

WHAT THE WORLD OWES LUTHER

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649742363

What the world owes Luther by Junius B. Remensnyder

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JUNIUS B. REMENSNYDER

**WHAT THE WORLD
OWES LUTHER**

What the World Owes Luther

By

JUNIUS B. REMENSNYDER, D.D., LL.D.



NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1917, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

Printed in the United States of America

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.
Toronto: 25 Richmond Street, W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

Contents

I.	LUTHER'S EARLY YEARS	7
II.	LUTHER THE MAN	12
III.	LUTHER BEGINS THE REFORMATION .	19
IV.	LUTHER'S UNIQUE PERSONALITY . .	30
V.	AUTHOR OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY	40
VI.	THE MYSTICISM OF LUTHER	44
VII.	LUTHER AND THE FINE ARTS	51
VIII.	LUTHER AND WAR	55
IX.	LUTHER AND THE HOME	59
X.	LUTHER'S FAULTS	62
XI.	WHAT THE WORLD OWES LUTHER . .	73
XII.	AMERICA'S DEBT TO LUTHER	87
XIII.	THE HERO OF UNIVERSAL PROTESTANT- ISM	91
XIV.	LUTHER'S GROWING FAME	93

“ Great men are the five-pillars in this dark pilgrimage of mankind ; they stand as heavenly signs, everlasting witnesses of what has been, prophetic tokens of what may still be, the revealed embodied possibilities of human nature.”

—THOMAS CARLYLE.

I

LUTHER'S EARLY YEARS

ON the night of the tenth of November, 1483, more than four centuries ago, in the quaint little German town of Eisleben, Luther, the monk who shook the world, was born.

A century before, the martyr Hus prophesied that from his ashes in a hundred years another swan—the meaning of Hus in the Bohemian tongue—would arise who could not be destroyed. As Luther's family coat of arms was a swan, many historians have seen in his birth a fulfillment of the dying martyr's prophecy.

Whether such strange coincidences are mere accidents, or whether they are links in that chain of mystic agency which circumvents the realities of life, one can never know. But certainly the gaze of the supernatural world could not have been closed to what then and there transpired. Says Thomas Carlyle: "In the world that day, there was not a more entirely unimportant looking pair of people than this miner and his wife. And yet what were all emperors, popes and potentates in comparison? There was born here once more a mighty man, whose light was to flame as the beacon over long centuries and epochs of the world.

History was waiting for this man. It is strange. It is great. It leads us back to another birth hour, in a still meaner environment, 1,900 years ago, of which it is fit that we say nothing; that we think only in silence—for what words are there! The age of miracles past! The age of miracles is forever here.”

The talents early evinced by Luther made his father—a man of strong character,—and his mother,—a woman beloved for her rare feminine graces—resolve to give him a thorough education. So, in his fifteenth year they sent him to the flourishing school at Eisenach. Here, he was so pressed by poverty that he had to beg his bread. A wealthy lady, Ursula Cotta, who had often been struck by the rare sweetness of Luther’s voice in the church choir, one Christmas Eve when he was singing a carol at her door for bread, called him in and made him an inmate of her family. Here he enjoyed all the refining influences of a cultured home. Luther never forgot this kindness. Years after, at the height of his fame, similarly receiving her son into his household, and making the significant remark when he recurred to the incident: “There is nothing sweeter than the heart of a pious woman.”

LUTHER AT THE UNIVERSITY

Thence, Luther went to the University of Erfurth, the most renowned in Germany. Here, while one day in the library, he found a copy of the Bible—a book he had never seen, only hearing

the Scripture lessons read by the priests. A striking commentary on the state of Christendom at that time, when a highly educated student had not seen that holy volume which now even the simple and wayfaring have in their hands! Luther eagerly opens the Bible, and, as he reads, a new light dawns in his eyes, and a new thrill wakes his inner life!

Says the historian D'Aubigne of Luther as a student: "His powerful intellect, the glow of his imagination, and his remarkable memory, soon gave him the start of all his fellow students. He was especially gifted in the dead languages, in rhetoric and in poetry: cheerful, obliging, sociable and good-hearted, he was beloved by his teachers and companions." Wrote Melancthon: "The whole university admired his genius."

But just when, with great pomp and a splendid procession, he had been created master of arts and doctor of philosophy and the most brilliant future invited him, he one night summoned his friends to a repast. Music, pleasure and gayety ruled the hour, but at their very height, Luther stepped into the midst of the company and announced his resolve to become a monk. And, having bidden this public farewell to the world, that very night he hastened to a cloister, and as its doors closed upon him, the world with its prizes was renounced forever. Luther's companions were stupefied. His father, whose hopes were dashed to the ground, disowned him, but all protest failed to move him.