

thus get rid of the evil tendency.

Now in order to see the truth on this important subject it is only necessary to briefly examine the office of conscience. Let it then be fully understood in the beginning that conscience is a creature of education. What it approves one day, it may disapprove the next. And again, let it be noted that it can only act in connection with the other faculties of the mental and moral man. For example if, the judgment be destroyed the conscience will cease to act. The decision of the judgment is necessary to the exercise of the conscience. Hence, no judgment, no conscience. So the conscience must not only act with the judgment, but the decision of the judgment must always go *before* the proper exercise of the conscience. In other words, the conscience can only act on the decision of the judgment. This will greatly aid us to understand the true office of conscience. Its office then is not to judge between matter of right and wrong, approving on the one hand and disapproving on the other, but it is simply to follow after and carry into effect the decisions of the judgment whether right or wrong. Hence, if the decision of the judgment is correct, the conscience will be right; but if the judgment be wrong, then the conscience also will be wrong. To illustrate: the office of the conscience and the judgment may be compared to that of the judge and the sheriff in our civil courts. It is not the province of the sheriff to decide in matters that came before the court. If the judge orders the prisoner confined in chains in harmony with the decision of the jury, it is the duty and office of the sheriff to obey orders. Hence he asks no questions. But if at any time afterwards the decision of the court should be reversed and the prisoner ordered to be released, it is still the duty of the sheriff to obey. In other words, the sheriff in every case is simply to follow the decision of the judge. Now in a similar way does conscience act. Every matter of right and wrong is first submitted to the judgment for approval or disapproval. If the judgment decides that a certain course is right, then the conscience prompts him to carry into execution that decision; and if he does not do so, his conscience will sting and lash him. On the other hand, if the judgment decides a thing to

be wrong, then the conscience acquiesces in that decision; so that the conscience, instead of being a rule of action, is simply an executive faculty.

Now with these facts before us let us for a moment look at the history of Saul of Tarsus. Before his conversion, Saul was a bitter enemy and a fierce prosecutor of the churches of Christ. Yet, some time after his conversion he declared that he had lived in all good conscience before God until that day. But how could he have a clear conscience while engaged persecuting God's people? Why, easy enough. Saul was not only a Jew, but a Pharisee, and like most of his class, had not been taught the way of the Lord. He believed that the religion of the Jews was the religion of all time. Hence he regarded the Christ as an imposter, and his religion as an enemy of God. While his judgment thus decided, his conscience approved it, and was hence a clear conscience. But in his conversion he was fully convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the decision of his judgment was completely reversed, and the being whom he had regarded as an imposter, now became his Savior. The conscience, following the decision of his judgment, was also reversed and hence prompts him to preach the Christ he once denounced, and to build up the religion he had been destroying. So we conclude that the conscience will not do for a standard of rectitude. But the will of God alone must be that standard, and man's judgment must decide what constitutes that will.

Marin Luther the Student.

BY REV. R. WEISER, D.D.

In 1501, Luther, then in his 18th year was sent to the University at Erfurt, at the time one of the most famous institutions of learning in Germany. The financial condition of his father had improved so that John Luther was now able to support his son at the University. Luther was well prepared to enter upon the study of the higher branches. He had laid a good foundation at Mansfield and Eisenach. He had paid much attention to Latin, read Virgil, Cicero, and Livy, but his favorite Latin author seems to have been Plautus. Up to this time he had not studied Greek or Hebrew; these languages he studied afterward, and studied them thoroughly. Dr. Trautvetter was

the leading professor at Erfurt. This man led Luther into the intricacies of scholastic philosophy, as the science of moral philosophy was then called. In connection with the lectures of Trautvetter, he read the works of Occam, Bonaventura, Dun Scotus, Thomas Aquinas, and other celebrated schoolmen. These men were all the servile followers of Aristotle, whose absurd system of logic had governed the whole intellectual and theological worlds for two thousand years. Everything had to be taught in conformity with this false system. Luther had to study this absurd system of logic in order to see its fallacy, and to demolish it. He commenced the undermining of it, which was more successfully prosecuted by Peter Ramus, of Paris, and at last altogether overthrown by Sir Francis Bacon. If Luther had never done anything more than to destroy the influence of Aristotle over the human mind, he would be entitled to the everlasting gratitude of the literary world! Luther was a great reader; he read everything that came in his way, and seems to have remembered nearly all he read. This is evident from all his writings, but more especially from his protracted debate at Leipsie with John Eck. One of the rules of that debate was that no books should be used on the rostrum. On that occasion Luther quoted the fathers, the Decretals, and the Clementines by the hour. It was during the second year of his residence at Erfurt, that an event occurred that changed the destinies of this young man. It was the finding of the Bible. It occurred in this wise. One day, in looking over the library, he saw a large volume bound in parchment, with large red letters on the back, "Biblia Sacra," Holy Bible. It was in Latin. He was struck with the title "Biblia Sacra," he wondered what kind of a book it was, he had never seen nor heard of such a book before. So he opened it to see what it was. And in opening it he happened to open it at the Book of 1st Samuel, 1st chapter. Did it happen by chance, or did God in his Providence open it? The first thing that attracted his attention was the beautiful and touching story of Hannah and her son Samuel. He read this touching narrative with deep interest, and it made such an impression on his mind, that he could think of nothing else. Henceforth he devoted all his spare time to the read-

ing of this book. The Reformation lay hid in that old neglected Bible.

The Romanists pretend to ridicule the whole story of Luther's finding the Bible. Dr. Spaulding, in his review of D'Aubigne, says "D'Aubigne professes to borrow all this fine history from Mathesius. It is a story absurd enough, in all conscience, and too clumsily contrived even for a well digested romance. What? Are we to believe that Luther, at the age of twenty, did not know there was a Bible, until he chanced to discover one in the library at Erfurt? The thing is utterly incredible." Not at all incredible to Protestants. If this story is not true, no fact in the history of the reformation can be established. To corroborate it, Carolstadt declares that he had been made a doctor of divinity before he had ever seen a Bible! And Mathesius says he never heard the Ten Commandments, the Creed, or the Lord's prayer read in a Roman Catholic Church, and he was twenty five years old when he left the Papal Church. This is pretty strong presumptive evidence in favor of Luther's ignorance of the Bible. The fact is Romanism always chains the Bible or locks it up in a dead language.

But to proceed with Luther's discovery of the Bible. He opened it at 1 Samuel, and read the first, second and third chapters. Hannah, her son Samuel, his birth and dedication to God—what a wonderful narrative, how grand, and yet how simple! He had read many thrilling legends of the saints, and many beautiful pictures drawn by the classical poets, but such a touching scene he had never read before. Cicero, Livy, Virgil, and even his beloved Plautus, are thrown aside for the Bible.

The Bible fell into Luther's hands at a most favorable juncture. He was near the close of his classical course, and as his father had intended, he had commenced the study of law. But the reading of the Bible changed his views on that subject.

Towards the close of his second year in the university, he had a severe spell of sickness, brought on by too close an application to his studies, and on his convalescence he returned to his home at Mansfeld to recruit his health. How long he remained in his father's house we do not know; but about the time of his return to the university, two events occurred that had an impor-