

through the decades. After the services in the church, the members of the imperial, royal and princely families proceeded to the house in which Luther lived while at Wittenberg and inscribed their names on the visitor's album there.

#### THE OLD CHURCH RESTORED.

The celebration, says the *N. Y. Recorder*, marks the completion of the renovation of the old Schloss church, which has been restored at the cost of the Emperor, to its original form and features. In the celebration the Protestant churches of Prussia and Germany took part, and memorial services were preached from their thousands of pulpits. England was represented by Queen Victoria in the person of the Duke of York, heir presumptive to the throne of Great Britain. For both these countries, England and Germany, as well as for America, the anniversary is of noteworthy historical interest. It is well, just after the splendid pageants that have been held in honor of Christopher Columbus for discovering a new world, to call to remembrance the great deed of Martin Luther, who, though he did not discover a new world, upset the old one for Luther's reformation broke the power of an all absorbing and tyrannical church, that, supreme everywhere, had forgotten its splendid mission; it released the barriers that had stemmed advanced thought and intelligence and paved the way to the achievement of political liberty in almost every country that it touched.

#### THE MARCH OF THOUGHT.

The Protestant empires of Germany and England and the great Republic of the West owe their rise to leadership in the realms of literature, scientific discovery, of human progress and thought and liberty to that event which Germany and the Protestant world has celebrated at Wittenberg. Without Luther's great Reformation what? "Had there been no Luther," says Froude, "the English, American and German peoples would be thinking differently, would be acting differently, would be altogether different men and women from what they are at this moment." "Once more a true sense of nature and fact," exclaims Carlyle, "for which these centuries and many that are to come yet will be thankful to heaven." "He created the German language," says Heine; "he was not only the greatest, but the most German man of our history." "His image," says Krauth, "casts itself upon the current of ages as the mountain mirrors itself in the river that winds at its foot—the Mighty fixing itself immutably upon the Unchanging."

#### THE ANCIENT CHRONICLE.

Those who have read the charmingly interesting "Chronicles of the Schoenberg-Cotta Family" will remember that passage in the diary of the narrator, dated Wittenberg, Nov. 1, 1517—All Saints' Day:

"Yesterday evening, as I sat at the window with Gottfried in the late twilight, hushing Gretchen to sleep, we noticed Dr. Luther walking rapidly along the street toward the Castle church. His step was firm and quick, and he seemed too full of thought to observe anything as he passed. There was something unusual in his bearing, which made my husband call my attention to him. His head was erect and slightly thrown back, as when he

preaches. He had a large package of papers in his hands, and, although he was evidently absorbed with some purpose, he had more the air of a general moving to a battlefield than of a theologian buried in meditation. This morning, as we went to the early mass of the festival, we saw a great crowd around the doors of the Castle church, not a mob, however, but an eager throng of well-dressed men, professors, citizens and students, those within the circle reading some writing which was posted on the door, whilst around, the crowd was broken into little knots, in eager, but not loud, debate. Gottfried asked what had happened. 'It is only some Latin theses against the indulgences,' by Dr. Luther," replied one of the students, 'inviting a disputation on the subject.'

And on Nov. 20 is the entry in the diary:

"It is wonderful the stir that these theses make. Christopher cannot get them printed fast enough. Both the Latin and German printing presses are engaged, for they have been translated, and demands come for them from every part of Germany. Dr. Tetzel, they say, is curious, and many of the prelates are uneasy as to the result; the new Bishop has dissuaded Dr. Luther from publishing an explanation of them. It is reported that the Elector Frederick is not quite pleased, fearing the effect on the new university, still in its infancy. Students, however, are crowding to the town and to Dr. Luther's lectures more than ever. He is the hero of the youth of Germany." Again in February, 1518, the diary goes on: "Christopher returned yesterday evening from the market place, where the students have been burning Tetzel's theses, which he wrote in answer to Dr. Luther. The students kindled this conflagration in the market place entirely on their own responsibility. They are full of enthusiasm for Dr. Luther, and of indignation against Tetzel and the Dominicans."

#### THE GREAT SCHISM.

This was the beginning of the struggle which led to the great division in the Christian world. It was occasioned by the building of that magnificent edifice of ecclesiastical splendor—St. Peter's Church in Rome. Indulgences were to furnish the necessary means. The sale of these had been intrusted for a great part of Germany to Albert, Archbishop of Mayence and Magdeburg, and he, crippled for want of money, secured a loan from the wealthy Fuggers of Augsburg, and gave as security part of the profits arising from the sale. As Julius Koestlin says, in his "Life of Luther," "Behind the preacher of indulgences Tetzel, who announced God's mercy to the paying believers, stood the agents of that commercial house, who collected their share for their principals." Tetzel's advent, however, only marks the point where the revolution against Rome, the revolt against the abuses that had grown up within the Church, was pushed from the quiescent to the active stage. As Bishop Hurst remarks in his "Short History of the Reformation:" "The sale of indulgences aroused Luther's nature to a high pitch of excitement. He was now ready for his mission. He went over the whole case against Rome, as he saw it, and arraigned the Church in a bill of charges, which he called his 'Ninety-five

Theses.' They were directed principally against the sale of indulgences but they included the whole burden of Luther's soul. He insisted that the Church taught the truth, but that there were excrescences which must be removed."

The life of Luther takes us back more than 400 years. Nine years before Christopher Columbus set sail from Palos to discover a new ocean route to Cathay, Martin Luther was born at the little village of Eisleben, the son of a peasant who had been a slate cutter in Mohra, and then a miner in Eisleben. In 1498 he was sent to a school at Eisenach, just below the Wartburg. In 1501 he attended the university at Erfurt. In 1505 he entered the Augustinian cloister at that place; in 1506 he became a monk; in 1507 he was ordained a priest, and in 1508 he was appointed professor of philosophy and later of theology at the University of Wittenberg, then a small town of only 3,000 inhabitants. It was in Wittenberg that Luther did most of his greatest work, and the little town is crowded with historic places connected with his life.

From Wittenberg he made his first visit to Rome, from which he returned full of bitterness of spirit against the abuses in the Church that reigned unchecked. It was there that he lectured and drew thousands of students from every part of Germany to listen to him. It was there that he published his Thesis, nailing them to the door of the Schloss Church. It was there that during the next three years, while engaged in disputes with Cajetan and Eck, he wrote and brought out several of his most important works, among them his "Commentary on the Galatians," his "Address to the Christian Nobles of Germany" and his "Sermon on the Liberty of a Christian Man." It was there, in 1520, came his open breach with the Pope, when he burned the Papal bull of excommunication which began:

"Arise, O Lord, and judge thy cause! Remember the reproach which the foolish cast against Thee all day long. St. Peter, St. Paul, the congregation of saints and the whole Church are called upon to arise. The foxes would lay waste the vineyard of the Lord; a wild boar has entered therein; a savage beast would pasture there."

Then Luther was condemned as a heretic; his writings were to be burnt, and every one was "commanded to seize Martin Luther and deliver him to the Pope at Rome."

Eck was sent to deliver the bull, but he was received with great hostility. In Leipsic he had to take refuge in St. Paul's Church, and the students sang satirical songs for his benefit. In Erfurt the students attacked him, seized the printed copies of the bull and threw them into the river Gera. In Wittenberg Luther himself "took the bull by the horns," and on Nov. 10, 1525, he publicly announced that the bull of excommunication and the Papal books of canonical law would be burned on the following morning at 9 o'clock.

At the appointed time students, masters and doctors were assembled at the designated place at the Elster Gate, near the Augustinian Monastery. An advanced student prepared the place, piled on the faggots and applied the fire. Then Luther cast the Roman decretals, together with the Papal bull, into the flames, exclaiming: "Because