

**STUDIES IN HISTORY,
ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC LAW,
VOL. XXVI,
NO. 2. LUTHER'S TABLE TALK,
A CRITICAL STUDY; PP.135-261**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649742912

Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, Vol. XXVI, No. 2. Luther's Table talk, a critical study; pp.135-261 by Preserved Smith

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

PRESERVED SMITH

**STUDIES IN HISTORY,
ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC LAW,
VOL. XXVI,
NO. 2. LUTHER'S TABLE TALK,
A CRITICAL STUDY; PP.135-261**

IG
1973t
·Ys

STUDIES IN HISTORY, ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC LAW

EDITED BY THE FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE OF
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Volume XXVI]

[Number 2

LUTHER'S TABLE TALK

A CRITICAL STUDY

BY

PRESERVED SMITH, Ph.D.

Sometime Schiff Fellow



25064
10/12


New York

THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY, AGENTS

LONDON: P. S. KING & SON

1907



COPYRIGHT, 1907
BY
PRESERVED SMITH

PREFACE

THE following study aims to give a picture of the environment in which Luther and his guests conversed and of the men who noted down the sayings of the master. Each of these reporters was a source from whom others copied until practically all the sayings were united, after several stages of transcription, into great collections by various editors. We might compare the process of accumulation to that by which many springs pour their waters into the same great river, the original notebooks corresponding to the springs, the first copies to tributary streams, and the final editions to large rivers. From an account of this process, as little technical as possible, we naturally come to an appreciation of the literary and historical value of the Table Talk, treating it in a manner which is illustrative as well as critical.

Among many friends and scholars who have helped me with criticism and suggestion, I must thank especially those to whose constant interest I owe the most—Professor J. H. Robinson, Professor J. T. Shotwell, both of Columbia University, and my father, the Rev. H. P. Smith, D. D.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	5
I. LUTHER AND HIS GUESTS	9
II. THE EARLIER REPORTERS OF THE TABLE TALK	15
III. THE YOUNGER GROUP	29
IV. THE SOURCES	38
V. THE COLLECTIONS	51
VI. THE PRINTED EDITIONS OF THE TABLE TALK	63
VII. THE TRANSLATIONS	76
VIII. THE TABLE TALK IN LITERATURE	85
IX. THE TABLE TALK IN HISTORY.	99
APPENDIX. THE LITERATURE	111

CHAPTER I

LUTHER AND HIS GUESTS

IN the old town of Wittenberg the traveler may still see Luther's house looking much as it did three hundred and eighty years ago when he moved into it after his marriage. The veneration of posterity has restored it to the style of Luther's time and filled it with memorials of its famous occupant; pictures of Martin and Käthe on the walls; the old *cathedra* in the *aula* or lecture room; the bench on which Luther often used to sit with his wife, looking out on the neat garden in front.

The house had once been the Augustinian Monastery, and as such Luther's home for several years while he was a member of the order; but the progress of the reformed teaching had left it without occupants for some time before it became the dwelling of the ex-monk and his wife with their numerous dependents and guests. Here the reformer spent the happiest and most peaceful part of his career. The storm and stress of the previous years had given place to a period of comparative calm which was to last the rest of his life. The awful struggle in his own soul, the fierce revolt against the abuse of indulgences, the brave stand at Augsburg, the heroism of Worms, the imprisonment in the Wartburg and the perturbations of the Peasants' Revolt, all had passed. When Luther and his bride took possession of their home in June, 1525, they had before them twenty busy, useful years, years of comparative quiet and domestic happiness.

One cannot say years of domestic privacy. The Luthers kept open house and entertained not only their poor relatives such as old "Muhme Lehne" and their nieces, but many students as well, to say nothing of the distinguished strangers who visited Wittenberg. The table was always full. At the head the large form and strong face of the master would be conspicuous. He was a man of many moods, and his strong personality forced them on his guests, who took their cue from him, maintaining silence or talking seriously or jocosely as he set the example. At times he was lost in thought over some weighty problem of theology, or the vexatious attacks of the "Papists" or "Ranters," and again he was "happy in mind, joking with his friends." Near him we see the staid and dignified Schiefer, or the mournful Schlaginhaufen, intent upon his sins, or the irascible countenance of Cordatus. A strongly built woman, comely¹ in spite of her snub nose, serves the meal with the assistance of her female relatives, frequently participating in the conversation, occasionally the butt of an innocent joke from her husband, and sometimes quarrelling with the students who kept Luther from his dinner with their interminable questions. Let us hear from one of those present what a meal was like at Luther's table:²

As our Doctor often took weighty and deep thoughts with him to table, sometimes during the whole meal he would maintain the silence of the cloister, so that no word was spoken; nevertheless at suitable times he let himself be very merry, so that we were accustomed to call his sayings the con-

¹ Luther once thought her "wunderhübsch." Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, i. 764.

² Mathesius, *Luther Histories*, xii, 133a, quoted by Kroker, *Luthers Tischreden in der Mathesischen Sammlung*, Einleitung, p. 11. Cf. Köstlin, ii, 488, Anm. 1.