

HANS SACHS AND THE REFORMATION

by

THOMAS GORDON

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BISHOP  
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Ph. D. 1958



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Abstract of Thesis presented for the Degree of Ph.D.  
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### HANS SACHS AND THE REFORMATION

This thesis contains a study of the contribution to the evangelical Reformation of the sixteenth century made by one of Martin Luther's most loyal and wholehearted supporters, the German poet, dramatist, dialogist and mastersinger, Hans Sachs (1494-1576). It is based on a survey of all of Hans Sachs' published works.

Part One of the thesis contains two background Chapters designed to set Hans Sachs in the perspective of his times. During the whole of the sixteenth century, but particularly in the period down to the establishment of the Religious Peace in 1555, every aspect of life in Germany - political, economic and social as well as religious - came under the influence of the Reformation. The literature of the period was no exception, and Chapter I is devoted to a brief sketch of the impact of the Reformation on German literature in the years during which Hans Sachs was its most outstanding representative. Since it is impossible to appreciate Hans Sachs' response to the Reformation without some knowledge of the part played in the Reformation by the Free Imperial City of Nuremberg, where he was born and where, apart from his years of travel as a journeyman, he lived

out the whole of his long life, an account of the reception of the Reformation in Nuremberg and the contribution of the city to the religious controversies of the first half of the sixteenth century is given in Chapter II.

Part Two is devoted to the detailed study of the Reformation aspects of Hans Sachs' works. An introductory Chapter deals with his mental and spiritual development before he publicly declared his allegiance to Martin Luther in 1523 in Die wittenbergisch nachtigall. Hans Sachs' response to the Reformation was typical of that of the lower middle class into which he was born. The controversy which Luther started in 1517 soon burst the limits of the scholastic world within which it was at first confined and vigorous attempts were made to bring the new theology within the comprehension of the common men. Nowhere were the popular religious works and tracts, the output of which increased sevenfold between 1518 and 1523, more eagerly read and collected than in the Free Imperial Cities. Amongst the many literary forms adopted by Luther's publicists the most popular was the dialogue, in which the common man appeared in the rôle of theologian, taking the side of Luther against his opponents and putting priest and monk to rout with quotations from the Bible and "Doctor Martin". In 1524 Hans Sachs followed up his success with Die wittenbergisch nachtigall with two equally successful dialogues, in which he himself played the part of the common man. These, together with Sachs'

other dialogues and contributions to the polemical literature of the early confident period of the Reformation are treated in detail in Chapter II. The suggestion that in the later 1520's Hans Sachs wavered in his loyalty to Martin Luther is examined at length and dismissed as unwarranted.

Hans Sachs' strictly polemical works, though influential, are relatively few in number. Besides these, however, he made important contributions to the Reformation in at least three other directions. His hymns and psalms (Chapter III) were amongst the first to be inspired by Luther's stirring examples. They found a ready place in the manuals of the early Lutheran churches and played their part in helping to establish the practice of congregational singing. His greatest contributions to the Reformation, however, were in the matters of moral teaching and in the dissemination of knowledge of the Lutheran Bible. It was almost certainly the moral aspect of the Reformation, which won for it Sachs' initial support. His disappointment at the non-fulfilment of the moral regeneration of men and society, which he expected would follow from the preaching of the doctrine of justification by faith and the spreading of the Word, found early expression in the third and fourth dialogues of 1524. After 1530 there was a vast unfolding in his writings of the penchant for moralising which had marked his works from the first. Almost all his poems and plays, whether serious or humorous, and regardless of whether their

material is drawn from heathen or Christian sources, conclude with the explicit pointing of a number of moral conclusions. His works present an immense cavalcade of virtues and vices. Every aspect of human nature and human behaviour is paraded before his readers and each receives its due measure of approval or condemnation (Chapter V). In no sphere of social and moral life did the Reformers take up a more decisive attitude against the medieval Church than in the matter of marriage, and Hans Sachs readily took over Luther's basic proposition regarding marriage, that it is a divinely appointed status and therefore a natural condition. His attitude to the whole question of marriage and the proper ordering of relations between the sexes is considered in Chapter VI.

Though through the middle years of his life, Hans Sachs' vast poetic energies were devoted largely to working for the moral revolution he hoped for, he retained a lively interest in religious controversy and he was driven from time to time to comment sadly on the state of religious affairs and the hindrances to the progress of the Reformation (Chapter IV). His latter years (Chapter VII) were saddened by the death of Martin Luther and embittered by the Schmalkaldic War and the imposition on the Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Interim. But despite the gloom which darkened his soul and pervaded his works during the tragic events of these years, Hans Sachs never lost faith in the ultimate victory of the Word of God. His faith was solidly

rooted in the Bible and his knowledge of the Lutheran text was remarkable. In the last twenty years of his literary life he turned increasingly to the Bible for consolation and inspiration and through his verse paraphrases and poetic and dramatic adaptations of Biblical material he did more than any of his contemporaries to popularise knowledge of the Scriptures. A large part of Hans Sachs' Bible study found its expression in his religious mastersongs, most of which are still unpublished, but from the samples which are available, and are discussed in this thesis, it seems likely that a detailed study of the religious mastersongs might add considerably to our knowledge of Hans Sachs' personal attitude to the Reformation.

An account of the literary fortunes of Hans Sachs is appended to this thesis, and it is hoped that this will serve as the basis for the later production of a complete critical bibliography of Hans Sachs, by the absence of which Hans Sachs research has long been handicapped. The Appendix contains little discussion of works on the linguistic aspects of Hans Sachs' writings, but the relevant works are listed and also included in the extended alphabetical bibliography of Hans Sachs.

"Wo irgend eine Seite des Lebens so gewaltig Alles verschlingt wie in der Reformationszeit das Moralische und Religiöse, da muß jede andere Seite nothwendigerweise verhältnismäßig darunter leiden."

(Gustav Schmoller)

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## FOREWORD

Outside the ranks of Germanisten and Wagner enthusiasts the name of Hans Sachs is virtually unknown today. The Reformation historians occasionally spare an odd line or two to mention 'the shoemaker poet', who, as one recently put it, 'succeeded not badly in rhyming couplets on Luther in "The Wittenberg Nightingale"'. The rest of Sachs' output - over six thousand works in all - has received scant attention or recognition from the historians. Indeed, few attempts have been made at all to assess Hans Sachs' contribution to the Reformation. Franz Schultheiß' "Hans Sachs in seinem Verhältnis zur Reformation" (1879) was no more than the briefest survey of the subject. In 1889 the "Verein für Reformationgeschichte" issued a volume by Waldemar Kawerau entitled "Hans Sachs und

die Reformation", but this dealt only with Hans Sachs' early polemical works. A few subsequent theses and articles have touched on parts of the subject but so far no one has attempted a detailed survey of the whole theme. At a time when for many and diverse reasons the Reformation is again a focus of historical study it seems appropriate to look at Hans Sachs' work as a whole in the light of the movement which so profoundly affected his life and to the furtherance of which he devoted half a century of literary activity.

Part One of this thesis contains two background chapters designed to set Hans Sachs in the perspective of his times. During the whole of the sixteenth century, but particularly in the period down to the establishment of the Religious Peace in 1555, every aspect of life in Germany - political, economic and social as well as religious - came under the influence of the Reformation. The literature of the period was no exception, and Chapter I is devoted to a brief sketch of the impact of the Reformation on German literature in the years during which Hans Sachs was its most outstanding representative. Since it is impossible to appreciate Hans Sachs' response to the Reformation without some knowledge of the part played in the Reformation by the Free Imperial City of Nuremberg, where he was born and where, apart from his "Wanderjahre", he lived out the

whole of his long life, an account of the reception of the Reformation in Nuremberg and the contribution of the city to the religious controversies of the first half of the sixteenth century is given in Chapter II.

Part II is devoted to Hans Sachs. An introductory chapter deals with his mental and spiritual development before he publicly declared his allegiance to Martin Luther in 1523 in "Die wittenbergisch nachtigall". Hans Sachs' response to the Reformation was typical of that of the lower middle class into which he was born. The controversy which Luther started in 1517 soon burst the limits of the scholastic world within which it was at first confined and vigorous attempts were made to bring the new theology within the comprehension of the common man. Nowhere were the popular religious works and tracts, the output of which increased sevenfold between 1518 and 1523, more eagerly read and collected than in the Free Imperial Cities. Amongst the many literary forms adopted by Luther's publicists the most popular was the dialogue, in which the common man appeared in the rôle of the theologian, taking the side of Luther against his opponents and putting the priest or the monk to rout with quotations from the Bible and "Doctor Martin". Hans Sachs followed up "Die wittenbergisch

nachtigall" with two such dialogues in 1524, in which he himself played the part of the common man. These and Sachs' other contributions to the polemical literature of the early confident period of the Reformation are treated in detail in Chapter II.

Hans Sachs' strictly polemical works are relatively few in number, and if they were all, he might perhaps merit no more than the meagre references he receives in the Reformation histories. He did, in fact, make notable contributions to the movement in at least three other directions. His hymns and psalms (Chapter III) were amongst the first to be inspired by Luther's stirring examples. They found a ready place in the manuals of the early Lutheran churches and played their part in helping to establish the practice of congregational singing. His greatest contributions to the Reformation, however, were in the matters of moral teaching and in the dissemination of knowledge of the Lutheran Bible. It was almost certainly the moral aspect of the Reformation, which won for it Sachs' initial support. His disappointment at the non-fulfilment of the moral regeneration of men and society, which he expected would follow from the preaching of the doctrine of justification by faith and the spreading of the Word, found early expression in his third and fourth dialogues. After 1530

there was a vast unfolding in his writings of the penchant for moralising which had marked his works from the first. Almost all his poems and plays, whether serious or humorous, and regardless of whether their material is drawn from heathen or Christian sources, conclude with the explicit pointing of a number of moral conclusions. The influence of these cannot, of course, be measured at this distance in time but the unceasing witness Sachs bore in his works through over forty years to the highest standards of behaviour cannot have been entirely without its effect on his audiences and readers. This aspect of his works is dealt with in Chapters V and VI.

Though through the middle years of Hans Sachs' life his vast poetic energies were devoted largely to working for the moral revolution he hoped for, he retained a lively interest in religious controversy and he was driven from time to time to comment sadly on the state of religious affairs and the hindrances to the progress of the Reformation (Chapter IV). His latter years (Chapter VII) were saddened by the death of Martin Luther and embittered by the Schmalkaldic War and the imposition on the Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Interim. But despite the gloom which darkened his soul and pervaded his works during the tragic events of these years, Hans Sachs never lost faith in the

ultimate victory of the Word of God. His faith was solidly rooted in the Bible and his knowledge of the Lutheran text was remarkable. In the last twenty years of his literary life he turned increasingly to the Bible for consolation and inspiration and through his verse paraphrases and poetic and dramatic adaptations of Biblical material he did more than any of his literary contemporaries to popularise knowledge of the Scriptures. A very large part of Hans Sachs' Bible study found its expression in his religious mastersongs, most of which are still unpublished. From the samples which are available, it seems very probable that a detailed study of the religious mastersongs might add considerably to our knowledge of Hans Sachs' personal attitude to the Reformation, and one may hope that the approaching quatercentenary of Hans Sachs' death in 1576 may stimulate the publication of his last remaining unpublished works.

Hans Sachs research is handicapped by the absence of a critical bibliography. In preparing this thesis I have taken the opportunity to examine much of the accumulated Hans Sachs literature. I hope that the Appendix, which is in the nature of a by-product of this work, may serve at least as a basis for the production of a complete Hans Sachs Forschungsbericht. I am greatly indebted to

the staffs of the Brotherton Library of the University of Leeds, the North Riding County Library and the National Central Library for their ready assistance in tracing copies of books and articles, and to the Librarians of the numerous university and public libraries in England and Germany from which I have been generously allowed to borrow.

## PART ONE

### THE BACKGROUND

# I

## GERMAN LITERATURE AND THE REFORMATION (1517 - 1555)

The Reformation was a complex phenomenon. Its course was profoundly affected by a diversity of circumstances - political, economic, social, geographical and philosophical, as well as religious and moral. The rise of national states and of absolute rulers made the spiritual overlordship of Church and Pope seem alien and improper. Germans, Frenchmen and Englishmen had long been disturbed by the vast sums of money that were forwarded to Rome in the form of Papal dues, fees and taxes. Rulers like Henry VIII of England and some of the German princes cast envious eyes on the rich lands held by the Church and were not slow to seize the opportunity offered

by the Reformation to appropriate the wealth of the Church and use it for their own ends. The development of capitalism, the growth of industries, the expansion of Europe, the break-up of feudalism and the rise in prices were by the early years of the sixteenth century bringing about deep-seated and lasting changes in the traditional pattern of the economic and social life of Europe. Whilst giving due weight to each of these secular elements in the Reformation, however, the fact remains that underlying the movement viewed as a whole were grave issues of faith and Church practice, and to regard these issues as only of secondary importance can only result in confusing the part with the whole. It is impossible to discuss the political, social or cultural aspects of life in early sixteenth century Germany without continual reference to the religious controversies of the day. The age of the Reformation was, in fact, dominated by the religious and the moral, and this is particularly true of the literature of the period.

The existence of administrative and financial abuses in the Roman Catholic Church, and especially in the Roman curia, had already been widely recognised in the fifteenth century. It is not necessary here to enter at length into the details of these abuses; <sup>(1)</sup> it will suffice

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1. These abuses were described and attacked in detail by Martin Luther in An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation (WA/VI/381-469). See also T.M. Lindsay: History of the Reformation, Vol. I, Ch. 1 (Edinburgh, 1907); N. Sykes: The Crisis of the Reformation, Ch. 1 (London, 1938); J. Mackinnon: Luther and the Reformation, Vol. I (London, 1925-30).

to cite the case of Albert of Brandenburg, whose career sheds high light on the state of the German episcopate at the time and whose ambitions led directly to Martin Luther's protest against the sale of indulgences, which sparked off the Reformation.

In Germany the episcopate had long been treated as a provision for princely families; pluralities were common, and consecration or even ordination to the priesthood was often long postponed by some bishops-elect. Albert of Brandenburg, of the house of Hohenzollern, already held the sees of Halberstadt and Magdeburg before he was old enough to be a bishop at all. In 1514 he aspired also to the Archbishopric of Mainz, which would make him Primate of Germany. The impoverished diocese offered him the post on condition that he paid the installation fee himself. Albert knew that he would have to pay dearly to "compensate" the Pope for allowing him to hold three sees at once. After some hard bargaining the irregularity was condoned in return for a fee of ten thousand ducats, which Albert borrowed from the banking house of Fugger. To enable Albert to reimburse himself the Pope then granted him the privilege of dispensing an indulgence on his territories for a period of eight years. One half of the proceeds of the indulgence, in addition to the sum already paid, was to go to the Pope; the other half was to be used to pay off the Fuggers. Subscribers to the

indulgence were told that they would enjoy a plenary and perfect remission of all sins; they would be restored to the state of innocence they had enjoyed in baptism and would be relieved of all the pains of purgatory, whilst those who secured indulgences on behalf of those already in purgatory need not be contrite and confess their sins. The indulgence vendors, led by a Dominican monk named Tetzel, were not allowed to enter the territory of Electoral Saxony but they came close enough for the inhabitants of Wittenberg to be able to cross the border with ease and spend their ducats. At this time Luther presumably did not know all the sordid details of Albert's transaction, but the amazing concessions obtained by his parishioners - the benefits allegedly promised by Tetzel in his indulgence sermon went even further than those listed in Albert's printed instructions, which were themselves of unparalleled scope - <sup>(1)</sup> so appalled Luther that he was angered into taking the action by which he unwittingly unleashed the Reformation.

The arrangements arrived at by Pope Leo X and Albert of Brandenburg over the archbishopric of Mainz illustrate the lengths to which the Popes and high Church officials were prepared to go in the committing and condoning

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1. See R.H. Bainton: Here I Stand, pp. 74-79 (London, 1951)

of irregularities. Though Albert had known that he would have to pay heavily for Mainz, he also knew that a refusal was unlikely if the price was high enough. Leo's activities were absorbed in pressing forward the temporal claims of the Papacy in Italy, and in the diplomatic intrigues for these ends, which were themselves subservient to his lifelong policy of increasing the power of the Medici family. Under this most worldly of pontiffs the secularisation of the Papacy and the decline of its spiritual authority went further than ever before.

The inferior clergy were not slow to follow the example of their superiors. Abbeys and cathedrals, which disposed of great numbers of benefices in which the duties were largely nominal, provided a happy hunting ground for clerical careerists. The religious orders, too, did not escape the prevalent worldliness and laxity. The vocation to the life of religion was undoubtedly a declining influence during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the fall in numbers affected the position and the strength of the religious houses. Dwindling personnel and inefficient, and often corrupt, administration led to financial difficulties and a decline in the value of the welfare services in education and hospitality provided by the friars. In view of the widespread decay of zeal and the intrusion of laxity it is difficult to escape the persuasion that from the

standpoint of religion the religious orders could not justify their position by the end of the fifteenth century. Here and throughout the whole ecclesiastical organisation there was an urgent need of reform, and it was the grave responsibility of the Papacy that this was not realised until so great a part of Christian Europe had repudiated its allegiance.

The administrative abuses of the Church and the secularisation of the Papacy were not the only factors which determined the nature of the Reformation movement of the sixteenth century. Equally important, if not more influential, were the intellectual and religious forces tending towards the disintegration of the traditional order. Half a century before Luther's birth Lorenzo Valla and Nikolaus Cusanus had respectively demonstrated the falsity of the Donation of Constantine and the Isidorean Decretals, two of the principal proof-texts of Papal supremacy. It was not long before the Bible itself was being subjected to critical study and the work of Renaissance scholars towards the recovery of as good texts as possible of the Hebrew version of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New helped to discredit the massive edifice that had been erected on the basis of the Vulgate. Many students had a share in this labour, notably Johann Reuchlin, the Hebraist, but most influential of all was the cosmopolitan scholar and theologian, Desiderius Erasmus, whose editions of the Greek New Testament and of the Greek patristic

writings prepared the way for a new and critical attitude to the Papal system. In general, the study of the early history of the Christian Church in the apostolic and post-apostolic ages presented a picture of a pre-Papal organisation, which was in marked contrast to the claims of the Papacy, and which was of immense importance in moulding Luther's thought on the ideal structure of Church and society.

Many other influences were, of course, operative in shaping the mental attitude towards reform in the pre-Reformation era, for instance, the declining importance in the universities of the system of scholastic philosophy, which in its decay provoked biting satire and ridicule, notably in the Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum (1515-1517). But on the whole these tendencies were effective only in the limited circles of educated society, which despite the emergence of literate laymen, were small in numbers. Speculation concerning the relations of civil and spiritual authority - the Old Testament in particular provided many arguments in favour of the civil power in its contest with Rome, and the reformers' cause was greatly strengthened by the scholars' investigations into the rôle of the "godly prince" in Old Testament society - or even critical studies of historical and Biblical proof-texts were not calculated to appeal to the generality of either the

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1. See Chapter II below, pp. 73ff. for some account of the Humanist circle in Nuremberg. See also Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 60ff.

clergy or the laity, who were too ignorant to understand their purport. If the movement towards reform had been impelled solely by the political ambitions of kings and princes, or the predatory appetites of the flourishing middle classes for monastic estates, or the ridicule of scholars for the ignorance of parish priests, there would probably have still been a reformation, but the character of the Reformation would certainly have been different. (2) Beneath the high matters of state and churchcraft, however, were popular religious tendencies and influences which played an important part in both the preparation and the fashioning of the changes instituted in the sixteenth century.

At the heart of medieval catholicism lay the Mass, but during the later Middle Ages the Mass had become inextricably associated in the popular mind with many superstitious ideas. In particular, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had witnessed a tremendous growth in the practice of offering masses for the delivery of the souls of the dead from purgatory, which was reflected in the widespread endowment of chantries and the enormous provisions made in wills for the saying of requiem masses. "The popular view of the Mass was distinctly mechanical ... The

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1. Sykes, op. cit., p. 18.

benefits which the living and the dead received varied in direct proportion with the number of the masses said and with the amount of offering made at each.<sup>(1)</sup> The multiplication and the arithmetical valuation of masses led naturally to a superstitious and degraded conception of the nature of the Mass amongst the laity, which led in turn to a widespread popular repugnance.

The abuses connected with the Mass led to a grave degradation of the office of the priesthood. Since one Mass was as good as another, the personal character and education of the priests became matters of comparative unimportance. The multiplication of requiem masses created a demand for more priests to perform the duty and resulted in the admission to the priesthood of large numbers of candidates, whose education was often limited to an ability to repeat the Latin of the Mass. After ordination many of these men tramped the countryside seeking employment as Mass-priests and the natural result of the growth of this class of vagrant priests of uncertain education was to bring contempt on the whole order of priesthood.

The saying of masses for the souls of the dead was only one of the many practices encouraged by the medieval

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1. Quoted by Sykes, op. cit., p. 19 from B.L. Manning: The People's Faith in the Time of Wyclif.

Church which Luther was to condemn under the heading of "good works". The sale of indulgences has already been mentioned and there will be opportunity later to deal with such matters as the popularity of pilgrimages with their attendant social evils, the veneration of sacred relics, the cult of the Virgin Mary and St. Anne, and the rest. Enough has perhaps been said, however, to show that it is far from the truth to suppose that popular aversion to the Church in the early sixteenth century was confined to financial and administrative abuses and did not extend to matters of belief and practice. The volume of tracts and broadsheets directed against established Roman Catholic practices and, in particular, against the corruptions and superstitious ideas associated with the Mass, which poured forth in Germany when Luther had opened the floodgates of criticism, is clear evidence of a widespread popular revulsion.

The Reformation was preceded by a considerable body of satirical and didactic writing criticising the abuses in the Church and ridiculing the human frailties of priest and layman. Much of this literature was in Latin, but though men like Reuchlin and Erasmus must be regarded in some measure as forerunners of the Reformation, they were essentially scholars, not reformers. They fought against the abuses of Roman Catholicism, but with the weapons of philosophy and learning; their satire was concerned only with

intellectual matters. Works like Erasmus' Enchiridion militis christiani (1509) or Moriae Enconium (1509) were widely read in educated circles, but they were written from the standpoint of the scholar and did not echo the thoughts of the ordinary man. Before he came under the spell of Martin Luther Ulrich von Hutten (1488-1523) lacked the popular touch; in his early writings he was in any case more concerned with the fight for intellectual and political freedom than with religious reform. Those like Sebastian Brant (1457-1526) and Johann Geiler von Kaisersberg (1445-1510), who wrote in German, had received the greater part of their education from humanists and neither could resist the temptation to parade his learning. Both achieved a wide popularity, however, Brant as the author of Das Narrenschiff (1494) and Geiler as a preacher of popular sermons. Thomas Murner (1475-1536) was influenced by both men; as a preacher he soon gained a reputation for the sort of ironical witty style of pulpit oratory that Geiler affected, and his satires, Die Narrenbeschwörung and Die Schelmenzunft (1512), were clearly modelled on Brant. Unlike the latter, however, he had the ability to descend from the scholar's platform and get down to earth. He struck the coarsest popular note, and in his later writings he went even further in unscrupulousness, coarseness and vulgarity. It is always difficult to assess the popularity of a work of art in a remote age, but it is generally accepted that the satirical works of Brant and

Murner, and the sermons of Geiler reached a wide public. It seems more doubtful whether they achieved the didactic aim of their authors. J.G. Robertson tells us that Murner's "thrusts never missed their mark, and left wounds behind them that rankled"<sup>(1)</sup>. Possibly, but Murner's strictures were too all-embracing; he might arouse men to anger but not to reform. It required Luther's simpler approach with its concentrated attack on wickedness in high places to fire men's minds and touch their hearts with a zeal for moral regeneration, which is such a marked feature of the early years of the Reformation.

The Reformation began with a moral issue. Luther was perturbed by the moral effects on the people at large of the sale of indulgences. In composing his celebrated "theses"<sup>(2)</sup> he was stirred by two impulses. The first was theological and academic in character and had to do with the enquiry into truth and error in the whole question of indulgence and grace, of sin and its annulment, of redemption and human salvation, and the standards to be found in the Bible, the early Church Fathers and in natural morality.

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1. History of German Literature, p. 182. (Edinburgh and London, 1933)
  2. More strictly these were "propositions". Luther intended that they should form the basis of a disputation, which as a member of the professorial staff of the University of Wittenberg, it was Luther's turn to lead on All Saints Day (1st November) 1517. According to custom the propositions were posted the previous day on the door of the Church of All Saints in Wittenberg.

The second derived from his profound concern for the people themselves. Luther was no scholarly recluse. His appointment in 1515 as District-Vicar of his Congregation had brought him into close contact with people throughout the district and their affection for him enabled him to understand their needs and how they felt about the problems, practices and abuses of the times. It was above all his love for his people, which once the issue he had raised blew up into a public controversy, led him on to explain, expound and justify.

We are not concerned here with the theological principles involved in the theses; nor with whether they were "sledge-hammer blows directed against the most flagrant ecclesiastical abuse of the age" or "like the leaps and strokes of a skilled fencer", though the reactions which followed might be better illustrated in the language of nuclear physics; but with the flood of literature which ultimately flowed as a result of the event of October 31st, 1517.

Translations of the Latin theses into German were soon made and, without Luther's consent, the printers seized upon them. Within a few months they were known throughout Germany. It is unlikely, however, that Luther's hand was

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1. B.L. Woolf: Reformation Writings of Martin Luther. Vol. I, pp. 25-26. (London, 1952).
  2. T.M. Lindsay: Cambridge Modern History. Vol. II, p. 129. (Cambridge, 1934)
  3. Woolf, op. cit., p. 27.

really forced by this development. In accordance with his duty he had appraised his superior, the Bishop of Mainz, of his intention to hold the "disputation" and had sent him a copy of the theses. On the day the theses were "posted" he preached in the Church of All Saints at Wittenberg on the subject of "Indulgences and Grace"<sup>(1)</sup>. He must have felt that evening that the die was cast. At all events, he now plunged with amazing and apparently boundless energy into the business of making his convictions known. The matter had already been in his mind for at least five years as can be seen from the sermon he had preached at Litzka in 1512 and had come to clearer and clearer expression in later lectures and sermons.<sup>(3)</sup> The time had now come to write and publish, and once he was launched it required three printing presses to cope with his output. His main task consisted in the constructive presentation of his convictions and this he accomplished in a vast number of sermons to the people; lectures on the Bible to students and others; discussions of traditional theological doctrines and topical issues; repeated expositions of the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer; the first of several commentaries

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1. Eyn Sermon von dem Ablesz unnd gnade (WA/I/239-246)
  2. Sermo praescriptus praeposito in Litzka (WA/I/9ff)
  3. See especially his lectures on the Seven Penitential Psalms (1515-1516, WA/I/154ff), sermons preached in July and August, 1516 (WA/I/65 and 69) and his discussion of Indulgences in February, 1517 (WA/I/138ff.)

on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians; and, in 1520, the famous sermon Von den guten Werckenn <sup>(1)</sup> and the "three great monographs". There were polemical writings, too, and though these lie rather aside from the main stream of Luther's works in this period, they set the tone for much that was to come. The unhappy defeat which Luther suffered at the hands of Johann Eck of Ingolstadt in the Leipzig disputation of 1519 had two important consequences. It gained great sympathy for Luther's cause and rallied the younger German humanists round him almost to a man; and it made him see for the first time what lay in his opposition to indulgences, so that out of the depression of 1519 was born the sweeping programme of reform which flowed from his pen the following year in the great monographs, An den Christlichen Adel deutscher Nation: De captivitate Babylonica Ecclesiae <sup>(2)</sup> Praeludium: and Von der Freyheytt eynicz Christen menschen. Armed above all with the first of these three documents, in which Luther attacked the sovereignty of the Pope and described in detail the abuses in Roman Catholic administration and practice, Luther's supporters now rushed into print to attack the Papacy and its iniquities and to support their leader, whose life was now in great danger as a result of the issue of the Papal bull against him and his arraignment

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1. WA/VI/202-276.

2. WA/VI/381-469; WA/VI/484-573; WA/VII/12-38.

before the Diet of Worms. In the next few years Germany was flooded by a mighty stream of pro-Lutheran pamphlets and broadsheets, which despite Imperial prohibitions poured forth from the presses and were eagerly read by the masses of the people from one end of the <sup>German part of the</sup> Empire to the other.

The increase in the amount of printed matter circulating in Germany is one of the most striking accompaniments of the Reformation. The annual number of separate "works" issued in Germany between 1517 and 1523 rose by over ten times and it has been estimated that four-fifths of the increase was in controversial writings prompted by the national antagonism to the Roman Church. It must not be supposed that the great expansion in the production of the written word gave any great stimulus to literature in the narrower meaning of that word. Even though the greatest minds of the age were engaged little that was written in the early years of the Reformation is of more than passing literary interest. This was perhaps inevitable since the greatest works of art are rarely forged in the heat of controversy. Many of the crudities of style and content perpetrated by the pamphleteers were, however,

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1. Some details are given in W. Stämmeler: Von der Mystik zum Barock, p. 303 (Stuttgart, 1950)
  2. L. von Ranke: Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation, Vol. II, pp. 55-56 (Leipzig, 1894)

not accidental, but deliberately adopted to appeal to the readers in the lower classes for whom the pamphlets were in general intended. Most of the pamphlets were written anonymously or under pseudonyms and purported to be written by the unlearned - peasants, weavers, shoemakers, and so on - for the unlearned, but wherever research has uncovered the identity of an anonymous author, he has almost invariably turned out to be a leading theologian or scholar, an Oecolampadius or a Spengler, and there are strong grounds now for believing that Robertson's remark that the German humanists held aloof from the Reformation<sup>(1)</sup> is in need of revision. Men like Pirckheimer were, it is true, later disillusioned and joined the ranks of Luther's detractors, but at first they were wildly enthusiastic.

Of Luther's earliest supporters only one has an assured place in the history of German literature, the Franconian knight, Ulrich von Hutten. It was Luther's appeal An den Christlichen Adel deutscher Nation that revealed to Hutten the powers of the German language and persuaded him to forsake Latin for German as his vehicle for literary expression. Many of his German verses are written in a popular style and rhythm that suggests the Volkslied. Of his theological writings the Gesprächbüchlein (1521) is the

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1. Op. cit., p. 181.

most important, not least because it set the fashion for the dialogue, the form beloved above all others by the pamphleteers.

The Roman Catholic Church did not lack its defenders but as so many of the printing presses were in the pro-Lutheran Imperial cities, they found it difficult to get their pamphlets published. In Thomas Murner, however, the Roman Catholics possessed the greatest satirist of the day and in 1522 Murner produced the wittiest and bitterest of all his satires, Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren, wie in doctor Murner beschworen hat. "Der groß nar", whom Murner conjures up, is the Reformation, and the great fool contains within him a host of lesser fools, who under the leadership of Luther attack Christianity and plunder Church and monastery. Despite the grossness of this work and the quite unscrupulous personal attacks on Luther, Murner here displayed a literary genius unequalled on the Protestant side until the emergence of Hans Sachs.

Luther was not content to rely on the popular pamphlet or the controversial treatise for the furtherance of his cause. He must have realised himself that much that was being written by others was negative and destructive. His own attacks on the Papacy and its institutions had been firmly grounded on his own long and patient study of the

Bible. In the seclusion of the Wartburg in 1521 it was borne in upon him that if the Gospel was to assert its power in the rejuvenation of the Church and the world it was essential to instruct the people in the Word. To this end he now undertook the task of writing in the vernacular a series of sermons (Postille) on the passages from the Gospels and Epistles, appointed to be read on Sundays and Feast Days. These sermons contrasted markedly with the allegorical moralisings of the popular preachers of the fifteenth century, like Geiler von Kaisersberg, whose rhetorical outpourings were characterised by a display of obscure and barren learning and filled out with a mass of satire and anecdote, and other frivolous and comic ingredients. Luther replaced all this by simple teaching basing his message solely on the Word of God as he interpreted it. Apart from the distinctive matter of his sermons the manner of them was characteristic too. He wrote as if he were addressing an ordinary congregation in the Saxon vernacular. There was no rhetoric, no attempt at more oratory, for he was uttering thoughts and convictions on which he was certain his own salvation and that of his unseen hearers depended.

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1. Luther himself denounced the popular sermon, as he found it, in a preface to a collection of his own sermons (WA/X/Pt.1). See also the preface which he wrote to Eyn Deutsch Theologia in which he commends the simple language used by the anonymous author of this work (WA/I/375-379).

But this strength of conviction imparted to his discourses a spontaneous eloquence, an incisive power of appeal, a directness and clarity of expression, which only a preacher aflame with the prophetic fire and gifted by nature with an utterance adequate to his message can attain. (1)

Luther's sermons served as models for those of his followers, who were now being called to office as preachers in the new "Lutheran" churches and men like Andreas Osiander and Wenzeslaus Link in Nuremberg soon gained reputations through their powerful preaching, which transcended the bounds of the communities they served. Many of the sermons of the new preachers were published; others bearing their names were issued without the authority of their alleged authors. On the whole evangelical sermons seem to have formed a substantial element in the literature circulating in Germany at this time. (2) (3)

It was but a short step from instructing the people in the Gospel through his written sermons for Luther to wish to put into their hands the Gospel itself in the common tongue. Encouraged by his friends in Wittenberg

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1. Mackinnon, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 63.  
2. See below, Part One, Chapter II, pp. 80-81.  
3. Examples of Osiander's sermons are to be found in W. Möller: Andreas Osiander. Leben und ausgewählte Schriften (Elberfeld, 1870)

Luther began his translation of the New Testament into German in December, 1521. The first draft was completed within ten weeks, a truly herculean performance. This translation, however, was no mere 'tour de force'; it was a work of creative genius, the greatest German literary and linguistic achievement of the century. The enthusiastic reception of Luther's New Testament, when it was published the following September, was due to two things. Firstly, by the emphasis he had placed on the Bible and his own habit of clinching all his arguments by quotations from the Scriptures Luther had himself aroused a deep longing in the German people for the chance to read and hear the Bible in a form they could understand. The anonymous author of the Gesprech-büchlin New Karsthans (1) summed up the mood of the people when he wrote in 1521: "Wir gehn in großem hunger des göttlichen Worts". Secondly, in translating Luther deliberately kept in mind the ordinary man and woman; he aimed to produce a version which "die mutter ym haus und der gemeine man" (2) could simply and clearly understand, and in this he was brilliantly successful. He subjected all he wrote to the test, "Ist das gut deutsch?" and constantly rejected literal translations from the

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1. O. Schade: Satiren und Pasquille aus der Reformationszeit. Vol. II, p. 1 (Hanover, 1863)
  2. Sendbrieff D.M. Luthers von Dolmetzschen und Fürbit der heiligenn (WA/XXX/Pt. 2/pp. 627-646)

original in favour of a more homely German idiom. The style of his translation is dominated throughout by the spoken rather than the written word and this made it especially suitable for reading aloud from the pulpit and in the family circle. It was in the next few years that the habit of family Bible reading became ingrained in the German people. We are told that even the children were soon learning to spell with the aid of Luther's Testament.

Within two years fourteen editions of Luther's New Testament had been published in Wittenberg and sixty-six elsewhere. Writing in 1523 Heinrich von Kettenbach tells us:

" Man findet jetzund zu Nürnberg, Augsburg, Ulm, am Rheinstrom, in Schweiz, in Sachsen Weiber, Jungfrauen, Knechte, Schüler, Hanswerksleute, Schneider, Schuster, Bäcker, Büttner, Reiter, Ritter, Edle Herren, die mehr wissen in der Bibel (welche die Heilige Schrift ist), denn alle hohen Schulen, auch Paris, Köln und alle Papisten, soweit die Welt ist, und sie können's beweisen und beweisen es täglich." (1)

Further evidence of the widespread distribution of Luther's Bible is to be found in the pamphlet literature, to which it gave an added stimulus. The Bible now replaced Luther's earlier works as the principal source-book of the authors of the broadsheets and dialogues, many of which consist of little else than a linking together of Biblical quotations, and in this way knowledge of the Bible reached a still wider public.

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1. Quoted by Stammer, op. cit., p. 315.

With the exception of „Die wittenbergisch nachtigall“ (1523) of Hans Sachs and his four celebrated dialogues <sup>(1)</sup> (1524) little of the polemical literature of these years has much claim to literary merit. Nevertheless, many of the authors were now, like Hans Sachs, men of the people and much that they wrote had a genuine earthiness, which contrasts favourably with the scholarly imitations of lower class idiom affected by some of the earlier pamphleteers. A number of scholars, who had enthusiastically rallied to Luther in the early days, had now become disillusioned and had withdrawn their support. Two important polemical poems, Triumpus veritatis. Sack der warheyt <sup>(2)</sup> (once attributed to Lazarus Spengler, the Town Clerk of Nuremberg at the time of the Reformation), and Die Luterisch Strebkatz (an anonymous satire against all Luther's enemies), and a dramatic satire, Ein Tragedia oder Spill: gehalten in dem kunigklichen Sal zu Paris <sup>(3)</sup>, all written in or about 1524, are clearly the work of scholars.

Luther never again achieved, or attempted to achieve, in his later writings the stylistic prose artistry of his New Testament, and only in one other literary activity,

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1. Schade, op. cit., Voll. II, p. 196ff.
  2. Schade, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 112ff.
  3. See L. Geiger: "Das Spiel zu Paris". Archiv für Litteraturgeschichte, Vol. V, pp. 543-554.

his hymn-writing, did he again strike the vein of religious exaltation which produced his great translation. The German hymn was not, as is so often said, the product of the Reformation. The singing of hymns in German on special occasions, such as feast-days, was already a widely accepted practice in pre-Reformation Germany and the Reformation brought no immediate change. Luther was more cautious than some of his more impetuous followers, like Andreas Carlstadt and Johannes Oecolampadius, in sanctioning changes in the ancient liturgy. His Deutsche Messe und  
<sup>(1)</sup>  
ordnung Gottis diensts was not printed until 1526, and it was only after some years that the singing of hymns in the vernacular came to occupy a special place in the liturgy of the evangelical churches. Luther had been a music-lover since his early student days in Erfurt, but he only appears to have come to appreciate the educative value of hymn-singing some time in 1523. His enthusiasm for hymn-singing in the form of metrical paraphrases of Biblical texts may well have been a by-product of the exalted mood which  
<sup>(2)</sup>  
produced his first Bible translation. His first hymns were  
<sup>(3)</sup>  
written in 1523 and his first main collection, the Erfurter Enchiridion (1524) served as a model to his friends and others who were not slow to respond to his encouragement to

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1. Luther's hymns are all printed in WA/XXXV with an exhaustive introduction by Lucke and Albrecht.
2. It was preceded by the so-called Achtliederbuch.

to follow his example. Many of the new hymn-writers sold their compositions separately as broadsheets; enterprising publishers issued general collections. (1) Psalms predominated amongst the early hymns, either as paraphrases or straight metrical versions, but just as Luther did not scorn the great Latin hymns and "sequences", the hymns included in many of the early collections show a remarkable diversity of origin and often contained, besides old Catholic hymns, others which originated with the Moravian Brethren, the Anabaptists and other sects. Here was one field in which the bitter controversies which divided men at this time were largely, if not entirely, forgotten, and this may well be one reason why hymn-writing is one of the few literary genres, which shows any real development in Germany in the first thirty years of the Reformation.

The Peasants' War, which brought to an end the first phase of the Reformation, produced its own brief literature. In content this is largely a mixture of agrarian communism and gleanings from Luther's writings. The "Twelve Articles", the principal public declaration of the peasants, was at first greeted by Luther with approval since it fitted

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1. Details of these may be found in K. Goedeke: Grundriß zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung, Vol. II, sections 122-4 (Dresden, 1886), and examples in P.B. Wackernagel: Das deutsche Kirchenlied von der Ältesten Zeit bis zu Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts (Vol. II, Leipzig, 1864-1877). See also below, Part Two, Chapter III.

in with his own ideas of the ideal Christian society, but when the senseless murdering and burning began, he was seized with revulsion and in Wider die rewbischen und mordischen rotten der anderen bawren (1) (1525) he urged the princes and the authorities to put down the peasants like mad dogs. Some indication of the religious fanaticism of the Thuringian peasant leader, Thomas Müntzer, can be seen in two of his manifestoes, which were included in Luther's Schreckliche (2) Geschichte und Gericht Gottes über Thomas Müntzer. (1525).

The Peasants' War had a lasting and disastrous effect on the course of the Reformation in Germany. By rallying the forces opposed to the Reformation it checked the spread of the movement throughout the whole of Germany, and it threw the guidance of the movement into the hands of the evangelical princes. From 1525 the Reformation ceased to be predominantly a religious affair and became indissolubly involved with Imperial politics. One result of this was a marked increase in the output of prose and verse accounts of contemporary events, to which the name "Zeitungen" is sometimes given. Some of the earliest examples of this genre, the forerunner of the newspaper (though regularly numbered journals only appeared first in the year 1566), had dealt with the Worms Reichstag of 1521. The Peasants' War gave rise to

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1. WA/XVIII/344-361.  
2. WA/XVIII/362-373.

large numbers and other favourite topics were the battle of Pavia (1525), the sack of Rome (1527), and above all, the Turkish Wars, for which Luther's Heerpredigt widder den  
 (1)  
Türcken (1529) set the keynote. There was no historical event and hardly any local happening - drought, famine, fire, flood, murder, execution, and the like - which did not find an echo in the "Zeitungen". Some of the rhymed "Zeitungen", including some by Hans Sachs, have achieved the status of  
 (2)  
 historical folksongs.

The connection between the "Zeitungen" and the Reformation is rarely more than incidental. A bridge between  
 (3)  
 the two is formed, however, by the Lutheran martyrologies, accounts of the early martyrs of the Reformation, such as Lienhart Keyser, who was burnt at the stake in Schärding in  
 (4)  
 1527 and to whom Luther dedicated a "Trostbrieff", and Heinrich von Zütphen, whose end in Dittmarschen in 1524 was described by Luther in Die recht warhafft und Gründtlich  
Hystori oder geschicht Von bruder Hainrich inn Diethmer  
 (5)  
verprent. Poems on such themes are found amongst the historical folksongs, as for example, Luther's Lyed von denn zeweyen Marterern Christi zu Brussel von den Sophisten

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1. WA/XXX/Pt. 2/149-197.
  2. See R. von Liliencron: Die historischen Volkslieder der Deutschen (1865-69); and Stammer, op. cit., p. 605.
  3. See Goedeke, op. cit., Vol. II, section 138.
  4. WA/23/443-476.
  5. WA/XVIII/215-240.

(1)  
von Louen verbrandt, which tells the story of the first two  
 Augustinian martyrs.

Apart from a certain preoccupation with liturgical  
 works, the most important of which were the Deudsche Messe und  
ordnung Gottis diensts (1526) and the large and small  
 catechisms (1529), Luther's time was largely absorbed in the  
 later 1520's in the sacramenterian controversy with the Swiss  
 Reformer, Zwingli. The details of this dispute do not concern  
 us here, but the acrid pamphlet warfare which it engendered  
 between the two principals and their supporters (Melancthon,  
 Osiander, Brenz and Bugenhagen on Luther's side, and  
 Oecolampadius, Bucer, Capito and Schwenkfeld on that of  
 Zwingli) provides one of the most unedifying chapters in the  
 story of the Reformation.

The year 1530 marked the beginning of another  
 stage in the history of German Reformation literature. The  
 negotiations between the Romanist and Lutheran parties at the  
 Diet of Augsburg in that year, though they failed to achieve  
 the object of conciliation so anxiously desired by the  
 Emperor, demonstrated how firmly the Lutheran Church was now

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1. WA/XXXV/411.
  2. WA/XIX/44-113.
  3. WA/XXX/Pt.1/123-425.
  4. This and subsequent events are dealt with in some detail  
 below, Part One, Chapter Two.

established, and this, together with the general acceptance by the Lutheran leaders of Melanchthon's statement of Lutheran doctrine in the "Confessio Augustana", led to a distinct cooling of interest in doctrinal polemics. From about this time the output of polemical matter with which Germany had been flooded for some ten years noticeably subsides. From time to time Luther indulged himself with such immoderate outbursts as Von der Winckelmesse und Pfaffen Weihe <sup>(1)</sup> (1533) but much that was written by Luther and his co-workers - Bugenhagen, Amsdorf, Justus Jonas, Spalatin, Caspar Criciger and, above all, Melanchthon - was from now on intended for learned circles and not for the mass of the people. If, however, the Reformation ceases at this point to stand in the very centre of German literature and to be its main source and inspiration, its indirect influence was to be felt for several more decades - and this, largely through the agency of Hans Sachs.

Only an inadequate acquaintance with the works of Hans Sachs could have led Kuno Francke to the conclusion that "in reading Hans Sachs we have the impression that all the world-moving thoughts of the early Reformation period had swept over the German people without touching it" <sup>(2)</sup>. Hans

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1. WA/XXXVIII/171-256.
  2. A History of German Literature as determined by Social Forces (London, 1901), p. 166.

Sachs gave himself wholeheartedly to Martin Luther in 1523, when he penned his first version of Die wittenbergisch nachtigall, and he remained staunchly devoted to Lutheran principles throughout the whole half-century of life which remained to him. He expounded those principles not only in the 1520's but at intervals throughout his life, and in crucial periods such as during the Schmalkaldic War and the Interim few men were more outspoken in their condemnation of Papal and Imperial policy. Such direct contributions to the Lutheran cause take up only a relatively small space in the many volumes of Hans Sachs' works, however, and yet there is little that he wrote which is not touched by the profound spiritual experience he underwent between 1520 and 1523. In those years he studied assiduously the numerous Lutheran tracts which he collected, but he was moved, above all, by his reading of Luther's Bible, and no preacher contributed more to spreading the knowledge of the Word than did Hans Sachs by his dramatisation and versification of Biblical material. To Hans Sachs, however, the Reformation was, more than anything else, a call for the reformation of men. He early expressed in the third and fourth dialogues of 1524 his bitter disappointment at the failure of men to respond to Luther's call by living better lives and throughout the long span of his literary life Hans Sachs never gave up the struggle to persuade his fellow men and women to adopt higher standards of behaviour, nor his hope that one day

the life of the world would marry up to the ideal of life which he found in the Bible.

In 1539, Wenzeslaus Linck, one of the outstanding preachers thrown up by the Reformation, wrote in a letter to a fellow parson:

"Da jetzt das mehrere Teil Menschen die heilsame Lehre nicht leiden, geschweige denn aufnehmen wollen, sondern nach ihren eignen Lüsten selbst Lehre aufladen, je nachdem ihnen die Ohren jucken, und die Ohren von der Wahrheit wenden und sich zu den Fabeln kehren, so muß man jetzund Gottes Wort und Lehre, gute Sitten der tollen Welt und ungezogenen Jugend vortragen mit Predigen, Gesängen, Reimen, Liedern, Sprüchen, Spielen der Komödien, Tragödien usw., ob vielleicht die, die das Predigen nicht hören noch sonst Zucht leiden, durch Spiele oder Gesänge könnten erworben werden." (2)

We know that in the 1520's Luther encouraged his friends to write hymns and to urge others to do so. There is, however, not much evidence to support the contention that the spell which the Reformation cast over almost the whole of German literature during the second quarter of the sixteenth century was deliberately contrived by the leaders of the Reformation. This has often been suspected and Link's letter is therefore of great interest in providing at least one piece of supporting evidence that the Lutheran clergy were directed to see that their own literary talents and those of their parishioners were devoted to the spreading

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1. See below, Part One, Chapter II, p. 74.  
 2. Quoted by Stammier, op. cit., p. 304.

of "Gottes Wort und Lehre" and "gute Sitten". Apart from Osiander's invitation to Hans Sachs in 1527 to collaborate with him in an edition of the prophecies of Joachim of Fiore,<sup>(1)</sup> we know of no direct approach made to him by the Nuremberg clergy to put his services at the disposal of the movement, but as Link was one of the most vigorous preachers in the city, it would seem on the face of it unlikely that Sachs did not receive at least some direct encouragement.

It is noteworthy that Link lays such emphasis on dramatic representations as a vehicle for converting the erring and faithless. Of all the literary forms he mentions it was drama and, above all, Biblical drama which received the greatest stimulus from the Reformation.<sup>(2)</sup> Holstein repeats a common error in describing Luther as "der geistige Urheber des biblischen Dramas", because of his commendation in 1534 of the stories of Judith and Tobias as suitable for dramatic treatment: "Judith gibt eine gute, ernste, tapfere Tragödie, so gibt Tobias eine feine, liebliche, gottselige Komödie".<sup>(3)</sup> Reformation drama in the narrower sense, as distinct from satirical dialogues, had in fact made its appearance early in the Reformation in Switzerland. Niklaus

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1. See below, Part Two, Chapter II, pp. 199ff.
  2. H. Holstein: Die Reformation im Spiegelbilde der dramatischen Litteratur (Halle, 1886)
  3. Quoted by Holstein from Luther's preface to his translation of the Book of Tobit.

Manuel's Vom Pabst und siner priesterschaft was produced at Shrovetide, 1522, and was followed in 1525 by the carnival play Der Ablasskrämer, and in 1526 by Barball, a protest against nunneries. In 1527 a Festnachtspiel, De Parabell van vorloru Szohn, written in Low German dialect by Burkard Waldis, was performed in Riga. Neo-Latin drama, originally the product of humanism, came under the influence of the Reformation in 1529, when Guilielmus Gnapheus wrote his famous drama on the prodigal son, Acolastus de filio prodigo, and this and other products of the same genre soon reached a wider public in German translations. Sixt Birck wrote the first comedy on the subject of Susanna in 1532 and Hans Sachs the first German version of the Tobias story in 1533. Nevertheless these few plays were only a trickle compared with the flood which followed when in 1534 Luther lent his authority to the writing of plays on Biblical themes<sup>(1)</sup>. Judged by the most generous standards of criticism only a very few of these plays can be said to possess any real literary merit. Their primary object was to supplement the pulpit and served to spread knowledge of the Bible further and to dispense much sound moral teaching. The majority of these plays were based on Old Testament material and certain figures quickly became representative of desirable or undesirable aspects of human conduct. Isaac and Rebecca thus became symbolical

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1. Hans Sachs alone wrote over fifty Biblical dramas and this represents only a small fraction of the total volume.

of ideal courtship and marriage and their story was used to glorify Christian marriage as an act of divine ordination; Joseph was an example of youthful purity and chastity, whilst the fate of the High Priest Eli and his sons was a warning to parents, who failed to exercise control over their offspring; the Books of Kings provided an abundance of material to illustrate the vices and virtues of good and bad rulers; Daniel was a witness to the ultimate victory of true faith over idolatry; and so on. As Luther had recognised, the Book of the Apocrypha was a rich source of dramatic material. Johann Greff wrote the first of the many Judith dramas in 1536 and in it expressed the hope that the Word of God would triumph over Papal tyranny as Judith had overcome the godless tyrant, Holofernes. The story of Esther, the saviour of her oppressed people, had an obvious application and inspired numerous plays - the first by Hans Sachs in 1536 - but the most popular of all the Apocryphal stories was that of Susanna, the model of womanly virtue. Paul Rebhun's version of this story (1536) ranks as one of the best German plays of the sixteenth century. Though the New Testament dramas are smaller in number than those based on the Old Testament and Apocrypha - since their source material is largely restricted to the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles - they illustrate more clearly that the object of Biblical drama was to supplement and underline the sermon, which in Lutheran churches was almost invariably a commentary

on the appointed Gospel or Epistle for the day. Some parts of the Gospel narrative clearly lent themselves more readily to dramatic representation than others. The Christmas story produced inevitably an abundant crop of nativity plays, some, like Hans Sachs' nine-Act version, of prodigious length. The beheading of John the Baptist was a favourite tragic theme, whilst the wedding-feast at Cana, of which the best known version is by Paul Rebhun (1538), served as a basis for several homilies on virtuous marriage. But the most popular of all the New Testament stories was the parable of the prodigal son, which not only provided the perfect illustration of the doctrine of justification by faith, but allowed great scope for imaginative treatment. None of the subsequent plays on this theme, however, are the equal in merit of Burkard Waldis' Low German version of 1527. In his (1) his Sermon von der Betrachtung des heyligen leydens Christi Luther objected strongly to Passion Plays on the ground that they gave rise to false and sentimental ideas about the significance of Christ's death, which was in any case an unfit subject for human entertainment. In consequence, the production of Passion Plays in the areas subject to the Reformation ceased and it was not until 1558 that Hans Sachs

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1. WA/II/131-142.

(1)  
 turned his hand to dramatising the Passion, though no less  
 than seven of Sachs' mastersongs and one Spruch had been  
 written round this theme before that date.  
 (2)

Many of the Biblical dramas, notably those based on the parable of the prodigal son, are only a special form of allegory and it is not surprising to find Reformation writers resorting to pure allegory to illuminate the struggle of the Christian against sin and the Devil, or to illustrate a point of doctrine. Most of the best examples of Reformation allegorical drama were written in the second half of the sixteenth century, (3) but one of the most popular problems, that of the death-bed repentance of the hardened sinner, was first treated by Johann Colroß in 1532 in Von fünfferley Betrachtungen and in 1549 Hans Sachs wrote his Comedi von dem reichen sterbenden menschen, der Hecastus genannt, an interpretation of Georg Macropedius' Latin Hecastus of 1539. None of the German Reformation writers possessed the rare combination of rich imagination and intense religious fervour, which makes

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1. Der gantz Passio nach dem text der vier evangelisten  
(KG/XI/256)
  2. It was a common practice of Hans Sachs to work up the same material in a number of different forms and the material of several of his dramas can be found in the form of mastersongs and Sprüche.
  3. See Stammer, op. cit., p. 377ff.

the successful allegorist, and the Reformation made no really original contribution in this restricted literary field. Hans Sachs was fond of casting his plays in allegorical form but these differ only in form from the vast mass of his didactic writing, whose object is not so much to demonstrate the Christian's struggle with the powers of evil, as to draw attention to specific human failings and point the way to better canons of behaviour.

Hans Sachs derived the material for his moralisings from his extensive reading, which embraced Classical mythology and legend, ancient history, the German heroic sagas, medieval courtly romances, Scandinavian chronicles, as well as numerous collections of stories and fables. No matter whether his stories were cast in the form of plays, Sprüche, Schwänke, verse fables or dialogues, he invariably supplied an epilogue or Beschluß, in which he called the attention of his readers or listeners to the moral lessons they should draw from the actions and fates of his characters. Frequently his moral

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1. E.G. Plays: Die stulticia mit irem hofgesind (1532); Fraw Warheit mit dem paurn (1550); Der Kampf mit Fraw Armut und Fraw Glück (1554). Poems: Kempfigesprech zwischen dem Tod und dem natürlichen Leben (1533); Klagred fraw Arbeit uber den grossen müssigen hauffen (1535); Fraw Traurigkeit mit irer eigenschaft (1544); etc.
  2. See below, Part Two, Chapters V and VI.

precepts are in the form of Biblical paraphrases. In the epilogue to Die irrfahrt Ulissi,<sup>(1)</sup> for example, we find this version of the fifth commandment:

" . . . . bey Thelemacho  
 So lehrt ein frummer sehn also,  
 Sein eltern trewlich vor zu gehn,  
 Inn allen nöthen bey zu stehn.  
 Es treff an leib, ehr oder gut,  
 Soll er mit gehorsamen mut.  
 Sein eltern sein in dienst ergeben;  
 So gibt im Gett ein langes leben."  
 (2)

And his play Griselda concludes with the following quotation from the first Epistle of St. Peter:

"Wie Petrus schreibt: Liebt ewre weyber,  
 Geleich als ewre eygne leyber,  
 Und wonet auch fein in vernunft  
 Bey ewern frawen in zukunfft,  
 Als bey dem schwachsten werckzeug hie."  
 (3)

This illustrates the point that Stammler makes that for the sixteenth century Reformer all morality was rooted in religion. It was, in fact, impossible for Luther and his followers to accept as justified any change or development in human relationships, which did not have literal Biblical support. This is most clearly seen in the field of economic theory.

It is a text-book commonplace that "Martin Luther was an economic conservative"<sup>(4)</sup>; but without a good deal of

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1. KG/XII/342.
  2. KG/II/40.
  3. Op. cit., p. 380.
  4. For example, in S.B.Clough and C.W.Cole: Economic History of Europe (Boston, 1947), p. 152.

qualification this statement is meaningless. Luther was certainly not satisfied with the economic state of the world as he found it; and, there was never any question of his accepting the view then already current that the world of business and commerce is a closed compartment with laws of its own and that the religious teacher exceeds his commission when he lays down rules for the moral conduct of secular affairs. For Luther, men were at all times subject to the law of God and he believed implicitly that all departments of life should be regulated in accordance with this law which is enshrined in "the first great commandment" of Christ - "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind". All else, including the second great commandment, followed from this. If men love God first, they will automatically love one another; and if men love one another with a love which springs from their love of God, then detailed rules of social conduct are not only needless, but objectionable. Hence Luther's condemnation of the whole medieval framework of rules and practices designed to bring men closer to God by regulating his behaviour. Luther did not, however, carry his thesis to its logical conclusion, and though he denounced "good works" and numbered the Law amongst his "Tyrants", he did, in fact, at other times accept rules of conduct, those rules he found in the Bible and those dictated by his own conscience.

The early generation of Reformers differed in practice very little from their Roman Catholic contemporaries and forebears in searching the Bible for light on the practical questions of social morality and in supporting the general rules of good conscience which had for long been supposed to control economic transactions and social relations.

Luther's economic views were also to a large extent conditioned by his background. He saw economic life with the eyes of a peasant and the unworldliness of a monk. (1) He dismissed the commercial developments of the previous two centuries as a relapse into paganism and as evidence of the corruption of men by riches; and he had ever before him the ideal of a society in which men earned their livings by the sweat of their brows and practised primitive Christianity in all its forgotten purity, a society in which selfishness was excluded and men worked only for "den gemeinen nutz". Unhappily, the Reformers found the world dominated by greed -

"O Got und schöpffer mein,  
Wie ist menschlich geschlecht verderbt  
Durch eygen nutz." (2)

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1. In contrast, Calvin, who had a legal background, and his followers, who were largely men of affairs, were prepared to accept an economic organisation which was relatively advanced, and were disposed neither to idealise the patriarchal virtues of the peasant community, nor to regard with suspicion the mere fact of capitalist enterprise in commerce and finance.
  2. Hans Sachs: Der eygen nutz, das grewlich thier (1527)  
(KG/III/500)

This was the greatest of all sins and the source of all other evils, but though the Reformers never ceased to preach against the selfishness of all classes, it was for the merchants that they reserved their loudest thunder, and in so doing they intensified the popular hatred and envy of the merchants, the one class which had so obviously benefited from the continually rising prices which bedevilled the economic life of that age too. Luther and his contemporaries could never understand the productive nature of capital; only land was productive and this solely due to God, not man -

"Also bringt Got auf erdterich  
 Herfür all frucht, wein unde korn.  
 All menschlich arbeit wer verlorn,  
 Wo Gott nit geb das sein gedeyen." (1)

The corollary to this was that all trade was sterile and an argument similar to that later used by the eighteenth century French physiocrats was common in this age too: the shortest route from the producer to the consumer is the best, and the merchants by lengthening the process of exchange add nothing to the national wealth and the profits are stolen from the rest of the community; the merchant is little better than a thief:

"Dann wie der dieb mit seinen listen  
 Heimlich kan rowmen pewtl und kisten, ...  
 Und stilet wie und wo er kan,  
 Dem gleich thut ein falscher kauffman,  
 Der sich auf geitz ergiebet gantz." (2)

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1. Hans Sachs: Evangelium wider die übrigen sorg der zeytlichen narung (1532) (KG/I/284)
  2. Hans Sachs: Mercurius, ein got der kaufleut (1526) (KG/III/515)

Thus the endless complaints against "fürkauf" and the activities of "finantzer" were given a moral justification and Luther and his followers had no difficulty in buttressing their arguments with Biblical quotations. Luther's Grosser Sermon vom Wucher <sup>(1)</sup> is written round the text: "Lend hoping for nothing" (St. Luke, vi/35) and in Von Kauffshandlung und wucher <sup>(2)</sup> he argues on the basis of the text, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118, v.8) that to take the responsibility for a loan is to usurp the position of God.

Though it was the ever-increasing prices which were at the root of the bitter hatred of the trading companies and the financial houses, which made their activities possible, it was the moral consequences of the greatly increased wealth of the merchant class, which most appalled the Reformer. "Wie sollt das ymmer mügen Göttlich und recht zugehen, das eyn man ynn so kürtzer zeyt so reych werde, das er Konige und Keyser auskeuffen mochte?" <sup>(3)</sup> Luther asked. By the beginning of the sixteenth century princely luxury had become the mode in the rich mercantile houses of Augsburg and Nuremberg, and however oppressed the lower classes were, they too caught the increasing love of pleasure. All classes sought for

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1. WA/VI/33-60.
  2. WA/XV/279-322.
  3. Von Kauffshandlung und wucher. WA/XV/312. See also An den Christlichen Adel. WA/VI/465ff.

greater ostentation, and the impossibility of satisfying the demands of the lower classes led only to bitterness and ill-will, envy and jealousy of the luxuries of the rich. This is the basis of the unending complaints about extravagance and self-indulgence in clothes, eating and drinking. (1) Admittedly the Reformers had always the moral rather than the social side of the matter most in mind, but without the prevailing conditions they would not have been led to make such frequent and violent attacks on luxury.

The Reformers' solution to the evils of the day lay, of course, in a return to the plain and simple way of life, <sup>which</sup> they found in the Bible, and their advocacy in this respect was reinforced by the German humanists who enthused over the simplicity and solid virtues of their ancestors, which they read about in Tacitus and other historians. The ~~source~~ <sup>illusion</sup> that the only means of restoring Germany's greatness was to be found in a return to hard work, plain food and simple pleasures was cherished not only by Hans Sachs and Luther but also by men with a very different background, like Ulrich von Hutten and Franz von Sickingen. Luther constantly makes use of such texts as "Thou shalt eat the herb of the field" and "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread". (2) Hence the Reformers' stern denunciation of the

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1. See below, Part Two, Chapter V.
  2. Genesis iii, vv.18-19.

"idleness" of monks and mercenaries and their firm conviction that it was in keeping with the divine will that agriculture should be increased and commerce decreased. Hans Sachs thus writes:

" ..... die arbeyt ist veracht,  
 Zu der uns doch verordent Gott,  
 Im schweiß heist essen unser brot,  
 Darzu der mensch auch ist genug  
 Geborn wie der vogel zum flug,  
 Spricht Job. Auch haist Paulus ermessen  
 Arbeyten, eygen brot zu essen. ....  
 Abraham, Leban und Jacob  
 Lagen der hirtenschafft streng ob.  
 Dergleich die andern Römer (schaw!)  
 Nerten sich von dem scker-baw.  
 Da war nit so viel müssig-gangs,  
 Ein ursach viel thewring und zwangs." (2)

This kind of Bible-rooted moralising remained the characteristic feature of German literature during the last twenty-five years of the struggle of the Lutheran Reformation for official <sup>Imperial</sup> recognition. Throughout this period the German literary scene was dominated by Hans Sachs, who never wavered in his loyalty to the Reformation and who kept the German public supplied with an almost unceasing flow of instructive and edifying entertainment. As he is to be treated in detail later it only remains to mention here a few minor figures, whose pens sustained the rearguard action which led to the Religious Peace of Augsburg in 1555.

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1. Luther: "Das weysz ich wol, das viel gotlicher weere scker werck mehrten und kauffmenschafft myndern, und die viel besser thun, die der schrift nach die erden erbeyten und yhr nerung drausz suchen." (An den Christlichen Adel, WA/VI/381)
  2. Klagred fraw Arbeyt uber den grossen müssigen hauffen (KG/III/480)

The output of polemical dialogues and "Kampfgedichte", which had fallen off in <sup>the</sup> 1530's, increased again in the early years of the next decade, when the main focus of Lutheran wrath was Duke Henry of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, "the greatest Papist in all Germany" (Luther's "böser Heinz", whom he satirised in Wider Hans Worst).<sup>(1)</sup> Foremost amongst the Duke's paper opponents were Burkard Waldis and Erasmus Alberus.<sup>(2)</sup> One of Alberus' most violent outbursts, Der Barfüßermönch Eulenspiegel und Alcoran (1542) was furnished with a preface by Luther. Alberus also played a large part in the attack on the Augsburg Interim, Charles V's compromise attempt to solve the religious problem after his victory over the Schmalkaldic League at Mühlberg in 1546. The director of the struggle against the conditions imposed on the Protestants under the terms of the Interim was, however, a Croat, Matija Vlačić Ilir, known in German literature as Flacius Illyricus, who whilst teaching Greek and Hebrew in Wittenberg had been converted by Luther into an enthusiastic Protestant Reformer. Writing under such

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1. WA/LI/469-572.
  2. Burkard Waldis' play on the theme of the prodigal son has been mentioned above, but both he and Alberus are best known as writers of fables. It goes almost without saying that in this moralising age, fables enjoyed a great popularity. (See Stämmler, op. cit., p. 222ff) Luther was frequent in his praise of fables and even tried his hand at translating Aesop. Hans Sachs drew widely on Steinhöwel's and Burkard Waldis' versions of Aesop, and also on Sebastian Brant's fables. Many mastersongs, too, were based on fables, and here the moral often took up the whole of the second and third strophes, the story being compressed into the first.

pseudonyms as "Johann Wahrmond" and "Christian Lauterwehr" Flacius boldly filled the gap left by Luther's death in 1546. From his headquarters in Magdeburg (which was put under the Imperial ban largely because of his activities) he rallied the defence of pure Lutheranism (as it had been set out in the Augsburg Confession in 1530) with a stream of dialogues, broadsheets and caricatures, and together with his co-workers launched bitter personal attacks on Johann Agricola, one of the three authors of the Interim, whose Antinomian views had led to a breach with Luther in 1540, and Maurice of Saxony, who was regarded as a traitor to the evangelical cause and whose defection from the Schmalkaldic League had been rewarded with the Electorate of Saxony. Flacius also conducted the struggle against the <sup>(1)</sup> Adiaphorists, those theologians led by Melancthon who showed in the Leipzig Interim that they were prepared to purchase religious peace by compromise. The revolt of the German princes against the Emperor, which led via a bewildering series of manoeuvres to the religious settlement of 1555, soon rendered Flacius' polemics superfluous, and with the end of the Adiaphorist controversy, Flacius retired from the centre of the stage to direct the brilliant critical and historical researches of the Magdeburg Centuriators.

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1. The Adiaphora were those Roman Catholic customs and tenets which Melancthon and his followers declared in the Leipzig Interim to be indifferent. The Leipzig Interim which differed slightly from the Augsburg Interim was authorised by Maurice of Saxony for use in his dominions.

Whether the Religious Peace of 1555 marked "the failure of the religious Reformation" (Kuno Francke)<sup>(1)</sup> or "a victory for religious liberty" (T.M.Lindsay)<sup>(2)</sup> can only be a matter of opinion. If it was a victory, it was not a great one. The scope of the religious peace was restricted to Roman Catholicism and the Evangelical creed as laid down in the Augsburg Confession, and it has been said with much truth that there was less freedom of conscience under the Lutheran territorial system of churches, and also under the Roman Catholic Church as it was reorganised in accordance with the canons and decrees of the Council of Trent,<sup>(2)</sup> than there had been in the medieval Church. In the second half of the sixteenth century there was little relaxation of the grip in which the Reformation had held German literature for so long. The battle of the pamphlets broke out again, after a temporary lull, with the emergence of the Jesuits as a dominant religious force. No new ideas appeared until the end of the century to infuse fresh life into German literature, and the old patterns continued to be reproduced. As in the first half of the century the great bulk of German literature was again the work of men of Lutheran backgrounds and displays the same moralising tendency of the earlier period. Johann Fischart, the only

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1. Op. cit., p. 169.

2. Op. cit., p. 399.

new writer of genius, was a staunch upholder of Lutheran principles and a true descendant of Hans Sachs.

The Reformation, <sup>had</sup> produced one work of unquestionable genius, the Lutheran Bible, and the ultimate influence of this work on the development of the German language and literature is so great that it alone outweighs by its importance the mass of ~~mediocre~~ mediocre writing for which the Reformation was responsible. But whilst it is sadly true that in the field of literature the Reformation inspired only a few works of lasting literary merit, few events in the history of ideas have made such an impact on the minds and lives of men and women, or have been so fully recorded; and if the German literature of the sixteenth century gets, and even deserves, the scant treatment it usually receives from the anthologists and literary historians, it contains a rich source of material of great interest and value to religious, social and economic historians, which has <sup>not</sup> ~~been~~ yet been fully explored.

## II

### NUREMBERG IN THE REFORMATION (1517-1555)

The story of the coming of the Reformation to the German Imperial city of Nuremberg has been told several times, but rarely have the historians escaped from the musty atmosphere of the archives to bring this stirring episode to life. Here is a setting and a tale worthy of

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1. E.g. G.W.K. Lochner: Die Reformationgeschichte der Reichsstadt Nürnberg (Nuremberg, 1845); F. Roth: Die Einführung der Reformation in Nürnberg, 1517-28 (Würzburg, 1885); L. Eisen: Wie Nürnberg protestantisch wurde (Nuremberg, 1925); P. Kalkoff: Die Reformation in der Reichsstadt Nürnberg (Halle, 1926); "Die Reformation in Nürnberg", Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg (Vols. 33, 34 and 36; 1936, 1937 and 1939)

a Victor Hugo or a Charles Reade, a colourful period, protagonists of classic stature, a situation fraught with immense dangers and calling for the exercise by the city's government of great courage and skilful diplomacy in face of conflicting pressures from the Church, the State, the populace and, for the first time in history, of the press. The opportunities for the painting of a rich historical canvas are infinite, but have not yet been fully seized.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century Nuremberg was at the summit of its medieval power. The city itself presented a picture of magnificent strength and splendour. Dominated by its castle, it was protected by a deep moat and a double wall with nearly two hundred towers and bastions. Square towers marked the six great gates from which roads radiated in all directions. From the castle the Nurembergers could look with pride over a sea of roofs and gables above which rose fifteen churches and chapels, twelve monasteries or similar religious foundations, and eighteen large public buildings. The city was divided into eight main administrative districts and was cut in two by the River Pegnitz, whose waters were crossed by eleven stone bridges and used to turn about seventy mill-wheels. Its ten huge markets served for the display of food and commodities of all kinds and were the scene of great activity at the time of the annual fairs,

which attracted to the city men and goods from many lands.

By this time Nuremberg was one of the greatest of the medieval trading cities, ranking in importance with Bruges, Florence and even London. It owed its wealth to its geographical position and the sturdy qualities of its citizens. It was situated at the then commercial crossroads of Europe, on the two main trading highways which led from Venice to the Hanseatic ports and from the Danube to the Rhine. Its development as a centre of population and trade had permitted the rise of a craft industry, for the large medieval cities gave the craftsman a safe place to live and work in, and a market where he could buy his raw materials and sell his products, whilst the exceptional opportunities provided by Nuremberg's happy location encouraged an immense subdivision of crafts and the development of industry, skill and enterprise for which its citizen craftsmen were widely renowned. And it was not only in the more common-place skills that its citizens excelled. Book-printers like Anton Koberger and the many flourishing printing establishments (there were twelve in Hans Sachs' day, one of which had twenty-four presses and employed a hundred workers) had made Nuremberg the centre of the German book trade. Its glass stainers, notably the Hirschvogel family, were known throughout the land, and no other city could match Nuremberg in the wealth of its artists, pattern-

makers, wood and copper engravers and etchers - men like Albrecht Dürer, the Beham brothers, Georg Pencz, Jost Amman, Virgil Salis, and to these artists can be added Peter Vischer, Adam Krafft, Veit Stoß and the goldsmith Wenzel Jamnitzer, all contemporaries of Hans Sachs.

If industry and skill were the predominant qualities of Nuremberg's craftsmen, the enterprise was supplied by her merchant and trading class, and it was in the hands of this class that not only the wealth but also the government of the city was largely concentrated. The wealth of the city had long ago won for it, in return for services rendered to the Emperor, a place on the list of Free Imperial Cities. Since she had gained this rank with its attendant trading privileges and territorial rights, Nuremberg had maintained a constant loyalty to the Emperor in war and peace; she looked to him in the last resort for protection against the presumptuousness and arrogance of powerful princes and knights. Administrative authority in the city was vested in the City Council, whose members were drawn mainly from the ranks of a few wealthy families, and though as a result of an earlier upheaval in the city in the mid-fourteenth century the craftsmen had gained some small representation on the Council, the general form of government was autocratic. The Council had a long reputation for efficiency and model civic arrangements. The

old city ordinances show an admirable attention to detail. The Council, for example, took great pains over the protection and health of its citizens; there were 116 draw-wells and twelve running fountains for the fighting of fires; there were thirteen public bathing places and in an attempt to prevent the worst diseases it maintained a special body of police whose duties were to keep a strict eye on all matters relating to cleanliness and foodstuffs. The special ordinances printed and distributed on the outbreak of plague and other ravaging diseases show the lengths to which the Council went in caring for the welfare of its subjects.

But however excellent the government, one must remember that these were still medieval times and in its framing of rules for the security and protection of life and property, the Council must not be judged by modern standards. It was an age of sharp contrasts and delicacy and refinement of taste existed side by side with much coarseness and brutality. Cruel punishments and barbaric executions were regular occurrences in the city, but even when resorting to such cruelties the Council had the reputation for preserving the impartiality of justice as between high and low, and showed on one famous occasion that it could act with equal severity against one of its own members. This made for mutual trust as between the Council and its

subjects and at the time of the opening of the Reformation relations between rulers and ruled in Nuremberg were excellent.

The majority of the Council's subjects were, of course, handworkers, and no distinction existed at this time between handworkers, craftsmen and artists. Men of the eminence of Peter Vischer and Albrecht Dürer served their apprenticeships and hawked their works around the fairs and markets like any other craftsmen. And yet though the patricians were jealous of their privileges, social contact between the classes was not excluded. Hans Sachs was intimate with the patrician Niclas Praun and Dürer was the friend of Willibald Pirckheimer and other patricians, and even had personal dealings with the Emperor. It was no doubt rare but not impossible for men of ability to rise to high rank; the artist Lukas Cranach, for example, became burgomaster of Wittenberg. Scholars and priests, in so far as they were not drawn from the patrician class, served as a link between the patrician and popular elements in society.

The city of Nuremberg had a long reputation for learning and scholarship and has an honoured place in the history of humanism. Patrician families sent their sons not only to the German universities, but also to the great medieval founts of learning in Italy, to Pavia,

Padua and Bologna. Nuremberg produced some of the most questing minds of the day, such as Christoph Scheurl, who spent eighteen years at Bologna and six years as Rector and Professor of Mathematics at Wittenberg before being recalled to the service of his native city, and Willibald Pirckheimer, who had studied at both Pavia and Padua, counted Erasmus and Ulrich von Hutten amongst his friends and had contacts with many of the other great thinkers of the day not only in Germany but also in Italy, France and England. Nuremberg's position on the great transport highways of Europe meant that a constant stream of visitors flowed through the city and kept its more enquiring minds abreast of current thought and made it a mart not only for the exchange of goods and commodities but also of ideas about intellectual trends.

But if humanism had found roots in Nuremberg, there was also no lack of religious-minded men and women, who had gained for Nuremberg in the fifteenth century the reputation of being the most pious city in the Empire. Many of the patrician families regarded it as a point of honour to give generously to Church funds and many of the splendid monuments to medieval craftsmanship in the city's numerous church buildings were evidence of the willing sacrifice of their donors. As late as 1510 the rich merchant, Matthäus Landauer founded and richly endowed

a new monastic establishment in Nuremberg. The city was an assembly point for pilgrimages to Jerusalem and patricians were zealous in financing the departure of members of their families on such outings. There is in fact no reason to suppose that the inhabitants of Nuremberg were any less assiduous in their efforts to assure the salvation of their souls than any other Roman Catholic community, or that the practices instituted by the Roman Catholic Church to aid them to this end were less rigorously observed than elsewhere. Since 1324 the city authorities had been the custodians of the Imperial crown jewels and these together with a number of holy relics constituted the "Heiltum" which was displayed to the populace each year in the market place on the second Friday after Easter. This was only one occasion, however, and the many churches and the presence in the city of the representatives of so many religious orders ensured that there was no lack of opportunity for the public display of devotion to the Roman Church.

There were occasional outbursts of mass religious enthusiasm in the city, which, though of interest in themselves, are more important in that they foreshadow the future turn of events. In the Middle Ages Franconia was a particularly rich breeding ground for heretical sects and the Cathars, the Brethren of the Common Life, the Flagellants and the Waldensians all had their adherents in

Nuremberg in the fourteenth century. The Waldensians appear to have been particularly flourishing and included amongst their converts two members of the patrician family, the Tuchers. In the fifteenth century John Huss had a considerable following in Franconia and nowhere did he receive a more enthusiastic welcome in 1414 on his way to the Council of Constance than in Nuremberg, which he visited in order to pick up the Imperial safe conduct. Huss' execution left behind in Nuremberg the feeling that he had been innocently burnt and Hussite itinerant preachers made many converts in Franconia and especially in the Bamberg diocese. And in spite of the damage done to Nuremberg trade by the Hussite Wars, powder and other war materials were sold to the Hussites by Nurembergers. The belittlers of Luther in their search for pre-Reformation reformers have, however, perhaps given too much weight to the teachings of heretical sects in the Middle Ages, for it is possible to point, for example, to the enthusiastic reception in Nuremberg in 1452 of Giovanni di Capistrano, the Italian theologian, inquisitor and persecutor of Jews and Hussites, as evidence of a continuing fervour for orthodox religion. Capistrano's sermons drew vast crowds and were followed by public demonstrations of penitence and the burning of games, dice and articles of luxury. But the importance of this event, too, can be exaggerated; mass enthusiasms are notoriously unstable

and the reception of Luther's words had much in common with that of Capistrano's. Nevertheless, the history of heresy in the area and the responsiveness of the Nuremberg masses to religious appeals are two factors which cannot be overlooked in assessing the events in the city from 1517 onwards.

A more important factor, however, was the attitude of the City Council in religious matters. It must be remembered that the Council was no mere local authority but a government which regarded itself as charged with a responsibility for the physical, moral and economic welfare of its citizens. But even if the Church had been willing to accept this claim and if the Council had been willing to abdicate all responsibility for spiritual welfare to the Church, the division of responsibility would have been far from clear-cut. In practice the Church claimed an interest in the total welfare of its members, and there were numerous matters within the strict province of the Church in which the Council had a clear interest. It could not remain indifferent, for example, to the type of men appointed to high ecclesiastical office in the city, or to the widespread charge of immorality amongst the clergy and in the monasteries, and it became increasingly concerned about the local economic consequences of Papal policy. In retrospect it is possible to see in the fifteenth century a gradual stiffening

of the Council's attitude to the Church and its servants, and an extension of its powers at the expense of the Church.

Difficulties arose also frequently throughout the fifteenth century over the sale of indulgences in the city. In 1436 the Council set a precedent by refusing its permission for the sale of indulgences to defray the travelling costs to Rome of the Emperor of Constantinople, who was alleged to be interested in the re-unification of the Greek and Roman Churches, and though it rarely prohibited the sale of indulgences in the city subsequently, it viewed with alarm the vast outflow of money from the city to Rome. It was particularly incensed in 1489 when, after giving permission for the sale of indulgences for the purpose of re-building the Neues Spital, it found that the whole proceeds had been filched by the Pope. A repetition of this duplicity the next year was followed by a marked cooling in the Council's relations with the indulgence preachers, whose bulls it scrutinised carefully from then on with the object of finding excuses for withholding its permission.

The Council had early acquired certain supervisory and protective rights over the monasteries in the city and on city territory, and as time went on it sought to extend these rights more and more. It appointed trustees to whom the brethren had to turn in all secular matters; it laid down the

maximum number of monks and nuns to be housed in each establishment and in some cases it laid down further restrictions on membership, for example, the Franciscan convent of St. Clare was only allowed to take in girls who were „verbürgerrechtet“ in Nuremberg. It looked carefully into the financial affairs of the monasteries and received regular accounts from the superiors; it had a long-standing right to be consulted over the appointment of the superiors; it kept a watchful eye on the disputes between monks and between the monks and the city clergy. By the beginning of the fifteenth century the immoral behaviour of the Scottish and Irish monks in the Benedictine monastery of St. Aegidius had become proverbial and in 1416 the Council took energetic steps to clean up the place. In spite of the remonstrances of the Scottish abbot (Donat) a thorough reform was carried out and the Gallic brethren were expelled and replaced by Germans. The Council also gave its support to Cardinal Cajetan in the reform he carried out at the Engelthal convent in 1513.

Until late in the fifteenth century the Council had less control over the city churches than over the monasteries, but in the matter of appointments it used its influence to see that the benefices in the city were not swallowed up by outsiders but reserved for local sons. The Council was not always successful in keeping out „Pfründen-fresser“ (generally younger sons of the provincial nobility)

and the city was thus often saddled with men unfitted by virtue of character or learning to hold their important offices. The Council was particularly interested in the appointment of the priests (later provosts) in charge of the city's two principal churches, St. Lawrence' and St. Sebaldus'. The holders of these offices were the traditional representatives of the city in ecclesiastical matters and it was essential that they should be above all learned jurists; a blameless character and a pious disposition were also, of course, desirable, but few demands were made on the incumbent's theological knowledge since his normal priest's duties were carried out by vicars whom he himself appointed. With the right men at St. Lawrence' and St. Sebaldus' the Council was not only assured of sound advice at home and efficient representation abroad in Church matters, but could also have confidence that the spiritual welfare of its citizens was in good hands. It must therefore have been a source of great relief to the Council when in 1474 Pope Sixtus IV granted it the right of presentation to both benefices. The right could at first only be exercised in the Papal months (that is, if the outgoing incumbent died or resigned in one of the odd months) but by prompt action and by resort to legal quibbles the Council managed to fill all subsequent vacancies, and in 1513 the Bishop of Bamberg conceded the full right of presentation to the Council; final Papal approval was given to this in 1517. Thus from the very beginning of the Reformation the

Council was in a powerful position tactically to influence the course of events in the city through the appointment of men of evangelical disposition to high ecclesiastical office in the city.

In the years immediately before Luther's fateful step in 1517 feeling was running high in Nuremberg - in 1516 an indulgence broker, Dr. Franz Tripontinus, was sent on his way by the Council with a nominal contribution of ten gulden - and it is clear that an atmosphere strongly favourable to the reception of Luther's protest reigned in the city. Mass movements are, however, rarely spontaneous; they require a lead from individuals to spark them off and in this respect the part played by the Augustinian monastery in Nuremberg and the men closely associated with it is of crucial importance. The Augustinian monks in Nuremberg were distinguished from their brethren in the other orders by their reputation for scholarship, their zeal in preaching and the range of their pastoral work. Luther's superior, Johann von Staupitz, the Vicar-General of the Augustinian order was a frequent and popular visitor in Nuremberg. In his sermons in the Augustinian chapel of St. Vitus he expressed views on justification and indulgences which anticipated Luther.<sup>(1)</sup> He was a man of charm and wit as well as scholarship and these qualities

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1. See L. Keller: Johann von Staupitz und die Anfänge der Reformation (Leipzig, 1888)

attracted to him a group of Nuremberg's outstanding intellectuals and humanists. They formed a loose society known as the "sodalitas Staupiciana"<sup>(1)</sup> and met from time to time for discussion and conversation at the Augustian monastery and in the homes of leading citizens. Even before 1517 Luther's name was well-known in this circle through Staupitz who had praised him as a talented theologian, and through his correspondence with Christoph Scheurl, the ostensible founder of the sodality. The connection with Luther was strengthened in 1517 by the appointment of Wenzeslaus Link as preacher to the Augustinians,<sup>(2)</sup> and from then on he and the Augustinian prior, Wolfgang Volprecht, were the leading figures in the group. Luther's theses thus fell not only on fertile but also on well-prepared ground in Nuremberg.

How the news of Luther's theses was first brought to Nuremberg is not known with any certainty, but it is believed that the first copy of the theses to reach the city was obtained from a friendly canon in Wittenberg by Christoph Scheurl. He was very active in spreading<sup>knowledge of</sup> the theses around, though his own

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1. "Sodalities" were a feature of the intellectual life of Germany in the years immediately preceding the Reformation. (See L. Keller, op. cit., p. 24ff. Keller collected much useful and interesting information, though his conclusions are not always reliable.)
  2. Link was a close friend of Luther, a former fellow-student, prior of the Augustinian monastery in Wittenberg, professor at Wittenberg university and dean of the Faculty of Theology there, when Luther received his doctorate.

failure to understand their significance is illustrated by his action in sending a copy to Johann von Eck, which put an end to the friendship between Luther and Eck which Scheurl had been trying to foster. The theses were, of course, first known in detail only to scholars, but Caspar Nützel, one of the two senior councillors in Nuremberg, seems to have perceived their importance and translated them into German, thus ensuring their wider circulation. On March 5th, 1518, Luther wrote to Scheurl saying that he was still not sure about much that was in the theses and that they were not intended for the general public, and begging his friends not to have too high hopes of him and to demand more than he could achieve. But his appeal was in vain. The Augustinians in Nuremberg took Luther's side from the start and Link was one of the first to declare himself publicly for Luther; he preached many eloquent sermons on the theses. Luther's early Reformation writings, especially those answering and attacking Eck, were eagerly received in Nuremberg and the "Staupiciani" were particularly active in spreading them. Luther stayed with Link in the Augustinian monastery in Nuremberg on October 5th, 1518, on his way to meet Cardinal Cajetan, the Papal legate, at Augsburg and he called there again on his return journey a fortnight later. He was introduced to the members of the Staupitz group, who now appear, from Scheurl's letters to have renamed themselves "Martinianer", an indication of the great enthusiasm and veneration of this circle for Luther at this time.

Shortly after Luther's visits to Nuremberg Karl von Miltitz, a Saxon nobleman, a papal chamberlain and the Elector of Saxony's own agent at the Court of Rome, spent two days in Nuremberg arguing with Scheurl and his circle of "Martinianer" about Luther and religious matters. He succeeded in winning over Scheurl to the view that a way should be found for Luther to withdraw honourably. Scheurl's subsequent letters to Luther and to Eck counselled caution and he sought to keep the opposing sides from clashing. But the wheels were in motion and Scheurl was not the man to stop them. Eck's "obelisci" were despatched and the battle was on. From this point Scheurl ceased to be the driving force behind the Reformation in Nuremberg and his place as the Reformer's leading advocate was promptly taken by the city's eloquent and energetic town clerk, Lazarus Spengler, who in 1519 published a stout defence of Luther under the title of Schutzred und christliche Antwort eines erbaren Liebhabers göttlicher Wahrheit der heiligen Geschrift auff etlicher Widersprechen, warumb Doctor Martin Luthers lehr nit samen unchristlich verworffen, sunder mer als christenlich gehalten werden soll. This was reprinted in Augsburg, Wittenberg and Leipzig but the Council intervened to prevent the publication in Nuremberg of an extended version with Spengler's replies to the attacks made upon him. The Council, which the same year reproved the Augustinian prior, Wolfgang Volprecht, for publishing Luther's Sermon von Ablass und

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Gnade, was in fact already acting with the caution which marked its handling of Reformation problems for some years to come.

The Council was undoubtedly in a most serious dilemma. The private sympathies of most of its members were certainly with Luther; yet, as a corporate body, it was responsible for law and order in the city and for the protection of all its citizens, Lutherans and Catholics alike. It had to foresee and forestall difficulties which would ensue if the dispute developed into a public brawl. And more important still, the Council, as the government of a Free Imperial City, had responsibilities to the Emperor, which it could only neglect at its peril. The surprising thing is not that the Council acted with circumspection, but that it showed any tolerance at all to the Lutheran party. Its attitude is indeed a tribute to the fairness, sincerity and courage of the city's rulers.

The dangers inherent in the too precipitate action of individuals was brought home to the Council by the reactions to Spengler's Schutzred und christliche Antwort and to Eccius dedolatus, a bitter attack on the nuntius apostolicus, Johann von Eck (Pirckheimer's authorship of the latter work was an open secret). Soon after the publication of these works Eck visited Rome, where the Papal bull "Exurge Domine" was

signed on June 15th, 1520. The Council was both dismayed and highly embarrassed when the news reached it early in October of the excommunication along with Luther of Spengler and Pirckheimer. The city authorities regarded the bull as an act of malice not only against Pirckheimer and Spengler but against the city as well, and strongly supported the two men in their efforts to avoid the humiliation of receiving absolution at the hands of Eck. Both men were ultimately absolved during the Diet of Worms by the Papal nuncio, Alexander. What they did to secure absolution is not known but Pirckheimer's correspondence leaves little doubt that he bowed to pressure from the Council. Spengler's selection as one of the three Nuremberg delegates to the Diet would seem to indicate that the excommunication affair had done him little harm in the eyes of the Council.

The news of Luther's outlawry was received with deep resentment in almost all the Imperial cities, where from the beginning Luther had found most followers. The repeated condemnation of Luther in the Edict of Worms, so inflamed feeling in the cities that the Councils hesitated to post the Edict for fear of riots. The Nuremberg Council received the Imperial mandate in April, 1521, but it delayed publication of the Edict until the following October, when it doubtless yielded to threats. At the same time the sale and re-printing of Luther's works in the city was prohibited. The Fastnachtspiele which had shown a tendency to satirise the Catholic

clergy were this year strictly supervised. No change in the form of the church services was permitted, the Corpus Christi processions were held as usual and the Council took care to see that the Coronation insignia and "Reichskleinodien" were returned in time from Aachen for their annual airing in the market place on Low Sunday. Those clergy who supported Luther and their opponents were forbidden to attack one another in the pulpit, and in general everything was done by the Council to avoid public disturbances.

The most significant indication of the true disposition of the Council towards the Reformation is to be seen, however, in the type of men it sponsored to fill ecclesiastical offices in the city as they fell vacant. In July, 1520, Georg Behaim, the provost of St. Lawrence' had died and Hector Pömer was chosen to succeed him. Pömer was then studying in Wittenberg where he in fact remained until the following year to take his doctor's degree. He was a member of a Nuremberg patrician family, a friend of Melanchthon, and an early admirer of Luther, whose writings he distributed amongst his friends in the city. In October, 1521, the provost of St. Sebaldus', Melchior Pfinzing, resigned and his post was offered to an out-and-out Lutheran, Hieronymus Baumgärtner, a student of Melanchthon's and personally known to Luther. Baumgärtner declined the offer, but another declared Lutheran, Georg Besler, who had studied at Wittenberg, was appointed to

the office. The superior of the Augustinian monastery had been in the city since 1516, and Wenzeslaus Link since 1517, and both had been zealous in the propagation of Luther's ideas both inside and outside the monastery. In 1520 they were joined by Andreas Osiander, as lecturer in Hebrew. Osiander was a man of wide talents with a scholar's reputation in theology and the three classical languages, and more than a passing acquaintance with mathematics, philosophy and medicine, but above all he was an eloquent speaker with a gift for effective and vigorous exposition. His combination of erudition and eloquence marked him out when the Council was looking for suitable men to fill the office of preacher at the city's two principal churches. The position of "Prediger" was not new, for it had been the custom for the provosts to delegate this duty to subordinates, but the post was poorly paid and had rarely attracted men with any pretence to learning. Now that Luther had placed such emphasis on the exposition of the Bible, it was clearly necessary that the preachers should have a sound theological training. Thus the Council took the fateful step in 1522 of appointing Osiander as preacher at St. Lawrence' and in the years to come no one did more than he to sustain the Lutheran cause in the city. His very first sermon on February 22nd, 1522, established his reputation and his fame soon spread beyond the city. His sermons were printed and sermons by others were often falsely attributed to him to increase their sales.

About the same time as Osiander was appointed Dominicus Schleupner, a nominee of Luther, was called to similar office at St. Sebaldus'. Schleupner, though not the equal of Osiander, was a most effective preacher and galleries had to be built into the church to hold the throng at his services.

In spite of the strong terms in which the Edict of Worms was worded it seems to have been wholly ineffective. After publicly posting the Edict outside the Town Hall, the Nuremberg Council took no further steps to carry out its provisions, and though in 1522 no great change took place in the externals of the church services in the city, it was in other respects a year of virtually uninterrupted progress there for the Lutheran cause. Public enthusiasm grew increasingly uninhibited and was swelled by the flood of books and broadsheets, which despite the earlier prohibition poured from the city's presses. The more popular books of Luther, Eberlin von Günzburg, Ulrich von Hutten, Heinrich von Kettenbach and others were sold openly on the streets and in the markets, and even within the very precincts of the Town Hall. Meanwhile the monasteries were in a state of growing confusion. Though the monastic orders were still receiving some recruits, the rate of abscondions rose steadily, and there were constant disputes between supporters of the old and new orders. The Council refused to support efforts to drive the absconders back into their monasteries, but the

immoral lives led by many of those who left the cloisters forced the Council to take summary action against the offenders and expel them from the city. Popular animosity against the monks increased alarmingly and the Council appears to have done little to discourage the gangs of hooligans who gathered outside the monasteries, throwing stones and singing bawdy songs. The Dominicans, Franciscans and Carmelites were the only supporters of the old order left in the city and their preachers received anonymous threatening letters and were even attacked openly in church. In the end the Council was forced to remove the Roman Catholic preachers from the city to prevent further trouble.

Towards the end of 1522 delegates began to assemble in Nuremberg for the second meeting of the reign of the Imperial Diet. This faced the Council with a ticklish situation and forced it to act with understandable circumspection. In response to the complaints in December of the Imperial Statthalter, the Archduke Ferdinand, about the sale and printing in the city of Lutheran literature, the Council reiterated its earlier ban. The ban was repeated again three weeks later, and this time the Council gave express permission for the publication in the city of anti-Lutheran material, an act of subtle humour since no printer would have been willing to touch it!

The new Pope, Hadrian VI, despatched Francesco Chierigati, Bishop of Terramo, to Nuremberg as his representative

Chierigati was armed with a Papal "breve" which was read to the Diet and the Reichsregiment (the latter had established its headquarters at Nuremberg and was meeting for the second time since its formation at Worms in 1521) on January 23rd, 1523. It began with a long diatribe against Luther, and then to the surprise of the assembled delegates it placed the blame for Luther's actions squarely on the Roman curia. Luther was a punishment sent by God for the sins of the Pope and the Catholic hierarchy. It admitted that abominable things had come out of Rome and that there had been many abuses in Church administration. It gave promises of reform, but ended with a demand for the fulfilment of the terms of the Edict of Worms. The Papal nuncio emphasised that the Edict must be carried out particularly in Nuremberg. The Council was accused of indulgence towards heretical activity in the city and the arrest of the city's four leading preachers was demanded. The Council decided on vigorous counter-measures in case the Imperial Statthalter or any other representative of the estates of the Empire laid hands on its preachers, and took a number of precautions for the protection of its own members. It also prepared a reply in case of need in which it promised that it would avoid any action, which would harm the Christian religion, that it would support neither Luther's doctrines nor those of any other man, and that it would hold fast to the Gospel and the Word of God. This argument by the Council

that it adhered not to Luther's doctrine but to the Gospel was to be heard again and again from now on. With regard to its preachers the Council remarked that it had taken no little trouble to look for good men and to see that those who preached in Nuremberg proclaimed the Word of God, that it might be that they were falsely accused, and that to arrest these men against whom there was no real proof of guilt would be against the conscience of the Council and would raise "difficulties" which were better avoided for the sake of both parties.

The turbulent situation in the city during the meeting of the Diet can be seen reflected in the proclamation issued by the Council on February 22nd, 1523. This took the form of a solemn warning to those of its citizens who in the name of Christian liberty had taken part in attacks on churches and monasteries and had committed acts of violence and provocation against priests and members of religious orders. It ordered them to desist from such activities, and instead of baiting and annoying their fellow men to behave towards them in a spirit of unity and brotherly love. The Council's warning and wishes seem, however, to have gone unheeded and the ostentatious eating of meat on fast-days, for example, appears to have continued openly and unashamedly.

A sub-committee of the Reichsregiment was formed to draft a reply to the Papal nuntio. This seized upon the Pope's admission of abuses in the Roman Church and reported that

it was the experience of these very abuses which had made it impossible to proceed against Luther for having pointed them out. It asserted that the proper body to pass judgement on Luther's "errors" was a General Church Council and it called for the holding of such a Council, to which lay members should be admitted and have a voice, within a year and at a place to be agreed upon between the Pope and the Emperor. If the Pope was willing to accede to these wishes, the members of the Reichsregiment agreed to use their influence in the meantime to see that Luther and his followers would refrain from publishing or teaching anything which would further inflame the situation and would restrict themselves to preaching the Gospel and expounding the Scriptures. This report met with some opposition from the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, Duke George of Saxony and the Archduke Ferdinand, but the modifications adopted by the Diet did not seriously alter its import. And though the final resolution expressed no approbation of Luther and his cause, the outlawed monk had as much reason to be pleased with the results of the Diet as the Papal nuntio had to be discontented.

The Nuremberg Council had every reason, too, for satisfaction with the outcome of the Diet. The stand it had been prepared to take if necessary had in fact received the support of a majority of the Diet and the way was now open for the Council to permit "the preaching of the Gospel" in the

city. The results of this were soon apparent. All church furnishings, ceremonies, liturgical practices not confirmed by the authority of the Holy Scriptures were before long regarded as abuses and attempts were made to get rid of them. The approach of Lent with its weeks of fasting and of Easter with its abundance of ceremonies provided the opportunity for innovations. In March the Council forbade the sale of indulgences during the Lent period and the Passion Play which had been regularly ~~and~~ <sup>performed</sup> at the Neues Spital on Good Fridays and in Easter week was withdrawn on the grounds that it contributed more to frivolity than piety. The Council was, however, more cautious in the matter of Church ordinances. It lent its support to the "old order" in banning the eating of meat during Lent and in issuing very firm instructions to butchers not to slaughter cattle without its consent, and despite the insistent requests of the congregations of St. Lawrence' and St. Sebaldus', the Council refused its permission for the administration at Easter of the sacrament in both kinds. The provosts could not move in this matter without the approval of the Council and in response to their applications the Council replied that, though it had no objections in principle, it feared that to accede to such a request might lead to disturbances and would give offence to members of the Reichsregiment and many others still in the city, who opposed such innovations. It suggested that the provosts might appeal to the Bishop of Bamberg, but he only

referred them to the future General Church Council which was to settle such matters. Volprecht, the Augustinian prior, was, however, unperturbed by all this and administered the cup to a narrow circle of people in the monastery church; this, of course, only increased the desire for the practice to be introduced more widely. The showing of the "Heiltum" on Low Sunday took place as usual, as did the annual Corpus Christi procession, though with regard to the latter the Council had strong fears of disturbances and Osiander and the other "Lutheran" preachers had to work overtime in assuring their flocks that such practices were of little importance and in urging them to have patience with their weaker brethren.

It would seem from the frequent warnings issued by the Council that from now on the only limitations it was prepared to put on its preachers, printers and booksellers arose from considerations of public order and safety. A Dominican preacher, whose activities led to a breach of the peace, and four journeymen, who attacked him, were given four days "in the tower" to cool their ardours. In September the Council ordered the confiscation of Heinrich von Kettenbach's "Practica" and Luther's attack on Henry VIII, and again forbade the sale of such explosive works. But there can be little doubt that on the whole the Council interpreted the Diet's final resolution in a manner widely tolerant to the Lutheran

party and that the production and sale of pro-Lutheran and anti-Roman literature in the city was allowed to flourish with very few restrictions. It is clear that, for example, Hans Sachs, when he wrote the first version of "Die wittenbergisch nachtigall" in 1523, was well-versed in the polemical literature of the day and we know that he had acquired some forty of Luther's writings alone. The out and out "best-seller" of the day was, of course, Luther's translation of the New Testament, and by the end of this year many of the citizens of all classes in Nuremberg and elsewhere knew Luther's Bible largely by heart and could bandy texts disconcertingly with their opponents.

The members of the estates of the Empire were again in Nuremberg at the end of 1523 for another session of the Imperial Diet, which after several postponements eventually opened on January 14th, 1524. The early days of the session were taken up with intrigues against the Reichsregiment. The latter had proved itself firmly on the side of the Imperial cities at the earlier session in Nuremberg, but in the meantime it had aroused their wrath by proposing to raise revenue for itself by the imposition of a transit duty which would have struck heavily at the trade of the cities. Nuremberg had sent a deputation to the Emperor, who in return for certain assurances had promised that the Reichszoll would not become effective. Charles V honoured his word and sent his Imperial

Chancellor from Spain to Nuremberg to aid the cities in their resistance to the financial proposals of the Reichsregiment. The repudiation of the government's authority by the cities, the knights and several of the princes, with the encouragement of the Emperor, foreboded a speedy end to this shield of Lutheranism and an opening of the way to reaction when the religious question was reached on the agenda.

It had not originally been expected that religious matters would be discussed at this Diet, but the Emperor gave his spokesmen additional instructions and the Pope armed his nuntio (this time Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggio) with another "breve". The attack was first opened outside the Diet when  
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seven of the elders of the Nuremberg Council were summoned to the Imperial Statthalter, to be accused of maintaining an indulgent attitude towards heretical literature and runaway monks and of allowing false doctrines to be broadcast from the city's pulpits and even by "peasants in public places", all of  
(2)  
which the Archduke Ferdinand claimed was contrary to the Edict of Worms. In sharp contrast to its cautious attitude on an earlier and similar occasion the Council this time despatched a prompt and resolute answer to the Statthalter in which it

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1. The suspicious Council in fact sent only four of its members!
  2. This referred to the appearance in the city of the so-called "Bauer von Wöhrd" (actually a refugee priest from Swabia called Diephold) who had preached to enthusiastic crowds in the city until stopped by the Council.

firmly defended its attitude to the sale of literature in the city and described its preachers as intelligent and gifted men, who were adhering strictly to the last Imperial mandate to preach only the Gospel as regular congregations of over a thousand people could confirm. <sup>(1)</sup> As for the runaway monks it regarded itself as under no obligation to drive these men from the city so long as they behaved themselves. The Council concluded by standing on its dignity and declaring that it would in any case never allow anything to happen in the city which was contrary to the glory of God, the Christian faith and the Holy Gospel.

The official entry into the city on March 13th of Campeggio was a sober affair. The Council was determined to avoid a repetition of the unseemly events which had occurred a few days earlier in Augsburg and the city clergy and leading citizens turned out to welcome him, but the Cardinal was asked by the city authorities to avoid making the sign of the cross, or using the benediction. Campeggio had another cheerless welcome from the Diet. The Papal "breve", which again demanded the enforcement of the Edict of Worms against Luther and his followers, was ill-received. The old struggle was fought over

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1. Just before the opening of the Diet the Council had taken the significant step of confirming Dominicus Schleupner in office at St. Sebaldus' for life, with the duty of preaching the Gospel pure and unadulterated!

again and the inevitable compromise differed only in shades of meaning from that of the previous year. The estates promised to execute the Edict "as well as they were able and as far as possible", and the cities made it plain that the enforcement was impossible. They renewed their demand for a General Church Council to meet in a suitable German town to settle the affairs of the Church in Germany, and again declared that meanwhile nothing should be preached contrary to the Word of God and the Holy Gospel. They went further this time, however, and virtually decided to summon a National Synod to meet at Speyer in the November and there make an interim settlement of all the practical and doctrinal questions at issue. This Diet in fact settled nothing but merely encouraged the two parties to continue in their chosen ways. The Pope persuaded the Emperor to forbid the proposed meeting at Speyer; Campeggio organised a gathering of Catholic princes at Regensburg, whilst the cities held meetings first at Speyer and then at Ulm in which they bound themselves to act together and to order their preachers to confine themselves to the Gospel and the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures.

The presence of the Papal nuntio in Nuremberg seemed to increase the anti-Catholic zeal of its inhabitants and the evangelical movement continued to make rapid progress in the city during the months of the Diet. Changes in the actual order of the Mass were now introduced for the first time;

for example, the "salve regina" was altered by the substitution of Christ for the Virgin Mary. In Holy Week the insistent demands of the populace to receive the sacrament in both kinds were at last conceded, and Volprecht, who had already dropped those parts of the Mass, which were offensive to the Lutherans and had begun to say the remainder in German, again took the lead in this. Isabella, the wife of the deposed King Christian II of Denmark and sister of the Emperor, caused a great sensation and insensed her brother Ferdinand by receiving both sacraments from Osiander in a celebration at the castle. Soon Volprecht's example was followed at the Neues Spital and both parish churches whilst by Whitsuntide the canon of the Mass had been omitted; such practices as saying masses for the souls of the dead, and several festivals and ceremonies (including the showing of the "Heiltum") had been dropped and the "salve regina" abolished completely.

These innovations were not introduced without vigorous protests, especially from the Franciscans and Carmelites. The Council was again in an embarrassing position. The clergy had acted without its authority, and though a majority of the councillors privately approved the changes, few were willing to accept official responsibility for them. On the other hand the mood of the populace was such that the Council was in no position to take action against the clergy. Nevertheless, no such profound changes had taken place elsewhere

outside Wittenberg and the Council foresaw that in Imperial circles it would be held responsible for the actions of its clergy and difficulties might ensue. It therefore sent a deputation to the provosts to persuade them to re-institute what they had abolished. The provosts refused and replied that they must be bound by their consciences. At this juncture Melanchthon issued a directive from Wittenberg to the effect that what had been abolished should not be reintroduced but that otherwise the old liturgical forms should be retained for the time being; the great number of celebrations of the Mass should be reduced and Psalms sung instead; Latin hymns could still be sung and those who could not understand them should be content with the sermon and the reading of the lessons in German. The Council allowed matters to proceed along these lines in Nuremberg but it felt obliged to explain its position to the Reichsregiment, the Imperial Statthalter and the Bishop of Bamberg. The deputation which waited upon the Archduke Ferdinand got away with a promise that the Council would do all in its power to carry out the Imperial mandate. The Bishop of Bamberg was less easily satisfied and sent for the two provosts and the Augustinian prior, whom he promptly pronounced heretics and put under the ban.

The Bishop's action at last faced the Council with the crucial decision it had so long sought to avoid. As the "weltliche Hand und Obrigkeit" it could expect within a

few weeks at most to be asked by the Bishop to assume the responsibility for the execution of his judgement. This time there would be no possibility of dodging the issue. The dismissal and punishment of the three men would be interpreted throughout Germany as a triumph for the Roman Church; such an example would strengthen the forces of reaction and might well deal a mortal blow to the evangelical cause in Germany; it would undoubtedly be bitterly resented by the majority of the citizens of Nuremberg and might unleash such an uncontrollable commotion in the city as to provoke outside intervention. On the other hand a refusal by the Council to act against the men would be construed not only as a rebuff to the local Bishop but as an affront to the Emperor and a direct incitement to others to ignore the Imperial mandate and the Edict of Worms. Either way the situation was fraught with dire consequences, and there must have been some painful heart-searchings in the Nuremberg Council chamber.

At this point Lazarus Spengler, the Town Clerk, intervened to rally the dejected spirits of the councillors with one of his masterly reports. The report took the form of a statement of the grounds on which the Council might refuse to take action against the accused men. The men had offered to give the Bishop an explanation of the reasons for the liturgical changes they had made in the city churches and had asked the Bishop to explain to them on the basis of Holy

Scripture in what way they had contravened the Word of God with their innovations. The Bishop had refused to do this and had thus put himself in the wrong. On these grounds alone the Council could refuse to execute the Bishop's sentence, and even if the Reichsregiment were to range itself along side the Bishop, the Council could still justify itself on the grounds that the innovations had the support of Holy Scripture, over which the Council had no jurisdiction. In any case the men had appealed over the Bishop to a General Church Council and in the circumstances the City Council could not drive out the men without giving great offence to the people of the city, which could have the worst consequences. Spengler concluded his report by reminding the councillors that this was not man's but God's affair, and by advising them not to be faint-hearted but to trust in God, who at the right time would show Himself as their helper. Spengler's report appears to have been effective, for, when the Bishop's judgement was officially forwarded to Nuremberg for action, the Council did nothing about it; the provosts and the prior remained in office and their ex-communication was devoid of all earthly consequences.

The outcome of this affair was inevitably hailed as a victory for the Lutheran cause. In defying the Bishop of Bamberg the Council had accepted the Reformation principle of recognising the Bible as the supreme guide in matters of faith and had demonstrated its right to arrange the religious

affairs of the community by an exercise of its official authority. From this point Nuremberg was virtually cut off from the authority of the Papal See. Nuremberg's example did not go unnoticed and other cities followed where Nuremberg had led.

The Council was now in no position to resist the clamant demands of the populace for the full realisation of the Reformation in the city. If this was to be done, it was essential that it should be carried through quickly before the decisions of a new Diet could put insuperable obstacles in the way. The main pockets of resistance of the old order in Nuremberg were the monasteries and nunneries and these were the principal target of the "Wort-und Federkrieg", which now raged virtually unchecked in the city. This revived old memories of the "Schottenkloster" and the nuns of Engelthal; many of those who had left the monasteries in the early 1520's had been a poor advertisement for their orders; and with the overwhelming majority of the people regarding all monks and nuns indiscriminately as sluggards and hypocrites, it was inevitable that the demand should be voiced for the complete closing of the religious houses. Apart from the many advantages, financial and material, which would accrue to the city from such closures, the Council might have been excused for wishing to dry up a perpetual source of trouble. The monasteries provided centres for the consumption and active distribution

in the city of opposition literature of which there was no shortage, and there was the ever-present danger of a serious outbreak of violence; as it was, the Council had had to supply a permanent guard for the convent of St. Clare, against which feelings ran particularly high. Towards the end of 1524 the monks at the Augustinian monastery created a precedent by divesting themselves of their monk's garb and offering the priory to the Council on certain conditions. A section of the Carthusians was in favour of following the Augustinians' lead. But for the time being the Council limited its interference with the monasteries to attempts to convert the monks and nuns by imposing Lutheran preachers on them and to forbidding the Franciscans and Dominicans to undertake their pastoral responsibilities in the nunneries entrusted to them.

The attempts at conversion failed; the Dominican, Franciscan and Carmelite preachers continued bravely to disregard the Council's instructions to preach only the Word of God and used their pulpits to carry on a vigorous denunciation of the Reformation in all its manifestations; and it was soon evident to the Council that only drastic measures could bring about a final unification of the religious life of the city. The city councillors were, however, still loth to accept the logical consequences of the policy to which they were committed and decided on one last effort to achieve religious harmony in

the city by peaceful means. It therefore invited all the preachers to submit in writing a list of twelve articles which, in their opinion, every Christian should acknowledge as necessary for salvation and it fixed March 3rd, 1525, for the holding of a public colloquy, at which the articles would be expounded by their several advocates. Because of the great variety of points submitted the Council had its own list of articles drawn up, and despite some opposition to these from the Roman Catholic side, the representatives of the two parties assembled in the Great Hall of the Rathaus on the appointed date. The Council appointed four chairmen, all drawn from the evangelical side - the provosts of St. Lawrence' and St. Sebaldus', the abbot of the Benedictine monastery (Friedrich Pistorius) and a Würzburg Cathedral preacher,

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1. These articles were as follows:

- i. What is sin and how is it punished?
- ii. Why was the Law given and how is it to be used?
- iii. What is meant by justification before God?
- iv. What is the Gospel?
- v. What is Baptism? What is its significance? What is its effect?
- vi. In what form must the old Adam be destroyed, from which so many sects have arisen?
- vii. What is the "sacrament of the altar" and what is its effect?
- viii. What are good works? Are these the way to justification or do the works flow from justification?
- ix. What powers have the secular authorities and how far must they be obeyed?
- x. What are the commands and teachings of men? How far are these to be obeyed?
- xi. What is anger and how far must it be avoided?
- xii. May the servants of the Church marry? And in the event of adultery may the innocent party re-marry within the lifetime of the guilty party?

(Continued on p. 99)

Johann Poliander, whom the Council had in mind for a Nuremberg appointment. An opening address was given by Christoph Scheurl,<sup>(1)</sup> who explained that they were not met to hold a disputation, but for an exchange of ideas which would put an end to the preaching of obnoxious doctrines in the city. The questions were then put to the representatives of the two parties, but whereas the evangelicals addressed themselves to the points at issue, the Roman Catholics, led by the Carmelite prior, Andreas Stoß, sought to justify their position by reference to the decisions of the great Church Councils, the teachings of the Church Fathers, old traditions, and so on. Eventually, however, the Roman Catholics agreed to appoint the Franciscan preacher, Frieß, as their spokesman, and with Osiander representing the evangelicals, the parties settled down to debate the issues. Agreement was reached on some points but inevitably there was disagreement on others and on March 13th, after five sessions in all, the Roman Catholics withdrew, declaring that they were being forced into an illegal disputation and that since none of the chairmen was impartial, they had no hope of victory. The Council decided to hold a final session

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(Continued from p. 98)

These articles show how deeply the Nuremberg evangelicals had grasped the true significance of the Reformation. The discussion was to be concentrated not on the "abuses" committed by the Roman Church, but on the central point of Luther's doctrine, justification by faith and not works.

1. Disputations had been forbidden under Imperial mandate.

and Osiander was commissioned to elucidate the twelve articles once again by reference to the Holy Scriptures and to refute those arguments of the Roman Catholics which were not founded on the Bible. The proceedings were rounded off by a closing speech by Christoph Scheurl.

If the "Religionsgespräch" did not achieve the object of bringing about by agreement a harmonisation of the religious doctrines being preached in Nuremberg, it did have two major effects. Firstly, it forced the evangelical party to think out clearly the rights of its own position and to state and "prove" the essential features of the evangelical creed and their consequences for Christian living. Secondly, it served to convince the Council beyond all further doubt that Luther's position was irrefutable and that no further hesitation was justified. At the close of the colloquy it declared itself overwhelmingly on the side of the evangelicals and ordered the report of the proceedings to be printed and issued to the public. Three days later the Dominicans, Franciscans and Carmelites were ordered to desist from public preaching and the hearing of confessions until such time as they had proved that their doctrines and attitude had the support of Holy Scripture. The Carmelite prior, Andreas Stoß, was ordered to leave the city within three days. Within a few months four of the monasteries had been dissolved,

and the remaining monasteries and the convents of St. Clare and St. Catherine were forbidden to take in fresh recruits and were thus condemned to slow extinction; the last monk, a Franciscan, died only in 1562, and the last convent did not close until near the end of the century.

In May the Council formally took upon itself the full responsibility for the appointment and remuneration of the city clergy. Those clergy who were willing to accept the full duties of citizenship were confirmed in office and their stipends fixed, though in practice only about one-tenth of the confiscated church assets were applied to the clergy. The marrying of priests was now actively encouraged. In further transforming the life of the local churches and their members in accordance with the principles of the new doctrines, the Council adopted an essentially practical approach. The sale of meat at fast times was now officially permitted, but at the same time the number of feast days was drastically curtailed. Excesses of all kinds were frowned upon and by a series of ordinances the Council sought to encourage a great spirit of self-control and reverse the recent degeneration in the moral standards of its citizens. Games of cards and dice were completely prohibited; the skittle alleys outside the city gates were closed on working days; steps were taken to reduce the boisterousness of the celebrations at carnival

times; and sharp penalties were fixed for drunkards and blasphemers. The Council also expressed its strong disapproval of the customary lavish expenditure on articles of luxury at weddings.

The too liberal interpretation of the Lutheran principles of divorce had led to a great confusion in human relationships in the city. In tidying up this situation the Council as always took a more conservative line than its clergy, especially with regard to the strict definition of the prohibited degrees, which had been relaxed to a considerable extent. Habitual beggars were expelled from the city and the Council used the funds already available to it for alms, together with monies accruing to it through voluntary gifts and from other sources, to form a civic poor-box for the support of the genuine poor. The Council also took a keen interest in education and in response to Luther's appeal in 1524 for the building of schools, it was decided on Melanchthon's suggestion to establish a Gymnasium in the now vacant Augustinian monastery; the school was opened in 1526, though Melanchthon declined the proffered post of headmaster.

The prohibition on the printing and sale of Lutheran works in the city was now lifted, whilst the marketing of anti-Lutheran works was forbidden and punished. Though the way now appeared to be open in Nuremberg for the

unrestricted sale and publication of polemical literature, the Council still kept an eye on what was published and set limits to what it was prepared to allow, and from time to time took vigorous action against authors, printers and artists who  
 (1)  
 overstepped these limits. (2)

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1. See Part Two, Chapter II.
2. It is tempting at this point to digress into an account of Nuremberg's part in the Peasants' War. No one will deny that this war had a profound, lasting and disastrous effect on the Reformation movement. It has been argued that it stopped the spread of the Reformation throughout Germany. But the war did not halt or even retard the progress in Nuremberg towards a full acceptance of the Reformation, and it is therefore largely irrelevant for the purposes of the present narrative. The actions of the Nuremberg Council during the Peasants' War make a fascinating study in political tightrope-walking. The primary aim of its policy was to keep its military and financial contributions to the Swabian League down to the minimum and to hold Nuremberg as far as possible aloof from the conflict and by good fortune and skilful diplomacy abroad and a mixture of firmness and conciliation at home it was largely successful. It is to the Council's great credit, however, that throughout the struggle it did not compromise itself on the religious issue. Through Christoph Kreß, its envoy with the Swabian League, it used its influence to counteract the propoganda of those who laid the whole responsibility for the peasants' revolt at the door of Luther and the evangelical preachers, and it expressed its conviction that the real cause of the outbreak were the excessive and intolerable hardships suffered by the peasants. After the surrender of the Swabian peasants it viewed with dismay the actions of those princes and bishops in the League who were determined to turn the suppression of the revolt into a counter-Reformation, and it instructed Kreß to represent strongly the principle that greater good can be achieved by clemency, good-will, humanity and justice than by brutal violence and hard cruel punishments. The Council's correspondence with its envoy is clear proof of its consistency in religious matters. The Council was doubtless induced by the strong tide of sympathy in the city for the peasants to grant economic concessions in its territories in May, 1525, but there is no real evidence that pressures set up by the peasants' revolt had any direct bearing on the religious developments in the city in that year.

By the end of 1525 Nuremberg had turned its face squarely towards the Reformation, but even with the virtual elimination of the last traces of Roman Catholicism in the city, the Council's troubles were far from over. Luther's example had encouraged men to think for themselves and it was not long before almost all the basic principles of the new orthodoxy were being challenged by men who were no less opposed to the old order than Luther himself. From the very beginning, however, the Nuremberg Council came down firmly on Luther's side on all controversial issues and the works of Carlstadt, Zwingli and Oecolampadius were prohibited by the Council as "Teufelsbücher". A careful watch was kept for the fanatics who were regularly infiltrating into the city. Heinrich Pfeiffer (Schwertfeger), a strong advocate of the theory that all goods should be held in common and all objectors liquidated, and a number of other associates of Thomas Müntzer, the so-called anabaptist and leader of the Thuringian sector of the peasants' revolt, were promptly removed from the city. Towards the end of 1524 Müntzer himself had got into the city and had even persuaded a printer to publish an answer to Luther. The Council took strong action against the printer and expelled Müntzer, and on the whole Müntzer's ideas were given little opportunity to fructify in Nuremberg; the danger from this quarter was shortly settled by the death of Müntzer and many of his followers.

The term "anabaptist" was used loosely in these early days of the Reformation to embrace a wide variety of religious views, which had little in common besides the rejection of infant baptism, and this has led to much confusion in the accounts of the early history of the true Anabaptist movement. The accounts of the moral degeneration which followed the introduction of Luther's reforms may well have been exaggerated, but there can be no doubt that there is some truth in them and many people, disgusted and perturbed by the behaviour of some of the nominal followers of Luther, turned in their disillusionment to more austere doctrines. The wilder excesses of the "Lutherans" were more evident in the cities and it was here that the true Anabaptists gained their greatest following, especially amongst the stricter-minded members of the lower classes. Nuremberg was no exception and in view of the stand which the Council took against those who revolted against Luther's authority, it is ironic that one of the first and most influential leaders of the true Anabaptists should have been appointed in 1523 to the post of Rektor of the Sebaldusschule. Johannes Denck, a Bavarian, who had studied in Basle under Oecolampadius, was a Hebrew scholar. His studies brought him into correspondence with Andreas Osiander who recommended him to Pirckheimer for the post! For one and a half years Denck's religious activities escaped the attention of the Council. It was eventually the issue of

Holy Communion, a continuous source of argument and disagreement in evangelical circles, which focussed attention upon Denck, and as soon as his views were investigated it was clear that he was totally opposed to the Reformation as understood by the orthodox followers of Luther. Osiander denounced Denck to the Council for his deviationist views and a disputation was arranged between the two men. This was inevitably inconclusive, for whilst Osiander was able to substantiate his case in the accepted manner by reference to the Bible, Denck had recourse to the revelations of his "inner voice". The Council next asked Denck to supply a written statement of his views but this step was equally futile and on January 21st, 1525, Denck was expelled from Nuremberg and forbidden to approach within ten miles of the city.

Denck left behind him three enthusiastic converts to his doctrines in the painters Sebaldus and Bartholomew Beham, and Georg Pencz. These men were in many ways typical representatives of their class. They read eagerly and indiscriminately anything they could lay hands on, not only Luther but Carlstadt and Müntzer, and were carried away by their enthusiasms. They made contact with Heinrich Schwertfeger and with Hans Denck, and though they probably lacked the ability to distinguish clearly the difference between the various sects, they loved arguing <sup>about</sup> their radical doctrines in

public and soon gained a reputation for extreme views. This led eventually to their denunciation and banishment from the city. But though the Council made an example of these men, it appears to have been prepared to attribute their offences to youthful hotheadedness and within a few months they were pardoned and Sebaldus Beham, at least, returned to the city. (1) The problem of the anabaptists, however, seems to have continued to tax the attentions of Osiander and the Council and in 1526 and 1527 a few arrests of anabaptists took place. The following year the whole question was focussed afresh by an Imperial mandate proclaiming the death penalty for anabaptists, who in the Roman Catholic territories were now hounded down and subjected to fiendish cruelties. The Lutheran rulers were in a quandary. The anabaptist's offence was a mere aberration compared with the much greater offences of the Roman Catholics. How could they punish the one without acting with at least equal severity against the other? In Nuremberg jurists and theologians conferred for over six months on the matter without reaching a final decision. In the end the Nuremberg Council took a lenient path and first attempted to cure the offenders but if they persisted in their error they were ejected from the city. Great care was taken to exclude the refugee Augsburg

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1. See also Part Two, Chapter II below.

anabaptists from the city. At the same time anabaptism was vigorously denounced from the city pulpits and a booklet containing advice on how to refute the anabaptists and defend the true faith was prepared by Wenzel Link (who in December, 1525, took up the office of preacher at the Neues Spital), and officially issued to all clergy in the city and outlying districts. On the whole the efforts of the Council to suppress anabaptism on its territory seem to have been at least outwardly successful.

If by 1526 the city fathers in Nuremberg had ranged the city fully and unequivocally on the side of the Reformation - and apart from a brief forced relapse after the Augsburg Interim in 1548 there was no going back - the future was to be far from easy. Political and religious matters were in this period inextricably bound up together, and Nuremberg's political and religious associates were to present the Council with many difficult and often virtually insoluble problems. Throughout all the ensuing vicissitudes, however, the Council remained unshakable in its loyalty to the Emperor and this faced the Council with some disagreeable decisions, which eventually resulted in the exclusion of the city from its dominant position of influence in Reformed circles. In February, 1526, the city declined to join the League of Gotha, a loose alliance of Lutheran princes. In its reply to Elector John of Saxony and Landgrave Philip of Hesse the Council

emphasised its determination to hold fast to the Word of God but out of regard for the Emperor it was unhappy about resorting to arms to defend the Reformation. At the Diet of Speyer (June, 1526) the attitude of Nuremberg was decisive in persuading the other Imperial cities to remain outside the League of Gotha. In 1526 and 1527 the Bishops of Bamberg and Constance, by direct pressure and through the Swabian League (which was now completely dominated by the Catholic party) sought to assert their authority over the Lutherans, and this eventually forced the cities to concert measures for their own defence. Representatives of Nuremberg, Ulm and Augsburg met at Ulm in September, 1527, and decided to protest together against any threats by the Swabian League in the matter of religion and to appeal to the Speyer Recess which had reserved the decision in such matters for a future General Church Council and had provided that meanwhile each ruling authority should so conduct itself as it could answer for its behaviour to God and the Emperor. The three cities decided that before the next meeting of the Swabian League they would hold a meeting of representatives of all the Swabian cities. Nuremberg was commissioned to arrange the meeting and the Council sent its representative round the cities to unite them against any attempt by the

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1. This is the name usually given to the "final communiqué" of a Diet, which was composed before the Diet went into recess and embodied the decisions of the Diet which were binding on the estates until the sitting was resumed.

Swabian League to settle religious matters on its own or in any way sit in judgement against the cities. The cities agreed to vote at the next meeting of the League against the intervention by the League in religious matters, and if despite this the League decided to intervene, every city was to order its representative to protest. The smaller cities were assured that the others would support them in case of trouble, but it was felt that their united protests would cause the League to hold back. And so it proved. The threatened attack was averted largely thanks to the Nuremberg Council's wise and skilful action.

The Emperor was meanwhile at war with the Pope and as this struggle lasted until 1529 the evangelical movement in Germany was given time and peace to develop and consolidate. The Lutheran princes and cities interpreted the decision of the Diet of Speyer to mean that they had the legal right to organise territorial Churches and to introduce such changes into public worship as would bring it into harmony with their evangelical beliefs. In September and October, 1528, Nuremberg followed the example of Luther in Saxony and organised a visitation of its territories to find out how things stood in the matter of religion and determine the suitability of its pastors for office. What the visitors discovered was in many ways disturbing and the Council decided on the production of a manual of church services and church discipline based on

evangelical principles and requirements. The manual was eventually compiled and came into use on Nuremberg territory on January 1st, 1533. But meanwhile the next Diet of Speyer was casting its shadow before, and with the Emperor again at peace and determined to root out the Lutheran heresy without delay, a majority of the Nuremberg Council was now in favour of a policy of circumspection.

Nuremberg was represented at Speyer by Christoph Tetzl (its permanent delegate to the Reichsregiment) and two other councillors, Christoph Kreß and Bernhard Baumgärtner. On hearing the ominous details of the Imperial ordinance, in which the Emperor denounced the Speyer Recess and virtually dictated the terms of the next one, the Nuremberg Council sent clear instructions to its representatives which amounted to a declaration of "no surrender"; they refused to be turned away from the Word of God by fear of threats or possible dangers. The Lutherans were in a minority at this Diet and only three of their number (including Tetzl) were chosen to sit on the sub-committee appointed to discuss the religious question. But despite Tetzl's valiant efforts in committee and the vigorous witness to their faith of Nuremberg's representatives in the full Diet, the final Recess upheld the Emperor's decision. This virtually decreed complete toleration for Roman Catholics in Lutheran areas, but no toleration for Lutherans in Catholic areas, and no toleration anywhere for Zwinglians and anabaptists; the Lutherans were to

make no further innovations and clerical jurisdictions and property were to be restored.

The 1529 Recess called forth the celebrated Protest, which was read in the Diet on April 19th, 1529, the day when all concessions to the Lutherans had been refused. The Protesters declared that they meant to abide by the Recess of 1526 and that the Recess of 1529 was not to be held binding upon them, because they were not consenting parties. They appealed from the wrongs done to them at the Diet to the Emperor, to the next General Church Council, or to an ecclesiastical congress of the German nation. The Protest was signed by the six Lutheran princes and by Nuremberg and the thirteen other Imperial cities. In May, 1529, the Elector of Saxony called a meeting of Lutheran representatives in Nuremberg. A deputation of three, including the Nuremberg syndic, Michael von Kaden, was chosen to go to Italy to present the Protest and appeal to the Emperor in person, and at the same time assure him of their loyalty.

Three days after the Protest had been read in the Diet Electoral Saxony, Hesse and the cities of Strasburg, Ulm and Nuremberg came to a secret understanding for mutual defence in the event of their being attacked "on account of the Word of God". As soon as negotiations were opened with the object of turning the understanding into a formal compact the

underlying religious differences between the supporters of Zwingli and those of Luther came to the surface. The Marburg Colloquy failed to bridge the differences and despite a series of meetings at Rotach, Schwabach, Schmalkalden and Nuremberg the negotiations were eventually abortive. In any case Luther had persuaded the Elector of Saxony of the unlawfulness of any resistance to the Emperor, a point of view which was shared by the conscience-stricken Nuremberg councillors. The change in the attitude of the Nuremberg Council in the few months between the Diets of Speyer and Augsburg is indeed striking. It had clearly been shaken by the Emperor's rough treatment of Michael von Kadan and the other envoys in Italy and in their timid and anxious state the city councillors now sought to come to a separate understanding with the Emperor. Early in 1530 two sets of envoys were despatched by Nuremberg to the court of Charles V but both had to bear the brunt of the Emperor's extreme displeasure with the Imperial cities in general and Nuremberg in particular. The Council must have been greatly relieved by the friendly tone of the Emperor's subsequent invitation to the Diet of Augsburg.

The Emperor set the new Diet two main tasks: the provision of armament against the Turks and the ending of the religious differences which were distracting Germany. The Protestants were invited to give the Emperor in writing their opinions and difficulties. Nuremberg and Saxony both prepared

separate drafts but after discussions Nuremberg agreed to accept the Saxon draft, which was drawn up by Melanchthon and signed by the six Protestant princes and by Nuremberg and Reutlingen. This document, known as the Augsburg Confession, was formally read by the Saxon Chancellor on June 25th, 1530. The Roman Catholic theologians presented their Confutation of the Confession to the Emperor. Confused and lengthy negotiations followed and Melanchthon was so disposed to make concessions that the Nuremberg Council became very disturbed and informed the Elector of Saxony and the Margrave of Brandenburg, that it could not approve Melanchthon's concessions. On September 20th Luther, chafing in frustration at Coburg, intervened to put an end to all negotiation. An Apologia for the Confession - an answer to the Confutation - was then presented and virtually ended the possibility of agreement. The draft Recess gave the Protestants until April 15th to decide whether they would conform or not, and meanwhile they were ordered to make no innovations on their own account, to put no constraint on Roman Catholics on their territories, and to assist the Emperor to root out Zwinglians and anabaptists. This led to a second Protest, signed by the Lutheran princes and by the fourteen cities, whose delegates then withdrew, though Nuremberg at least appears to have kept observers in Augsburg until the end of the Diet. The final Recess promulgated on November 19th was stronger in tone and

content than the original draft. It laid down that the Edict of Worms was to be executed; that ecclesiastical jurisdictions were to be preserved and all Church property restored; and, what was of more practical importance, the Reichskammergericht (the Imperial Court of Appeal for all disputed legal cases in the Empire) was to be reconstructed. The last provision pointed to a new way of fighting the Protestants by harassing legal prosecutions.

The view widely held on the Protestant side that the Emperor was not the real enemy and that the Papists and Catholic princes had by false reports been able to use him as a tool was rudely shaken by the course of events at Augsburg. It was now clear that the Emperor in his own person was a determined opponent of the Reformation and was ready to suppress it by all available means. Should the Protestants continue to maintain their attitude of passive resistance? This question was earnestly debated when the princes and delegates of the cities met at Schmalkalden in December, 1530, to arrange some common plan to meet the threat of force which now hung over them. The lawyers were all on the side of active defence. Even Luther now convinced himself that in religious matters the Emperor was not independent, but was the tool of a thoroughly secularised Pope who did not serve the true interests of the Church; therefore not to resist the Emperor would strengthen the enemies of the true Church.

Nuremberg and the pious Margrave of Brandenburg alone refused to accept this line of reasoning, and so the Schmalkaldic League was founded and soon reached huge proportions.

The result of Nuremberg's holding back from the Schmalkaldic League was that from now on the city no longer took the leading part in the development of the Reformation which it had formerly done. The Nuremberg Council decided on another attempt to placate the Emperor. In February, 1532, it sent three of its members to Dinkelsbühl to greet the Emperor, who was on his way to attend the Regensburg Diet, and invite him to visit Nuremberg, where great festivities were planned and he was to receive costly presents. The envoys were, however, received most ungraciously by the Emperor, who found it difficult to forgive the cities for remaining so stubbornly attached to their evangelical faith.

The Turks were now menacing Vienna and the Duchy of Austria and this pressure forced the Emperor to come to terms at least temporarily with the evangelicals. Nuremberg played an honourable part in the negotiations at Regensburg. She refused to be a party to attempts to use the Turkish embarrassment as a lever to coerce the Emperor into granting religious concessions. For a time her representatives seemed to be out of step with the other evangelicals and the Council at one moment thought of making a separate peace with the

Emperor, but at last along with Electoral Saxony and some other cities her representatives were able to convince the Emperor that the coming of the Turk would not be used for sectional purposes. In return the Emperor promised the Lutherans a temporary peace. An agreement was subsequently reached with the Emperor at Nuremberg in July, 1533, by which all religious suits against the Protestants before the Reichskammergericht were quashed and they were guaranteed peace until the next Diet or the meeting of a General Church Council. This agreement was kept secret for fear of offending the Catholics, but it served to open to Charles the armouries of the Protestant cities. The Nuremberg Council seems to have been inordinately pleased with the outcome; Spengler sang the praises of „den frommen und friedlichen Kaiser" and the city sent double its quota of troops to serve in the Turkish campaign.

Hopes that after the Emperor's Nuremberg promise the Protestants would be free from further legal persecution proved illusory. The definition of "religious suits" had been left to the Reichskammergericht and Catholic lawyers had little difficulty in finding excuses for condemning the Protestant princes and cities like Strasburg and Nuremberg. In January, 1534, the Protestants formally repudiated the court and by taking advantage of Ferdinand's political embarrassments forced him at the Peace of Kaden shortly

afterwards to quash all proceedings of the court directed against the Protestants.

Owing to Charles' and Ferdinand's other domestic and foreign preoccupations in the middle 1530's the Protestants were free to develop in relative peace and the period was marked by such a rapid dissolution of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany that late in 1536 both Charles and the Pope were convinced that some attempt must be made to stabilise the situation. Clement VII decided to hold a General Church Council at Mantua in May, 1537. The bull announcing this made no reference to the discussion of religious issues with the Protestants or the abolition of abuses, but only referred to the rooting out of heresies. The Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse promptly called a meeting of the Schmalkaldic League to which Nuremberg was invited. Nuremberg's delegates were given firm instructions by the Council on the subject of the Schmalkaldic League; on no account was the city to be committed to joining the League; otherwise the delegates were given a free hand to negotiate on religious matters.

Meanwhile Charles V had commissioned his Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Matthias Held, to sound out both Roman Catholics and Lutherans in Germany on the possibility of a prolonged truce or some compromise acceptable to all parties.

Dr. Held appears, however, to have interpreted Charles' cautious and ambiguous instructions as an order to form a Catholic League with the object of restraining, if not attacking, the Lutheran princes. He had been a zealous member of the Reichskammergericht and desired especially to avenge the scorn with which the Protestants had treated the verdicts of that court. He publicly announced that Charles' promise at Nuremberg, confirmed by Ferdinand in the Peace of Kaden, was withdrawn and that the lawsuits brought against the Protestants in the Reichskammergericht were not to be quashed, but were to be prosecuted to the bitter end. His brutal intervention in the deliberations of the Schmalkaldic League resulted in a communiqué in March, 1537, in which the Protestants again protested against the unjust proceedings of the Reichskammergericht and declared that they would adhere to all the points and articles in the Augsburg Confession. They expressed their willingness to do their duty towards the Emperor faithfully if granted freedom of conscience but they could not and would not renounce their faith even if they were to be persecuted for it.

Nuremberg was now in a desperately difficult and dangerous position. Her territorial neighbours were mostly powerful Catholic princes; failure to support a cause which the Emperor had at heart could result in a charge of disloyalty to the Emperor and the loss of the city's valued rights and

privileges; her refusal to join the Schmalkaldic League cut her off from possible support from that quarter. And yet the Nuremberg Council took upon itself the grave responsibility of associating the city fully with the Schmalkaldic League's decisions. Packed wholeheartedly by its citizens the Council chose to prefer to risk the threatening dangers rather than deny its chosen faith. Dr. Held tried hard to break down Nuremberg's solidarity with the Schmalkaldic League. He told the Council that the League he was attempting to form was designed only for defence against "unruhige Geister im Reich" and that the Emperor would maintain religious freedom and extend his protection to those Protestant estates, who wished only for peace and unity. He told the Council that the Emperor was aware of Nuremberg's constant loyalty and that he had a particular affection for the city. But the Nuremberg Council was proof against these blandishments. It assured Dr. Held of the city's continued loyalty to the Emperor, but in view of his guarantee that the religious peace was to be preserved, it saw no necessity for the creation of the proposed League.

Dr. Held's Catholic League (the League of Nuremberg, as it was ironically named) came into existence in June, 1538, and his machinations thus brought Germany virtually to the brink of civil war. Sensing the danger the Emperor recalled Held and sent the Archbishop of Lund to find

out the terms which the Protestants would accept. These proved greater than the Emperor was willing to grant, and conferences were held between Lutheran and Romanist theologians and laymen at Hagenau in June, 1540, and at Worms the following November. The Nuremberg Council had great hopes of these conferences and was bitterly disappointed by their inconclusive outcome; both Osiander and Link were officially reproved for their outspokenness. All the city preachers were urged to be "geschmeidiger" in future and to be particularly careful not to give offence to the Emperor in their sermons during his forthcoming visit to the city on his way to the Diet of Regensburg. The Emperor was given an enthusiastic reception in the city but the Council firmly resisted the attempt which was made during the visit to allow the Franciscans and nuns to return in full to their old practices. At Regensburg the proceedings were again dominated by the issue of military assistance against the Turk. The policy of the Schmalkaldic League was to demand religious satisfaction as the price of military aid. Nuremberg's delegates were instructed to adopt a non-committal line and it was largely due to the mediatory efforts of Nuremberg that the final Recess was couched in such relatively mild terms. The religious peace of 1532 was extended and the religious cases before the Reichskammergericht were suspended and the former judgements annulled. More important than the proceedings of

the Diet, however, was the religious conference which was taken up where it had been left off at Worms. The discussions showed that it was possible to state the Roman Catholic and Lutheran doctrines in ambiguous propositions which could be accepted by the theologians on both sides, but also that there was a great gulf which the evangelicals would never re-cross. This was Charles' last attempt at peaceful compromise. He saw that the Lutherans would never return to the medieval Church unless compelled to by force and it was impossible to use force unless the Schmalkaldic League was broken up altogether or rendered ineffective by internal dissensions.

The details of the steps by which the Schmalkaldic League was progressively undermined do not concern us here. By the time the delegates assembled for the Diet of Regensburg in 1546, it was an open secret that the Emperor was now determined to go to war against the League. In the intervening years Nuremberg had consistently refused to join the League, and when its representatives reported back from Regensburg that the members were determined to hold together and hoped to have Nuremberg with them, the Council replied that it would stand up for the truth and would not break with those with whom it had been associated in the 1530 Protest and the Augsburg Confession, but if "holding together" meant a readiness to participate in a war against the Emperor this was going too far. It had not joined and would not join the

League. The Council was clearly determined to follow its conscience and in making the agonising decision to abide by the principle it had so long championed - that it was wrong in any circumstances to take up arms against the Emperor - it was doubtless aware of the bitter resentment with which its decision would be received by many of its citizens. The war was indeed an unhappy incident in the history of Nuremberg and the Council must have been cruelly troubled in its conscience when it was faced by the pressure of events to supply money to the League and arms to the Emperor and provisions to both sides.

The Emperor's final victory at Mülberg on April 24th, 1547, can have brought little joy to Nuremberg, and its Council and citizens must have viewed the future with deep anxiety. The quartering of many thousands of Imperial troops on Nuremberg territory soon impoverished the city's stocks. The Council ordered the clergy to give a lead to the people and exhort them to penitence. Special prayers were prescribed for use in the services and the clergy were pressed to observe great restraint in their sermons so as to avoid offending the Emperor. Charles was received in the city with great respect and ceremony and handsome presents of cannon were given to his two leading commanders, the Duke of Alba and the Marquess of Malignon. Before his departure the Emperor sent the Bishop of Arras to the Council to demand

a loan of two hundred thousand gulden. The Bishop used his knowledge that the Council had given financial assistance to the Schmalkaldic League. The Council was indignant but in no position to refuse and eventually got away with one hundred thousand.

The Augsburg Interim was received with dismay in Nuremberg. The Council tried at first to keep the details secret and muzzle its preachers, whilst it sought ways of getting round it. But Veit Dietrich announced the details from the pulpit and Osiander preached a bitter sermon, which gave great offence to the Council. After threats by the Emperor and Ferdinand to invest the city with troops, the Nuremberg Council formally accepted the Interim on June 20th, 1547. A month later the Elector of Brandenburg (one of the two commissioners appointed by the Emperor to arrange the carrying into effect of the Interim) arrived in Nuremberg. Explanations were given by Johann Agricola, the Elector's court chaplain, a former Lutheran and one of the three authors of the Interim, and after the Elector had made certain promises relating to Catholic customs and practices, the Council was convinced that it would not be necessary to carry out the terms of the Interim to the letter. A visit from the second commissioner, the Count Palatine, and a grave and menacing note from the Emperor quickly dispelled any impression the Elector and Agricola had given about the

harmless nature of the Interim. The city preachers now composed a joint statement in which they declared that they were no longer prepared to accept even minor changes in the existing order. Osiander preached another vigorous sermon against the Interim. Nevertheless, on August 5th the Council announced to the assembled preachers its intention to make a start with the introduction of those articles in the Interim which did not offend conscience such as private confessions and public fasting. The number of feast-days was also increased. Precise instructions were issued to the clergy on how they were to carry out their offices under the new arrangements and three senior chaplains were commissioned to resolve the misgivings of those who were offended by such reactionary changes in the order of public worship as the singing of hymns in Latin and the elevation of the host. Not all the clergy were willing to conform and some were released from their duties. Osiander and his son-in-law, Besold, the preacher at the Neues Spital, asked the Council to relieve them of their offices as they could not acquiesce in the Interim. Osiander interpreted the Council's expressions of regret as notice of dismissal and left the city to take up service with Duke Albrecht of Prussia. The Council was very annoyed with Osiander and treated him as absent without leave; payment of his stipend, including contributions to the maintenance of his wife and family, who remained in the city, was stopped and he was deprived of his citizenship rights. As it turned

out Osiander had left the city because he no longer felt safe there, for without the knowledge of the Council he had written a tract against the Interim which had been printed in Magdeburg.

In January, 1549, the Council ordered the introduction throughout its outlying territories of the less offensive articles of the Interim relating to fasting, feast-days and private confession. These together with the minor changes in the order of divine service mentioned above marked the limits of the Council's concessions to the Interim. The Bishop of Bamberg received a tactful but non-committal reply to his demand that the Interim should be executed in full, and when he attempted to pursue the matter the Council refrained from further correspondence. It paid equally scant heed to the remonstrations of the Bishop of Eichstätt and the demands of the Carthusians and Carmelites for the re-opening of their monasteries in the city.

The Council's hopes that the people of Nuremberg would quietly accept the abridged version of the Interim which it had sanctioned were soon disappointed. Large numbers of citizens responded by staying away from the churches and it was not long before the clergy began to lament the increase of indiscipline and immorality in the city and lay the blame squarely on the Interim. The savage attack on the city in

1552 by Albrecht Alcibiades, the neighbouring Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach, was interpreted by many as a divine visitation on the city for turning away from the Reformation. The failure of Charles V to come to the aid of the city weakened the Council's long-standing loyalty to the Emperor and disposed it to listen to the insistent demands of the clergy and leading Protestant laymen in the city for the re-introduction of the 1533 liturgy and the suspension of everything contrary to this which had come in with the Interim. By the end of 1553 the religious status quo ante had been restored in the city.

The Interim was the last attempt of Charles V to force German Protestantism back under the Papal yoke. Though the Interim had been successful in a few places, it only served on the whole to show that a real and lasting return to the old order was now impossible over wide areas of Germany. The Emperor's hopes that the Council of Trent would bridge the gulf between the Pope and the Protestants were disappointed and by 1554 many of the Catholic leaders in Germany and even the Emperor's brother, Ferdinand, had come to see the urgent need for religious peace. In the summer of 1554 Charles handed over the management of German affairs to Ferdinand and empowered him to settle the question of religion once and for all with the Diet, which opened at Augsburg on February 5th, 1555. After months of debate, which at times brought the

parties to the verge of civil war, an acceptable compromise was at last found. It was agreed that the Lutheran religion should be legalised within the Empire, and that all Lutheran princes and rulers should have full security for the practice of their faith; that the medieval episcopal jurisdiction should cease within their lands; and that they should retain all ecclesiastical possessions which had been secularised before 1552. For the future each territorial secular ruler might choose between the Catholic and the Lutheran faith, and his decision was to bind all his subjects. If a subject professed another faith than that of his prince, he was to be allowed to emigrate without molestation.

The Religious Peace was hailed with great rejoicing by the citizens of Nuremberg and with immense satisfaction and relief by the city's rulers. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the city of the Pope and the Bishop of Bamberg was now formally at an end and the whole structure of the religious life of the city, which had been built up in the 1520's and sustained in the face of solemn threats and great dangers, was now fully legitimised and rested upon the support of the law of the Empire.

PART TWO

HANS SACHS

## THE EARLY YEARS

Hans Sachs was in his twenty third year when in 1517 Martin Luther nailed his ninety-three theses to the door of the Castle Church of All Saints in Wittenberg. He had returned the previous year to his native Nuremberg with nearly six years of journeyman's travels behind him. His "Wanderjahre" had not only served to develop his skill at his chosen trade of shoe-making and to widen his knowledge of life and human nature; they had also given him a firm sense of his literary vocation and provided a searching test of his moral character.

Before leaving Nuremberg Hans Sachs had spent two years as an apprentice and in this time his godfather, Andreas Sponn, had introduced him to a celebrated mastersinger, (1) Lienhard Nunnenbeck. This step was perhaps occasioned more by his godfather's enthusiasm than by any clearly demonstrated poetic bent on Hans' part. He left Nuremberg, however, conversant with the basic rules of mastersong composition and armed with letters of introduction from Nunnenbeck to brother mastersingers in Regensburg, where he duly reported to the "Singschule". As he was still only a "Schüler" it is unlikely that either here or in Salzburg he played any significant part in the activities of the guilds of mastersingers. What was more important to him at this stage of his development was the opportunity for friendship and social intercourse which his contacts with the local mastersingers provided. His experience of life with all its pleasure, heartbreaks and temptations was rapidly widened. According to his own testimony, in Summa all meiner gedicht, (2) he seems to have had no difficulty in avoiding the many snares with which his way was beset:

"Spil, trunckheit und bulerey  
 Und ander kurtzweil mancherley  
 Ich in meiner wanderschafft  
 Entschlug ....."

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1. See T. Hampe: "Lienhard Nunnenbeck", Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg (Vol. 11, 1895)

2. KG/XXI/337.

On another occasion, in Die neungab Muse oder kunstgöttin  
 (1)  
betreffend, he tells us rather prudishly of this period of  
 his life:

"Weil ich in kurtz verschinnen jern  
 Het als ein jüngeling erfarn  
 In gesellschaft mancherley untrew,  
 In bulerey schandt und nachrew,  
 In trunckenheyt schwechung der sin,  
 In spil heder und ungwin,  
 In fechten, ringen neyd und haß,  
 In saittenspiel verdruß der maß,  
 Was kurtzweil menschlich hertz erfrewt,  
 Darinn sich üben junge lewt,  
 Iedes sein nachgreuß mit im bracht.  
 Des wurdens all von mir veracht."

Whether his youthful defences were as impregnable against human weakness as he would have us believe, we have no means of telling. The consistent moral tone which is struck throughout all his works is the only corroboration we have of his claim to virtuous behaviour on his travels. But the claim fits the picture of the man as he stands out from the pages of his works.

The above poem is of more importance in that it records when and where Sachs first seriously resolved to devote himself to poetry. He clothes his account of how he came to take this decision in the form of a dream which he is supposed to have had in the Austrian town of Wels which he visited on his way from Regensburg to Salzburg in 1513. He describes how the Muse, Clio, appeared to him

and told him of his duty to dedicate his life to "teutsch poeterey":

"Nemblichen auff meistersang,  
 Darinn man fürdert Gottes glori,  
 An tag bringst gut schriftlich histori,  
 Dergleichen auff trawrig tragedi,  
 Auff spil und fröliche comedi,  
 Dialogi und kampf-gesprech,  
 Auff wappenred mit worten spech,  
 Der fürsten schiät, wappen pleßmiren,  
 Lobsprüch, die löblich jugent zieren,  
 Auch aller art höfflich gedicht  
 Von krieg und heydnischer geschicht,  
 Dergleich auff thön und melodey,  
 Auff fabel, schwank und stampaney,  
 Doch all unzucht außgeschlossen,  
 Darauß schandt und ergernuß brossen."

Hans had been on his travels for two years when he allegedly felt this creative urge within him. His earliest recorded work, a love poem, dates from this same year, as do his first original melodies. The next two years were spent mainly in Salzburg and Munich. His leisure time was applied to studying and composing mastersongs in the established forms of the old masters, and to widening his literary knowledge. He read Ovid in German translation and acquired a copy of the Augsburg edition of Heinrich Steinhöwels "Boccaccio". His skill was rewarded by a share in the administration of the Munich "Singschule".

Though Sachs was to remain a loyal mastersinger all his life and did much later to regenerate the craft in Nuremberg and elsewhere, he seems even at this stage to have found the rigid discipline of mastersong composition, with

its restrictions on both form and content, irksome and fettering. This, allied with his natural sense of fun, led him to a show of independence in 1516 in writing Der schwknecht  
 (1)  
werckzewg, which contrary to the mastersingers' general ban on profane subjects, dealt humorously with the history of the shoemaker's craft. His urge to find a freer and more natural vehicle for his poems led him to adopt the rhyming couplet for his "Sprüche" (poems intended to be spoken and not, unlike the mastersongs, to be sung). An unhappy love affair in Munich gave rise to the composition of his first Spruch, Ein kleglich geschichte von zweyen liebhabenden.

(2)  
Der ermürt Lorentz, based on a sad tale of Boccaccio. Hans had been urged by his father to leave Munich, but whatever the father's suspicions may have been, his son seems to have entertained only the most honourable intentions towards the Munich tinsmith's daughter: both this poem and another,  
 (3)  
Kampff-gesprech von der lieb, written some three weeks later, end with a warning that the proper channel for love is marriage.

"Derumb ich endet mein gedicht  
 Zu eyner warnung zugericht,  
 Auff das, wer lieb im hertzen hab,  
 Der laß zu rechter zeytte ab  
 Und spar sein lieb biß in die ee  
 Denn halt ein lieb und keyne meh."

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1. GT/I/15.
  2. KG/II/216.
  3. KG/III/406.

Similar sentiments are expressed frequently in Sachs' early writings and might well be regarded as not too unusual in a young man anxious for marriage; nevertheless, they mark the first recorded signs of Sachs' life-long addiction to moral precepts and probably reflect an already strongly ingrained sense of moral rectitude.

The last year of Hans' wanderings was spent in visits to Würzburg, Frankfurt and the Rhineland towns of Coblenz, Cologne and Aachen. His homeward journey brought him through the towns of Thuringia to Leipzig and late in 1516 he was back in Nuremberg. He arrived home with a strongly marked sense of his literary vocation. His conscientious application to mastersong during his travels and the written evidence of exceptional skill must have pleased his old master, Nunnenbeck. His bold attempts, as in Unterweisung<sup>(1)</sup> was zu singen sey (ein schuel-kunst), to enlarge the subject matter of the mastersong beyond the conventional praise of the Deity and the elaboration of themes drawn from the Scriptures must have earned him more qualified approval,<sup>(2)</sup> whilst his experiments, as in Gismunda mit Gueisgarde with purely profane subjects were doubtless received with little enthusiasm. Hans seems to have taken his master's strictures

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1. GT/I/10.  
2. GT/I/18.

seriously, for his original contributions to the mastersong were for a time more in regard to form than content. These early breaks with convention are, however, indications of a certain independence of mind, and once his sense of moral indignation was aroused, it was this independence of spirit, which was to turn him into such an ardent champion of Martin Luther and to persuade him to use his art so whole-heartedly in the service of the Reformation.

There is nothing in Hans Sachs' early writings to show that he had been in any way deeply affected by the events which preceded Luther's outburst in 1517. He had been born into the family of a master craftsman, who seems to have had some respect for education since he sent Hans to the Spital-schule, where he gained a grounding in grammar, geography and singing as well as learning some Latin and astronomy. Jürg Sachs had no intention, however, of turning his son into a scholar or educating him beyond his station in society, and at the age of fifteen Hans was taken away from school to begin his apprenticeship. There is no hint in any of Sachs' poems that he would have wished to step beyond the confines of his class. We have no reason to believe either, that Hans was brought up other than in the strict line of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. His early mastersongs are based on the traditional material. His first "Bar", Ein maisterstraff von

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1. See also below, p. 183ff.

(1)  
der gotheit, written in 1514, dealt with the doctrine of the  
 Trinity, and in another from the same year, Pewerung vom  
 (2)  
sacrament, which begins

"Maria himel keyserin  
 du hochwirdige meid,"

he characterises the doctrine of transubstantiation as follows:

"Warumb wolt sich dan wandlen nicht  
 brot, wein in fleisch und blut  
 durch wortes kraft, die der priester da  
 sprechen tut?"

Philip Wackernagel quotes the following inscription from a  
 Hans Sachs manuscript, which he examined in the former  
 Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin:

"In dem Süßsen Namen unsers Heil makers Jhesu criste.  
 und Seiner gebendeiten Mutter Marie. ist Dis puch mit  
 meister gesang angefangen. als man zalt Anno Salutis  
 1517 Jar an dem dag Sancte Margarete Der heiligen Junck-  
 frauen .... Welches puch Ich Hans Sachs mit grosser  
 mue und Emsigem Fleiss zw Sam gesamlet hab. auff  
 mengen guten puch." (3)

Wackernagel's collection of "Kirchenlieder" contains two (4)  
 poems by Hans Sachs on the nativity written in 1514 and 1515,  
 and another from 1515 addressed to the Virgin Mary, Salve  
 (5)  
regina (partly in Latin), in which he prays to the Virgin to  
 save him from the wrath of her son. He was similarly in line

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1. GT/I/5.
  2. GT/I/7.
  3. WKL/II/1136.
  4. WKL/II/1137, 1138.
  5. WKL/II/1139.

with Roman Catholicism on the question of hagiolatry, as can be seen from his Mirackel von s. Katerina<sup>(1)</sup> (1518).

Whether Hans Sachs was in fact the paragon of religious orthodoxy he appears to have been from the slender evidence presented above, is impossible to tell. He has left us no account of his early religious experience, or of any discussions he may have had on religious subjects during his travels or in Nuremberg before 1520. It may be doubted, however, that he remained utterly insensitive to the rumblings which preceded 1517. Indeed, the environment in which he grew up makes this improbable, for, as we have seen, Nuremberg had long been a centre of the religious and humanist opposition from which the Reformation sprang and ideas which were soon to gain such universal currency had found a ready circulation in this flourishing and lively city.

In discussing the Puritan attitude to society

R.H. Tawney made the remark:

"If religious zeal and moral enthusiasm are not straitened by the vulgar categories of class and income, experience proves, nevertheless, that there are certain kinds of environment in which they burn more bravely than in others."

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1. WKL/II/1410.
  2. Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (Pelican Books, London, 1938), p. 202.

And he went on to say that

"to contemporaries the chosen seat of the Puritan spirit seemed to be in those classes of society which combined economic independence, education and a certain decent pride in their status."

(1)

Much the same was said by J.L. and B. Hammond of the Methodist revival in the eighteenth century. It would indeed be interesting to study the periodical outbursts of vitality which have marked the history of Christianity from the point of view of their class appeal. It might well be found that the main body of support for such movements has come from the middle class and that only where there has been a flourishing middle class have the movements obtained a wide success.

Whether this thesis has universal validity or not, the cause of Luther was received with the greatest enthusiasm in the German Imperial cities with their flourishing merchant houses and tightly organised craft guilds. It would be a gross exaggeration to pretend that all who rallied to Luther's side were borne up by moral enthusiasm. Sachs had shortly some blunt things to say about the unchristian behaviour of many nominal followers of Luther. But the moral code of the class to which Sachs belonged is probably stricter than that of any other class and it was the element of moral indignation in Luther's appeal which served to overcome the traditional loyalties and conservatism of this class.

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1. The Bleak Age (London, 1934), Chapter 8.

Hans Sachs seems to have taken a lively interest in Luther's writings from 1520 onwards. For three years from this date he wrote nothing but devoted his leisure time to reading widely in the literature of the new cause. Salomon Ranisch records that in 1522 Sachs already had a collection (1) of about forty of Luther's tracts and sermons. It was no ignorant enthusiast who in 1523 published to the world his personal confession of faith which cut through the welter of theological controversy in which the movement was already becoming bogged down to the confusion of the common man. Here, in Die wittenbergisch nachtigall, was an appeal that all could understand and here, too, was evidence that the Muses at Wels had not showered their gifts on Sachs in vain and that the earlier hint of independence had not been crushed in the constricting embrace of the mastersong.

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1. Historischkritische Lebensbeschreibung Hanns Sachsens  
(Altenburg, 1765), p. 65.

## II

### POLEMICS

The publication of Die wittenbergisch nachtigall in July, 1523, was well-timed. The Imperial Diet had been meeting in Nuremberg and the Papal nuntio, Francesco Chierigati, had demanded the delivery of Luther into the hands of the Roman curia and the punishment of all priests, monks and nuns who had broken their vows. The Nuremberg City Council had been instructed to set an example to other cities by imprisoning the four principal "Lutheran" preachers in the city. The Council had refused to comply with this request but had tempered its intransigence by the issue of orders

designed to restore certain practices, such as fasting, the discontinuance of which by the mass of the people in the city had caused offence to those who had remained loyal to the Roman Church. This cautious attitude of the Nuremberg city fathers was dictated by circumstances; the city's privileged position in the Empire made a clear display of partisanship impolitic until the outcome was more certain and at the moment the course of future developments was far from clear. The apparently simple issues raised by Luther between 1517 and 1520 had in the light of subsequent controversy become so complicated that they were no longer comprehensible to the mass of the people but probably also to many educated laymen as well. The time was ripe for a re-statement of the issues in a form which all could understand. Hans Sachs' famous poem did just that.

(1)

Die wittenbergisch nachtigall was prefaced by an explanation in prose of Sachs' reasons for writing his poem. After a Pauline salutation addressed "to all lovers of evan-  
(2)  
gelical truth" he tells his readers that the "blind leaders" of the Roman Church like the scribes and Pharisees have  
(3)  
substituted "for doctrines the commandments of men"; that they have led men away from Christ's simple teaching to

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1. KG/XXII/3.
2. St. Matthew, xv/14.
3. St. Matthew, xv/9.

(1)

"believe on Him"; and that as a result Christ's injunction to men "to love one another" has been lost sight of. He then relates how Martin Luther has begun to write against the errors of the Roman Church and its abuse of the Scriptures; how God's Word has once again been revealed "clar unvermischt"; how Luther, resting his case on the Holy Scriptures, has defended himself against all attacks. Sachs ends his preface by setting out clearly the three objects of his poem. These are, firstly, to explain the significance of recent events to the common man, ignorant of what has happened, so that he may recognise the divine truth revealed by Luther; secondly, to remind those who have seen the divine truth of God's good grace in again revealing the Gospel to men, so that they may be gloriously thankful; and thirdly, to urge those who falsely rest their hope of salvation on "iren selb erdichten wercken", to accept the true Word of God and to base their hopes of glory on Jesus Christ, for in Him alone is "wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

(2)

(3)

The poem opens in the style of an aubade reminiscent of the courtly minnesang:

"Wach auff! es nahent gen dem tag.  
 Ich hör singen im grünen hag  
 Ein wunigkliche nachtigall."

- 
1. St. John, vi/29.  
 2. I Corinthians, i/30.  
 3. KG/VI/368.

The first section takes the form of an allegory. By the treacherous light of the moon a herd of sheep have wandered away from their shepherd and their pasture. They have followed the seductive call of a lion out into the desert. Here they have fed on weeds and thistles and thorns and have become the victims of the lion and the prey of wolves and serpents. But now the lion is furiously raging because the nightingale has proclaimed the rising of the sun and the end of his dominion. He seeks in vain to kill the nightingale, and the other animals who serve the lion -

"Waldesel, schwein, bück, katz und schnecken"

- also fail in their attempts to drown her singing. The sheep strive to escape from the snakes, which stir at the light of day and praise the lion and his sweet pasture. The frogs in their puddles and the wild geese raise their voices against the nightingale. But their cries are in vain. Many sheep return to the shepherd and his pasture, and in spite of attacks and threats from the wolves, join the nightingale in singing the praises of the day.

Then follows the explanation of the allegory.

The nightingale is Martin Luther, who has shown men the way out of the night into which they have been led by the teachings  
(1)  
("moonshine") of the "sophists". The lion is the Pope; the

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1. In 1523 in his Lyed von denn zeweyen Martererern Christi (WA/35/411) Luther had used the term "sophists" to mean any defender of the Roman Catholic Church.

wilderness represents the Roman Church; and the thorns, weeds and thistles are the services, customs and practices on which the Pope feeds his flock. Monks and nuns are "fed" with

"Metten, prim, tertz, vesper, complet,  
 Mit wachen, fasten, langen bet,  
 Mit gerten-hawen, creutzweis-ligen,  
 Mit knien, neygen, bucken, biegen,  
 Mit glocken-leuten, orgel-schlagen,  
 Mit heilthumb-, kertzen-, fannen-tragen,  
 Mit reuchern und mit glocken-tauffen,  
 Mit lampen-schüren, gnad-verkauffen,  
 Mit kirchen-, wachs-, saltz-, wasser-weyen,"

and the laity

"Mit opffern und den liechtlein brennen,  
 Mit walfart und den heyling denen,  
 Den abend fasten, den tag feyren,  
 Und beichten nach der alten leyren,  
 Mit bruderschaft und rosenkrentzen,  
 Mit ablas-lesen, kirchen-schwentzen,  
 Mit pacem-küssen, heilthumb-schawen,  
 Mit meßstiffen und kirchen-bawen,  
 Mit grossem kost die altar zieren,  
 Tafel auff die welschen monieren,  
 Semate meßwand, kelich gülden,  
 Mit monstrantzen und silbern bülden,  
 In clöster schaffen rendt und zynst."

All these practices are condemned

"..... als in der schrift ungründ,  
 Eytel gedicht und menschen-fünd."

This section of the poem contains the gravamen of the Lutheran charge against the old order, the unscriptural basis of the Roman doctrine of salvation through "good works". In Luther's writings the term "works" has several connotations, but it is consistently used by Sachs in the sense of religious observances, things done in blind acceptance of "the commandments

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1. See on this point B.L. Woolf: The Reformation Writings of Martin Luther (London, 1952), Vol. I, p. 353.

of men", on the authority of the Pope, the curia, the priest or the confessor, and he includes both the rites and ceremonies of the Church and the mechanical performance of penances or the purchase of indulgences, or going on pilgrimages, or the like.

Sachs goes on with his interpretation of his allegory. The snares set by the lion are "des bapstes netz", the web of Papal decrees and ordinances instituting such practices as confession, fasting and celibacy. The wolves are all those priests and prelates who assist the Pope and who perform their offices only for the monetary reward they bring. A long list follows of the means adopted by the Roman Church ("römisch schinterey") for extracting money from the faithful.

Sachs then pronounces against the episcopal courts with their hosts of notaries and officials engaged in circumventing the Church's rules on marriage, fasting and so on, and even in extricating sinners from ex-communication - all in return for an appropriate fee. He next passes strictures on the indulgence of bishops in hunting and other worldly pastimes, and on their waging wars like "ravening wolves" to the harm of their fellow Christians. The serpents, who feed on the sheep, are the monks and nuns

"Die ire gute werck verkauffen  
 Umb gelt, käß, ayer, liecht und schmalz,  
 Umb hñner, fleisch, wein, koren, saltz,  
 Damit sie in dem vollen leben  
 Und samlen auch groß schätz darneben."

but such people

"Hant uns den glauben nie erklert  
In Christo, der uns selig macht."

The long deception of mankind practised by the "wolves" and the "serpents" has ended now that "doctor Martin" has drawn men's attention back to the Scriptures; in four years he has written "bey hundert stucken" in the German language exposing the abuses practised by the Church.

Then there follows a broad statement of Lutheran doctrine with its rejection of the adequacy of good works for salvation and its emphasis on salvation by faith alone in Jesus Christ. He begins this section with a statement of the Christian Gospel. The imagery of the first section is developed further. The dawn had broken with the Law and the Prophets, relieving the darkness into which Man had been plunged by Adam's fall. Then with the birth of Christ the glorious sun had risen, redeeming the world from sin and the Devil through the powers of the Holy Spirit. This brings Sachs to the central point of the poem. Salvation comes through faith alone in Jesus Christ and everything a believer does will be well-pleasing in the sight of God. Good works are not the price but the by-product of faith. The Christian

"Thut iederman hertzlich als gutz  
Auß freyer lieb, sucht keinen nutz,  
Mit rathen, helffen, geben, leyhen,  
Mit lehren, straffen, schuld verzeyhen,  
Thut iedem, wie er selber auch wolt,  
Als, das im von im geschehen solt."

These are

"Die waren christlich guten werck,"

but the Christian should note

"Das sie zur seligkeit nit dyn.  
Die seligkeit hat man vorhyn  
Durch den glauben in Christum."

Luther's theology could not have been summed up more succinctly!

Then Sachs gives a short account of the course taken by the Reformation. He recounts how Pope Leo X, fearing a loss of revenue from the annates, the "Papal months", the sale of indulgences, and from pilgrimages to Rome, and fearing also the loss of his authority if men should know "die rechte warheit", had summoned Luther to Rome (July 1518) and, when Luther declined to walk into this trap, to Augsburg, where "der cardinal" (Cajetan), had failed to make him retract his doctrines; the Imperial Diet at Worms had equally failed to bring about a recantation.

Then follows an explanation of the other animals in the allegory. They stand for Luther's opponents - Dr. Eck (the wild boar), Hieronymus Emser (the ram), Augustin von Alfeld (the wild ass) and Johannes Cochleus (the snail) - all

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1. The first year's income from a see or benefice paid on their appointment by Roman ecclesiastics to the Pope.
  2. The right of investiture to a benefice usually belonged to the Pope in alternate months.

of whom have written in vain against the new doctrines. The serpents (the monks and nuns) are raging because Luther has told them that their offices are useless and they have responded by calling Luther "ein erzkätzer, schalck und bößwicht." The frogs (the scholars) croak in their holes (the universities) for fear that Luther's simple teaching will expose their heathen distortions of the Scriptures. The wild geese are the conservative laity who have clung to their old beliefs and way of life, because it was good enough for their fathers.

Sachs now leads into the third main division of the poem. All the attacks on Luther have been in vain:

"Die warheit ist kommen ans liecht.  
 Deßhalb die Christen wider-keren  
 Zu den evangelischen lehren  
 Unseres hirtten Jesu Christ,  
 Der unser aller löser ist,  
 Des glaub allein uns selig macht."

Now the bishops and "etlich weltlichen fürsten" have joined in the struggle to root out the new doctrines. Priests have been seized and beaten and threatened with the stake. Luther's writings have been banned and burnt by the servants of the Anti-Christ ("des Endchrist hofgesind"). All this Christ  
 (1)  
 had foretold but Christians must not be diverted by tyranny from the true Word of God. The end of the reign of Anti-Christ

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1. St. Matthew, x/16-28.

has been prophesied in the Revelation of St. John in the vision of the fall of Babylon beneath the weight of the sins of her people.

(1)

(2)

Sachs ends his poem by comparing Rome with Babylon and calling upon all Christians to return from the wilderness of Rome into the fold of the Good Shepherd, the redeemer, the hope and the comforter of all mankind.

Die wittenbergisch nachtigall does not rank highly as poetry, though the dawn picture in the opening lines shows perhaps more poetic sensitivity than is general in Sachs' verse. On the whole, Sachs' talents were not strong enough to sustain his complicated allegory with truly poetic effect, and for long stretches the poem is dull and pedestrian. It is, however, the content and reception of the poem and its impact on contemporary events which are important. The polemical parts of the poem bear eloquent testimony to Sachs' intimate knowledge of the theological controversies and literature of the time. He shows, too, a wide acquaintance with the institutions and practices of the Roman Church, though on these points his knowledge is less surprising than Kawerau suggested. These matters were in the air and were doubtless widely discussed

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1. Revelations, xviii.
  2. The parallel is based on Daniel, ix.
  3. W. Kawerau: Hans Sachs und die Reformation (Halle, 1889)

even by the common people. It was only in the last year or two that many had lapsed from the Roman Church; all must have subscribed to, grumbled at and known something of the purpose and destination of the many collections conducted by the Church authorities; nor were monks and nuns such rare and retiring figures as they later became. In any case Sachs' information on such matters as the annates and the Papal months was almost certainly drawn from An den Christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, in which Luther had given a detailed account of these and other practices of the Roman curia.

The really striking element in the poem is Sachs' familiarity with the New Testament. His Old Testament references were very probably drawn second-hand from Luther's works, <sup>(1)</sup> but there can be no doubt that he had steeped himself in Luther's New Testament before penning Die wittenbergisch nachtigall. Compared with much of the contemporary polemical literature the matter of Sachs' poem appears remarkably "digested". There are no quotations from the many books and pamphlets he had read, and, as yet, no attempt at subtle distinctions or scholarly argument. He is content to rest his case firmly on the Bible, and by the apparent simplicity of his exposition he shows how perfectly he had understood the doctrine of salvation by faith.

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1. There are, for example, several quotations from the Book of Daniel in "An den Christlichen Adel."

Whatever may be the poem's defects as poetry, it nevertheless stands out from among the vast polemical literature of the time both by its literary quality and the relative restraint of the language. The effect of the poem cannot be doubted, though few direct contemporary references to the poem have been unearthed. Its popularity is indicated by its wide distribution through numerous editions and reprints. There are six different known impressions dated 1523, including one printed in Zwickau, an important centre of the Reformation.

(1)

The poem was imitated and plagiarised, and the term "wittembergisch nachtigall" was taken over into the literature of the time

(2)

(3)

1. Rudolf Genée in Hans Sachs und seine Zeit (Leipzig, 1894) quotes (p. 143) Johann Cochleus' scornful reference in his Commentaria de Actis et scriptis Lutheris to the eagerness with which "cobblers and women" read Luther's New Testament and to the readiness with which they argued matters of religion not only with monks and priests but also with academic theologians. But Cochleus' work was not published until 1549 and if he had Sachs in mind, he was more probably referring to Sachs' prose dialogues than Die wittembergisch nachtigall. Heinrich von Kettenbach's reference to "Schuster" in the passage quoted above (p.33) would seem to be a likely reference to Hans Sachs.
2. Compare, for example, the quotation on p.145 above with the following taken from O. Schade: Satiren und Pasquille aus der Reformationszeit (Vol. II, p. 232):

"Lang metten in der kirche blierren,  
 Prim, terz, sext, non, vesper, complet,  
 Wie solchs dan noch einander geht  
 Vil messen lesen, zwo drei singen,  
 Und sollichs alles sampt vol bringen,  
 Mit wachen, beten, kreuzweis ligen,  
 Mit knien, neigen, bücken, biegen,  
 Mit glocken leuten, orgeln schlagen,  
 Mit heiltum, kerzen, fanen tragen,

(Continued on p. 153)

In 1523 in Nuremberg the balance was swinging in favour of the Lutherans and in the next year a section of the clergy openly declared for the new doctrines. Hans Sachs' celebrated poem, with which his name and fame have been linked down the ages, must be counted amongst the influences which helped to shape the course of future events, at least in Nuremberg, and probably also further afield.

The great popularity, which the publication of Die wittenbergisch nachtigall undoubtedly brought him, spurred Hans Sachs on to further efforts and in the following year he made another significant contribution to the polemical literature of the Reformation period, when he published his four prose dialogues.

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 (Continued from p. 152)

"Mit kirchen, wachs, salz, waßer weihen,  
 Darzu ablaß und gnad verleihen,  
 Mit reuchen, amplen, kerzen brennen  
 Und was me ist, kans nit als nennen."

3. As, for example, in the poem allegedly written by one Hans Heinrich Freyermut in about 1525, Triumphus veritatis. Sik der warheit. Mit dem schwert des geists durch die wittenbergische nachtigall erobert. P. Kalkoff: Die Reformation in der Reichsstadt Nürnberg (Halle, 1926) argues that Freyermut was in fact Lazarus Spengler and that the "victory of truth" refers to the outcome of the religious colloquy held in Nuremberg early in 1525.

The first dialogue - Disputation zwischen einem chorherren und schuchmacher. darinn das wort gottes und ein  
recht Christlich wesen verfochten wirt (1) - opens with a link  
 with Die wittenbergisch nachtigall and one of the objects of  
 the work was to show the vexatious effect the poem had had  
 on the ecclesiastical opponents of the Reformation.

A cobbler, Meister Hanns, calls on a canon, who  
 excuses his absence from church by saying that he has just been  
 feeding his nightingale. The cobbler replies that he knows a  
 shoemaker who has a nightingale which has just begun to sing.  
 The canon flies into a rage and curses the shoemaker for  
 having slandered the Pope and the clergy. This gives Sachs the  
 opportunity to defend himself, through the cobbler, against  
 the attacks made on him by the clergy. Has he not a Christian  
 duty to help his sinful brother? the cobbler asks. The canon  
 replies that the clergy know full well what sin is. He then  
 quotes Roman Canon Law in defence of the Pope, whom he holds  
 to be above God's commandments and his actions, however bad,  
 above reproach. The cobbler rejects this thesis and insists

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1. KG/XXII/6. Translated into English in 1548 by the printer, Anthony Skoloker as "A goodly dysputation between a Christian Shomaker and a Poppyshe Parson, with two other persones more, done within the famous citie of Norembough". Skoloker is believed to have been in exile in Germany during the latter years of Henry VIII's reign, because of his evangelical views. See C.H. Herford: Studies in the literary relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century (Cambridge, 1886), p. 51ff.

on the right of all, including the laity, to reprove and punish sin wherever it is found, even amongst the clergy. The priest denies this and echoes Pliny's cry, "ne sutor supra crepidam", which had been quoted with such aptness against Hans Sachs: "einem schuster zympt mit leder und schwartz umbzugeen und nicht mit der heyligenn schrift". The cobbler makes a spirited reply to this and attempts to prove by many quotations from the Scriptures that every Christian has the right to read the Bible for himself. The priest makes no reference to difficulties caused in the past by questions of Biblical interpretation. Such feeble defence as he is allowed to make of the Church's authority is swept away by the cobbler's appropriation of Joel's prophecy that God will pour out his spirit upon all flesh. Schultheiß remarked that this passage shows that the fundamental need of the time was for a greater personal element in religious life and that it was this which made possible the surprising response to Luther's attack on the cold authority of the Church. This may be partly true but it is not by any means the whole explanation of Luther's success.

The conversation now leads on to a discussion of

Luther's monograph, Von der christlichen freyheit, and to

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1. Joel, ii/28.
  2. F. Schultheiß: Hans Sachs in seinem Verhältnis zur Reformation, (Munich, 1879), p. 13.
  3. Von der Freyheyt eynisz Christen menschen (WA/VII/12-38)

statements by the cobbler of the Lutheran attitude to various aspects of Roman Church practice. The mediation of saints is not necessary because "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous"<sup>(1)</sup>. Fasting and confession are not God's commandments. The priest's not unreasonable enquiry:

"Wolt it denn gar nichts thun, dann was von got geboten und in der schrift verfaßt ist?" is dismissed with an almost contemptuous "Was soll ich dann erst mer auff mich laden?"

This brings up the subject of Church Councils and the validity of their decisions. These are all rejected by the cobbler except those of the Council of Jerusalem, which the poor canon has apparently never heard of! When his Bible has been fetched and dusted and the relevant passage in Acts found for him, the canon offers to read later "was die alten gesellen gutz gemacht haben". The cobbler tells him that the Councils have been responsible for "mercklicher schaden zween in der Christenheyt". These are, firstly, the production of a host of commandments not founded on the Scriptures, such as the celibacy of the priesthood and the prohibition of meat-eating, but which have been given equal validity with God's commandments; and secondly, the false emphasis they have placed on "good works".

This opens the way for a discussion of the principal

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1. I John, 11/1.

issue of the Reformation, whether good works are, or are not, necessary to salvation, and for a statement of the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith. This causes the canon to declare that Luther is the greatest heretic since Arius and the cobbler his direct descendant, and that in the end the new doctrines will be put to the sword. A discussion then follows on the Church's right to use force as an instrument of Christian conversion. The cobbler finally poses the problem in the form of an antithesis: "dyse prediger wolten uns all gern zu Christo führen, nyemand außgenommen. So wolt ir sy mit sampt uns gern zum hencker führen". And he concludes the conversation with the final reproach that in attacking Luther the canon and his kind are not concerned with the glory of God but with their own power and wealth which are linked with the old order. The church bells call the canon to his next service and the cobbler begs pardon for his presumptuousness and takes his leave.

A short epilogue follows. The canon complains to his cook about the importunity of the laity and she expresses her surprise that a layman should show such skill in argument. He finds the reason for this in the changed circumstances; in former times Papal authority had been strong enough to deal with a heretic like John Huss, but now the Lutheran preachers cannot be silenced and wish to argue the point with the Bishops and even the Pope himself. He calls in his manservant

and bids him dig out some texts from the Bible to beat the cobbler with if he comes again. When his servant points out to him that he ought to know his Bible since he has assisted in the examination of ordinands, the canon replies that for that purpose he had needed "nur schulerische leer .... und gar wenig das geistlich recht, welches die heyligen vetter in den conciliis beschlossen haben". The servant describes the decisions of the Councils as "menschenfünd". He, too, thus stands revealed as a follower of Luther and is driven out of the house. The dialogue ends with the canon ordering his cook to make arrangements for a banquet after the Mass to be followed by dice and cards.

Hans Sachs had three objects in writing this dialogue: firstly, to defend himself against the attacks made upon him after the publication of Die wittenbergisch nachtigall; secondly, to renew his assault on Catholic doctrine and practice; and thirdly, to expose the ignorance of the clergy. The skill with which Sachs achieved his third object accounts largely for the popularity of this dialogue, of which eleven different impressions dated 1524 are extant. The aphorism at the end - "ir bauch ir got" - sums up the attitude of this priest and his kind to their work. It is clear from the first that the cobbler is greatly superior to the canon in his knowledge of the Bible; the latter has in fact long ceased to be interested in it. When the cobbler

enquires if the canon has a Bible (!) he sends his cook for "das groß alt buch". She fails to find it at first and returns with the Decretals. The right book is at last brought, the dust is wiped off and the canon shows how unfamiliar he is with the Bible lay-out by asking the cobbler to look up Acts xv for him. He then tells his cook to mark the passage about the Council of Jerusalem, because he wishes "von wunders wegen" to read "was die alten gesellen gutz gemacht haben". The satire is obvious.

Sachs had begun his picture of the canon by showing how negligent he was of his duties. He is feeding his nightingale and at the same time he "thrashes off" his horary prayers. The final touches complete the picture of the worldly prelate; he orders the cook to buy in a dozen or so "kraynwetvogel" (fieldfare) for a banquet, to put the Bible out of sight and get out the dice and playing cards.

The Reformation released a flood of hatred against the Roman Catholic Church and the writers of the popular tracts and dialogues of the day allowed themselves full rein in baiting the clergy, in retailing scandalous stories of their worldliness and immorality and in ridiculing their ignorance. There was, it is true, plenty of evidence at this time to support the severest strictures on the worldly behaviour of priests, especially those in the higher ranks, and on the

immorality of monks and nuns, but the atmosphere in which the religious controversies were fought out precluded any attempt to be fair to the many good and honest monks and clergy who doubtless existed. Like his contemporaries Sachs in this dialogue makes no attempt to be fair in drawing his picture of the canon, but it can at least be said in his favour that the language of this dialogue is more moderate and the humour more gentle and kindly than in much that was being written by others, including Luther, at the same time.

The first of Sachs' dialogues bears witness to the care that he had devoted to the study of Luther's writings, especially the first of the three primary Reformation documents, An den Christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, and also Warum des Papstes und seiner Jünger Bücher v. D. Martin Luther verbrannt<sup>(1)</sup> sind". The earlier part of the dialogue reflects his acceptance of the most controversial of Luther's doctrines, the priesthood of the laity. "Ubir das, szo sein wir yhe alle priester, .... alle einen glauben, ein Evangely, einerlei sacrament haben; wie solten wir den nit auch haben macht, zuschmecken und urteylen, was do recht odder unrecht ym glauben were?"<sup>(2)</sup> Luther wrote in An den Christlichen Adel, and Sachs echoes Luther with such remarks as "Solt denn ein getauffter

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1. WA/VII/152-182.  
2. WA/VI/412.

christ seinem bruder nit helffen, so er yn sech ligen in der beschwert seyner gewissen?" and, on the basis of Ezekiel xxxiii/8, "Derhalb sol und muß ein getauffter seinen sündigen bruder straffen, er sey geweicht oder nit". The canon defends the special position of the Pope by quoting the canon law: "Der bapst ist ein vicarius Christi, darnach dy cardinäl, bishove mitsampt dem gantzen geistlichen stand, von den stet in geystlichen rechten, c. solite de majoritate et obedientia: Sie bedewten die sonn und der weltlich gewalt bedewt den mon"; and "Wenn der papst so böß wer, das er unzelich menschen mit grossem hawffen zum teüffel füret, dörsst in doch nyemant straffen." (1) The cobbler's reply, quoting St. Matthew xviii/15, (2) reflects Luther on this point in An den Christlichen Adel. when he argues that if the Pope acts contrary to Scripture he must be punished and constrained. There is an echo of Luther's "Open Letter to the Pope" in the cobbler's comment on the secular position of the Pope: "Ist der bapst ein solcher geweltiger herr, so ist er gewyßlich kein stathalter Christi". (3)

The broad picture of the canon, well-versed in the Decretals and canon law but grossly ignorant of the Scriptures, owes much to Luther's account of the contemporary state of the universities and in particular of their theological

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1. See Luther: WA/VI/410, 415, 416, and WA/VII/107 and 165.
  2. WA/VI/413.
  3. Sendbrief an den Papst Leo X (WA/VII/9-10). See also WA/VII/169, where Luther like Sachs quotes St. Luke xxii/25, though less accurately!

faculties. "Meine lieben Theologen ... lassen die Biblien wol rügen unnd lesen sententias ... die Biblien mag wol lesen der nit priester ist, aber sententias musz ein priester lesen ... Der bapst gepeut ... seine gesetz in den schulen und gerichtten zulesen und prauchen, aber das Evangelium wirt wenig gedacht: also thut man auch, das das Evangelium in schulen und gerichtten wol mussig unter der benck ym stawb ligt, auff das des Bapsts schedliche gesetz nur allein regieren mugen".<sup>(1)</sup>  
 This passage doubtless suggested to Sachs the realistic comedy scene of the dusty Bible.

On one point - the validity of decisions taken in Church Councils - Sachs appears to carry his strictures further than Luther, whom he had obviously misunderstood. He gives the impression that he accepts only the Council of Jerusalem, whilst Luther only rejected the arbitrary decisions of the Lateran Councils and disputed the Pope's exclusive right to summon a Council.<sup>(2)</sup> Sachs puts a restrictive interpretation on St. John xv/26, when he misquotes: "Der tröster, der heylig geyst, welchen mein vater senden wirt in meinem namen, derselbig wirdt euch alles leeren und euch erindern alles des, das ich euch gesagt hab"; and adds the comment:

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1. WA/VI/460.
  2. WA/VI/413.

"er spricht nit, er wird euch neu ding leern, welches ich euch nit gesagt hab, würdt euch erindern, erklären, auff das irs recht verstet, wie ichs gemacht hab". Sachs' limitations on the power of the Holy Spirit are distinctly naïve and indicate the danger of misinterpretation and oversimplification (1) which Luther ran. The mention of the Councils, however, was probably only intended as a bridge to a discussion of "good works". In his treatment of the latter subject it is clear that, though he refers to it, Sachs has not yet digested Luther's remarks in Von der Freyheytt eynisz Christen menschen. Between the writing of the first and fourth dialogues, he was to arrive at a much truer insight into the real meaning of "good works". Here as in Die wittenbergisch nachtigall they are rejected out of hand as "menschen-gebot, -leer, -fünd und auffsetzung".

As the title suggests - Eyn gesprech von den scheinwercken der gaystlichen und iren gelübden, damit sy zu verlesterung des bluts Christi vermaynen selig zu werden (2)

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1. In putting a brake on the too rapid acceptance of "innovations" in the religious life of the city, the Nuremberg City Council seems to have appreciated that the interpretation of the Bible was no simple matter and that without the guidance of the Holy Spirit mistakes would be made. Cf. Luther, WA/VI/460: "aber sey nur gewisz, eynen Doctor der heyligenn schrift wirt dir niemandt machenn, denn allein der heylig geyst vom hymel, wie Christus sagt, Johan vi: Sie müssen alle von got selber geleret sein".
  2. KG/XXII/34.

the second dialogue deals with a more restricted and specialised subject, the oaths of poverty, chastity and obedience taken by the monastic orders. The original impression was accompanied by a woodcut, showing two men sitting facing one another, whilst two mendicant friars stand at the door. The conversation takes place between one of the monks and the two men, Hans, the shoemaker, and Peter, the baker.

The dialogue opens with Brother Heinrich asking the two men for a candle. The request is refused with a quotation from Deuteronomy xv/4: "Keyn betler soll unter  
(1) such sein". The monk counters Peter with other quotations:  
(2) "Give to him that asketh thee" and "Give alms of such as  
(3) thou hast". Peter then offers a Pfennig but his offer is declined by the monk on the grounds that his order does not allow him to possess money. This leads into the discussion of the monastic vows. Hans says that the oath of poverty is only an excuse for idleness and for living off the people. The monk reminds him of the good works which they perform and the services they hold. Peter then tells him scornfully that

1. Here again Sachs distorts the Scriptures. This text is made to bear an interpretation totally at variance with the passage from which it is taken; "betler" here = "poor person" and not "beggar"; the general tenor of this section of Deuteronomy is that "the poor are always with us and the Lord loves a cheerful giver".
2. St. Matthew, v/42.
3. St. Luke, xi/41.

it is only unwanted food that the monasteries distribute to the poor and that even "die gaistlichen tröstung" are in poor supply if the recipient cannot afford to pay well for them.

Hans drops the subject of poverty at this point by bluntly asking if the monks keep their oath of chastity. Doesn't the collecting of alms give them plenty of opportunities for breaking their oath? The monk frankly admits that there are a few black sheep but reminds the two men that the mortification of the flesh and indeed all the rules and statutes of the monastic orders are aimed at suppressing the desires of the flesh. Peter thinks little of mortifications; his own life is full of them! "So muß ich mit meinen knechten den gantzen tag arbeiten, ubel essen und legen uns oft kaum umb mettenzeit nider; da singen mir dann meine kynder oft erst metten; ich hab vil ein hertern orden dann ir"<sup>(1)</sup>. Hans asks why the monks need to take such vows and why the renunciation of the Devil and all his works at baptism is not sufficient<sup>(2)</sup>. The monk replies that entry into an order is in fact a second baptism in which men are given new names and are born again.

Hans doubts whether the monks keep their third oath.

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1. These remarks give a hint of the undercurrent of social unrest which came to the surface with the Reformation and of which one of the principal manifestations was a hatred of the clergy and monks for their supposedly more comfortable existence.
  2. This point was made by Luther in the section on baptism in De captivitate Babylonica ecclesiae (WA/VI/538-539)

obedience, any better than the others. It is easy enough to obey in things they like doing but the monastic orders contract out of or are exempt from the burdens borne by ordinary people - "fröhen, zehenden, rayßgelt, wachgelt, stewergelt, zynßgelt, lehengelt, zollgelt, ungel<sup>(1)</sup> ..." Their rule of obedience relates to such things as "kutten, platten, stricken, schuhen, fleisch meiden, schweigen, singen, lesen, mettengeen, chorsteen, bucken, knien und solchen eüsserlichen ertichten wercken," and Hans quotes in support: "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"<sup>(2)</sup>. He tells the monks they are "whited sepulchres", "full of hypocrisy and iniquity". "Ir haltet armut on mangel, und keüschait, die besudelt ist, und gehorsam, die erticht ist".

The patient forbearance of the simple monk in face of Hans' heated outbursts at last apparently has its effect and Hans asks him in a more friendly tone to tell him why he joined his order. On learning that he has taken his vows in the hope of salvation Hans at once tells him that salvation comes through faith and not through "works" which the monks confuse with faith, and he advises him to leave the cloister. The monk replies that he has not heard much good said of those monks who have left their orders, but Peter concludes that this only

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1. See Footnote 1, p. 165.  
2. St. Matthew xv/9.

proves that such monks had already sinned in their hearts whilst still in the monasteries. Hans adds that those who have been driven to take this step "durch erkantnuß des wort gottes ... und mit freyem sicherm gewissen" should not be condemned. When the monk refuses to follow their example Hans at once again reminds him of the uselessness of the monastic life and of the promises of Christ to all who approach Him in humility and the spirit of the publican who cried "God be merciful to me a sinner."

The discussion ends with Peter giving the monk two candles and the advice that he should use them for reading the Bible and not Scotus and Bonaventura. The monk then leaves them, promising as he goes to look more closely into the matters they have been discussing.

The whole tone and purpose of the dialogue is summed up in the final quotation: "Neither shall they cover <sup>(1)</sup> themselves with their works, their works are works of iniquity". Sachs' object was to attack the foundations of the monastic system, the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and the host of rules and statutes which governed the practice of the monastic life. More precisely, he sought to show that the vows were not kept, that the rules and statutes had no basis in the Scriptures, and that the only way to salvation was

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1. Isaiah, lix/6.

through faith in Jesus Christ.

The dialogue carries further Sachs' assault on the Roman Catholic Church. The first dialogue had contained an exposure of the unworthy priest and an attack on Catholic dogma; in the second, he turned his attention to the "ecclesia militans", the monastic orders. His technique of argument<sup>(1)</sup> is in both cases broadly the same - the use of Biblical quotations by simple men to corner and confound their ecclesiastical opponents. The method was more successful in the first dialogue which gains from the crude characterisation of the ignorant and worldly priest. The monk, deliberately or not, is more sympathetically drawn; he has no pretence to scholarship but is a simple pious man who believes implicitly in what he has been taught by his ecclesiastical superiors. His patient refusal to be goaded into anger by Hans' churlish insults draw us (though it would doubtless have gone unnoticed by the biased readers of the day) unconsciously to his support. Peter and Hans produce little "proof" that the monastic vows were broken (though here Sachs could perhaps assume "common knowledge" amongst his readers) and we can admire the refusal of the monk to be brow-beaten into accepting their criticism of the monastic rules and his reasonableness

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1. The dialogue was almost certainly inspired by the section on the mendicant orders in Luther's An den Christlichen Adel (WA/VI/438-440)

in agreeing to study what they have said. It can only be assumed that if Sachs intentionally painted the monk in this light, he did so in order to show how good simple people were led astray by the Roman Church. The impression he doubtless wished to leave at the end was that on further consideration the monk would be convinced by the weight of argument and would leave his order. But the arguments are such that only the most biassed Lutheran convert would be sure of this outcome.

Although Sachs reflects Luther fairly accurately on the subject of the poverty of the monastic orders, he also echoes the prevailing jealousies and prejudices of his own class, when, for example, in reply to the monk's statement: "Wir verlassen das unser williglich", he lets Peter reply: "Ja, ewer mancher verlest kaum ayns gulden werdt und dritt in ain pfründ, wol cc. gulden werdt". And when the monk points out that the monasteries receive little in the way of contributions from people like Hans and Peter, but that their income comes rather from "grosse herren und reiche bürger und kauflewt", and Peter replies: "Ist gut; wo nemen es die selbigen? Allain bey uns; wir die aylfftausent mertrer müssens zollen, da sy uns betriegen, ubernötten, dringen, zwingen, daß oft das plut hernach möcht gan, da speisen sy darnach auch heillosen vätter (hailige vätter soll ich sagen) mit, die starck und faul seind, und selber wol arbeiten unnd

andere arme krancke Christen mit inen ernören möchten", we have another hint of the underlying social discontent reflected in this dialogue.

In the matter of the chastity of the monks and clergy Sachs shows none of Luther's deep understanding of the problem. In An den Christlichen Adel Luther's remarks on celibacy are based on his own personal anguish and experience. Celibacy was no problem to Sachs, who was by this time a married man, and so does not probe deeply, but at least it can be said that he avoids the grosser exaggerations of his contemporaries. He knows chastity is only for the few, but he is unable to regard it, as Luther did, as a special grace.

Criticism of the monastic orders was so intense in Nuremberg in 1524 that public order was gravely threatened. In the circumstances the second dialogue was sure of a ready sale. If it strikes us as being less effective than the first, this may perhaps be explained by certain doubts which were then forming in Sachs' mind about the way in which events were shaping. As the Lutheran movement had spread certain disturbing features had manifested themselves. It is noteworthy that in this dialogue Sachs distinguishes for the first time between "Lutheran" and "evangelical". When Peter launches the attack on the monk, the latter remarks: "Ich hür wol, ir seydt lutherisch", to which Peter replies: "Nayn,

Sonder evangelisch". Despite his undiminished reverence for Luther's name we have here a hint that Sachs was not without his doubts about some of Luther's followers and he allows the monk to make one of the most telling points in the dialogue, when he objects that the behaviour of many of the runaway monks and nuns left much to be desired. Sachs was to develop his criticisms of the "Lutherans" in his third and fourth dialogues.

In a long preface, dedicated to Hans Odrer of Breslau, Sachs gave his reasons for writing his third dialogue - Ein dialogus des inhalt ein argument der Römischen wider des christlich heufflein, den geytz, auch ander offentlich laster u.s.w. betreffend. (1) The Roman Catholics, he says, having failed to win their case by argument, have now switched their attacks to the sinful lives of their opponents. Sachs hopes that the sins of his co-religionists will soon fall away like the walls of Jericho before "the blast of the evangelical trumpet".

The protagonists this time are Junker Reichenburger, a "new evangelical" and a well-to-do merchant, and Romanus, a Roman Catholic priest. After an exchange of greetings Reichenburger accuses Romanus of avarice and receives the

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1. KG/XXII/51.

spirited reply that the world is flooded with greed and that it is no use the "new evangelicals" pretending that priests and monks are alone addicted to this vice; they, too, are equally guilty. The merchant expresses the view that the Church has for long been swindling people with the sale of indulgences, masses for the souls of the dead and the whole apparatus of "good works". Romanus counters this attack with a list of all the frauds perpetrated by the evangelicals in their business dealings: speculating in wine and corn and hiding it away for sale at high prices in time of need; cornering the market in commodities in order to push up the prices; misrepresenting the quality of goods; giving short weight and measure; and making false entries. Romanus repeatedly punctuates his list with the telling question: "Ist das gut evangelisch?" There is no doubt about Sachs' own views on these matters.

Romanus then takes to task unscrupulous traders who unjustly accuse pieceworkers of bad work in order to reduce their earnings. Reichenburger agrees that such treatment is unchristian. The priest next turns to the vexed  
(1)  
question of usury and proves that it is contrary to the

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1. The practice of usury was frequently attacked in the Reformation period, e.g. in Luther's Kleiner sermon vom wucher (1519, WA/VI/1-8) and Grosser sermon vom wucher (1520, WA/VI/33-60). Calvin wrote a famous letter on usury and delivered sermons on the subject. See also O. Schade: Satiren und Pasquille, op. cit., Vol. II/73 ("Von der gult").

Scriptures. The merchant's admission that he has no answer to this charge, tells us clearly what Sachs' view was in this matter, too.

Romanus goes on to deplore the cruel treatment meted out to insolvent debtors and though he accepts the merchant's contention that the poverty of some of these is their own fault and they deserve all they get, he shows that it is contrary to the Scriptures to squeeze those whose misfortunes are due to illness and other unavoidable troubles. He invokes the Scriptures, too, against the storing up of riches on earth, which leads Reichenburger to defend the rights of the rich to their wealth. Were not Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and many of the old patriarchs rich men? There can be no harm in wealth, so long as hopes of salvation are not based on it. In any case since the Word of God has been explained to them (he implies by Luther) many well-to-do men have shown great generosity in their treatment of the poor. Romanus discounts this. So far as he can see from their attitude to the poor, the rich have "das ewangelisch wort und nicht die werk". The vice of greed is as widespread amongst the different classes as ever and the laity are in no position to accuse the clergy of avarice. Reichenburger admits that there are still plenty of mean and selfish men amongst the rich, but there are also numbers of good Christians who give alms secretly and not ostentatiously like the

Pharisees. He expresses the hope that with the continued preaching of the Gospel greed and the other vices, as well as doubtful trade practices will disappear. Romanus scoffs that the evangelicals have been preaching the Word of God for a long time without much result. Reichenburger retorts that the effects of much false teaching must first be eradicated; the commandments of God must be expounded along side the Gospel, "dem menschen sein bößhafftig hertz ... erschrecken und demütig zu machen". Only then will men appreciate the hope of grace held out to them in the Gospel message and the fruits of their conversion be seen.

Romanus remarks that the evangelicals have seized the opportunity to indulge themselves by giving up fasting, confession, prayer, attendance at church, pilgrimages and so on, but far from there being any "good fruit" they still wallow in their old vices. Reichenburger sadly admits this but points out that no one is without sin. Only on the day of judgement will the true children of God be known. He accuses the clergy of attacking the sinful lives of the evangelicals because they have failed to refute their doctrines, to which Romanus makes the obvious reply that if only they would give up their sinful lives it would prove that their doctrines were from God. So long as their behaviour to one another is "rutzigs und reüddigs", he has no desire to join them, but if there were "one fold and one

(1)  
shepherd", he would gladly throw away his cowl.

This dialogue is particularly interesting not only for the insight it gives into the progress of the Reformation but also for the light it sheds on contemporary economic practices and commercial morality.

It is perhaps one of the saddest coincidences of history that the Reformation should have burst upon Europe at a time when the old medieval economic order was breaking up. The view has often been put forward that the Reformation inaugurated a period of unscrupulous commercialism, which had previously been held in check by the teaching of the Church. (2) Though the later course of events may lend some credence to this view, it is profoundly untrue of the first generation of the Reformers. Luther hated greed, avarice and usury with all the intensity of the medieval churchman. He (3) suspected merchants, he denounced bankers, and he fulminated (4) against usury. Luther's great revolt was in fact set in motion partly as a protest against the high-pressure salesmanship of the notorious indulgence-hawker, Tetzel. (Tetzel was

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1. St. John x/16.
  2. See R.H. Tawney, op. cit., p. 92ff on the origins of this idea.
  3. See R. Ehrenberg: Das Zeitalter der Fugger (Jena, 1922) Vol. I, p. 117.
  4. See Footnote on p. 172 above, and also Luther's Von der Kauffshandlung (1524, WA/XV/279-322) and An die Pfarrherrn wider den wucher zu predigen (1540, WA/LI/325-424)

accompanied on his travels by an agent of the Fuggers, who took charge of all the money collected, part of which went to pay debts owed to the Fuggers.<sup>(1)</sup> Sachs has little mercy on the merchant, for whom he has the dislike of the craftsman catering for a known and limited market, committed through his guild to high standards of workmanship and fair trade dealings. He resents the exploitation of piece-workers by unscrupulous tradesmen on moral grounds, but also doubtless because of the threat to the guilds which such men represented. Behind his heartfelt strictures on the harsh treatment of debtors in the courts it is possible to sense, if not his own experience, at least that of friends and fellow craftsmen. His denunciation of "forestalling", "engrossing" and "regrating", the cardinal business sins of the Middle Ages, indicate how widespread these practices had become by the beginning of the sixteenth century. Here one can sense the indignation of the ordinary citizen faced with high and rising prices and Sachs' approval of "fürkauffen, ... wo ein oberkeit fürkaufft und gemeinen nutz sucht" shows how the pressure of circumstances had forced on municipalities the recognition that if engrossing and forestalling were prohibited to the individual, it was incumbent upon them to exercise foresight and adopt precautionary measures by the institution of municipal storehouses.

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1. See p. 14-15 above.

But the deep trend of events was against Luther and the economic reactionaries. The religious individualism preached by Luther was bound to carry over into economic life and many of Luther's followers must have been placed in the sad dilemma of Sachs' Reichenburger.

1524 was a crucial year in the progress of the Reformation in Nuremberg. The City Council's policy of keeping the peace between both sides, taking a middle course and siding neither with reactionary nor with revolutionary began to break down before the force of public opinion. On Good Friday, 1524, the prior of the Augustinian monastery in Nuremberg read the Mass in German with Lutheran omissions and for the first time in the city administered the sacrament in both kinds to the laity. Both parish churches followed his example. Shortly afterwards steps were taken by representatives of the city to determine a new form of worship to be used in the city churches and it is possible to sense a reference to this in Romanus' scornful allusion to "ewer ewangelisch prediger" and more especially in the general tone of his latter remarks.

Sachs had clearly been disappointed by the results of the evangelical teaching and preaching in the city. One can sense in the third dialogue that he feels the reproaches of Romanus to be well-founded. His expectations of a spiritual

regeneration which would issue in a rapid regeneration of both private and public conduct had not been realised. Unlike Pirekheimer and others who grew soured and disappointed with Luther, Sachs did not lose faith in the new doctrines. In the third dialogue, however, he showed that he was far from satisfied with the course of events. In the fourth dialogue he developed even more sharply his attack on the shortcomings of many Lutherans.

In the fourth dialogue - Eyn gesprech eynes evangelischen Christen mit einem Lutherischen, darin der ergerlich wandel etlicher, die sich Lutherisch nennen, angezaigt und brüderlich gestrafft wird <sup>(1)</sup> - there are again two main speakers. Both Peter, a "Lutheran", and Hans, an "evangelical", are equally keen adherents of the new order, but whereas Peter is unthinking and inconsiderate in his attitude to its opponents, Hans is more cautious and would rather seek to win over the supporters of the old order through friendly intercourse and instruction.

The different attitudes of the two are seen right at the beginning. Peter tells Hans how angry his father-in-law had been to find him eating roast veal on a Friday. This gives Hans an opportunity to explain what in his view is

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1. KG/XXII/69.

meant by "Christian liberty". He agrees that there is no sin in eating meat at any time but he feels that the Christian has a primary duty not to give offence to his fellows. He quotes: "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak"<sup>(1)</sup> and says that in this instance it would have been more in keeping with the spirit of the Gospels and quite without prejudice to the doctrine of Christian liberty if Peter had refrained from eating meat on fast days or had at least eaten it in private so as not to give offence to his father-in-law. The matter is thrashed out amid a welter of Biblical quotations and in the end Peter agrees to do as Hans suggests.

Meister Ulrich, Peter's father-in-law, now comes in and Hans invites him to come to church with them. He replies that he would rather the preacher were hanged as a heretic. The preacher, so Peter has told him, has said that there is no longer any need to pray or revere the saints or observe any of the old customs - fasting, confession, masses for the dead and the like - and that good works are not essential to salvation. To him this is clear proof of heresy. Hans again reproaches Peter. It was wrong of him, he says, to quote the preacher without adding his interpretation

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1. Romans xiv/21.

of the new doctrines. The only result of such behaviour is to embitter Roman Catholics and confirm them in their old beliefs. A true Christian would tell them of the words of solace he has heard from the preacher, of how the death of Christ alone opened the way to salvation. They would then want to hear the sermons and the preacher's explanations themselves and in this way they would be brought to a sounder knowledge of the truth of God. Meister Ulrich declares that this appeals to him but his son-in-law and his "Lutheran" friends are only interested in abusing monks and priests. Hans then reproves Peter for forgetting Christ's command to love one's neighbour and begs him to show charity and moderation towards monks and priests and to make intercession for them instead of disparaging them. Another battle of quotations ensues when Peter attempts to justify himself and eventually he is driven to ask: "Warum schreyen dann unser prediger der geistlichen falsche verführische leer, gottdienst, gebot und leben also auff der cantzel auß?" What is right for "Doctor Martin" must be all right for him. Hans will not accept the parallel. Luther and his preachers are moved by Christian charity, but those who sit over their wine and revile the Roman clergy are only actuated by envy, arrogance and hate; they only use Doctor Luther as a cloak for their unseemly behaviour.

Meister Ulrich then complains about the jeers and ridicule heaped on non-Lutherans by Peter and his sort. Hans strongly condemns this, too, and tells Peter that it is his duty to impart the Word of God to ignorant people and to show them their errors in a kindly way. When Peter grumbles that such people will not accept the message of the Scriptures, Hans tells him that this is because of the poor example he and his kind set by their rough lives. It is only in those who act charitably towards their neighbours that the true faith can be seen, and only by leading truly Christian lives and following the Gospel of Christ can they show the truth of Luther's teaching.

Meister Ulrich wholeheartedly agrees with Hans and now expresses his willingness to go to church with them to see if he too can become "ain gutter Christ".

(1)

Schultheiß regards Sachs' fourth dialogue "als ein Beweis für seine maßvolle Gesinnung". Sachs' views are indeed put here with remarkable restraint, especially in comparison with the earlier dialogues and Die wittenbergisch nachtigall. But the tone of "more in sorrow than in anger" was clearly occasioned by the fact that Sachs is here taking his own side to task. It is more relevant to ask why in the latter part

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1. Op. cit., p. 23.

of 1524 Sachs found it necessary to turn from attacking the Roman Catholics to admonishing his fellow Lutherans.

The explanation is partly to be found in the local situation in Nuremberg in 1524. By the end of that year the new doctrines had found overwhelming acceptance in the city and Sachs may be pardoned for having thought that the universal victory of the cause would not be long delayed. In these circumstances he possibly felt that those who still clung to their old beliefs would more probably be won over by tact and conciliation than by further abuse and denunciation. There had already been too much of the latter. In February, 1522, Luther had been constrained to issue Eyn trew vormanung Martini Luther tzu allen Christen tzu vorhuten fur auffruhr unnd  
 (1)  
empörung from which Sachs often quotes almost verbatim in the fourth dialogue. Thus Sachs makes Hans say to Peter: "Du und dein gesellen fart mit sölchen stücken herauß: das und das sagt unser prediger, und sagt doch nit die ursach dabey, wie es euch der prediger hat gesagt, und stürtzet die einfeltigen lewt von der leer, die verflüchen darnach die christlichen prediger und fliehen darnach sölliche ir predig, daran sy den grundt möchten hören, und verlestern das heilig wort gottes, unwissendt und sprechend: Ist das die neue leer, so will ich in meinem altenn glawben pleiben." Luther had

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1. WA/VIII/670ff.

written similarly: "Es sind ettlich, szo sie eyn blatt oder tzwey gelesen, odder ein predigt gehoret, rips raps auszher wisschen, und nichts mehr thun denn ubirfaren und vorsprechenn die andern mit yhrem wesen, als die nit Evangelisch seyn, unangesehen das tzu weylen schlecht eynfeltige leutt sind, die wohl die warheyt lernten, so mann sie yhn sagete ... Sie thunsz nur derumb, das sie wollen etwas newesz wissen und gut lutherisch gesehen seyn. Aber sie missbrauchen des heyli- gen Evangelii tzu yhrem mutwillen. Da mit wirstu das Evangelium nymmer mehr ynn die hertzenn treyben. Du wirst sie viel mehr abschrecken, unnd must ein schwer antwort gebenn, das du sie von der warheyt getriebenn hast."

Much has been made of the distinction Sachs drew in this dialogue between "lutherisch" and "evangelisch". Schultheiß saw in this "ein Beweis, wie wenig er geneigt ist, auf Luthers Namen bei aller Verehrung gegen den grossen Mann zu schwören". L. Keller went so far as to put forward the view that Sachs belonged to an old evangelical community. He asserts, "daß Hans Sachs jetzt ganz bestimmt und klar nicht zwei, sondern drei Parteien unterscheidet, nämlich die Römischen, die Lutherischen und die Evangelischen, und daß er die Letzteren in einen ganz bestimmten Gegensatz zu denen, die

1. Op. cit., p. 19.

2. Johann von Staupitz und die Anfänge der Reformation.  
op. cit., p. 183.

(1)

sich lutherisch nennen, bringt." Kawerau was undoubtedly right in rejecting this curious attempt to depict Sachs as an opponent of Luther. A reading of Luther's "trew vormanung" shows that in this dialogue Sachs was not striking out on his own but was clearly in step with his revered leader, "dem frummen man, dem Luther", as Hans calls him. By 1524 the term "lutherisch" no longer meant strictly a follower of the new doctrines. Its meaning had been debased on the one hand through the crude and vulgar behaviour of many nominal

(2)

followers of Luther, and, on the other, through its employment by the Catholic party as a term of abuse. Sachs therefore possibly described Hans as an "evangelical" simply in order to draw attention away from sterile controversy and back once more to the Gospel message as it had been revealed once more by Luther. In any case Luther had already issued a strong plea to his followers to stop using his name. "Tzum ersten bit ich man wolt meynes namen geschweygen und sich nit lutherisch sondern Christen heysen. Was ist Luther? Ist doch die lere nit meyn. Szo byn ich auch fur niemant gecreutzigt. Wie keme denn ich armer stinckender madensack datzu, das man die kinder Christi solt mit meynem heyloszen namen nennen? ... Last uns tilgenn die parteysche namen und

1. Op. cit., p. 63.

2. Cf. Hans' remark: "So wolt ir all, die euch lutherisch nennet an ... dem Luther, ainen deckmantel ewer unschicklikait suchen, und euch seiner leer nit gemeß halten."

Christen heyssen, des lere wir haben. Die Papisten haben billich eynen parteyschen namen, die weyl sie nit benuget an Christus lere unnd namen, wollen auch Bepstisch seyn, szo last sie Bepstisch seyn, der yhr meyster ist. Ich byn unnd wyll keynisz meyster seyn".  
(1)

That the writing of the fourth dialogue was occasioned by Sachs' observation of events in Nuremberg and his disappointment at the lack of any striking improvement in the mode of life of many of the adherents of the Reformation is doubtless true. What is particularly striking, however, in the last of the four dialogues is the deeper understanding he seems to have reached of the true implications of Luther's teaching.

The last dialogue begins with Hans asking Peter to return his copy of Von der christlichen freiheit and the conversation which follows shows how far Sachs had progressed since the earlier dialogues in his appreciation of this work. It is undoubtedly this third of Luther's great Reformation documents and his admonitory pamphlet Eyn trew vormanung which form the basis of this dialogue.

Von der Freyheytt eynisz Christen menschen is not an easy work to undertand and the difficulties lie mainly in Luther's failure to define clearly, what exactly he

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1. WA/VII/685.
  2. WA/VII/20.

meant by his two key words, faith and works. Luther does, in fact use these complex words with varying connotations until his argument becomes inextricably involved. It is to Sachs' credit that he could <sup>see</sup> through to a clear meaning and express it clearly.

Luther began his treatise on Christian liberty with two paradoxical propositions: "Eyn Christen mensch ist eyn freyer herr über alle ding und niemandt unterthan" and "Eyn Christen mensch ist eyn dienstpar knecht aller ding und yderman unterthan". In the first two dialogues Sachs had focussed attention primarily on the first of these and his approach to the term "works" is largely negative, involving an attack on the blind acceptance of the authority of the Church, or the habitual observance of church ceremonies, the mechanical performance of penances, the purchase of indulgences, and so on. The third dialogue is more positive, but it is only in the last one that Sachs brings out the complementary nature of Luther's paradoxes and makes clear Luther's fundamental thesis that the goodness of an act is to be measured only by the genuineness of the ethical intention behind it. He begins with the homely example of meat-eating on Fridays - a practice elevated by many "Lutherans" almost to the dignity of a "good work" - and shows that though this is no sin in itself, it is entirely devoid of virtue when done with the deliberate object of giving offence. For his

second example Sachs chooses the now well-established sport of slandering the Roman Catholic clergy. When Peter claims that in this case he is only following the example of the Lutheran preachers, Hans replies: "Wo sollich predigen oder schreiben aus bößem gemüt und nicht auß christlicher liebe geet, so ist es unrecht und sünd, wie nützlich und not das werck an im selber ist ... Hiebei ist wol zu besorgen, wo ir hinder dem wein sitzt und schendet münch und pfaffen, daß es nit auß christlicher liebe, sonder auß übermut, neydt, haß oder böser gewonhait kumm".

By limiting his examples to those with which his readers could not fail to be familiar Sachs was able to bring out the significance of what was probably the most subtle meaning Luther gave to the word "works". This concerned not the thing actually done, not religious observances or even altruistic conduct, but the volition, the motion of the will. "Hatt ir die lieb des nechsten nit, von nöten kennt man euch nit für jünger Christi"<sup>(1)</sup>. This may be compared with the following statements by Luther. "Alle werck sollen gericht seyn, dem nechsten zu gutte, Die weyl ein yglicher für sich selb gnug hatt an seynen glauben, und alle andere werck und leben yhm übrig seyn, seynem nechsten damit auß freyer liebe

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1. KG/XXII/82. Cf. St. John xiii/34-35.

(1)  
 zu dienen". "Ich rate dir aber, willst du etwas stifften, betten,  
 fasten, so thu es nit der meynung, das du wollest dir etwas  
 guts thun, sondern gibts dahin frey, das andere leuth desselben  
 genißen mugen, und thu es yhn zu gut, so bistu ein rechter  
 Christen ... eyn Christen mensch lebt nit ynn yhm selb,  
 sondern ynn Christo und seynem nehstenn, ynn Christo durch  
 den glauben, ym nehsten durch die liebe."<sup>(2)</sup>

The point that Luther is here making and which  
 Sachs echoes in the last main speech of the dialogue is that<sup>(3)</sup>  
 an act of will, to be ethically good, can only come from a  
 man who is already good; and a man can only be good in this  
 sense if he has been made so through the grace of God, grace  
 which can only be grace when it is free, unbought and  
 unmerited, a gift which can only be achieved by faith through  
 prayer.<sup>(4)</sup> This is the very heart of the evangelical conception  
 of religion and it is one of Sachs' greatest contributions to  
 the Reformation that he understood and felt it his duty to  
 share his knowledge with his fellow men.

An edition of the fourth dialogue exists with the  
 title "Underweysung der ungeschickten vermeinten Lutherischen,

1. WA/VII/35.
2. WA/VII/37.
3. "Wann ir auß dem evangeli geporn wert, so verkündet ir das  
 evangeli ewern mitbrüdern in Christo holdselig und mit  
 aller ersamkeit, und füret ain gotseligen wandel".
4. See B.L. Woolf, op. cit, Vol. I, p. 354, on this point.

so in eusserlichen sachen zu ergernuß jhres nechsten freündtlich handlen. Hans Sachß. Item. Ob das Euangelium sein krafft von der kirchen hab. Hans Greiffenberger." The second part of this is a short theological tract which argues the point that the Gospel preceded and gave birth to the Church.

Ranisch's contention that this was one of the missing dialogues of Hans Sachs is clearly erroneous and there is no reason to suppose that it was not the work of Hans Greiffenberger, the painter, who was a well-known figure at this time in Lutheran circles in Nuremberg and was later expelled from the city because of his extreme views. It is likely that the conjunction of Sachs' dialogue with Greiffenberger's pamphlet was entirely the work of the printer, but the possibility of Sachs' association with men of advanced views cannot be ruled out and will be examined later.

The second of Sachs' polemical poems - Der schafstal Cristi - was published in 1524 and signed, rather defiantly, "Hans Sachß, schuster". Sachs rarely refers to himself elsewhere as "schuster, but almost always as "schumacher". Meister Hans in the first dialogue is, however, described as "schuster", a term scornfully applied to Sachs

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1. Goedeke: Grundriß, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 416.
  2. In the "Summa" Sachs mentions "artlicher dialogus siben". Two others are now known to exist. It is possible that the third was never written. See Appendix, p. 348.
  3. and 4. See below, p. 193ff.
  5. KG/XXIV/3.

by his detractors after the publication of Die wittenbergisch nachtigall. It is therefore probable that this poem was written shortly after the first dialogue.

The poem is divided into three sections, spoken in turn by Christ, an angel and "der gotloß hauff" (the Roman Catholics!). Christ is made to say that He alone has won salvation for men and is their only hope; only through faith in Him can they attain everlasting life. Sachs lets Christ personally condemn "good works" -

"Wann all ewer werck die seind entwicht,  
Ich han allain es außgericht".

The angel continues the condemnation of "good works" and warns the "gotloß hauff" against following the teaching and commandments of men

"Die all mit lügen seynt vergyfft".

They should rather turn to the Bible, where alone they will find Christ and through Him salvation. The "gotloß hauff" replies with a statement of the Catholic case, which is so distorted as to be ridiculous -

"O engel, schweyg, sag uns nit mer  
Von dyser newen ketzer-leer,  
Die unser gütte werck veracht,  
Sam hab uns Christus selig gmacht  
Unnd sey uns gar kayn werk mer not  
Zur sälligkayt, das ist ain spot.  
Und spricht das evangeli weyß,  
Das sey allayn der seelen speyß,  
Der inn sy hab ir gaystlich leben,  
Veracht all menschen-leer daneben  
Und vernichtet unsern gotßdienst,  
Der doch gestanden ist auff's minst  
Bey drey- oder vier-hundert jaren.

Vil haylig leüt, die vor uns waren,  
 Die sölche werck uns hand geleert  
 Die wir täglichen hand gemært,  
 Das haist die new leer gleyßnerey,  
 Wie haylig, schon und gut das sey,  
 Sam vermög wir nichts guts auff erden,  
 Dar durch wir ewig sällig werden.  
 Wir lassen euch schreyben unnd sagen,  
 Auff unsre werck da wöln wirs wagen  
 Und darinn auch verharren gantz  
 Und den schopff lassen bey dem schwantz."

The poem falls far below the standard of Die wittenbergisch nachtigall and is indicative of the lack of taste which marked the general campaign against the Roman Catholics in Nuremberg. It is not surprising that Sachs left it out of the Folio edition of his works!

Another poem - Ein newer spruch, wie die geyst-<sup>(1)</sup>licheyt und etlich handwercker uber den Luther clagen - is also signed "Hens Sachs, schuster". The only extant copy is undated but the signature and general tone of the poem would seem to place it in either 1524 or 1525.

After twelve introductory lines the poem takes the form of a legal action and judgement. The plaintiffs are the clergy and certain craftsmen; the defendant is Luther and the Judge is Christ. The clergy charge Luther with slander and the rejection of all the old doctrines and practices. The bell-founders, goldsmiths, woodcarvers, stonemasons, candle-makers,

1. KG/XXIII/505.

fishermen and others complain of the damage Luther has done to their trade and the demand an injunction against him. Luther then presents his defence. He has only preached the Word of the Lord. His opponents only complain because their pockets have been affected; if his teaching had increased their wealth instead of revealing their falseness and hypocrisy

"So were kein bessrer auff-gestandn  
In langer zeit in teutschen landn".

He refuses to be intimidated by their demand that he

"Muß prinnen oder revocirn"

and declares that he will stand by the Lord's decision.

Christ then gives judgement. He reminds the clergy of His command to go into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; this they have scorned to do and have introduced new forms of worship and instituted practices contrary to His commands. The handworkers, too, have despised his Word and have sought their own advantage. The judgement ends with the warning:

" ..... Darumb so kert  
Von euwerm falschen widerstreit! ...  
Und hört doch in den worten mein ...  
Sunst wert ir in der hellen qualn".

Hans Sachs' collaboration with Andreas Osiander, the outstanding preacher at the parish church of St. Lawrence in Nuremberg, in the production in January, 1527, of the

Wunderliche weissagung vom papstum. wie es ihm bis an das  
ende der welt gehen soll <sup>(1)</sup> has given rise to much speculation  
 and conjecture. Sachs had published little during the  
 preceding two years apart from a few metrical psalms. It  
 seems unlikely on the face of it that Sachs' profound interest  
 in the Reformation, which had resulted in the Wittembergisch  
nachtigall, the four dialogues and a number of Lutheran  
<sup>(2)</sup>  
 hymns, could have evaporated after the end of 1524. The year  
 1525 was crucial in the progress of the Reformation in  
 Nuremberg and it is possible that Sachs was too pre-occupied  
 with the stirring events both inside and outside the city  
 in that year to find time for literary activities. About  
 1526 we have more information.

On August 9th, 1526, the Nuremberg Council issued  
 the following decree: "Von wegen der angegebenen schwyrmer,  
 nemlich Greyffenbergers, Hans Sachsen, Endres Leone, cantor  
 zu sant Sebald, und Linhart Fincken ist verlassen, desz  
 Greyffenbergers halb, der seinem weyb selbs das sacrament  
 geraicht hat, bei den theologi und anderen doctoren zuratschl-  
 agen, desgleichen des cantors halb auch und her widerpringen.  
 Die 2 meler, die noch nit beschickt sind, zu erkundigen,  
 nochmals beschicken und der schwirmerey halb vom sacrament

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1. KG/XXII/131.
  2. See below, Part Two, Chapter III.

(1)  
 auch zu bemerken". Later decrees made no further reference to Hans Sachs but Greifenberger and Andreas von Löwen were banished from the city a week later. The two painters were Sebald and Barthel Beham, who had already once been banished the previous year, because of their outspokenness and their association with Johannes Denck, the Anabaptist. We have no means of telling why Sachs was listed with the other accused. (2)  
 (3)  
 Beifus believed that the Council had a particular work of Sachs in mind which has been lost. Kalkoff discounts this suggestion and comments: "Wer das Verfahren des Rates kennt, wird das nicht für zwingend halten. Ihm wurden Namen angegeben und er ermahnte dann en bloc." Nevertheless in the absence of further evidence the suspicion would still remain that in 1525 and 1526 Sachs might have been spending time in the company of some of the more hotheaded fanatics who were loose in the city in these years. The fact that Sebald Beham's first woodcut, dated 1521, was later used to illustrate Sachs' Spruch, Ein gesprech zwischen Sanct Peter und dem Herren von

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1. Rathsmanuale 1525-6, Heft 5, Fol. 18a. (Quoted by A. Bauch: "Der Aufenthalt des Malers Sebald Beham während der Jahre 1525-35". Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft, Vol. XX, 1897, p. 197.
  2. See above, p. 105 ff.
  3. J. Beifus: "Hans Sachs und die Reformation bis zum Tode Luthers". Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, Vol. XIX, 1911, p. 11.
  4. P. Kalkoff: Die Reformation in der Stadt Nürnberg (Halle, 1926).

(1)  
der jetzigen Welldt lauff. proves nothing, and according to  
 (2)  
 R. Muther Sebald Beham was no longer in Nuremberg at the  
 time he composed his woodcut for Sachs' Schwank, Der  
 (3)  
pauerntantz. If this were all, the charge that Sachs was  
 guilty of "schwimerney" would at most rank as non-proven.  
 However, Beifus, in the course of his researches into Sachs'  
 master songs, unearthed, though apparently without realising  
 it, evidence with which the charge against Sachs of being  
 out of step with Luther at this time could be confidently  
 refuted.

In 1526 Luther wrote his Sermon von dem sakrament  
 (4)  
des leibes und blutes Christi wider die schwärmeister. The  
 (5)  
 same year Sachs composed his mastersong, Das abent mal. He  
 began by describing the setting of the Lord's Supper and went  
 on

"Da sie aber aßen, do nam  
 Jesu das prot, danckt, es sprach,  
 Gab es seinen jüngern alsam.  
 Mit claren worten er da sprach:  
 Nemet, esset, das ist mein leib;  
 Darnach nam er den kelich gut,  
 Danket, gab in den, sprach pehent:  
 Drinket al draus, das ist mein plut  
 Das neu ewigen testament;  
 Als auch Marcus und Lucas schreib."

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1. KG/I/404.
  2. Die deutschen Buchillustrationen der Gotik und Früh-  
 renaissance (Munich and Leipzig, 1884)
  3. KG/V/279.
  4. WA/XIX/474-523.
  5. Beifus, op. cit., p. 22.

Sachs then comes down firmly on the side of Luther in asserting that the mystery of the Lord's Supper involves an act of faith and that attempts to explain away the mystery can only lead to error.

"Hör cristen mensch die claren wort,  
Die doch nit clarer möchten sein,  
Die mustu hie an diesem ort  
Fassen durch den gelauben rein.  
Mit der vernunft weich ab zu tal,  
Sunst wirstu in zweiffel gevirt,  
Was leib und plut Cristi da ist.  
Derin menig weltweißer irt,  
Der die wort mit vernunft aus mist."

Later, after dealing with St. John, 1, he adds:

"Dissen artickel die vernunft  
Mit nichte auch pegriffen kan,  
Allein der glaub peschleust in y.  
Wer mit vernunft nach gruben welt, der velt  
In irrung ketzerei."

He concludes with a further reference to the risk of heresy run by those who attempt to interpret Christian mysteries in the light of human reason:

" ..... nit raub  
Du Cristo seiner er,  
Der eingesetzt hat durch sein wort  
Sein leib und plut in prot und wein.  
Ob al doctores auf ein ort  
Hie anders lerten uberein,  
Denoch gelaub du Cristo mer;  
Der selb die ewig warheit ist."

(1)

In other mastersongs written in the same year, such as Das urteil Cristi, and Wie Cristus straf die falschen ler, Sachs ranged widely over the whole polemical field. In Die Verfolgung

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1. Beifus, op. cit., pp. 23, 24.



- are, however, sharply polemical in tone and this raises the question of their authorship. The work was sent to Luther who supplied a foreword and postscript in which he made it clear that anti-Papal polemics were still to be encouraged. The work was re-published the following year "gebessert und gemert", with a new set of illustrations by Sebald Beham. Did Osiander send the original to Luther? Did Hans Sachs supply the verses? Was this the cause of the reproof Hans Sachs possibly received from the Nuremberg Council in 1526? We now know from Beifus that Sachs was capable of writing verses at this time which were no less outspoken than those attached to Das Bapstum mit seynen gliedern. Towards the end of 1526, for example, Sachs wrote his mastersong, Die  
 (1)  
verkäufer, an account of the clearing of the Temple, to which he added the following interpretation:

"Der bapst ist der oberst in dissem spil,  
 Mit simonei ist sein reich gar pesessen.  
 Die pischhoff mantel er verkauft,  
 Cardinal huet um vil dausent ducatten,  
 Die anatten an duncken alle samen,  
 Pfar, probstei, pfrunt ist er verkauffen vil,  
 Um golt kauft man von im große freiheitte;  
 Mit gnad prieff er uns uber hãuft  
 Wo man gelt geit, dut er die sunt verzeie,  
 Löst die sel aus dem fegfeuer mit namen.  
 Der gleich verkauffen seine knecht  
 Das predigen und alle gottes gabe,  
 Mit dem pan und geistlichen recht.  
 Mit steuer, zehenden sie schinden grabe,  
 Verkauffen, was da wirt geweicht,  
 Dauff, firmung, peicht.  
 Das sacrament um gelt ists auch pereitte  
 Mit heiltum, pruderschaft, opfer.  
 Ir werck auch mer  
 Verkauffen, vigil, jartag und sel messen."

1. Beifus, op. cit., p. 26.

It must have been about the time that Sachs was writing this last mastersong that Osiander approached him with the suggestion that they should collaborate in the publication of the "Weissagungen". Osiander had played a large part in the proceedings against Johannes Denck and other "Schwärmer" (1) who had been removed from the city. His invitation to Sachs is surely further proof, if any is needed, that Sachs was not under suspicion at this time. We know nothing of any previous association between the two men, but even if neither of them had anything to do with Das Bapstum mit seynen Gliedern, it seems unlikely that the men were unacquainted with one another. Both had rendered signal service to the Reformation, Osiander through his preaching and published sermons and Sachs through his poetry, dialogues and hymns, and there must have been occasion for them to meet. Any suggestion that Sachs disapproved of the vigorous sermons of Osiander and the other Nuremberg preachers is based on a misreading of the fourth dialogue. The gentle, good-humoured Sachs of Wagner's opera (2) and Genée's humble figure in the cobbler's workshop might well have had little respect for Osiander, but not the real Sachs who was equally the master of forceful speech when occasion warranted it. Osiander was doubtless as pleased when

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1. See above, p. 105-106.

2. R. Genée: Hans Sachs und seine Zeit (Leipzig, 1894), p. 165ff.

Sachs accepted his invitation as Sachs was to receive it.

(1)

In his introduction to the Weissagungen Osiander claimed that they were based on manuscripts he had discovered in the Carthusian monastery in Nuremberg (this had recently been dissolved) and in the Library of the Nuremberg City Council, and that they were about one hundred years old and

(2)

the original illustrations much older. If the statement made in 1870 by Julius Tittmann in the introduction to his edition

(3)

of Hans Sachs' Sprüche is true, that the actual copy of the work used by Sachs and Osiander was still in existence at Wolfenbüttel, Osiander's claim was at the best inaccurate and at the worst it amounted to a deliberate deception of the public. The Wolfenbüttel copy was, in fact, an impression of the Vaticinia Joachimi - a collection of prophetic sayings

1. There is a copy in the British Museum. The full title reads: Eyn wunderliche Weyssagung von dem Bapstum wie es yhm biß an das endt der welt gehen sol in figuren oder gemäl begriffen gefunden zu Nürnberg ym Cartheuser Closter und ist seher alt. Eyn vorred Andreas Osianders. Mit gutter verstandtlicher außlegung durch gelerte leut verklert. Welche Hans Sachs yn teutsche reymen gefast und darzu gesetzt hat. 1527.
2. "Laß ich jderman wissen das ich diser Bücher zwey gehabt. Eyns auß dem Cartheuser kloster. Das ander auß meyner Herrn eynes erbern Rhats hie zu Nürnberg librey. Deren keynes so new ist es muß eyn yeder der es ansicht bekennen. Das es an geverlich bey hundert jaren von gemel unnd schrifft alt sey hie das eyn yeder der mir nicht glauben wil heutigs tags wol erfarn kan. Dartzu wirdt yn den selben büchern eynem angetzeygt wie das urspränglich darvon die abgemalt wol vor drithalb hundert Jaren. Nemlich da man hat geschriben 1278."
3. GT/II/xxviii.

attributed to Joachim of Fiore - which had been issued as  
 (1)  
 recently as 1515 in Bologna.

(2)

Joachim of Fiore was one of the most fascinating medieval figures. During the centuries following his death he became an almost legendary personage, like Merlin and the Sibyl, with whom he is so often associated as a prophet. He was  
 (3)  
 born at Celico, near Cosenza, in about 1130. After entering the monastery of Corazzo he was ordained there in 1168 and became abbot ten years later. In 1191 he left Corazzo to found the abbey of Saint John of Fiore, which was to be the centre of a severe reform of the Cistercian rule. He later withdrew from the Cistercian order and established his own order which was approved by a Papal bull of Celestine III in 1196. He died at San Martino in 1202. The Ordo Florentis was never a large institution and in the sixteenth century the various Florian houses either rejoined the Cistercians or united with the Carthusians and Dominicans. None remained after 1570.

In the year 1200 Joachim wrote a letter with which

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1. The full title is Joachini abbatibus Vaticinia circa Apostolicos viros Ecclesiam Romanam, Bononiae, 1515. A copy is in the British Museum. The Nuremberg copies of this edition were possibly brought back to the city by Nuremberg students at the university of Bologna.
  2. See H. Bett: Joachim of Fiore (London, 1931); and H. Grundmann: Studien über Joachim von Fiore (Leipzig and Berlin, 1927) and Neue Forschungen über Joachim von Fiore (Marburg, 1950)
  3. Joachim's dates are usually given as 1145-1205. Those used here are taken from Bett.

he submitted his works - the best known are the Concordia novi ac veteris testamenti, Expositio in Apocalypsim and Psalterium decem chordarum - to the judgement of the Holy See and declared his devotion and fidelity to it. "I am prepared always to observe what it has decreed or shall decree, and never to defend an opinion of mine against its holy faith." The devoted Papalism of this testament is, as Bett says, in the most violent contrast to the thought and the language of the writings later attributed to Joachim and would alone be sufficient to show that they are spurious.

During the thirteenth century a number of spurious works originating from the Franciscan Spirituals were fathered on Joachim. The spurious books attributed to him were all expositions of prophecies he was alleged to have made, such as the Interpretatio in Hieroniam prophetam, the Expositio Sibyllae et Merlini and the Vaticinia Pontificium. It is this latter work which forms the basis of the work used by Sachs and Osiander. It is an extraordinary production, consisting of a series of twenty-four enigmatic paragraphs, which are all supposed to be characterisations of the future line of Popes. Each prophecy is accompanied by a fearful and wonderful picture. The pretended predictions appear to be accurate from Pope Nicholas III (died 1280) to Clement V (died 1314) and then they become fantastic. In the succeeding centuries additions were made to the work and the 1515 edition contained

in all thirty pictures, twenty-nine of figures wearing full robes and Papal tiara and one (the twentieth) in a monk's cassock and cowl, bearing in one hand a jagged sickle and in the other a flower. It was this latter figure which most seized Osiander's imagination. Here was first-class polemical material, a series of vivid pictures showing how the decline of the Papacy had long been foretold and apparently even predicting the monk whose destiny it would be to strike the blow which would cut down the unworthy institution!

The finished work, as printed by Hans Guldenmundt in January, 1527, consisted of thirty satirical woodcuts, each accompanied by four lines of verse written by Sachs attacking the Papacy in the most pungent and scurrilous terms. Osiander's marginal comments were in a similar vein and the work was rounded off by a further twenty-nine lines by Sachs, pointing out the conclusions the reader should draw, namely, that the Popes' dominion had been built up and maintained "mit schwinden listen" and

"Mit reichtum, gwalt und precht fürwar,  
 Biß gott seyñ heylsam wort thet schicken",

and concluding with the words:

"Darumb wer oren hab der hörer,  
 Von lueg sich zu der warheyte keer!"

The artist who executed the woodcuts is unknown. On the whole they reproduce faithfully the detail of the originals, though

they are incomparably better drawn; to a layman they appear to be similar in style to other woodcuts of Sebald Beham. The twentieth picture was, however, altered slightly to fit in more exactly with Luther. The clumsy peasant-like figure of the original was redrawn with a more intelligent face and more natural stance. He still holds the jagged sickle in his right hand and the rose in his left, but the rose (a vital clue, because the principal motif in Luther's coat-of-arms was the rose!) is now recognisable as such; in the original it had four petals and daffodil leaves! Beside the figure on the right there still stands an amputated leg but on the left instead of a large capital "B" there is a small object which looks like a pair of ram's horns but is in fact a branding iron as Osiander tells us in his commentary explaining the symbolism. "Damit man aber sehe, wer der münch sey, so stehet er da yn seiner klaydung, und hat sein zeychen, die Rosen yn der handt. Ich mayn ja es sey der Luther. Die weil aber Esaias spricht am xl. Alles flaysch ist wie grass. Stehet er da mit eyner sicheln, unnd schneydets ab, nicht grass, sonder flaysch und alles was flayschlich ist. Denn da wider predigt er, und wenn es außgerentet ist, wirdt er mit dem fewer eysen, das fewer d' Christlichen lieb, das erlöschen ist, wider auffschlagen und anzünden." Sachs makes it all doubly clear with his riming couplets:

"Das thet der heldt Martinus Luther,  
 Der macht das Evangeli lauther,  
 All menschen-leer er gantz ab-hauth  
 Und selig spricht, der Gott vertrawth."

We must assume that Osiander was the dominant partner in the affair of the Weissagungen and he must bear the main share of the blame for the outcome of his association with Hans Sachs. The forcefulness of the language of Sachs' verses, which may be seen from the following examples:

"Drumb wonet bey dem bapst auch bey  
 Die grundsup aller puberey;  
 Als-denn zu Rom sicht yderman  
 Zucht, eer und frumkeyt untergen."

"Dem bapst al frumckeyt ist verschmecht;  
 Wer yhm gelt gibt, der ist gerecht,  
 Sey gleich meynaidig und trewloß,  
 Yn gibt er brieff und freiheyte groß." -

leaves no doubt that he was fully persuaded of Osiander's interpretation of the illustrations. Osiander's appreciation that the Joachimite prophecies would make excellent polemical material with an immediate popular appeal was sound enough. But he strangely miscalculated the reactions of the Nuremberg Council which took more notice of the vigorous Catholic protests than he had expected. The Emperor was at war with the Pope but in his absence the decisions of the 1526 Diet of Speyer could not be considered final. There was no lack

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1. Luther gave it his approval in a letter written to Georg Spalatin on April 29th, 1527 (WA (Briefwechsel)/IV/196) and expressed a wish to see it reprinted in Wittenberg.

of councillors ready to point out that such blundering attacks on the Papacy were a source of needless embitterment to Roman Catholics and might well occasion considerable embarrassment to the Council in the near future. Discretion prevailed and the Council took firm action against the perpetrators of the Weissagungen. Osiander was ordered to refrain henceforward from any similar undertaking and not publish anything without the knowledge of the Council. The printer was required to deliver the blocks for the woodcuts and all unsold copies of the work to the Town Hall. <sup>(1)</sup> The Council also made an energetic but not altogether successful attempt to buy up any copies which had already been sent to the Frankfurt Fair. Hans Sachs was warned to stick to his trade of shoemaking and to refrain <sup>(2)</sup> from publishing "einig büchlein oder reimen".

Too much importance should not be attached to the reproof which Sachs received from the Nuremberg Council. It is true that very few of Sachs' poems were printed in the next few years and it cannot definitely be asserted that any <sup>(3)</sup> more of his work was published before 1530. Printed copies of certain poems composed in these years still exist - a

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1. There are nevertheless three other different impressions extant from the same year.
  2. The relevant entries in the Ratsmanuale are reprinted in A. Bauch, op. cit., p. 68f.
  3. When All Römisch Kaiser (KG/II/353) and Ein lobspruch der statt Nürnberg (KG/IV/189) appeared.

couple of poems on the subject of drink, a few verses written on the death of Albrecht Dürer, a verse account of the siege of Vienna in 1529 - but all are undated and may well have been published later as were the two hymns, Die zehen Gebot and Das Teudtsche Patrem.<sup>(1)</sup> The warnings issued to Osiander and Sachs were doubtless motivated by genuine indignation on the part of at least some of the councillors, but in view of the general attitude of the Council towards the Reformation in the 1520's it seems likely that the warnings were designed rather for consumption in Imperial and Roman Catholic circles. In any case, within a few months Osiander had edited another prophecy: Sant Hildegardten weissagung ober die Papisten unnd genannten geystlichen wilcher erfüllung in unsern Zeiten hat angefangen und volzogen sol werden. In his foreword to this work Osiander was certainly no less vehement in his denunciation of the Papacy than in his comments on the Joachimite prophecies.<sup>(2)</sup> Here, if he needed it, was the assurance that Sachs was under no obligation to take the Council's reprimand too seriously, and we may be fairly certain that if Sachs had wished to publish between 1527 and 1530 obstacles would not have been put in his way. Those who have been inclined to regard Sachs' collaboration with Osiander as a near tragedy have overlooked two things: firstly, Sachs had published

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1. See Part Two, Chapter III below.
  2. See W. Müller: Andreas Osiander. Leben und ausgewählte Schriften (Eiberfeld, 1870), p. 103.

nothing in 1525 and 1526 (apart from a few psalms) and there is no reason to suppose that he was anxious to publish more in the years which followed; and secondly, Sachs' leisure time in these years was devoted to putting new life into the Nuremberg gild of mastersingers. Sachs had rapidly established himself as the leading figure in the gild and under his direction - if his own works are a true guide - the gild had virtually been turned into a centre for the energetic study of Luther's Bible and other works. It is a mistake to suppose that because Sachs' mastersongs were rarely published they had little influence on the religious climate in Nuremberg, and indeed much further afield. At its height the Nuremberg gild had some three hundred and fifty members, a not insignificant proportion of the total population of the city at that time. Knowledge of Sachs' own mastersongs was spread not only by word of mouth, but also by copying. Research has shown that Sachs made copies himself for payment and copies made by journeymen craftsmen who visited Nuremberg on their travels have turned up in places as far apart as Danzig, Breslau and Strasburg. It can in fact be assumed that in one way or another Sachs' mastersongs reached a wide public.

In the later 1520's Luther's time was largely taken up with the sacramentarian controversy,<sup>(2)</sup> in which

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1. F. Schnorr v. Carolsfeld: Zur Geschichte des deutschen Meistergesangs (Berlin, 1872), p. 12 and p. 26.
  2. See above p. 39.

incidentally Osiander played an outspoken part. In 1527 Hans Sachs added his contribution on the subject in three master-songs, Das gros abentmal, Gespons Christi sein schacz and Das lebentig himelprot. The last named gives Luther's views in such detail that it may be supposed that Sachs had read Luther's Daß diese wort Christi das ist mein leib, noch fest stehen widder die Schwermgeister. In January, 1528, the Nuremberg Council again ordered its clergy to preach against the anabaptists, who had once more appeared in the city, and in February Luther published his Von der widdertauffe an zween Pfarherrn. Soon after this Sachs wrote his mastersong, Der kinder dauff. in which he attacks the anabaptists with the identical arguments used by Luther:

"Hie entspringet ein irrtum schwere:  
 Das man die cristen kinder sol tauffen nicht,  
 Seit sie noch nicht haben vernunft,  
 Pis sie durch ihr vernunft glauben erlangen.  
 Ich antwort nach christlicher lere.  
 Paulus ad Corinthos an zehenden spricht:  
 Der glaub mit des geistes zukunft  
 Der nem genczlich alle vernunft gefangen.  
 Darpei sollen vermercken wir,  
 Das die vernunft nicht helffen zu dem gelauben,  
 Sunder hindert .....

So das kint an vernunft ist,  
 Da leit nit vil daran,  
 Vil pas kan es got sein gancz unterthan.

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1. See Beifus, op. cit., p. 29.
  2. WA/XXIII/38-320.
  3. WA/XXVI/137-174.

Es suchet keinen eigenucz,  
 Es leidet, duldet als, was im zu stet ....  
 Doch kan sein geist im sein erleucht  
 In mutter leib, in dem pesten,  
 Als Johannes, der frum baptist,  
 Und Jeremias, der heillige man." (1)

Sachs continued his attacks on the Pope in Von des anticristes und seines gelider pös regiment (1528), in which he treats the tenth psalm and concludes:

"O cristen mensch, nun merck hie bei,  
 Wer disser gotlos thiran sei  
 Mit sein gewalt und thiranei,  
 Der uber got sich rumet  
 Und meint, es hab um in kein not;  
 Lauret durch sein gesecz, gepot,  
 Die unschuldig sel würget dot,  
 Verpanet und verthuemet.  
 Den leib auch mort  
 Und an dem ort  
 Im wuergen er erwürget wirt  
 Mit al den, so im halten schucz  
 Und cristen erwürgen mit drucz.  
 Hie wirt erkent  
 Des babstes gotlos reigiment." (2)

Similar anti-Papist sentiments are expressed in the master-songs, Der morder Cain and Von dem anticrist und abfal.

Sachs wrote little in 1529 during the months when the Diet of Speyer was meeting, but he was deeply shaken by  
 (3)  
 the course of events and conscious of the great dangers which seemed then to be threatening the Lutheran Church. His state of mind is reflected in a number of mastersongs written after

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1. Beifus, op. cit., p. 31.
  2. Beifus, op. cit., p. 32.
  3. See above, p. 110ff.

the celebrated Protest, in which he attacks tyrants and the persecutors of the Word of God. The following extract from Davit mit dem spies is typical:

"Der kunig Saul  
 Deut al gotlos thirannen,  
 Sint feind dem himmlischen Davit  
 Cristo mit al sein christlichen mannen,  
 All die pekennen gottes wort,  
 Stellen sie nach mit prant und mort  
 Gancz dückisch mit geferden.  
 Doch sint sie faul,  
 So palt die cristen kumen  
 Mit gottes wort, stil in dem frid,  
 So wirt in palt ir scharpfer spies genumen."<sup>(1)</sup>

It was perhaps Sachs' consciousness of the seriousness of the situation facing the Lutheran Church which led him in a Spruch written towards the end of 1529 to sum up the various hindrances barring the way to the acceptance of the Gospel. Though this poem is superficially simpler and more direct than Die wittenbergisch nachtigall, it resembles the latter in covering the broad field of Lutheran doctrine. It is a tribute to the extent to which Sachs has appreciated Luther's exposition of the relation of the Law and the Gospel, one of Luther's principal contributions to theology, and possibly reflects Sachs' acquaintance with Luther's commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. The poem opens with a

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1. Beifus, op. cit., p. 33.
  2. Die sieben anstös eines menschen, der von dem berg Siney, des gasetz, zu dem berg Zion, des evangeli, gehen wil (KG/I/383). There is no evidence that this was published before 1553.
  3. See P. S. Watson: Let God Be God (London, 1947), passim.

statement of the baneful effects of the Law of Moses:

" ..... das götlich gesetz,  
 Das den menschen erschreckt zu letz,  
 Im gab ewige maledeyung,  
 Der vor der mensch het gar kein freyung.  
 Also der mensch wart hat beladen  
 Mit untreglichem, schweren schaden,  
 Mit eyner bürden, schwer und groß,  
 Der er nit mehr mocht werden loß.  
 Das waren seine eygne sünd  
 Die im das gsetz schröcklich verkünd,  
 Wie viel er hielt auß menschlich krafft;  
 Doch in das sein gewissen strafft,  
 Wie vil er hülf in wercken sucht."

It was part of Luther's charge against the Roman Catholics that the form of religion they practised was based on the false conception of God as a God of Law, who must deal with men on the basis of merit and reward. The Law had had tragic consequences; the revelation through the Law of his utter sinfulness had plunged man into despair and led him to attempts to placate God and secure His approval. Sachs now lists and describes the various man-made impediments to a right relationship with God - 'menschen gesetz, gebot und lehr', ordinances of the Church Fathers and Councils, false ideas of public worship and the many traditional customs and practices of the Church; then the poor Christian, beset by the lusts of the flesh, must face the ridicule of the godless and the assaults of "false priests", heretics and fanatics; and finally, the greatest impediment of all,

" ..... der obrigkeit tyranney,  
 Die schilt Gottes wort ketzerey  
 Und thut auß unverstand verjagen  
 Den menschen zu martern und plagen,  
 Verfolgen und gantz zu durchhechten,  
 Hilfft der geistlichen lüg verfechten,  
 Den menschen von werheit zu dringen."

Sachs concludes by urging Christians not to waver, but to follow the example of their Saviour, who suffered before them.

Though Beifus tells us that there was no falling off in the polemical tone of Sachs mastersongs in the latter part of 1529, two poems dating from this period seem to foreshadow the change of emphasis which comes over his work in the early 1530's. In the first of these, Inhalt zweyerley<sup>(1)</sup>  
predig. iede in einer kurtzen sum begriffen. he sets out in the form of two short sermons by alleged evangelical and Catholic priests the differences between the two doctrines. The tone is restrained and the Catholic priest is allowed to speak last. The evangelical preacher bases his case as usual on quotations from the Scriptures and gives a concise statement of Luther's doctrine of justification by faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the only mediator and advocate.

"Nimbt an das evangeli, bloß  
Christus eyniger mitler sey  
Und unser fürsprecher darbey."

He who believes in Jesus Christ will be born again and be filled with the Holy Ghost:

"So nun der mensch solliche wort  
Von Jesu Christo sagen hort  
Und die gelaubt und darauff bawt  
Und den wortten von hertzen traut,  
Der mensch denn new geboren wirt,  
Mit dem heyligen geist gezyrt."

The results of such faith will be seen

"In wercken der barmhertzigkeit,  
 Thut seinem nechsten alles guts  
 Aus milter lieb, sucht keinen nutz  
 Mit rathen, helffen, geben, leyen,  
 Mit lehren, straffen, schuld verzeyen,  
 Thut yedem, wie er selber wolt,  
 Das im von jam geschehen solt, ...  
 Diß als ist ein wer christlich leben."

Here Sachs again shows how simply he understood the ethical implications of the doctrine of justification by faith. With the receipt of faith man is born again and a new dynamic enters his life and issues in a new attitude to his fellow men and in the voluntary performance of "good works". It is Sachs' firm acceptance of this consequence of the most controversial of Luther's doctrines that provides the source of all his later moralising.

The Catholic priest begins his statement by affirming the authority of the Roman Church and of the Pope.

"Ir Christen, hört, was euch sagt Got  
 Und der römischen kirchn gebot,  
 Wie sie die bäbst verordnet han!"

The implication here is that God speaks to man only through the Roman Church and the Pope. Luther in An den Christlichen Adel had criticised the claim of the Roman Church to an exclusive right to interpret the Scriptures, and to act as the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit in so doing. Sachs does not

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1. See Mackinnon, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 166-168.
  2. See Part Two, Chapters V and VI below.

allow the priest to argue the basis of the Roman Church's claim. He seems to have had little knowledge of Church history and the reasons behind the growth of the disciplinary powers of the Church. His acceptance of Luther's doctrine of the church universal and the priesthood of the laity, and the existence of the very real evils in the Roman Church of his time, led Sachs to overlook the strong presumption that the Holy Spirit is at least as likely to operate through an organised body of Christians as through individuals! For Sachs the rôle of the Holy Spirit is purely to interpret and not supplement the Scriptures; he fails to see that the power of interpretation logically opens the way to a development in the practice of Christianity.

Sachs thus distorts the Catholic case by what he leaves out. Nevertheless, the Catholic priest is allowed to list the "vil guter Übung" which "gehören zu eym geystling leben"; pilgrimages, fasting, penance, confession, and so on. He ends with an appeal to the past:

"Das unser eltern haben trieben,  
Die auch nit sind gewesen narren,"

and a final statement of the position of the Roman Church and the Pope:

"Die römisch kirch die kan nit irren.  
Der babst all ding ist confirmiren,  
Der hie sitzt an Gottes stat  
Und gwalt auff gantzer erden hat  
Über die gantzen christenheyt,"

and a warning against heresy:

"Viel ketzerey im land umb gat.  
Hüt euch darfür! das ist mein rath.  
Es kan in d'leng nit bstehn fürwar."

Sachs does not attempt to sum up but leaves it to his readers to choose between the two cases:

"Hie urteyl recht, du frummer Christ,  
Welche lehr die werhafftigt ist!"

This poem was composed in 1529. As only the  
(1)  
woodcut of the original survives, the date of publication is not known, but the Nuremberg Council could hardly have taken exception either to the content or the tone of the poem, which perhaps owes something to Sachs' reading, or re-reading, of the Council's report on the Religious Colloquy held in the city in March, 1525.

The other poem dating from the same period, Von dem ampt des gesetz und krafft des evangelii, shows how Sachs  
(2)  
saw the Reformation as part of the progressive revelation of God to man. Man had fallen from grace when

"Die unghorsam in überwand  
Auff eygen lieb, lust und begier  
Und setzt sich selbs dem schöpfer für".

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1. Reprinted in R. A. Becker: Hans Sachs im Gewande seiner Zeit (Gotha, 1821)
  2. KG/I/394. The poem is undated. Karl Drescher's researches into "Die Spruchbücher des Hans Sachs und die erste Folioausgabe I" in Hans Sachs-Forschungen (Nuremberg, 1894) showed that the poem was in the missing third Spruchbuch and was issued separately before 1546. His estimate of the date of the composition was 1530. The maturity of Sachs' view of the Reformation in this period make this date preferable to Goetze's estimate of 1524.

The disclosure to Moses of the Law and the awful consequences of sin had only plunged men into despair and had driven some, in the blindness of their human reason, to seek an escape from the pains of hell in an austere life and "good works". (The reference is to the widespread ascetic practices in the pre-Christian era.) But the false pride and virtuous feeling induced by such conduct had only defeated its object. Even when Christ had revealed the Gospel that

"Der gelaub mach selig und frum,"

human reason had still refused to believe that "good works" were indispensable.

"Noch bleybt der mensch gotloß wie vor,  
 Hebt sein gute werck hoch empor,  
 Die in die blind vernunft thet leren,  
 Maint, dardurch frumb und selig weren."

The poem closes with an appeal to men to turn to God, through whose grace alone salvation is assured. This shows the high significance which Sachs gave to the Reformation. He clearly saw in Luther's stirring call a kind of second redemption which would fulfil the hopes of the first so that through faith in the Gospel men would find "den rechten weg hindurch zu Got".

The ominous turn of events at the end of the Augsburg Diet in 1530 led the Protestants to concert measures for their own defence, and even Luther who had hitherto always taught that the Christian must never take up arms against fellow-Christians, now conceded the right of self-defence

(1) (2)  
 against the Emperor. As we have seen the City Council of  
 Nuremberg refused to follow Luther's lead and avoided committ-  
 ing itself to the Schmalkaldic League. It preferred to rely  
 on the justice of its cause and let God be the arbiter. It  
 is unlikely that the Council carried all its citizens with it  
 in this policy but it is difficult to be sure where Sachs  
 stood on this issue. (3)  
 Beifus tells us that in the mastersongs  
 of this period Sachs constantly urges his fellow-Christians  
 to be fearless and stand firm in their reliance on God's  
 help and quotes the end of David flucht auf dem berg -

"Hiepei verstet, ir cristen,  
 Wo ein tirann euch heimsucht  
 Mit pratic, falschen listen,  
 Wider all pillikeit und recht  
 Sich gwaltig an euch recht,  
 Cristen glauben zu dempfen,  
 Und ir mügt haben kein ausflucht,  
 Vermügt auch nicht zu kempfen  
 Den dot vor euren augen secht,  
 Das ir verzeget nicht,  
 Wan got noch heut auf diesen tag  
 Ein fremdes volck erwecket,  
 Das den tirannen wider plag  
 Das er werd abgeschrecket.  
 Got hencket pös an poesse,  
 Das er aus tirannischer hent  
 Sein cristlich volck erlösse."

Beifus maintains that by "tyrant" Sachs here means Charles V.  
 This may be so, but it must be remembered that Sachs, like  
 Luther, uses the word "tyrant" in many contexts and it is not

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1. Warnunge D. Martini Luther. An seine lieben Deutschen  
 (WA/XXX/Pt.3/252). (1531)
  2. See above, p. 115.
  3. Beifus, op. cit., p. 37.

unlikely that he was here referring to the most pressing (1)  
 danger of all to Christendom, the Turks. In two Sprüche  
 written some three months after this last mastersong Sachs  
 mentions the Turks specifically, though in both cases he adds  
 the words "und ander tyrannen". In the first of these poems  
 he addresses his concluding remarks to

"Du christenliche obrigkeit!  
 Ietzund lebend in dieser zeyt  
 Keyser, künig, fürsten und regenten."

This seems to be an appeal to the whole of Christendom and  
 not merely the supporters of Luther, and when he goes on

"Wo denn auß frevel und hochmut  
 Der Türck oder ander tyrannen  
 Wider dich auff-würff sein streytfannen  
 Und durch practick und hemisch dück  
 Undter dem schein gerechter stück  
 Zu dempffen christlichen glauben  
 Dein untherthon mit mörden rauben  
 Tyrannisch zu verderben sucht,  
 Als denn zu Gott hab sein zuflucht. ...  
 Darnach such mittel, weg und sin,  
 Solch tyranney zu legen hin!  
 Wo dann gherechtigkeit und unschuld  
 Am feind nit kan erlangen huld,  
 Als denn mit ritterlicher ehr  
 Greiff dapffer zu der gegen-wehr,  
 Zu retten Gottes ehr vor-an  
 Und zu schutz deiner untherthan,  
 Zu rach der bösen allersampt,  
 Welches denn ist dein eygen ampt!"

it is difficult to share Beifus' confidence that Sachs is  
 here calling upon the Protestants to take up arms against

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1. Die ehrenpord der zwölf sighthafften helden des alten testaments ... zu einem trost-spiegel aller christlichen obrigkeyt wider den blutdurstigen Türcken und ander thyrannen (KG/I/211).
  2. Schandenpord. Die zwölf thyrannen des alten testaments ... allen ieden Christen, so under dem schweren joch des blutdurstigen Türcken und ander tyrannen verstricket sind (KG/I/221).

(1)

Charles V. As we shall see later Hans Sachs' loathing of war was so intense that it is unlikely that he would advocate the use of violence except against the Turks.

(2)

The change which comes over Sachs' work in the early 1520's was remarked by Schultheiß. It was not, however, as he asserted due to the consequences of his collaboration with Osiander in 1527. As we have seen the reproof he received from the Council resulted in no diminution of his polemical writings. Schultheiß was quite wrong in supposing that the major events of the later 1520's found no echo in Sachs' work, and even after 1530 he was still capable of expressing himself on occasion with vigour about the contemporary religious scene. But if he did this less frequently from now on, this was almost certainly due to the diminution in the general tension which followed the arranging of the temporary religious peace in 1532. Sachs continued a devoted adherent of Luther, but in future his energies were to be largely applied, not to the propagation of Lutheran doctrine, or to the overthrow of rival religious doctrines and practices, but to the promotion of the fundamental ethical purpose of the Reformation, the moral regeneration of men and society.

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1. See below, p. 324.
  2. Schultheiß, op. cit., p. 31.

HYMNS AND PSALMS

Christianity owes an immense debt to German hymn-writers. Over one hundred thousand hymns have been written in German - more than in any other language - and these make up about a quarter of the total stock of Christian (1) hymns.

Hymns were, of course, sung before the Reformation. The Latin hymns and sequences of Hilary, Ambrose, Fortunatus, Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas and others had long been in use for public worship, but they were sung only

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1. J. Julian: Dictionary of Hymnology (London, 1892)

by choristers and the clergy, and not by the people. Nor, to be strictly accurate, did even congregational singing begin with the Reformation. The singing of hymns in German by the congregation on special occasions, such as feast-days, was already a widely accepted practice in pre-Reformation Germany. Attempts had been made also in Germany before Luther to develop the regular singing of hymns in the vernacular, notably by Peter Dresdensis, a Rector of Zwickau, who died in 1440. He had been led to do this through his acquaintance with John Huss, whose followers had formed themselves, in 1467, into a separate and organised Church, the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, one of the distinctive peculiarities of which was the free use of hymns and prayers in their mother tongue. The first book of hymns in the vernacular was published in 1504 by Lukas, the Archbishop of the Brethren. Nevertheless, it was only when harnessed to the Lutheran Reformation that the practice of regular congregational hymn-singing became an established feature of the religious life of a large part of Germany, and it is by the evangelical Church in Germany, that the hymn, as a popular religious lyric in praise of God to be sung by the congregation in public worship, has been most extensively cultivated. The treasures of German hymnody have enriched Churches in other tongues and have passed into Scandinavian and modern English and American hymnbooks.

The first German evangelical hymnbook was

(1)

Luther's Etlich christlich lider lobgesang, the so-called Achtliederbuch, which was published in 1524 and contained in all eight hymns, four of them by Luther. The Erfurt Enchiridion of the same year had twenty-five hymns (eighteen by Luther<sup>(1)</sup>) and altogether Luther contributed twenty-four hymns to the collections published in Nuremberg, Erfurt and Wittenberg in that year. Even before these early collections were published, single hymns by Luther were being printed and circulated among the people.

Luther's friends and colleagues and even his students hastened to follow his inspiring lead. Among their number were Justus Jonas and Paul Eber, Professors respectively of Ecclesiastical Law and Hebrew at Wittenberg, and Erasmus Alberus (one of Luther's students and a friend of Melanchthon), whose hymns were considered by Herder as almost equal to those of Luther himself. But the movement quickly spread over a much wider field and a host of hymn-writers sprang up. They included not only clergymen and professors, but men of all ranks: princes, like the Margraves of Hesse and Brandenburg; soldiers and lawyers, like Adam Reissner (who was present at the siege of Rome in 1527) and Lazarus Spengler, the town clerk of Nuremberg; and Hans Sachs.

In 1524, with Lutheran pastors installed in the great churches in Nuremberg, new forms of worship were

1. WA/XXXV

being worked out in the city along the lines suggested by Luther. It was possibly in response to a local need that Sachs in this year wrote the first of the

"Psalmen und ander kirchengesäng,  
Auch verendert geistliche lieder,"

that he mentions in the Summa. Few truly original German hymns were produced in the sixteenth century. Luther himself had no hesitation in borrowing freely from the hymnody of the Roman Church. But when it is remembered that for over two centuries following the Reformation there was no hymn-book at all for use in the English Church, it can be seen how striking was the progress made in Germany in adapting older hymns and secular songs for use in the new services. Sachs' hymns were typical of their period.

(1)

It is known that Luther wrote to Spalatin and others encouraging them to follow his example in composing hymns. It is not unlikely that he thought of enlisting the services of Hans Sachs and the latter perhaps received a message from one of Luther's many Nuremberg friends. Sachs had in fact already experimented with hymn-writing in 1520 though neither Ach huelf mich laid mein senlich klag (an adaptation of a secular song) nor Die epistel Pilati von Cristo, das bildnus Jesu Cristi were published. Etliche

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1. See Mackinnon, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 113.
  2. Beifus, op. cit., p. 8.
  3. WKL/II/1081-2.

geistliche in der schrift gegrünte lieder für die layen zu

(1)

singen was issued in 1525, though several of the hymns in this collection had appeared singly in 1524. Marienlieder and, to a lesser extent, Annenlieder, hymns addressed to the Virgin and St. Anne, had constituted a very large and well-known class among the poems of pre-Reformation Germany. They had first assumed a prominent place in literature in the age of the crusades and the Minnesänger, and had been revived in the most extravagant forms in the fifteenth century. Mary was even clothed with divine attributes and virtually put in the place of Christ as the fountain of all grace. "Da tritt uns vor Allem die abgöttliche Verehrung der Jungfrau Maria entgegen, durch alle Jahrhunderte hindurch von Otfrid bis auf Luther. Es gibt Lieder, welche die Präexistenz der Maria bei Gott vor der Schöpfung der Welt lehren. In ihr und zu ihr seien Alle Dinge geschaffen, in ihr nahm Gott am siebenten Tag seine Ruhe." All this was, of course, rejected by Luther.

(2)

In particular, the veneration of the Virgin Mary as the supreme intercessor with her son, ran counter to the Lutheran doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the right of all Christians to approach God directly through Christ. Many of the old Marian hymns were therefore re-written at the time

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1. WKL/III/55-61; KG/XXII/85-108.  
2. WKL/II/xiii.

of the Reformation, the Virgin Mary being replaced by Christ, as in Sachs' first two hymns, Das liedt Maria zart, verendert und christlich corrigiert and Das liedt Die fraw vom hymmel verendert und christlich corrigiert. The first stanza of the original and Sachs' version of Das liedt Maria zart run as follows:

<u>Original</u>	<u>Hens Sachs' version</u>
Maria zart	O Jesu zart,
von edler art,	Göttlicher art,
ein roß an allen doren,	Ain roß on alle doren,
Du hast auß macht	Du hast auß macht
her wider pracht	Herwider pracht,
das vor lang was verloren	Das vor lang was verloren
Durch Adams fall;	Durch Adams vall;
dir hat die wall	Dir wert die wal
sendt gabriel versprochen.	Von got vatter versprochen;
hilff, das nit werd gerochen	Auf daß nit würd gerochen
Mein sündt und schuld,	Mein sünd und schuld,
erwird mir huld,	Erwerbstu huld;
Dann kain trost ist,	Wenn kain trost ist,
Wo du nit pist	Wo du nit bist
barmhertzigkait erwerben.	Barmhertzigkait erwerben:
Am lesten endt,	Wer dich nit hat
ich pitt, nit wendt	Und dein genat,
von mir in meinem sterben. (1)	Der muß ewiglich sterben. (2)

This change was characteristic of the effect which the Reformation exerted on the worship of the Virgin Mary. It substituted for it the worship of Christ as the only mediator and Saviour through whom men attain eternal life.

The fact that Sachs' first two hymns were based on old and well-known forms probably accounts for the rapid

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1. WKL/II/804.  
2. KG/XXII/85.

distribution and acceptance of his versions. Both appear in Low German renderings in the oldest Low German evangelical hymnbook, which dates from 1525 - O Jesu tzart. Gŕdlycker arth and Christum van hemel rop jck an.

The third hymn - Ein schone tagweyß von dem wort gottes - was based on an old aubade, whose first line was taken over:

(1) Ein schone tagweyß von dem

wort gottes - was based on an old aubade, whose first line was taken over:

"Wach auff, meins hertzen schŕne,"

and recalls the opening lines of Die wittenbergisch nachtigall.

The words have the assured, almost aggressive ring of the

(2) evangelical hymns of a later era; for example -

"Mit viel menschen-gesetzen  
Mit -bannen und -gebot  
Mit gelt-strick und seelnetzen:  
Die werden yetzt zu spott,  
Vor yederman zu schande,  
Fŕr eytel lŕg und finsterntŕß  
Durch alle teŕtsche lande." (v.3)

"O christenheit, merck eben  
Auf das war gottes-wort!  
In im so ist das leben  
Der seelen hie und dort.  
Wer darinn thut abscheyden,  
Der lebet darinn ewiglich,  
Bey Christo in den freuden." (v.9)

1. KG/XXII/91.

2. This hymn was translated into English by Catherine Winkworth, and included in her Christian Singers of Germany (London, 1869), as A fair Melody: To be sung by Good Christians. Verse 9 was rendered by Miss Winkworth as follows:

(Continued on p. 228)

The fourth hymn - Ein christlich lied das  
(1)

grawsam droen des satans - appears to be an entirely original composition. The words are fresh and lively and express the convert's bold assurance that the Lord is on his side, for example, in the simple and effective ending of the second verse, in which Satan, of course, represents the Pope:

"Die alt schlang, der sathane,  
Der lüg ein vater ist:  
Wölt das gern unterstane,  
Verbot mit gschwindem list:  
Das wort solt niemand sagen  
Bey bann und lebenspflicht!  
Ir viel ließ er verjagen,  
Verbrennen und erschlagen:  
Doch halff es alles nicht."

Most of the verses recount incidents in which the Lord came to the assistance of the old Jews, and show how familiar Sachs was by this time with Old Testament history. Miles Coverdale, the English bishop and translator of the Bible, made a free translation of this hymn which he probably came across during his exile on the continent under Mary I.  
(2)

(Continued from p. 227)

"O Christendom, here give thou heed,  
By no false lore perplexed,  
Here seek and find true life indeed  
For this world and the next;  
For he who dies believing  
In Christ, shall live with Him,  
His heavenly joys receiving."

1. KG/XXII/94.

2. Goostly Psalmes and Spirituelle Songs (No. 16). See C.E. Herford, op. cit., p. 19ff.

(1)

Das lied von der erkanntnß Christi was adapted

from a secular song, Rosina, wo was dein gestalt. The polemical nature of the opening lines is unmistakable:

"O Christe, wo war dein gestalt  
 Bey bapst Silvesters leben  
 Do kayser Constantinus gwalt  
 Im uber Rom thet geben?"

This passage echoes Luther's critical attacks on the basis  
 (2)  
 of the Pope's temporal authority and in the two following  
 (3)  
 hymns - Christe, du anfencklichen bist and Christe warer sun  
 gottes fron - there are hints of the interest Sachs took in  
 the vexed question of the Donation of Constantine.

The final hymn in this collection - Ach Jupiter  
 (4)  
 hestw gewalt, christlich verendert - was probably originally  
 a love-song and was turned by Sachs into a dialogue between  
 Christ and a sinner, in which the latter asks for and is  
 eventually granted salvation.

Some of Sachs' hymns were quickly accepted into  
 current use. The first two found a place in the Nuremberg  
 enchiridia of 1525. The last one was in a collection of  
 hymns made by Georg Korn (also 1525); it then appeared in  
 the Nuremberg enchiridion of 1527. In the last two cases the

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1. KG/XXII/98
  2. AS, for example, in An den christlichen Adel (WA/VI/433-36)
  3. KG/XXII/100 and 102. The latter was translated by Catherine Winkworth as The Mediator, beginning "O Christ, true son of God most high". (See Christian Singers of Germany, and also Julian, op. cit., p. 1287 and p. 1597)
  4. KG/XXII/104.

the name of the author was given but in 1533 the same hymn was included anonymously in the Wittenberg hymnbook. All Sachs' hymns seem to have passed over into the general stock of hymns in Nuremberg but no attempt appears to have been made to trace their wider distribution. The task would indeed be difficult as in the Classic days of Lutheranism every community had its own hymnbook and the number of such books is therefore legion. Only Miles Coverdale and Catherine Winkworth appear to have attempted English translations of Sachs' hymns and none has been included in any well-known English hymnal.

In 1526 Sachs turned his attentions to the Psalms and examples survive of a collection of Sachs' metrical Psalms published by the Nuremberg printer, Jobst Gutknecht, in that year. The collection was entitled Dreytzehen Psalmen zusingen in den vier genotirten thönen in welchem man wil Oder in dem thon Nun frewt euch lieben Christen gmein einem Christen in widerwertigkeit seer tröstlich. Hans Sachs 1526. All thirteen Psalms were included in the Nuremberg enchiridion of 1527. Sachs' version of Psalm cxxiv - "Wo der herre nicht bey uns wer" was translated by Miles Coverdale as "Except the Lord had been with us".

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1. See E. Weller: Der Volksdichter Hans Sachs und seine Dichtungen (Nürnberg, 1868), p.67 and WKL/III/56ff (Notes).
  2. KG/XXII/109-120. (Psalms ix, x, xi, xiii, xv, xxx, xliii, lvi, lviii, cxxvii, cxxiv, cxlvi and cxlix)
  3. Goostly Psalmes and Spirituelle Songs (No. 27)

Gar schöner und Christlicher Lieder fünffe.

published in Nuremberg in 1542 by Georg Wachter, contained two hymns by Hans Sachs, which according to E. Goetze were originally written in 1530. The first, Die zehen Gebot,<sup>(1)</sup> is a paraphrase of the Ten Commandments; the second, Das Teudtsche Patrem,<sup>(2)</sup> is a confession of faith in the Holy Trinity and the first stanza is borrowed from Luther's hymn with the same theme and title,<sup>(3)</sup> which appeared in the Erfurt enchiridion of 1524.

Sachs attempted individual versions of many more of the Psalms, mostly in the form of master songs, but after he had conceived the project of publishing his collected works, he applied himself, between 1559 and 1565, to the production of a complete version of the Book of Psalms. This was included in the fifth book of the Folio edition of his works. It was one of at least twenty complete German psalters published between 1561 and 1617.<sup>(4)</sup> It never achieved the popularity of his earlier Psalms.

(5)

The famous hymn Warum betrübst du dich mein Herz? which is in almost universal use in Germany, has often been

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1. KG/XXII/16.
  2. KG/XXII/165.
  3. WKL/III/16.
  4. Other versions are listed in Julian, op. cit., p. 1543.
  5. Three versions are given in WKL/IV/128-130. It was translated by Catherine Winkworth in her Lyra Germanica (2nd Series, London, 1858) beginning "Why art thou so cast down, my heart?"

ascribed to Hans Sachs and there is a touching tradition that he wrote it during the siege of Nuremberg by Albrecht Alcibades. Schultheiß states that the hymn was not attributed to Sachs before 1650 but according to James Mearns, the scholarly Assistant Editor of Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology. Ambrosius Hennemann in his Prodromus Hymnologiae (Wittenberg, 1633) entitled it Consolation against Tearfulness. Hans Sachs, whilst the title given in Jeremias Weber's Gesangbuch (Leipzig, 1638) was On Famine. A good family hymn. Written for the heads of households and their families by Hans Sachs of Nürnberg, the well-known German poet. Several versions of the poem were printed during Sachs' lifetime and the printers included Valentin Neuber and Fridrich Gutknecht, both of whom published other works by Sachs, but in none is it ascribed to him. The free verse structure and the inaccurate rhymes which characterise the extant versions of the poem argue against Sachs' authorship of the poem. Perhaps the most convincing argument of all against Sachs is the omission of the poem from the Folio edition. If Sachs had indeed written such a beautiful and deeply sensitive poem, it is at least unlikely that he would have excluded it from his collected works.

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1. On the evidence of J. Mitzell: Geistliche Lieder der der evangelischen Kirche (1885). This work was severely criticised by Goedeke in the Grundriß, Vol. II, p. 415.
  2. Julian, op. cit., p. 1234.

#### IV

### THE MIDDLE YEARS

After 1530 a significant change of emphasis can be seen in Hans Sachs' Reformation writings. As has been suggested, it is improbable that this was due to the consequences of his association with Andreas Osiander in 1527, for it is paralleled by a change in the course of the Reformation itself. In the early 1530's the increasing military threat from the Turks distracted the Emperor's attention from the religious situation in Germany, and the temporary religious peace patched up at the Diet of Nuremberg in 1532 brought a relaxation of religious tension (which is reflected in a greatly diminished output of polemical literature) and opened the way for a further spread of Protestantism. In the next few years the number of adhesions to Lutheranism was very

great, but the direction of the movement was now in the hands of the political powers recently organised into the Schmalkaldic League. Undoubtedly a new wave of enthusiasm for Lutheran ideas spread over Germany in these years, but the motives of many of the rulers, who now embraced Lutheranism, were frankly selfish and political and their subjects had neither the power to resist the introduction of the Lutheran church system, nor the means to make their wishes known. A mood of disillusionment swiftly followed, and this was probably at the root of the widespread decline in moral standards in Germany at this time, upon which Janssen insists with so much detail. Only some twenty years later do we find a note of real disillusionment in Hans Sachs' works, but the element of moralising which becomes such a marked feature of his writings from now on does reflect his disappointment at the failure of his fellow men and women to fulfil Luther's teachings by leading better lives, and would seem to indicate that in this respect the inhabitants of Nuremberg were little, if any, better than their compatriots elsewhere.

The key to Sachs' later work is to be found in the fourth dialogue, in which he had illustrated the fundamental Lutheran concept of "good works" as proceeding from end

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1. J. Janssen in his History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages (London, 1900-1925) produced such a deal of evidence on this point that, despite his Roman Catholic bias and frequent exaggerations, it is impossible to believe that there is not much truth in his assertions.

not leading to faith in God, and the major part of Sachs' vast output can be seen as one long development of the theme of the relationship between human conduct and faith, or lack of faith, in God. Thus the poem, Die sieben fürtrefflichen geistlichen gaben. so auß einem waren glauben ihren ursprung haben. (1) opens as follows:

"Der glaub ist das gantz fundament  
Anfang, mittel und auch das end,  
Ein ursprung andrer gaben allen,  
On den Got niemand mag gefallen."

Sachs then shows how love and hope and the other virtues follow from faith, and concludes:

"Der warhafft glaub der ist die wurtz,  
Der gibt uns Gott gantzlich zu eygen.  
Die lieb dem nechsten wir erzeygen,  
Die hoffnung ist uns täglich laben.  
Gerechtigkeit im geist wir haben.  
Fürsichtigkeyt uns warnen thut.  
Messigkeyt zemet fleisch und blut.  
Sterck inn dem leyden uns erhelt,  
Biß doch das zeitlich leben felt.  
Als denn erlang wir alle send  
Das erb im ewing vatterland."

(2)

In his "comedy", Die gantz histori Tobie mit seinem sun. Sachs points the moral that God can do anything for those who trust and believe in Him:

" ..... Gott, der uns erretten kan  
Aus allen nöten hie und dort,  
So wir gehorchen seinem wort  
Mit einem gotseligen leben  
Und uns im gantzlich undtergeben."

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1. KG/I/353 (1535)  
2. KG/I/134 (1533)

In the Kampff-gesprech zwischen dem Tod und dem natürlichen  
 (1)  
Leben ("fast nützlich zu lesen"!.) the theme is the inevitability of death for all and damnation for the sinful. But Death is only the agent of Justice, equally ready to hand over his charges to everlasting punishment or eternal freedom. He is made the mouthpiece of Sachs' simple faith:

"Wilt du entgehn dem ewign todt  
 Und dem strengen gericht vor Gott,  
 So fleucht zu dem genaden-thron  
 Jesu Christo, dem Gottes son! .....

Dieser ist zu eym mitler gebn,  
 On den ich sonst kein trost nicht west.  
 Halt dich an den im glauben fest,  
 Durch den du ewig leben magst!"

One of Sachs' rare references to the Lord's Supper then follows:

" .... Ist schwach dein gewißn,  
 So hat dir Christus auch zu gut  
 Gelassen hie seyn leyb und blut  
 Eh er abscheyd vor seynem end,  
 Inn dem heyligen sacrament,  
 Darmit du dein glauben sterckst,"

which shows how closely Sachs followed Luther's interpretation  
 (2)  
 of the sacrament as the "gift of divine promise", "an object  
 of faith ... meant for the nourishing and strengthening of the  
 (2)  
 personal faith of the individual".

Sachs was by now, however, no longer concerned  
 so much with the exposition of Lutheran doctrine as with its

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1. KG/I/442 (1533).
2. "beneficium promissionis divinae"; "obiectum fidei propriae cuiusque alendae et roborandae". (De captivitate Babylonica Ecclesiae - WA/VI/523)

moral consequences. He was more intent on preaching virtue than dogma. In the Summa he says of his works:

"Darinn ist angezeigt, wie  
Hoch die tugend zu loben sey  
Bey menschling gschlecht, und auch darbey,  
Wie schendlich sein die groben laster."

As he grew older Sachs seems to have come to see the Reformation less as a theological dispute than as a call for the moral regeneration of the society in which he lived. His claim that in his "Wanderjahre" he had shunned

"Spil, trunckenheit und bulerey  
Und ander kurzweil mancherley"

shows that he was perhaps not blind to the temptations to which others succumbed and it is possible that the conversion of this simple but morally armour-plated man to the Lutheren cause had its origin to a large extent in the hopes it promised of an improvement in the lives of his fellow men. He had been drawn in the 1520's by the pull of circumstances into the great debate and in this period his works were concerned mainly, though not exclusively, with the propagation of Lutheran doctrine and the criticism of Roman Catholicism. From about 1530, however, he turns, as he had done earlier in the fourth dialogue to the application of Lutheran standards to the life of the individual and of society. Almost all his works - dramas, Shrovetide plays, Sprüche and Schwänke - regardless of whether their material is drawn from Vergil, Plutarch, Boccaccio or the Bible, from heathen or Christian

sources, from now on point a moral, usually explicitly in the concluding lines. It is possible from his moralisings to build up a picture of Sachs' ideal society and at the same time, as we shall see in the next two chapters, we learn how far contemporary society fell short of this ideal. (1)

But if in his middle years Hans Sachs' vast poetic energies were largely devoted to advocating the moral revolution he hoped for, he still retained his interest in the Reformation as a whole and he was driven to comment, sometimes sadly and sometimes with extreme bitterness, on the state of spiritual affairs and the hindrances to the further progress of the Reformation. Thus in 1539 he told his readers in Die gemartert Theologia that he had been pondering (2)

"Wie teutsche nation  
Ietzunder so vol steckt  
Irrthumb, rotten und sect,"

he had fallen asleep and in a vision was led by a spirit (Genius) into an ancient temple. Here he sees a beautiful, white-clad maiden sitting in an odour of sanctity on a lofty throne and reading a large book. Around the throne stand her small band of followers. Suddenly there bursts in a crowd of wrangling prelates armed with many books and each seeks to persuade the maiden to resolve their dispute in his favour.

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1. Incidentally we can gather much information about the everyday life of the times. This aspect of Sachs' work has never been fully investigated. For a limited treatment based on the Fastnachtspiele only see W. French: Medieval Civilisation as illustrated in the Fastnachtspiele of Hans Sachs (Hesperia, No. 15, 1926) and J. Münch: Die Sozialen Anschauungen des Hans Sachs (Diss. Erlangen, 1936)
  2. KG/I/338 (1539)

The figure on the throne is unmoved by their arguments and after shamelessly abusing her they go on their way. The spirit then explains to Sachs that the snow-white maiden is Theology ("die haylig biblisch schrift") and the group around the throne are the true followers of the Scriptures, who

"Suchen in werck und lehr  
Allein die Gottes ehr,  
Des nechsten hayl und nutz."

Unfortunately her true followers are few in number; the vast majority

"Sucht eygne ehr und ruhm,  
Wol-lust oder reychthum,"

and though they appeal to the Scriptures they twist them to suit their own purposes, so that there has arisen

"Irrthumb unnd ketzerey,  
Menschen gesetz unnd wohn  
Unnd superstition,  
Orden, rotten und sect."

The spirit disappears and Sachs awakes and comments on his vision. He is reminded of Jeremiah's lament: "My people hath been lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to go astray." The leaders of Christendom have likewise led their people astray by twisting and tearing and stretching the Scriptures for their own ends and for the sake of personal renown. But not only the scholars are to blame -

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1. Jeremiah i/6. This seems to be the probable quotation implied by Sachs.

"Sunder auch die verkerten  
 Layen die gschrift auch nützen,  
 Zu verdaiding und bschönen,  
 Verspotten und verhönen,  
 Die gschrift auch an viel örtern  
 Mit merlein und sprichwörtern  
 So grob und unbescheyden,  
 Als ob es weren heyden;"

he fears that, because of the way men treat the Scriptures  
 and distort their simple truth, God will take back His Word.  
 He ends by addressing a prayer to Christ asking

"Das er wöll all irrthum,  
 Spitzfünd und ketzerey,  
 Sact, rotten und partey  
 Außrotten durch sein geist."

It is clear that Sachs is here tilting not at the  
 Roman Catholic opposition but at those responsible for the  
 divisions in the Protestant camp itself. To him the "simple"  
 fact of the Reformation was that Luther had again drawn Man's  
 attention back to "the Word of God", and had torn away the  
 superstructure erected by the Roman Catholic Church, which  
 barred man's direct access to the Word. The meaning Luther  
 attached to the concept of the Word is supremely important  
 to the understanding of his idea of the Church. "Tota vita  
 et substantia Ecclesiae est in verbo dei." (1) The Word of God  
 for Luther is Christ as he lives in the witness of the Bible (2)  
 and as he comes to life again in preaching based on the Bible.

1. WA/VII/721.

2. See W. Pauck: The Heritage of the Reformation (Boston, 1950)  
 p. 29.

It is, however, not necessary to pursue this matter here as it was never fully understood by Sachs. He naïvely took the "Word of God" to be synonymous with the Bible; more particularly he identifies it with the Gospels. It was a source of perpetual sorrow to him that men should be so perverse as to misunderstand and misinterpret the words of the Bible. Sachs may perhaps be pardoned for this as Luther himself never brought himself to regard as real the possibility that men would honestly differ in their apprehension of the same reality of the Word of God and that it might be possible to reconcile these differences either by a reconsideration of their reference to the apprehended reality or by a toleration of them under maintenance of mutual contact - possibilities which were implied in his fundamental conception of the power of the Word.

(1)

Sachs expressed his regrets at the perverseness of men in another forthright poem written in 1540, Das klagendt Evangelium. He again resorts to his favourite device of the vision. This time he has been keeping vigil in church one Good Friday night and has fallen asleep. In the vision he hears the sorrowing voice of the Word of God. The

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1. Pauck, op. cit., p. 36.
  2. KG/I/345.

Word tells him how it had come to Germany to reform the churches "von allem misbrauch klar", how it had been eagerly received by the common man, and how it had thought that Germans would now

"Wären ein christlich leben  
Nach meiner lehr und sag  
Teglich von tag zu tag  
ALS rechte Gottes kind."

But in vain. Whilst many had accepted the Word with their lips they had denied it in their lives. They had comforted themselves with the thought that Christ had done all that was necessary for them; they had no longer any time for good works but had behaved

"Sam sey die hell verdorben  
Der teuffel lengst gestorben  
Und lieg der todt gefangen,  
Der streng ghricht vergangen,"

and had continued to practise all the vices. They had only accepted the Word of God, so long as it served their own selfish purposes. Others had not accepted the divine truth of the Word of God at all but had denounced it as heresy, saying that it brought no good fruit. And there were yet others, the Pharisees and High Priests, who had condemned the Word unheard and had striven to banish it by burning and martyring its true followers. If Christ Himself came back, the representatives of the Church would crucify Him again as a crazy imposter or murderous rebel. They had disparaged the Word of God by attributing to it all wars, famines and other human disasters. If instead of reducing their incomes it had brought

them an increase of power and wealth, it would have been  
 quite acceptable to them. Thus the Word of God had been  
 "kicked around" (umb-getrieben)

"Erstlich von dem maul-christen,  
 Darnach von Romanisten  
 Und den religiosen;  
 Sind eines tuchs drey hosen."

Only a very few had adhered to the Word, the real Christian community. These would be saved and the rest abandoned to judgement. The Word ends its lament with the warning that the blindness of Germany will force it to leave Germany for other, more Christian shores:

"Blind, Überblinds Teutschland  
 An geyst und an verstand!  
 Es wirdt mein lehr unnd treyben  
 Nicht allmal bey dir bleyben.  
 Ich wirdt von dir außgohn  
 Inn andre nation."

Sachs then awakes and thinks over the significance of his dream. He ruefully admits that it is unfortunately true that the Word has been preached clearly but has born little fruit. He recalls the parable of the sower, and the poem ends with the prayer:

"O Herr, laß unns dein wort  
 Bleyben, unnd laß es fort  
 In unns erflammen starck  
 Durch seel, hertz, bein unnd marck,  
 Das wir dir zeugnuß geben,  
 Beyde mit wort unnd leben  
 Gut christlich früchte bringen,  
 Her auß dem glauben springen  
 Als ware Gottes kind."

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1. Cf. p. 192 above.

The failure of all classes of society - eccles-  
 iastical and secular - to heed Luther's message and his call  
 (1)  
 to reform was the theme of another poem written a year later.

Sachs recounts how he had lost his way in a wood and had  
 encountered an old hermit monk. The latter had told him how  
 three months before he had read some new theological books  
 which were

"So christlich, schriftlich und noch mehr  
 On zusatz aller menschen-lehr".

Joyfully believing that a great increase in the Christian  
 faith had taken place, that love and virtue had multiplied  
 and that all vice was at an end, he had left the wood and  
 returned to the world. But his hopes that all was well with  
 the world had been sadly disappointed. He had first gone to  
 the court of the supreme head of Christendom but instead of  
 "pure holiness" he had found

" ..... lauter simoney,  
 Geldstrick, seelmördt und triegerey  
 Und so vol unchristlicher werck,  
 Als ob es wer fraw Venus perck."

The bishops he had visited were no better. With all their  
 pomp and splendour they were more worldly than the world  
 itself; they devoured the money of the poor and opposed the  
 Word of God. Amongst the theologians he had looked for  
 harmony and pure Christian doctrine but he found them

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1. Der klagent waltbruder uber aller stend auff erden  
 (KG/III/573) (1541)

" ..... so manigfeltig,  
 So wider-wertig und vilspeltig  
 Vol irrsal und vol ketzer ey,  
 Voller spitzfünd und schwärmer ey,  
 Voller opinion und maynig,  
 Gantz voller schulzenck und unaynig."

He had met only a few who stood by the Word of God; the rest defended their doctrines with threats of fire and murder. In the clergy houses he had found the care of souls subordinate to the care of food; in the monasteries instead of poverty, chastity and obedience he had discovered only hypocrisy and superstition, and in the schools and universities he had found young scholars being fed on "heathen poison" instead of being nourished with the Holy Scriptures.

From the representatives of the Church the monk had turned to the ranks of the laity but here, too, from the highest to the lowest he had found the very opposite of those virtues - the fruit of the Gospel - that he had been seeking. His experiences had convinced him that the preaching of the pure Gospel was only a sign that the day of judgement was at hand and so he had returned to his wilderness to escape the doom that awaited the world.

The great event of 1541 in Nuremberg was the visit of the Emperor Charles V to the city on his way to the Diet of Regensburg and in a poem written to celebrate the

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1. Kayserliche mayestat Caroli der V einreyten zu Nürnberg in der heyligen reichs stat, den xvi tag Februarii des 1541 jars (KG/II/381)

occasion Sachs reflected the high hopes of the Protestants that at this Diet a way would at last be found to bridge the differences between them and the Catholic party. But though in March we find Sachs wishing

"Das zu regenspurg auff dem reichstag  
Wird abgelaint der gros zwispon  
Zwischen geistlicher religion,"

he was clearly soon disappointed by the course of events, for in May he gave vent to one of his sharpest attacks on the Pope and the Roman Church in Des pabstes ackerbau.<sup>(1)</sup> The poem is again clothed in the form of a dream in which Sachs sees a large field. Scholars armed with pitchforks are busy spreading the field with books from a dung-cart; monks are drawing a plough hung with paternosters, rosaries, "pretzen, hering und fasten-speis"; a Papal courtling is sowing indulgences and four priests are pulling a harrow on which burns the purgatorial fire. Purses spring up all over the field; the crop is harvested, the purses threshed and the money extracted. The cardinals and bishops appropriate the ducats and dollars, the abbots and canons take the smaller coins and the mendicant friars and the village priests are left with the chaff. A heroic figure then arrives on the scene, as strong as Hercules; he smashes the plough and the harrow and sows good seed. Though his life is threatened, he merely laughs at his persecutors.

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1. KG/XXII/246. Though the poem was not included in the Folio edition of Sachs' works, it was published as a broadsheet.

Sachs then awakes and interprets his dream.

This is the Pope's field - the Roman Catholic religion - stinking with the doctrines of men and trenched with falsehood, hypocrisy and superstition; indulgences have brought a rich harvest to Rome as has also the harrowing of men's spirits by the fear of purgatory. The Pope has in fact set himself up as a god on earth -

"Er macht vil geltstrick und gepot;  
 Als, was er wolt, das macht er stent,  
 Umb gelt er es wider abkent,  
 In suma kurz: in aller welt  
 War all sein ding gericht auf gelt  
 Sampt allen seinen meßknechten,  
 Dettten nur nach dem pewtel fechten,  
 Ganz selig nenntens, der in gab;  
 Wer das nit det, der war schabab.  
 Wer zw weit reden wolt darfen,  
 Der war den in dem schweren pon.  
 Lent und lewt thetet sie peschwern,  
 Sie hetten gar ein guete ern."

The "harvest" has been used to keep the Pope and his "meßknechten" in luxury and idleness. The heroic figure is, of course, Martin Luther:

"Seit doctor Martin hat geschriben,  
 Hat er sie von dem acker drieben,  
 Zerprochen in ir pflug und egen  
 Und predigt das wort gotz dargegen.  
 Darin hat unser gewissen rw;  
 Des strick wir itz die pewtel zw;  
 Derhalb des babst mit seinem hawfen  
 Duet also zdernen; wlaten und schnauffen.  
 Het aber Martin Lueter gleret,  
 Das sich ir ernet het gemert  
 Und hetten mer pewtel und deschen  
 Gehapt zw schneiden und zw dreschen,  
 So wer kein glertrer man erstanden  
 In teutschen, noch in weischen landen."

Sachs ends his poem by wishing that God would root out all doctrines and commandments of men and put an end to all ecclesiastical money-grubbing. The dating of the poem makes it clear that Sachs was convinced that the Catholic leaders at Regensburg had no intention of promoting the Word of God and were only motivated by hatred of Luther and his doctrines, which had resulted in a reduction in their incomes and profits.

A month or so later in Disputacion zw Regenspurg  
 (1)  
im 1541 jar Sachs gave an account of the negotiations at Regensburg which had now finally broken down. He tells how he had been pondering the reasons for the failure of the two parties to reach agreement. He believes that if only their object had been the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and their guide the Word of God, harmony would have been achieved. He is then transported in a dream to a court-room, where Jupiter is sitting in judgement on Truth; the chief prosecutor is Hypocrisy, supported by Good-for-Nothing (Nequicia); Minerva leads for the defence and succeeds in forcing Hypocrisy to remove one of Truth's many chains. Things are going well for Truth and Jupiter is clearly moved in her favour, but Bacchus, Venus and Pluto deny her their support, and after Adulation and Nequicia have again spoken, Jupiter

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1. KG/XXII/253. So far as is known the poem was unpublished.

is so confused that he no longer knows what is Truth and seeks advice from Saturn and Neptune. Finally, the armed figure of Mars enters and breaks up the proceedings. Truth remains in chains and is comforted by Patience and Justice. Sachs awakes with the sound of Truth's weeping in his ears and remarks that he is no longer surprised that nothing has been settled (at Regensburg):

"Weil der ain dail allein  
 Sich suechet und das sein,  
 Reichtum, gewalt und er,  
 Woluest und anders mer.  
 Derhalb er das liecht schewcht  
 Und in die finster krewcht  
 Durch mancherley auszflieg,  
 Pratic, arglist und lüeg,  
 Wie er sein dach müeg schmüecken,  
 Verdaiding und durch-drüecken  
 Und die obrikait plent,  
 Pis got selb an dem ent  
 Durch sein himlische clarheit  
 Sein wort, die heillig warheit,  
 Wunderper wirt erledigen,  
 Offenlich lassen predigen  
 Durch die ganz cristenheit."

It is clear from this poem that Sachs at this time credited Charles V (Jupiter) with the best of motives and an honest wish to achieve religious unity, which was frustrated by Catholic intriguers. The chain which Hypocrisy (?Morone, the Papal nuntio) is forced to remove from Truth signifies the concessions (the marriage of priests and the use of the cup) which were made to the Protestants during the religious conference which was held during the Diet and in which the Protestant delegation was led by Melanchthon (Minerva) and

(1)

the Catholics by Johann von Eck (Nequicia). Saturn and Neptune are clearly the Pope and the Emperor's brother, the Archduke Ferdinand, whilst Mars embodies the threat of war from the Turks.

Hans Sachs never had any deep feeling for politics and it is probable that he had little real understanding of the confused events of 1542 and 1543. That echoes of distant struggles were heard in Nuremberg is evident from his account of the battle of Sittard, but the true objects of the Emperor's policy were still veiled from greater minds than his. To Sachs the Pope and not Charles V was still the arch-enemy and early in May, 1543, he composed in the form of Sprüche a number of sharp attacks on the Papacy, all of which were issued as broadsheets. In Ein warnung Hensel Narren den weltlichen stant vor dem gaistlichen stant he warns the secular estates of the losses they have suffered at the hands of the Roman Church and urges them -

"Derhalb wacht auf und last euch ddersten  
Nach rainer leer hailliger schrift!  
Fleecht menschen-leer als herbes gift,  
So wert ir rechte Cristen frum,  
Pleibt pey lant, lewten und reichthum,  
Entget iren stricken und garnen."

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1. See pp. 121-122 above.
  2. Die schlacht zwischen der künigin Marie heer und des herzogen von Cleve zwischen Zitart und Rettmund. 1543 jar am 24 tag macci geschehen (KG/XXII/288).
  3. KG/XXII/274.

(1)

In Vermanung des pabstes zw seinen thempel-knechten Sachs

makes the Pope exhort the Roman clergy to keep their sheep within the fold, so that they may not be poisoned by evangelical doctrines; so long as they are within the fold the sheep may be fleeced and "skinned". The Pope boasts that he is more powerful than the Emperor, kings and princes, from whom the clergy need fear no interference. Anyone who dares to resist, the Pope says -

"Den det ich in den schweren pan;  
Wolt er mit gwalt sich wider-setzen,  
So thw ich ander an in hetzen,  
Die in uberzihent pekriegen,  
Den mues er sich ducken und schmiegen."

The Pope then continues, saying that he has suffered much injury in Germany through Luther, and that many princes and cities have taken his doctrines to heart. Nevertheless, the Pope hopes that

"..... es wern etlich mein gelieder  
Mit der eyseren ruetten wider  
Das Deutschland dreiben noch zw-mal  
In unsren römischen schaffstal;  
Und wirt uns dieser däck geratten,  
Erst wolt wir metzgen, siedn, pratten,  
Den doppelt melken, schinden und schern  
Und alles laids ergetzet wern."

Beifus thought he saw here a disguised reference to the Emperor's impending attack on the Duchy of Jülich-Cleves-Berg, where Duke William had recently abandoned his Erasmian ideas and adopted Lutheranism, and to attempts to frustrate the

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introduction of the Reformation in Cologne. It seems more likely that this poem and a similar attack on the Papacy written a few days later in May, 1543,<sup>(1)</sup> were motivated more by a sense of despair at the general trend of events rather than by any clear appreciation of the details of the current situation. Contrary to Beifus' assertion the mastersong, Die frösch Pharaonis,<sup>(2)</sup> was written before and not after Charles V's defeat of Duke William, and the single quotation from this mastersong -

"Pharao deut al gotlos leut  
 Die gottes volck durchechten.  
 Was got gepeut, verachtens heut,  
 Sampt allen seinen knechten.  
 Was in got schickt fur straff und plag,  
 Werdens erger von tag zu tag,  
 Pis si got entlich niderschlag  
 Mit sein götling almechten." -

is hardly strong evidence that Sachs was now regarding the Emperor more and more as a tyrant. This may well be true, but in view of the Nuremberg Council's persistently loyal attitude to the Emperor, it would have been interesting to have more evidence, if any, that Sachs was now critical of the Emperor, for it would then probably indicate that such an attitude was common in the city at this time. This quotation does, however, betray Sachs' sense of the growing danger which

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1. Das sieben-hauptig pabstier Appocalipsis (KG/XXII/279)
  2. Written 21/8/1543. The attack on Duren, the Duke's principal stronghold did not open until the 24th and the Duke's submission to the Emperor did not follow until September, 6th, 1543. (Cf. Beifus, op. cit., p. 63.)

(1)

threatened the Protestants. It is clear from a poem written just after the Diet of Speyer in 1544, that though Sachs realises that the Protestant cause has many enemies, he is still prepared to take a favourable view of the Emperor's intentions. (2) Thus he makes Jupiter, who again clearly represents Charles V, rebuke Mars, who counsels war as the solution for the discord in Germany, as follows:

"Dein rath ist ye nicht gut.  
 Dich dürstet nur nach blut,  
 Weil auß des reiches krieg  
 Volgt ein blutiger sieg,  
 Mord, raub und darzu brandt,  
 Verderbung teutscher landt.  
 Darumb gefiel mir baß,  
 Das man solch zenck und haß  
 Durch freundligkeyt hin-leet,  
 Welche das hertz beweget."

And the poem ends with an expression of hope that

"Gott werd durch sein gött  
 Selb all zwitracht ableynen  
 Und durch sein wort vereynen  
 Im reich all stett unnd fürsten,  
 Das sie nach fried werd dürsten,  
 Auff das inn hohem rhum  
 Das römisch kayserthumb  
 Sich wider mehr unnd wachs  
 Durch gmein nutz .... "

which shows that Sachs had still not lost his faith in the power of the Word to resolve the religious discord. Six

1. Ein ertlich gesprech der götter. die zwitracht des römischen reichs betreffende (KG/IV/176)
2. In early 1544 Charles was at war with both France and the Turks and needed the help of the German Lutheran princes. This poem perhaps reflects the Emperor's smooth words and generous concessions at the Diet of Speyer.

months later in the concluding lines of his master song,  
 (1)  
Der künig Josaphat, we find him offering this advice to  
 rulers:

"Schau an das lobwürdig exempel  
 Du obrigkeit am frum Josaphat!  
 Bestell dein land an alle end  
 Prister und prediger in alle gemeine,  
 Frauen und men in gottes tempel  
 Zu lehren gottes wort klar, lautt, fru und  
 spat;"

but at the time he was writing this Charles V and Francis I  
 of France were making peace. Under the terms of the Treaty  
 of Crespi the two rivals pledged themselves amongst other  
 things to unite in restoring peace and unity to the Church.  
 This was ominous news for the Lutheran princes, who can have  
 had little doubt that the Emperor was now resolved on war  
 against the Schmalkaldic League, and Beifus produced evidence  
 which perhaps shows that Sachs was now convinced that the  
 Emperor was the greatest enemy of the Protestants and that  
 little good could be expected from him. Beifus refers to a  
 series of mastersongs written shortly after the Treaty of  
 Crespi, in which Sachs draws on incidents from Old Testament  
 history to illustrate the fate of tyrannical princes. The  
 conclusion of Das ent künig Joram und Jesabel is particularly  
 outspoken:

- 
1. Written 17/9/1544.
  2. Written 9/11/1544.

"Hiraus merck, ein tiranisch regimende,  
 Wo das auch vil unschuldig pluēt  
 Vergiesen thuet  
 Und wider gottes wort sich het erhoben:  
 Das im got wert schicken uber den hals  
 Den ddrcken oder sunst einen tirannen,  
 Der es auch straffen wert nachmals  
 Und ausdilg das ganz gotlose geschlechte.  
 Wan got thuet sein knecht rechen unnd erretten."

The Diet of Worms in the spring of 1545 ended  
 in deadlock and war was now inevitable. Something of Sachs'  
 despondency at this time and also his faith that God will  
 defend the right is reflected in the prayer with which the  
 mastersong, Die drei gotlosen künig Jude, ends:  
 (1)

"Herr, nun ist unser pit  
 Du wölst zu unser zeit  
 Auch untertruecken da,  
 Welcher fuert wuet,  
 So deinem volck thuet widersten  
 Mit morden, wueten unferschemt ....  
 Ste uns pei, uns pehuet  
 Und schlag im aus sein packen zen.  
 Las untergen  
 Oder in leibs gefar in pring;  
 Leg in die nasen im ein ring,  
 Darmit in zwing  
 Ein got dich zu erkennen."  
 (2)

And the fable, Die böck mit dem meczger, written about a  
 month later appears to point the moral of the need for  
 Protestant solidarity:

"Sei freuntschaft, handwerckstet oder ein reiche,  
 Ob sich ein feind darwider seczt druczleiche,  
 So sollens bleiben unzerstret,  
 Einig und ungespalten.  
 Was einen darunder geht an,  
 Das hab man inen allen than,  
 Des feinds sich dapfer wehren.

1. Written 19/6/1545.

2. FS/III/389 (Written July, 1545).



"Merck, du christliche obrigkeyt!  
 Thu auch also zu dieser zeyt!  
 Wüffft wider dich auff sein streitfannen  
 Der Türck oder ander tyrannen,  
 So versamel mit fleiß dein heer,  
 Provant, büchsen, harnisch und weer!  
 Jedoch verlaß dich nit darauff,  
 Wie groß und starck auch sey dein hauff,  
 Sünder rüff hertzlich auf zu Got,  
 Das er dir helff in dieser not." (1)

Beifus' interpretation of the above two quotations is at least open to question and it is unfortunate that he did not adduce more evidence to show that Sachs' was out of step with the policy of the Nuremberg Council. It is possible that the following lines from the mastersong, Die verprennt stat Saguntum -  
 (2)

"Als der senat zu Rom den jamer höret,  
 Da reuet sie, das sie nicht pei der zeitte  
 Ir puntgenossen hetten entseczt.  
 Also die guetten ret zu leczt  
 Kumen doch vil zu spette." -

sould like a disguised call for support for the Schmalkaldic League, but the evidence is thin, and though Sachs expressed himself similarly in his Historia: Von zerstörung der mechtigen statt Saguntha<sup>(3)</sup> this poem, as did perhaps the mastersong on which it was based, ended with a reference to the necessity for the maintenance of peace, and the opinion that

"Krieg ist ein mutter alls ungemachs,  
 Darvor bhüt uns gott, ..."

As we shall see later Sachs had an intense loathing for war,

- 
1. Cf. p. 219.
  2. Written 16/12/1545.
  3. KG/XVI/360.

and though he regarded it as a Christian duty to support the war against the Turks, there is little beyond Beifus' ambiguous and insubstantial evidence to show that he was ever resigned to seeing his city involved in civil war.

Beifus was justifiably excited by the discoveries which he made on reading through the religious mastersongs, which have so often been assumed to be unimportant. His selections from the mastersongs of the later 1520's are of great value, as they help to bridge the gap of an otherwise largely barren period and are proof of a continuing attitude to the Reformation for which there is virtually no other evidence. His later selections illustrate Sachs' awareness of contemporary events and bring out his sense of the increasing dangers which beset the Lutheran cause in these years, but the evidence on which Beifus bases some of his deductions is hardly adequate, and it is a pity that none of the other material he collected from the mastersongs was published, and appears to be lost. The latter part of Beifus' thesis is valuable in that it adds something to our scanty knowledge of Sachs' personality, but Sachs' greatest contribution to the Reformation in these years was not in the field of polemics or propaganda, but of ethics. It is now time to turn and look in some detail at this aspect of his work.

## MEN AND MORALS

In Die wittenbergisch nachtigall Hans Sachs showed that he had already grasped the moral consequences of the doctrine of justification by faith in Jesus Christ:

"Wem solcher glaub ist genost,  
 Der selbig mensch der ist schon selig.  
 All seine werck sind Gott gefellig,  
 Er schlauff, er trinck oder arbeit.  
 Solcher gelaub sich dann außbreit  
 Zu dem nechsten mit warer liebe,  
 Das er kein menschen thut betriebe,  
 Sonder ubt sich zu aller zeyt  
 In wercken der barmhertzigkeit,  
 Thut iederman hertzlich als gutz  
 Auß freyer lieb, sucht keinen nutz."

That the acceptance of Christ's conditional promise with its attendant liberation from the penalty of sin (justification)

should bring about the real and effective transformation of sinful human nature was to him self-evident. When in fact the principle of justification did not operate in the practical sphere to bring about the ideal results, which, if rightly applied, it was both fitted and intended to produce, he was as troubled as Luther was and as St. Paul and St. James had been. St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians and the Epistle of St. James reveal plainly enough that, in the early Church, principle did not necessarily square with practice. There are similarly many passages in Luther's writings admitting and deploring the widespread discrepancy between creed and practice. Sachs' own disappointment at the failure of men to appreciate the true significance of "Christian liberty" was expressed forcibly in the third and fourth dialogues. It is evident that there was no far-reaching revolution of the moral life as a result of the preaching of the doctrine of justification by faith. We are not here concerned with the reasons for the relative failure of the Reformation as a moral force - it does not lie in the doctrine itself or in the preaching of it, but rather in the difficulty of the task of raising ordinary human nature to the level of the Christian ideal, which has so sadly handicapped the Christian idealist in his efforts to achieve the moral regeneration of the individual and society from the time of Christ to the present day - but rather with Hans

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1. See Mackinnon, op. cit., Vol. I/202ff. and IV/251ff.

Sachs' response to this failure and the widespread degeneration in morals in his age. That response was a vast unfolding of the penchant for moralising which had marked his works from the first. His works present an immense cavalcade of virtues and vices. Every aspect of human nature and human behaviour is paraded before his readers and each receives its due measure of approval or condemnation.

(1)

In 1524, in Der zwölf reynen vögel eygenschaft

Sachs had already produced the first of his many lists of Christian virtues. As might be expected from the date of composition he implores the Christian to follow God's commands, to confess Christ and to acknowledge his own sinfulness. More specifically he commends the salutary effect of hard work:

"Also ein Christ nach arbeit ringt,  
Darmit er seinen Adam dempfft,  
Der stet wider den geist im kempfft."

He issues a warning against anger and self-righteousness; a true Christian "ergert niemandt auß argem mut" (the theme of the fourth dialogue) and "brauchet keinen hinderlist" (the moral of the third dialogue); he gives to the poor and "red, strafft, lert, leicht, gibt, wo er mag". The corresponding vices are given in Die zwölff unreynen vögel. (2)

That virtue is the only path to happiness is the advice Sachs gives to youth in Tabula Cebetis: (3)

- 
1. KG/I/377.
  2. KG/I/380.
  3. KG/III/91.

"Wie eylent soll die blüend jugend  
 Durch alle ding auff zu der tugendt,  
 Darinn sey ruh und sicherheit  
 Auff erd die höchste seligkeit."

Two poems written in the middle 1530's deal with the seven cardinal virtues and the seven deadly sins and these are treated individually and in pairs in several allegorical poems of the same period, such as Kampfgespräch zwischen der Hoffart und der edlen Demut and Ein gesprech mit dem schändden <sup>(1)</sup> Mussiggang. <sup>(2)</sup> Like all the Reformation writers Sachs reserved his loudest thunder for the sin of greed or selfishness.

Luther preached many sermons on the subject of "Geiz" and wrote at length about its specific manifestations; he was convinced that the whole world was dominated by greed. Sebastian Franck wrote in his "Chronik": "Man sehe alle Händel an, geistlichen und weltlichen Stands, so stinckt es alles vor <sup>(3)</sup> Geiz und sind nichts denn ein lauter Eigennutz". The conviction that self-interest was objectionable and to be condemned and that its predominance always had sad consequences for the general good was so part and parcel of the whole moral character of the Reformation, such an essential product of the Christian moral teaching of the Reformers, that it is

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1. KG/II/149.
  2. KG/III/486.
  3. Chronik, Geschichte und Zeitbuch aller namhaftigsten und gedächtniswürdigen geistlichen und weltlichen Sachen (Quoted by G. Schmoller: "Zur Geschichte der national-ökonomischen Ansichten in Deutschland während der Reformations-Periode", Zeitschrift für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft (Vol. 16, 1860).

not surprising that it is a frequent theme in Sachs' works. It was the subject of the third dialogue in which Sachs let Romanus say:

"So schawt in spiegel ewers hertzen, wie rain ir sayt des geytz halb, und nicht allain euch, sunder sehet an alle dise welt vom minsten biß zu dem meisten, so findet irs alles uberschwebt mit geytzigkayt."

(1)

Three years later he wrote Der eygen nutz, das grewlich thir.

in which he lamented:

"Wie ist menschlich geschlecht verderbt  
Durch eygen nutz, der auf uns erbt!"

(2)

In Kleg der brüderlichen lieb uber den eygen nutz. written

in 1535, Charity made the following sweeping complaint:

"Doch ist der arme wie der reich  
Im eygen nutz ersoffen gleich.  
Ein armer thut den andren drucken  
Inn allen vorteylhaffting stucken  
Und ist gleich eyner wie der ander.  
Der eygen nutz regierts allsander  
Und hat sich unverschampt gesetzt  
Inn alle stendt, das mich zu letzt  
Verwundert, das es mag so lang  
Besteen on eynen undtergang."

And in the 1540's and 1550's when Hans Sachs was waging his fiercest battles on the moral front selfishness in all its forms was the principal object of his attack.

Sachs was rarely content for long, however, with abstractions. Vice is described more often not in the

- 
1. KG/III/491.
  2. KG/III/302.

vocabulary of mortal sin but in terms of the actual everyday evils of his own time.

Amongst the greatest of these evils was drink and Sachs had some hard words to say about it. He himself doubtless drank with his friends at convivial gatherings and he frequently states that he has no objection to drink in moderation. In 1528, for example, he wrote:

"Wein ist von Gott geschaffen gut.  
Wer ihn fein messig trincken thut,  
Dem selben erfreut er sein hertz."

(1)

Twenty-five years later he could still write:

"Wer aber inn arbeyt nit ist lessig  
Und brauchet sich zimlich und messig  
Wein und bier oder ander gaben,  
Die wir von Gott, dem Herren, haben,  
Mit danckbarkeyt sie neust allwegen,  
Dem gibt Got gedeyen und segen."

(2)

But equally he recognised the social, moral and physical evils which could be traced to the excessive consumption of strong drink. Few nineteenth century temperance tracts can have bettered the frightening and revolting picture he gives of the effects of drink in Wider das zutrincken:

"Sein angesicht macht sie gelb und bleich  
Bringt kopffweh und zittrente hend,  
Ein bösen magen an dem end,  
Rinnende bayn, trieffende augen,  
Thut all innerlich krefft außsawgen.  
Husten und keichen sind it thaten,  
Reuspern und ein stinckenten athen,  
Schwecht die gedechtnuß alle zeyt  
Und bringt sehr mancherley kranckheyt,  
Fiber, zypperlein und Frantzosen.

- 
1. KG/IV/243.
  2. KG/V/168.
  3. KG/III/523.

Der mensch vol unlusts wirt gestossen.  
Trunckenheyt kürzt des menschen leben;"

and of the drunkard's general behaviour and morals he says:

"Ein trunckner geschwetzig ist alzeyt  
Und offenbart sein haymlichkeit,  
Ist unverschemt und grob in worten,  
Mit bulerey an allen orten,  
Ist wüst und wild, fluchend und endlich,  
Rachgierig, häderisch und grentlich  
Leichtfertig, kelbrent, juchset und schreyt,  
Dorcklet, fartzet, gröltzet und speyt  
Und sich im kot sult wie ein schwein.  
Sich menget on zel laster ein  
Als ehbruch, hurweiß und manschlecht,  
Das sunst ein man nye hat gedacht."

(1)

In Die Insel Bachi he shows that he is well aware that "wine makes glad the heart of man":

"Getranck auffs köstlichst und auffs best,  
Macht frölich beyde wirt und gest,  
Auch thut er alle kürtzweil bringen  
Mit saytenspiel, pfeiffen und singen,  
Mit tantzen, spiel, schwenck aller weiß,  
Samb sey man in dem paradeiß."

But the trouble begins when "man wirt gar zu feucht vom wein" and he quotes the thirteenth century moralist, Freidank, for the opinion that

"..... mehr leut sterben  
Von füll, wenn durch das schwerd verderben."

It is rare that Sachs considers drunkenness a fit vehicle for amusement. The Schwank on the subject of the beer-drinking tournament in the Harz has, however, a certain crude humour, as when the competitors keep up their thirst

(2)

- 
1. KG/IV/244.
  2. KG/V/166.

by eating

"..... gesalzen knack-würst  
Und rohen speck, gesalzen frisch."

But though the general impression is of jolly peasant vulgarity, the inevitable moral follows with the oft-repeated warning of poverty, and worse, unless drink is kept in check.

Sachs has less to say about gluttony. He issues occasional warnings, such as -

"Füllerey schwechet leib und gut,  
Bringet kranckheit, tod und armut.  
Derumb hüt dich vor füllerey." (1)

In practice, however, Sachs has relatively very little to say about food in all his many volumes. Generally the reference is to "wildbred und fisch" (inevitably riming with "tisch"), the conventional fare of royalty and nobility. It is impossible to tell whether Sachs was envious or disapproved of rich fare, but, like Luther, he probably appreciated the good things of life.

Sachs was too jovial a character ever to become a mere spoilsport, but he roundly condemns gambling, largely because of the opportunities it gave to unscrupulous tricksters to play on the weakness of simple people. His condemnation of gambling is hardly less severe than his denunciation of drunkenness. Despite Imperial attempts at suppression -

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1. KG/III/65.

"Dein spilerrey ist gar verschmecht,  
Verbotten in keyserlichem recht." (1)

- the habits of gambling and gaming were very widespread in  
the sixteenth century:

"Das spil ist yetzund gar gemein  
Bei alten und jungen des-gleichen  
Beide bey armen und den reichen,  
Bey geistlich, weltlich, frawen und man." (2)

In his well-known list of household equipment Sachs includes

"Schach, karten, würrffel, ein predspiel" (3)

and the inns and ale-houses provided abundant opportunity  
for similar amusements. The waiter "im teutschen hof", for  
example, offers the two peasants the following alternatives:

"Macht euch ein weil selb kurtzweil viel  
Mit würrffel oder karten-spiel!  
Thut bocken, flossen oder rümpffen.  
Gwinn einer den peutel zu den stümpffen!  
Oder spielt in dem pret der lurtz! ....  
Ziecht mit einander in dem schach! ....  
Oder schießt ein weil in den kreis!"<sup>n</sup>

The winner, of course, pays for the drinks!

Sachs was certainly acquainted with numerous  
card-games (he gives an extensive list in Das untrew-spiel)  
and doubtless derived much innocent pleasure from card-playing:

"Zu kurtzweil geht es etwan hin,  
Doch on grossen verlust und gewinn," (6)

- 
1. KG/III/49.
  2. KG/III/64.
  3. KG/IV/339.
  4. KG/V/31.
  5. KG/V/225.
  6. KG/IX/302.

and he probably enjoyed a private game of backgammon ("lurtz")<sup>(1)</sup> which he mentions several times and in Hecastus gives some details of the opening play. He was, however, well aware, perhaps as the result of bitter experience, of the danger of playing with strangers:

"Schaw! der spiler, der listig luchs,  
So vil irrweg braucht in dem spil!  
Er kan vergebener griflein vil,  
Die würrfel maysterlich zu knüpfpen." (2)

That gambling is playing with the Devil is the theme of the Schwank, Der spieler mit dem teuffel.<sup>(3)</sup> which ends with one of Sachs' many warnings:

"..... das man sich hut vor spiel,  
Doraus denn kompt unrhates viel,  
Gotslestrung, zanck, hader und mordt,  
Viel böser stück und an dem ort  
Schand, schaden und auch die armut  
Von grossem spiel herfliessen thut."

Sachs makes few references to the game of skittles but in Der schönen frawen kegelplatz<sup>(4)</sup> he remarks:

"Es ist zu thewer und kost zu viel,  
Es ist ein freud an ehr und nutz,  
Auß der nie folget etwas guts."

Here again his objections arose from the opportunities for unscrupulous exploitation which the skittle alleys offered to wandering Dutch and Flemish players with their "geflügelt b88 kugel", and also because of the loose women who haunted

- 
1. KG/VI/141.
  2. KG/III/545.
  3. KG/IX/298.
  4. KG/V/222.

(1)  
such places.

Hans Sachs was no prude, as some of his Fastnacht-  
spiele and Schwänke clearly show, but a man of his high  
principles could not fail to be grieved by the extensive sexual  
immorality of his time. His frequent references to "ehbruch  
und hurerey" evidence the widespread nature of these evils,

(2)  
but though in one Kempffgespräch he appears to regard "die  
schedlichen wollust" as the source of all man's misfortunes -

"Die den menschen in unglück ziehen  
Alles jamers und ungemachs"

- his experience taught him in general to see these evils as  
derivative of the greater evil of drink, for which he reserves  
his loudest condemnation. But while he makes his appeals for  
greater moderation and self-control, for example, in Fraw

(3)  
Zucht, his own happy marriages led him to seek the true  
solution in a more Christian approach to marriage and through  
the personal example of parents to children. (4)

If Sachs' words are to be taken literally, he  
began to suffer from gout in the middle 1540's:

"Mit lang vergangen, als ich lag  
In des podagrams schwere plag." (5)

This may have justifiably soured his normal cheerful attitude  
to life! Certainly some of his fiercest condemnations of  
drink date from this period, as does also a bitter attack on

- 
1. Cf. p. 101 above.
  2. KG/III/158.
  3. KG/III/293.
  4. See below, Chapter VI.
  5. KG/IV/402.

public dancing, for which he betrays a really puritanical hatred. He describes how the Devil seeks a resting place on Earth and failing to find a congenial abode is about to return to Hell, when he comes to a place where a dance is being held:

(1)  
 "Da er sach solch seltzam cramentz  
 Mit prangen, knappen, hupfn und springen  
 Und wie einander sie umbfingen,  
 Da stellt er sich auch in der nehen  
 Dem dantz ein wenig zu zu sehen.  
 Da sach er gar kein christlich art,  
 Sunder prenck, hochmut und hoffart  
 Inn klaydung und mit leibes zier  
 Und an zal unkeuscher begier,  
 Auch viel leichtfertiger geper,  
 Auch viel cuplersey hin und her  
 Viel winckel-heyrat da beschliessen,  
 Auß dem viel unrats thut fliessen,  
 Auch bulen, eyfer, neyd und haß!"

Sachs ends by quoting two proverbs:

"Das best am dantz sey das umbkern,  
 Samb sey sunst nit vil guts daron.  
 So sagt man auch, nyemand kumb von  
 Dem dantz, so gut als er dran gieng. ...  
 So meydet den dantz! ....

Charles Schweitzer first drew attention in the Nuremberg "Festschrift" in 1894 to the enormous wealth of proverbial sayings, which are scattered throughout Hans Sachs' writings. Many of these occur, as in the above poem, in the concluding lines of his poems and are used to sum up the point he is making. Besides these, however, his works abound

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1. KG/III/533.
  2. Hans Sachs-Forschungen (Nuremberg, 1894), p. 353ff.  
 See also Bibliography (B) under Handschin, Rosen and Zahlten.

in moral precepts, a compound of admonitions and advice, designed to persuade his fellow men to lead better and happier lives. In 1533, for example, we find him warning young men (perhaps he had his own apprentices in mind) to avoid bad company,

"Welche ir datum setzt allein  
Auff bulerey, Spiel und den wein  
Und nur auff leybes wollust tracht,  
Hat keyner zucht noch ehren acht,"

and to seek out

"Ein wenig gsellschaft hie auff erdt,  
Die vor wol sey durch in bewerd't,  
Auffrichtig, tugentsam und herrlich,  
In wort und werck warhafft und ehrlich,  
Stät, still, messig, trew und frumb." (1)

On the subject of money Sachs offers the following advice:

"Geld das ist weder böß noch gut;  
Es ligt an dem, ders brauchen thut.  
Wo der selb ist des geldes knecht,  
So handelt er damit unrecht,  
Inn laster ob dem gelt erblind.  
Dargegen man ein weisen find,  
Der hencket sein hertz nit deren.  
Das geld muß im sein undterthan." (2)

Sachs is fond of giving advice to the young on how to behave towards their elders. Youth should give pride of place to the old:

"Iedoch hör, du blüende Jugend!  
Weil du noch unvolkommen bist,  
Dir weißheyte und vernunfft gebrist,  
So laß dem ehrling alter kranck  
In allen dingen den vorgangk!" (3)

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1. KG/III/448.  
2. KG/IV/231.  
3. KG/IV/59.

and should listen to advice, but at the same time he commends tolerance to the older generation who should remember their own youth with all its shortcomings.

Real friendships clearly meant a great deal to Sachs. He tells us that

"All ware freundt, die wiederumb  
In not beystehn durch trewen rat,  
Ir trew auch zeigen mit der that,  
Beystendig bleiben in der not,  
Sie sindt edler denn golde rat." (1)

But at the same time he was no pious sentimentalist. He is aware that life is full of adversities and he is as concerned as the medieval poets with

"Das unsthet, untrew, waltzent glück". (2)

The moral he draws from the story of König Hadingus in  
(3)  
Dennemarckt, for example, is that,

"Man mag wol bhalten in memori,  
Wie das gantze menschliche leben  
All augenblick ist waltzent schweben  
Von glück in ungelücke unfal,  
Gelsich wie in dem lufft der bal  
Sich verkert all augenblick.  
Darumb, o mensch, all zeit dich schick,  
So dich anlacht das frölich glück,  
Das gwiß unfall kompt auff sein rück!"

And he ends with the consoling thought:

"Derhalb so hoff auff kein irrdisch  
Unbstendigs, sonder auff himlisch,  
Da ewig bstendig frewd erwachs!"

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1. KG/VIII/338.
  2. KG/VIII/451.
  3. KG/VIII/518.

Nevertheless, if Sachs is aware that there are some misfortunes in life which cannot be escaped, he makes sure that his readers are aware of some of the pitfalls that beset the paths of the foolish and inexperienced. He gives, for example, the following cautious advice:

" .... das nit gelauben sol  
 Auff bloße wort ein weiser mann,  
 Vorauß wo es groß ding trifft an.  
 Durch wort wirdt man leichtlich betrogen,  
 In ein bösen argwon gezogen,  
 Das der unschuldig wirdt beladen  
 Mit ungunst und muß leyden schaden  
 An seinem leyb, gut oder ehr.  
 Nachrew bringt das nit wider mehr." (1)

In Das weyse urteyl kunig Salomonis he had given similar counsel to judges not to base their decisions "auff bloße wort".

" ..... dardurch offt bethort  
 Wirt und betrogen ein gericht." (2)

On the whole Sachs had no high opinion of the quality of justice dispensed in his day and he issues many warnings to his readers against having recourse to the courts. In Kampff-  
 (3)  
gespräch zwischen der Kühheit und der Geduldt he gives

this picture of what litigants might expect:

"Das recht wird offt verlengt,  
 Gekrümmt und gekrenckt,  
 Das der unghrecht gesiegt,  
 Und der ghrecht underligt,  
 Weil das recht sinbel ist,  
 Auch vol betrug und list  
 Fürsprech und advocaten,  
 Das man sich thut verwaten,  
 Das der unkost darumb  
 weit fürtrifft die hauptsumb."

- 
1. KG/VIII/471.
  2. KG/I/244.
  3. KG/III/140.

Sachs seems to have had more respect for the

(1)

medical than the legal profession, but his readers are warned to consult properly trained doctors and to beware of the many itinerant quacks, toothdrawers and other rogues, who prey upon the credulities of peasants and simple folk. In his

(2)

Schwank, Der bawer mit dem sawmagen, he warns

"Das sich mit fleiß hüt yederman  
Vor der landfarer artzeney,  
Wann es ist eytel trügerey,  
Dieweil sie nicht haben studiert,  
In medicina doctoriert,  
Etwan sunst aus der artzeney  
Geleret ein stücklein oder zwey,  
Darmit sie sich denn fürher thon,  
Darmit zu helffen yederman;  
Sagen denn viel geschwulstiger wort  
Mit lügen, wie sie hie und dort  
Diesen und jhenen kurtzer stund  
Haben gemacht frisch und gesund,  
Ziehen die lewt einfeltig frumb,  
Gar listig bey der nasen umb,  
Bringen ir viel aufft todten-par  
Mit irer kü-artzney fürwar.  
Drumb, wer kranck sey, mann oder weib,  
Bey den bewerten ertzten bleib."

The activities of the "zanbrecher" and his remedies for all  
manner of ailments are detailed in Der bawern aderlaß. The

(3)

"schottenpfaff" (a quack in priest's clothing!) appears as  
a character in the Fastnachtspiel Eulenspiegel mit dem blawen  
hoßtuch und dem bawren.

(4)

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1. Sachs' works incidentally contain much interesting information about contemporary diseases and medical practice, especially bloodletting in which he had great faith.
  2. KG/IX/308.
  3. KG/V/273.
  4. KG/XXI/49.

The real priests, of course, come in for much  
 (1) criticism, though it is good-humoured. Sachs has a great deal  
 of fun with the immoralities and other human failings of the  
 parish priests. They are shown as subject to the same tempt-  
 ations and desires as ordinary mortals and Sachs thus brings  
 out the underlying wisdom of Luther's advocacy of a married  
 clergy. He pokes fun, too, at the mendicant friars, who had  
 generally a bad reputation in the sixteenth century for  
 immorality and the misappropriation of the alms they gathered.  
 Other minor Church dignatories are on the whole let down fairly  
 lightly. The "custos" is merely the dutiful servant of his  
 (2) master and though the abbot is criticised Sachs' object seems  
 (3) to be less to wish to ridicule him than to see him turned into  
 a decent priest. The "domherr", like the "chorherr" in the  
 (4) first dialogue, is rebuked for the neglect of his duties.  
 Sachs' indictment of bishops is, however, comprehensive and  
 unredeemed by humour. In Der teuffel sucht im ein ruhstatt  
auff erden he gives this picture of an episcopal court:

"Da er wenig gots-forcht vernam,  
 Sunder fund da gros simoney  
 Erdicht gots-dienst und gleißnerey  
 Unnd on zal supersticion.  
 Da ergieng oft unrechter pon.  
 Da ward auch em gaistlichen recht  
 Das schlecht offt krum und das krum schlecht.

- 
1. e.g. KG/IV/412 and IX/72, 279, 392, 396.
  2. KG/XIV/310.
  3. KG/XIV/233 and XXI/7.
  4. KG/XVII/66.

Da verzert man in überflus  
 Den armen leuten ir almuß.  
 Die pfaffen hetten keller in. ....  
 Lebt weltlicher, dann selb die welt." (1)

A variety of rogues walks through Sachs' pages.  
 (2)

Amongst these is the inquisitor whose piety and compassion are but a means to turn the fears of common folk to his own advantage. Sachs appears to have littel love, too, for the Jews, though, apart from the favourable picture he draws of

Mardocheus in his play on the subject of Hester, his references to Jews on the whole follow the age-old conventions. It is likely, in fact, that Sachs had little personal contact with Jews. Jews had played a great part in the growth in wealth of the Imperial cities and Nuremberg at one time had had a large Jewish population, but in about 1499 at the time of the erection

of the "Leihhaus" the Jews were expelled from the city, and over sixty years later at the end of his Fastnachtspiel, Der teuffel nam ein alt weib zu der ehe. Sachs remarked -

"Nun frew wir uns, daß dise statt  
 Keinen Jüden mehr in ir hat." (5)

Sachs' Jews are nearly all money-grubbers and usurers, or

1. KG/III/531.

2. KG/XIV/305.

3. KG/I/132.

4. G. Schmoller, op. cit., p. 213; and E. Mummenhoff: "Die Juden in Nürnberg bis zu ihrer Vertreibung im Jahre 1499", Gesammelte Aufsätze und Vorträge (Nuremberg, 1931).

5. J. Münch, op. cit., p. 111ff. states that Nuremberg's Jewish population at this time was second only to that of Frankfurt!

engaged in medicine, usually as quacks. In many of the (1)  
 Fastnachtspiele in which Jews appear as principal characters  
 the term Jew is virtually synonymous with usurer. Sachs  
 seems to have been the first writer of Fastnachtspiele to  
 mention the Jew as a usurer, though he had quite generally  
 been represented before as a quack, in which capacity he  
 appears in Der schwanger bawer mit dem fül. (2)

Others ~~mentioned~~ against whom Sachs issues warnings  
 (3) are innkeepers, hawkers (krämer) and merchants. Sachs' dislike  
 of innkeepers was associated with his disapproval of immoderate  
 drinking and he was convinced that many innkeepers took  
 advantage of the weaknesses of their patrons to indulge in  
 petty thieving. (4) Sachs' hawkers are usually crude figures of  
 fun, but this hardly disguises his aversion for them as a class.  
 The "Krämer", who was usually to be seen with his stall or  
 baskets in the narrow streets outside the city gates, was  
 generally loathed in the Middle Ages by the artisan class.  
 His wares were cheaper and shoddier than those of the local  
 craftsmen and he was outside the control of the guilds. In  
 some areas the unpopularity of hawkers led to the passing of  
 legislation to exclude them from the territory of particular  
 rulers. (5)

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1. KG/IX/23, XIV/154, XXI/17.
  2. KG/XXI/62.
  3. KG/XVII/228.
  4. KG/IX/321.
  5. See Schmoller, op. cit., p. 519.

There was little appreciation in the sixteenth century of the true function of trade and merchants were generally reviled as greedy and deceitful. The theologians and scholars gave a lead in this, but their views were shared by princes and nobles, peasants and craftsmen. Hans Sachs was no different from the rest and only saw merchants as grasping selfish men, who never did any proper work and grew rich in idleness. His strongest indictments of the trading classes are to be found in Mercurius, ein got der kaufleut and Klagred fraw Arbeyt uber den grossen müssigen hauffen. Thus in the latter poem he says of rich men:

" ... Die treibt der geitz darzu  
Den grösten theyl; das merck der massen! ...  
Und werden sie kaufleut und krämer,  
Factor, amptleut und wucherer,  
Hückner, wirt und sonst fürkauffer,  
Verwürren all ding im landt,  
Das es kompt in die dritten handt,  
Ee es dem arbeyter wird beschert,  
Derhalb sich lenger herter nert  
Und muß zu grund gehn mit der weyl." (2)

Finally, there are gipsies, witches and landsknechte. The first Sachs regards conventionally as rogues and vagabonds, though he does have something to say about the exigencies of their existence. His attitude to witches is less clear. Like Luther Sachs certainly believed in witches

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1. KG/III/512.
  2. KG/III/483.
  3. ZG/IX/12.

and the harm they could do, especially to simple folk. They are usually depicted as the Devil's assistants. In 1545 he appeared to regard them as an even more potent force for evil than the Devil, who is made to say in the Fastnachtspiel,

(1)

Der teuffel mit dem alten weib:

"Ich fürcht dein betrug und arglist,  
Weil du tausend mal erger bist,  
Denn ich, der teuffel auß der hell."

Superstitions of all kinds are found recorded in Sachs' works, especially in the Fastnachtspiele. They relate mostly to the black art and Sachs clearly believed that the evil effects of such beliefs and practices was real enough. It is not clear, however, whether he believed, with Luther, that good Christians and God-fearing people could be affected by witchcraft or whether their faith bestowed an immunity from the Devil's infection. There is some reason for thinking that at least late in life he came round to the latter view. The Schwank,

(2)

Der cortisan mit dem beckenknecht, concludes with the words:

"Also der teuffl durch phantasey  
Offt richtet an sein zauberrey  
Durch alte weiber mit gfehrting sachen,  
Auff dem bock fahrn und wetter machen,  
Mit warsagen und dieberrey,  
Mit dem bultranck der lieberrey,  
Für den zanweh und die wundsegen  
Den leuten an-zu-hencken pflegen;

- 
1. KG/IX/35.
  2. See W. French, op. cit., p. 79ff.
  3. KG/XVII/314.

Ist doch alls nur solch loß gedicht,  
 Der ding doch keines wücket nicht,  
 Denn wer daran gelaubet starck,  
 Welches wücket der teuffel arg  
 Vom rechten glauben ab-zu-dringen,  
 In gottloß sünd und schand zu bringen,  
 Zu stossen in alls ungemachs  
 An leib und seel."

Sachs saw nothing of the hero in the Landsknecht, the mercenary soldier, a familiar figure in sixteenth century Germany. At times he perhaps shows some sympathy for the hardships and (1) discomforts suffered by the Landsknecht but he has few illusions about his motives for entering military service and in the (2) Schwank, Vergleichung eines lantzknachts mit einem krebs, he concludes that it is only a minority

"Der umb das vatterlandt allein  
 Wagt leyb, ehr, gut, mit dem beschied  
 Wolt doch viel haben fried."

Sachs' attitude to soldiers was in general conditioned by his (3) life-long passionate devotion to the cause of peace.

On the whole it would seem that Sachs had a poor opinion of his fellow men. It remains to be seen in the next chapter whether his attitude to the opposite sex and their children was any more charitable.

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1. E.g. in the Fastnachtspiel, Die sechs klagenden (KG/IX/7)  
 2. KG/IX/242.  
 3. See below, p. 324 ff.

VI

WOMEN AND MARRIAGE

Hans Sachs was an ardent and life-long advocate of the institution of marriage and few writers can have expressed themselves so frequently and at such length on the subject. He was himself twice married, first, in 1519, to Kunigunde Kreuzer, whose death in 1560 he lamented in the most moving of all his poems, and again, in 1561, to Barbara Harscher, a twenty-seven years old widow, whose praises he sang so rapturously in Das künstlich frauen-lob.

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1. Der wunderlich traum von meiner abgeschiden leben gemahel. Königundt Sächs in (KG/XI/462)
  2. She was the widow of Jakob Endres, a pewterer, and the mother of six children. Endres was mentioned in a Spruch written by Sachs in 1560, Die handwerks-deffel der kandel-giesser (KG/XXIII/171). (See A. Bauch: Barbara Harscherin, Hans Sachsens zweite Frau, Nuremberg, 1896)
  3. KG/XX/518.

Hans Sachs' attitude to marriage, though confirmed and strengthened by his own long and happy experience, was solidly rooted in his own deeply moral nature and in the traditions of the guilds and the artisan class and, above all, it found strong support in the teachings of the Reformers.

By the end of the fifteenth century the craft guilds which framed the lives of the medieval craftsmen were no longer merely local bodies. The wide development of the guilds in the previous two centuries had led to the emergence of a cohesive national system extending throughout the Empire. Once admitted to his guild the craftsman was a member of a great national organisation with universal rules and practices, an organisation of which he could be and was intensely proud. This pride in belonging to a great organisation developed in the artisan class a strong sense of honour, which led the guilds to exercise a fairly strict control over the morals of their members and in particular to require a record of irreproachable conduct and "Ehrlichkeit" from all new candidates for membership. It was, indeed, the handworkers, who were the greatest enemies of the gross immorality of the cities in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

It was into this class that Sachs was born and in

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1. G. Steinhausen: Geschichte der deutschen Kultur (Leipzig, 1933), p. 242ff.

which his life was inevitably spent. Academic brilliance or exceptional military prowess could have opened a narrow way of escape from his class, but Sachs gives no hint of ever having shown any outstanding talent during his eight years as a pupil at the Spitalschule, nor does he express any regret at not having been allowed to continue his education, and he was far too loyal to his family and too cautious and peace-loving a nature ever to have sought for gain or glory in the reckless adventures of professional military service. There is no evidence that the young Hans ever questioned his father's decision to apprentice him to the craft of shoemaking or that he had any other ambition than to become a worthy and respected exponent of his craft. Through his home upbringing he learnt to understand and appreciate at first hand the responsibilities and obligations of a master craftsman and to observe and respect the traditions and customs of the guilds. High amongst these traditions was the obligation upon every craftsman to marry before being accepted as a master member of his guild, for without a "Frau Meisterin" there could be no "Herr Meister".

Hans Sachs was thus early predisposed to regard marriage as a natural and honoured state. It was clearly no step to be taken lightly or wantonly and, indeed, some guilds imposed a waiting period of two years from the end of the "Wanderjahre" during which the returned journeyman had to demonstrate by his virtuous behaviour his moral fitness

for membership of the gild. The shoemakers' gild does not appear to have imposed such a restriction, though in fact it was not until two years after Hans' return to Nuremberg that he led his Kunigunde to the altar at the parish church of St. Sebaldus' and set up house in the Kotgasse.

Hans Sachs' slowness to undertake marriage was perhaps partly the consequence of the unhappy love affair, which in 1516 had been the occasion of a summons from his father to return home from Munich. <sup>(1)</sup> Whether he was influenced by this episode or not, Hans Sachs seems to have made an attempt to work out for himself a theory of love during his two years of preparation for marriage. This may be seen in his first two Fastnachtspiele, which, though they owe their form to the earlier plays of Hans Rosenplüt and Hans Folz, are lacking in the crudities and obscenities, which had marred the works of the earlier writers. Von der eygenschafft der lieb <sup>(2)</sup> (1518) is a development of the Kampff-gesprech von der lieb, a verse dialogue written by Sachs in 1515. It adds nothing but two superfluous characters to the story of the sad fate of the knight, who makes love to one maid whilst betrothed to another and it incorporates the final warning of the older

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1. This incident is referred to briefly in Gesprech frau Ehr mit eynem jüngling. die wollust betreffend (KG/III/418). See Genée, op. cit., p. 67. Genée's lively imagination makes perhaps more of this than is justified by the flimsy evidence.
  2. KG/XIV/12.

poem:

"Sperdt ewer lieb biß in die eh,  
Denn habt ein lieb, sunst keine meh,  
Die selbig lieb die ist mit ehrn,  
Wie uns die heylig schrifft ist lern."

(1)

Das hoffgesindt Veneris (1517) is a gayer piece, a satire on the "fools of love", which may have been influenced by Die Gouchmat of the Swiss dramatist, Pamphilius Gengenbach, whose dialogues Sachs possibly encountered about this time and whose moralising tone was in keeping with his own mood. The moralising element is more pronounced in the long didactic poem written by Sachs early in 1518, Klag der vertriben fraw Keuscheyt. Sachs recounts how one day whilst out wandering he had seen a group of maidens fleeing through a wood hotly pursued by another band. After a long search he had found the leader of the first group hiding in a cave. She tells him her story. She is Chastity, the daughter of Lady Honour, who had presented her with the realm of Virginitas, over which she had ruled with her loyal band of maidens. But Venus, the powerful queen of the neighbouring realm, had succeeded in carrying off most of her subjects to the Venusberg from where they had been handed on to another queen, Lady Shame. Chastity had escaped with a few loyal maidens,

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1. KG/XIV/3.
  2. J. Baechtold: Geschichte der deutschen Literatur in der Schweiz (Frauenfeld, 1889-92). Baechtold dates Die Gouchmat later than Sachs' work. See Note in Genés, op. cit., p. 478.
  3. KG/III/282.

the twelve womanly virtues, and have wandered from land to land without finding refuge. Even the leaders of the Church gave her no welcome. All had succumbed to the wiles of

Lady Venus:

"Auch kam ich zum gaystlichen stand,  
 Bey den ich auch kein statt nit fand.  
 Ir ayd und glübd was gantz vergessen,  
 Wann Venus het sie gar besessen."

Finally, they had come to the wilderness in which Sachs had found them. Even there they had been attacked by Venus and her confederates - sloth, pride, immodesty, infidelity and the rest. The poet then tells how he had returned home and had sought to undertsand the meaning of his experience. He then addresses his readers - he had presumably the maidens of Nuremberg in mind! - on the subject of Venus and the dangers which threaten those who follow her. He lists the virtues of those who support Chastity -

"Das ist scham, gehorsam, demut,  
 Zucht, messigkeit, warheyt behut,  
 Wenig red und einmütigkeyt,  
 Fursichtigkeyt, embsig arbeyt,  
 Gut und darbey ein sterck gemüt,"

and he ends with the admonition:

"Hüt euch vor dieser lieb! seyt steet,  
 Biß das ir kummet in die ee!  
 So halt ein lieb und keyne meh!  
 Ein solche lieb die ist mit ehren.  
 Doch bittet zum erst Got, den herren,  
 Das er bschütz ewer ehr vor schand!  
 Wann an im ligt es alles-sand.  
 On in ist alle hut umb sunst,  
 Zu empfliehen der liebe brunst,  
 Die wir dann habn von natur.  
 Got ist allein die hilffe nur  
 Zu leben in rechter keuscheyt."

This poem contains the germ of almost all that Sachs later wrote on marriage and associated subjects. It reveals his awareness of the widespread immorality of the times amongst all classes including the clergy. It shows his own belief in the naturalness of the sexual instincts and his conviction that marriage was the only proper channel for their outlet. Above all, it manifests his deeply rooted faith in God and his assurance that only with God's help and protection can the dangers of love be avoided. It is not surprising that he was to prove a ready vehicle for the teachings of the Reformers and that after the broadening experience of his own marriage the tendency to moralise and offer good advice, which shows already in this poem, became such a marked feature of his writings.

There is ample evidence in the literature of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, which, even when full allowance is made for exaggeration and caricature, demonstrates the general laxity of morals, the lack of respect for women, and the resultant coarsening of feminine behaviour at that time. The fifteenth century Fastnachtspiele were, it is true, usually performed in private houses and the female parts taken by young men, but it is difficult to conceive that such pieces were presented before women and girls, though they undoubtedly were as the wife and daughters of the host are

often addressed in the prologues. In some of the earliest of these plays the sole object of the author seems to be to work in some coarse joke or vulgar remark, and the rich abundance of vulgarities and obscenities is in marked contrast to the general impoverishment of the plays from other points of view. Such feculence is found in almost all the plays known to us even in those whose material offers little scope for it, but in such situations as those in which parents, neighbours and the betrothed couple parley about the marriage settlement crude jokes seem to be the essential part of the plays.

The more offensive features of the age had been most strikingly pilloried in Sebastian Brant's Narrenschiff (1494) and "Saint Grobian", the champion of all those who sailed in the "ship of fools", became the patron saint of a type of literature which had an immense vogue throughout the sixteenth century. Much of this had no other aim than to recapture the spirit and atmosphere of the tavern and its frank appeal to the senses and the coarser side of human nature caused it to enjoy a wide popularity. The Narrenschiff and the works of some others, including Hans Sachs, who entered this field, were written, however, with a deliberate didactic purpose, and though by modern standards much of the work of such writers is coarse and vulgar, it was redeemed by the wisdom and moral advice it purveyed.

Two themes predominate in this type of  
 (1) literature - drink and women. In his works Hans Sachs draws a picture of two distinct types of women; the one is a paragon  
 (2) of all the wifely virtues, as he saw them; the other is a stock character of sixteenth century German literature, the domineering housewife, the repository of all the qualities most hated by men in women. No writer did more than Sachs to draw attention to the latter type, doubtless a genuine enough phenomenon in this coarse age. In an early poem he lists in great detail the qualities "eynes boshafftigen  
 (3) weybs". She is quite undomesticated. She neglects the children who run around

"Zurissen, zottet, ungezopfft,  
 Ungezogen unnd ungestropfft,  
 Das sie eym nit ein hembdlein macht."

She does not bother with the housekeeping and refuses to spin so that all material has to be bought. She is a bad shopper and does not buy "holtz, saltz, schmeltz, zimes, kraut und fleisch" at the best time, but runs off to the shop-keeper or hawker, who gets all the profit! She is a bad cook and does not wash up the pots or scrub the clothes; the rooms and stairs are unswept, the beds unmade, and the fowls and geese unfed. She is greedy over food and drink and piles up debts by borrowing money on clothes, and loves

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1. See above, pp. 264-266.
  2. See below, pp. 304ff.
  3. KG/IV/376 (1530)

to show off in the very best of finery in a manner unbefitting  
 (1)  
 to her class; for example, for a wedding -

"So rüst sie sich mit mantel und schauben,  
 Mit ringen, schleyer, goller, hauben,  
 Samb sey sie reich, köstlich und mechtig."

She is always having new clothes made, but quickly loses interest in them and sells them "auff den dendelmarckt". She hates her husband's friends - none can come to the house - and falls out with her neighbours, behaving so badly that she is often taken to court and fined by the magistrates. She keeps bad company and squanders her husband's hard-won earnings amongst her loose friends. She is bad-tempered and there is never any peace in the house for her quarreling and noisy behaviour. She fights with her husband and if he beats her, she complains to her friends who spread slanderous tales about him; she even takes him to court!

Such a woman was known in the language of the time as a "Hausteufel" or "Eheteufel". As the husband in the above poem says:

"Der teuffel ir auß den augen sicht,  
 Mit worten scharpff sie zu mir spricht:  
 Du schelm, tropff, narr und unflat!  
 Gieb mir mein haustewer und haußrat. ....  
 Der teuffel hat mich zu dir bracht."

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1. See above, pp. 53-54.

(1)  
 She was also known familiarly as a "Sieman". Sachs used the  
 term in his Gesprech zwischen siben menden (2) in 1531, in which  
 the fourth man laments -

"Ach Got, mein fraw ist selber maister.  
 Erstlich ließ ich irn zaum zu langk,  
 Yetzt scheubt sie mich ger undter panck.  
 Gelt nimbt sie ein und gibt es auß.  
 So muß ich sein der narr im hauß. ....  
 Mein weib aber die haist Sieman."

The spectacle of the hen-pecked husband (der  
 Pantoffelheld) with the masterful wife provides the humour in  
 many of Hans Sachs' plays. In the fourth Fastnachtspiel, Von  
einem bösen weib, (3) for example, the wife after plaguing the  
 lives of her husband and her two servants chases them and  
 their neighbour, who has unwisely intervened in the family  
 squabble, into the street. The manservant returns at the end  
 of the play to speak the moral:

"So kam der Sieman in das hauß,  
 Und hat uns all geschlagen auß,  
 Das ich mich für uns all muß schemen.  
 Doch wölt das im best an-nemen,  
 Die weil es denn der jergang ist,  
 Das ir on zwyffel selbst wol wist,  
 Das die weiber wölln maister sein!" (4)

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1. See W. Kawerau: Die Reformation und die Ehe (Halle, 1892), p. 44f. Kawerau states that the term was first used in a Kuremberg poem of 1515.
  2. KG/V/237.
  3. KG/V/47.
  4. See also the Fastnachtspiel, Der böse rauch (KG/IX/108).

By a play on words the husband of such wives is frequently labelled "Simon", as in Das bachenholen im teutschen hoff,<sup>(1)</sup> in which the fitch is to be awarded for proof of a happy marriage, but it is interesting to note that marital harmony is to be judged by the fact that the husband

".... muß sein herr in seinem hauß,  
 Das im sein frau sey underthan  
 Und er sey allmal herr und man,  
 Als was er schaff, red und gepiet,  
 Das sie das thu und anderst nit,  
 On murmeln, unwilln, und einred."

Much of the humour of the Schwänke and Fastnachtspiele derives, of course, from the attempts of the husband to assert his mastery in his own home and the methods he adopts are not always the most delicate. Simon's friend in the above play, Hans Flegel, bears a name which recalls the counterpart of the "Sieman", the wife-beater, more usually known as the "Kolbmann",<sup>(2)</sup> and occasionally as the "Knuppelmann". By analogy with "Saint Grobian" Hans Sachs even canonises this character:

"Umb hulff anruffen Sent Kolbman." (3)

and

"Ziecht auff gut saiten widerumb,  
 Auff das nicht heint sent Kolbman kumb  
 Und euch umb ewer unzucht straff!" (4)

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1. KG/V/31.
  2. See Kawerau, op. cit., p. 95.
  3. KG/IX/70.
  4. KG/IX/94.

In Die neunerley heud einer bösen frawen sambt  
(1)

ihren neun eygenschafftten Sachs made use of the common joke about flaying the eight animal hides off a wicked woman in order to reveal her true human nature. But in the long moral he attaches to the Schwank Sachs clearly declares his own attitude to the practice of wife-beating:

"Das zimpt eym byderman mit nichten,  
Ungerathen eh werden drauß,  
Man muß mit krieg nicht halten hauß,  
Sonder mit fried und freundschaftt mehr."

And though in the last resort he would countenance drastic measures against an obstinate and unmanageable wife -

"Wo sie aber blieb eygenwillig,  
Nicht handelt, das wer gleich billig,  
Wolt dir gar nicht sein undterthenig,  
Ungehorsam und widerspenig,  
Wo sie noch rumoret dargegen,  
So magst du straffen sie mit schlegen,  
Doch mit vernunfft und wol bescheyden,  
Das es unschedlich sey auch beyden."

- he is nevertheless convinced, as he says repeatedly, that

"..... Ein frummer man  
Ein frummes weib im ziehen kan."

Though whipping scenes seem to have been a common enough element in the Schwänke and Fastnachtspiele of the time, (2) Sachs appears to have sensed the brutalising dangers inherent in such comedy and only once does he incorporate such matter into one of his own plays, and then (3) the characters are the Devil and a witch.

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1. KG/V/232.
  2. See Kawerau, op. cit., p. 47 ff.
  3. KG/XXI/17.

So far, Sachs does not differ greatly from his literary contemporaries on the subject of women and marriage. The quarrelsome wife, the hen-pecked husband and the wife-beater were stock characters too familiar to his audiences and readers for him to omit them altogether. He is perhaps a little less crude than his contemporaries, and any unpleasantness is at least in part redeemed by the inevitable moral, which makes it clear that Sachs' object even in such works was not merely to entertain but also to improve. Nevertheless, if that were all, Sachs would rank in this connection as no more than one of the many imitators of Sebastian Brant. Much remains, however, in Sachs' work to show the high regard he had for womanhood and the wholesome respect he had for the institution and purpose of marriage. In this connection in addition to the effect on him of the social milieu in which he lived and the inherited traditions of his own social class, he was greatly influenced by the teachings on marriage of the Reformers and he in turn made by no means a modest contribution to the literature on the subject which the Reformation inspired.<sup>(1)</sup>

In no sphere of social life did the Reformation

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1. Kawerau, op. cit., strangely omits all mention of Hans Sachs in this connection. He received only one or two passing references in Kawerau's Chapter on "Grobienische Literatur".

take up a more decisive attitude against the medieval Church than in the matter of marriage. (1) It was the universal rule of priestly celibacy in the Roman Church and his human concern for the many unhappy victims of this institution which launched Luther into a controversy on marriage whose ramifications were eventually to embrace all aspects of the subject. His researches into the Bible showed him that there was no scriptural basis for the Roman practice and this led him to question and reject the implications of the Roman Church's teaching on marriage and to ascribe to it a large measure of blame for the crying social evil of his day.

Luther quickly came to regard marriage as the law of God which is reflected in the natural impulse to cohabitation of man and woman. "The (2) union of man and wife is in accordance with the divine law, and this holds good no matter how it may contradict any regulations made by man .... and if the Pope, or bishop, or official should dissolve a marriage contracted contrary to one of these man-made laws,

1. See An den Christlichen Adel (WA/VI/440-443).
2. "Coniunctio enim viri et mulieris est iuris divini, quae tenet, quocumque modo contra leges hominum contigerit, .... et Papa vel Episcopus vel officialis, si dissolverit aliquod matrimonium contra legem humanum contractam, .... violator naturae et reus lesae maiestatis divinae." (De captivitate Babylonica ecclesiae praeludium, WA/VI/555)  
See also Vom Eelichen Leben (WA/X/Pt. 2/276-277), and Luther's commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians vii (WA/XIII/99). Also Mackinnon, op. cit., III/33ff.

then .... he does violence to nature, and is guilty of contempt of the divine Majesty." He rejected the views of St. Jerome, and still more those of St. Augustine, who had held that sexual desire was sinful in itself, that it expressed the effort of the individual to disregard God's will and to satisfy earthly desire. In consequence of the latter views the suppression of the sex life had come to be regarded in the Roman Catholic Church as a meritorious act. It was held as a mark of the special favour of God when a person was enabled by the grace of God to restrain his sexual desires, and as certain that Christians who lived in a state of virginity would receive greater rewards from God than married people. Luther agreed with St. Paul that there were exceptional cases in which by the special gift of God the body was so constituted that a man or woman might feel no inclination for marriage and so might devote themselves to the purely spiritual life. But these exceptions were few and to attempt to counteract the divinely implanted impulse by segregating men and women, without due consideration of this fact, in monasteries and convents under a man-made and artificial obligation to observe the celibate state, must inevitably result in sins of the flesh.

It was in fact only too patently obvious that the swelling of the ranks of the religious orders by men and women attracted to the monastic life by the greater hope of

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1. I Corinthians vii.

heavenly reward which it promised had resulted in many taking the oath of celibacy who were unable to keep it. Immorality amongst the clergy had become proverbial in medieval times.

Hans Sachs quotes "ein alt sprichwort" -

"Wer sein hauß halten will gar sauber,  
Hüt sich vor pfaffen und vor tauber,  
Wo sie wohn, bleibt das hauß nit rein." (1)

The poor example of many of the clergy, combined with a view of marriage as a subordinate state, had helped to undermine the institution of marriage and loosen respect for the bonds of wedlock. The low conception of marriage as incompatible with the perfection of the religious life was to some extent reflected in Luther's own one-sided view of it as a necessity of the flesh. Luther is not always consistent in his arguments but he does emphasise again and again that marriage is a high vocation and in no way subordinate to the condition of celibacy.

Luther's attribution of the blame for the loosening of morals to the teaching of the Roman Church may well have been exaggerated, but he was far from regarding it as the sole cause. He was equally forthright in his condemnation of the flippant and sensual spirit in which the sexual question was treated in certain humanist circles. With the Renaissance

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1. KG/XVII/183. Steinhausen, op. cit., quotes a similar proverb from Johann Geiler.

a stream of new ideas had flowed into Western Europe. The long hidden culture of the classical world of Greece and Rome had again been brought to light and for the first time for long ages men heard of standards of morality which were freer in both thought and action. The impact of these ideas certainly contributed to the deterioration of moral standards and the appalling examples set in the highest places by leading prelates of the Roman Church and even by some of the Popes themselves in these matters had its inevitable consequences in the lower orders and amongst the laity. It was indeed Luther's own knowledge of the rampant immorality of the Papal Court, gained on his visit to Rome in 1511, that was later to add such fire to his condemnation of the Papacy and the Roman Church.

Luther's championship of the cause of a married priesthood brought him perhaps more acclaim, and certainly more abuse, than any other cause he took up. It gave issue to a vast body of polemical literature much of which rivalled in tone the worst outpourings of Saint Grobian's followers. Outside this field, however, the subject precipitated little in the literary work of the period. In only one poem - and that written in

(1)

1562 - does Sachs refer to the matter at any length:

"Seit her in dem geistlichen standt  
 Die eh verboten und verbannt  
 Wider Gott und natürllich recht,  
 Von dem römischen stul durchecht  
 Und in das decret eingeschrieben.  
 Derhalb so ist worden getrieben  
 Sehr vil hurweiß, sünd unde schand  
 Allenthalb in geistlichem stand,  
 Darinn sie unverschemet lagen,  
 Daß man von ihn thet singn und sagen;  
 Dardurch wurd ir gottsdienst veracht,  
 Von leyen verspott und verlacht, ....  
 Jedoch gott lob, ist das gewendt,  
 Daß sie auch ietzund ehlich sendt  
 In teutschem land zu manchem ort,  
 Wo ietzt im schwang geht gottes wort.  
 Gott geb noch lang, daß in der eh  
 Der geistlich stand ehrwirdig steh."

In passing, it is also worth mentioning that the two most revolutionary theories concerning marriage which Luther formulated, the one that marriage was not a sacramental state which could be destroyed only by the death of one of the parties, and the other, that the secular and not the ecclesiastical power was the proper authority to adjudicate in matrimonial affairs and matters of divorce, also find little or no echo in contemporary literature, and certainly none in Hans Sachs.

Whatever the value and justification of Luther's views on marriage, his full-blooded defence of the wedded state had an immeasurable effect on the domestic life of Germany, an effect which extended beyond the bounds of the strictly Lutheran areas and into neighbouring countries. His

influence spread out from the intimate circle of his own family and the numerous couples who benefited from his advice on engagement or whom he married, through the congregations who heard him preach, to the larger body which read the tracts and sermons he published. But Luther had no lack of willing assistants. His views on conjugal love, the proper relation of husband and wife, the upbringing of children, the joys and sorrows of family life were reflected in a vast literature of evangelical "Ehespiegel" - pamphlets, poems, plays - which in contrast to the Roman Catholic praise of celibacy and, for the Catholics did not lack their humorists, the joys of single blessedness, proclaimed the divine origin of the married state, roused the consciences of married people, launched an assault on the vices and immorality of the times, and drew an ideal picture of Christian domesticity.

In his short survey of the "Ehespiegel" in the  
 (1)  
 sixteenth century Kawerau rather surprisingly omitted all reference to Hans Sachs, whose contribution to the genre must rival that of any other writer. Indeed, despite all the nineteenth century and more recent studies of Sachs' sources, this particular aspect of his works has not yet found an investigator, perhaps because of the difficulty of tracing copies of the contemporary marriage handbooks, with

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1. Kawerau, op. cit., p. 64ff.

which, in addition to Luther's tracts and popular sermons, of which he was an assiduous collector, Sachs must have been familiar.

Without following Luther into the sacramental controversy Hans Sachs readily took over his basic proposition regarding marriage, that it is a divinely appointed status and therefore a natural condition since God Himself had placed sex desire in man:

"Im anfang Gott einpflanzt pur  
 Durch sein wort menschlicher natur  
 Lieb, lust, begier, freundlich gemüt  
 Dem man zum weib durch hertz und blüt.  
 Wo diese lieb geordnet ist  
 Ehlich und stet bleibt alle frist,  
 Inn angst, not, trübsal, kummer, layd,  
 In gantzer trew und erberkeyt,  
 Die ist holdselig und begierlich,  
 Edel, köstlich und uberzierlich,  
 Auß der volgt manch holdselig frucht.  
 Inn warer trew und rayner zucht." (1)

If marriage was a divine institution it followed logically that the evils of sex stemmed from the Devil. Incontinence was a temptation of the Devil and marriage the only remedy. "To marry is physic against incontinence." (2) "We must resolutely repress the Devil instead of encouraging him .... I answer that God of His grace has instituted a remedy, marriage." (3) For Sachs, too, it is a cardinal tenet that all sexual immorality is the work of the Devil:

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1. KG/IV/325.
  2. The Table Talk of Martin Luther (London, 1872), p. 300.
  3. Table Talk, op. cit., p. 302.

"Die ander lieb ausserhalb der eh  
 In bulerey bringet hertz-weh,  
 In der der Sathan sich ein-mengt,  
 Falsche lieb in die hertz brenget.  
 Auß der folgt schad, schand und untrew,  
 Verlust der ehr, ewig nach-rew." (1)

This view was, of course, derived from St. Paul and Sachs is  
 fond of quoting " ... it is better to marry than to burn",  
 especially when he is giving advice to young lovers, as, for  
 example, in Der buler artzney:  
 (2)  
 (3)

"Besser sey heyraten, denn brennen.  
 Zu mayden hurerey voran,  
 Soll jedes sein gemahel han  
 Inn dem ehstand, welcher ist frey  
 Die synig haylsem ertzeney  
 Und mittel, das Got hat gesetzt,  
 Darmit der mensch sich hie ergetzt  
 Nach gottes ordnung und gebot  
 Und vor der weit on schand und spot  
 Mag mit seynem gemahel leben  
 Die frucht seins leybs mit ehrn geben."

The joy Sachs himself found in marriage is  
 clearly expressed earlier in the same poem:

" ..... Ein byder man  
 Ein frummes weyb im ziehen kan,  
 Schew! diese lieb die ist holdselig.  
 Gott und den menschen gar gefellig.  
 Auß der entspringet alles guts,  
 Ein uberschwenklich grossen nutz,  
 Fried, freud und lob, reichthumb und ehr,  
 Freundschaft, gsundheyt, erben und mehr,  
 Ein gut gwissen und Gottes gnaden."

But with twenty-two years of marriage behind him Sachs knew

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1. KG/IV/326.
2. I Corinthians vii/9.
3. KG/III/437.

that it was not "roses, roses all the way" and in Das bitter-  
 (1)  
stes ehlich leben he was at pains to point this out and warn  
 his younger readers that to undertake matrimony "unadvisedly,  
 lightly or wantonly" was only to store up trouble:

"Gott sey gelobet und geert,  
 Der mir ein frumb weib hat beschert,  
 Mit der ich zway und zweintzig jar  
 Gehaust hab (Gott geb lenger, zwar!)  
 Wie wol sich in meym ehling leben  
 Hat süß und sawres offt begeben. ...  
 Das mercken hie die jungen gesellen,  
 Die etwan jung nach weybern stellen  
 Von wegen keiner ursach sust  
 Denn zu haben freud und wollust!  
 So finden sie das widerspil."

The social status of women in Luther's time  
 was not very high. In law a woman held a subordinate position;  
 she could not be a witness and was frequently punished in a  
 (2)  
 different way from her superior, man. She was given some  
 protection by the courts but this was usually only effective  
 if her life was in danger, and no penalty was exacted of a  
 (3)  
 husband who killed a wife actually taken in adultery. But  
 in practice women were afforded more respect than the Fast-  
 nachtspiele and the coarser literature of the sixteenth  
 century would indicate. In the cities and amongst the landed  
 gentry the German "Hausfrau" had developed as a definite  
 (4)  
 type, certainly in the sixteenth century and possibly earlier,  
 but it was Luther and the writers of the "Ehespiegel" that  
 he inspired, who popularised her virtues. Hans Sachs had

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1. KG/IV/331.

2. See W. French, op. cit., p. 61.

3. See Steinhausen, op. cit., p. 267.

4. See Steinhausen, op. cit., p. 266.

most definite views on the position and the respective responsibilities in the home of both husband and wife and these he expresses at length in a number of his poems and incidentally in many of his plays.

The following is a composite picture of Hans Sachs' "good wife", based mainly on the Ehrenspiegel der <sup>(1)</sup> zwölf durchleuchtigen frauen des alten testaments and Das <sup>(2)</sup> frauen-lob, eynes biderweybs. The primary care of the woman is, of course, the care of the children, whom it is her duty to bear. She must nurse them conscientiously, instruct them and also punish them but

"Nicht rho, unachtsem und ablessig,  
Auch nicht zu hert sein, mittelmessig."

She is to bring them up to honour God and especially (like <sup>(3)</sup> Eva in Die ungleichen kinder Eve!!) to teach them the Lord's Prayer. (The Lutherans regarded the family as the means whereby God intended the younger generation to be entrusted with the Word of God. This idea was speculative rather than Biblical in character, but it has been of the greatest pedagogical importance in the upbringing of Christian families in Germany.) The good wife will naturally also cook and wash up (Sachs seems to have had a fierce hatred of dirty pots!), sweep the floors, sew and spin, and generally be

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1. KG/I/203.
  2. KG/IV/370.
  3. KG/XI/386.

"..... arbeytsam, heußlich und echtig  
Embsig, endlich, weiß und fürtrechtig  
Mit allen dingen inn dem hauß."

Towards her husband she is to be obedient and submissive,  
and not

".... eigensinnig, widerspennig,  
Nicht hertmeulig und widerwenig:"

she is to be sweet and loving, kind and agreeable, and not

".... stolz, frech, mutwillig, üppich,  
Böckisch, heunisch, leunisch, schnüppig."

She is to comfort her husband, especially when he is sad or  
worried, and she has to try to turn everything for the best,  
though if she does wrong she can expect punishment; she was,  
however, supposed to take this in good part:

"Und ob sie etwas unrecht thut  
Straff ichs, so nimbt sie es vergut."

Amongst the generally desirable qualities of this paragon  
are patience, modesty, sincerity, firmness and an ability  
to make up her mind. She must neither gossip nor quarrel  
with her neighbours and must always be agreeable to her  
husband's friends and willing to serve them with refreshment.  
Moderation in all things - food, drink, dress and ornament -  
is expected of her. She has, of course, to avoid bad company,  
and in all her behaviour be

"..... keusch, züchtig,  
Ersam, schemhafft und tugend-früchtig."  
(1)

For his part a good husband ought to be good

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1. See especially Das mans-lob eines bidermans (KG/IV/364).

at his trade and work hard in his workshop every day. It is his duty to exercise the authority vested in him to supervise the orderly management of the household and to see that everything needed is bought in at the right time and nothing spoiled by the servants or the children; in this way the household expenses are kept down. He pays his debts promptly and cheerfully and so is trusted by everybody. Honest and reliable he does not stoop to dirty tricks. He dresses simply as befits his class and is peaceful and friendly, avoiding quarrels and rows. His pleasures are taken with his family; he will only drink on feast-days and then only in moderation and never in a tavern. He never indulges in gambling except such as arises in games with decent people, and then only rarely. His language is always moderate; he is never angry with his wife for long and he never beats her, except perhaps in the early days of marriage!

"Er hat mich auch nye fast geschlagen,  
Dann erstlich inn mein jungen tagen,  
Da ich etwan auch trutzen wolt."

He is faithful to his wife, keeping good company and staying at home at nights. Generous and kind to others, he keeps a good table and likes to see people enjoying their food. Above all, he attends church, enjoys hearing good sermons and behaves in every way like a good Christian.

The one thing a good husband in this age did not do apparently, at least if he valued peace in his household,

was to meddle in the kitchen, which was strictly his wife's preserve. In Gesprech der mutter mit irer tochter von irem  
 (1)  
ayden the mother listens patiently to her recently married daughter's complaints about her husband's faults and at first pours oil on troubled waters but when her daughter tells her -

" ..... mein man streunet umb  
 Inn der kuchen die gantzen wochen.  
 Ich soll dem gsind gar wanig kochen  
 Und soll es darzu machen ubel.  
 Er schawt mir offt in den schmaltz-kübel,  
 Umb all ding muß ich rechnung geben."

- she really becomes angry and advises her daughter -

" ..... Gieb im den beschayd!  
 Mein mann, du warrt in der werckstat dein  
 Und laß mich inn der kuchen sein!  
 Ich will dein kuchen recht verwalten,  
 Ich bin erzogen beym haußhalten."

It was, indeed, a mother's responsibility to see that her daughters were soundly trained before marriage in the domestic arts, just as it was the father's duty so to mould their characters that they would later make tractable  
 (2)  
 and obedient wives. The story of Griselda provided Sachs with the opportunity to give the following advice to parents on the upbringing of daughters:

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1. KG/IV/356.
  2. KG/II/40.

"Das sies nit ziehen gar zu zart  
 Sunder fein arbeytsamer art,  
 Auff heußlichkeyt, sitten und tugent  
 Und in auch in plüender jugent  
 Sollens in brechen und abziehen  
 Irn eygen willen und zu fliehen  
 Allen drutz, stoltz und üppichkeyt,  
 Auff das sie gwonen mit der zeyt,  
 Zu leyden in dem stand der eh  
 Geduldig alles wol und weh."

It was not only the parents' duty to prepare their daughters for marriage. They had also to see that husbands were found for them in good time. Sachs here fully agreed with Luther who regarded matings as a matter for families and though he thought parents should not force their children into repulsive unions, he held that children in turn should not resist reasonable choices on the part of their parents. At the end of his tragedy Concretus Sachs sums up:

" ..... die eltern sollen  
 Ir töchter in lassen sein bevolhen;  
 Zu rechter zeit in gmahel geben,  
 Auff das sie ehlich mügen leben,  
 Darmit der liebe fewer endtrinnen,"

but, as Sachs delicately puts it,

"Ob sich begeb durch lieb etwas  
 Bey sun und tochter solcher maß,  
 Das etwas wider ehr geschech,"

then parents should not be too harsh in their reactions but should do their best to put things right and see that the matter "fein heimlich verschwigen bleib"!

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1. See R.H. Bainton: Here I Stand (London, 1951), p. 299.  
 2. KG/II/22.

Sachs had not much to say about the training of sons, but it can be imagined that they, too, were brought up "fein arbeytsamer art". He certainly did not believe in pampering children and he uses the sad story of Eli and his sons to point the consequences of parental indulgence. The moral is that a good father should

"Anf zucht zugwenen seine kind,  
Sey im mit straff nit gar zu lind.  
Wie das kind darff essen und schlauff,  
So not ist im ruten und straff."

It is a parent's duty to bring up his child

"..... auff Gottes forcht und ehr,  
Und auff christenlichs glaubens lehr,  
Nachmals auff erberkeyt und tugent,  
Und bald in der blüenden jugent  
Es biege, weyl mans biegen mag."

Sachs clearly wished children to be a credit to their parents, but he seems to have firmly convinced himself that without strict discipline they would inevitably tread the road to delinquency, both juvenile and adult. As a young parent of several growing children we find him offering the following advice to other parents:

"..... ir solt ewre kinder halten  
Undter der ruten, die mit schmerzen  
Des kinds thorheytt treib auß dem hertzen,  
Auff das nit wüstling derauß werden, ....  
Biegt sie, weil sie zu biegen sind,  
Weil auß eym wol gezogen kind,  
Wirdt auch ein frumb, redlicher man."

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1. KG/I/199.
  2. KG/III/59-60.

And much later, as a grandfather, he makes the timeless lament:

"Kain grösser schand ist dieser zeit,  
Denn gar nichts lehren in der jugent,  
Noch erfahren zucht oder tugent,  
Im alter man nichts weiß noch kon." (1)

Much of Sachs' teaching about marriage is to be found in his drama. If the Fastnachtspiele on the whole show the coarser side of marriage, Sachs made ample amends in his numerous comedies, tragedies and histories. Luther himself had keenly appreciated the potential effectiveness of drama for moral teaching and the development of Biblical drama in the sixteenth century and particularly of the type which aimed at glorifying marriage, owed much to the encouragement given (2) by Luther.

The drama inspired by the Reformation was at first restricted to Switzerland but from about 1530 the new Biblical drama made rapid strides in Germany. In Nuremberg the mastersingers were particularly active in the production of plays, for which purpose the Marthakirche was made over to them. Sachs naturally took a leading part in this activity of the Singschule and for a long time acted as theatre director, acting in his own plays and conducting the necessary negotiations with the City Council, which exercised a censorship over

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1. KG/III/131.

2. See above, p. 43ff.

(1)  
 plays. One of his own earliest plays, on the subject of  
 (2)  
 Tobias, was intended to be

" ..... der elcut ein spiegel,  
 Der kinder-zucht ein wares siegel,"

and some guidance on marriage is woven into the play; for  
 example, Hanna give this advice to her daughter, Sarah:

"Laß dir dein mann befolhen sein!  
 Sey ihm gehorsam und unterthenig,  
 In keinem weg nicht widerspenig,  
 ..... etc."

But on the whole Sachs' plays differ from many of the early  
 Reformation dramas in that they let the story tell itself  
 without the interlarding of much didactic material and theo-  
 logical argument; the moral is reserved for the end and is  
 usually pointed by the herald. It is noteworthy that despite  
 the popularity of the theme and the example before him of  
 (3)  
 Paul Rebhun, Sachs considered the marriage at Cana a suitable  
 theme only for a poem and did not fill it out as others did  
 with a lot of moralising padding to the confusion of the  
 essential point, which to him was simply that Christ along with  
 the Virgin Mary and the disciples had attended the wedding,

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1. See A. Bauch: Barbara Herscherin, etc. op. cit., p. 44,  
 and V. Michels: "Zur Geschichte des Nürnberger Theaters  
 im 16. Jahrhundert", Vierteljahrschrift für Literatur-  
 geschichte, 1890, Vol. III/42.
  2. KG/I/134.
  3. Die Hochzeit zu Cana (1538). See p. 46, above.

which

"Bedeut das er noch mit sein gnaden  
Will wonen im ehlichen stand  
Als ein holdseliger Heyland  
Weyl in Got selb hat eingesetzt." (1)

In 1505 Hieronymus Emser (1478-1527), then one of the leading Christian Humanists in Germany, but later one of Luther's bitterest enemies, had provided a catalogue of stories exemplifying womanly love and virtue. Sachs followed this hint in turning to classical literature for material of this kind and with his dramatisation of the tragedy of Virginia began a long line of secular stories which were to serve "zu eynem spiegel dem nechsten, der bösen schendlichen thaten zu vermayden, unnd den guten in ihren löblichen thaten nach-zu-folgen in einem ehrlichen und auffrichtigen wandel." Alcestis, Cleopatra, Hypermnestra, Lucretia, Thisbe and the rest, when their tale is told, all receive their due measure of commendation or condemnation, which with Sachs' usual scant regard for history, is invariably expressed in strictly Christian terms. The following example inspired by the story of Niobe, the Queen of Thebes, who was proud of the number of

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1. KG/I/261 (1545). Sachs had previously treated the subject in two master songs in 1531 and 1544.
  2. In Ein deutsche Satyra und straffe des Rebruchs. Hieronymus Emser was satirised by Sachs as the "ram" in Die wittenbergisch nachtigall. See p. 148. above.
  3. KG/II/3.
  4. Part of the Preface to Book I, Part 2 of the Folio Edition of Sachs' works. (KG/II/1)
  5. KG/VIII/659.

her children is typical. Sachs' remarks are addressed to a  
 "hiderweib" -

"Geit ir Gott schöne kind auff erdt,  
 Gesund und höfflicher geperdt,  
 Das sie thu allen hochmut fliehen,  
 Ir kind nit auff hoffart thu ziehen,  
 Sie auch nit rohmrettig beschrey  
 Und veracht andre kinder darbey,  
 Das sie nit darnach in der nehen  
 Müß plag und hertzleyd an in sehen,  
 Sonder wo ein weib kinder hab,  
 So erkennns sie ein gottes gab!  
 Dem sag sie drumb danck, lob und preiß  
 Und sie gantz gottseliger weiß  
 Auff-erziehen thu demütig sehr  
 Auff gottsforcht, tugent, zucht und ehr!  
 Zu solchen kinden geit allwegen  
 Gott sein genad und milten segen,  
 Das tugenthafft leut darauß werden,  
 Durch die denn den eltern auff erden  
 Im alter wun und frewd erwachs."

The conclusions drawn from such stories add nothing to those expressed in the more deliberately moralising poems and in the stories drawn from Biblical sources. Sachs' view of marriage was clear and limited and he never wearied of representing it, however often he might repeat himself. No assessment of the influence of any one man's writings on the moral standards of his time can, of course, be attempted. That the Reformation did ultimately effect a raising of moral standards and an increased respect for marriage and family life is now generally accepted. The continual witness of Sachs in his works to such standards and in particular his unwavering advocacy of marriage based on Christian morality, when the popularity and the sheer bulk of his works is remembered, entitle him to some credit, however small, for this, perhaps

(1)

the most positive outcome of the Reformation.

In this aspect of his work Hans Sachs appears to give the impression of himself in his own home as a stern and exacting husband and a strict, almost harsh father. It is most unlikely, however, that the sense of fun which bubbles out of Sachs' Schwänke and Fastnachtspiele can never have found an echo in the house in the Kotgasse, and though he rarely writes in actual personal terms about his life with his family it is perhaps permissible to regard the old man in Die neun verwandlung in ehlichen stant <sup>(2)</sup> as based partly on Sachs himself. He is here writing in 1557 with nearly forty years of married life behind him and though he is partly pulling the leg of a young man who is about to be married, there is a ring of genuine experience behind some of the verses. He tells of the joys of the early days of marriage, of how before the first baby was born he had fetched and carried for his wife, how he had later had to rock the cradle and

"Petten, spülen, holtz hawen  
Und waidlich zutragen der frawen,  
Auch etwan windel waschn darzu;"

and of the time when the baby began to grow up he tells the young man:

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1. On the popularity of Hans Sachs' works see the Appendix, and also Genée, op. cit., pp. 353-357 and p. 520.
  2. KG/IV/336.

"Und wenn du wilt geschertzig sein,  
 Bhelts dich vor im hindter der thür  
 Und schreyst denn zu dem kind herfür:  
 Guckgu, guckgu, guckgu, guckgu."

The man who could sufficiently unbend to wash napkins and play "cuckoo" with his young children was no very tyrannical father or husband.

(1)

The concluding lines of another poem written later in the same year form a fitting conclusion to this section; they could only have been written by a man whose marriage had been supremely happy:

"Wo ein ehvolk sich helt also  
 In lieb und leyd auffrichtig bstendig,  
 In keinen nöthen wirdt abwendig  
 In lieb und trew auff beydem theil,  
 Da muß auch volgen glück und heil,  
 Weil sie Gottes befelh nach-kommen,  
 Als die trew gehorsamen und frommen.  
 Ob sie gleich reith ein ungelück,  
 Hilfft in doch Gott und helt in rück  
 In unfall und gefehrlichkeit  
 Und hilffet in zu rechter zeit  
 Auß der pfüttsch alles ungemachs  
 Durch sein beystandt, so spricht Hans Sachs."

## VII

## THE LATER YEARS

Hans Sachs received the news of the death of Martin Luther in 1546 with a sense of deep personal loss and he expressed his grief in a short obituary poem, in which he summed up the Reformer's achievements and at the same time declared his confidence that the cause of the Reformation would survive the loss of its leader. Sachs again adopted the device of the dream. He tells how on February 17th, 1546, he

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1. Das epitaphium oder klagred ob der leyck D. Martini Luthers (KG/I/401).
  2. Luther's death occurred in fact on February 18th, 1546.

had been overcome by an inexplicable melancholy. In this mood he had fallen into a deep sleep and had dreamt that he was in a brightly lit temple in Saxony. In the centre of the temple was a bier covered with a black cloth over which hung an armorial shield bearing a rose pierced with a cross. The fearful thought strikes him that here is Luther's corpse. At this moment the white-clad figure of Theology (the Word of God) enters and, standing by the bier, laments the passing of him who had rescued her from her Babylonian captivity and saved her from her enemies, who had besmirched her snow-white purity, misused and misrepresented her "durch ir gotlose menschen lehr" until she was almost beyond recognition. But by God's grace Luther had cleansed and healed her wounds, so that once more she had shone forth in all her pristine purity. He had struggled long and hard and had often risked his life on her behalf, but neither physical dangers nor the wiles of Popes, bishops, kings and princes had turned him from his constant loyalty to God and her. Sorrowfully she asks

"Wer wilt nun mein verfechter sein?"

The poet now speaks up and comforts the sorrowing figure. He tells her that God Himself has now taken her under His protection and that there are still many worthy men ready to defend her. Now that she has been clearly revealed to all Germany, she will not be deserted by all her followers.

"Darwider hilfft kein gwalt noch list.  
 Dich sollen die pforten der hellen  
 Nicht überweltigen noch fellen."

Therefore, he bids her cease her grief and be assured

"Das doctor Martinus allein  
 Als ein überwinder und siger,  
 Ein recht apostolischer kriegler,  
 Der seynen kampff hie hat verbracht  
 Und brochen deiner feinde macht  
 Und ietz auß aller angst und not  
 Durch den milt barmhertzigen Got  
 Gefordert zu ewiger rhu!"

Hans Sachs' confidence that the Reformation would not collapse with the death of Luther is a testimony to his appreciation of the inner strength of the movement, all the more remarkable at a time when the clouds of war hung ominously over the religious scene.

During the spring and early summer of 1546 Charles V was maturing the blow which he was now resolved to deliver against the Lutheran princes. As a result of his skilful diplomacy in isolating the two principal Lutheran leaders, the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, Charles was at last able in July, 1546, to take the final step of declaring war. He did this by proclaiming the two princes under the Imperial ban. A few days before the Emperor's

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1. For details of the Emperor's diplomatic moves at this time see Mackinnon, op. cit., IV/119ff.

(1)

proclamation Hans Sachs wrote a poem in which he expressed his forebodings about the trend of events. The poem takes the form of a conversation which Sachs pretends he has overheard between the faithful Sir Eckhart and the sorrowing figure of Germania. Germania tells Sir Eckhart that a storm is gathering overhead and that she is beset with enemies; even he who should protect her is now bent on her destruction. Sir Eckhart asks who this is and Germania replies -

" ..... Der adler grosmechtig,  
 Der-selb sein klaen hat gewetzt,  
 All sein vermügen daran setzt,  
 Als ob er mich gar wöl verdempfen."

Sir Eckhart says he cannot believe this, because Germania has always been loyal and obedient and has rendered the eagle every assistance against his enemies; the eagle would do nothing against her without cause,

"Wan er hat ain fridlichen muet  
 Und ser ein freuntliches gemuet."

Germania agrees that the eagle is true and good and wise and would himself not harm a hair of her head were it not for the bat and the owl and the other night-birds, who set him against her. Sir Eckhart asks why they should do this. She replies that it is because of their hatred of the heavenly light which has dawned for her; they prefer to hide in darkness and

1. Ein Clagred Dewtschlands und gesprech mit dem getrewen Eckhart (KG/XXII/352). The poem was published at the time it was written but not included in Sachs' collected works.

so by lies and cunning they have stirred up the eagle against her. Sir Eckhart insists that the eagle would never fight to dim the clear light and that there must be another reason. Germania answers that the eagle is to attack on the pretext of punishing disobedience. Sir Eckhart tells Germania that she has only herself to blame, for though God had caused his light to shine, she has continued to live and walk in darkness and that she must suffer her punishment.

"Aus dir kumbt selbert dieser schad.  
 Weil dir got aus milter gnad  
 Erscheinen lest sein helles licht,  
 Hast doch darin gewandelt nicht,  
 Sunder nur in der finsternues,  
 In aller sünden uberflus.  
 Dardurch dw clerlich megst versten  
 Das solch straff ueber dich mues gen."

Her only hope lies in repentance and trust in God, who can still cause His divine light to shine in the eagle's heart:

" ..... rueff got an,  
 Hab rew und laid der sünden rües!  
 Peker dich und wüerck fruecht der pues,  
 Wie Ninive, die sündig stat,  
 Durch pues genad erworben hat,  
 Heb dein herz auf zw got der-masen,  
 Got wirt sich noch erpitten lasen  
 Durch mitel, weg dir thun peystant.  
 Des adlers herz stet in seinr hant,  
 Den kan er mit götlicher warheit  
 Erleuchten durch des liechtes clarheit,  
 Das ers erkent aus götling gnaden, ...  
 Pleib dw nur pey dem licht pesten;  
 So wirt dich got ie nit verlassn,  
 Zw helfen hat er gar vil strassn."

In this poem Sachs shows a surprisingly clear appreciation of the situation in mid-1546. He sees the Archduke Ferdinand and the Pope (the bat and the owl), and

their followers (the night-birds) as the real architects of the impending attack on Germany. He still cannot believe that the Emperor (the eagle) would attack Germany because she has seen the light of true religion, but he is now convinced that the Emperor has been persuaded to wage war on some of the German leaders who have flouted his authority. Sachs was probably inaccurate in regarding the Emperor so much as the tool of his advisers, but his picture of the Emperor, reluctant to enforce a religious settlement by war but convinced that war was inevitable if he was to resist the trend towards the political disintegration of Germany and secure the survival of the Empire, fits in well with the historians' considered judgement of Charles V and his motives at this time.

(1)

Sachs' hope that Germany would be a second Ninevah was doomed to disappointment. The outbreak of the Schmalkaldic War profoundly shocked him and he expressed the bitterness of his feelings in another prose dialogue in which he developed the following thought from Das klagendt Evangelium:

(2)

"Wenn Christus selbert khem,  
 Seynes worts sich an-nem,  
 So würd der gaystling zel  
 Ihn creutzing noch ein mal."

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1. See e.g. The Cambridge Modern History (Cambridge, 1934), Vol. II, Ch. 7, and Mackinnon, op. cit., IV/123-126.
  2. Ein wunderlicher dialogus und neue zeittung (KG/XXII/367). The dialogue was written on December 31st, 1546, but was never published.

The credibility of Sachs' fantastic tale is heightened by the common-place framework in which it is set. Sachs has just taken delivery of a business letter from Nördlingen in Bavaria (a commission for shoes or perhaps an account for materials supplied) and in the course of chatting with the courier he not unnaturally asks if he has any news. The courier then tells him of a strange encounter he had had one morning the previous month on the way to Nördlingen. He had seen a figure in the distance hastening towards him along the high-road and behaving like a fugitive. <sup>(1)</sup> As the figure comes nearer he realises that this is no ordinary traveller but Christ Himself. He plucks up his courage and addressing Him by name asks where He is going. A long conversation ensues. Christ tells the courier that He is on His way to Egypt, where in spite of the Sultan's rule He will be safer than in Germany. The courier asks why He should be leaving Germany just at a time when the Holy Gospel is being preached openly in Germany and Christ replies that this is the very cause of the persecution from which He is fleeing. "In der sinagog zw Drient" ( a reference to the Council of Trent where in 1545 the dogmatic tradition of the Roman Church was given equal authority with the Scriptures) the priests and scholars have condemned Him

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1. Nördlingen, together with Giengen and Rothenburg, had recently fallen to the Imperial troops.

to death. It does not matter to them if Germany is destroyed, so long as their power and authority survive. The Devil has entered into the High Priest of Rome, who has robbed Him and His disciples through the exaction of indulgence money, the annates and St. Peter's pence. The High Priest has become a second Judas, but instead of taking money for His betrayal he has given "dem römischen richter Pilate" (the Emperor) several hundred thousand pieces of silver to have Him crucified. Pilate has long delayed passing judgement on Him, but at last overcome by threats and entreaties and the cries of the Bavarian people, he has crossed the Danube with many Spaniards Dutchmen and Germans, and preceded by the servants of the High Priest (the Papal mercenaries). Only three disciples have remained faithful to Him (the reference is to the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse and Maurice of Saxony.) Now the latter has betrayed Him for thirty Saxon shillings (the Electorate, which Maurice received as his reward for deserting the Schmalkaldic League) to Ferdinand, King of the Romans, (the Emperor's brother) who has murdered many of His innocent followers at Plauen and wrought great havoc "umb die grentz des wittenbergischen Bethleem" (Wittenberg, defended by Sibylla, surrendered to Maurice of Saxony). Now Pilate and Herod and the High Priest are seeking to crucify Him again. The courier suggests that Christ might take refuge with the clergy or in a monastery or an Imperial city, but Christ refuses; the

bishops are His worst enemies because of the Gospel; the monasteries are dens of thieves, and He does not trust the cities "wan sie in woluest und aignem nuetz zw dieff versunken sint". Therefore He must once more take flight into Egypt. Christ then departs saying that after the deaths of Pilate and Herod He will arise once more, gather His disciples together and lead them into the German Galilee.

The decision of the Nuremberg Council not to commit the city's troops in the war must have both pleased and distressed Sachs. Christ's remark in the above dialogue that He could not trust the cities may perhaps be taken as an expression of Sachs' disappointment at the Council's equivocal attitude to the war, which in the eyes of many of its citizens must have appeared little short of a shameful betrayal of the Lutheran cause. But Sachs had also been a life-long opponent of violence of all kinds and of war in particular. He was not fundamentally a pacifist and could on occasion express the strongest patriotic sentiments, but in 1537 in his Kampffgespräch <sup>(1)</sup> zwischen der Künheit und der Geduldt he had allowed Patientia to put up a case closely resembling that of the Christian pacifist. The case is argued as follows: History proves that those who live by the sword, perish by the sword. St. Paul's advice - "Christlich und gut" - is

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1. KG/III/132.

"Bezal das arg mit gut!  
 So überwindst du in,  
 Das er inn liebe brinn  
 Und dir holt werden muß."

A soft answer turneth away wrath but hard words lead to others  
 and so to real harm. Complaints should be put before the  
 authorities, whose duty it is to protect, and

"Wo das ghricht ist zu schwach  
 So ist Gottes die rach  
 Der alles bös vergilt."

Patientia goes on:

"Wilt haben ruh auf erd, ...  
 Erstlich must du dich binden  
 Mit geduld überwinden  
 Deinen zornigen willen.  
 So magst du dich leicht stillen,  
 Mit geduld, spricht man, ring  
 Überwind man all ding.  
 Das ist der christlichst sieg  
 Inn allem kampff und krieg."

When Victoria replies that if this advice had been followed

"Teutschland wer lengst verderbt,  
 Durch den Türcken geerbt,"

Patientia admits that when

"Gewalt und tyranney  
 Braucht raub und plackerey  
 Wider recht billicheit,  
 Da hat die obrigkeyt  
 Das schwerdt in ihrer hand,  
 Das sie leuten unnd land  
 Handhab gemeinen nutz,  
 Halt vor den feinden schutz."

Nevertheless, it would still be better

"Durch mittel, weiß und wag  
 Abzulainen den krieg."

And in another Kampffgesprach from 1540 we find

"Wenn man muß sich wern,  
 Das der feind tringt und not darzu,  
 Sunst rath ich zu still, frid und rhu  
 Lehr mein fürsten den krieg abgraben  
 Ob sie deß-gleich ein schaden haben." (1)

But if there is a slightly pious and academic tone about such utterances, the events of 1546 bring a striking change. The declaration of war against his co-religionists impelled Sachs to write two poems in this year which are remarkable for their realism and discerning insight into the nature of war.

The first of these poems - Das schedlich gros und starck thier, der krieg - begins with an expression of surprise that the people should recently have cheered the Emperor when he set off for war -

" ..... Das ist ein saltzam ding.  
 Iederman thet des kriegs frolocken  
 Des ich doch hertzlich war erschrocken,  
 Weil er als unglücks ist ein brunn."

And Sachs goes on to paint a penetrating and revealing picture of war, which is as true today as it was then. Wars are begun, he says, with ostensibly the most righteous motives, though "die recht ursach bleibt schlaffen". It is only after wars have broken out that the instigators reveal themselves in their true colours. Wars often begin in a small way but gather strength until

" ... man ihn nicht mehr kan geweltigen,  
 Ihn nicht mehr halten in dem zeum."

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1. KG/III/186.
  2. KG/III/465 (30/9/1546).

Then this picture:

"Wo denn krieg ist, da wont nichts guts,  
 Denn das man rawbet, brennd und mördt  
 Stett, schlösser und die märck verhört,  
 Verschont weder alt noch jugend,  
 Verwüstet gut sitten unnd tugend,  
 Zerrüt burgerlich pollizey.  
 Die religion felit darbey.  
 Keins rechts noch unschuld acht man mer,  
 Verschwendt seel, leib, gut, gwalt und ehr.  
 Krieg ist in summa ein ziechpflaster  
 Aller grewlichen groben laster,  
 Lest hindter im ein langen schwantz,  
 Des lands-verderbung gar und gantz,  
 Seins eygen kriegsherrn nit verschont."

Sachs ends by expressing his hope that God would give the victory only to those who deserved it.

"Gott hat in seyner hand den sieg.  
 Den gibt er auch stetten und ffrsten,  
 Die nit nach christen-blut ist dürsten,  
 Sunder durch tyranney bezwungen  
 Zu gegen-weer werden getrungen,  
 Zu erhalten gemeynen nutz,  
 Dem vatterland zu hilff und schutz,  
 Gottes wort der religion."

At this time Sachs had almost certainly no first-hand experience of war but the description he gives in the second of these poems - Landts-knecht-spiegel <sup>(1)</sup> - of the scene in a valley after the tide of war has flowed through it, is startling in the stark horror of its word pictures, which recall accounts of episodes from the Thirty Years' War. Of the countryside he writes, for example:

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1. KG/III/470 (24/10/1546)

"Verhawen waren die welder,  
 Zertretten die bawfelder;  
 Würtze, krawt, laub unnd gras  
 All abgefretzet was,  
 Sampt allerley getrayd  
 Unnd aller wunn und wayd,  
 Unnd die edlen weynrebn,  
 All fruchtper pßwm darnebn  
 Waren all abgehawen,  
 Die ecker ungebawen."

And of the town:

"Ich schawet hin und wider  
 Die hewser alle offen.  
 Das volck het sich verschloffen.  
 All winckel hin und dar  
 Mit klag erfüllet war,  
 Mit seufftzen, gschrey und weynen,  
 Von grossen unnd von kleynen,  
 Dann all hewser in zorn  
 Zurißn, gebündert worn.  
 Aller haubrat war hin,  
 Pettgwand, silber unnd zin,  
 Klayder und die parschafft  
 Der gantzen burgerschafft."

But despite all the misery caused by the troops, their own  
 state is no less pitiable than that of their wretched victims:

"Do lag die blutig rott  
 An der erdt in dem kot,  
 Samb lebendig begraben ....  
 Hungerig, dürr unnd mager,  
 Ire klayder zerrissen,  
 Erfawlet und zerschlisßen.  
 etc."

Hans Sachs was undoubtedly capable of strong  
 patriotic emotions as can be seen in his stirring call for a  
 (1)  
 crusade against the Turks or the poems written during the

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1. Vermönung zu ainem statlich Dürcken-zug an das reich  
 (KG/XXII/373)

frightful siege of Nuremberg by Albrecht Alcibiades in 1552, but poems such as those just quoted above reflect the ordinary man's deep-felt loathing for war.

The close attention with which the people of Nuremberg followed the events of the Schmalkaldic War may be inferred from the two detailed accounts Hans Sachs wrote of the defeat of the Elector of Saxony at Mühlberg on April 24th, 1547.<sup>(2)</sup> The second of these poems ended with the prayer:

"Gott selber sech darein,  
Auf das werd fried und ainikeit  
Gemacht im deutschen lande  
Und gantzer Cristenheit,  
Auf das wir mügen leben  
Nach dein gotlichen wort!"

Once more Sachs' hopes were disappointed. Though Charles V may genuinely have meant what he had said when he had professed that the purpose of the war was the suppression of lawlessness and rebellion in the Empire, he was unable to resist using the power which victory brought to impose a solution of the religious question. The Augsburg Interim of 1548 was undoubtedly intended as a real attempt at a compromise between the Catholic and Protestant viewpoints, but though it was accepted by some of the more moderate Lutherans, it could not be other than a crushing blow to the more orthodox followers of Luther. After twenty-five years of whole-hearted service

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1. See below, p. 332ff.  
2. Die niderlag und gefencknus herzog Hans Fridrichs zw Sachsen im 1547 jar (KG/XXII/395) and Die gfencknus herzog Hans (KG/XXII/399). Both poems, the second of which was a master-song, were published at the time they were written (August, 1547).

to the Reformation, Hans Sachs was bitterly resentful of the Emperor's determination to force his will on the Church in Nuremberg and he expressed his feelings in another allegory -  
 (1)  
Das Interim - which was in the nature of a sequel to the  
 (2)  
 earlier Disputacion zw Regenspurg. As before, Sachs is transported in imagination to a Temple where Truth (the Word of God) is again sitting on her throne, this time with a chain on one foot. Sachs asks his guiding spirit who it is that is holding Truth prisoner. Genius tells him that Saturn (the Pope) is responsible; he hates her because she has dimmed his radiance with her own bright and sparkling light; and he fears, too, that Bacchus, Venus and Pluto (debauchery, lechery and opulence) will desert him. Minerva (Melanchthon) has interceded with Jupiter (the Emperor) on Truth's behalf and has proclaimed her innocence of the charges laid against her. Jupiter has set up an advisory committee and now Truth and her followers are awaiting Jupiter's decision. Suddenly Jupiter hurls a thunder-  
 (3)  
 bolt which shatter the portals of the Temple and Hypocrisy arrives and clothes Truth in an old and patched-up garment (the Interim) which is dirty and stinks of pitch and sulphur.

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1. KG/XXII/439. The poem was unpublished!
  2. See above, p. 248ff.
  3. In the earlier Disputacion zw Regenspurg Hypocrisy had probably stood for the Papal nuncio. Here the figure would seem to represent either the committee which drew up the Interim (the Bishop of Naumberg, the suffragan Bishop of Mainz and the Moderate Lutheran, Johan Agricola), or more probably the Elector of Brandenburg and the Count Palatine, who were commissioned by the Emperor to see that the Interim was carried out.

As Truth sobs and sighs and covers her face in shame, her followers stand by powerless and afraid. The figure of Penitence now enters and impatiently tells the bystanders that God has hidden Truth from them because they have continued to live in sin. Sachs then enquires why Jupiter, who had once been so benevolently disposed towards Truth, should now rage and torment her in this way. Genius lays the blame on Flattery and Ignorance and on Saturn who has at last succeeded in blinding Jupiter "mit einem guelden regen" (a reference to the financial assistance given to the Emperor by the Pope during the Schmalkaldic War) and winning his approval for the garment which now concealed Truth. Mars now appears at the Temple gates, and with the noise of battle ringing in his ears Sachs awakes and prays to God

" ..... das er sein wort  
 Selb wolt an allem ort  
 Genediclich erhalten."

(3)

In another similar allegory written two years later Sachs covered much the same ground as in Das Interim.

1. Sachs was, of course, wrong in attributing the main share of responsibility for the Interim to the Pope. Charles V was in fact already at loggerheads again with the Pope, who never approved the Interim.
2. Mars symbolises the threat to use force, if necessary, to impose the Interim.
3. Der wunderlich verborgen traum von den gottern (KG/XXII/527). Unpublished.

This time in his vision he sees the Word of God

"Gleich-sam ain himelisches pild  
Ir weibes-gstalt, gar zart und mild."

He tells how after being refused by Saturn the heavenly figure had been welcomed in by "die fuerstling geister", who had dressed her wounds and cleansed her soiled raiment. She had then shone forth in all her glory dimming the splendour of Saturn who out of envy had turned Jupiter against her, with the result

"Das herr Jupiter der senftmuetig,  
Welcher sunst ist von natur guetig,  
Am firmament ganz war verpittert  
Und gar schrocklich hagelt und witert  
Und zw-letzt mit ain doner-stral  
Draff der furstlichen gaister sal."

Sachs regrets that only a few had remained firm in their faith and had done their best to support the Word of God (a possible reference to Andreas Osiander's departure from Nuremberg and the campaign waged from Magdeburg against the Interim by Matthias Flacius and his associates.) The majority had crept away and hidden in their corners with the result that the Word of God was weak and sick. The poem ends with an expression of Sachs' confidence that "though Heaven and earth shall pass away", the Word of God will remain.

One of the direct results of the implementation of the Interim in Nuremberg was a sharp falling off in Church attendance by the citizens. It is not surprising therefore that the savage attack on the city in the spring of 1552 by

Albrecht Alcibiades, the neighbouring Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach, was interpreted by many, including Hans Sachs, as a divine visitation upon the city for having turned its back upon the Reformation, or as Sachs would have put it, for having "deserted the Word of God". In a beautiful lament, composed and circulated by hand in the latter days of the siege of the city, Hans Sachs called upon the city to repent. The poem was written in the form of a conversation between an old man (Hans Sachs) and a maiden (the city of Nuremberg). After the maiden has recounted the sad story of her sufferings, the old man urges her to put her trust in God, and when she replies -

" ..... ich und all meine kinder  
 Haben uns hart gen im verstant.  
 Der-halben ob uns ist anzdent  
 Der pitter gottes-grimer-zoren.  
 Derhalb mein hoffnung ist verloren,  
 Es wert all mein flehen und pit  
 Von got genzlich erhödret nit;  
 Wan gros ist meiner sünden meng.  
 Sein hilff verzeucht sich in die leng,  
 Weil ich schon lang gepeten hab." -

he assures her that God will hear prayers if she turns away from her sins and wickedness and leads a contrite Christian life -

" ..... las nit ab  
 Zw pitten, sunder pit erst ser  
 Und von dein sünden dich peker!  
 Dw dich und dein kinder ergeben  
 In ein puesfertig cristlich leben."

Sachs' hopes that God will answer the city's prayers and that

1. Clagspruch der stat Nürenberg ob der unpillichen schweren pelegung margraff Albrechtz anno 1552 (KG/XXII/541).

its citizens will show their eternal gratitude to Him, are expressed in the maiden's concluding prayer and promise:

"Ich hoff zw got, ich werd erlöst  
 Durch in von meim grewling erbfeint,  
 Wie tiranisch ers gen mir meint;  
 Das ich im sampt den kinden mein  
 Will imer ewig danckper sein. ....  
 Ich hab durch sünt und misedat  
 All dieses unglueck wol verschult,  
 Wil das auch dragen mit gedult,  
 Pues thon mit allen meinen kinden."

In July, 1552, shortly after the end of hostilities against Albrecht, Sachs dramatised the Biblical accounts of the sieges of Samaria and Jerusalem and used these incidents to underline the lessons of the city's recent experience. In the first of these plays he appears to support the demands of the city's preachers for the re-introduction of the liturgy of 1533 by pointing to the example of the prophet Elisha, whom he says

"Fürbildet uns warhafftig da  
 All prediger so Gottes wort  
 Verkünden rein an allem ort  
 Und thun dem volck trewlich vorgon  
 On als ansehen der person  
 Mit straffen, lehren und vermonen  
 Zur buß, der thut Gott auch verschonen  
 Und sie auch selb beschützen thut."

And in the second play he reminded the city authorities of their duties by emphasising the behaviour of Hezekiah, who

" .... fürbildet diser zeit  
 All fromb gottselig obrigkeit,  
 Welche nachvolget Gottes wort  
 Und fürdert trewlich an dem ort

Das wort und suchet Gottes ehr  
 Und dargegen außreuttet sehr  
 Falsche lehr und abgotterey  
 Und andere laster darbey  
 Und helt streng ob Gottes gebot."

Hans Sachs' longing to see the religious life of Nuremberg again ordered as it had been before 1546 was fulfilled during 1553. The city authorities were, however, not given to acting on emotion. Their feelings of loyalty to the Emperor had been undermined by Charles' brusque treatment of the city after the battle of M $\ddot{u}$ hlberg and during the early days of the Interim, and were further weakened by his failure to assist the city against Albrecht Alcibiades. The predatory activities of Albrecht were, however, indicative of the great diminution in the Emperor's political and military power in Germany in the eight years since M $\ddot{u}$ hlberg, and when in January, 1553, he resigned all responsibility for German affairs into the hands of his brother Ferdinand, the Council doubtless argued on the basis of Ferdinand's greater inclination to compromise that it had now little to lose by ignoring the Interim.

The wild anarchy in Germany, which characterised these years, is reflected in a number of Hans Sachs' poems at this time, but above all in Ein gesprech mit den neun muese.

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1. E.g. Ein gesprech zwischen sanct Peter und dem Herren von der ietzigen welt lauff (KG/I/404); Historia des lobwirdigen kayzers Trayani (KG/II/378); Die mordisch meuterer k $\ddot{o}$ nig Tarquinii Superbi zu Rom (KG/II/311); Ein artlich gesprech der g $\ddot{o}$ tter, werumb so vil ubler regenten auff erden sind (KG/VII/268).

wer doch ursprüncklicher ursacher sey der aufruere im Teutsch-

(1)  
landt. The nine Muses appear again to Sachs in a dream to remind him of the compact he had made with them at the outset of his literary career. He tells them that conditions have robbed him of all desire to write poetry.

" ..... Es ist ganz lab und kalt  
Worden all lieb, will und pegier  
Zw dem gedicht iczünd in mier,  
Nicht allein von des alters wegen,  
Nach dem det ich so hart mit fregen,  
Sunder das als so hebel stet  
Und so gar untrewlich zw-get  
In meim geliebten vaterland  
Mit krieg, gfencknus, mord, raub und prant  
Von dem teutschen adel und ffersten,  
Die nicht wie vor nach er ist ddersten,  
Dreiben so unfferstliche stueck  
Das mich solcher untrewer ddeck  
Nicht allein vertrewst mer zw dichten,  
Sunder pey den datten und geschichten  
Vertrewst mich schier lenger zu leben."

Melpomene tells him that, as in his youth, he should write to expose and destroy the evils of the day. He replies that it is now too dangerous for this (a possible reference to the hounding of Matthias Flacius and the other outspoken critics of the Interim and the Emperor):

"Auch ist zw dichten gar geferlich,  
Die-weil man leit die warheit schwerlich,  
Voraus in diesen lezten tagen,  
Weder zu schreiben, singen, noch sagen  
Von solchen pösen pueben-stuecken."

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1. KG/XXIII/17. A lost Spruch had the title Gesprech der gottes von aufruere Deutschlands.
  2. KG/VII/202. See above, p. 132ff.

When Thalia tells him that Jupiter (the Emperor) is responsible for the sad state of Germany, Sachs asks:

"..... Wie mag das-selbig sein,  
Die-weil doch Jovis ist sanftmüetig,  
Vor all ander planeten gütig,  
Ein freunt gancz menschlichem geschlecht?  
Wie kunt er solch mort und unrecht  
Verhengen uber dewtsche lant?"

The Muses tell him that he must see for himself, and they transport him through the clouds to Jupiter's abode. He then sees

"Ein uralt, eysgrabe person,  
Düer, holaugent aller gestalt."

and cannot believe that this is Jupiter

"Weil auch sein tron mit menschen-pluet  
Pesudelt ist hinden und foren;  
Sein angesicht scheint vol neid und zoren  
Uber das gancz menschlich geschlecht."

The Muses assure him that this is in fact Jupiter, but that he is now in the power of Malice and his eyes have been blinded by Deceit and Envy. The poet asks where are Justice, Honesty, Loyalty, Peace, Truth and Wisdom, and is told that they are now in thrall to Arrogance, Greed, Tyranny, Vengeance, Trickery, Hypocrisy, Selfishness and Violence. Sachs comments that so long as Jupiter is under the sway of "die schentling hellischen götter" there is no hope for peace in Germany, and he prays that God will intervene and put an end to "solch poses regiment".

Sachs' wish was soon granted, for when in the summer of 1554 Charles V empowered Ferdinand to settle the religious question with the Diet, his reign in Germany was

virtually at an end. But when the Religious Peace was decreed by the Diet of Augsburg the following year Sachs did not find it an occasion for rejoicing. A "final instalment" of the "Jupiter commentaries" on the current state of religion in Germany was never written. We can only presume that Sachs was not deluded into believing that the sordid political compromise achieved at Augsburg was a victory for the Word of God.

The few poems quoted above, in which Sachs commented directly or indirectly on the contemporary situation, represent only a tiny fraction of his literary output in the years following Luther's death. The ten years from 1546 to 1555 saw the production of nearly half of Sachs' total listed works. His great faith in the power of the Word of God as revealed in the Scriptures led him to make prodigious efforts throughout these troubled times to bring knowledge of the Bible and its message to his fellow men. A virtually uninterrupted stream of adaptations of Biblical material flowed from his pen - "prophecies", "figures" (short poems recounting some Biblical, usually Old Testament incident with a strictly Christian interpretation), Biblical drama, metrical paraphrases of the Psalms and Gospel stories, as well as many secular poems and plays, most of which were provided with a concluding summary of the moral lesson or lessons to be drawn. In this period Sachs also produced over two thousand mastersongs. The text

of few of the religious mastersongs amongst these is available,  
 (1)  
 but Beifus claimed that they provided abundant proof of the  
 strict Lutheran line taken by Sachs during the Interim and  
 of his unwillingness to countenance compromise. Unfortunately  
 Beifus never published the evidence on which his claim was  
 based. Some of the mastersongs were re-written by Sachs in  
 other forms during the 1560's and provide a prima facie case  
 for accepting Beifus' general conclusions. Thus from Psalm 140,  
 a version of which was included in the fifth Book of the Folio  
 (2)  
 edition of Sachs' works and dated June, 1565, Sachs drew the  
 conclusion that Christians

"Sollen ... umb hielff gott anruffen,  
 Zu schützen sie vor schwermerey;  
 Dergleichen auch vor tyranney,  
 Die sie mit blutigem gewalt  
 Von des heiligen worts einfalt  
 Abtreibn wolten, auff ir irrthum,  
 Der ein tag ist ein grosse sumb,  
 Ietzunder gar an manchem ort,  
 Wider das reine gottes-wort,  
 Derhalb not ist, daß gott bald stürtz,  
 Und ir böß fürnemen abkürtz  
 Mit seinem göttlichen gewalt."

This could be interpreted as referring more appropriately to  
 the circumstances of May, 1546, when the original mastersong  
 was composed. The Psalmist' triumphant faith in God's over-  
 ruling power, a faith which neither personal nor national  
 misfortune could destroy, was shared abundantly by Hans Sachs  
 and it is natural that in these times of tribulation he should  
 have turned to the Psalms especially for consolation and

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1. Op. cit., p. 75-76.  
 2. KG/XVIII/525.

encouragement. Nevertheless, in the absence of the original texts of the religious mastersongs, the interpretation of the "Beschlüsse" of the later Psalms in the light of earlier events can only be guesswork and no more than an amusing game.

With the greater sense of security which came with the establishment of the Religious Peace and its maintenance by Ferdinand I, after Charles V had retired to a monastery in 1556, Sachs was encouraged to prepare a complete edition of his works for publication. The first three volumes of the Folio edition were issued between 1558 and 1561 and by 1591 had gone through four editions. A new outburst of literary activity followed Sachs' marriage to Barbara Endres in 1560 and gave rise to the metrical version of the Psalter and complete translations into verse of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, the Book of Proverbs and the Wisdom of Solomon, as well as new Fastnachtspiele and plays, Sprüche and Schwänke based on Biblical and secular material. These works were published after his death in the final two volumes of the Folio edition.

(1)  
Beifus tells us that in his later mastersongs Sachs took an increasingly tolerant view of the religious situation, but it is difficult to find any evidence to support this in his published works. When he refers to the once hotly debated questions of pilgrimages, holy relics, the celibacy of the clergy, indulgences, confession and the rest, the tone may be rather less aggressive than formerly, but there is no question

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1. Op. cit., p. 76.

of tolerance. He was as convinced in 1562, for example, as he was when he had first read Luther's An den Christlichen Adel that pilgrimages were unnecessary to salvation and a source of much nuisance besides.

"Dergleich fund man auch vil exempel,  
 Weil man vor disen jaren all  
 Vil gieng hin und her wider wallen  
 Zun viertzehn nothelffern zumal,  
 Gen Rengsburg und ins Grimmenthal,  
 Gen sanct Jacob und nein gen Rom.  
 Da manning mensch herwider kom  
 Vil erger heymhin in sein hauß,  
 Der doch nach gnad ward zogen auß  
 Weil darauff gschah so mancherley  
 Unzucht und grosse büberey." (1)

It is a source of satisfaction to him that

"Das auch in Teutschland hat ein endt."

There is nothing new in the following reference to private confession in which one can sense his regret that "Christian teaching" has not yet succeeded in abolishing the practice throughout Germany:

"Nun dise ohrenbeicht mit nom  
 Werd wider auffgesetzt zu Rom  
 Durch bēbste, in dem nidergang,  
 Welche auch hat geweret lang,  
 Darinn sich auch manch böse that  
 Hin und wider begeben hat  
 Von ungehörter büberey  
 Und auch der geldtstrick mancherley  
 Betrug und römisch ablaß glat.  
 Das auch zum theil sein endung hat  
 In Teutschland durch christliche lehr." (2)

1. KG/XV/510.

2. KG/XV/506.

Sachs continued to poke fun at the Roman clergy and the monastic orders, but there is nothing very tolerant, for example, about his treatment of the wretched mendicant monk - "einen armen schlüffel" - in the Fastnachtspiel, Die fünf armen wanderer.<sup>(1)</sup> His amusement and satisfaction at the changed circumstances of the clergy and the monks is mingled with a sense of relief that excommunication is now an empty threat. Thus he makes the inquisitor in Der ketzenmeister mit den vil kessel-suppen lament<sup>(2)</sup>

" ..... wie gar verrucht  
Verstockt, verbannet und verflucht  
Ist ietzt der lay und gmeine man,  
Fürcht weder uns noch unsern ban."

There is nothing in Sachs' last published works to indicate that he ever became resigned to the religious division of Germany. At no point in his life had he shown a willingness to compromise with those whom he had been taught by Martin Luther to regard as "tyrants" and "the enemies of the Word of God". The enemies of the Word had indeed proved far stronger than he had realised when he had written so joyfully and optimistically in Die wittenbergisch nachtigall -

"Die warheit ist kommen ans liecht.  
Deßhalb die Christen wider-keren  
Zu den evangelischen lehren  
Unseres hirtten Jesu Christ,  
Der unser aller löser ist,  
Des glaub allein uns selig macht,.....  
Und hangen nur an Gottes wort."

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1. KG/IX/12. See also KG/XVII/255 and 355.  
2. KG/XIV/304.

But throughout the long years of frustration and disappointment Hans Sachs never lost his faith in the ultimate power of the Word of God to win the allegiance of men's hearts. His faith sustained him through nearly five decades of unwavering loyalty to Martin Luther and service to the cause of the Reformation, and his thousands of works bear astonishing testimony to his prodigious labours in spreading the Word, in exposing the follies and weaknesses of human nature, and in bearing witness to the highest standards of Christian behaviour in both public and family life. It was with the fullest justification that he was able at the age of seventy-three to claim of his works

"Die sind alle dahin gericht,  
 So vil mir außweist mein memori,  
 Zu gottes preis, rhum, lob und glori,  
 Und daß sein wort werd außgebreit  
 Bey christlicher gmein ferr und weit,  
 Gesangweiß und gereimten worten  
 Und im Teutschland an allen orten  
 Bey alter und auch bey der jugend  
 Das lob aller sitten und tugend  
 Wird hoch gepreiset und perhümt,  
 Dargegen veracht und verddümt  
 Die schendlichen und groben laster,  
 Die alls ubels sind ein ziechpflaster,  
 Wie mir das auch nach meinem leben  
 Mein gedicht werden zeugnuß geben." (3)

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1. Hans Sachs left over 2400 separate works based on the Bible and there was hardly a chapter of the Bible, which he did not use at least once as the basis of a poem or play, and the simple commentaries he appended testify to his prolonged study and understanding of the Scriptures.
  2. This was, above all, his object in writing the Schwänke and Fastnachtspiele, and those who later chose ignorantly to regard him only as a writer of comic verse, missed the point of such works and did the memory of Hans Sachs a great disservice.
  3. KG/XXI/343.

It is significant that for his last burst of Biblical adaptation, his last serious literary work, Hans Sachs should have turned to the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, which is chiefly concerned with the sane and prudent ordering of daily life. In the Book of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus Sachs found the ideal of life to which he had continually borne witness in his own writings, a life based on honesty, industry, clean living, considerateness for all, helpfulness towards the distressed and, above all, reverence and trust in God.

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APPENDIX

## APPENDIX

### THE LITERARY FORTUNES OF HANS SACHS

Hans Sachs died in Nuremberg on January 19th, 1576. "Nürnbergers teurem Sachs" was accorded no civic funeral, and in a chronicle issued in 1592 and dealing with the events of 1576 Valentin Fuhrmann, the publisher of a number of Sachs' plays and poems, did not find Sachs' death worthy of mention. But if the passing of the greatest German poet of the century was apparently not an occasion for the expression of popular grief, it did not go unnoticed in official quarters; it gave rise, in fact, to a minor display of panic by the civic

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1. KG/XXIV/206 and 243.

authorities in Nuremberg. The records of the City Council contain the following entry for January 20th, 1576: "Auf Veit Fesselmanns bei dem jungern herren burgermaister beschehenes anpringen, wie Hans Sachs gestern abends mit tod abgangen, welcher noch etliche gedicht und sonderlich zwen pasquillos, ainen von dem schloß Plassenberg und den andern von Hohenlandsberg hinder sich gelassen haben soll, die bisher nicht an tag kommen, auch nicht gut were, das solche weiter gebracht wurden, soll man gedachts Sachsen erben beschicken und, was für gedicht der Sachs hinderlassen, zu meiner herren handen erfordern.

(1)

H. Ebner." No loss to posterity resulted from the subsequent mutilation of Sachs' eleventh Spruchbuch, but this seemingly mean and timorous act is a clear testimony to the continuing power and influence of Sachs' words.

(2)

The news of Sachs' death was doubtless soon passed from the Singschule in Nuremberg to the other centres of mastersong in Augsburg and elsewhere, and it did not go unnoticed in the annals of the mastersingers. In addition,

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1. Quoted by A. Bauch: Barbara Harscherin. Hans Sachsens zweite Frau (Nuremberg, 1896) from the Ratsmanuale of 1575-76.
  2. It was in fact part of Hans Sachs' poem Gesprech von der himelfart Margraff Albrechtz (KG/XXIII/115) which was excised from the 11th Spruchbuch. The Pasquillus von dem schlos zw Blassenburg (KG/XXIII/46) remained untouched in the 9th Spruchbuch. This pasquil mentions Hohenlandsberg and it has been suggested that the report to the Council rested on a confusion and that the second pasquil was never written. This does not, however, solve the mystery of the last of Sachs' "artlicher dialogos siben" which is still missing.

Adam Zacharias Puschmann (1532-1600), a shoemaker of Görlitz and a former pupil of Hans Sachs in the Nuremberg Singschule, composed a moving literary obituary. His Eulogium Reverendi Iohannis Sachsen Norimbergensis <sup>(1)</sup> was written in June, 1576, and is in three parts, of which the first is in Hans Sachs own "morgenweis"; the first and second parts deal with the facts of Sachs' life and his achievements, and the third, using Sachs' own favourite device of a dream, is a lament.

Hans Sachs left behind him a vast literary legacy. Apart from the thousands of single copies of his works, which had been sold in his life-time, a start had been made in 1558 with the publication in Nuremberg of the Folio <sup>(2)</sup> edition of his poems and plays. The three Folios issued before his death were re-printed a number of times during the next thirty years; the final two Folios came out in 1578 and 1579 and were not re-issued in Nuremberg. Between 1612 and 1616, however, all five Folios were reprinted in Kempten. This was presumably no act of philanthropy on the part of the printer, Christoph Kraus, who must have felt that there was still a market for Sachs' works. We do not know how many

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1. Re-printed in M.S.Ranisch: Historischkritische Lebens-Hanns Sachsens (Altenburg, 1765), p. 317-331.
  2. This was not a complete edition of Sachs' works. The prose dialogues and a number of Sachs more outspoken poems were omitted. These together with a few other poems were included by Goetze in KG/XXII-XXIV.

copies of either the Folio edition or the Kemptner edition were printed, but the number of extant copies was probably sufficient for Ferdinand Eichler's cautious statement to (1) be accepted, that down to the middle of the seventeenth century a fairly extensive real knowledge of Hans Sachs' works formed the basis of the critical judgements passed upon him.

It is clear, however, from Christoph Kraus' foreword to the first volume of the Kempten edition that Hans Sachs by the beginning of the seventeenth century already had his detractors amongst those who either did not know his works or regarded him merely as a great jester. (2)

## (3)

In his own time Hans Sachs was known for his Sprüche and, above all, for his plays; it was the productions of his plays which more than anything else kept his name before

1. F. Eichler: Das Nachleben des Hans Sachs vom XVI bis ins XIX Jahrhundert (Leipzig, 1904), p. 22.
2. "Und muß ich selbs bekennen, daß dise vilen in verachtung kommen, umb daß der gemeine Mann nichts darumb waist, als daß Faßnachtspil darauß gehalten werden, und vermeint, es sey anderst nichtt darinn, als solche kurtzweil wie im Rollwagen, Eylenspiegel, siben weysen meistern, etc. Aber so jemandt all seine Bücher durchlesen, wirdt er solche wundersame Materien finden, daß solche gleichsam ein Theatrum mundi, da ein jeder was Stands oder Person er mücht sein, in lieb oder leyd, schimpff oder ernst, ein sonderbare nützlich Lektion, und underricht darauß wird schöpfen mögen."
3. A contemporary opinion of Hans Sachs is given by A. Englert: "Ein zeitgenössisches Urteil über Hans Sachs". Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturgeschichte (Vol. V, 1892)

the public after his death. After 1593, however, the stages of the German theatres were increasingly dominated by the companies of visiting English actors and similar German troops of wandering players. There is no sure evidence that the "Englische Komödianten" ever incorporated any of Hans Sachs' plays in their repertoire, but his plays did not disappear entirely from the stage. Adaptations of them for school use were widespread in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though frequently without acknowledgement. In 1612, for example, Johann Zehler, a schoolmaster in Nördlingen, pretended to the authorship of three plays - Kindheit Mose, Jael und Sissera and Jephta - which are nothing but plagiarised versions of the corresponding works of Hans Sachs. Patient research into archives has shown how widespread were the productions of Sachs' plays in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; they turn up in places as far apart as Danzig and Switzerland, though after a few decades the name of the author was often dropped from the title pages.

Hans Sachs also had quite a vogue at the same time in court circles. His tragedy, Die sechs Kempffer, was

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1. Eichler, op. cit., p. 47.
  2. See an Article by Trautmann in Schnorrs Archiv für Litteraturgeschichte, Vol. XIII, 1885, p. 430-433.
  3. KG/X/76, 130 and 169.
  4. Eichler, op. cit., p. 49-50.
  5. KG/VIII/3.

dedicated by one Georg Lucz to the Archduke Ferdinand of the Tirol in 1579. Another, Die trewen gesellen und brüder,  
 (1)  
zweyer könig sön. Olwen und Artus. was dedicated to Ferdinand of Austria in about 1608, though the text was altered to make it more acceptable in Roman Catholic circles and Sachs' name  
 (2)  
 was quietly forgotten. Eichler suggests that this play may have been performed by the "Englische Kômödianten". A study of the productions of one court (that of the Elector of Saxony at Dresden) has shown that even well on into the second half of the seventeenth century, at a time when English players and other troops had flooded the German stage with quite a different fare, and Italian opera had gained a great hold, Hans Sachs' plays still retained a place on the stage. No evidence has turned up to show that Hans Sachs' plays were performed in the towns in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and it was probably not until Goethe's production  
 (3)  
 of the Fastnachtspiel, Das narren-schneyden, in Weimar in 1777 that Hans Sachs re-appeared on a town stage. Nevertheless, material strongly reminiscent of Sachs' work turned up in the eighteenth century in the Viennese Haupt- und Staatsaktionen,  
 (4)  
 and though Karl Weiß admits of no link between these and Hans

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1. KG/VIII/219.
  2. Eichler, op. cit., p. 56.
  3. KG/V/3.
  4. Die Wiener Haupt- und Staatsaktionen. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Theaters (Vienna, 1854). p. 54.

Sachs, even where similar material was used, Hans Sachs was clearly not unknown in these circles. In the Ollapatrida des durchgetriebenen Fuchsmundi (1711)<sup>(1)</sup>, which was ascribed to Josef Anton Stranitzky, who had a major part in the development of the Haupt- und Staatsaktionen in Vienna, there appear to be obvious borrowings from Hans Sachs; for example, the nine hides which are flayed off a wicked woman are described exactly as in Hans Sachs' Neunerley heud einer bösen frauen<sup>(2)</sup> and in the same order.

The change which came over the German stage with the arrival of the "Englische Komödianten" is reflected most clearly in the plays of Jakob Ayrer. Ayrer was Sachs' successor as playwright; he wrote in rhymed couplets and employed the same broad undramatic method of presenting his story. There is also similarity of theme, but though there are passing echoes of Sachs in several plays, only one work, the Comedia von Nicolay dem verlor'n sohn,<sup>(3)</sup> contains passages lifted directly from Hans Sachs. The predominantly religious and didactic epilogues of several of Ayrer's plays are also reminiscent of Sachs, and are at least an indication that Ayrer would not have been averse to treating religious subjects. Only one play by Ayrer on a Biblical theme survives,

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1. Wiener Neudrucke. Vol. X, p. 168 (1886)
  2. KG/V/232.
  3. Ayrers Dramen, ed. Keller (Stuttgart, 1864-65), Vol. V, p. 3231 and KG/XXIII/264.

but J.G. Robertson, who examined the whole subject of the relationship of Ayrrer to Sachs, <sup>(1)</sup> guessed that the second (and largely missing) part of the Opus Theatricum contained Biblical dramas, which might well have been modelled on those of Sachs. Ayrrer's later plays still exhibit the same broad pattern as the earlier ones, but he was now no longer solely under the influence of Sachs, and in his use of more complicated stage effects and his introduction of sensational elements into his plots he was clearly imitating the "Komödianten".

Hens Sachs had had earlier imitators. Long before Kaspar Scheidt in 1551 translated "Grobianus", Friedrich Dedekind's satire on the drunkenness, coarseness and viciousness of the age, Sachs had written his "Tisch-zucht". <sup>(2)</sup> Scheidt was acquainted with Sachs' works and in his Kurzweilige Lobrede von wegen des Meyen, mit vergleichung des Frühlings und Herbsts (1551) he quotes, rather inaccurately, from Sachs' Kampfgespräch zwischen wasser und wein. <sup>(3)</sup>

Johann Fischert, like Dedekind, was taught by Kaspar Scheidt in Worms and was probably familiarised by him with Hens Sachs' works, which he (Fischert) knew well, often using quotations in his own works. He mentions both with

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1. Zur Kritik Jakob Ayrrers mit besonderer Rücksicht auf sein Verhältnis zu Hans Sachs und die Englischen Komödianten (Diss. Leipzig, 1892). Cf. Eichler, p. 63-69.
  2. KG/IV/297 (14/7/1534)
  3. KG/IV/249. Cf. Eichler, p. 69.

(1)

respect in his Eulenspiegel, but on the other hand in his Catalogus catalogorum he poked gentle fun at the "Reymer von Nürenberg" and "Johann von Sachsenhausen".

Jakob Schopper (1545-1616), theologian, Professor at Heidelberg and Rektor of Altdorf, described Luther in his Neuwe Chorographia und Histori Teutscher Nation (1582) as "den Teutschen Ciceronem" and added "Desgleichen ist Hans Sachs von Nürenberg zu unser zeit der Teutsche Virgilius gewesen, welcher allerley schöne Historien auß der H. Schrift und andern weltlichen Scribenten in schöne zierliche und wollautende Verß oder Reimen gebracht, und etlich Bücher mit Reimen an Tag geben hat."<sup>(2)</sup>

The next generation of writers produced at least one ardent supporter of Hans Sachs in the Stuttgart theologian and court chaplain, Johann Valentin Andreae (1586-1654), whose Mythologiae christianae sive virtutum et vitiosem vitae humanae imaginum<sup>(3)</sup> contained the first important public defence of Sachs:

Joh. Saxo Noribergensis, qui Germanae Musae maritatus pulcherrima prole patriam auxerat, cum solenni memoriae festo templum bonae famae ingredi vellet, a stipatore Paedagogo obtusissimo homine, aditu prohibitus est: Procul hinc, eiebat, procul esti Germani. Saxo conjugus suae nobilissimae imperium allegabat, cujus nomine et voluntate ipse adesset, alioquin

1. Selections, ed. K. Goedeke, Vol. XV, p. 19 of Deutsche Dichter des 16. Jahrhunderts (Leipzig, 1880)
2. The Neuwe Chorographia is in the British Museum. Cf. Eichler, p. 71.
3. Published Strasburg, 1619. Copy in the British Museum.

in sutrina permansurus. Cum stolidus ille nihilominus perstaret, ad jurgia, ad injurias, denique verbera ventum est. Exprobrabat Saxo homini rerum humanarum ignorantiam, inventionum sterilitatem, elocutionis balbutiem, vocabulorum inanitatem, animi ingenique stuporem, et pignore deposito, in luctam, quovis vellet loco, quibus vellet armis, animose provocabat. Intervenerunt forte altercationi Theodorus Zvingerus, Memoriae Cancellarius, Johan. Fischerus, Germanicae Nationi a libellis, ac Nicolaus Hermannus, religiosissimus Cantor, qui Saxonem, veterem congeronem, cum sordido homine litigare indignati, manu injecta in atrium unduxerunt; conversusque ad sequentes Fischerus: Hoc agent, inquit, illa pecora, cum ad fores ipsa perpetuo condemnata sint, quibus inventio et elocutio sciendi agendique vera atque bona fores reserarunt, bonae famae aditu arceant." (p. 35)

The picture Andreae gives of Sachs belligerently defending himself against the obscurantist attacks of the pedagogue is in refreshing contrast to the gentle amiable figure conjured up in the nineteenth century.

But Andreae was rowing against the tide. The small-time pedants against whom he supported Sachs were soon succeeded by men of greater stature and Sachs had no place in the literary scheme of things envisaged by Martin Opitz and his followers. Opitz had no word to say about Sachs. Drawing his inspiration from an alien culture, Opitz evolved a theory of versification based on the regular alternation of accented and unaccented syllables. Whatever merits the old rhyming couplet had had when practised by Sachs, it had been rendered meaningless by the syllable-counting antics of his less skilful successors. It was rejected out of hand by Opitz and Hans Sachs was lumped together with the crude festival jesters, the Pritschmeister, and condemned unread, for in general the

poets of the Opitz Renaissance had no acquaintance with Hans Sachs' works. It has not been shown either, that Andreas Gryphius, who poked fun at Sachs in his Absurda comica oder Herr Peter Squentz had any serious knowledge of Sachs' work; (1) and Peter Squentz had many descendants down to the second half of the eighteenth century.

One strikingly objective judgement of Sachs did come, however, from one of Opitz' most ardent followers, from the man whose own work typifies all that was worst in the poetry of his time - Christian Hofmann von Hofmannswaldau (1618-79). In the preface to his Deutsche Übersetzungen und Getiche, which was published in the year of his death, he (2) wrote:

"In abgelauffener Hundert-Jähriger Zeit hat ein ehrlicher Bürger in Nürnberg, Hans Sachs sich herfür gethan, und in einem grossen Wercke allerhand Spiele, Gesänge und dergleichen, unter dem Nahmen eines Meister-Sängers in das Licht gestellt. .... (Hans Sachs), dessen Kopff und Art, nach Beschaffenheit der Jahre, darinnen er gelebet, ich gar nit tadele, und würde er, wann er bessere Wissenschaft von gelehrten Sachen, und genauere Anweisung gehabt hätte, es vielen die nach seiner Zeit geschrieben, und manche ungereimte Dinge uns sehen und hören lassen, weit vorgethan haben." (3)

No such pertinent criticism of Sachs was expressed by any other poet in the period between Opitz and Gottsched.

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1. See F.M. von Waldeck: "Der Peter Squentz von Andreas Gryphius, eine Verspottung des Hans Sachs", Vierteljahrsschrift für Litteraturgeschichte (Vol. I, 1888), p. 195-212, and Eichler, op. cit., p. 87ff.
  2. Published Breslau, 1679-80. Copy in the British Museum.
  3. Breslau edition, p. 23-24.

Hofmannswaldau does not tell us how he arrived at his judgment, but it is safe to say that he must have read Sachs in the original, probably during his latter years as "Rathsherr" at Breslau.

Johann Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen (1622-76), the greatest novelist of the century, was certainly acquainted with at least the first two Folio volumes of Hans Sachs' works, material from which he incorporated in his Simplicissimus. The name of Simplicissimus was possibly derived from Hans Sachs' Fastnachtspiel, Der unersetzlich  
(1)  
geitzhunger, in which the artless Simplicius is a main character, and Baldanders in the ninth chapter of the Continuatio des abenteuerlichen Simplicissimus is certainly drawn from Hans Sachs' poem -

"Baldanders so bin ich genandt,  
Der gantzen welte wol bekannt." (2)

Grimmelshausen acknowledges this by giving the date of Hans Sachs' composition, when Baldanders replies to Simplicissimus -

"Daß ich aber niemahl mündlich mit der gered habe, wie etwan Anno 1534 den letzten Julij mit Hans Sachsen dem Schuster von Nürnberg ist die Ursach, daß du meiner niemalen geachtet hast." (3)

Other items from Hans Sachs taken over by Grimmelshausen were

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1. KG/XIV/154.
  2. KG/V/310.
  3. Grimmelshausens Werke, ed. Keller (Stuttgart, 1854-62), pp. 874-878.

Von dem verlorren redenten güldin, Die ellend klagent roßhaut  
 and Das narren-schneyden.<sup>(1)</sup>

The virtual banishment of Hans Sachs from literary society in the seventeenth century did not, however, mean that his name was entirely forgotten. His memory was kept green in evangelical circles, where he was revered as a doughty champion of Protestantism, and with the emergence of pietism in the latter half of the century, he found new defenders, notably in Gottfried Arnold<sup>(2)</sup> (1666-1714). In their reaction against orthodox dogmatism and in their wish to see a truer expression of the Christian ideal of love in the mutual dealings of their fellow Lutherans, the Pietists found much support in the views expressed by Sachs (especially in the prose dialogues), which seemed so closely parallel to their own.

Hans Sachs also found a defender in the orthodox theologian Georg Grosch, who in his Nothwendige Verthaidigung (1745) praised Hans Sachs' verses "wegen des herrlichen Nachdrucks und guten Verstandes, so sich überall darinnen zeigt."<sup>(3)</sup> But whereas Arnold had quoted Sachs dialogue, Syn gesprech eynes evangelischen Christen mit einem Lutherischen.

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1. RG/IV/216, RG/V/146 and 3.
  2. See especially his Unparteyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-Historie, von Anfang des Neuen Testaments bis auff das Jahr 1688 (1699-1715). See also F. Hirsch: Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie (Gütersloh, 1951), Vol. II, p. 264ff.
  3. See Eichler, op. cit., p. 99.

as evidence of a degeneration in Christian behaviour after the Reformation, Grosch ascribed no great value to this work and asked "Kann man wohl aus solchen erdichteten Gesprächen einfältiger Handwerksleute den Verfall einer gantzen Kirche beweisen?" Arnold and Grosch were not the last to misinterpret this controversial dialogue!

Hans Sachs' hymns have been dealt with in some detail elsewhere, <sup>(1)</sup> but for the sake of completeness some reference is again made to them here. Though Hans Sachs' hymns found their way into the Rostock enchiridion of 1531 and the Magdeburg Gesangbuch of 1534, he was rarely mentioned by later hymnologists, except as the putative author of Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz? His other hymns were rarely included in other anthologies. Of the Sachs hymns mentioned by F.W.Fischer in his Kirchenlexicon only four had kept a place in the hymnbooks into the second half of the seventeenth century. Johann Michael Dillherr, an assistant priest and teacher at the parish church of St. Sebaldus in Nuremberg, included three of Sachs' hymns and Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz? in his Bey Tausend Alte und Neue Geistliche Psalmen, Lieder und Gebete. <sup>(3)</sup>

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1. Part Two, Chapter III.
  2. Published Gotha, 1878-79.
  3. Published Nuremberg, 1654.

The controversy which has long raged over the authorship of Warum betrübst du dich mein Herz? has already been dealt with, but whether Hans Sachs was the author or not, the hymn has been of great importance in keeping Sachs' name alive. From at least 1630 down to present times it has been ascribed to him and has caused not only hymnologists but also Protestant theologians to take an interest in him; and it was its appeal which first attracted Salomon Renisch to the study of Hans Sachs and so ultimately inspired his remarkable biography in which he devoted sixty-one pages to the hymn!

Very few, if any, of Sachs' poems have become true folk-songs. Liliencron printed a number of his historical poems, <sup>(1)</sup> dealing mostly with the Turkish invasion, but these were too long for them easily to become folk-songs. The folk-song -

"Der Meyen, der Meyen,  
Der bringt uns blümlin vil;  
Ich trag ein freys gemüte,  
Got weiß wol, wem ichs will." -

was not composed by Hans Sachs but merely incorporated by him in the Fastnachtspiel, Der Neydhart mit dem feyhel. <sup>(2)</sup>

The uninformed and indiscriminating criticism from which Sachs suffered in the seventeenth century in what

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1. In Vols. III and IV of his Historische Volkslieder (1864-69).
2. KG/XVII/202-3.

passed for literary circles probably reached its lowest level around the turn of the century, when he became the whipping boy in the literary feud in North Germany between Christian Wernigke (1661-1725) and the poets who found employment in preparing libretti for use in the first permanent German opera-house, which had been established in Hamburg. Christian Heinrich Postel was Wernigke's butt in a poem he published in 1701, Heldengedicht Hans Sachs, in which Hans Sachs reviews his successors and proclaims Stelpe (Postel) to be the worthiest of them all, the "Patriarch von dem Pritschmeisterey". For Wernigke Hans Sachs was merely the prince of jesters and there is no real evidence that he ever read Sachs at all. In any case, the devoted admirer of Boileau could hardly have been expected to penetrate very deeply into the spirit of Hans Sachs. Christian Friedrich Hunold replied to Wernigke in a crude satire in which he caricatured Wernigke as "Wecknerr" and "Narrweck"; Der Thörichte Pritschmeister, oder Schwermende Poete (1704) probably reached the ultimate depths of vulgarity in any work "inspired" by Sachs, unless that doubtful honour be awarded to Johann Georg Gressel's Vergnügter Poetischer Zeitvertreib (1717). But the poets of this period are of little importance, and the fact that they could regard Hans Sachs as the master bungler is merely indicative of their own ignorance and incompetence

The seventeenth century, however, is far from being of merely negative interest so far as Hans Sachs studies are concerned, for this period saw the foundations laid of German literary and linguistic scholarship and amongst the true scholars it is possible to find evidence of genuine acquaintance with Hans Sachs' works. A basis for future work on German grammar and philology was laid by Justus Georg Schottel (1612-1676) and the first attempt to deal with the linguistic aspects of Hans Sachs was made by him in his Teutsche Vers- oder Reim-Kunst.<sup>(1)</sup> The greatest expert of the century on German literature was Daniel Georg Morhof (1639-91), who was conversant with Sachs' works and also with earlier judgements, especially that of Hofmannswaldau, whom he frequently mentions in his Unterricht von der Teutschen Sprache und Poesie.<sup>(2)</sup> Magnus Daniel Omeis' Gründliche Anleitung zur Teutschen accuraten Reim- und Dicht-Kunst<sup>(3)</sup> was largely a re-hash of Morhof with a few supplementary remarks on Meistergesang drawn from the book on the subject by his Altdorf colleague, Johann Christoph Wagenseil (1633-1705). The latter was a man of wide interests and in this respect typical of German scholars around the turn of the century; he held two professorships (public law and history) and also lectured on canon law

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1. Published Wolfenbüttel, 1645. See F.E. Koldewey: "Justus G. Schottelius und seine Verdienste um die deutsche Sprache", Zeitschrift für den deut. Unterricht (Vol. XIII, 1899), p.90.
  2. Published Kiel, 1682.
  3. Published Nuremberg, 1704.

and oriental languages. His literary studies were presumably a spare-time interest! Nevertheless, in his Buch von der Meistersinger Holdseligen Kunst Anfang, Fortführung, Nutzbarkeiten und Lehr-Sätzen (1697) he produced not only a worthy memorial to the Mastersingers, but also, in spite of some inaccuracies, a piece of research of real and lasting value to students of Meistergesang. His account was based on a real acquaintance with the basic materials and his explanations had been checked by consultation with the still practising mastersingers in Nuremberg, of which he was a native.

The rationalist philosopher and apostle of the Aufklärung, Christian Thomasius (1665-1728) was another ardent supporter of Hans Sachs. Thomasius doubtless derived his enthusiasm from his father, who at one time owned the original manuscript of Hans Sachs' sixth Spruchbuch, but his literary judgements were not sound and his prejudice led him to enshrine his ignorance in the remark: "Ja, ich bin versichert, daß wer Hans Sachsen und Homerum ohne Verurteil lesen wird, wird mehr Artigkeit und Iudicium in Hanß Sachsen als in Homere antreffen". The favourable judgements on Hans Sachs of men like Wagenseil and Thomasius bore fruit some years later, when Hans Sachs was

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1. This is the Dresden MS. M. 10<sup>x</sup>. It passed via Christian Thomasius' brother, Gottfried, to Gottsched.
  2. See Eichler, op. cit., p. 127. Quoted from the second part of Monatsgespräche, the first German literary periodical, which Thomasius published in 1688-89.

given a place in an ambitious literary project, which had the general title: Der Vortrefflichsten Teutschen Poeten verfertigte Meister-Stücke Wobey Jedesmahl das Leben eines solchen Tichters der den Nahmen eines Vortrefflichen Bey der Galanten Welt Durch seine Geschicklichkeit verdienet". The unknown editor of this work performed two services to Hans Sachs studies; he produced the first Hans Sachs biography based on the works themselves and including Summa all meiner Gedicht, and with his selection of the "masterpieces" he provided the public with at least some material on which valid judgements of Hans Sachs could again be based.

These selections from Hans Sachs were published in Rostock in 1724, the same year that Johann Christoph Gottsched escaped to Leipzig from the clutches of the Prussian recruiting agents. Gottsched acquired a number of Hans Sachs' manuscripts and also possessed a copy of the complete Kempten edition, and in his zeal for collecting and listing Hans Sachs' works he performed an undoubted service to Hans Sachs scholarship. But though Gottsched generally speaks kindly, if condescendingly, of Sachs, he was incapable of any

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1. See E. Goetze: "Hans Sachs als Gegner des Markgrafen Albrecht Alcibiades", Archiv für Literaturgeschichte, Vol. VII, p. 281.
  2. The following is a typical comment: "Bey uns Deutschen hat es vor und nach Opitzen an Comödien-Schreibern zwar

true appreciation of his poetry. The irregularity of Sachs' metre was an insuperable stumbling-block, alike to Gottsched and many other contemporary poets and critics. Even such mild approval as Gottsched gave to Sachs was enough to incense Bodmer, and so far as Sachs is concerned the Bodmer-Gottsched controversy resembles in sterility that between Wernigke and Humold. Unlike Gottsched Bodmer was almost certainly unacquainted with Sachs' works and lent his support to older distorted judgements by re-publishing Wernigke's Heldengedicht Hans Sachs. For Bodmer and the poets of the period like Günther, Hagedorn and later Gellert Hans Sachs stood for one thing only, the abominated metre which they derided as "Knittelvers".

As in the previous century, however, Hans Sachs' reputation was safer with the literary historians than with the practising poets and critics. In 1729 Georg Heinrich Götze

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(Continued from p. 365)

niemals gefehlt; aber nichtsdestoweniger haben wir nichts rechtes aufzuweisen, was unsrer Nation Ehre machen könnte. Wir haben wohl ganze Fuder Comödien, die in Hans Sachsens Geschmacke geschrieben und meistens aus der Bibel genommen sind. (Here he quotes from Die ungleichen Kinder Eve.) Man sieht aus diesen und anderen Proben wohl, daß der ehrliche Mann kein übles Geschicke zur Beobachtung der Charactere und zur Nachahmung der Natur gehabt. Allein die Regeln der Wahrscheinlichkeit sind ihm ganz unbekannt gewesen; sonst würde er keine Vermischung der Zeiten gemacht haben. (Critische Dichtkunst, Leipzig, 1742, p. 737.)

had shown in his Vermischte Anmerckungen von Gelehrten Schustern that he was capable of distinguishing between Hans Sachs and the rhymsters and jesters with whom his name was so often and so ignorantly coupled. In 1751 Götze stimulated the "Hamburgische Berichte" to call for a thorough documentary investigation by a Nuremberger of Hans Sachs biographical details. The call was heard by Karl Christian Hirsch, the bibliographer and church historian and an official at St. Lawrence' Church in Nuremberg from 1740-54, who in 1751 in the Hamburg "Briefwechsel der Gelehrten" published his Sendschreiben .... von dem Leben des Nürnbergischen Meistersängers, Hans Sachsens. Hirsch's concise and generally accurate biography was firmly based on a reading of Hans Sachs' works, on which he also offered some comments; the article ended with a few remarks on Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz?

In 1760 a collection of articles entitled Müßige Stunden in Stuttgardt, Tübingen und auf dem Lande contained a contribution on Hans Sachs by an unknown Swabian scholar. The author of this article put up a stout defence of Sachs. "Die schlechtesten Gedichte nennet man meistens Hanß Sachsens Verse. In diesem Urtheil liegt Unwissenheit, Ungerechtigkeit und Undank. Hanß Sachse war zu seiner Zeit einer der besten Dichter in Deutschland. Seine Ehre verdient gerettet zu werden."

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1. The preface to this publication merely states "Die Verfasser dieser Schriften sind Schwaben".

The way was gradually being prepared for the publication of a full-scale "Ehrenrettung" of Hans Sachs and this had in fact long been germinating in the mind and study of an Altenburg schoolmaster, E. Salomon Ranisch. The latter, when still a schoolboy had had his interest in Hans Sachs stirred by the singing of Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz? and had then and there decided to investigate its alleged author further. He was encouraged in this object at Leipzig by Gottsched and later by the learned societies of which he became a member, notably the "Deutsche Gesellschaft" in Altdorf. An Altdorf Professor, Georg Andreas Will, the editor of the Nürnbergisches Gelehrten-Lexicon,<sup>(1)</sup> in which he had championed Hans Sachs, gave Ranisch both moral and material support. The Historischkritische Lebensbeschreibung Hanns Sachsens ehemals berühmten Meistersängers zu Nürnberg appeared in 1765 at Altenburg, where Ranisch was now senior master. Ranisch's biography was a worthy product of over twenty years' devoted work and because of the wealth of source material which it contains, it is still of value to Hans Sachs scholars today. Ranisch describes not only Sachs' life but also his time and his attitude to the Reformation; he treats the works from several points of view, describes Sachs' services to Meistergesang, and lists the portraits of Sachs, his admirers and detractors. An Appendix contains

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1. Published Nuremberg and Altdorf, 1757.

Adam Puschmann's "Eulogium". Judged by modern standards Ranisch's critical comments on Sachs' works do not rank very high, but it must be remembered that new canons of literary judgement were only then being forged in Lessing's "Literaturbriefe".

Despite its undoubted merits it is doubtful whether Ranisch's biography made a very deep impression on his contemporaries. The controversy over Hans Sachs' metre which had raged in Gottsched's day continued and though much has since been written, the correspondence between the old traditional metre with its four accented syllables and an irregular number of unaccented syllables, Hans Sachs' metre and the so-called "Knittelvers" would still bear further examination. It is sufficient to say here that Gottsched had accepted Wernigke's identification of Hans Sachs' metre with Knittelvers, though it is to his credit that he advised his readers that if they wanted to write good Knittelvers they should look to Hans Sachs as their model. The view that in writing Knittelverse they were writing in the style of Hans Sachs was widespread among the poets in the early 1770's and both Goethe

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1. "Man pflegt zum Scherze auch Knittelverse zu machen, das ist, solche altfränkische, achtsylbige, gestümpelte Reime, als man vor Opitzens Zeiten gemacht hat. Die Schönheit dieser Verse besteht darinn, daß sie wohl nachgeahmet sind. Wer dergleichen machen will, der muß den Theuerdank, Hanns Sachsen, Froschmäuler und Reineke Fuchs fleißig lesen." (Critische Dichtkunst, Leipzig, 1742.)

and Wieland were under this impression. In the eighteenth  
 (1)  
 book of Dichtung und Wahrheit Goethe wrote:

"Hans Sachs, der wirklich meisterliche Dichter, lag uns am nächsten. Ein wahrer Talent, freilich nicht wie jene Ritter und Hofmänner, sondern ein schlichter Bürger, wie wir uns auch zu sein rühmten. Ein didaktischer Realismus sagte uns zu, und wir benutzten den leichten Rhythmus, den sich willig anbietenden Reim bei manchen Gelegenheiten. Es schien diese Art so bequem zur Poesie des Tages und deren bedurften wir jede Stunde."

Goethe's attention had been drawn to Knittelvers through reading Gottsched's Critische Dichtkunst and in his youthful poetry written in Leipzig he had generally followed Gottsched's suggestions and used Knittelvers only for humorous effect, for example, in his lampoon on Clodius' drama, Medon. At this time Goethe had probably no direct knowledge of Hans Sachs but (2) it is supposed that sometime around 1770 he came across the Kempten edition in the library at Darmstadt, for in the following years and especially in 1773 Goethe wrote a number of works more or less in Knittelvers. Amongst these were the Neueröffnetes moralisch-politisches Puppenspiel (with Prolog), Des Künstlers Erdewallen, Jahrmarktsfest zu Plundersweilern, Satyros, Künstlers Vergötterung, Hans Wursts Hochzeit, Der ewige Jude and, of course, the earliest parts of Faust. (3)

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1. Goethes Werke (Weimar, 1889), Vol. XXIX, p. 83.
  2. Goethes Werke (Weimar, 1889), Vol. XXVII, p. 139-142, and Vol. XXXVII, p. 58.
  3. Eichler, op. cit., p. 175.

(1)

In November, 1775, Goethe joined Wieland in Weimar and the day of Hans Sachs' rebirth was at hand. It would seem that, though Wieland had written Die Titomachie,  
 (2)  
oder das neue Heldenbuch in Knittelvers in 1775, it was only in 1776 that he got to know Hans Sachs at first hand. On April 15th, 1776, he wrote to his friend, the Zürich pastor, Johann Kaspar Lavater:

"Haben Sie schon gewußt, daß Hans Sachs wirklich und wahrhaftig ein Dichter von der ersten Größe ist? Ich weiß es erst seit sechs bis acht Wochen. Wir beugen uns alle vor seinem Genius, Göthe, Lenz (3) und ich. O die Teutschen, die stumpfen kalten, trügherzigen Teutschen! Die das erst vom Teutschen Merkur werden lernen müssen! Doch noch wollen wir sie nicht schimpfen; den meisten ist's mit Hans Sachsen wohl wie mir gegangen, - sie haben ihn nicht gekannt, nie gelesen, nie gesehen. Aber Wahrheit muß doch endlich einmal durchbrechen; in weniger als vier Monaten a dato soll keine Seele, die Gefühl und Sinn für Natur, und Empfänglichkeit für den Zauber des Dichtergeists hat, in Teutschland seyn, die Hans Sachsens Namen nicht mit Ehrfurcht und Liebe aussprechen soll." (4)

It is almost certain that Wieland made the acquaintance of Hans Sachs in the library of Friedrich Justin Bertuch (1747-1822), a native of Weimar and a great promoter of literary enterprises. Since 1770 it had been one of Bertuch's ambitions

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1. Hans Sachs' influence on Goethe has not yet been fully investigated. Edmund Goetze and Bernhard Suphan both delivered "Festreten" on the subject in 1894: E. Goetze - "Goethe und Hans Sachs", Berichte des freien deutschen Hochstifts (1895); B. Suphan - Hans Sachs, Humanitätszeit und Gegenwart (Weimar, 1895). See also G. Wahl: Hans Sachs und Goethe (Pr. Coblenz, 1892)
  2. Wielands Werke (Berlin, 1935), Vol. XII, p. 26.
  3. J.M.R. Lenz had arrived in Weimar on April 1st, 1776.
  4. In B. Suphan: Hans Sachs in Weimar (Weimar, 1894), p. 19. See also the letter of March 4th, 1776, in Wieland's Correspondence with Lavater, Schnorrs Archiv für Literaturgeschichte (Vol. IV, 1875).

to possess a complete set of Hans Sachs' works, and though he did not achieve his goal until later, he had by 1776 acquired a substantial collection of Sachsiana.

As Wieland's letter to Lavater shows, plans were in hand to tell the world about Sachs through the agency of Der Teutsche Merkur<sup>(1)</sup>, the review which Wieland had been editing and using as a vehicle for his own works since 1773. A glance at the contents of the 1776 volume of the Teutsche Merkur indicates that the general editorial plan for the year was to high-light the great names of the Renaissance and the Reformation periods. The series began with Ulrich von Hutten in the February issue, the commemorative article being accompanied by a picture of the great man; others who subsequently received similar treatment were Willibald Pirckheimer (June), Desiderius Erasmus (December) and Johannes Reuchlin (February, 1777). It is possible that Wieland originally intended that Hans Sachs should be celebrated in similar style, but, if so, his discovery of Sachs' works must have rendered such modest treatment no longer adequate. The February issue carried an editorial article on Sebastian Brant and Johann Geiler von Kaisersberg, in which Wieland appealed for the re-introduction

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1. See H. Wahl: Geschichte des Teutschen Merkurs (Berlin, 1914).

of sixteenth century words, which were no longer in current use, and he especially recommended that the works of Hans Sachs should be mined for this purpose. Sachs' portrait followed in March, preparing the way for the bumper Sachs edition in April, which contained three sections devoted to the poet: (a) Goethe's poem, Erklärung eines alten Holzschnittes, vorstellend Hans Sachsens poetische Sendung: (1)  
 (b) two of Hans Sachs' plays, Der liebe zanck and Sanct Peter mit dem gaiß; and (c) an article by Wieland himself, Zugabe einiger Lebensumstände Hans Sachsens. (2) for which the biographical details were clearly drawn from Renisch. Wieland echoed the last verse of Goethe's poem in a moving appeal to his readers:

"Auch seine Zeitgenossen waren gerecht gegen ihn; und ob Gott will, soll es künftig auch die bessere Nachwelt seyn. Denn es ist lang genug, daß Teutschland seinen Dichter und im andern alle unsern Meister verkannt haben! Seine alte, rohe, aber warme und kräftige Sprache, das ungefeilte seiner Verse und Reime, seine Holzschnittmäßige Dürerische Manier, und was ihm sonst aus seiner Zeit fehlerhaftes anklebte, soll uns nicht länger verhindern, den Geist, das Herz, die in allen seinen Werken leben und weben, zu fühlen, zu erkennen und zu heben."

Wieland ascribed the prevailing indifference to Hans Sachs to the scarcity of copies of his works and announced his plan for a new edition:

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1. Goethe did not finish his poem until April 27th, 1776. The April edition of the Teutsche Merkur did not appear until May!
  2. Suphan, Hans Sachs in Weimar. op. cit., pp. 22-28.

"Es wäre Schande für Deutschland, wenn diesem Mangel nicht abgeholfen würde; ich müßte mich sehr betrüben, wenn mein Vorsatz, eine neue Ausgabe der auserlesensten Stücke unsers Dichters, in einem oder zwei Octavbänden zu veranstalten, nicht den meisten unsrer Leser, und wahr-scheinlicher Weise aller Deutschen, die Gedrucktes lesen können, sehr willkommen seyn sollte."

The article ended with an appeal to libraries and scholars for information about Hans Sachs manuscripts.

Wieland's plans for the publication of selections from Hans Sachs came to nothing, but the idea was taken up again two years later by Bertuch in the Teutsche Merkur.<sup>(1)</sup> In his Frage an das Teutsche Publikum über die Erhaltung der poetischen Werke des alten deutschen Meister-Sängers Hans Sachsens.

Bertuch appealed for five hundred "Freunde ihres Vaterlandes und der Musen in ganz Deutschland", who were to subscribe to an issue of Sachs' works in eight large quarto volumes, complete with notes and a biography. The versified books of the Bible were to be omitted from the edition but some hitherto unpublished works were to be included. Bertuch followed up his Frage with the issue of a selection of Hans Sachs' works,<sup>(2)</sup> which was to whet the appetite of subscribers. He received many enquiries and offers of assistance and apart from C.F.

1. May, 1778.
2. Proben aus des alten deutschen Meistersängers Hans Sachsens Werken, zu Behuf einer neuen Ausgabe derselben (Weimar, 1778)

(1)

Nicolai's Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek the literary journals of the time generally applauded Bertuch's scheme. The ageing Bodmer was naturally outraged by the project - "Zu welcher Unverschämtheit steigen die Göthe, Wieland und Bertuch!" he wrote - and there were others, who whilst in general favouring the scheme doubted whether Bertuch was the most suitable editor; an enthusiastic champion of Hans Sachs, Christoph Gottlieb von Murr (1733-1811), a Nuremberg revenue officer and authority on Nuremberg antiquities and local history, (3) recommended that a Franconian, preferably a Nuremberger, should be asked to supply the interpretations of archaic words, a suggestion which was prompted by the many false explanations Bertuch himself had appended to the Proben. Others, including Lessing, offered the cautious advice that Bertuch would be wiser to aim only at a further selection of the works and not at a complete edition. Bertuch, however, was not interested in another selected edition and when the five hundred subscribers failed to come forward, the whole plan was allowed to lapse. This caused some regret, which

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1. In 1777 Nicolai had written Wyn feyner kleyner Almanach Vol schönerr echterr liblicherr Volckslieder (Beynreck an der Unstrutt, Verlegts die Schustergilde), a satirical attack on "folky" literature.
  2. See Goethe-Jahrbuch (Vol. V, 1884), p. 207.
  3. He was then engaged on writing and issuing his monumental Journal zur Kunstgeschichte und zur allgemeinen Litteratur (1775-1789)

was expressed, for example, in a letter from Lessing to Herder on January 10th, 1779. This letter is of interest as it reveals Lessing's acquaintance with Hans Sachs' prose dialogues:

"Ich wollte eben an ihn (Bertuch) schreiben und ihn bitten, wenn er doch so viele Alphabete Reime drucken ließ, noch einige Bogen Prosa von dem nämlichen Verfasser bedrucken zu lassen; wäre es auch nur, um zu sehen, wie Hans Sachsens Prosa gewesen. Denn daß Hans Sachsens prosaische Aufsätze auch ein ganz sonderbares Monument in der Reformationsgeschichte sind, wird nun keiner auf mein Wort glauben, der sie nicht gelesen hat."

Herder shared Lessing's wish to see the prose dialogues republished.

Bertuch's ambitious plan undoubtedly failed because the time was not yet ripe for its execution. At a moment when Germany was being treated to a feast of works by contemporary authors, the German reading public had little to induce it to turn for pleasure to an old-fashioned poet whose works already needed annotation to make them readily intelligible. At the same time the body of scholars and students interested in Sachs' works as an object of literary, historical and linguistic research was still too small to make a full-scale edition an economic proposition. The achievements of the Weimar coterie were, however, of immense importance; they stripped away much of the dress of ignorance and misunderstanding

1. Suphan, Hans Sachs in Weimer, op. cit., p. 35.
2. See Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität (Herders Werke, ed. Suphan, Berlin, 1877-1909, Vol. XVI, p. 228)

which had for so long besmirched his name; and with their support behind him Hans Sachs was from now on sure of an honoured place in German literature.

As might be expected the Romantics in regard to Hans Sachs followed where Goethe had led. In his Vorlesungen über schöne Literatur und Kunst August Wilhelm Schlegel said of Hans Sachs:

"Hans Sachs war so gänzlich vergessen und verkannt, daß weit schlechtere Poeten des 17ten Jahrhunderts sich nicht entblödeten, seinen Namen sprüchwörtlich für einen abgeschmackten Reimer zu gebrauchen. Goethe hat sein Andenken zuerst wieder geweckt, und ihm in seinem eignen Sinn ein Ehrengedächtniß gestellt, welches ihn so treu porträtirt, daß man sich eigentlich bloß darauf beziehen kann. Goethe hat auch durch seinen Vorgang der Hans-Sachsische Weise für immer eine Stelle in unserer Poesie gesichert; man kann sich ihrer mit großem Vortheil, besonders für das burlesk-allegorische Drama, oder auch für einzelne Parteen in ernsteren Dramen bedienen. Zwar ist auch hier die geistlose Nachtreterey nicht ausgeblieben, und Deutschland ist seitdem mit schlechten Hans-Sachsische seyn sollenden Versen überschwemmt worden, von Autoren, die keine Zeile vom Hans Sachs gelesen haben."

A.W.Schlegel's summing up of Hans Sachs' merits and demerits is still worth reading. He distinguished between Hans Sachs' Meistergesänge and his other works. He held that the mastersingers were not in the main stream of literary development and that it was a misinterpretation of literary history to regard the mastersingers as the typical representatives of the period following on that of the Minnesänger:

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1. In his Geschichte der romantischen Litteratur. See Deutsche Literatur-Denkmäler des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts (Heilbronn, 1884), Vol. XIX, p. 59ff.

"es war nur zufällig, daß einige Dichter ... jener Zunft mit angehörten". He dismissed the mastersongs as a fairly harmless amusement of the artisan class. Hans Sachs' poetry was "aus ganz anderen Quellen genährt". He missed a musical element in Hans Sachs' verse and he found his rhyming technique too monotonously mechanical, but he commended the universal applicability of Hans Sachs' caricatures of follies and vices and he regarded his allegories as amongst his best works. He had some good words to say about the Fastnachtspiele, which he found delightful despite their coarseness, and his review ended with the passage quoted above.

The public lecture was, of course, a favourite device of the Romantics for spreading their ideas. Adam Heinrich Müller (1779-1829) delivered his Vorlesungen über die  
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deutsche Wissenschaft und Literatur in Dresden in 1806 and 1807. Müller's approach to literature was vastly different from that of A.W.Schlegel. The anti-Liberal Müller was primarily a political economist and social historian, and to him literature was more than anything else a social phenomenon, a product and mirror of the environments which condition its birth. It is understandable, therefore, that he gave generous approval to Hans Sachs. In his tenth Lecture he remarked with perhaps more than a little exaggeration:

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1. Published Dresden, 1807.

"Mit dem großen Meistersänger Hans Sachs schließt sich die Reihe der germanischen Nationaldichter. Dieser vortreffliche Poet stellte, ohne seinen eigenthümlichen Standpunkt, die Sitte des deutschen Vaterlands, die geliebte Geburtsstadt Nürnberg, und sein Gewerbe je zu verläugnen, die ganze Sphäre des deutschen Lebens noch einmal mit kräftiger Strenge, Tüchtigkeit und Frömmigkeit dar."

And later in the same Lecture he had this to say:

"Bey Hans Sachs war ... die Weltgeschichte ein Vermittler zwischen ihm und den Mitbürgern und Zunftgenossen. Unbesorgt um die Gestalt der von ihm dargestellten Helden für sich, die die Historiker und Antiquarier unser Zeit absolut aus der Geschichte herauszuschneiden versuchten ....; unbesorgt um da, was alle jene Einzelnen für sich gewesen seyn mochten, versetzte er sie alle in den einzigen Staat, in die einzige Gemeinschaft, die er durch und durch kannte, in die freie Reichsstadt, unter deren Bürgermeister unbedenklich Junius Brutus aufgenommen wurde, neben deren kaiserlichen Oberhaupt alle Cäsarn der alten Welt Platz nehmen mußten."

And he concluded -

"Ich habe Hans Sachs und seine Werke besonders beachtet, um von neuem darzuthun, wie die politische oder die ökonomische und die poetische Existenz einander beständig bedingen, um zu zeigen, wie unziemlich die Gleichgültigkeit der Dichter und Freunde der Poesie gegen den gesellschaftlichen Zustand von Deutschland erscheinen muß. ... Ich erkläre, daß ich bey allen Anachronismen und Verletzungen des Costüms, die Vorwelt treuer dargestellt finde in Hans Sachs als in allen Universalhistorien der gelehrtesten Kritiker." (1)

Müller might well be regarded as the ancestor of Kuno Francke and his numerous progeny of social interpreters of literature who flourished in the earlier half of this century. (2)

Friedrich Schlegel generally shared his brother's

1. The quotations are from pages 163-167 of the Dresden edition of Müller's Lectures.
2. Kuno Francke: A History of German Literature as determined by Social Forces (London, 1901)

views on Hans Sachs and in this context he is perhaps best remembered for his once oft-quoted exaggeration, when he said he found Hans Sachs "erfinderischer als Chaucer,  
(1)  
reicher als Marot, poetischer als beide". The Romantics were ever ready to rank Hans Sachs along side the greatest men of other lands.

Johann Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853) also recalled Goethe's services to Hans Sachs, expressing himself in similar  
(2)  
vein to A.W.Schlegel.

"Goethes freier Sinn fühlte sich zuerst von diesem verschmähten Altvater angezogen, und in einem schönen Gedicht sprach er jugendlich begeistert das Lob des Nürnberger Bürgers aus. Sein Faust, der schon früher begonnen war, wurde in einer Sprache geschrieben, die der veredelte, tiefsinnigere Widerhall jenes alten vergessenen deutschen Tones war."

But though in this connection Goethe's influence on Tieck was subsequently enormous, it was actually through his friend, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder (1773-1798), that Tieck was first led to Hans Sachs, for it was Wackenroder who originally aroused Tieck's interest in the glories of medieval and sixteenth century German literature and art. In 1792 and 1793 Wackenroder had attended lectures on German literature given at the Pädagogium der Realschule in Berlin

1. Geschichte der alten und neuen Litteratur (Lectures delivered in Vienna in 1812) published Vienna, 1815 (Pt. II, p. 252-3)
2. Sämtliche Schriften (Berlin, 1828-46) Vol. XI, pp. lxii-lxiii.

by Erduin Julius Koch (1764-1834), a highly important figure in the background of German Romanticism. Koch's teaching of Wackenroder was to have widespread repercussions, for he inspired a love of the German Middle Ages, which Wackenroder communicated to Tieck, and which the latter directly and through his edition of the "Minnelieder" passed on to Novalis, the Schlegels, Savigny, Jacob Grimm, and the rest. Wackenroder's letters to Tieck from Berlin did not achieve his friend's immediate conversion; this came during the summer semester on 1793, which they both spent in Erlangen. In the autumn of the same year they visited Nuremberg together before going up to Göttingen for the winter semester, and it was probably in Göttingen that Wackenroder wrote his critical fragment on Hans Sachs. With great insight Wackenroder saw the main purpose of the poetry of Hans Sachs and his middle-class contemporaries as "Beförderung der Erkenntniß der christlichen Religion - und der Moralität", and he continued -

"Hans Sachs, der als Haupt der Dichtkunst verehrt ward, gibt diese Zwecke mehrmals deutlichen; und wir sehen auch aus seinen Werken hinlänglich, daß er sie beständig vor Augen hatte."

He praised Hans Sachs' Schwänke ("Meisterstücke in ihrer Art")

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1. See A. Gillies' introduction to Herzensergießungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders (Oxford, 1948), p. xvii-xx)
  2. Schilderung der dramatischen Arbeiten des Meistersängers Hans Sachs (Wackenroder's Werke und Briefe - Jena, 1910 - Vol. I, p. 323ff.

and some of his "allegorische Phantasien", but he rated his dramatic works very low, with the exception of some of the  
 (1)  
 Fastnachtspiele.

Tieck's interest in Hans Sachs showed itself in a variety of ways. He collected Sachs' works ("Hans Sachs und den Ayrer besitze ich selbst."<sup>(2)</sup>); and he edited a number  
 (3)  
 of Sachs texts; he praised the comic and the gentler elements in Sachs verse -

"Für seine Zeit in der komischen Darstellung (war er) vortrefflich und in dessen sanfteren Gedichten man Stellen findet, die man den besten der Minnesänger an die Seite setzen kann." (4)

and if at other times he was sharply critical of Sachs -

"Die Fastnachtspiele abgerechnet, können die Komödien und Tregödien des Hans Sachs kaum den dramatischen Werken zugezählt werden; sie sind geistliche oder weltliche Geschichten oder Novellen, in Dialog gesetzt, wie er sich ohne Anstrengung darbietet; die Darstellung ist ohne Kunst verbunden und eingeleitet, und nur selten zeigt sich die Spur eines Charakters." (5) -

he was well aware of how far Sachs surpassed his contemporaries in stature -

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1. "Weder in Ansehung des Plans, noch der poetischen Behandlung, weder als Dramas noch als Gedichte, von dem geringsten Verdienst, (einige Fastnachtspiele ausgenommen)" (p. 326)
  2. Letter to F.A. Hartmann, September 20th, 1816. (Letters of L. Tieck, 1792-1853 - New York, 1937)
  3. Deutsches Theater (Vienna, 1822), Vol. I, p. 63-245.
  4. Reprinted from Archiv der Zeit (1796-98) in Kritische Schriften (Leipzig, 1848), Vol. I, p. 93.
  5. From Preface to Altenglisches Theater (1811) in Kritische Schriften. op. cit., Vol. I, p. 224.

"Hans Sachs steht als der vorzüglichste und geistreichste Poet in dieser Versammlung, dessen Witz und komische Laune wirklich fröhlich, dessen Ansicht des Lebens auf eine große Art vernünftig, und dessen allegorische Gedichte oft sogar das Gepräge einer Ältern und viel poetischen Zeit tragen." (1)

But it was, above all, as a poet rather than as a literary historian or editor that Tieck contributed most to Hans Sachs studies. Of all the Romantics Tieck paid Sachs quantitatively the greatest compliment of imitation. It is, of course, in Tieck's satirical pieces and comedies that Sachs' influence is most clearly seen, for example, in Ein Prolog (1796), Prinz Zerbino (1796-98), Leben und Tod des kleinen Rothköppchens (1800) and, especially, Der neue Hercules am Scheidewege (1800), which was later renamed Der Autor, ein Fastnachtschwank.

None of the other Romantic poets showed Tieck's versatility in reproducing the Hans Sachs manner but with almost all of them he counted as a real poet and they did much to consolidate his position. One of the more successful imitators of Hans Sachs was Friedrich Wilhelm Josef von Schelling (1775-1854) with his Epikurisch Glaubensbekenntniß (2) Heinz Widerporstens (1799), in which he tilted at the sentimental effusions of Schlegel and Novalis. The younger Romantics shared their immediate predecessors' enthusiasm for

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1. From Die altdeutschen Minnelieder (1803) in Kritische Schriften, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 205.
  2. Cf. Hans Sachs' Haintz Widerporst (KG/V/321).

evoking the German past. Arnim and Brentano only gave Sachs a fleeting glance in Des Knaben Wunderhorn (1805-8) (which incidentally led Goethe in his review of this work to make some sharply critical remarks about the mastersingers) but Kleist and Eichendorff paid him more attention. Kleist wrote two poems in imitation of the style of Hans Sachs - Legende nach Hans Sachs and Der Welt Lauf. Eichendorff's characterisation of Hans Sachs and his works in his Geschichte der poetischen Literatur Deutschlands <sup>(1)</sup> was not published until 1857, the year of his death, and his remarks on the mastersingers had already been anticipated in 1818 by Jacob Grimm in his Über den altdeutschen Meistergesang, whilst as a literary history Eichendorff's work had long been preceded in this field by a work of real scholarship, Georg Gottfried Gervinus' Geschichte der deutschen Nationalliteratur (1835-42). Gervinus (1805-71) was Professor of history and literature at Göttingen and was one of the "Göttlinger Sieben" - seven distinguished professors, including Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, who were dismissed from their posts in 1837 for signing a protest against Ernst August's breach of the constitution. He was a fervent patriot and defender of constitutional liberty, and his literary history reflects some of the prejudices of its author; nevertheless, it was one of the major works on German literary

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1. Published Paderborn, 1857.

history produced in the nineteenth century and it was for long a principal reference book for those interested in German literature. Gervinus' services to the cause of Hans Sachs were epoch-making. Here he was at his best; here the prejudices which clouded his judgement of some of his contemporaries (notably Goethe) were firmly under control, and he succeeded in distinguishing clearly between Hans Sachs' historical position in the development of German literature and his intrinsic worth as a poet. He described Sachs as "den Mittelpunkt zwischen alter und neuer Kunst" and having fixed his position historically Gervinus then applied himself carefully to tracing Hans Sachs' own inner development. When Gervinus' account of Hans Sachs was finished, the picture of Sachs which emerged was so clear in outline and his position

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1. The following articles and works on Hans Sachs are based in varying degrees on Gervinus and/or the Schlegels, who are all better read in the original:

- J.L.Hoffmann: Hans Sachs, Sein Leben und Wirken (Nuremberg, 1847);
- O. Haupt: Leben und dichterische Wirksamkeit des Hans Sachs (Posen, 1868);
- K. Blind: "Hans Sachs als Streiter in Kirche und Staat", Die Gegenwart, 1872, 1873;
- G.G.Zerffi: "Hans Sachs as Poet and Reformer", Royal Society of Literature Transactions, 1878;
- L. Barbé: "Hans Sachs", Gentlemen's Magazine, 1882;
- M.W.MacCallum: "Hans Sachs and the Mastersong", Studies in Low German and High German Literatures (London, 1884);
- (Unknown): "Hans Sachs, the People's Goethe of the Sixteenth Century", Westminster Review, 1888.

in German literature so firmly defined that he was safe from such attacks as Eichendorff's and immune to Heine's witticisms. One only regrets that Gervinus' remark that Hans Sachs was "in einem gewissen Sinn ein Reformator in der Dichtung, wie Luther in der Religion und Hutten in der Politik" should have been so often quoted by Hans Sachs enthusiasts without the limiting introductory phrase!

Goethe did not completely forget Hans Sachs in his later days. Echoes of Hans Sachs can in fact be heard, or imagined, at intervals throughout Goethe's life and works. His early enthusiasm for Sachs had coincided with the writing of the earliest draft of Faust and in addition to the superficial linguistic resemblances, there is the remarkable similarity between Frau Marthe Schwartlein and Hans Sachs' peasant's wife in Der fahrent schueler ins paradeis. He was also perhaps reminded of his earlier poem, Hans Sachsens poetische Sendung when he wrote Auf Miedings Tod in 1782<sup>(1)</sup>.

Later in 1788, when he was in Italy, Goethe wrote to his publisher asking him to place these two poems at the end of the collected edition of his poems to represent his "Personalien und Perentationen". There are occasional echoes of

1. KG/XIV/72.

2. See J. Boyd: Notes to Goethe's Poems (Oxford, 1944), Vol. I.

Hans Sachs, too, in Goethe's later poems, for example, Die Legende vom Hufeisen and Die Doppel Parabel vom Landschulmeister (1) and K. J. Schroer (2) suggested that two scenes in Faust, Part Two, the conjuring up of Helen of Troy and the appearance of Mephistopheles at the Imperial Court, owe something to Hans Sachs. (3) Towards the end of his life, and four years before the oft-quoted lines from Dichtung und Wahrheit were written, Goethe again took up the cudgels on Hans Sachs' behalf, when he composed a prologue to the play Hans Sachs by Johann Ludwig Ferdinand Deinhardstein (1794-1859), the successful director of the Court Theatre at Vienna, where the play was first performed on October 4th, 1827. In its day the play enjoyed a wide popularity and was performed all over Germany, but it ~~xxx~~ holds little interest for Hans Sachs lovers: it is grossly inaccurate, (4) gives no real picture of Hans Sachs' times and is too full of trivial detail. But apart from its connection with Goethe, the play has some importance for two

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1. Werke, op. cit., Vol. XVI, p. 111 and 115.
  2. Faust (Heilbronn, 1851)
  3. Historia. Ein wunderbarlich gesicht keyser Maximiliani, löblicher gedechtnuß von einem nigromanten (KG/XX/483); and Historia. Die geschicht keyser Maximiliani löblicher gedechtnuß mit dem alchamisten (KG/XVI/422).
  4. Deinhardstein used the now rejected story that Hans Sachs was once in Maximilian's service and made much of the relationship. See KG/IV/154 and cf. Goetz in Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, Vol. xxx, p. 114

(1)

reasons: firstly, to students of Wagner's libretti, and secondly, because it is the first play (the first that need be taken at all seriously) <sup>(2)</sup> in which Hans Sachs appears as a dramatic character, and it was thus responsible for bringing Hans Sachs' name before the attentions of a wider public. In this latter respect Friedrich Furchau's prolix two-volume novel, Hans Sachs, <sup>(3)</sup> had been a failure.

Gervinus' history and Deinhardstein's play together signalled a turning point in the fortunes of Hans Sachs. Gervinus had settled the centuries long debate about whether Sachs' works were a German literary asset or not, and an immense field for research was now identified and awaiting further exploration. Deinhardstein's play paved the way for the further honouring of Sachs' name in the theatre and in other realms of art. Friedrich Wilhelm Gubitz' dramatic sketch, Hans Sachs oder Dürers Festabend, <sup>(4)</sup> was written for the Dürer tercentenary festival in 1828. The first comic opera about Hans Sachs was composed in about 1831 by Adalbert Gyrowitz (1763-1850) and an unknown librettist; it is entitled Hans Sachs. Im Vorgerückten Alter. Another better-known

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1. See below, p.389ff and see also Ernest Newman's scholarly work Wagner Nights (London, 1949), in which he gives an outline of Deinhardstein's plot and compares it with Wagner's Meistersinger von Nürnberg. See also K.F. Baberadt: Hans Sachs in Andenken der Nachwelt (Halle, 1906), pp. 8f.
  2. It was preceded by L. Halersch' one-act play, Hans Sachs.
  3. Published Leipzig, 1819 and 1820. (1826)
  4. Hans Sachs appeared as a subsidiary figure in a number of pieces written to mark the tercentenary of Dürer's death.

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 opera about Hans Sachs was Albert Lortzing's Hans Sachs; this was based on Deinherdstein's play with libretto by Philipp Reger and Philipp Düringer, and was first produced in 1840. Wilhelm Kaulbach (1805-74) gave Hans Sachs a prominent place in his fresco, Das Zeitalter der Reformation, which was composed for the entrance hall of the Berlin Museum. A painting of Hans Sachs by Gustav Spangenberg was placed in the Berlin National Gallery in 1871, and a statue of Sachs, by Konrad Krausser, was at last erected in his native Nuremberg in 1874 and his bust was placed in the Munich Ruhmeshalle about the same time.

Hans Sachs appeared several times in August Hagen's collection of Novellen entitled Norica (1854) and he is a subsidiary character in Otto Roquette's Hans Heidekuckuck (1855). The most important of the nineteenth century narrative works to be inspired by Hans Sachs, however, was E.T.A. Hoffmann's Meister Martin der Kufner und seine Gesellen (1819), for though Sachs does not appear in this Novelle in person, Hoffmann admirably re-captured the atmosphere of early sixteenth century Nuremberg; and the story had some influence on Richard Wagner and so played a part in the genesis of the greatest of all the artistic representations of Hans Sachs, Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, which was first performed in

in Munich, under Bülow, on June 21st, 1868.

Wagner's opera is far from being an unmixed blessing to those who have both a love of music and a concern for historical and literary accuracy. It is indeed fortunate that Wagner spent so long writing his poem for Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, for in this time, nearly twenty years, he moved a long way from his original intention of writing a musical burlesque. "Just then (1845) he wanted nothing more from the Market and the apprentices and the rest of the Nuremberg crew than material for kindly laughter. But as the years went on, the subject struck deeper and deeper roots into him." (1) He read up the subject in Grimm and Wagenseil, new elements entered into the plot, possibly derived from Hoffmann's Meister Martin and Signor Formica and Deinhardstein's plays, Hans Sachs and Salvator Rosa; the character of Sachs developed and took on greater seriousness and a gloomy philosophy spread over the central motive of the action. (2) But whatever Wagner's intention, (3) and though it may be true, as Professor Pickering has said, that his treatment of the mastersingers is fair enough and

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1. E. Newman: Wagner Nights, op. cit., p. 297.
  2. Just before the first performance Wagner wrote to King Ludwig II: "It is impossible that you should not have sensed under the opera's quaint superficialities of popular humour, the profound melancholy, the lament, the cry of distress of poetry in chains, and its re-incarnation, its new birth, its irresistible magic power, achieving mastery over the common and the base." (Quoted by E. Newman, op. cit., p. 297)
  3. Cassell's Encyclopaedia of Literature, Vol. I, p. 304 (London, 1953)

that he was merely wrong in according them such general, patrician and popular approval, the fact remains that Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg is first and foremost an opera which has remained one of the most popular in the repertoire. It seems academic in the extreme to divorce the play from the music, and label it "the greatest German comedy"; the play is never performed alone but always in conjunction with the fabulous music; and it is from the opera that the popular impressions of Hans Sachs and the mastersingers have been largely absorbed in the last hundred years. Wagner's intentions have been belied; actors, singer, producers and musical directors have conspired to play up the jolly atmosphere and the comic elements in the plot and music and play down the opera's serious side. Ernest Newman goes to some length to show that "the mastersingers were by no means the monsters of bourgeois stupidity, which spectators of Wagner's opera can too easily assume them to have been," and he warns opera-goers that they must not take it for granted that the mastersingers "were in real life the uncouth figures of fun he sees on the stage." Hans Sachs is admittedly not exactly an uncouth figure of fun, but the final impression left with most opera-goers is of a genial, sentimental old man, adored by the populace of Nuremberg. This picture has stuck, and is sadly incomplete, and not even accurate so far as it goes. Much of the trash written about Sachs at the time of his quatercentenary in 1894

was coloured in Bayreuth tints and though a valiant band of scholars strove hard in the last decade of the nineteenth century to redress the balance, the mood of those years has faded, and Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg has endured, and will endure.

Hans Sachs scholars in the nineteenth century were at first handicapped by the shortage of the basic tools of literary scholarship, accurate texts, and the fundamental work of locating, listing and collating manuscripts had still to be done. In this matter scholars owe a great debt to the first giant in this field, Karl Goedeke (1814-87), the Professor of History at Göttingen, who in his Grundriß zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung (which began to appear in 1859), in which he made the first serious attempt to list the manuscripts and the more important individual works. Emil Weller produced the first Hans Sachs bibliography in 1868. (1) Meanwhile, a steady flow of selected Hans Sachs texts had begun to appear and these formed the basis of a parallel stream of articles about Sachs in all manner of publications - newspapers, almanachs, school programmes, church magazines - few of which are now of any interest or importance, but even though the texts were often sadly inaccurate and the articles

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1. E. Weller: Der Volksdichter Hans Sachs und seine Dichtungen. Eine Bibliographie (Euremberg, 1868), with later supplement.
  2. These were carefully listed by E. Goetze in KG/XXVI.

whimsical and ill-informed, they helped to sustain a growing interest in Hans Sachs and paved the way for the great days at the end of the century. One major work of some interest to Hans Sachs scholars appeared in this period, Philip Wackernagel's mighty series of volumes on Das deutsche Kirchen-  
 (1)  
 lied.

The next great step was the decision of the "Literarische Verein in Stuttgart" in 1867 to sponsor the publication of the complete works of Hans Sachs. The first volume, edited by the President of the Verein, Adelbert von Keller of Tübingen, was issued in 1870, and it is a source of everlasting regret that Professor Keller had so unimaginative a conception of his task, that he felt it necessary only to reproduce the text of the Folio editions, together with such variations as appeared in these editions and the Kempten edition of 1612-1616. No attempt was made to correct these editions (which contained some notorious misprints) by reference to the manuscripts, whilst the chronological tables were incomplete and inaccurate and the indexes almost useless. For the issue of the thirteenth volume in 1880 Edmund Goetze joined Keller as joint editor and from 1885 (the fifteenth volume) until 1908, when the work was completed in twenty-six volumes, Goetze appears to have been the sole editor. He made valiant and scholarly efforts to salvage the publication. He

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1. Published Stuttgart, 1841 and Leipzig, 1870.

consulted the manuscripts and issued copious corrections to the earlier volumes; he included in Volumes 22-24 all the available works not contained in the Folio editions; he patiently listed in Volume 24 all Sachs' works which were issued separately in his lifetime together with a list of his publishers (here he drew heavily on Weller); he laboriously compiled a full list of Sachs' works in chronological order (Volume 25); and in the final volume he arranged a massive bibliography of Sachsiana and a list of first lines. If one regrets the clumsy nature of the arrangement of the final volume, the absence of an alphabetical list of titles and the mere handful of hints about the value of the works listed, one cannot but salute a stupendous achievement and marvel at Goetze's patient devotion to his task over half a life-time. Nevertheless, this is not an edition to put into the hands of the inexperienced without some words of caution.

Fortunately, at the time he began his collaboration with Keller, Goetze was already engaged on a complete edition of Hans Sachs' Fastnachtspiele based on a study of the original manuscripts; these were published in the series of Neudrucke deutscher Literaturwerke des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts<sup>(1)</sup> and he followed this (partly in collaboration with Carl Drescher) with a complete compilation of the Fables and

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1. Published Halle, 1880 ff.

(1)  
 Schwänke in the same series. These are first-class textual editions. Meanwhile, Karl Goedeke had published his selection of Hans Sachs' Geistliche und weltliche Lieder in 1870 in the series Deutsche Dichter des 16ten Jahrhunderts, which has a valuable introduction and which gave the lie to the old jibe that Hans Sachs' mastersongs were too bad to be printed. Goedeke's volume was followed by two others edited by Julius Tittmann in the same series, containing respectively selections of Sachs' Spruchgedichte and Dramatische Gedichte. Textually Tittmann's volumes leave much to be desired. In 1872 Franz Schnorr von Carolsfeld published a further selection of mastersongs, including some by Hans Sachs, drawn from the Dresden manuscripts, and in the years which immediately followed a host of single and selected works of Hans Sachs in the original and in modernised form appeared. Most of these selections could now be dismissed, except that through reprints some are still available.

The readier availability of Hans Sachs' works after 1870 encouraged scholars to get down to the serious

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1. Published Halle, 1893 ff.
  2. Published Leipzig, 1870.
  3. Published Leipzig, 1870, 1871.
  4. Zur Geschichte des deutschen Meistergesangs (Berlin, 1872)
  5. Notoriously Karl Kinzel's selection (Halle, 1889), which was reprinted in England during the last war (Oxford, 1944).

discussion of specific aspects of his works. The earliest of these was C.G.S. Marströms dissertation, Studien über Hans Sachs (1) It refers only to the works in the first Folio and is now of little value. Another early dissertation was Franz Schultheiß' Hans Sachs in seinem Verhältnis zur Reformation, (2) a very brief survey of this field and limited by lack of access to much material. The 1877 volume of Schnorr's Archiv für Litteraturgeschichte contained one of Karl Goedeke's last contributions to Hans Sachs material, "Die Büchersammlung des Hans Sachs", and also two of the first fruits of Edmund Goetze's researches, articles on the thirteenth Spruchbuch and on Albrecht Alcibiades. Meanwhile a start had been made on the detailed investigation of some of the linguistic aspects of Hans Sachs' works in M. Rachel's Reimbrechung und Dreireim im Drama des Hans Sachs und anderer gleichzeitiger Dramatiker (Freiburg, 1870) and C.M.G. Frommann's Versuch einer grammatischen Darstellung der Sprache des Hans Sachs. (3)

The tercentenary of Sachs' death in 1576 went by without much notice. It was too early yet for the scholars, and the popularisers had not yet woken up to the possibilities.

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1. Published Upsala, 1872.
2. Published Munich, 1879.
3. Published Nuremberg, 1879 (Part I, Lautlehre only)

The quatercentenary of Sachs' birth in 1494 was a different matter and Sachs was treated to the adulation worthy of a national saint or hero. (1) Julius Sahr, one of Sachs' liveliest advocates at this time, produced a lot of specious nonsense (2) to justify the fuss that was made of Sachs in 1894. "Unsere Zeit ähnet in vieler Hinsicht dem Zeitalter der Reformation. .... Haben nicht auch wir 1870 eine Wiedergeburt erlebt und seitdem einen Aufschwung des nationalen Lebens zu verzeichnen?" And so on. It is clear that Sachs became the focus for an outburst of patriotic enthusiasm, which reached all levels of the German people. Governments officially took note of the celebrations: the Bavarian government was officially represented at the Hans-Sachs-Feier in Nuremberg and in Weimar the official celebrations were put off until the return of the reigning prince and princess. Fine exhibitions of Sachsiiana were arranged in the public libraries in Weimar and Munich, and in the Katherinenkirche in Nuremberg, where the later mastersingers had held their functions. There was hardly a court or civic theatre in Germany, which did not devote at least one evening to Hans Sachs. Erw warheit mit dem bauru. Der farent schueler ins paradeis. Der krämerskorb. Das heiß eysen and the tragedy of Lisabetha were each performed in

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1. A bibliography of the occasion is included in KG/XXVI.
  2. Lyons Zeitschrift für den deutschen Unterricht, Vol. ix, 1895, p. 676.
  3. KG/XIV/99 and 72, KG/XVII/170, KG/IX/85 and KG/VIII/366.

several towns. A number of plays and Festspiele were specially written for the occasion. There were innumerable lectures, addresses and speeches in clubs and associations of all kinds. Articles appeared in every possible variety of newspaper and magazine from the Berlin Adels- und Salonblatt to the working class papers. The celebrations had (or were made to have) a special appeal to the working classes. Was not Hans Sachs a worthy representative of the "Handwerker- und Arbeiterstand"? Special editions were brought out of the Deutsche Schuhmacherzeitung, the Bäcker- und Konditorzeitung, the Deutsche Tischlerzeitung and the Allgemeine Handschuhmacherzeitung. The Social Democratic Party put out a Festschrift: Hans Sachs. Ein Erinnerungsblatt für das arbeitende Volk by Manfred Wittich. This was Hans Sachs seen through Socialist

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 1. Amongst these were:

Martin Greif (F.H.Frey): Hans Sachs. In five acts; originally written in 1866 but remodelled in 1894; largely pure fiction;

Otto Haupt: Hans Sachs (1890). In five acts with the Reformation as background; a gross libel on Hans Sachs, who is portrayed as being deserted by his wife and children and in love with another woman;

W. Reisinger: Hans Sachs im Schlaraffenland (1893). A crude comic ballet in one Act.

R. Genée. Two Festspiele entitled Hans Sachs designed for performance respectively in Berlin and Nuremberg.

There were many other Festspiele, some of which were based directly on Hans Sachs' works with linking dialogue, such as F. Lemmermeyer and R. Kralik: Hans Sachs-Abend, based on a number of Fastnachtspiele; others had 'original' plots, mostly dealing with Hans Sachs' alleged love affairs, e.g. Hans Sachsens Werbung by L.F.Meißner. More information about these ephemeral productions will be found in

K. Baberadt: H.S. im Andenken der Nachwelt (Halle, 1906)

2. Published Nuremberg, 1894.

eyes, Hans Sachs the leader of the proletariat (the sixteenth century artisans!) This was, of course, only a more extreme example of the rubbish about Hans Sachs with which the general public was regaled at this time.

Fortunately, the quatercentenary served also as a stimulus to Hans Sachs scholarship and many fine articles and studies were produced in the 1880's and 1890's. W. Sommer had continued the investigation into Hans Sachs linguistics with his Preisschrift, Die Metrik des Hans Sachs.<sup>(1)</sup> Some of Hans Sachs' sources were dealt with in three dissertations: Otto Günther, Plautus-Erneuerungen in der deutschen Litteratur des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts (Leipzig, 1886); F.W.Thon, Das Verhältnis des Hans Sachs zur antiken und humanistischen Komödie (Halle, 1889); and A.M.MacMechan, The relation of Hans Sachs to the Decameron as shown in an examination of the Shrovetide plays drawn from this source.<sup>(2)</sup> W. Kawerau's Hans Sachs und die Reformation (Halle, 1889) carried on the discussion of Hans Sachs' rôle in the Reformation, though the work is unashamedly biased and also restricted in scope, dealing only with Die wittenbergisch nachtigall and the prose dialogues. Kawerau's book was published under the auspices

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1. Published Halle, 1882. See also R. Bechstein's critical comments in Germania. Vol. XXVIII, 1883, p. 380ff.
  2. Published Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1889. It has not been possible to examine a copy of this work which is listed as "a dissertation". It does not appear to have been a doctoral thesis.

of the "Verein für Reformationsgeschichte" and two other Schriften of the Verein made more than passing reference to the Reformation aspects of Hans Sachs' work: Kawerau's Die Reformation und die Ehe" (Halle, 1892) and Hugo Holstein's Die Reformation im Spiegelbilde der dramatischen Litteratur des 16. Jahrhunderts (Halle, 1886). A Leipzig dissertation of 1889 - Studien zur Geschichte des Nürnberger Fastnachtspiels - by Leonhard Lier, is also of interest to Hans Sachs students. In 1893 Georges Duflou made a first attempt to collate Hans Sachs' moralisings, in a useful if restricted article in the Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie: "Hans Sachs als Moralist in den Fastnachtspielen."

As 1894 approached the pace of Hans Sachs research quickened. Four more theses dealing with Hans Sachs were issued between 1890 and 1894, but the major works of scholarship inspired by the quatercentenary were two academic Festschriften. In addition to sponsoring a popular, well-illustrated Festschrift by the city archivist, Ernst Mummenhof,

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1. Reprinted in the Mittheilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, 1889.
  2. Karl Drescher: Studien zu Hans Sachs (Berlin, 1890)  
J. G. Robertson: Zur Kritik Jakob Ayrers mit besonderer Rückauf sein Verhältnis zu Hans Sachs und den Englischen Komödianten (Leipzig, 1892)  
A. W. James: Die starken Präterita in den Werken von Hans Sachs (Munich, 1894)  
D. B. Shumway: Das ablautende Verbun bei Hans Sachs (Göttingen, 1894)

the city of Nuremberg commissioned a series of monographs on Hans Sachs and related topics by leading scholars, which was published under the general editorship of A.L. Stiefel with the title of Hans Sachs-Forschungen. The contributors to this Festschrift included Victor Michels (on the friendship of Hans Sachs with the Nuremberg patrician, Niclas Praun); A.L. Stiefel (on the sources of Hans Sachs fables, fairy tales and Schwänke); Edmund Goetz (on the Hans Sachs manuscripts); Karl Drescher (on Hans Sachs' Spruchbücher); Charles Schweitzer (on proverbs in Hans Sachs' works); and others who dealt with various aspects of Hans Sachs' sources and with Meistergeseng. Another, smaller Festschrift by scholars of high standing was sponsored in Weimar by the Zeitschrift für vergleichende Litteraturgeschichte with articles by Goetze, Karl Drescher, R. Bechstein, and Johannes Bolte. These were the principal Hans Sachs publications of the year, but a number of lesser works were inspired by the occasion. Bernard Suphan, the editor of Herder's works, compiled a collection of all the relevant references to Hans Sachs in the Goethe era, whilst the indefatigable Edmund Goetze somehow found time to compose and deliver on the second night of the Nuremberg celebrations a major address, which set out the known facts about Hans Sachs and cleared up some persistent errors. Another misconception was

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1. Published in Nuremberg, 1894.
  2. Hans Sachs in Weimar (Weimar, 1894)
  3. In 1890 Goetz had published a short clearly written book on Sachs, Hans Sachs (published Bamberg) which formed the basis of his 1894 address. In the same year he had written the article on Sachs in the A.D.B.

cleared up two years later by Alfred Bauch in a patiently compiled monograph on Hans Sachs' second wife, Barbara Harscherin,<sup>(1)</sup> who it turned out was not a young maiden of seventeen, as Goedeke had led everyone to suppose, but a sober matron and widow with six children!

It is a matter of regret that 1894 inspired no really exhaustive work on Hans Sachs. The Alsatian scholar, Charles Schweitzer, had published his Etude sur la vie et les oeuvres de Hans Sachs,<sup>(2)</sup> a model of the scholar's art, in 1889,<sup>(3)</sup> but apart from his article on Hans Sachs proverbs in the Nuremberg Festschrift, he appears to have published nothing else of note about Hans Sachs. One large volume about Hans Sachs did appear in 1894, Rudolf Genée's Hans Sachs und seine Zeit.<sup>(4)</sup> Genée devoted his life to popularising Hans Sachs; one of his contemporaries unkindly described him as Hans Sachs' "Wanderprediger". His very readable book was beautifully produced with copious illustrations. If had been of smaller dimensions it could have been dismissed as just another ephemeral popular work. But the book was decked out with such a parade of footnotes, appendices, bibliographical information

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1. Barbara Harscherin, Hans Sachsens zweite Frau (Nuremberg, 1896).
  2. Published Nancy, 1889.
  3. Since Schweitzer the following further studies of Hans Sachs' proverbs have been made: C.E.Handschin: Das Sprichwörter bei Hans Sachs (Wisconsin, 1904); H.Rosen: Die sprichwörtlichen Redensarten in den Werken von Hans Sachs (Diss. Bonn, 1922); E.Zahlten: Sprichwort und Redensart in den Fastnachtspielen des Hans Sachs (Diss. Hamburg, 1922)
  4. Published Leipzig, 1894.

and facsimile reproductions of manuscripts that it is clear that its author intended it to be taken as a work of scholarship. Unfortunately Genée could not restrain his dramatic fancy and apart from its rank inaccuracies the book is larded with anecdotes, doubtless the product of Genée's own imagination, and the reader is given no indication of where fact ends and fiction begins. Goetze described the work laconically as "à la Furchau"<sup>(1)</sup>, and indeed it is safest to regard the book as a work of historical fiction.

Little was added as a result of the centenary publications to our knowledge of the part played by Hans Sachs in the Lutheran Reformation. Only one article in this field appeared in 1894 and this, though useful, is more of interest because the views expressed in it were so at variance with those of Ludwig Keller, the editor of the journal in which it was published, the Monatshefte der Comenius-Gesellschaft.<sup>(2)</sup> Keller had strong prejudices against Luther and in favour of Johannes Staupitz and Johannes Denck<sup>(3)</sup> and his works on the two latter men should be read for their<sup>(4)</sup> imaginative, if distorted, picture of the events in Nuremberg in the 1520's, and Hans Sachs' alleged part in them.

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1. Referring to Furchau's historical novel (1819-20)
  2. A. Nicoladoni: Hans Sachs und die Reformation (Vol. III of the Monatshefte, 1894.)
  3. See above p. 105ff.
  4. Johann von Staupitz und die Anfänge der Reformation (Leipzig, 1888); and Ein Apostel der Wiedertäufer (Leipzig, 1882).

The flood of interest aroused in Hans Sachs by his quatercentenary subsided almost overnight after the celebrations of 1894. One cannot help feeling that Wagner must be given a lot, if not most of the credit for having sparked off the enthusiasm which culminated in 1894. Theodor Hampe in his article, "Die Hans Sachs-Feier in Nürnberg",<sup>(1)</sup> said bluntly that without Wagner's Meistersinger von Nürnberg there would have been no 1894 celebrations "wenigstens keine Feier in dieser Vollendung, von dieser Ausdehnung, unter dieser allgemeinen Teilnahme von Vornehm und Gering". And he added: "Bei aller Anerkennung und Achtung vor der Arbeit und den Verdiensten unserer Gelehrten um Hans Sachsens Popularisierung kann es doch kaum zweifelhaft sein: eigentlich volkstümlich und zugleich salonfähig hat ihn doch erst Wagner gemacht".

Edmund Goetze continued to plod on after the celebrations with producing the complete edition of Sachs' works, and the final bibliographical volume contained a particularly full section on the many articles on Hans Sachs' numerous sources which were perhaps the major by-product of the investigations into his works undertaken in connection with the centenary. Some, though very little, work has been

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1. Zeitschrift für den deutschen Unterricht (Vol. IX, 1895) p. 81-91.

done in this field since the publication of Goetze's  
 (1)  
 bibliography in 1908.

Ferdinand Eichler's excellent survey of the  
 literary fortunes of Hans Sachs down to the time of the  
 (2)  
 German Romantics appeared in 1904. The work is now unfortun-  
 ately difficult to obtain and deserves to be better known;  
 it has therefore been drawn on fully in the compilation of  
 the earlier part of this appendix. K.F. Baberadt's Preisschrift,  
 (3)  
Hans Sachs im Andenken der Nachwelt, despite its broad title,  
 is not really a supplement to Eichler's work; it deals  
 primarily with the Hans Sachs dramas of the nineteenth century, a  
 singularly sterile field of investigation, and in particular  
 with Wagner's Meistersinger von Nürnberg. It seems doubtful  
 whether Baberadt had even a superficial acquaintance with  
 Hans Sachs own works; he has no word of criticism for the  
 picture of Hans Sachs drawn by Wagner. Hanns Holzschuher's

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1. The more important works in Goetze are included in Bibliography (B). Subsequent works on the sources include:
    - A.L. Stiefel: "Neue Beiträge zur Quellenkunde Hans Sachsischer Fabeln und Schwänke", Studien zur vergleichenden Literaturgeschichte, 1908;
    - E. Geiger: Hans Sachs als Dichter in seinen Fabeln und Schwänken (Pr. Burgdorf, 1908);
    - M. Betz: Homer, Schaidenraißer, Hans Sachs (Diss. Munich, 1911)
    - J. Hartmann: Das Verhältnis von Hans Sachs zur sog. Steinhöwelschen Decamerone-Übersetzung (1912);
    - P. Hanford: "The medieval debate between wine and water", Publications of the Mod. Lang. Association (Vol. 28, 1913);
    - F. I. Wiener: Der Alkestis-stoff in der deutschen Literatur Diss. Breslau, 1921; and "Hans Sachs' Alcestis Drama and its sources", German Life and Letters, N.S. 6, 1952-3;
    - A. Zirn: Stoffe und Motive des Hans Sachs in seinen Fabeln und Schwänken (Diss. Würzburg, 1924).
  2. Op. cit.
  3. Op. cit.

(1)

Hanns Sachs in seiner Bedeutung für unsere Zeit, though inspired by a real love for Hans Sachs, is not a work of scholarship and repeats many of the old errors.

Hans Sachs' mastersongs received little attention

(2)

in the nineteenth century for the obvious reason that the raw material was not readily available. Goedeke included a few of the secular and religious mastersongs in the first volume of the Goedeke-Tittmann selections, but the number was inadequate as a basis for serious study, and though Goetze and Drescher included the mastersong fables and Schwänke in their complete edition of the fables and Schwänke, the religious mastersongs are still largely unpublished. The only serious investigation of the content of Sachs' religious mastersongs so far attempted was carried out by Joseph Beifus, whose article "Hans Sachs und die Reformation bis zum Tode Luthers" was published in the Mitteilungen des Vereins für

1. Published Berlin, 1906.
2. F. Schnorr von Carolsfeld's Zur Geschichte des deutschen Meistergesangs failed to stimulate research. F. Schultze's Hans Sachs und die Meistersänger in Nürnberg (Nuremberg, 1874), a Festgabe for the occasion of the unveiling of the Nuremberg monument to Hans Sachs, is popular and of little value. See also K. Drescher: Das Gedenkbüchlein des Hans Sachs (Halle, 1898) and T. Hempe's comments in Euphorion, Vol. VI, pp. 114-127. E. F. Clark dealt with the influence of H. Folz on Hans Sachs in an article in Modern Philology (1918). K. Drescher's "Hans Sachs als Meistersänger" in the Bayreuther Festspielbuch of 1925 is only of popular interest. The first large-scale study of Hans Sachs mastersongs only appeared in 1956, Eugen Geiger's Der Meistergesang des Hans Sachs (Berne). It contains a careful study of the form, language and content of the published mastersongs.

(1)

Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg. It is a work of major importance to Hans Sachs scholars, being based on a careful study of the mastersongs, many extracts from which are reproduced, and shedding new light on the character of Hans Sachs and his response to the times in which he lived. It is a great pity that a second article promised by Beifus does not appear to have been published.

(2)

Apart from Beifus' work the most exciting Hans Sachs event in this century has probably been the discovery and publication by F.H.Ellis of the original mastersong version of Die wittenbergisch nachtigall. The same author, in

(3)

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1. This admirable journal has been published at varying intervals since 1887 by the "Gesellschaft für fränkische Geschichte". Its volumes contain few major articles, like that of Beifus, dealing specifically with Hans Sachs, but there are numerous contributions of interest to students of Hans Sachs and the Reformation in Nuremberg; for example:
    - T.Hampe: "Lienhard Nunnenbeck", Vol. XI, 1895;
    - T.Hampe: "Volkslied und Krieglid im alten Nürnberg", Vol. XXIII, 1919;
    - A.Engelhardt (and later A.Kreiner): "Die Reformation in Nürnberg", Vols. XXXIII, XXXIV and XXXVI.
 It also contains some excellent critical reviews of the Hans Sachs literature of the period covered. An index dealing with the Volumes issued up to 1950 has been compiled by Hanns H. Hofmann (Würzburg, 1950)
  2. Beifus' only other article appears to be "Some Hans Sachs Discoveries", Modern Philology, 1906. Beifus, who was on the staff of the University of Chicago examined the mastersongs in the MSS in Nuremberg, Dresden, Weimar, Berlin, Erlangen and Munich, and noted the titles of 84 "lost" Meisterlieder with the numbers allotted by Goetze in KG/XXV.
  3. Hans Sachs Studies I (Bloomington, Indiana, 1941)

collaboration with Archer Taylor, had produced A Bibliography of Meistergesang <sup>(1)</sup> in 1936, which contains a useful section on Hans Sachs. Archer Taylor's own two stimulating works, The Literary History of Meistergesang (New York, 1937) and Problems in German Literary History of the 15th and 16th centuries (Oxford, 1939) have so far begotten few progeny.

Little has been added to the scanty biographical information about Hans Sachs since A. Bauch's Barbara Herscherin <sup>(2)</sup> in 1896. Two short articles by F. Hintner and A. Drayer <sup>(3)</sup> dealt respectively with Hans Sachs' sojourns in Wels and Munich, whilst F. Windolph traced more fully Hans Sachs' route during his Wanderjahre in his Reiseweg Hans Sachsens in seiner Handwerksburschenzeit nach seinen eigenen Dichtungen. <sup>(4)</sup>

Hans Sachs was the subject of a number of theses earlier in this century, most of which have proved elusive. Paul Kaufmann's Kritische Studien (Breslau, 1915) contains a miscellaneous collection of articles on the linguistic and literary aspects of Sachs' works, though none appears to be of any great interest. The titles of other theses are listed

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1. Indiana University Studies, Vol. XXIII, No. 113.
  2. Hans Sachs in Wels (Pr. Wels, 1903)
  3. "Hans Sachs in München", Analecta Germanica, 1906.
  4. Diss. Greifswald, 1911.

(1)  
below.

Due in large part to the lead given by Kuno Francke, the present century has seen the production of a large number of contributions to the social history of Germany based on a study of the contemporary literature. In this respect Hans Sachs, for all the wealth of material in his works, has again been poorly served. Walter French's Medieval Civilisation as illustrated by the Fastnachtspiele (2) of Hans Sachs makes interesting reading, whilst Jette Münch's Die sozialen Anschauungen des Hans Sachs in seinen Fastnacht- (3) spielen, which covers much the same ground is dull in the extreme. It is understandable, but regrettable, that both

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1. A. Glock: Die Bühne des Hans Sachs (Diss. Munich, 1903). On this subject see also A. Köster: "Die Bühne des Hans Sachs", Deutsche Vierteljahrschrift (1923) and K. Holl: "Die Meistersingerbühne und Hans Sachs", Zeitschrift für die deutsche Philologie (Vol. LI, 1926); and Engler below; E. Ricklinger: Studien zur Tierfabel von Hans Sachs (Diss. Munich, 1909); S. Wernicke: Die Prosedialoge des Hans Sachs (Diss. Berlin, 1913); E. Caspary: Prolog und Epilog in den Dramen des Hans Sachs (Diss. Greifswald, 1920); A. Hugle: Einflüsse der Palliata auf das latein. und deut. Drama im 16. Jahrhundert mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Hans Sachs (Diss. Heidelberg, 1921); K. Moninger: Der Begriff der Vaterlandsliebe bei Hans Sachs (Diss. Greifswald, 1921); H. Paetzold: Hans Sachs künstlerische Entwicklung vom Spruchbuch zur Folio (Diss. Breslau, 1921); H. Engler: Die Bühne des Hans Sachs (Diss. Breslau, 1926); C. Rolf: Der Teufel des Hans Sachs (Diss. Tübingen, 1926); F. K. Heinemann: Das Scheltwort bei Hans Sachs (Diss. Giessen, 1927); H. L. Wolf: Studien über die Natur bei Hans Sachs (Diss. Heidelberg, 1937)
  2. Herperia, No. 15 (Göttingen, 1925)
  3. Diss. Erlangen, 1936.

authors dealt only with such a restricted amount of the total volume of Hans Sachs material. Hans Sachs' Shrovetide plays have been the subject of a number of other studies. Duflou's article on the moral aspects of the Fastnachtspiele has already been referred to. Others include E. Edert: Dialog und Fastnachtspiel bei Hans Sachs (Diss. Kiel, 1903); E. Geiger: Hans Sachs als Dichter in seinen Fastnachtspielen (1904); and H. Cattenès: Les Fastnachtspiele de Hans Sachs (Northampton, U.S.A., 1924).

Though the investigation of the linguistic aspects of Hans Sachs' works has lain largely outside the scope of the present work, it is worth recording that Goetze's bibliography was incomplete in this respect. Some omissions have already been mentioned above; others, together with the relevant works and articles published in this field since 1907 are listed in the footnotes below and overleaf. The major comprehensive work on the language of Hans Sachs remains to be written.

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1. V. Flohr: Geschichte des Mittelverses (1893);
  - K. Helm: Zur Rhythmik der kurzen Reimpaare des 16. Jahrhunderts (Diss. Weidelsberg, 1895);
  - A. Köster: "Über Sprechverse des 16. Jahrhunderts", Sitzungsberichte der Sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaft zu Leipzig (Vol. LVII, 1905);
  - L. Bloomfield: "The i-sounds in the language of Hans Sachs", Modern Philology (Vol. IX, 1912);
  - W. Richter: "Die Grundlage des Hans Sachs-Verses", Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur (Vol. XLIII, 1918);

Since the "gold rush" days in the latter years of the nineteenth century, when the whole field of Hans Sachs studies was invaded by a legion of literary prospectors, amateur and professional, Hans Sachs has been rather sadly neglected. A few sizeable nuggets have been unearthed by the lone prospectors of the twentieth century, but there is now a need for a thorough re-survey of the whole field and a re-appraisal of the problems of future investigation. This may well have to wait for the next centenary of 1974 to spark off the necessary enthusiasm. The upheavals of the war years and the subsequent division of Germany - much of the basic Hans Sachs material lies in archives in the Eastern zone -

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 (Continued from p. 410)

1. L. Pfannmüller: "Zur Auffassung des Hans Sachs-Verses", Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur (Vol. XLIII, 1918);
  - E. Zählten: Sprichwort und Redensart in den Fastnachtspielen des Hans Sachs (Diss. Hamburg, 1921);
  - H. Rosen: Die sprichwörtlichen Redensarten in den Werken von Hans Sachs (Diss. Bonn, 1922);
  - A. Schirokauer: "Zur Metrik des Hans Sachs-Verses" (Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur Vol. L, 1925);
  - ? Rußland: Das Fremdwort bei Hans Sachs (Diss. Greifswald, 1933);
  - C. G. Johnson: Der Lautstand in der Folio-Ausgabe von Hans Sachs-Werken. I. Der Vokalismus (Diss. Upsala, 1941)
2. My colleague, J.R. Wilkie, is at present engaged on a study of Hans Sachs' language with particular reference to the prose writings.

have not made the task easier. Hans Sachs scholars are indebted to Dr. Mary Beare for her survey of the present whereabouts of the Hans Sachs manuscripts and we await her promised critical review of the available texts. There have been encouraging signs since 1946 of a re-awakening of interest in the Reformation period of German history, and it is to be hoped that some Germanisten will follow the lead of their historian colleagues and that Hans Sachs may be accorded the credit and recognition he deserves.

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1. Mary Beare: "Hans Sachs' MSS: An account of their discovery and present locations". Modern Language Review (Vol. LII, 1957).

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- Notes: (a) Works of fiction mentioned in the Appendix are not listed below.  
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ABBREVIATIONS

## ABBREVIATIONS

- FS - Sämtliche Fabeln und Schwänke von Hans Sachs edited by Edmund Goetze and later by Goetze in collaboration with K. Drescher, and published in the series of Neudrucke deutscher Literaturwerke des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts by Niemeyer, Halle, 1893-1913.
- GT - Dichtungen von Hans Sachs edited by Karl Goedeke (Vol. I) and Julius Tittmann (Vols. II and III) and published in the series, Deutsche Dichter des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts by Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1870-71.
- KG - The Works of Hans Sachs edited by Adelbert von Keller and Edmund Goetze and published in 26 Volumes by the Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart (Tübingen, 1870-1908)
- WA - The Works of Martin Luther in the Weimerer Gesamtausgabe (Weimar, 1883- )
- WKL - Das deutsche Kirchenlied von der Ältesten Zeit bis zu Anfang des 17ten Jahrhunderts edited in 5 Vols. by Ph. Wackernagel (Leipzig, 1864-1877).