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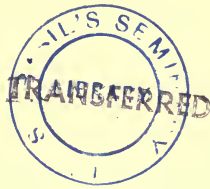
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ALBERT THE GREAT.



# ALBERT THE GREAT,

OF THE ORDER OF FRIAR-PREACHERS:

## His Life and Scholastic Labours.

FROM ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH EDITION.

BY THE

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*Nihil obstat.*

FR. RAYMUNDUS PALMER, ORD. PRÆD.

*Censor Deputatus.*

*in primatur :*

† HENRICUS EDUARDUS,

*Card. Archiep. Westmonast.*



To the Memory of  
THE LATE  
VERY REV. JAMES DOMINIC AYLWARD,  
ORD. PRED., MAG. SAC. THEOL.,  
REVERED AND ADMIRER ALIKE  
FOR HIS  
ESTIMABLE VIRTUES AND LEARNING,  
THIS LIFE OF THE  
GREAT SCHOLASTIC OF THE MIDDLE AGES  
IS INSCRIBED BY THE  
TRANSLATOR  
IN TOKEN OF AFFECTION AND GRATITUDE.

To those of our readers who are acquainted with Sighart's Life of Albert the Great, it may appear somewhat singular that, in presenting it to the public in an English dress, we should have suppressed that portion of the work which deals with the "Science" of the great Master. Such a reflection is natural enough. We own that our first intention was to have given the whole of the work entitled, "Albert the Great: his Life and Science;" and that, so far as our own individual tastes are concerned, nothing would have been more agreeable thereto. But considering, on the one hand, that to the generality of our readers the Science of the Schools could afford but small interest, while, on the other, to increase a work already necessarily large would be also to increase its price to the public, we have been induced to put aside the Science of Blessed Albert, and to confine our labours to a careful reproduction of his Life in English. We have moreover omitted here and there a few unimportant extracts from his writings, for the twofold purpose of avoiding useless and wearisome repetition and of reducing the work as far as is convenient within a narrower compass. We therefore trust that these reasons will appear to those who read these pages sufficient to justify the liberty we have taken with the work before us.

T. A. D.

ST. PETER'S PRIORY, HINCKLEY,

*Feast of St. Thomas of Aquin, 1876.*





## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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THE artistic monuments, and especially the churches of the Middle Ages scattered over Bavaria, have until the present time been the object of our researches and public lectures. We now venture to offer to our readers a most faithfully executed portrait of a great man who also belonged to that period and to our native land. If, as a worthy writer of this century has observed, a holy man is the grandest structure, the loveliest statue, the most expressive and brilliant picture—if the life of the virtuous man be music, whose delicious harmony ravishes heaven and earth, the most perfect poem that can be sung in honour of the Most High—we have then described in this history a magnificent work of art brought to perfection by the simultaneous concurrence of Divine grace and human liberty. Albert the Great did not leave this world with the sole eulogy due to a virtuous man, he merited also the imperishable crown of sanctity. Do not his whole life and marvellous influence during that remarkable thirteenth century, which witnessed side by side with Albert such men as St. Thomas of Aquin and St. Bonaventure, Marco Polo, Roger Bacon, and Wolfram of Eichenbach, present a striking analogy with the imposing Cathedrals of the Middle Ages? These, in effect, rose in the midst of



an ocean of structures which they exceeded by the majestic height of their spires and pointed roofs. And such was Albert among his contemporaries, in regard to the extent and development of his wonderful science. He surpassed all from the shoulder upwards, to use the expression of an ancient biographer, as Saul of old surpassed all the warriors of Israel. In the divers paths of research we constantly meet with Albert the Great. Legend, history, architecture, all vie with each other in repeating his glorious name; the mediæval knowledge of meteorology, mechanics, astronomy, geography, mineralogy, botany, zoology, physiology, and physionomy, ever show us his sublime figure; and logic, and metaphysics, and the history of philosophy could not disregard his toil. If we look for the origin and method of exposition of certain theological dogmas, and even of many of the terms commonly used in this science at the present day, we fail not to have recourse to him. These striking facts then lend a powerful stimulus to examine honestly the life and labours of this great man; to disencumber the trunk of historical truth of the parasite branches of fable; in a word, to separate, by means of original documents, his authentic works from all those that were in after times attributed to him. Moreover, this man, so interesting to us on many grounds, belongs, by birth and his office of Bishop of Ratisbon, to our beloved country, Bavaria. And yet, although he was the greatest scholar of mediæval times, his merits are unhappily too little known and still less appreciated by philosophers, theologians, and historians. All these considerations combined have induced us to undertake this work, which we submit with a certain hesitation to the



thoughtful public. We say with hesitation : for, though we have carefully availed ourselves of all the materials which have everywhere been placed at our service ; though we have even perused and studied the greater part of Blessed Albert's works ; though we have visited nearly all the places sanctified by his presence, with a view to discover personally the traces and relics of his labours ; yet the vast extent of his scientific or literary works, the diversity of his science, the scarcity of ancient documents, as well as the difficulties of knowing and consulting local sources, make us fear that many imperfections, many defects, and possibly many errors, may have crept into this history. We would fondly hope, however, that the indulgent reader will recognise in this work our conscientious efforts. He will understand that the love of truth alone has been the motive of all our inquiries ; for we like to repeat with the old biographer, Peter of Prussia : “*Non enim sancti nostris delectantur mendaciis, qui jam veritatis lumen sunt adepti.*”

May this great picture, which has taken us many years to execute, bear at least some resemblance to Blessed Albert, who, as a Christian, a Religious, a Bishop, and Preacher—as a Writer, Naturalist, Philosopher, and Theologian—justly merits the surname of Great ! We can undoubtedly recognise in him one of the sublimest phenomena of the Middle Ages, and indeed of the whole of history.

DR. SIGHART.



# CONTENTS.



## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
THE COUNTRY, BIRTH, AND YOUTH OF BLESSED ALBERT— METHOD OF EDUCATION AND TEACHING AT THAT PERIOD...	1

## CHAPTER II.

THE LIFE OF BLESSED ALBERT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PADUA— IN WHAT THE STUDY OF PHILOSOPHY AND THE LIBERAL ARTS THEN CONSISTED ... ..	18
---	----

## CHAPTER III.

ALBERT'S STRUGGLES IN HIS CHOICE OF A VOCATION—HIS ENTRANCE INTO THE ORDER OF FRIAR-PREACHERS ...	29
--	----

## CHAPTER IV.

ALBERT AS A YOUNG RELIGIOUS—HIS PROGRESS IN SCIENCE AND VIRTUE—THEOLOGICAL STUDIES AT THAT PERIOD ...	37
--	----

## CHAPTER V.

ALBERT A PROFESSOR AND PREACHER IN THE GERMAN CITIES OF COLOGNE, HILDESHEIM, STRASBURG, FRIBURG, AND RATISBON —HIS SCHOOL, HIS CHAIR, HIS METHOD OF TEACHING IN THE LATTER CITY ... ..	46
---	----

## CHAPTER VI.

ALBERT RETURNS TO COLOGNE—ARRIVAL OF ST. THOMAS OF AQUIN—HIS RELATIONS WITH THE GREAT MASTER ...	63
---	----



## CHAPTER VII.

	PAGE
ALBERT A PROFESSOR IN PARIS—FOUNDATION OF THE CONVENT OF PARIS—THE FRIAR-PREACHERS OBTAIN CHAIRS IN THE UNIVERSITY—THE ESTEEM IN WHICH ALBERT WAS HELD—HIS ACTIVITY—A TEMPTATION ... ..	74

## CHAPTER VIII.

ALBERT RETURNS TO COLOGNE AND THERE RESUMES HIS TEACHING—HIS RELIGIOUS PRACTICES—HIS BOOKS OF PIETY—PICTURES OF HIS PRAYERS AND DISCOURSES ... ..	87
---	----

## CHAPTER IX.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL WORKS WRITTEN BY ALBERT AT THIS PERIOD—CHARACTER OF HIS WRITINGS—HIS PREDECESSORS—HIS WRITINGS ON LOGIC, PHYSICS, AND METAPHYSICS—HIS COMMENTARIES ON DENIS THE AREOPAGITE, AND THE SENTENCES OF PETER LOMBARD ...	101
--	-----

## CHAPTER X.

POPULAR TRADITIONS RESPECTING ALBERT—OLD AND NEW TRADITIONS—LEGENDS RELATING TO COLOGNE CATHEDRAL—RECEPTION OF THE GERMAN KING WILLIAM—THE SPEAKING AND WALKING AUTOMATON—THE GUILTY PRINCESS PIETISYLA—CHASTISEMENT OF KING WILLIAM AND OF THE INDISCREET SHOEMAKER—APOCRYPHAL LEGENDS... ..	120
---	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

ON THE TRUTH OF THESE LEGENDS—ALBERT'S SHARE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF COLOGNE CATHEDRAL—HIS MAGICAL SCIENCE—HIS SPEAKING FIGURES AND MAGICAL CUPS ...	135
---	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

ALBERT IS ELECTED PROVINCIAL OF THE ORDER IN GERMANY—HIS JOURNEYS AND THE STRICT ORDINATIONS WHICH HE PROMULGATED IN THIS CAPACITY... ..	149
--	-----

CONTENTS.

xiii

CHAPTER XIII.

	PAGE
ALBERT FOUNDS A CONVENT OF NUNS AT PARADISE, NEAR SOEST	157

CHAPTER XIV.

ALBERT IS SENT INTO POLAND TO EXTIRPATE THE VICES OF PAGANISM ... .. .	164
---	-----

CHAPTER XV.

ALBERT A PEACEMAKER IN COLOGNE—CONTENTION BETWEEN THE CITIZENS AND THEIR ARCHBISHOP ... .. .	168
---	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

PERSECUTION AGAINST THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS, ESPECIALLY IN FRANCE—ALBERT DEFENDS THEM BY SPEECH AND WRIT- ING—COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN—A WORK AGAINST THE PARTIZANS OF AVERROËS—A VISION	176
--	-----

CHAPTER XVII.

ALBERT BECOMES PROVINCIAL IN GERMANY A SECOND TIME— HIS PORTRAIT AT THIS PERIOD—COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW—HE IS RELEASED FROM HIS OFFICE ... .. .	198
--	-----

CHAPTER XVIII.

ALBERT IS NOMINATED TO THE BISHOPRIC OF RATISBON—HIS RESISTANCE—HIS ENTRY INTO RATISBON ... .. .	206
---	-----

CHAPTER XIX.

CONDUCT OF ALBERT AS BISHOP OF RATISBON... .. .	217
---	-----

CHAPTER XX.

ALBERT'S ADMINISTRATION OF HIS DIOCESE—HIS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE PUBLIC MORALS—HIS NUMEROUS PREACHINGS— HE PONTIFICES FREQUENTLY—HE ASSISTS AT PRO- VINCIAL SYNODS—OFFERINGS MADE TO POOR MONASTERIES AND TO THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER ... .. .	222
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXI.

PAGE

ALBERT COMPOSES PIOUS WORKS DURING HIS EPISCOPATE— COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE—OFFICE OF ST. JOSEPH—ON THE PART WHICH HE TAKES IN THE BUILDING OF CHURCHES IN RATISBON—BUILDING OF THE CATHEDRAL AND THE CHURCH OF THE DOMINICANS ...	245
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXII.

ALBERT RESIGNS THE BISHOPRIC OF RATISBON—REASONS WHICH URGE HIM TO THIS STEP—CALUMNIES—COM- MENTARY ON THE ETHICS AND POLITICS OF ARISTOTLE— DIFFICULTIES OF THE POSITION OF A GERMAN BISHOP AT THIS PERIOD—PETITIONS OF THE BLESSED TO BE RE- LEASED—THEY ARE AT LENGTH GRANTED ... ..	255
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXIII.

ALBERT PREACHES THE CRUSADE IN GERMANY AND BOHEMIA— CRUSADES IN GENERAL—HIS JOURNEYS THROUGH BAVARIA, SUABIA, AND FRANCONIA ... ..	267
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXIV.

PROLONGED RESIDENCE OF ALBERT AT WÜRZBURG—HE FRE- QUENTLY APPEARS AS A PEACEMAKER—COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK—"LIBER DE MULIERI FORTI"	278
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXV.

ALBERT RETURNS TO COLOGNE—HE RE-ESTABLISHES PEACE— HIS HAPPY SOJOURN AT THE CONVENT—HIS OPINION IS SOUGHT FOR AT PARIS—HIS COMMENTARIES ON THE PSALMS, THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH, BARUCH, DANIEL, THE MINOR PROPHETS, AND THE APOCALYPSE ...	289
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXVI.

ALBERT'S LOVE FOR THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR— HIS WRITINGS ON THIS MYSTERY—BOOK ON THE SACRI- FICE OF THE MASS—BOOK ON THE HOLY EUCHARIST— SERMONS ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST...	301
--	-----

. CONTENTS.

XV

CHAPTER XXVII.

PAGE

ALBERT'S LOVE FOR THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY—HIS WRITINGS IN HER HONOUR—THE "MARIALE," OR BOOK ON THE ANGELICAL SALUTATION ... .. 322

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ALBERT ONCE MORE VISITS THE CONVENTS, AND CONSECRATES CHURCHES IN ESSLINGEN, BÂLE, STRASBURG, COLMAR, IN THE DIOCESE OF COLOGNE, AND IN THE LOW COUNTRIES—HE IS OCCUPIED WITH THE BUILDING OF CHURCHES IN THESE DIFFERENT LOCALITIES—HIS PIOUS MAXIMS ... 335

CHAPTER XXIX.

ALBERT BUILDS THE CHOIR OF THE DOMINICAN CHURCH AT COLOGNE, AND ENRICHES IT WITH HOLY RELICS—ANCIENT TRADITIONS RELATING TO THIS EDIFICE—WHETHER ALBERT IS THE AUTHOR OF THE PLAN—TRANSLATION OF THE BODY OF ST. CORDULA—HIS PROFOUND VENERATION FOR THE RELICS OF THE SAINTS... .. 348

CHAPTER XXX.

ALBERT ANNOUNCES THE DEATH OF ST. THOMAS OF AQUIN, WHO IS ABSENT, AND REPAIRS TO PARIS FOR HIS DEFENCE 364

CHAPTER XXXI.

ALBERT ASSISTS AT THE SECOND GENERAL COUNCIL OF LYONS—CAUSES AND SITTING OF THAT COUNCIL—HIS TRANSACTIONS THEREIN AS AMBASSADOR OF KING RODOLPH OF HAPSBURG... .. 372

CHAPTER XXXII.

LAST WRITINGS OF ALBERT—HIS SUMMA OF THEOLOGY AND ITS RELATIONS WITH THE SUMMA OF ST. THOMAS—PARADISE OF THE SOUL—ON THE MANNER OF ATTACHING ONESELF TO GOD... .. 394

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WILL OF ALBERT ... .. 406

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

	PAGE
CLOSE OF ALBERT'S TEACHING—SUDDEN DEFECTION OF HIS MEMORY—HIS LAST DAYS AND EMPLOYMENTS—HIS DEATH AND BURIAL—EPITAPHS ... ..	410

## CHAPTER XXXV.

IN WHAT MANNER GOD GLORIFIED HIS SERVANT AFTER DEATH — TRANSLATION OF THE BODY—VISIONS TOUCHING ALBERT'S BEATITUDE—CURES ... ..	421
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN WHAT MANNER MEN HAVE EXTOLLED THE MEMORY OF ALBERT—COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENTS AT COLOGNE— MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS—MAGICAL CUP—RELICS OF THE BLESSED—HIS CHASUBLE AND PASTORAL STAFF IN THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW AT COLOGNE—COMMEMORA- TIVE MONUMENTS AT RATISBON—ALBERT'S SCHOOL AND CHAIR—GATE AND ALTAR AT LAUNGEN—PORTRAITS OF THE GREAT MAN IN THE ITALIAN CHURCHES, PARTICULARLY THAT OF FLORENCE—HIS PRAISE BY POETS, ORATORS, HISTORIANS, NATURALISTS, AND PHILOSOPHERS ... ..	433
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

ON THE VENERATION WITH WHICH THE CHURCH HAS SUR- ROUNDED ALBERT—PROCESS OF HIS CANONISATION—HIS OFFICE ... ..	461
APPENDIX ... ..	469





# ALBERT THE GREAT.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE COUNTRY, BIRTH, AND YOUTH OF BLESSED ALBERT.

AT the commencement of the eleventh century large and magnificent cities sprang up on the banks of the Upper Danube, beneath the shadow of those old Roman fortresses constructed for the defence of the Empire against the incursions of the barbarians. At that period, especially, of Hungarian invasion, the people fled from the country districts, and sought refuge in those towns whose ramparts and wide fosses afforded shelter against the fury of those savage hordes. By the skill of the inhabitants, the development of industry and commerce, many of those towns in time attained to high celebrity and prosperity.

Lauingen, situated in Bavarian Suabia, and subject to the diocese of Augsburg, was able to

acquire a preponderating position among its rivals. It is even said that, in the battle fought near the Lechfeld, the men of Lauingen fought with remarkable bravery. It would appear that at a remote period this interesting town received within its walls a family which till then had inhabited the castle of Bolstadt, distant about two leagues. We know not whether this change of abode resulted from a desire to secure the advantages of town life, or was in consequence of a royal mission with which the family was invested. The most ancient documents support the latter supposition, for they exhibit the father of Albert the Great sometimes under the title of Chevalier,<sup>1</sup> at other times under that of Officer of the Royal Court.<sup>2</sup> He was probably a member of the inferior nobility, a minister charged to represent in the town the rights of his master, the Emperor of the House of Hohenstauffen.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph and Prussia. "Parentes erant ex militari ordine."

<sup>2</sup> Aventin and V. Hund, specially versed in these matters, say: "Albertus Suevus natione, in agro Lavgiensi clarissimis crepundiis et regulis Bolstadensibus ortus" ("Metrop. Salisb." p. 136). Native historians are the most reliable sources of information of this sort.

<sup>3</sup> The legends and later works are inaccurate in giving to Albert the title of Count of Bolstadt. So also is Heumann ("Act. Philos." III. 756), who, on the authority of Vives, thinks that Magnus (Grotus) was his family-name; but this is no more than one of those puerilities which are unworthy of

Ancient records also affirm that this family was abundantly provided with the goods of fortune. Yet their happiness was only complete, observes an old chronicler,<sup>1</sup> when the parents, already advanced in years, beheld at a distance the amiable and gracious smile of an Isaac. That child of benediction was Albert, whose history we are about to record.

It is impossible to determine the year, and still less the day, of his birth, although the most accredited authorities claim to show that Albert came into the world in the year 1193.<sup>2</sup> The refutation. At Cologne he was styled Albert de Grote, a patois expression for *der grosse* (see "Fabricii Bibl. Med. Lat." I. p. 113).

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph. Peter of Prussia thinks that his name already contained the prophecy of his future greatness. Thus, al (altus—high), ber (fons—source), tus (thus—incense.) (Prussia, "Vit. Albert," p. 330).

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph observes on this point: "Natus est circa annum incarnationis Domini MCXCIII., Celestino Tertio totam Ecclesiam regente." But Celestine sate from the year 1292 to 1298. The traditions of Lauingen, his native town, pronounce also in favour of the first date, inasmuch as 1193 appears on a tower of the house as the year of the birth. Moreover, it is only local data that can justly decide such questions and such a period of the Middle Ages. Altamura is of the same opinion. The critic Echard and the historians of Cologne appear to think the same. The majority of later writers point to the year 1205 as the period of his birth. Also Jammy, the author of "La Vie des Saints," &c., yet without leaning upon any certain testimony. This latter opinion is clearly nothing more than an hypothesis calculated to weaken more easily the idea of Albert's long life,

traditions of Lauingen still indicate in a corner of the market-place the house formerly inhabited by the Lords of Bolstadt, and in which our great master was consequently born.<sup>1</sup>

The days of his childhood are surrounded with an almost impenetrable darkness. We find here the same obscurity which baffles the eye of the historian of all the great celebrities of the Middle Ages. It is only when the splendour of their virtues and renown of their deeds fill the world, that contemporaries turn their astonished gaze towards those sublime personages, and ask themselves whence they come, and whither they have gone. But the greater part of the witnesses capable of throwing light on their infancy are already in their grave; while they themselves, filled as they are with the spirit of true Christian humility, are rarely induced to make known to us

his prolonged studies at Padua, and his marvellous activity even to the most decrepit age. How, it is said, could he be still teaching at Cologne at the age of eighty-five? But there is nothing surprising in this, for there were living, at that very time, men who were giants as to bodily and intellectual vigour. Thus Pope Celestine did not ascend the Pontifical throne till the eighty-second year of his age. St. Raymund of Pennafort lived and laboured till his ninety-eighth year.

<sup>1</sup> It is doubtless of little use to observe that the actual house, though very ancient, is not that which the Lords of Bolstadt occupied in the twelfth century.

their personal life.<sup>1</sup> Albert, in his numerous writings, never speaks of his country, his family, or his younger years ; nor do his biographers give us more than a few rare and incomplete details respecting the first period of his life. It is true, the child has no personal history ; its existence lacks that individuality, that character of greatness and intelligence which awaken the attention ; its tender age gives it no claim to be the object of historical notice. It is with the lives of children born among a certain social class as with the countenance, which, in many instances, bears striking marks of resemblance. Albert himself merely informs us that he had a younger brother, named Henry, who, like himself, entered the Order of St. Dominic, and died Prior of the Convent of Wurtzburg. In his will, which we shall reproduce hereafter, he names his brother according to the flesh, and appoints him one of his executors.<sup>2</sup>

It may be supposed that, obedient to the wise

<sup>1</sup> This is especially characteristic of the mediæval age. While it extolled in rapturous language the magnificent objects of science and art, it completely effaced itself. What a contrast with modern times, when historians and poets seek only their own personal exaltation !

<sup>2</sup> As Albert in this same will bestows a legacy on the Monastery of St. Catherine at Augsburg, we may suppose that he had a sister or some relation there. The Nuns established themselves there in the year 1250, according to the "Histoire d'Augsberg," by Stetten (V. 70).

counsels of his elder brother, the younger abandoned the stormy sea of the world and followed him into the tranquil port of the monastic life.

All that the biographers relate of our hero may be reduced to the following facts: "Albert," they observe, "was carefully educated from the commencement of his life. He was taught the commandments of God and the principles of science."<sup>1</sup> The first of these data doubtless relates to the care lavished upon this noble youth under the parental roof. Who, indeed, could doubt that this precious plant was early subjected, under the care of a watchful father, to severe discipline, since we see him at a later period of his life bearing such abundant fruits of wisdom and regularity? It is no less certain that he received, at a tender age, from the love of a pious mother the fortifying milk of religious instruction. Nor can it be doubted that the body of the youth acquired at that period, in the exercises of a chivalrous life, an energy, suppleness, and strength which imparted to his mind in later life, and even till he was far advanced in years, the vigorous impulse of a wonderful activity. But to this domestic instruction ere long

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph. Prussia relates: "Hic a piis parentibus viam Domini a pueritia est edoctus; traditus ab iisdem litteris imbucendus" (p. 78).

was added, as the above-cited authors show, the initiation into the principles of science. We know not whether this was in the paternal home, or in some neighbouring monastery; whether it was from the lips of a chaplain or a monk that he received those first lessons. Elementary schools, in the sense applied to this word at the present day, had then no existence; they were open only in the cathedrals and convents, sacred asylums where the youth destined to the ecclesiastical state and the children of the nobility received education and instruction. We can, however, form some idea of the system of education which Albert would receive. The old method of the Benedictines, those great masters in the art of elevating peoples and individuals, was everywhere in vogue; and their inflexible law of never departing, without pressing need, from received customs, served from that time the Church and its institutes with a fundamental rule.

We have before us a work written at the end of the twelfth century which supplies us with precise information on the method of teaching followed at that period;<sup>1</sup> and we may well suppose that the boy Albert was moulded in that way.

<sup>1</sup> The "Doctrinale Puerorum," falsely attributed to Boëthius, but in reality written towards the close of the twelfth century (Daniel, "Les Etudes classiques dans la Société Chrétienne").



When seven years old, the young pupil was sent to school to learn at first to read and write ; but as this sort of exercise required but little time, says our author, he soon commenced to make the acquaintance of the Latin grammarians, Donatus, Priscian, or Didymus. To those who know the value attached to books at that period it will be easy to conceive that the number of scholars in a condition to procure these classical authors was small indeed. The more ordinary course was to imprint the rules on the memory of the student by frequent repetitions, or by dictating them to him : a measure which was adopted not only in regard to grammar, but also as regarded the classics. The text was usually dictated by fragments ; then followed the explanation. When the pupil had mastered the first principles of the Latin tongue, he received, before all, the Psalter, whose chaunts he was made to learn by heart, that he might draw therefrom pious thoughts and sentiments, and also take part in the public psalmody in the Church.

The words of the chronicler appear sufficient to indicate that this method was adopted with regard to Albert when he says : “ Albert soon gave sure signs of what he would one day become. Instead of yielding to the frivolous amusements of the companions of his age, he delighted to visit the



churches and to chaunt the hymns and psalms with the clerks.”<sup>1</sup> This clearly shows that Albert had even at an early age read the Psalter, and had deeply engraven the magnificent chaunts on his memory. How is it possible to doubt this on reading his works, which exhibit at every page a wonderful knowledge of that book of chaunt in use in the Church? It may even be said that the whole Psalter was as familiar to him as the *Our Father*. It is only what man commits to memory from his tenderest years that can be preserved so faithfully and with such clearness in the sanctuary of his soul. At that time the rules and forms of language were not the sole constituents of grammatical study; the reading of the profane literature of antiquity, especially the poets, formed an essential part of it, thus closely uniting practice with theory. Children were made to learn from their ninth to their twelfth year Æsop’s Fables, the poetry of Theodulus,<sup>2</sup> and the sentences of Cato the Moralist. Thence the young pupil was forthwith introduced into a vast gallery of the writers of antiquity. He read fragments of Seneca, whose pure morality offered special advantages; extracts

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> A poet of the tenth century who opposed to the fables of paganism the prodigies of the Old Testament in verse full of rapture and charm worthy of ancient art.

from Ovid, Persius, and Horace, equally regarded as the inspired preachers of natural morality; but especially Lucan, Statius, and Virgil, who seemed as prophets amidst the darkness of paganism, announcing, so to speak, the dawn of a new era and the near advent of a liberator.<sup>1</sup> After this first and vast preparation, which embraced many years, the youthful students passed to the study of the other liberal arts, particularly logic and rhetoric, into the principles of which they were initiated by lectures out of Cicero, Quintilian, and Aristotle. These writings ought not only to be read, but even made the matter of deep meditation, and engraven in great part on the memory.<sup>2</sup> There was at that period a strong conviction that the reading and study of pagan authors embodied immense advantages. "Though shorn of the lights of faith," observes Vincent of Beauvais, a contemporary of Albert the Great, "they have not the less spoken in a wonderful manner of the Creator and His creatures, of virtue and vice; they knew a great number of truths which faith as well as reason

<sup>1</sup> Ozanam says with reason that the Fourth Eclogue opened to Virgil the schools of the Middle Ages. Dante has surrounded these poets with an aureola not less brilliant.

<sup>2</sup> For it is said in the above-cited "*Doctrinale Puerorum*:" "*Senecæ traditio, Lucani inxpletio indaganda memorialique cellulæ commendanda*" (Daniel, I. c.).

announce from on high.”<sup>1</sup> Albert himself, when explaining the *Kyrie* in his treatise on the “Sacrifice of the Mass,” remarks: “The sublimest wisdom the world could boast of flourished in Greece. Even as the Jews knew God by the Scriptures, so the pagan philosophers knew Him by the natural wisdom of reason, and were debtors to Him for it by their homage. It was, moreover, among the Greeks that the laws were at first observed, as the Pandects and Statutes of the Twelve Tables show, which, coming from Greece, are still esteemed by us: and it was by that justice that they knew the justice of the law of Christ, and merited to be the first among the Gentiles to receive it.”<sup>2</sup> Thus we see in what estimation the scholastics of mediæval times held the literary works of pagan antiquity. It need not surprise us, then, to witness the Christian youth of that period eagerly pressing under the vestibule of the temple of classical study, since the ancient authors ought not only to be read, but even committed to memory. It cannot, however, be denied that, in the two passages which we have given, there is an appreciation of the old authors which is diametrically opposed to that which was

<sup>1</sup> “*Speculum Doctrinale*,” lib. i. cap. xii.

<sup>2</sup> We shall reproduce in full this admirable passage when we come to speak of Albert’s “*Treatise on the Sacrifice of the Mass.*”

bestowed on them in more remote times. Thus, while the Doctors of the primitive Church admired, especially in the classics, the beauties of speech and the elegance of style then necessary to the Christian *savant* to express the truths of Christianity, as David of old made use of Goliath's own sword to dispatch him; in the Middle Ages they disregarded style, so attractive to the ancients, in order to recognise only the truth concealed in their works. It is the property of the scholastic to search for everywhere, and ever to esteem and venerate, only the truth, while he occupies himself less with the brilliant charms of style.

Such was the method of teaching everywhere in vogue in the schools of the Middle Ages. The uniformity which existed in the corporations of that period authorises us to believe that Albert trod the same path under the direction of the monks. We shall be still more convinced of this, if we consider the close familiarity in which the great man lived with all the profane writers of antiquity. It goes so far, that his numerous treatises, and even his very sermons, are, so to speak, but a tissue of the maxims of ancient wisdom, drawn from Cicero,<sup>1</sup> Virgil, and Juvenal.

<sup>1</sup> This philosopher is so familiar to him that he frequently styles him "noster Tullius."

Reading and study necessarily, then, became him, since he applied himself thereto from his infancy. How long did Albert continue to attach himself to that sort of study? What progress did he make in learning in the obscurity of his native land? We know not. All that we learn of him is that he passed his childhood in study, in pious exercises, and holy innocence.<sup>1</sup> Brief words, doubtless, but sufficient to convince us, once for all, that this great soul sought above all things purity of heart—as the sunflower looks unceasingly to the star of terrestrial light—that he might be preserved from the corruption of the world. Without this we cannot explain that clearness and penetration of intellectual sight into those higher truths which we have to admire. “For it is impossible that an impure soul should ever attain to that spiritual science. Would any one think of pouring liquor of rare price into an unclean vessel? The juice would more readily imbibe the bad odour of the vessel than impart to it its own fragrance.”<sup>2</sup>

When the happy years of childhood were passed, and Albert had reached the joyous springtide of

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph. Jammy observes that Albert at that age already delighted in meditation, reflection, and soliloquy.

<sup>2</sup> St. Anselm, in a work entitled, “*De Spirituali Scientia*,” cap. v.

youth, it behoved him to think of the future and to choose a course of life. That of arms, pursued with glory by his ancestors, offered him honours, position, and renown, especially amid the burning struggles of the East and West. The Crusades presented to the brave soldier an opportunity to distinguish himself and to acquire glory and wealth. The Imperial House of Suabia, in whose service the Count of Bolstadt was employed, was renowned for its deeds of valour, and engaged in interminable warfare; but on the other hand science allured his ingenuous soul with her brilliant charms. Albert responded to this appeal. He could not hesitate between the peaceful, legitimate, and noble study of the sciences, and the tumultuous din of arms, with the too frequently unjust and disastrous triumphs of the warrior. It is possible also that he may have had a dim presentiment that he would one day become a Godfrey de Bouillon in the crusade of ideas; that is, that he might be enabled by the power of thought to reduce to the dominion of Christ and His Church the Jerusalem of every human knowledge, fallen under the power of pagans and the followers of Mahomet. He therefore preferred the acquisition of science to the profession of arms; and as at that period learning opened a sure path to the highest dignities, ecclesi-

astical and political, it is hardly to be supposed that his relations or friends, who were charged with his education, would dissuade him from so favourable a project.

The circumstances of the time obliged Albert to bid adieu to his native land. Secondary education was at that period departing from the precincts of the cloister. The old cathedral and monastic schools saw their splendour eclipsed and their influence destroyed by the newly established universities. Bodies of public professors assembled together in many of the large cities in the twelfth century, who were speedily surrounded by crowds of eager students. Such was the origin of those famous universities which, protected by Popes and Princes, and enriched by the donations of wealthy patrons, attained a wonderful development of power and influence, and absorbed almost exclusively the higher branches of instruction in the liberal arts and industrial sciences.

Such were the schools that were frequented by those who were desirous to advance themselves in a higher course of study and mental culture. But, as in the thirteenth century no university of this kind was yet founded in Germany,<sup>1</sup> the youth of

<sup>1</sup> The University of Prague, the first in Germany, was founded in the year 1384, by Charles IV.



that period were obliged to go abroad to secure these advantages. The treasures of learning were then more dearly bought than at the present day. They could only be acquired by travelling at great expense, accompanied with much bodily fatigue and exposure to innumerable dangers. Albert courageously braved all these obstacles. But why choose Padua rather than Paris or Bologna, whose universities had attained the highest celebrity? History is silent on this point. It is possible, however, that his uncle, who was a nobleman and an officer of the Emperor, might have influenced his choice. He resided at Padua, and had doubtless made himself responsible for the care of his young kinsman. What may possibly have also decided him, is that Padua was especially distinguished for its culture of the liberal arts.<sup>1</sup> And it was precisely these that the ardent soul of Albert desired above all to acquire. He set out, then, with a joyful heart, and directed his course across the Alps, towards the delightful plains of Lombardy.

History affords us no clue to the precise date of this journey into the Peninsula. But, as the high

<sup>1</sup> See Ersch and Gruber, "Encyclop. des arts et des sciences," III. in the article *Padua*, p. 116. Olfrid, a professor of the University of Padua, relates that this school already numbered, in 1262, upwards of ten thousand students, and that it was chiefly the professors of the liberal arts who attracted the greatest number of foreigners.



schools were usually frequented from the age of sixteen to twenty years,<sup>1</sup> it may be supposed that Albert accomplished the journey about the year 1212. A new and interesting chapter now opens in the life of our blessed master.

<sup>1</sup> According to Prussia, Albert was still under the parental roof at the age of sixteen, and was doubtless at that time endowed with a tender love of the Mother of God.

## CHAPTER II.

THE LIFE OF BLESSED ALBERT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
PADUA.

THE episcopal city of Padua, situated on the banks of the Bacchiglione in the midst of a richly cultivated plain, was for a long period possessed of claustral schools sufficient for the education of the nobility and clergy ; but when, after a long and glorious struggle against the house of Hohenstauffen, it recovered, by a treaty of peace signed at Constance in the year 1183, its liberty and right of self-government, it began rapidly to develop itself in the sunshine of its independence and enterprise. Its bridges, ramparts, and magnificent communal palace rose simultaneously with new religious institutes ; while the culture of the arts and sciences also imparted to the city a marvellous activity. The clergy and citizens invited the most distinguished *savants* of the day, who lectured on the liberal arts and attracted a considerable num-

ber of scholars. Such were the beginnings of this great school, which professors coming from Bologna (in 1222<sup>1</sup>) raised to the rank and proportions of a celebrated University. Paris bore in after-years the sceptre of theological teaching; Bologna was esteemed the highest authority in civil and canon law; but it was Padua's high privilege and glory to possess the most accomplished masters in the liberal arts. It was to this latter school that Albert went to quench his thirst for science. We have, however, but a very imperfect notion of the length of time that he passed there, the studies that were the object of his efforts, and the success

<sup>1</sup> The date of the foundation of the University of Padua is variously estimated by authors. Ersch and Gruber, as also the "Lexique Ecclesiastique" of Wetzer and Welt (vol. ii. p. 442), assign the year 1222. It is, moreover, said in the "Life of Duns Scotus" (Patav. 1671, p. 106): "Universitas Patavina, omnium princeps et parens fecunda heroum." The fact which places the foundation of the University of Padua in the year 1222, is doubtless one of the reasons for supposing that Albert was born in the year 1205; if so, the young Suabian had already attained his twenty-ninth year when he arrived at Padua. Rodolph says nothing about his having gone to the university, but merely observes that "he went to Padua to study the *liberal arts*." This city nevertheless possessed a school renowned for the study of philosophy. There was even a school of law towards the end of the twelfth century, since Gerard Pomedella is styled Professor of Law at the University of Padua. Theology was not taught there till towards the fourteenth century. (See the Supplement Vol. of the "Lexique Ecclesiastique" of Wetzer and Welt, p. 917.)

which crowned his labours. Rodolph expressly mentions that he still devoted himself to the liberal arts. Grammar, dialectics, rhetoric, music, geometry, arithmetic, and astronomy were the sciences which he studied under the direction of skilful masters. He next advanced towards the redoubtable sanctuary of logic, as to an arsenal wherein the soldier finds the arms which he needs to conquer truth and to defend his post against the attacks of his enemies. He doubtless studied the logic of Aristotle from the wretched Latin translation which was in use for a long time, and which the old masters expounded. He attended also the public interpretations of other works of the same Philosopher,<sup>1</sup> as ethics and politics, then but recently known in the West, and was filled with enthusiasm at the sight of the treasures of wisdom which they embodied. To these would be added many other books of the great Stagirite on natural science, which would charm our young German's passion for knowledge. Is it not from this period that his deep-seated love and veneration for the prince of ancient philosophy dates, whom he was able to understand and admire more than all his fellow-disciples? Albert thus laid the foundation

<sup>1</sup> See the admirable work of M. Jourdain on the history of the works of Aristotle in the Middle Ages.

of that vast knowledge which will shortly astound us, and which so frequently caused him to be suspected of magic. He moreover acquired medical knowledge, which is but the application of natural science to the body of man.<sup>1</sup> The explanation of these different works, as well as the other public lectures, were given in the Latin tongue. Albert never learned Greek; we shall prove that he was ignorant of its rules and forms. Yet it is possible that he may have known the meaning of a certain number of Greek words through the relations which he had with the literature of that country.

But it was not only in books and in his public course that our noble youth laboured with ardour to gather the golden fleece of science and wisdom, his eyes were incessantly fixed on the great book of the exterior world, and he set himself to read its marvellous pages. He would make numberless excursions with his friends into the cities and neighbouring provinces, observing with a penetrating look every phenomenon, and seeking to explain it. He himself relates, in his *Natural*

<sup>1</sup> In his sermons, Albert gives as a parallel the history of all the forms which a malady may assume. It is thus that in the Gospel for the Feasts of St. Margaret, Holy Cross, and the Conversion of St. Paul, in which mention is made of the lepers, of the woman afflicted with an issue of blood, he points out the remedies. He never speaks of minerals without making known their curative properties.

History, how, being yet a youth (*juvenis*<sup>1</sup>), he met with at Venice, in Italy, large blocks of marble, destined for the construction of a church. He and his companions were surprised to see the perfect image of a crowned king delineated on one of those stones, the surface of which appeared to them exceedingly hard. He explained to his astonished friends this singular appearance.<sup>2</sup>

On another occasion,<sup>3</sup> at Padua, Albert observed that the men who successively descended a well, which had been closed over for a considerable time, immediately died; and he gave as the cause the corruption of the air. In another city of Lombardy he witnessed an earthquake, and noticed its different phenomena.<sup>4</sup>

Albert thus ardently quenched his thirst at the sources of natural science; human wisdom had above all things charmed his heart, and he was become her faithful champion. It is doubt-

<sup>1</sup> Would not this show that he had then passed his twentieth year? We might conclude so from the fact that his companions appealed to him for an explanation of the appearance. It is, then, a sign that Albert dedicated long years to the study of philosophy.

<sup>2</sup> "De Mineral." lib. ii. tract. 3, cap. i. He shows that this stone had been formed of hardened vapours; the excessive heat having forced them, according to him, to rise without order and beyond measure to the centre of the block.

<sup>3</sup> "Meteor," III. tract. 2, cap. xii.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 98.

less to this fact that is due the pleasing tradition which shows Albert kneeling in a vision before the Mother of God, asking of her the knowledge of nature, and receiving, in punishment of his disregard of Divine theology, the sudden privation of all his knowledge some years before his death.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This legend is by no means ancient. It is found only in Flaminius, Leander, Jamny, and later biographers. It can only then be a fable; but it is too charming to be entirely omitted. It runs thus: Albert at that time strove to penetrate the sanctuary of science. But in vain; all he learned in the evening vanished the next day. What he believed he understood soon became impenetrable darkness. He then resolved to bid farewell to study, and to return to his paternal home. But, behold, his chamber was suddenly illuminated with an extraordinary light, and three young virgins of ravishing beauty (Mary, Barbara, and Catherine, according to the symbolism of the Middle Ages) appeared to his astonished vision. One of them desired to know the cause of his discouragement; he answered that it was the dulness of his intellect. The virgin then consoled him, and told him to ask of his mistress what he desired. Full of happiness, Albert approached the Queen of Heaven, and falling on his knees besought her to bestow on him a vast knowledge of human wisdom. The holy Virgin then said, "Be it done to thee according to thy request; thy progress shall be so extraordinary, that thou shalt not have thy equal in philosophy. I will protect thee always, and will not suffer thee to perish by alienating thyself from the true Faith, when surrounded by the snares of sophists. But in order that thou mayest know that it is to my bounty, and not to the exertion of thy own mind, that thou art indebted for this immense knowledge, thou shalt be completely stripped of it before thy death."

We find an apparition analogous to this in the "Life of St. Dominic," when Cecilia and Catherine appeared on each side of the Mother of God (see Lacordaire).



None of his biographers make mention of the time consecrated by Albert to philosophical studies at the University of Padua, but we may believe that it was sufficiently long; for if the founder and patriarch of the Friar-Preachers, St. Dominic de Gusman, devoted six years to the study of philosophy—with which, however, he was but little satisfied, because it is not the wisdom of God<sup>1</sup>—it is probable that Albert, who was tormented with the thirst of science, gave a considerable time longer to it. How can we otherwise comprehend that vast learning, which embraced every branch of positive knowledge, unless we admit that he consecrated many years to it? These prolonged studies might possibly have given rise to that other legend which attributes to him a mind that was excessively slow in penetrating into abstract truths. The following is what one of his biographers relates of him: “Science appeared to him very difficult at the commencement, and the path which led to it too thorny for his delicate feet; but, aided by an indefatigable application, he surmounted every obstacle. The marble receives with difficulty the form of a

<sup>1</sup> “Vie de Saint Dominique,” par le R. P. Lacordaire (Landshut, 1841, p. 26).



statue, but retains it so much the better when once the artist's chisel has imparted it to it: such was Albert's intelligence."<sup>1</sup>

It is indeed possible that our blessed master's faculty of conception was slower in his youth than it is in the Italians, although his contemporaries do not speak of it. After what we have said, we may suppose that Albert devoted ten years to philosophical studies, which would be nothing extraordinary in the Middle Ages. He studied at Padua as an artist and philosopher, and consequently until the thirtieth year of his age. It is easy to picture him to our minds at that period, clothed in a coat of silk, a sword at his side, wearing on his head a cap surmounted by a waving plume, traversing the narrow and circuitous streets of Padua, which were by degrees embellished with houses built of stone, large and magnificent churches,<sup>2</sup> monasteries, and palaces.

<sup>1</sup> Jammy, I. c.

<sup>2</sup> The magnificent church of St. Justina, the pearl of the churches of Padua, already existed. The new cathedral was completed in the year 1124, which was unhappily replaced by a building of the Renaissance period. The churches of St. Daniel, St. Nicholas, and St. Mary Magdalen also flourished then. To the numerous religious communities then existing at Padua were added the Dominicans, in 1217, and the Franciscans, in 1220. (See the article *Padoue*, in the Supplement Vol. of the "Lexique Ecclesiastique," p. 917.)

Nature lavished on his countenance the charms of manly beauty; she endowed him with a constitution robust, vigorous, and capable of long and painful endurance.<sup>1</sup> He went daily from his uncle's palace to the schools, where the masters of science explained the books of Aristotle. With what eagerness would he listen to the words which fell from their lips! What scrupulous attention would he pay to the solution of the numberless difficulties which those defective translations presented! What anxiety would he manifest in procuring copies of those precious works!<sup>2</sup> With what a thirst for learning would he assist at all those solemn exercises of the school, especially the public disputations! Then, when a holiday occurred, he would join his companions, on horseback, to perform those joyous excursions into the cities and surrounding provinces where we have already met him.

As to his extraordinary progress, and the reputation which he acquired, it is sufficient,

<sup>1</sup> The bones would furnish a proof of this, when they were disinterred at the translation. But we are still more convinced of it by the chasuble which he used; a priest at the present day could with difficulty wear it.

<sup>2</sup> The pecuniary means placed at his disposal would enable him to purchase parchment on which to transcribe them. We shall see later on that he actually procured a collection of the translations of Aristotle.

in order to be convinced of it, to hear his masters as well as his fellow-disciples call him, in their admiration, the sage,<sup>1</sup> or the master of philosophers.

All these data, however, do not suffice to make our young *savant* known at that period. There is an essential trait missing which the biographers have carefully preserved. All this scientific research in no way caused him to be unmindful of the religious needs of his soul. In the midst of the tumultuous and oftentimes debauched life of the young men of the schools, he reflected seriously on his last end. Hence his numerous visits to the churches and his intercourse with holy men,<sup>2</sup> especially the Friar-Preachers, established at Padua in the year 1217,<sup>3</sup> and to whom he doubtless confided the direction of his conscience.

The chroniclers enable us to see also what means Albert employed to strengthen his soul against the consequences of an education too exclusively intellectual, and against the snares of seduction, which, particularly in the Italian cities, threatened the virtue of students. By

<sup>1</sup> Thus speak Rodolph and Prussia. If we may credit Jammy, he was honoured with the title of "Philosophus a magistris."

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph, Prussia, Jammy, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Rodolph.

prayer and spiritual exercises he caused the fortifying dews of grace to fall continually on himself; and amidst the corruption that surrounded him he shone as a precious flower in the arid sands of the East. He kept himself pure in the midst of a world of dissolute scholars, who too frequently abused their uncontrolled liberty.

## CHAPTER III.

STRUGGLES OF ALBERT IN HIS CHOICE OF A VOCATION—  
HIS ENTRANCE INTO THE ORDER OF FRIAR-PREACHERS.

THE moment was now come for him to determine on a state of life. Albert had lived long enough under the beautiful peristyle of general science; he had reached the age when it behoved him to think seriously of the future, and to choose between the study of law, which would lead him to the highest political dignities, and the service of the Church, whose preferments were not less splendid.

There was in the latter domain a career on which he had often dwelt—the religious life, which by its mysterious charms attracted his beautiful and great soul. Moral sufferings, those redoubtable forerunners of a new life, occasioned him then strange conflicts. He reflected unceasingly on the post he was destined to occupy in the world, without being able to decide on

anything. He relied not on himself, but turned to God, and besought Him with tears to make known to him his true vocation.

One day, while he was in the Church of the Dominicans, the holy Virgin, before whose statue he knelt, seemed to address him in these words: "Albert, my son! leave the world, and enter the Order of Friar-Preachers, whose foundation I obtained of my Divine Son for the salvation of the world. Thou shalt apply thyself to the sciences according to the prescriptions of the Rule; and God will fill thee with such wisdom that the whole Church shall be illumined by thy erudite books."<sup>1</sup>

This revelation from on high has received from the pen of historians a character of high importance, and is painted in various colours. We cannot, indeed, deny its possibility without deserting the domain of faith and rejecting the evidences of history, which frequently relate similar facts in the lives of the Saints.

It was, then, at the feet of the holy Virgin that Albert's future was decided. He resolved to quit the ocean of the world, so fruitful in shipwreck, to seek refuge in the secure port of the monastic life.<sup>2</sup> The spectacle of the frightful

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

storms which unsettled the people; the savage strife which stained with blood the Italian cities; the quarrels constantly reviving between the Popes, the protectors of the liberties of the Church, and the great despot Frederic II., who would have called the young Suabian under his flag; the bitter disappointments which followed the hopes which the Crusades stirred up—such were doubtless the motives which banished from the soul of Albert the desire to remain in the world, and to take part in its agitations. Might he not also have felt a supreme disgust for the moral depravity that surrounded him, for that prosperity and unbridled luxury, the inevitable consequences of the relations of Europe with the Oriental nations?

On the other hand, the two Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic, which spread abroad and sowed everywhere peace and concord with the rapidity of conquerors, would appear to him like two trees of life, planted by the Divine hand in the garden of the Church for the salvation of the people; and he naturally resolved to give himself to one of these holy families, to provide thus against the perversity of the age, and to labour himself in curing men of sin and error. We can well understand that he would prefer the Order of

St. Dominic, whose first children purposed above all to reconquer the world to our Lord with the sword of preaching and the splendour of science. Science had for a long time enamoured the soul of Albert.

He then decided to become a Religious. But this project was hard to be realised; insurmountable difficulties rose up before him. The uncle for whom he cherished the affection of a son, and who supplied to him the place of his father,<sup>1</sup> was far from approving the plans of his nephew.<sup>2</sup> He forbade him all intercourse with the Dominican Friars, and exacted of him a promise that he would not carry out his design till after a fixed time. The noble seignior no doubt wished to spare his ward a thoughtless step. He possibly had also in view for him some brilliant career, and was determined that his hopes should not be sacrificed.

Moral struggles of a most painful kind then

<sup>1</sup> From this period there is no longer a question of Albert's parents. They were doubtless dead. What makes it the more likely is that they were already old when he was born.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph, cap. ii. Raderus gives a long description of this scene: "Obstitit præsens cognatus qui ætatem illius ex majorum auctoritate regebat et meliora juvenis consilia interciperat" ("Bavaria Sancta," p. 283). Further details are to be found in the "Vitæ Fratrum," quoted by Prussia and Quetif in vol. i. p. 164.



began with our young champion. The path of heaven and the inclination of his own heart urged him on towards the religious life, and the fatherly hand of a friend whom he was loth to grieve arrested him. Everything, even his very dreams, tormented him. It seemed to him that he should never be anything but an object of shame to the Order, and a rock of scandal to the world. He passed many years in these cruel uncertainties, and realised in their truest sense those words of our Lord, "I came not to bring peace, but the sword." He felt the shaft that pierced his heart, and had not courage to pluck it out. God at length took pity on him.

One day Albert, whose soul was deeply oppressed with sorrow, visited the Church of the Friar-Preachers. The disciple and successor of St. Dominic, Blessed Jordan of Saxony,<sup>1</sup> arrived from Bologna. Few men in history have possessed so much as he the marvellous talent of winning souls. His personal merit, his holiness

<sup>1</sup> He was a member of the German nobility, a native of Paderborn. He was won over to the Order at Paris by St. Dominic. He was General of the Dominicans from the year 1221 to 1236. Thomas of Cantimpré describes his life with much enthusiasm in his "Liber de Apibus." The Bollandists give his biography on February 13. Lacordaire relates his interview with St. Dominic, p. 236.



of life, the renown of his learning, and his gift of miracles exercised an irresistible power.

It is said of him that he drew out of the stormy sea of the world, with the net of the Divine Word, and clothed with the white tunic of his newly born Order, more than a thousand young men belonging to the Universities of Paris and Bologna.<sup>1</sup> A great number of those whom he thus gained to our Lord became in after-time, by their virtues and learning, brilliant lights in the Church. Such were, among others, Cardinal Hugo of Sancta Sabina (Saint-Cher), the celebrated interpreter of the Holy Scriptures;<sup>2</sup> his companion, Humbert of Romans, fifth General of the Order;<sup>3</sup> Raymund of Pennafort, the illustrious doctor in ecclesiastical law;<sup>4</sup> Vincent of Beauvais, the author of the

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph's own words. His zeal for the salvation of the youth, and the affection which the latter bore him personally, are described by Quetif in his "Vie de Jourdain," I. c. If it chanced that another Religious preached to the students in Jordan's presence, the latter had no peace until he addressed them in his turn.

<sup>2</sup> He entered the Order in 1225, being then somewhat advanced in years, and was named Cardinal in 1244. His correct edition of the Bible, his Concordance, and his "Postillæ in universâ Biblia," are known as important works of exegesis.

<sup>3</sup> A native of the diocese of Vienne, he entered the Order in 1224, and was its General until 1263. He is renowned as the head of the Order, the Pope's counsellor, and the homiletic writer.

<sup>4</sup> Born in Spain, he went to Bologna in 1204, and taught canon law till 1219, returned to his own country, and took the

Mirrors,<sup>1</sup> in which all the knowledge of that time is set forth with such vast erudition that they have hardly ever been equalled.

Master Jordan, who had gathered around him such disciples, was desirous of visiting Padua in order to sow the seed of God's Word, and doubtless also to gain some distinguished subjects for the new house which the Order was establishing there. The news of his arrival being speedily spread throughout the city, a prodigious number of auditors, among whom was Albert, invaded the Church of the Friar-Preachers to taste of his doctrine, sweeter than honey. The illustrious preacher, ascending the pulpit, portrayed in such lively colours and with an enthusiasm so celestial the snares employed by Satan to deter men from the business of salvation, that Albert was deeply moved, and

habit of the Order in 1222. He is the author of the "Summa Casuum Conscientiæ," and compiler of the "Decretals." He was promoted to the Generalate in 1238, and died in 1275, being nearly a century old.

<sup>1</sup> We are ignorant of the place of his birth. He doubtless studied at Paris about the year 1220 till 1225. He entered the Order, and was sent to Beauvais in 1228, to the Convent which was being founded there. He was a great friend of Louis IX., King of France. He wrote his celebrated Encyclopædia entitled "Speculum Majus," which he divided into three parts, "Speculum Naturale, Doctrinale, et Historiale," comprising all the knowledge of his time. The "Speculum Morale" is apocryphal. Vincent of Beauvais died in the year 1264.

suddenly felt within himself a strong determination to carry out his purpose.

He hesitated no longer; the eloquent discourse was no sooner concluded than, bursting asunder every fetter, he sped to the door of the Convent, cast himself on his knees before Father Jordan, exclaiming, "Father, you have read my soul," and craved with tears his admission to the Order. It must be observed that the time of trial fixed by the uncle, and which Albert promised faithfully to respect, had expired.<sup>1</sup>

Jordan of Saxony, whose keen sight had been sharpened by his long intercourse with young men, perceived at a glance what Albert would one day become. He received him with joy and gave him the habit. The two-edged sword of God's Word had happily cut asunder the painful cords which still bound him. This occurred in the year 1223.

<sup>1</sup> It is probable that he pledged himself to wait till his thirtieth year. All the personages mentioned above were men who were equally fitted to enter the Order.

## CHAPTER IV.

ALBERT AS A RELIGIOUS.—HIS PROGRESS IN SCIENCE  
AND VIRTUE.

Our young nobleman had attained the object of his most ardent desires. The opulent scholar, already celebrated for his learning,<sup>1</sup> who had so long traversed the streets of Padua in all the luxury of the age, and who had lived in the midst of abundance in a palace of marble, was now become a poor Friar. Austere penance shaved his head, and covered his shoulders with a white coarse tunic, and scapular of the same colour; he was reduced, in his wants,

<sup>1</sup> The following is what Albert says in his famous farewell discourse: "I had already distinguished myself in science, when, obeying the injunction of the Blessed Virgin and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, I entered the Order." This fact accords equally with the context of the passages on the figures in stone, as we shall presently show. For he only relates that he was present when the phenomenon was witnessed at Venice. As to the marvellous shell-fish which he saw at Paris, he says: "Many years afterwards, when I was at Paris, among the doctors *et de grege Sancti Dominici*, I saw," &c. This clearly shows, then, that he could not have been in the Order at the time of the first-named occurrence.

to what was strictly necessary, contenting himself with a poor cell, an incommodious bed, and subjecting his will continually, by obedience, to that of others. What a change! he had freely, and for the love of God, renounced all earthly goods, the pleasures and the hopes which the world might offer him! But did not he find ample compensation in the joys of the mind which the silence of the cloister, his intimate intercourse with God, and the peaceful culture of sacred science, afforded him?

He could not, however, remain long at Padua, for the theological studies had not yet begun to flourish there, and the presence of his relations might be inconvenient. He was, then, sent to Bologna to prosecute his studies and to acquire sacred science.<sup>1</sup> The Convent of St. Nicholas, the second cradle of the Order, had for some years possessed the mortal remains of the holy patriarch St. Dominic, who during his lifetime loved to inhabit it: it was there that the new disciple gathered up the strength necessary for the construction of a magnificent and gigantic edifice, that of universal and Christian science. He there re-

<sup>1</sup> According to Rodolph he would remain at Padua. Others, even Quetif, mention Paris as the place of his final studies. This latter datum is not known to ancient authors. The first is improbable for the above-named reason. Bologna, moreover, received from the Pope, as a relic, an arm of Albert, in memory of the abode which the great man made there.

ceived lessons from the most celebrated professors of the University which ranked as the second centre of the scientific world.

If we consult historians on the life and progress of Albert at that period, Rodolph offers us only these few words: "Thus, transplanted into the garden of the Lord, the young warrior strove with holy zeal to preserve the purity of his soul, to consecrate himself entirely to study, and to advance from virtue to virtue." He increased therefore in wisdom and grace, like his Divine model Jesus Christ.

Later biographers,<sup>1</sup> however, speak of grave difficulties which fettered the progress of his studies, a certain dulness of apprehension, clouds which obscured his mind and kept him in the lowest place among his fellow-disciples. They relate that despair took possession of him, and that he formed the design of flying from the Convent, when the Mother of God consoled him in a vision, and endowed him with faculties so extraordinary that his wonderful progress began from that moment.<sup>2</sup>

This pious tradition has undergone many varia-

<sup>1</sup> Leander, Jammy, &c. The afore-mentioned legend ought perhaps to have been recorded here.

<sup>2</sup> It is this which affords Bayle, as is known, the opportunity of making a dull joke, namely, that Albert was metamorphosed by the Mother of God from an ass which he was into a philosopher, and later on from a philosopher into an ass.



tions under the pen of authors; but we cannot admit it as an historical fact. How, indeed, can it be supposed that Albert studying at Bologna should show himself wanting in facility and talent after having devoted himself for ten years at Padua to philosophical studies with a success that merited for him the glorious surname of master? Besides, the contemporary chronicles do not speak of this fact. Albert merely says in his farewell discourse, the authenticity of which is even doubtful, that he always felt himself interiorly excited by the holy Virgin to study with courage;<sup>1</sup> that what he could not acquire by labour he always obtained through prayer; that one day asking for light from on high with special ardour, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him, consoled him, and encouraged him to persevere in the study of science, as well as in the practice of virtue, and finally promised him that his learning should not cause him to lose the true Faith. She assured him, moreover, that all his knowledge should disappear before his death, and that he would die in the innocence and simplicity of a little child.

Such is evidently the germ out of which sprang the legend, with its rich and numerous branches.

<sup>1</sup> No mention is made of the period when this took place. The scene has been laid at a later date, during the course of his professorship.





It merely proves that Albert felt himself continually urged on towards the culture of science, that he was exposed to the temptation of abandoning it,<sup>1</sup> by thinking that faith, joined to holiness of life, sufficed for salvation, which might be injured by study; and that through this vision or dream which the Mother of God sent him, he obtained consolation and new courage to prosecute his scientific researches. Whatever it might have been, it is certain that he overcame all the assaults of the tempter, and that at Bologna as at Padua, buried in indefatigable application and continual prayer, he made wonderful progress. "He was accustomed," says Rodolph, "to arm himself with the shield of prayer and strength, according to the advice of the prophet, making them his spiritual wings for a bolder flight." He soon surpassed his fellow-disciples, although Master Jordan had gathered together in the Convent of St. Nicholas the flower of the learned youth. Whatever embraced the circle of knowledge was laid open to his intelligence, the thickest darkness disappeared before him, and no difficulty could subdue his passion for learning.<sup>2</sup> We are ignorant who the

<sup>1</sup> It was the period when the children of St. Francis commenced to conquer heaven to themselves, and the world to our Lord by the *folly* of holy love.

<sup>2</sup> Jammy, and others.

masters were whose theological lectures Albert then attended.

It is not difficult to determine the outline of the subject-matter taught at that period. Every scholastic would in the first place acquire a deep knowledge of Holy Scripture. Each of the books which compose it was explained by the professors according to the allegoric method which was known, and which is so conducive to the edification of souls, inasmuch as it gives to the facts and words of Scripture a meaning which is at the same time practical, profound, and spiritual. As many scholars as assisted at these courses were called "Biblici," students of the Bible; and they were exclusively engaged therein, for the simultaneous study of many authors was not adopted in the schools of the Middle Ages. They read for several years the Holy Scripture and that alone, and this system was justified by the marvellous success that attended it. We cannot doubt that our Albert followed this plan; since, going through his writings, passages from the Holy Books succeed each other with an original purpose. The Old and New Testaments were so familiar to him that he was able to explain and compare their texts with surprising facility.

To the study of the Holy Scriptures succeeded

that of the Sentences of Peter the Lombard, which we should call at the present day dogma and moral. This was the whole doctrine of the Church collected together by the great Parisian Professor, with the elucidations and amplifications of later masters, who subjected the matter to a still deeper analysis, sought for new proofs and solved every doubt. The professor could take into his chair the book of Peter the Lombard, but on condition that he explained to his auditory, without any foreign help, its expositions and developments. While this course lasted, which extended over a period of several years, the theologians were styled "Sententiarii," students of the Sentences. Besides a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and of the doctrines of Peter the Lombard, they were required to have a perfect acquaintance with the works of those enlightened men whom the Church venerates as her Fathers and Doctors, the born witnesses and interpreters of revelation. Is it not, in effect, the Fathers of the Church who give the most perfect and elaborate exegesis of Scripture? Their writings are a storehouse of dogma and moral. The works of Albert prove the indefatigable zeal with which he drew from those pure sources of Divine wisdom. He continually quotes the writings of these venerable men, especially those of the Latin Fathers:

St. Jerome,<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine,<sup>2</sup> St. Ambrose,<sup>3</sup> St. Gregory the Great, St. Hilary, St. Bernard,<sup>4</sup> and St. Isidore of Seville.

As to the Greek writers, Denis the Pseudonymous, St. John Chrysostom, and St. John Damascene appear to have been alone accessible. The study of dogma naturally demanded a knowledge and an appreciation of the errors which for centuries rose up against Catholic truth. Albert is no more a stranger to this branch of ecclesiastical history than to all the rest. He frequently speaks of the heresies of Beringer, Arius, Sabellius, Gilbert de la Porrée, and David of Dinando. He attacks and refutes them always with a full knowledge of the cause, and with great superiority of mind.

Such were almost the matters which, at that period, absorbed, in the silence of the cell, or amidst the throng of the schools, the active mind of the young Religious. We do not find, however, any positive information on the subject of his studies, their duration, and his promotion to the priesthood. Yet the usages and method of teaching in the Middle Ages lead us to suppose that Albert spent at least six years in the sanctuary of theological

<sup>1</sup> Serm. de Michaele, Archang.

<sup>2</sup> "P. ex de Appreh." p. 61. Sermo de Mattheo, Apost., &c.

<sup>3</sup> "De Sacrificio Missæ," p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Serm. de B. Mauritio.

study. All that we gather from Rodolph in reference to that period of the great master's life is reduced to the following data: "Albert," he says, "was a true lover of wisdom, even in his outward appearance. He never sought after the fleeting glory of time, but only wisdom, and strove by every means in his power to plant in the garden of his soul, what is sweeter far than honey, the flowers of every virtue. His Superiors being desirous to reward his labours and learning, which placed him at the head of his brethren, promoted him to the grade of lector, and sent him to Cologne, the famous metropolis of Germany.

Thus did this precious plant taken from the banks of the Danube, grow under the influence of Divine grace and of the beautiful sky of Italy, till he became a majestic tree and full of vigour; now transplanted into Germany, he goes forth to rejoice and fortify, with the rich fruits of wisdom and virtue, thousands of souls in science and life. When and by what route did Albert accomplish his return to his native country? We know not. It was probably in the interval from 1228 to 1230; the young Lector, consequently, had attained his thirty-sixth year.

## CHAPTER V.

ALBERT A PROFESSOR AND PREACHER IN THE GERMAN  
CITIES.

THE new Order of St. Dominic had taken deep root everywhere, in Germany as elsewhere, with incredible rapidity. Every generous mind was convinced that public life stood in need of being renewed and regenerated by a new element. Here and there virtue still showed its front; works of piety, acts of charity and of sacrifice were not rare, and the noble creations in science and art were admired; yet society, taken in general, was tainted with shameful corruption. The constant altercations between the bishops and the cities on the subject of manorial rights, the hatred of parties in the communes and throughout entire countries, the immense wealth acquired through commerce, and, what is its inevitable result, envy, a thirst for pleasure and luxurious habits;<sup>1</sup> the worldly spirit

<sup>1</sup> Albert depicts in his sermons all these evils of the time, particularly dancings, theatres, luxury, debauchery, the shameful

and the ambition and vain glory, which corrupted the majority of the clergy: all tended to show the imperative necessity of reform. The Mendicant Orders were with reason looked upon as instruments raised up by God to effect this moral revival: their very exterior was a protest against these deplorable abuses. Hence the Pope granted them apostolic powers which by right belonged to the bishops, and sent them everywhere to preach the Gospel and to hear the confessions of the faithful. The good bishops, who beheld with sorrow this depravity of morals rise like the waves of an angry sea, hastened to invite these heavenly messengers into their dioceses. It was thus that, in 1221, the Friar-Preachers went from Paris to Cologne, the City so justly proud of its numerous and magnificent churches; they were under the direction of Brother Henry, who entered the Order, with the celebrated Jordan of Saxony, at Paris, where they received together the Bachelor's degree. These Religious established themselves in the Stolkstrasse (Vicus Stolkorum), not far from the Cathedral, superstitions of the women, and the sloth of the Canons, who scarcely took the trouble to open their lips sufficiently in choir. See the three sermons, "De Nativ. B. V. M.," "De Sacrificio Missæ," "Serm. de Assumpt.;" but especially the Sermon for the Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany. His complaints against the bishops and the clergy are chiefly to be found in his Commentary on St. Luke.



where they took possession of a *Hospitium*, with its chapel, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen.<sup>1</sup>

They speedily gained, by a life conformed to their Rule, and holy poverty, the confidence and goodwill of the people, who flocked in crowds to them. Many of the secular clergy complained to the noble Archbishop Engelbert of the monks invading the domain of others and robbing the Parish Priests of the affections of the faithful, by attaching them to their eloquent preaching. But the worthy pastor, unmoved by their complaints, quietly replied: "So long as we witness nothing but what is good in them, let them act!"

"We fear," rejoined the adversaries, "lest these be the monks whom the holy virgin Hildegarde announced, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, who will place the clergy in danger and the City under oppression."

"If this prediction comes from God," said Engelbert, "it is fitting that it be accomplished." So the Friar-Preachers pursued their work, and gained innumerable souls to Christ. The most dexterous of them was the Prior of the small Convent, Brother Henry, whom his Superior and friend, Jordan of Saxony, paints in most charming colours. "We do not remember," he says,

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph, cap. iii.



“having known before him, at Paris, a more amiable and eloquent preacher. God filled this vessel of election with all the treasures of His grace. His obedience was prompt, his patience unalterable, his sweetness seducing, and his charity overflowed all that surrounded him. His morals were pure, his heart was frank and his flesh was virginal. He never, throughout his whole life, fixed his gaze upon women, or treated them with any degree of familiarity. His conversation was modest, his speech was fluent, his mind was adorned with great refinement, his countenance was pleasing, he was remarkably handsome. He wrote well, he taught perfectly, and his voice was of angelic sweetness. He was never seen to be sad or troubled; he was ever calm and joyous. There was nothing austere about him; he was all mercy. He attached hearts to himself in such a manner, and showed himself so amiable towards all, that he appeared, after a moment’s conversation, as though you were the only one in the world whom he loved. God truly endowed him with irresistible attractions, and, despite this evident superiority, this perfection in everything, he was never proud, because he had learned of Christ to be meek and humble of heart.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quetif and Echard, “*Script. Dom.*” I. p. 94.

After such a picture, need it surprise us to witness the people of Cologne flocking around the new Religious, as of old the crowds pressed upon our Lord? When Brother Henry departed this life,<sup>1</sup> and Brother Leo had replaced him in his office of Prior, the new star which was about to rise in the Order, Brother Albert, arrived in the metropolis of the German Empire to labour for God's glory, the salvation of souls, and the increase of the Dominican family; his principal work was the foundation of a school which should bear testimony to Catholic truth, and attract to it numerous disciples. God's grace had enabled him to increase in piety and wisdom like a fruitful tree, and it was at Cologne that he commenced to impart to others what he himself had drawn from the source of our Lord. He took possession of that chair which he occupied for more than half a century. We find no references to the subjects which he taught in that school, from which a celebrated University was one day to spring. History merely relates that Albert went to Cologne to teach the natural and sacred sciences.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This was between 1228 and 1233, for in 1234 Jordan of Saxony speaks of Brother Henry as already dead (see above).

<sup>2</sup> Jammy. At that time philosophy was not separated from theology, not being considered a special faculty. The professors frequently taught logic and the other sciences.

He doubtless taught the liberal arts, and explained the books of Aristotle on logic, ethics, and physics, and also some portions of Holy Scripture and the Sentences.<sup>1</sup> A vast number of disciples flocked to hear him. Among these Thomas of Cantimpré distinguished himself, who took the habit of the Order in 1232, and prided himself in after-times on having, during long years, heard the lectures of Albert.<sup>2</sup> We know but little respecting the first sojourn of Albert at Cologne. Prussia contents himself with saying that he taught the Sentences there on two different occasions, which would show an interval of four years. As the sun sheds its beneficent rays far and wide, and develops new life on every side, so Albert did not confine his happy influence simply to the City of Cologne. Scarcely had he devoted a few years, in the silence of retreat, to his cherished studies and the duties of his first lectureship, than the voice of his Superior called him to the offices wherein his talents were necessary. Every time that a Convent of Friar-Preachers was established in any of the German

<sup>1</sup> Prussia. "Philosophiam et theologiam e superiori loco docuit." See Eclard, "Script. Dom." I. p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> In the work already quoted, "Bonum Universale de Apibus," which rendered his name celebrated, and in which he describes the republic of bees as a picture of a spiritual community.

cities Albert received orders to repair thither, in order to facilitate, by his reputation, learning, and virtues, the success and future of the new foundation. Thus, according to history, did he reside at Hildesheim, Strasburg, Friburg in Brisgau, and at Ratisbon.<sup>1</sup> It is even said that he arrived in Paris at that period for his own studies. It is impossible for us to determine precisely the date of his sojourn in each of these cities. But what we are certain of is that these appointments lasted ten years, from 1232 to 1243.

At Hildesheim, the City founded by Louis the Pious and made illustrious by great Bishops, the Friar-Preachers obtained a house under the government of Conrad II. (1221-49). This Bishop, formerly a student, then a Professor of Theology at Paris, doubtless called to Hildesheim the children of St. Dominic, whom he had learned to know, in order that, with their help, science and morality might flourish anew throughout his diocese. Albert could not be overlooked, he whose learning had shed such lustre on the Convent of Cologne. Rodolph and Prussia say that he arrived at Hildesheim in 1233. But the words of Albert himself lead us to believe that it was later, since he relates having witnessed in Saxony,

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph; Echard, I. p. 163; Jammy, etc.

in the year 1240, with a great number of persons, the appearance of a comet;<sup>1</sup> and this was evidently at Hildesheim.

Strasburg also opened its gates early to the Mendicant Orders. Bishop Henry II. of Beringen invited the Dominicans in 1223, and their school soon became celebrated among all the establishments of the great Imperial City.<sup>2</sup> It was necessary that there especially, where the other schools had for a long time possessed masters of acknowledged ability, the new Order should send a man who would surpass all by the renown of his learning and his talent for preaching. That man was Albert, whom we see opening a public course between the years 1230 and 1240. Would it not be at that period also that the building of the modest but charming Dominican Church was begun, which exists even to our own days? It is equally probable that the residence of Albert at Friburg is connected with that at Strasburg, but documents are wanting on this subject.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isag. "in lib. Meteor," cap. xxx.

<sup>2</sup> When Heideloff affirms that Albert resided there so long that he acquired the surname of *Argentinus*, it is necessary for us simply to remark that *Albertinus Argentinensis* is a different personage, being an historian of the fourteenth century, under the Episcopate of Berthold II., as Dr. Schneegans of Strasburg has shown. See Heideloff, "*Der Kleine Altdeutsche (Gothe) etc.*"

<sup>3</sup> Prussia names Friburg first, then Ratisbon, and afterwards Strasburg.

As to Ratisbon, tradition has preserved some traces of Albert's teaching in that City. Ratisbon, at one time an ancient fortress of the Dukes of Bavaria, afterwards a powerful episcopal and imperial city, offered cordial hospitality to the Dominicans. After having, from the year 1218, held possession of this important post, and occupied a modest habitation, from which they went forth to sow everywhere the seed of salvation, by preaching and the direction of souls, these Religious obtained from Bishop Siegfried the old Roman Church of St. Blaise, with leave to build a Convent adjoining it. Thanks to the offerings of the people, the clergy, the nobility, and the citizens, they set to work, and very soon built a magnificent Monastery,<sup>1</sup> which enabled them to extend the sphere of their beneficent influence. There, as elsewhere, they had in view, above all, secondary teaching, which is a preparation for the future. These men of genius employed this means to attract the youth of Ratisbon, the *elite* of whom soon enlarged the new phalanx of Christ, and afterwards gained others to the Christian truth and to

<sup>1</sup> "Solemne Monasterium," it is said. It was then an important edifice. See Gumpelzheimer, I. p. 291, as also the plan of it which our young and learned friend A. Niedermayr, a student of the great Episcopal Seminary of Ratisbon published in the Supplement of the *Postal Gazette* of April 17, 1856.

the commandments of God by public preaching and the arms of science. We already find, in 1230, a school among the Friar-Preachers of Ratisbon. Albert was ordered to repair thither at that epoch,<sup>1</sup> to enlighten it by his teaching, and tradition still points to the locality in which the master, it is said, broke the bread of science. The cloister of the ancient Dominican Convent actually borders on a hall of moderate dimensions,<sup>2</sup> which to this day bears the name of Albert's School.

The famous chair from which his strains of eloquence were heard is still to be seen in all its integrity. Although the cloister and its surroundings, richly ornamented, go no farther back than the fifteenth century, it is nevertheless highly probable that their design belongs to Albert's time, and that this hall was respected in memory of the great master, whose lectures had so often been heard therein. The chair was perhaps originally of simpler design, and more in accord with the humble commencement of a religious house; but later on, when the memory of Albert revived, it was embellished and adorned with the portrait of another

<sup>1</sup> The opinion which holds that Albert only taught at Ratisbon between 1248 and 1260, the period which witnessed his elevation to the episcopal dignity, contradicts the testimony of historians. Prussia says that Albert spent two years at Ratisbon at this epoch.

<sup>2</sup> It is about five metres high, by ten wide.



master. Be it as it may, this place is of high interest to us, for the plan of the cloisters in the Middle Ages was everywhere the same, and we can believe that we have here a faithful indication of the method of teaching and study in Albert's time. Seats are arranged round the walls, the backs of which exhibit a coronation, in the middle of which [are inscriptions in Latin. These are sentences of Holy Scripture, and rules calculated to excite the student to labour, and vigilance against the assaults of the enemy.<sup>1</sup> On these seats, as also on the forms, placed no doubt in the middle of the hall,<sup>2</sup> the scholars sate. It is possible that those who could not find a place along the wall were obliged to content themselves with the centre.<sup>3</sup> It was difficult to take notes of the master's words, in-

<sup>1</sup>They are as follows: "Ama scientiam Scripturarum, et vitia carnis non amabis (Jeremia). Qui addit scientiam, addit et laborem (Salom. Eccl.). Quia scientiam repulisti, repellam te, ne sacerdotio fungaris mihi (Osee). Bonitatem et disciplinam et scientiam doce me (Ps. cxviii.). Qui fecerit et docuerit, hic magnus vocabitur in regno cœlorum (Matt.). Videte, ne quis vos decipiat per philosophiam secundum elementa mundi et non secundum Christum (Col.)."

<sup>2</sup>On the engraving which serves as a frontispiece to the legend of Albert by Rodolph, forms of this sort are placed in the centre of the hall, in front of the Professor's chair.

<sup>3</sup>It would appear that at this period, in Paris, the students sate upon straw spread on the ground. Hence the name Rue du Fouarre, the place wherein the public course was given (Daniel, "Etudes classiques," p. 119).



asmuch as the seats were without desks. Yet despite this drawback, some still managed to reproduce in writing the expositions given by the Professors.<sup>1</sup> Others were obliged to imprint them on the memory, and to preserve a living recollection of them by questions, controversies, and repetitions among themselves. Others, again, on their return home noted down the concatenation of ideas.<sup>2</sup> The custom of writing was not so general then as in our times, and teaching depended chiefly on oral delivery. In the centre of the hall arose a chair from which wisdom flowed in streams. This monument in oak, so far as it is possible to judge of it by its resemblance to the structure of the seats at Ratisbon, is divided into two parts; being double, and of more than two metres deep, it could accommodate two lectors at once. The hind and upper part is wedged in the wall, and possesses a back which is remarkable for the magnificently carved foliage which embellishes it. The back of the lower chair is even more richly decorated, and its ornaments are disposed in such a manner as to form as it were a crown around the figure of our

<sup>1</sup> Echard relates having seen many copies of these rapid writings in the library of the Sorbonne ("Script. Dom." I. p. 164).

<sup>2</sup> St. Thomas of Aquin adopted this course in regard to the explanation of the Ethics of Aristotle by Albert.

Lord. As to the front part, it bears the image of a Dominican, standing before a desk in the act of giving his lecture. A garland which encircles him discloses the words which he utters : *Timete Deum et date illi honorem, quia veniet hora judicii ejus* (Apoc. xiv.) A second bandrol, placed beneath, bears the name of the doctor : *Vicentius*. On one of the sides a novice is seen attentively listening, his head being covered with the capuce. This doctor can be no other than Vincent Ferrer(1357–1419), the great Professor of dialectics and the Angel of the general judgment, whose image was thus placed before the eyes of the students. We repeat, these ornaments and the chair itself may belong to a more recent period,<sup>1</sup> but it is not less true that we find thereon valuable information respecting the mode of teaching in Albert's time.

The great man occupied the more elevated seat ; the bachelor or licentiate<sup>2</sup> sate below, who was

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that none of the ancient historians allude to this interesting monument, while they entertain us with a long account of other relics of Albert. Harry Hortel maintains that the chair once occupied by St. Thomas of Aquin is still to be seen at Naples.

<sup>2</sup> These titles derive their origin from the Universities. There was naturally no degree of this kind in the German monastic schools ; but the University customs were to some extent imitated. There still exists in the English Universities an institute which is analogous, that of Fellows. We shall call them assistants.

chosen by the master to explain, under his superintendence, the introductions to the books of Aristotle or the Sentences, and to direct the repetitions and debates on the matters explained. The lector, as well as his assistant, was moreover forbidden to read a written lecture. Everything was committed to memory. Free exposition, such was the rule.<sup>1</sup> When, after a more or less considerable time (two or three years), a graduate had furnished, by these scientific repetitions, proofs of his capacity for professorial functions, he was only then admitted into the number of the masters, and could himself preside over the public lectures.<sup>2</sup> It is probable that the residence of Albert in each of the above-named cities lasted no longer than was necessary for the formation of a worthy successor, chosen from among this almost innumerable host of noble youths, who, in Germany as elsewhere, flocked from all parts under the white livery of the Order. Whatever sparkles with the brightness of early morn, whatever is stamped with the freshness of youth and virginal innocence, irresistibly attracts

<sup>1</sup> Echard, I. p. 165. It is said in Daniel that it was allowable to the Professors to bring the written text of Aristotle, the Laws and Sentences, into the class, but not their explanation. This was a privilege granted in later times.

<sup>2</sup> Thus did St. Thomas of Aquin become Albert's assistant at Cologne, then his substitute, as we shall see.

the heart. Thus did the two young Orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis, in Germany, gather, with sweet violence, into their ranks the great and valiant men of that period. Did not the merciful hand of God plant a new paradise in the midst of a corrupt world?

The scientific matters which Albert made the subject of his lectures in all the schools were doubtless the same as those which he had previously taught at Cologne. He appears moreover to have taught grammar, and lectured on mathematics and astronomy.<sup>1</sup> But it was especially to the study of logic and philosophy that the Order of Friar-Preachers attached most importance.<sup>2</sup> It is especially said in a decree of the Chapter: "The study of the liberal arts and sciences embodies great advantages for a Christian. It is useful for the defence of the Faith, attacked not only by pagans and heretics, but even by philosophers. The formation of the mind in the liberal sciences is, then, most necessary in the Church."<sup>3</sup> A General of the Order, a contemporary of Albert, Humbert of Romans (1277), strongly condemns those who deprecate these studies, and compares them to

<sup>1</sup> In the old catalogues of the works given by Prussia and Rodolph are to be found many books on mathematics and grammar.

<sup>2</sup> See Jourdain, I. c. p. 212.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 213.

those who, as it is said in the Book of Kings, were averse to seeing a smith in Israel, for fear of the Hebrews learning from him the art of manufacturing swords and lances. "The study of philosophy," it is said in another place, "is indispensable to the defence of Faith, precisely because the pagans avail themselves of it as an invincible weapon in combating it. It is necessary in order to understand the Holy Scriptures, because there are certain passages of it which cannot be understood but by the aid of philosophy. It heightens the reputation of the Order, for the world despises ignorant monks. It finally shows how insufficient it is. Many, indeed, who do not understand the matters with which philosophers are occupied, make more of them than they really merit; but, after having examined them closely, philosophy appears to them a small matter, especially when compared with theology."<sup>1</sup> It is undeniable then that the lectures given by Albert in the different colleges of the Order consisted of philosophical doctrine, and consequently embraced logic, physics (natural history), and metaphysics. On those occasions he made use of the books of Aristotle, which had long been translated from the Greek into Latin. Might he not also have had, as at Paris, the works

<sup>1</sup> "Expos. Regulæ St. Aug." pars ix. in Bibl. Max. 55.

of the same Philosopher translated from the Arabic? These labours did not prevent him from presiding also over the course of theology and Holy Scripture, although no University had as yet conferred on him the doctor's cap. Our great master, then, in the space of ten years traversed Germany, in order to establish by his teaching new homes of science, destined to inflame souls, and to conquer hearts to the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ. In 1243 he was recalled to Cologne, to undertake the direction of the school already flourishing in the Convent. It is there that God brings to him a disciple worthy of him.

## CHAPTER VI.

ALBERT RETURNS TO COLOGNE—ARRIVAL OF THOMAS OF  
AQUIN.

ALBERT, returning to his beloved vineyard of the professorship, applied himself to its cultivation in the sweat of his brow.<sup>1</sup> The youth who thirsted after knowledge flocked from the far countries round the chair of the master, whose reputation had already spread far and wide. There were seen

<sup>1</sup>Rodolph and other later writers affirm that Albert had also been Vicar-General of the Order from 1236 to 1238, that he had even been proposed for the office of Master-General; that in 1238 he travelled into Spain for the purpose of placing the seals of the Order in the hands of Raymund of Pennafort. Those best acquainted with the history of the Dominicans, Echarid and Quetif, declare that the first of these assertions is not justified by any ancient document, and that, according to the Constitutions of the Order, the Vicariate would pass to the Provincial of Lombardy. These same critics absolutely deny his contention with Hugo of Saint-Cher for the Generalship. Moreover, the labours of Albert as a Professor at that period would with difficulty allow him such journeys, and still less the management of so important a charge. (See "Script. Dom." I. p. 164, Nota.)



at his feet men who ever afterwards plumed themselves on having been his disciples, when they themselves became shining lights in the Church. We know not whether Thomas of Cantimpré, of whom we have spoken, was then at Cologne; but it is certain that at this period Cologne possessed a man whose celebrity bid fair to outshine that of his master. The depth of his genius, the breadth of his knowledge, the number of his works, and the holiness of his life have for ever rendered him the ideal of the Doctor and sage of the Church. This man is Thomas of Aquin, whose history is too intimately bound up with that of Albert for us to omit giving here a brief outline of it.

Thomas, it is known, was descended from the Counts of Aquino, in Calabria, and was born in the year 1226.<sup>1</sup> His family entrusted his early education to the Monks of the celebrated Monte Cassino, and afterwards sent him to the University of Naples. He there attended the learned lectures of Pietro Martini in logic, and those of Pietro d'Ibernia in the natural sciences. But the disorders of a youth which prostituted in debauchery the privileges of birth and fortune, the sorrowful spectacle of a corrupt world, and the political agitations

<sup>1</sup> See Harry Hortel, "Thomas d'Aquin et son époque" (Augsbourg, 1846); and especially the "Acta Sanctorum, Martius,"



caused by the long strife between the House of Suabia and the Church inspired the noble youth, as it did Albert, with a disgust and horror for the world, and forced him, so to speak, to seek a refuge in the solitude of the cloister in order to yield himself to the contemplation of truth and to shield the purity of his soul. He likewise took the habit of St. Dominic, whose Order then shone with the renown of new-born fervour and triumphed in all its works undertaken for the glory of God. What a struggle this admirable youth had to sustain against a family irritated by his determination, before he was allowed to wear peacefully the white scapular of the Friar-Preachers! No power could vanquish this athlete of sixteen. The tears of his mother, the caresses of his sisters, the horrors of a prison, the ill-treatment and the shameful temptations of seduction employed by brothers unworthy of that name, could never move his generous purpose. The matter was carried before the tribunal of the Pope. Thomas defended his own cause, in presence of Innocent V., with holy zeal, without bitterness and pride, but also without weakness. He showed in fervid language the repugnance with which the perishable goods of the world inspired him and the invincible vocation which urged him onwards to the religious life.

This eloquent pleading convinced the judges that Thomas was obeying God Himself, and that he had been faithful throughout his conduct to a special grace. According to some authors,<sup>1</sup> Innocent V., whether on account of the impression which this young man of nineteen made on him, or in order to soften the bitter grief of his family, offered him the Abbey of Monte Cassino; this was one of the highest dignities of the Church in Italy, and he who was invested with it soon received the Roman purple. But Thomas humbly declined it, and implored the Holy Father to crown his goodness by suffering him to lead a poor and hidden life conformed to his Rule. The Pope yielded to his prayer, and Thomas, freed from the ambition of his family, was henceforth able, in the peace of the cloister, to follow without hinderance the counsels of evangelical perfection. Nothing more remained for his Superiors but to provide him with the means of developing his rare and precious talents. John the Teutonic, successor of Raymund of Pennafort, and fourth General of the Order, soon discovered that this stripling would become a luminary of the Church, the glory of science, and the honour of the Order. Thus did he hasten to find a master capable of completing the educa-

<sup>1</sup> Modern critics regard this datum as incorrect.

tion of the illustrious Italian. The Universities of Paris, Bologna, and Salamanca possessed learned Dominican Professors, but Albert of Cologne was the one whom he judged most worthy to set this magnificent diamond. And he himself was pleased to conduct his new disciple to him.

The year 1245 had been fixed for holding a General Chapter at Cologne; Master John could not have chosen an opportunity more favourable to the realisation of his project. They set out on their journey in the month of October, 1244, travelling like Apostles, that is on foot, having nothing but their Breviary and religious habit, and arrived at Cologne in the beginning of the following year, after a brief sojourn in the French capital. What a spectacle, truly observes an author, to witness these two children of St. Dominic silently and slowly entering the old metropolis, the one in quality of Master-General reigning over a commonalty of thirty thousand Religious,<sup>1</sup> and the other bearing within him the elements of a vast, mysterious intellectual empire. "Thomas," says another biographer,<sup>2</sup> "hastened to Cologne with the ardour of a thirsty stag which runs to a fountain of

<sup>1</sup> See Ennen, I. c. p. 20. In 1221 the Order already possessed sixty convents in eight provinces. It counted over thirty thousand members in 1244.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph.

pure water, there to receive from the hand of Albert the cup of wisdom which gives life, and to slake therein the burning thirst that consumed him." The desires of his soul were then finally satisfied: he could seat himself as a disciple at the great master's feet, and inhabit the same house with him. This was in the Stolkstrasse, where at the present day an artillery barracks is erected.

We find in the biographies of the holy Doctor many interesting facts connected with the life and studies of St. Thomas of Aquin in the Convent of Cologne, and under the direction of Albert the Great. Thomas, says one of these, consecrated the whole of his time to prayer, contemplation, or study.<sup>1</sup> Although living in the bosom of a numerous community, whose Religious loaded him with tokens of affection and esteem on account of his reputation, he nevertheless preferred the solitude of his cell. He was silent in recreation; in public he took no part in disputes with the other students. This conduct passed at first for oddness of character; it afterwards became matter of surprise that the Superiors should have believed in the talents of a man so simple, and should have judged him capable of following the

<sup>1</sup> See the Bollandists, seventh of March. "Vita Sancti Thomæ Aquinatis," p. 662.

lectures of Albert the Great. His companions went so far as to style him the dumb ox, or the great Sicilian ox. Thomas patiently bore these pleasantries, regarding them as a precious means of practising humility. But it happened that a novice, moved with compassion, offered to help him in his studies and to repeat to him the expositions of the Professors. The young foreigner thankfully accepted the offer. One day, however, the subject for study presented inextricable difficulties. The obliging tutor offered, but in vain, to explain what he himself did not understand. Thomas then taking up the book untied the knot with extreme ease, put the question on its true basis, and forthwith expounded it with marvellous lucidity. His astonished companion implored him to become thenceforth his teacher, and to exercise in his regard the functions which he had so rashly undertaken. Thomas would not consent till after repeated importunities, and then only on condition that the most rigorous silence should be kept in regard to what had taken place. Sometime afterwards Albert proposed to his pupils a most difficult question on the subject of the interpretation of the book, "De Divinis Nominibus," commonly attributed to St. Denis the Arcopagite. Being asked by his companion to give him his written opinion

on the subject, Thomas immediately set to work, and solved the problem with all the penetration and dexterity of an accomplished dialectician. The manuscript having accidentally fallen into Albert's hands, the great man was charmed with the perfection of the work, and was desirous to know who the author might be. His name was eagerly made known to him, and he had at the same time the consolation to learn with what sweetness and modesty the pious young man had acted in regard to his unlucky tutor.

Albert, so keen-sighted and able to read character, had for a long time noticed the marvellous dispositions of his noble disciple, whose humble and solitary life could not escape him. His prevision was fully realised in the first essay. He however still wished to subject him to a public trial, in order that this luminary might shine before all his disciples. He then told Thomas to prepare himself for a disputation on the following day in solemn assembly. The young man obeyed, the contest took place, and the hopes of the master were greatly surpassed. It was difficult to know which to admire the most in this youthful Religious, the ease and lucidity with which he developed the most obscure passages, the science and erudition on which he founded his arguments, or the charm

of his speech which ravished all who heard him. Albert had reserved for the illustrious scholar a trial of a most delicate kind. "Brother Thomas," he exclaimed in a tone of apparent reproach, "you appear to perform less the part of respondent than that of master." "Master," Thomas modestly replied, "I know not how to treat the question otherwise."<sup>1</sup> "Well, continue according to your method," answered Albert, "but remember that I have many objections to make." He then started his objections, and presented the most inextricable difficulties one after another; these served but to bring into full light the marvellous penetration of the respondent's mind. Albert, no longer able to restrain his admiration, exclaimed in these prophetic words: "You call this young man a dumb ox; but I declare to you that so loud will be his bellowing in doctrine that it will resound throughout the world."

From that moment Albert was fully convinced of the eminent qualities and special fitness of his

<sup>1</sup> We observe here that Thomas of Aquin was called upon to defend a thesis against an adversary chosen by Albert. His conclusions were so precise and indubitable that the master exclaimed, "The conclusions come within the master's province, and you speak as though you were already a master." It was, in fact, the master's place to draw the conclusions in matters under discussion. On this occasion, on the contrary, Albert himself appears to have become the disputant.



disciple for the study of science, and felt himself doubly bound to cultivate with the greatest care this precious plant confided to him by his Superiors. Not content with procuring him a cell near to his own,<sup>1</sup> he even allowed him to share the results of his own laborious researches, and chose him as the companion of his walks. It was to Thomas that he some time afterwards confided the duties of the lectorate during his absence.

Thus was Albert eager to raise the young Sicilian to the honourable post of his assistant in the public lectures. Thomas was become his well-beloved, and the joy of his heart, for he beheld in him the germ of a powerful means of glorifying God. Under his eyes, and through the great man's care, the Angelic Doctor grew in knowledge and holiness for the honour of the Order and of the Church. Albert laid in this noble youth a foundation of science so immovable," says an ancient writer, "that all who have since built upon this rock (the doctrine of St. Thomas) remain firm and unshaken to this day." Another biographer expresses himself thus: "Like the sun which shares its light with the moon, Albert im-

<sup>1</sup> The cells of these two heroes of science were still to be seen at Cologne at the commencement of the present century (Bianco, "Hist. de l'Université de Cologne").



planted science in Thomas of Aquin, who, in his turn, sought incessantly to clothe himself with the scientific mantle of his Elias.”

Unfortunately this first and happy meeting of our two great men in the silence and peace of the cloister at Cologne was not of long duration. Soon the voice of obedience called them forth to a field of labour where their light might shine with more brilliancy and splendour. This was Paris, the eye of the world and the centre of intellectual motion at that period.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ALBERT A PROFESSOR AT PARIS.

THE Order of Friar-Preachers had for some years possessed a flourishing house in Paris, the metropolis of learning at this period. The holy Patriarch Dominic sent thither, in 1216, a small colony consisting of four Religious, simple men who were destined soon to acquire a golden sceptre for their Order in the empire of intellect. Arrived in that capital, in the train of Matthew of France, they tenanted at first a house in the vicinity of the *Hospitium* of Notre Dame, near the Archiepiscopal Palace. Two years had scarce elapsed when they obtained a magnificent establishment. John de Barrastre, the king's chaplain and a Professor at the University, founded near one of the gates of the city, called the gate of Orleans or Narbonne, a *Hospitium* for pilgrims, dedicated to St. James; doubtless because he intended it for the use of travellers who repaired to the tomb of the great

Apostle at Compostella. He ceded it, in 1218, to the newly arrived Friar-Preachers, who converted it into a cenacle of apostles, a school of *savants*, and the sepulchre of kings. The good Religious soon became well known; crowds of people assisted at their sermons, while important conquests were made among the numerous students who flocked to Paris from every country of Europe. In the summer of 1219 the Convent already numbered thirty priests, whose eloquent preaching was sought after by an eager multitude. Rich donations soon abounded; but the Dominicans desired above all to obtain a chair in the University, this being the surest way to multiply themselves, to win public esteem, and to establish a salutary influence over youth and learning. Till then their schools were open only to the members of the Order. But the enterprise was not easy, and success was still more doubtful. The University jealously guarded its ancient privileges, to which belonged the right of disposing of chairs at pleasure. It feared to weaken its independence by admitting the Religious, who, allied to their Superiors by an absolute submission, would be led by them, regardless of the traditions and authorities of the school. Thus did it deny them admission into its learned corporation. But the

year 1228 offered the latter an unlooked-for opportunity of attaining their end. In consequence of a dispute that arose between Queen Blanche and the authorities of the University, who were unable to obtain redress for the ill-treatment which one of their body had sustained, they suspended their course and withdrew from Paris, some to Rheims, and others to Angers. The Dominicans, profiting by the absence of the lay Professors, petitioned the Archbishop and the Chancellor to found a chair for their Order. They obtained it after some delay, and even established a second in the course of the year 1230. Brother Roland of Cremona and John of St. Giles were the first to teach in the University. Irritated by this flagrant violation of its ancient rights, the University loudly protested, and thundered forth its decrees of interdict against the audacious Preachers. This measure gave rise, for the space of four years, to a war of the pen and of bitter invective, marked, as was not unfrequent at this period, with a violence that was deeply to be regretted. Love and hatred were then equally energetic. This conflict, however, could not result otherwise than in suffering the Religious to occupy their chairs of teaching in peace.

The tempest roared once more in all its fury

when the General Chapter of the Order was held at Cologne, where Thomas of Aquin had sojourned scarcely one year. This was on the 4th of June, 1245.<sup>1</sup> The Superiors, convinced of the admirable success obtained by Thomas under Albert's direction, as also of the talents and merits of the illustrious Master himself, resolved to send both to Paris: Albert to occupy<sup>2</sup> one of the chairs secured by the Order and to eclipse by the renown of his doctrine the reputation of the other Professors, Thomas to pursue the course of his theological studies.

The master and disciple started on their journey to the celebrated capital in the beginning of Lent, and arrived at the Convent of St. James. It is there that one of the most glorious periods of Albert's scholastic career opens to our view. He commenced almost immediately with the Sentences of Peter Lombard. He acquitted himself of this task with such depth and subtlety of

<sup>1</sup> Echard is of opinion that he was sent thither in the capacity of Licentiate or Bachelor, to teach under a Master in Theology, in order to qualify himself, after three years of teaching, for the doctor's cap. ("Script. Ord. Dom." I. p. 166.)

<sup>2</sup> His contemporary, Thomas of Cantimpré, observes, "Thomas of Aquin came to Cologne and studied there until the celebrated Lector Albert was sent to Paris, where he obtained a theological chair on account of his unrivalled learning" ("Lib. Apum." cap. xx.).

reasoning that his auditors were lost in admiration of him.

Among the numerous disciples gathered round his chair from every country were princes, bishops, prelates, counts, rich and poor, religious and seculars, and if we are to believe later writers there was no hall large enough to contain the vast multitude, so that he was frequently obliged to lecture in the open air.<sup>1</sup> The memory of it is still preserved in Paris to this day. There is, moreover, not far from Notre Dame, the Place Maubert (du Maitre Albert), where also may be seen the ruins of a small Gothic church, with the cells of a Convent. On the rising ground is a fountain whence Albert addressed the multitudes, who were seated at his feet on straw spread upon the ground. This story, however, is treated as a fable by Natalis Alexander<sup>2</sup> and Echard, who affirm that Maubert was the name of the proprietor of the place who styled it thus, and that the Friar-Preachers then owned large buildings and gardens which were sufficient for the masters and all their disciples. Be this as it may, it is certain that Albert's name was already known far and wide, and that his word was held as an oracle. Was there a solution of some abstract

<sup>1</sup> Prussia, Rodolph, Jammy, and others.

<sup>2</sup> "Hist. Eccles.," and Echard, I. p. 166.

point of science needed, Albert was the person appealed to; was an explanation of some unknown phenomenon sought for, his opinion was alone decisive. He himself relates a similar case which shows the esteem of which he was the object in the most distinguished circles in Paris. "When I was in Paris," he says, "among the doctors and in the Order (*de grege*) of St. Dominic, the son of the King of Castile came thither to prosecute his studies. The Prince's cooks having one day bought some fish, discovered one among them which is called in Latin *peccet*, but more commonly *pleiss*, and which was very large. Opening it, they found in the stomach a big oyster-shell, which his Highness sent to me in token of friendship. This shell bore on the concave and smooth side the print of three reptiles with their heads erect, and so perfectly shaped that the eyes, despite their smallness, were quite perceptible. On the outer side were ten serpents bound together by the neck, but separated at the head and the rest of the body. It was easy to see on each of those prints the opening of the mouth and the tail of those animals. For a long time I possessed this precious shell; many persons saw and examined it. At length I sent it as a present to one of my friends in Germany."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Physic," p. 238; "Meteor," lib. i. tract. 3, cap. v.

We see by the recital of the above fact what a halo then encircled the name of Albert in Paris. He enjoyed the reputation of the most profound interpreter of nature, so much so that persons were eager to submit to his judgment the singular phenomena of nature, and to make him similar presents. This anecdote also serves to determine a precise period; for the Prince in question could only have been the son of Ferdinand III., King of Castile, who sent his two sons, Philip and Sancho, Canons of Toledo, to pursue the higher studies. These two Princes, in fact, resided in Paris during the year 1245, where John, Archbishop of Toledo, visited them after a council held at Lyons.<sup>1</sup>

The name of Albert is still more honourably mentioned in a public Act of the same period. The Jewish Talmud having been denounced to the Holy See as replete with error and immoral teaching, the Papal Legate, Odo, Bishop of Tusculum requested the Rabbins to forward those books to him. He submitted them to the most distinguished men in Paris, and then pronounced the following sentence against them on the 15th of May, 1248:—

“In the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> “Primacia de la Santa Iglesia de Toledo,” par Diego de Casteljon, vol. ii. p. 757; Jourdain, p. 288.



“The Jewish Rabbins having sent to us, invested with apostolic authority, some of their books entitled the Talmud, we have caused them to be examined by competent persons, experienced in such matters, fearing God and zealous for the Faith. Since we have discovered them to be full of innumerable errors, abuses, blasphemies, and impieties which can neither be read nor heard without exciting scandal, and as the said books cannot be tolerated without prejudice to the Christian Faith, we hereby declare, in accordance with the advice of the learned men whom we have consulted to this effect, that they cannot be suffered to exist in any shape or be returned to the Israelite doctors, and we condemn them by this present sentence. As to other works of this nature which the Rabbins have not yet delivered to us, despite our frequent remonstrances, or which we have not yet been able to sufficiently examine, we shall judge of them as time and opportunity shall enable us, and pronounce on them according to justice.”

Among the signatures of the doctors by whose advice this condemnation was passed, we find, besides those of William, Bishop of Paris, the Abbot of St. Victor, the dignitaries and theological Professors of the University, the names of three Dominican Doctors, namely, John Pungensasinum,

Albert the Teutonic (Theutonicus), and Stephen of Autun.<sup>1</sup> Albert, who at that time taught the Sentences<sup>2</sup> at the University of Paris with his two brethren, appears to us then, for the second time, surrounded with honours and reckoned among the counsellors of the Apostolic Legate.

The document reproduced above gives us an insight into the religious and scientific life of the Convent of St. James in Paris, as well as of the topographical arrangements of the University at this period. We need not suppose that the Professors lectured in a vast building set apart solely for the high studies. The University buildings were not larger then than at the present day. Nor did the name of University mean an assembly of doctors in one place, but of masters, inasmuch as they formed a distinct corporation. The choice of the places of meeting was left to the pleasure of those who were authorised to teach. Hence it was that public courses were given in all parts of the City. They who professed the arts taught in the Rue de Paille, while the logicians and theologians gave their lectures in the cloisters and

<sup>1</sup> Echard, "Script. Dom." I. p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Echard thinks that Albert in 1245 taught as a Bachelor under a Master in Theology, that he became a Master in 1246, and that in 1247 he finished his three years of exercise with the view of receiving from the hands of the Chancellor the doctor's cap.

colleges, which soon increased to eighteen.<sup>1</sup> The most renowned theological school was unquestionably the Convent of the Friar-Preachers, who had the right to hold two chairs for the teaching of this science. They were occupied, as we have said, in 1248 by three celebrated men: John Pungensasinum,<sup>2</sup> whose three years of preparatory lectorship were completed; Albert, who for the same space of time explained, in the capacity of Master, the Sentences of the Lombard; and Stephen of Autun, who spent only two years in teaching. The rule was that no one could lecture on theology in the University before he had for three consecutive years furnished proofs of his capacity, by teaching first under a Master, then alone, afterwards with a Bachelor, and finally had been subjected to divers academical tests.

The Friar-Preachers being obliged to render the advantages of the Paris University equally accessible to all the French and foreign Religious of their Order, which was at that time the most renowned school throughout the world, their chairs were for this reason always occupied by a Frenchman and a foreigner; hence it is that we find Albert at work, at this period, as the representative of the German

<sup>1</sup> See Daniel, I. c. p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Descended from the celebrated family of the Poinlane (Echard, I. p. 119).

Dominicans. We can also imagine that the Order of Friar-Preachers counted among the inmates of St James's a great number of distinguished *savants*,<sup>1</sup> at whose feet sate Thomas of Aquin, followed by an ardent and studious youth. Rodolph cites thirteen such,<sup>2</sup> all upright before God and men, and giving joy to the Church by the success of their indefatigable zeal. What a beautiful and touching spectacle! Every difference of nationality disappears under the folds of the white habit of St. Dominic. Men come from the east and the west, from the north and the south. Germans and Romans dwelling beneath the same roof, united together by the bonds of the most ardent charity; they have at heart only the interests of science, the establishment and propagation of God's kingdom in souls! Thus verifying the words of the Apostle: "There is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free; but all are in Christ Jesus."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Echard, it is true, affirms the contrary, saying that independently of this they would have been, like John, Albert, and Stephen, summoned to the Council by the Legate Odo. But it must be borne in mind that the Bishop of Tusculum summoned the theologians and canonists only, and not the professors of other branches, who could not vote on the matters dealt with.

<sup>2</sup> These personages no doubt dwelt successively at the Convent of St. James during the three first years. Prussia is of this opinion (p. 98).

<sup>3</sup> Epistle to the Galatians, iii. 28.



Yet the centre of scientific activity in the Convent of St. James was undoubtedly Albert. He was incessantly occupied; his successes and his multiplied studies and the burden of the lectorate were such that it would be especially to the period of his sojourn in Paris that this magnificent eulogy belongs, which is commonly bestowed on Albert the Great: "You enlightened all others, your writings made you illustrious, you illumined the earth, for you possessed a knowledge of all that it is possible to know."<sup>1</sup>

There is, moreover, a tradition belonging to this period which we cannot pass over in silence. It is recorded by Thomas of Cantimpré, a disciple of Albert the Great, who assures us of his having frequently heard it related of the great Master himself. "To understand," he says, "the degree of perfection to which the servant of God at that time attained, it suffices to know that the enemy of all good, the old serpent, wished to turn him from the healthy practice of study and to deprive him of his cherished science. One day, while Albert, seated at his desk in his humble cell at the Convent of St. James, was engaged with his

<sup>1</sup> Cunctis luxisti,  
Scriptis præclarus fuisti,  
Mundo luxisti,  
Quia totum scibile scisti.—JAMMY.

usual ardour in solving some scientific problem, the unclean spirit appeared to him in the garb of a Dominican Friar. He entertained him at first by feigning modesty and compassion at his excessive application to study. He represented to him that he weakened his body and mind, that he was unmindful of his age and health; that, in a word, he spent his time in occupations that were foreign to his profession, without thinking of himself. Albert, interiorly warned by the Divine Spirit of the impostor's design, contented himself with making the sign of the Cross, and the phantom disappeared." Thus speaks the old chronicle. It is certain that Albert treated this apparition as the visit of an inhabitant of hell. It might be supposed, without recurring to the marvellous, that this was not the devil, but a member of the Order who, being solely devoted to the ascetic life, charitably exhorted Albert not to occupy himself with the thousand phenomena of nature, but only with his salvation. Be this as it may, it is clear that Albert treated this advice as a perfidious insinuation of hell, and that he was convinced that the incessant culture of science was his veritable calling.

## CHAPTER VIII.

ALBERT RETURNS TO COLOGNE AND THERE RESUMES HIS TEACHING—HIS RELIGIOUS PRACTICES—HIS BOOKS OF PIETY—PICTURES OF HIS PRAYERS AND DISCOURSES.

IN the year 1248 the twenty-eighth General Chapter of the Friar-Preachers was held in Paris, which, in accordance with the Constitutions, then shared this honour with the celebrated City of Bologna. The assembled Fathers confirmed a resolution already passed, of founding a school of learning in the four principal houses of the Order, that the young men might be enabled to pursue their studies and obtain academical degrees in theology. The Convent of Bologna was selected for Lombardy, that of Oxford for England, Montpellier for Provence, and Cologne for Germany. They doubtless desired, by this means, to replace in some sort the Universities, whose access was possible only to a small number of Religious of

<sup>1</sup> See Ennen, I. c. p. 22.



the Order, and thus to place their advantages within the easy reach of all. The man whom the Superiors chose to direct the new and important creation at Cologne was Albert the Great, who had but recently received the doctor's cap in Paris. Thomas of Aquin was to accompany him on his return to Cologne, in order to teach in the capacity of assistant and under the title of Master of Studies. Thus were the foundations of a public school laid in the German metropolis, which, after an existence of one hundred and forty years, was destined to become a University of world-wide celebrity.

It was in the autumn of the year 1248 when Albert, accompanied by his dear and beloved disciple, set out on his journey to Cologne and resumed his teaching, which on this occasion was to be bestowed, not only on the members of his Order, but likewise on the laity. The resplendent luminary had scarce reappeared, his glorious name had hardly resounded through the Rhenish Provinces, when multitudes of students flocked from every country around his chair. It was the period when the general studies<sup>1</sup> and theo-

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph. It is also said in the lectures of Peter of Prussia: "Sub eo floruit in Coloniâ studium generale: mox ad eum ex omni natione et provinciâ discipulorum convolabant xamina."



logical science attained their highest degree of splendour. Out of all the names of the youth who at this period studied under Albert, two only besides that of Thomas of Aquin have reached us. The first, Ambrose of Siena, having studied at Paris under Albert (this well of physical and theological science), afterwards became a Professor at Cologne,<sup>1</sup> and died at Rome, in the odour of sanctity, after having won the admiration of that City by the splendour of his doctrine.

The second was Ulrich d'Engelbrecht (Engelberti), of Strasburg, who, after having been a disciple of Albert, taught at Strasburg, became Provincial of the Order, and died suddenly at Paris, where he was engaged in explaining the Sentences. He is illustrious as a fruitful writer on philosophical and theological matters, and as the constructor of magnificent organs at Strasburg.<sup>2</sup> This latter fact proves that he perfected himself especially in the mechanical and physical arts under Albert's tuition.

It is certain that our blessed master numbered,

<sup>1</sup> We read in the "Catalog. Ordinis." tom. iii.: "Studuit Parisiis, mox Coloniae rogatu Imperatoris ac praelatorum jussu docuit." Echard, "Script. Dom." I. p. 401.

<sup>2</sup> Echard, I. p. 356; and the "Histoire de la Cathédrale de Strasbourg," par Khreiber (p. 69), who relates this fact from Grandidier, p. 38.

then, among his disciples many distinguished men, whose names have not descended to posterity. But we have at least some interesting details of the life and labours of Albert, which we will string together here.

We shall mention first a record which shows that Albert knew how to join the culture of science to the practice of the most ardent piety. His pupil, Thomas of Cantimpré, relates that, during the long years of his scholastic life, he daily recited the Psalter of David. It was also his custom, after his lecture, to devote some time to spiritual reading and holy meditation. He thus inspired his disciples with indefatigable ardour for the study of science, at the same time that he offered them the example of a holy and perfect life. Rodolph says, on the testimony of Thomas of Cantimpré: "Ought it to astonish us after this that Albert should be enriched with superhuman knowledge, and that his word should inflame the heart more than that of other masters? We know now from what source those transports of love proceeded which we see so frequently burst forth from his numerous writings." If the recital of his practices of piety did not rest on the testimony of one who was his pupil and confidant, we might with difficulty believe in

them. We should be tempted to think it impossible for a Professor so occupied, a writer whose works embrace not less than twenty folios,<sup>1</sup> should even have found the time necessary for the recital of the Psalter. But it is a fact which ought to convince us once for all that Albert was also as great in learning as in prayer.

Further on we read: "What shows us how much Albert strove to impart, even to the people, the result of his learned researches, and to change the problems which he solved into virtues calculated to engender piety in souls, are the four books of the Sentences, which he transformed into so many formulas of prayer.

"He wrote alike a short paraphrase of the Gospels and then reduced them to prayers, in order that the mind and heart might at once be enlightened and inflamed with God's praise. He was not content with the usual invocations in the Litanies; but, after having increased them, he composed in honour of each of the Saints a prayer of few words, but full of meaning."

Thus did our blessed master labour always to stir up in himself and in others the flames of devotion. If it be true that he converted into prayers the Summa

<sup>1</sup> See Jammy. An author in Fabricius attributes eight hundred works to Albert ("Bibl. Med. et inf. Lat.").

of the Catholic Faith, such as is found in the Sentences of the Lombard, it may be said that he did what Peter Canisius attempted in his celebrated Catechism, that little work which contains all the points of our belief in a pious form which children can understand, and which served our fathers as the basis of their religious education. This opus-cule, however, is not to be met with in the published works of Albert the Great.<sup>1</sup> We have only a few prayers by him which might have sprung from that work,<sup>2</sup> of which we shall offer an example.

“Be Thou Blessed, O Humanity of my Saviour, Which was united to the Divinity in the womb of a Virgin Mother! Be Thou Blessed, O sublime and eternal Divinity, Who wast pleased to come down to us under the veil of our flesh! Be Thou for ever Blessed Who, by the power of the Holy Ghost, didst unite Thyself to virginal flesh! I salute you also, O Mary, in whom the fulness of the Divinity dwelt! I salute you in whom the fulness of the Holy Ghost dwelt! May the most pure Humanity of the Son be equally Blessed, Which, consecrated by the Father, was born of you! I salute thee, O

<sup>1</sup> Unless it be confounded with the “*Compendium Theologicæ Veritatis*,” vol. xii., which is itself doubtful.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph gives one of them to our Saviour Jesus. A second is found in Jammy (vol. xx. p. 83), applied to the Holy Eucharist.

unspotted virginity, now raised above all the choirs of Angels. Rejoice, O Queen of Heaven,"who didst merit to become the temple of the spotless Humanity of Christ! Rejoice, and be glad, O Virgin of virgins, whose pure flesh united the Divinity with the Sacred Humanity! Rejoice, and be glad, O Spouse of the holy Patriarchs, who wast deemed worthy to nourish and suckle at thy breast the Sacred Humanity. I salute thee, ever blessed and fruitful virginity, which didst merit to obtain the fruit of life and the joys of eternal salvation. Amen."

We have in this touching prayer an example of those formulas through which Albert was desirous to present each of the Articles of Faith to the people under these different aspects. Do we not also discover in this effusion of love a sort of litany which he delighted to recite, since he bestows on the Sacred Humanity of Jesus and on the name of His Virgin Mother a great many attributes in their praise, and renews the salutation before each invocation? When it is said that Albert interpreted the Gospels, and changed the texts into forms of prayer, we are ignorant as to which of his works this allusion refers,<sup>1</sup> and if that work really

<sup>1</sup> This may be the unpublished work which Echard and Quetif quote thus: "Scripsit Albertus super totam Bibliam per

exists. We may, however, without departing too much from the chronological order of Albert's writings, speak here of his sermons on the Gospels<sup>1</sup> for Sundays and Festivals. They are a brief exposition of certain passages in the Gospel, which are nearly almost always followed by a prayer to obtain some special grace. As we have no reason to doubt that Albert discharged the ministry of preaching<sup>2</sup> to the people (a duty which the learned men of that time were by no means averse to) we may trace these sermons back to that period. We shall give a rapid analysis of their plan, and of the truths embodied in them.

Albert appended a touching Preface to his book as follows: "Since according to the testimony of the Eternal Truth," he says, "the unprofitable servant who hides his Master's talent in the earth instead of turning it to account, is judged guilty, deprived of his talent, and cast into the exterior darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashmodum postillæ" (I. p. 179). But Ptolemy of Lucca speaks even more emphatically: "Hic exposuit magnam partem Bibliæ, quia postilavit Evangelia, Epistolas Pauli," &c. (I. c). The beautiful prayers are only to be found in vol. xii. p. 129, and further on.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xii., in Jammy. German translation by Weinzierl, 2 vol. Ratisbon, 1844.

<sup>2</sup> It is expressly said in the lectures of Peter of Prussia: "Albertus per plures annos doctrinando et prædicando fructus celeberrimos attulit."

ing of teeth, I fear lest I should incur the punishment of the wicked and slothful servant, by not employing the modest talent which the Lord has entrusted to me. Yielding, then, to the importunities of some of my friends, I offer these sermons to the public. I entreat those who possess a knowledge of the interpretation of the Scriptures, who draw from their hearts great and magnificent gifts to deposit them in the treasury of the Church, not to grudge me, who am so poor, if I contribute thereto only the widow's mite. The Lord is pleased with what each one offers in His house according to his means. Some bring gold, silver, and precious stones; others rich flax, purple, and the hyacinth. Let it suffice me to offer the fleece of the ram and the goat's hair.<sup>1</sup> Let those who desire the pure wheat have recourse to the works of the great masters, and leave the mean chaff of this book to simple and ignorant people." Such is the Preface, which so touchingly proves the humility and modesty of this giant of learning.

As to the sermons themselves, they embody, as we have stated above, a short paraphrase of the Gospel text, followed by an allegorical meaning with a beautiful application from Scripture and the Fathers. A prayer usually sums up the whole

<sup>1</sup> This idea is borrowed from a Preface of St. Jerome.



discourse. We will select as an example the homily for the First Sunday of Advent. Its subject for meditation is the following passage from the Holy Book: "Tell ye the daughter of Sion: Behold thy King cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and the colt of the foal of her that is used to the yoke" (Matt. xxi. 5). Albert draws the following points from these words: "Who is the King who comes? Who is the daughter of Sion? How does the King come? and why does He come?" These questions are each solved in turn. The King is Christ, on Whom God has bestowed the kingdom. As to the prophecy of Daniel which represents the Son of man as coming on the *clouds* of heaven, observe how Albert explains it: "We understand by the celestial clouds love and truth; it is, in effect, love and truth which cause the dews of mercy to descend upon us. The Son of man comes seated on the clouds, because love and truth were the motives for which He abased Himself by becoming the Son of a Virgin. It is through love that He promises, and it is through love that He is faithful to His word. The holy Virgin was also a cloud on which our Lord came into the world. Isaias said of her: 'Behold the Lord is seated on a luminous cloud, and descends towards Egypt.' This cloud was the Blessed



Virgin, who caused Divine grace to rain upon the earth. She was a luminous cloud, because she was sanctified in the maternal womb, and was never sullied with any stain. The Lord seats Himself by clothing Himself with our flesh, and thus comes into Egypt; by which we understand the world, since the word Egypt signifies darkness and sorrow. Indeed, darkness and ignorance of God then rested on the wicked, while a deep sorrow afflicted the just, who waited in tears the coming of the Redeemer. But Christ by His coming illumined the darkness of the wicked, and dried up the sorrow of the just by the sweetest consolations. By the daughter of Sion is meant every Christian soul, for Sion signifies precept or mirror. The soul ought to be the daughter of precept; that is, she should observe the commandments which God has imposed on her. The word ass is understood to mean the flesh of Christ, burdened with the crimes of all mankind. But the King comes with meekness and justice, as a Deliverer, yet poor." He then concludes with this exhortation: "Let us beseech the Lord to enable us to celebrate the advent of His Son, Who comes meekly, in such a manner that we may have cause to rejoice at His second coming, the general judgment."

The following is an example taken from a sermon

of Albert for the Feast of All Saints. After portraying their beatitude, he explains this passage of the Apocalypse: "The Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall rule them, and shall lead them to the fountains of the waters of life" (vii. 17). "In God's kingdom," he observes, "there are five fountains, to which the Lamb will lead His elect. The first is the source of consolation; there the Lord shall wipe away their tears. The second is the fountain of repose; for after having dried up their tears, the Spirit, that is the Holy Trinity, will say: 'Henceforth they shall rest from their labours.' The third is the source of refreshment; for they who are at rest shall be refreshed and inebriated with the superabundance of God's house. The fourth is the source of joy. The elect, by reason of the heavenly consolations, the sweets of repose and the most agreeable refreshment, shall be in jubilation. They shall sing their salutations with gladness in the courts of the predestined. The fifth is the fountain of love. How ardently will they not love Him, Who consoles them, Who gives them rest and loads them with every good? Isaias, speaking of this fountain, says: 'You shall draw water] with joy from the fountain of the Lord.'"

"On the other hand, in hell there are," he says,

“five fountains, to which the infernal dragon thrusts the souls of the reprobate, that they may drink thereof. The first is called *Styx*. When souls drink of those waters, they conceive a mutual hatred of each other. The second is named *Phlegethon*. The property of its waters is to enkindle the rage of the damned, first against themselves, then against those through whose fault they are lost. The name of the third is *Lethe*: scarcely have the reprobate tasted of it than they lose the knowledge and recollection of past joys and pleasures. The fourth is *Acheron*. The damned on applying their lips to it immediately sink into indescribable sadness. The fifth bears the name of *Cocytus*. The effects of those waters are such that they who drink of them weep without ever experiencing the least consolation.”

Thus do Albert's sermons develop in simple and unaffected language the deepest mysteries of faith and of the Christian life. They may even now be read with great edification, and consoling fruits may be gathered from them. The preacher selects in preference the mystical meaning of the sacred text, doubtless because it serves better to express what is shrouded in mystery, and because it is more calculated to impress the people, a method which St. Jerome himself observed. Who would

not especially admire the holy condescension of the great man! He who is accustomed to speak to the most cultivated intelligences of his time forgets his tremendous knowledge and converses in language as simple as the love which animates it, with ignorant and uncultured men as a father with his children. He expressly declares that he neither speaks nor writes in this book but for the uneducated. Ah! the reason is because Albert seeks in everything only God's honour and the salvation of souls. He was, then, in this a faithful admirer of the Eternal Incarnate Wisdom, a disciple of Christ Jesus Who presented to the world a spectacle till then unknown of boundless attachment to the lowly and the poor, to whom He broke before all the life-giving bread of His doctrine.

## CHAPTER IX.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL WORKS WRITTEN BY  
ALBERT AT THIS PERIOD.

WHAT we have said in regard to the devotion and the homilies of Albert might lead us to suppose that this illustrious man lived in the sweets of the contemplation of the truths of Christianity, in order to dispense to hungry souls, in his lectures or from the pulpit, what he had drawn from the sources of Divine Wisdom. We might perhaps see in him only a Master or a devout preacher, a soul mystically consumed with zeal for the salvation of his fellow-men. This would be to conceive an erroneous notion, to form an imperfect picture of the great man. Contemplation, prayer, and preaching were to him but the accessories of the greatest activity, the adornment, the joy of his life, a sweet recreation and an interior refreshment amid his more serious studies. The principal work to which he felt himself called was,

besides teaching, his labours as a writer, especially as a philosophical writer. It is in this capacity that he truly merits a glory which nothing can tarnish. On this rock of science his greatness as an educator of the human race rests. And it was precisely during the years of his first professorship at Paris and Cologne that he brought to light the most important of his works on these matters. We have proof of this, not only in divers passages of his writings, but in a host of contemporary witnesses besides.<sup>1</sup>

We shall give, in a brief analysis, a list of the works which may date from this period. We must first observe that all these writings of Albert are not entirely his own compositions on philosophical subjects: they are, on the contrary, for the most part paraphrases, that is to say enlarged translations of the writings of Aristotle. Albert completed, corrected, and Christianised this philosophy. It is true that in the preceding ages the Christian

<sup>1</sup> Vincent of Beauvais already quotes the Natural History of Albert, also his "Zoology," which the great master himself considers the last part of Physics. Bartholomew of England alike makes use of it. But Vincent dates his "Speculum Morale" in 1250, and died in the year 1264. Albert's writings on Physics would then be well known. (See Jourdain, p. 288.) Albert moreover relates in the "Isag. in Meteor" (cap. xxx.) that he observed a comet in 1240. His writings on Physics could not therefore date beyond this period.

Apologists, such as Origen, Clement, the great Bishop of Hippo, and later Scotus Erigena, Anselm, as well as the School of St. Victor, set forth in their writings the true meaning, the beauty, and magnificence of the Christian Faith. Some had recourse to scholastic reasoning; others were content with a mystical exposition of the sweet and superabundant fruits which this same Faith germinates in souls. Yet this was done only in detail and very imperfectly, inasmuch as they were wanting in that clearness of form which is requisite in order to explain Christian dogma. To render the harmony which exists between religious faith and natural science obvious—to completely unlock the treasures of revelation, impressed with unity and admirable beauty, and containing nothing contrary to the requirements of human reason, it needed a system of natural science which might serve as a body to generate truth, in order to compare it with Christian truth and serve as a basis. Aristotle's Philosophy appeared suited to supply this want. It embraced, in effect, the whole range of the natural sciences; it presented great ingenuity of conception, an admirable clearness of exposition, and conclusions common to revelation. It was difficult, then, not to view Aristotle as the representative of natural science, and to adopt his forms



and doctrines so as to render Christian truth as intelligible as possible. Hence the reason why the Schoolmen attached themselves to Aristotle, studied, commented on, and adopted his doctrines with such incredible ardour.<sup>1</sup> This was especially the case with the new Orders called to the defence of the Church. But Albert the Great was the first who ventured to tread in this difficult path with full consciousness of his success, and of the immense labour which it would entail. He then offered to the Church of the West the doctrine of Aristotle and a complete exposition of it.

But in order to attain this end it was necessary to know the harmony and the references of all the the works of the Philosopher; it needed careful study to discover their meaning, to interpret and correct them. The Schools possessed only the Latin translations of the detached writings of the Stagirite, his works on Logic, according to Boethius, to which were afterwards added his Ethics, Rhetoric, and some others on

<sup>1</sup> Hence it is that the Church equally favours the study of Aristotle. The censures which were passed upon some of his works at Paris in the year 1220 did not touch Aristotle, but the wretched translations from the Arabic, which contained abominable errors. Thus speaks Jourdain. This does not hinder us from finding, in each new manual, that the Church upheld the study of Aristotle.



Physics. But long before this period Aristotle became the object of veneration in Spain, where, under the Mussulman Empire, the sciences took a new flight. Won by the splendour of natural knowledge which filled these works, the distinguished *savants*, of Arabian origin, and for the most part belonging to the medical profession, acquired them in the East. They brought them into Spain, translated them into their own language, and made them the object of personal research and of extensive education.

The names of Avicenna (Ibn Badsches), Avenpace (Ibn Poschd), and Sercal are known as the most renowned translators and interpreters of the works of Aristotle.<sup>1</sup> After these come the learned Jews, who also in Spain rose to great eminence in the culture of science. Finally, masters and Christian princes themselves flocked to the fountains of Mussulman knowledge, whence they procured Arabian manuscripts of Aristotle's works. They had them translated into Latin,<sup>2</sup> in order to render their circulation more general, and forthwith

<sup>1</sup> See their Lives and Labours, especially vol. vi. p. 188 of the "Histoire Litteraire des Arabs," by Hammer; and Jourdain, p. 99 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> There were then whole companies of translators, as among the Moors. Raymund, Archbishop of Toledo, founded one such company (Jourdain, p. 128).

adopted them as the subject of indefatigable study.<sup>1</sup> It was especially the privilege of the members of the new Orders to introduce into their monasteries these treasures and precious helps to scientific progress. Hence it was that during Albert's residence in Paris there already existed a considerable number of Latin translations of Aristotle, which he doubtless procured or caused to be transcribed by the pen of copyists. He would with equal facility acquire translations of the same Philosopher from the Greek, which was at that time well known.<sup>2</sup> He purposed to compose out of these materials a system of Aristotelian Philosophy. It was fitting therefore, above all, that he should reproduce the text, by adopting, among the numerous manuscripts at his service, those which appeared to him the most suitable.<sup>3</sup> But he did not confine himself to

<sup>1</sup> We ought especially to mention Michael Scott, who translated the works of Aristotle on Physics from the Arabic (Jourdain, p. 134).

<sup>2</sup> Albert expressly mentions these books in his will. His contemporary Roger Bacon collected together similar manuscripts, and expended on them a sum of 2,000 livres. Yet none of the Schoolmen, says Jourdain, took so much pains to acquire a knowledge of Aristotle as did Albert the Great.

<sup>3</sup> Jourdain (I. c.) clearly indicates the manuscripts which Albert used for each of the works of Aristotle. With his help we are enabled to discover whether they were Greco-Latin or Arabico-Latin manuscripts. We can understand that Albert was not able to keep to the rules of the critic, but only to his philosophical tact.

this first effort; he was desirous to elucidate the obscure passages of these works, to supply what was wanting in them, by turning modern research as well as his own personal studies to profit, to correct the errors, and finally to connect and harmonise them as a whole.

Thus did the philosophical works of Albert receive their birth. They embody the Philosophy of Aristotle under a popular, detailed, and Christianised form;<sup>1</sup> they represent to us the Prince of ancient Philosophy as a pillar of natural science, with the marvellous harmony which exists between the latter and Christian truth.

Such was the sublime task which was offered to the minds of the *elite* in Albert's day, and which he himself was able to accomplish, in great part, at this period of his life which we are now studying: an overwhelming task, the fulfilment

<sup>1</sup> It is curious that Schelling should have recently expressed a desire to meet with a similar paraphrase of Aristotle; he was doubtless unacquainted with that of Albert. These are his words: "It seems to me that, in order to solve every difficulty, a corrected text, accompanied with critical and grammatical notes, should be placed side by side with a complete translation in paraphrastic form. Such a work is indispensable to the perfect exposition of the meaning and of the hidden connection of Aristotle's doctrine." What Schelling claims for his age, Albert did for his own with a success that warranted H. Ritter in saying that the great master understood Aristotle better than all our modern philosophers.

of which was possible only to his own gigantic mind, his penetration, his unwearied application, his vast and profound erudition, and doubtless also to the robust health with which Divine Providence endowed him. We can hardly conceive how a man was capable of executing in so short a space of time a work which claims in our day the longest existence.

We shall content ourselves here with quoting Albert's books on philosophical subjects, and which date from this period.

We first meet with his "Logical Treatises,"<sup>1</sup> which were no doubt his first composition, inasmuch as he ever regarded logic as a preparation and introduction to the other sciences. He leaves us here the different works of Aristotle in a translation in paraphrastic form, to which he adds, after reviewing them, the logical researches of former philosophers.

Then follow the numerous treatises on natural science, which are entitled, "Physics."<sup>2</sup> In his Preface Albert explains the motive which led to the production of this masterpiece, saying, "Our

<sup>1</sup> Complete edition of Jammy, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> These writings fill up vol. ii. iii. v. vi. and in great part vol. xx. in Jammy, consequently five folios. We have shown above that these works belong chiefly to this period. The other short writings would only be matters of incident, published later.

intention, in treating these questions of natural science, is to oblige as far as we can the brethren of our Order. For many years past they have asked us to write a book on the phenomena of nature which may supply them with a complete course of the natural sciences, and afford them suitable helps in studying the works of Aristotle. Although sensible of our incapacity for such an enterprise, we could not resist their entreaties. Overcome by the solicitations of some of them, we accepted this task. We have undertaken it above all for the glory of the Omnipotent God, the Source of wisdom, the Creator, Preserver, and King of nature, and also for the benefit of the brethren and of all who shall read this book and be desirous of acquiring the natural sciences.”

Who can fail to recognise in these words the modest and truly Christian teacher, on whom the love of his neighbour imposes so laborious an undertaking, and who seeks in all things God’s honour and the salvation of souls? It is thus that, walking daily in the footsteps of Aristotle, but perfecting him by his own additions, he cultivates thoroughly on a vast scale every branch of natural science.

By the side of these works stand the thirteen

books of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*,<sup>1</sup> which treat of the Immutable and Eternal, as physics treat of matters which are subject to change. As these researches are immediately connected with those on physics (in Aristotle they form but one and the same whole), and as they denote a work altogether similar, we may suppose that Albert published them also at this the most glorious period of his teaching.<sup>2</sup> Here again Albert seeks to solve the most profound and difficult problems, by developing and analysing all anterior scientific researches. Had our indefatigable Professor but produced in this period of from ten to fifteen years these philosophical works (comprising five folios), we should admire his extraordinary zeal, his astonishing application, his fruitful and marvellous aptitude for science. But what we mention does not embrace all that he did as a writer at this period. He was, moreover, a Professor of Theology, and we observe that in treating the sublime

<sup>1</sup> Second half of vol. iii. in Jammy.

<sup>2</sup> They were already in existence when Thomas of Aquin, about the year 1262, brought out his new translation of Aristotle's books from the Greek. A biographer, speaking of Thomas, says, "Scripsit super philosophiam naturalem et moralem," &c. (Guill. de Toco, cap. iv. in Act. Sanct.). Albert would doubtless have availed himself of these latter works had they then existed. In the chronicle of Staindelius (in *Æfele*, "Script." I. p. 508), William de Brabant (!) receives the name of translator.

mysteries of Divine science his pen is not less fruitful. It is well known that Albert, during Thomas of Aquin's first residence at Cologne, explained the books of Denis the Areopagite. These lectures, transcribed by his own hand, or dictated by him to a copyist<sup>1</sup> are still extant.

As this work is of high importance by its relation to Albert's general acts, seeing that it becomes us to admire him here as a mystic, while elsewhere he passes as the representative of the Schoolmen, and as there is an ancient tradition attached to it, we cannot omit giving here some interesting details.

These works of Denis,<sup>2</sup> which may be traced to the fifth century, were attributed, in the Middle Ages, to the famous Areopagite who was converted by the preaching of the Apostle St. Paul; they were, as such, the object of universal esteem and of deep study. They embodied the sublimest Mysteries of Faith blooming as so many beautiful flowers in this mass of doctrines sprung from Neoplatonism. It cannot be denied that they

<sup>1</sup> Manuscripts which Albert himself wrote, and others transcribed by his copyist but corrected with his own hand, are to be met with in libraries (Quetif and Echard, I. p. 172).

<sup>2</sup> "De Divinâ Hierarchiâ," "De Hierarchia Ecclesiastica," "De Nominibus Divinis," "De Mystica Theologia, et Litteræ." See Engelhardt's Dissertation on this subject (Salzb. 1823); as also the "Mystique" of Gœrres, vol. i. p. 227-93.



contained rich ideas, stamped with the impress of Christian orthodoxy. They moreover afforded food for devotion and meditation in a style that was racy and full of imagery. But they also frequently overshot the mark in matters of strict Catholic doctrine, inasmuch as they presented unbecoming ideas, arbitrary interpretations, and affirmations bordering upon error. The belief in the Apostolic origin of these writings strongly recommended in mediæval times the doctrines which they set forth, and, despite the very obscurity<sup>1</sup> and mystery that surrounded them, they had a secret charm for all. They were regarded as a sort of compliment to Biblical revelation, glimpses into God's kingdom in heaven and His image on earth.

It need not then surprise us to see the master-minds of that period imposing on themselves the task of penetrating, expounding, and translating these mystical writings. Albert, after the celebrated Hugo of St. Victor, the successor of Scotus Erigena, who had previously offered to the public a translation in paraphrastic form,<sup>2</sup> wrote a vast commentary<sup>3</sup> on these books, so universally es-

<sup>1</sup> Scotus Erigena says: "Opus valde anfractuosum, longæque a modernis sensibus remotum. Paucis apertum, non solum propter antiquitatem, verum etiam cœlestium altitudinem mysteriorum" (Migne, "Patrolog." p. 1,034).

<sup>2</sup> Migne, "Patrolog." tom. cxxii.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. xiii. in Jammy's edition.



teemed, and discovered in them admirable thoughts in relation to the kingdom of God.

There is an ancient tradition connected with this work of the great master which we cannot pass over in silence. Rodolph<sup>1</sup> speaks as follows: “When the Master was expounding the works of Denis, and had completed the book on the Divine Hierarchy, his courage failed him at the sight of the difficulties which the rest of the work contained. He resolved, as St. Jerome before him did in regard to the book of Daniel, to put aside the work, and leave it unfinished, when the faithful Master, Who permits not the labourers of His vineyard to be tried beyond their strength, sent to him, in his sleep, the Apostle St. Paul, who encouraged him to renewed ardour. The manner in which the preacher of the Gentiles appeared to Albert is thus related. A Religious, renowned for his learning and eminent virtues, whom many suppose to have been Thomas of Aquin, one day found a document in Albert’s handwriting in which the following occurred: ‘When I had completed with much toil the book on the Celestial Hierarchy, I began to explain the Hierarchy

<sup>1</sup> Also Prussia, p. 199. Prussia moreover relates having seen the *Codex*, which comprises both the works of Denis and Albert’s exposition in his own handwriting.

of the Church. I got through the first chapter, on the Sacrament of Baptism, with much difficulty. But when I entered on the second my courage failed me, and I despaired of being able to pursue it, when after Matins I had a vision. I found myself in a church where St. Paul was celebrating Mass. Consoled beyond measure, I hoped that he would enlighten me as to the meaning of Denis the Areopagite. When the Apostle had said the *Agnus Dei*, a multitude of people entered the church; the Apostle calmly saluted them and inquired what it was they wanted. "Behold," they all exclaimed, "we have brought to you one who is possessed, whom we implore you to cure by freeing him from the devil." Having cast out Satan, St. Paul communicated this man with a particle of the consecrated Host. I offered my services at the ablution of the fingers, and, with fear, said, "Sir, I have long wished to be instructed in the mysterious subjects contained in the book of St. Denis, but especially on the grace of true sanctity." He answered me, with much kindness of manner, "Come with me after Mass to the house of the Priest Aaron, which is on the other side of the river." I then followed the Apostle after Mass. When we reached the banks of the river, he without difficulty passed over.

But it was otherwise with me, for I had scarce touched the water when it began to rise to such a degree as to render the passage impossible. The Apostle entered the house of Aaron, which he had pointed out to me; and while anxious as to how I should follow him, I suddenly woke. On reflection, I discovered the meaning of the dream. The first chapter explained by me treats, in effect, of the expulsion of Satan from the body of man by baptism, then his participation in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. The following chapter leads him who receives the holy unction to the house of Aaron, for it treats of the chrism with which bishops are consecrated. The deep waters increasing so suddenly arrested my pen; but the Apostle, through God's grace, rendered the passage easy to me. I then commenced to write again, and accomplished, with God's help, what to my personal feebleness appeared impossible.'” From this we gather that it was in consequence of a dream that Albert was at length enabled to surmount the difficulties of this obscure book; what had for long days been the subject of his meditations, thoughts, and reading comes to him in sleep, in the form of a vision, and at the same time offers him a key to the solution. When awake, the powers of the soul often re-

semble dispersed troops ; but in the depth of sleep they are collected together like a compact army, and are oftentimes capable of doing in that state what would have been impossible when awake. We can, then, view this dream as a natural phenomenon, seeing that it affords no direct proof of its being a Divine illumination. This is rendered all the more probable by the fact that other portions of the dream are reproduced in the same chapter on the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy : such as the walking towards the abode of the high-priest Aaron, and the difficulties that oppose him on the way. It is not for us to question whether Albert regarded this dream as a heavenly favour or not ; for all that is good comes from on high, from the Father of lights, and every natural appearance should, in a general sense, be recognised as a message from and a providence of God, the Author of nature.

A second work, not less important, which Albert must have composed at this period, is his " Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard." Peter, born at Novara, a theological professor, then Bishop of Paris in 1164, provided by this work for an urgent want of the times. He wrote a book which contains a pithy outline of the whole of the dogmatic and moral teaching of the



Church, based upon Scripture and the Fathers, and in which he sets forth and solves every possible objection. The most illustrious theologians made it the groundwork of their lectures, and enriched it with commentaries and expositions. It was in this way that Albert occupied himself when teaching at the Convent of St. James in Paris, and this was doubtless the origin of his splendid Commentary on the Book of the Sentences, which embraces three folios,<sup>1</sup> and surpasses all other works of its kind in breadth and penetration. It is curious to see how unity appears under his pen in a work which is generally void of it. Witness the text on which this important work is grounded: "I came out of the mouth of the Most High, the First-born before all creatures: I made that in the heavens there should rise light that never faileth, and as a cloud I covered all the earth" (Eccles. xxiv. 5, 6). These words, according to our author, contain the different subjects of the work. *I came out of the mouth of the Most High*: here we have the first book on God Three in One. The passage, *Before all creatures*, represents all the creatures to whom reference is made in the second book. The words, *I made that in the heavens there*

<sup>1</sup> Jammy, vol. xiv. xv. and xvi.



*should rise light*, indicate the subject-matter of the third book, where it treats of the justice of Christ, of grace, and precept. These words, *As a cloud I covered all the earth*, signify the Sacraments which are explained in the fourth book. It would be difficult, indeed, to imagine a more charming connection between the different portions of the "Book of Sentences." What is still more worthy of note, is that Albert, in the fourth part of this work, deals with the faults against the holy virtue of chastity with a breadth and minuteness which was only surpassed, long afterwards, by the expositions of Suarez.

He treats especially of the conjugal life (Dist. xxxi.), and endeavours, by turning to account the rich treasures of natural and medical knowledge, to distinguish between what is conformable to nature and is permissible, and that which is an abuse of nature, and which becomes matter of sin. One cannot deny the justice of his observations when speaking of these inquiries. "It is true," he observes, "we ought never to raise, and much less discuss these immoral questions, which we can scarce mention without shame. But the monstrous sins which are now-a-days brought to the holy tribunal unhappily too often oblige us to speak of them. They who seek

to excuse their faults by saying that such acts are conformable to nature should be taught that they are, on the contrary, opposed to it." The great man, as we perceive, is not placed on such delicate ground, but that he can afford, in his charity and zeal for souls, to supply Confessors with excellent rules to be followed in the painful duty of directing consciences.

All these data should convince us that Albert during this period of his life was not only a Professor and a man of prayer, but that in his character of a writer he was like to a large and noble tree laden with fair and delicious fruit.

## CHAPTER X.

## POPULAR TRADITIONS RESPECTING ALBERT.

ANCIENT biographers say nothing of the singular events of Albert's life which we purpose to relate in this chapter. Yet we cannot pass them over in silence. The legendary genius of people does not abandon itself entirely to fancy in delineating its pictures; it never really creates, it frequently does no more than enlarge upon some real phenomenon of history or of nature; it transforms it according to its own ideal of the beautiful, and, having imparted new glory to it, by the marvellous details with which it clothes it, leaves it to posterity. We can also admit that most of the legends connected with Albert's name must have some foundation in fact or in real motive.

One of the first legends relates to the construction of the magnificent Cathedral of Cologne. At the very time that Albert returned to that



City (1248), the old Roman Church<sup>1</sup> had been partly destroyed by fire. The Archiepiscopal See was then occupied by a man who longed to erect in honour of the precious treasure which this Church possessed—the sacred relics of the Magi Kings—a temple which might not have its equal throughout the universe. This was Conrad of Hochstraden, an ecclesiastical prince, who was exceedingly powerful, rich, pious, magnanimous, and active, but sometimes also hasty and violent. “Archbishop Conrad,” says a Colognese chronicle, “being richer than all others in gold, silver, and precious stones, began to construct large and magnificent buildings; he laid the foundations of the superb Cathedral. It is said that he many years previously engaged Albert to provide the plans of a new edifice. The legend relates that the plans of this matchless monument were from Albert’s design, but that they were not so much the fruit of his learning, long meditation, and personal effort, as a fresh favour from the Mother of God.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The supposed plan and drawings of it are given by Boisserée in his “Histoire et description de la Cathédrale de Cologne,” Appendix, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> The legend is from Ennen, I. c. There exist, moreover, various accounts of the plans of Cologne Cathedral, one of which is spoken of by A. Dumas, in a book entitled, “Voyage aux bords du Rhin.”

It is related that Albert was one day sitting in his cell meditating on the project of building; he fervently prayed to be enlightened in carrying out the work which he was desirous to undertake for the glory of God. Suddenly a light flashed before his eyes; being startled, he raised his head, and saw himself encircled with a soft light, which cast its splendour on every object around. Four personages entered his cell, wearing crowns of gold, which shone like the precious stone when exposed to light. The first, an old man of imposing mien, wore a long beard, which covered his breast; he held a compass in his hand. The second, of youthful appearance, carried a square. The third, a robust man, whose chin was covered with a thick dark beard, held a rule; and the fourth, a young man, in the flower of his age, with rich flaxen curls, had a level. They announced themselves as having been masters in sacred architecture. They advanced with grave and solemn step. Then came the holy Virgin, Mother of God, holding in her right hand a lily whose white petal was resplendent with beauty. The four masters commenced eagerly to trace out, from signs given by the holy Virgin, the plan of a majestic temple. The exterior plan was gradually delineated by means of bright lines,

and formed a sumptuous monument such as Albert could never have imagined. But this bright vision did not last long. The entire edifice, encompassed with light similar to the twinkling of the stars, suddenly put on a ravishing appearance; then all vanished from his astonished sight. Albert, however, retained in his memory the marvellous design which the four masters with crowns of gold<sup>1</sup> had drawn from directions given by the Mother of God, and was able to present to the Prince-Bishop a plan capable of satisfying the desires of the most ambitious. Thus speaks the legend, which, however, is of recent origin. According to it, Albert was the framer of the plans on which was built the Cathedral which is admired to this day.

The second tradition regards the renowned visit paid by the German King, William of Holland, to Albert the Great, in his Convent at Cologne,<sup>2</sup> where the illustrious Doctor had given proofs

<sup>1</sup> The four crowned Martyrs, *Quatuor Coronati*, Patrons of masons.

<sup>2</sup> This wonderful account is first related by John de Beka (1346), an historian of little authority, and afterwards by the Belgian Chronicle of the year 1474, John Cuspinianus and Trithemius. (See Echard and Quetif, I. p. 169.) This legend was at a more recent period adorned with the charms of poetry by E. Ebert and others. See the Bavarian Legendary by Schœppner, I. 417. We adhere to Ennen's account, having been allowed to make some verbal alterations only.

of his magical art. The legend runs as follows. It was in the year 1249, about the time of the Epiphany, that the youthful William, who was elected to the Empire in 1247, went to Cologne to venerate the sacred relics of the three Magi Kings, and to lay on their shrine his offering towards the erection of the new and magnificent Cathedral. A friend and protector of the arts and sciences in Germany, he was desirous of availing himself of the opportunity to visit Father Albert, whose reputation filled the world. On the Festival of the Three Wise Men, when the religious solemnity of the morning was over the King repaired to the Convent of the Dominicans, attended by a numerous train of knights and courtiers magnificently adorned. William and his brilliant equipage were there received with every suitable mark of honour, and introduced to the cell of the celebrated Philosopher and Theologian. Great was his astonishment, however, when he beheld the wonderful display of things which Albert explained to him by word of mouth. Yet still more astonished was he when the Friar invited him to spend a short time with him in recreation in the Convent grounds. They who accompanied the monarch imagined that the Friar was jesting with them,

for it was bitterly cold, and the ground was covered with ice and snow. The King, however, was desirous to see what surprise Albert had in store for him. The latter went first, and the Prince, with his attendants, followed him into the Convent garden. No one could expect to find much that was agreeable there. But what was their surprise when, the moment they passed the threshold, a refreshing spring breeze, sweet with the perfume of flowers, agreeably fell upon them; the most luxuriant vegetation surrounded them as though they were in the midst of the splendours of the month of May. Thousands of rare exotic plants displayed their rich and variegated petals, and scented the air with their delicious fragrance. The trees seemed proud of their bright and abundant foliage, and in a few moments were laden with the most beautiful fruit. Innumerable birds of varied plumage cooed, warbled, and sung together in ravishing accord; they balanced themselves gracefully on the transparent petals of the flowers, hopped amidst the thickly covered branches, and enjoyed to all appearance a most delightful existence. Butterflies of different sizes fluttered above the fragrant flowers, and indulged their capricious fancies in their circular flight. Fountains shot their humid rays high into the air,

while the sun reflecting thereon produced so many rainbows of admirable beauty. All breathed an air fresh and smiling, and nature seemed to employ herself in displaying in an instant all her charms. Albert did not allow his astonished visitors time to recover from their surprise; he invited them to be seated at a table erected in that place, praying them to be content with the little which the Convent garden produced. But who shall describe the wonderment of the noble strangers when they beheld a banquet spread out before them, of which even a king need not have been ashamed? Servants elegantly dressed, young men full of activity and of youthful beauty, surrounded the table in fitting order, who served the guests in graceful haste, bringing dish after dish which came no one knew whence. But hardly had grace been said after the repast, than the illusion vanished in the twinkling of an eye, and the company suddenly found themselves in the cold, amid the winter's gloom.<sup>1</sup>

Albert plays here the part of a magician, and passes, as we see, for a sorcerer. A third legend also relates to the period when Albert lectured at Cologne, and had as a disciple the youthful Thomas

<sup>1</sup> The legend is continued in Ennen. Albert is invited to the King's table, where he repeats the sorcery.

of Aquin.<sup>1</sup> It is thus recorded: Besides the cell which was assigned him in the Convent of the Friar-Preachers at Cologne, Albert selected another room somewhat apart, where he spent whole days when his occupations did not call him to the church or to the Professor's chair. Many a brother of the Convent viewed with indescribable dread the mysterious workshop in which Albert applied himself to the various mechanical arts. Thomas, whose curiosity led him to observe his master's work, one day profited by his absence to examine the interior of this interesting chamber. With a beating heart he entered the laboratory. Strange animals which he had never before seen, instruments artistically made, vessels of curious shape, were there exposed. Thomas's astonishment increased in proportion as he looked around. Something drew him towards the corner of the room. A scarlet curtain, reaching in long and close folds to the ground, seemed to him to conceal an object. He approached, and timidly drawing aside the curtain found himself face to face with a lovely talisman, whose charms threatened to deprive him of his senses. He wished to fly, but felt himself detained by magical

<sup>1</sup> Unknown alike to all the old historians. Gumpelzheimer relates it when he speaks of Albert's residence at Ratisbon, clearly forgetting that Thomas of Aquin never resided in that City. It is met with in Ennen, p. 68.



force, and was compelled, in spite of himself, to gaze on the enchanting figure of a young girl. The more he gazed, the more it shone before his eyes, the greater was the confusion with which his thoughts pressed upon his mind. But this was not all: the strange form addressed to him, with a human voice, the triple salutation, "Salve, salve, salve!" The noble youth was on the point of losing consciousness. He imagined that the prince of hell was sporting with him; he strove, in the fear and uneasiness that possessed him, to defend himself as best he could against the tempter. He seized a stick that was near him, then exclaiming, "Begone, Satan!" he struck with redoubled blows the imaginary demon, till the statue broke in pieces with a strange noise. Thomas was flying from the room when Albert stood at the threshold. Seeing what had happened in his absence, that the fruit of his long application was annihilated, he was moved with just indignation, and apostrophised the young student thus, "Thomas! Thomas! what have you done? You have destroyed in an instant the labour of thirty years!"

From this it would appear then that our master had manufactured a human automaton capable of pronouncing certain words. Other traditions connected with the preceding are still extant, which



however appear more foreign to the domain of history. Such is the legend of a voluptuous Queen, related by the old Troubadours.<sup>1</sup> Pietysila, the daughter of the Duke of Saatz, they say, in order to gratify her infamous passion, enticed into her chateau nine young men one after the other, and, having led them into crime, precipitated them into a river through a secret trap-door. The unhappy woman wished to ensnare Albert in like manner; but he foreseeing her design, thanks to his knowledge, represented to her that he beheld nine young men hovering over her, and that he heard beneath his feet the roaring of the billows which would engulf her. The Princess, in a fit of rage, caused him to be bound and cast into the water. But the cords having burst asunder, he joyfully moved forward amid the waves, while the arrows that were shot at him changed into so many birds, which fluttered around him. Then he repaired to a forest and fastened a billet to the beak of each of the birds, on which the following words were written: "Nine persons were assassinated by the Queen after having served to gratify her base

<sup>1</sup> From a poetical song of Martin Schleich in the "Knaben Wunderhorn," II. 237; and in Schœppner, I. 410. This author reproduces the text of it. The prose in Mittermaier, the legendary of Gundelfingen, Lauingen, Dillingen, Hochstadt, p. 29 (Dillingen, 1849).

passions." In this way was her shame published in the cities and the country round. She was afterwards seized with bitter sorrow at the sight of her crimes: she went to Albert, avowed her wickedness, imposed on herself a severe penance, and entered an austere Order; and when fourscore years had rolled by, nine Angels bore her into the heavenly kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

Another longer legend refers to Albert's relations with William, whom we have spoken of above. The latter, being then Count of Holland, one day promised Albert that he should be for ever grateful to him and would grant him whatever he should ask. Albert begged him not to repulse him when he should be surrounded with great power, but to relieve him with his alms. The Friar, on the solemn assurance of the Count, had recourse to his magical art. A splendid palace appeared, knights flocked in multitudes before him, the people proclaimed the Count their King and set him upon a sumptuous throne. After three years of regal splendour had passed, Albert went to him in the garb of a mendicant: the Religious reminded him

<sup>1</sup> The result is characteristic of the Middle Ages. Great sinners at that period had recourse to penance, and died reconciled with God. Modern poets, on the contrary, represent obstinate perseverance in sin till death, or, what is still worse, the deification of the wicked.

of his promise and asked him for relief. But William, transported with anger, caused the insolent beggar to be driven from the door. Albert immediately uttered some mysterious words, the illusion ceased; palace and knights vanished, and William himself became what he was before, a poor Count.<sup>1</sup>

Another legend (for it would seem that the legendary spirit of the people is inexhaustible on the subject of Albert) records the following: "A travelling shoemaker came one day to Cologne. Having frequently heard of Albert and his extraordinary knowledge, he was himself desirous to give an account of him, and to this end presented himself with his wallet at the Convent door of the Friar-Preachers, where he asked to see Father Albert. The porter inquired of him the object of his visit, but he refused to make it known except to the Philosopher himself. The latter, taking him to his cell, asked him what he wanted. The shoemaker then said, 'I have heard many singular things stated in regard to your knowledge and ability; I am therefore come to ask you to show me something in order that I may believe in your wonders. I shall not depart until you have afforded me some

<sup>1</sup> Bavarian Legends by Schœppner, I. 420. It is doubtless a satire on William's short reign, his elevation by the clergy and his ignominious death in a ditch.

proof of your art.' Albert then asked him to give him his wallet, and putting his hand into it restored it to him saying: 'Return to your home, but do not open your wallet until you arrive; open it only when you are alone, and you will discover something. Close it again, and return hither to tell me what you have seen.' The delighted shoemaker had hardly passed the gates of the City when he felt the sting of curiosity. He seated himself on the roadside and opened his wallet. But to his horror two lusty fellows immediately emerged from it, who beat him so severely that he almost lost his senses. He remembered what Albert had said, that he should close the wallet. He did so, and immediately saw the two enemies who had beaten him so unmercifully disappear. He then hastened back to Father Albert and implored him to restore his wallet to its former condition, adding that he did not wish to know anything more about his art. Albert did what he desired; but the shoemaker remembered throughout his life the learning of the Friar Philosopher.<sup>1</sup>

It is moreover said that Albert possessed a magical cup, into which he poured only water or wine, a beverage which served to cure every species of malady.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Schœppner, I. 416.

<sup>2</sup> See Bianco, "Histoire de l'Université de Cologne," vol. i.

Such are the more interesting legends which, even in modern times, are related in reference to our great master.

A host of other traditions were handed down to the end of the Middle Ages of such a nature that Albert's early biographers were obliged to contradict them. Thus, observes Prussia, was the story invented that Albert transported the daughter of the King of France to Cologne in mid-air;<sup>1</sup> that he went to Rome on the back of the devil to absolve the Pope from a fault;<sup>2</sup> that he traversed the terrestrial globe with Alexander the Great; that he was so small in stature that the Pope on seeing him imagined him to be kneeling and bid him rise. It is even related that he besought our Lord to allow him to pass some days in purgatory, in order that, after having explored the whole earth, he might also become acquainted with those regions.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He also explains, after Thomas of Cantimpré, whence this fable arose. Albert maintained at Paris, in presence of the bishop and a great number of doctors, a discussion on the mysterious "raptus mulierum," of which the German afforded an example of his own time.

<sup>2</sup> This story is related by Vincent of Beauvais in the "Speculum Hist." lib. xx. cap. iii., of the holy Bishop Antidius (Prussia, p. 311).

<sup>3</sup> This tale also comes from Thomas of Cantimpré, who speaks of a sick man who chose seven years of purgatory in preference to one year of suffering.

We gather from this collection of legends what an impression Albert must have left upon his age, since fable and poetry both surround his name.

All that forms the subject of the admiration of people has been placed to the account of the illustrious Religious, for people often attribute to a great man all that has been said of others. His acts also appear to us only through the prism of legendary caprice, and his art and stupendous learning impart to him in the Divine power and knowledge, that which cannot be explained but by an illicit intercourse with the world of spirits.

## CHAPTER XI.

ON THE TRUTH OF THESE LEGENDS—ALBERT'S SHARE  
IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF COLOGNE CATHEDRAL—HIS  
MAGICAL SCIENCE.

LEGENDARY fancy, we have observed, does not create; it merely embellishes an accomplished fact with fresh colours. It will not be useless then to trace these traditions to their source, in order, if possible, to discover what was the germ of truth from which sprang the popular belief in this almost incredible number of mythical stories. We shall first speak of the part which is assigned to Albert in the construction of the celebrated Cathedral at Cologne, then of the legend which attributes the design to his marvellous genius. It is doubtless the charm of some popular tradition that has led certain distinguished archæologists to bestow a scientific basis on a pious fable.

Canon Boeker is the first who, in Walraff's appendices to the History of the City of Cologne (p. 84), pronounces in favour of this opinion. Walraff himself, whose works on the memory and relics of Albert the Great are above all praise, does



homage to this tradition because of the resemblance of the Cathedral choir to that of the Church of the Friar-Preachers. It is even said that he frequently related to his disciples that he had read textually in a document of the thirteenth century (now lost), that Albert assisted in the construction of the Cathedral.<sup>1</sup> We find this opinion established more learnedly and at greater length by Kreuser, who gives a host of proofs of probability.<sup>2</sup> It has also been recently adopted by Doctor Ennen. Finally, the trustworthy Heideloff goes so far as to think it probable that it was Albert who introduced Gothic art into Germany, that is that the mysteries of the pointed arch, the octangular art, were logically and scientifically brought to perfection by him.<sup>3</sup> He affirms that for this reason Gothic art is called in the ancient books of architecture the Albertine science. What then must be thought of an opinion which is brought forward and supported by men of such importance? Is it likely that

<sup>1</sup> Verbal communication of the Counsellor of Justice Haas, of the Vicar Bock, and of Professor Weyden, at Cologne. An old parish priest of the neighbourhood of this City, a disciple of Walraff, would be able to testify to this.

<sup>2</sup> In his "Letters on the Cathedral" (Berlin, 1844; letter iv.), and in his "Christlicher Kirchenbau," I. 378, and elsewhere, where he refers to closer researches for a decision.

<sup>3</sup> "Der Kleine Altdeutsche," I. Curs. p. 17-25 (Nuremberg, 1849).

Albert should have sketched the plan of this splendid edifice, which men of art of every nation regard, with few exceptions, as the most perfect specimen of Gothic architecture?

We are certainly convinced that the great master possessed wonderful knowledge in the domain of mathematics and mechanics; architecture was probably not unknown to him; but it is nevertheless impossible to attribute the design of the Basilica of Cologne to him. None of his biographers mention this particular. These men, who extol with such delight the merits of their hero, and who bring to our notice all the homage of which he was the object, would certainly not have omitted to tell us that he received from his Prince the flattering commission to design the future Cathedral, and would not have allowed a work of this nature to remain secret. Moreover, a monument of this kind assuredly supposes a long experience in Gothic buildings; it could only be the work of an architect whose life was passed in examining into the beauties of this art. But such an architect ought to be familiarised, by numerous analogous works, with the methods and technical problems, since he undertook an enterprise which would surpass in magnificencē, and consequently in difficulties, all others which till

then had been seen. He would have had to submit to a long examination and comparison the Gothic monuments then existing, at least those with which France was adorned. For the feature of unity that exists between these and Cologne Cathedral, and the natural improvement of the latter on the others, is incontestable at this day. It was not sufficient, then, to have a general knowledge of the forms and rules of Gothic art, of a precision more or less exact in the handling of the compass, or still less of the science of Christian symbolism; but a special knowledge was needed, an artistic capacity, in order to impart a perfect expression to conceived ideas. But this knowledge, this capacity is not acquired but by long, arduous, and exclusive study. Hence it was that, at the birth of Gothic art, the clergy abandoned the superintendence of buildings to lay architects, whose whole lives were devoted to this study, while the priest had a host of other important duties to discharge. We moreover believe that it would have been impossible for Albert to have found at that time the leisure necessary to dive into the vast and profound studies of Gothic art and of the monuments which it had till then produced; or even to conceive a design similar to that which is

attributed to him. Was he not at this period a Professor in the great schools of Paris and Cologne, always surrounded with a crowd of students, consulted as an oracle on a thousand occasions, and moreover such an indefatigable writer that he was able to fill six folios with the results of his researches? We will even add that recent works on Cologne Cathedral have brought to light some admirable documents.<sup>1</sup>

It is now proved that the fire in 1248 inflicted only slight damage on the ancient church, and that on this account it was intended at first to build a new and magnificent choir, and to add to the original nave. The determination to thus reconstruct the interior, and consequently the project of the present Basilica, were not settled till the fourteenth century, a period long after Albert's death. With regard to the choir, it is proved to be an imitation of that of Amiens Cathedral,<sup>2</sup> and that its plan is due to an architect who lived for a long time in France, and

<sup>1</sup> See especially the remarkable artistic history by Schnaas (V. p. 510-43), which is based chiefly on the Memoirs of Lacomblet.

<sup>2</sup> Schnaas places the two plans side by side, and thus shows their essential points of resemblance ("Hist. de l'art," V. p. 528). The great superiority of Cologne Cathedral over the French Basilicas consists in the interior, with its five naves and transept, and not in the choir, whose beauties are only in detail.

who on his return committed to paper his artistic recollections, stamped with incontestible marks of intelligence and originality. This being so, Albert might at most be regarded as the author of this part of the edifice ; but can it be imagined that, during his residence of three years in Paris, he, a Religious and a Professor of the Sentences, could have undertaken journeys to distant cities, and remained there long enough to apply himself to the study of architecture ?

This hypothesis appears to us inadmissible ; and we affirm with certain authors that the architect who travelled through France,<sup>1</sup> studying the different sorts of buildings, labouring himself in a timber-yard, and finally designing the plan of the choir of Cologne, is no other than the builder Gerhard, a native of Riel. We moreover see this artist receiving, in 1257, an honourable acknowledgment from the Cathedral Chapter and magnificently recompensed for his talents and services.<sup>2</sup> These considerations, however, would not prove that Albert had not some share in the construction

<sup>1</sup> Gothic art is, in effect, called in the first German report, *Opus Francigenum*. Villars of Homécourt, whose celebrated Album has been preserved, proves that architects travelled much at this period (Schnaas, p. 152).

<sup>2</sup> See also, in reference to the question in dispute, the "Artistic Monuments" of Guhl and Gaspard, II. p. 86.

of the Cathedral. It is possible, it is even probable, that the illustrious Dominican, whose authority was so great among the Colognese, may have been invited to the deliberations which took place on the subject of the future edifice.<sup>1</sup> Seeing that there was question of the style that should be adopted, since the new style was at variance with the old Roman architecture, and that there was need of some one to throw light on the advantages of the Gothic art, on the symbolism of the number seven in the division of the choir, Albert doubtless spoke in favour of the artistic wonders he had seen in Paris, and of the style adopted in almost all the Dominican churches, and would easily explain the mystical meaning of those imposing forms of art. And that an active part in the work of the new Basilica might for this reason have been attributed to him we are the first to admit.<sup>2</sup>

We now pass to the examination of the other legends. All represent Albert as a man who was

<sup>1</sup> These deliberations moreover could only have taken place after the precipitate laying of the first stone, which was anticipated on account of the King's presence. The round columns of the ancient choral edifice were found at the time of the new restoration.

<sup>2</sup> This opinion is equally admitted by Kugler in the *Vierteljahrsschrift* of 1842. It is certain that the presence of an intelligent ecclesiastic when there is question of plans for the construction of a church is of great importance. Experience proves this even in our own times.

capable of producing astonishing appearances in support of his natural knowledge. He is no more, according to these stories, than a celebrated enchanter, or to use a fitter expression, a veritable magician.

What took place in presence of King William clearly rests on historic grounds. William, after he had besieged and conquered Aix-la-Chapelle, in the year 1248, was crowned in the month of November following, and returned to Holland by way of Cologne. During his stay in that City he solemnised with extraordinary pomp the Festival of the holy Magi Kings, the Patrons of the City. But this took place at the commencement of the year 1249. It was also on this occasion that he visited Albert,<sup>1</sup> being attracted by his great reputation, and perhaps with a view to being himself convinced of the great man's stupendous power.

It is therefore not improbable that Albert profited by this interview to give the German Monarch striking proofs of his learning, and by this means to render him favourable to his Order. Though the sudden transformation of the claustral garden, which the rigorous cold of winter had covered with ice, into a festive hall decked out in all the splendours of nature, might not have been more than a

<sup>1</sup> This is what the contemporaries, Vincent of Beauvais and Raynald, relate (Quetif, I, 167).



pure exaggeration,<sup>1</sup> nothing prevents us believing that the illustrious Friar prepared a surprise of this sort for the Prince, since an historian of the fourteenth century already speaks of it. He might possibly have built a greenhouse in the interior of the garden, to which he conducted his august visitor,<sup>2</sup> who had not before seen anything similar. It is even possible that he may have constructed small mechanical figures capable of emitting sounds, for he himself speaks of these inventions as things then known.<sup>3</sup> "The Barbiton," he says, "is a figure with a long beard, from the mouth of which comes a tube; while a bellows is attached to one side. It is set in motion by the introduction of air into the tube, so that the bearded manikin appears to play on the flute (*fistulare*)."<sup>4</sup> The great master thus explains how this instrument is made,

<sup>1</sup> William Heda says in his "History of the Bishop of Utrecht, Otho III.:" "Claruit hoc tempore Albertus Magnus Episcopus Ratisbonnensis, vir magnæ doctrinæ, de quo multa fabulantur in convivio quod paraverat regi." In Quetif and Echard, I. c.

<sup>2</sup> It is thus that Buhl, in the article "Albert," in Hersch and Gruber, interprets this legend.

<sup>3</sup> "Polit." p. 493. He explains here the instruments mentioned by Aristotle (VI. 3). Albert moreover evidently allows himself to be guided by the consonance of a word with its meaning.

<sup>4</sup> This instrument may still be seen in schools of natural philosophy, with this difference, that at the present day it is usually shaped like a trumpet, and, instead of the bellows, an invisible tube is fixed in the nearest room, through which a person blows.



and speaks of it as existing in his own time. Might not he himself have fashioned similar ones to place in his wonderful garden? This is but a conjecture. What is certain, however, is that William was so delighted with his visit and conversation with Albert, that he induced him to accompany him to Utrecht (on the Rhine); and built, at his request, a monastery for the Friar-Preachers beautifully situated.<sup>1</sup> It is clear, then, that the reception accorded to the King was most pleasing to him, which leads us to suppose that some extraordinary occurrence took place at this interview. If we now examine the other supernatural talents attributed to Albert, we cannot, however, reject everything within the domain of fable; for his disciple Ulrich d'Engelbrecht says that he was versed in magical knowledge.<sup>2</sup> God forbid that we should understand, by the term magic, the black art or the intimate communications with the spirits of darkness, seeing that, in divers passages of his works, he vigorously opposes these dark sciences and all their forms.<sup>3</sup> But whoever attentively

<sup>1</sup> This is what Beka and William Heda tell us (Quetif, I. p. 167). Hence the King's coat-of-arms in the windows and halls of the Convent.

<sup>2</sup> "In rebus magicis expertus fuit." See Prussia, p. 126.

<sup>3</sup> The passages in question in Prussia and Quetif, I. p. 167. Albert tells us that he read these books, but without being interested, because they afforded no pleasure to his mind.

examines his writings cannot possibly deny that he possessed extraordinary experience in physical and mechanical phenomena. It is therefore difficult to doubt that he manufactured automatons that were able to pronounce certain words and to move a few paces ;<sup>1</sup> for he so frequently speaks of these things, and goes into so many details, that we are obliged to take his words in their literal sense. Thus, in his work on the soul,<sup>2</sup> he says : “ It is related that Dædalus made a statue of Minerva movable in all its members, which sang through a movement of the tongue and appeared to dance (*tripudiare*). It is thus explained :—The organs inside the statue were brought in contact with mercury, through the mobility of which they seemed to move of themselves, as we observe in certain other figures.<sup>3</sup> The feet were fixed on wheels, in which were cavities separated from each other by small cells. When the mercury

<sup>1</sup> When Prussia alleges, on the contrary, that Albert everywhere shows that man alone is endowed with speech, this proves nothing against the matter ; for the indistinct utterance of certain words by an automaton or a bird is far from being human speech (Prussia, p. 153).

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii. p. 23, in Jammy.

<sup>3</sup> A very common experiment in physics, which was consequently then known in Albert's time. There are Chinese manikins at the present day. These are small manikins put together, and fixed to a tube in which a simple drop of mercury plays. The action of the mercury gives a tumbling motion to the automaton, which continues on an inclined plane until it reaches the extremity of this plane.

dropped through these cells into the cavity in front, that which was behind rose up, set the whole in motion, and the automaton went from place to place; for it was obliged to move in the direction given to it by the mercury in displacing itself."

He explains in another passage<sup>1</sup> how a trembling of the earth may be produced by the use of steam. "Take," he says, "a solid earthen vessel provided with an opening at the top and bottom, and standing on feet. Fill it with water and place it near the fire. The steam is then generated in the vessel and steadily increases in proportion to the heat of the fire until, escaping with violence through one of the openings, it shoots the water far off on to surrounding objects. If it escapes through the bottom of the vessel, it discharges sparks, burning coal, and hot ashes to a considerable distance. This sort of vessel is usually called *sufflator* (blower), and is ordinarily shaped like a man who is blowing."<sup>2</sup>

It is evident from these passages that our master really made use of these human figures in his studies and lectures on physics. The legend which refers to St. Thomas of Aquin's

<sup>1</sup> "Meteor." lib. iii. p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> This instrument is likewise kept in our halls and schools of natural philosophy. But it is now called *Eolipile*, on account of its effect having been formerly attributed to *Æolus*, the god of the winds.

encounter with an automaton of this kind is not then entirely devoid of foundation. It is most probable, from these disclosures, that Albert himself manufactured one of these instruments, that was capable of moving, and uttering the word, "Salve!" It was perhaps by putting aside the curtain which concealed it that the whole was set in motion,<sup>1</sup> so that we may consider the tradition as an historical fact. He, moreover, describes other similar physical experiments in his Natural History, and speaks of rare instruments which he kept exposed in his cell.

Finally, with regard to the magic cup which we have alluded to, the solution of the problem is easy enough, seeing that this object is still to be met with in Walraff's collection at Cologne. It is an ordinary cup, the recess of which is formed of two plates of metal, the upper part being perforated. Antimony (*antimonium*) was placed between the plates. When water was poured into it, a portion of the antimony slowly dissolved, and the beverage had a purgative effect. If wine, the dissolution of antimony was greater, and the liquid excited vomiting. Albert possessed,

<sup>1</sup> We may observe that the famous painter, Leonardo da Vinci, kept a similar instrument in his studio. It represented a small leather bottle, but it swelled to such a size by the motion of a bellows, that it soon filled the whole room (Basari, "Vita da Leonardo").

then, a universal medicine. He could employ the two principal processes of the medical art; and there is no doubt that he wrought by this means the cure of many sick persons.<sup>1</sup>

With such wonderful experiments and phenomena, the illustrious Dominican would naturally make a great impression on his disciples. They spoke of what they had witnessed; ere long exaggeration was added to truth; they spoke of spirits, of strange guests seen in his company, and with whom he communicated in the secret of his cell: and in this way was the reputation of a magician imputed to him.

Was it not, therefore, natural that people should also attribute to him what was related of other extraordinary personages, so that Albert's name would become the canvas on which popular caprice embroidered all that had passed as strange and mysterious in ancient and modern times.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Most of the convents, even in Bavaria, possessed, until recent times—that is, until their secularisation—cups of this description, and arranged in the manner shown above.

<sup>2</sup> It was not impossible that Gothic art might, in many books (according to Heideloff), be called “*Ars Albertina*,” in order to show that it contained what was mysterious, difficult, and magical. *Albertina*, then, meant *mystica*. Hence it was that these books were later on entitled, “*Scientia Alberti*.”

## CHAPTER XII.

### ALBERT IS ELECTED PROVINCIAL OF THE ORDER IN GERMANY.

ALBERT spent five years at Cologne in blissful activity as a Professor in one of the most flourishing schools of the period, as a fruitful writer, and an enlightened director of souls.<sup>1</sup>

“He then shone in the Church,” says Rodolph, “as a radiant pillar of fire in the camp of Israel.” Prussia compares him to a star which surpassed all others in brilliancy.

Although this great Doctor treated honours and human glory with the utmost indifference, and was never more happy than when in the humble cell wherein he devoted himself to the peaceful study of science, it was nevertheless impossible that the eyes of all should not be fixed on him, and that the Religious of his Order, especially, should not open to his genius a larger field of action.

In the year 1254 the Provincial Chapter of the

<sup>1</sup> Prussia expressly mentions that he was assiduous in hearing the confessions of the faithful, and that he even imposed penances of seven years (p. 251).

Dominican Order was held at Worms. Convinced that no one was more fitted to rule than Albert, the assembled Priors elected him to the Provincialate in Germany. What a rich territory was now opened to the great man's influence! Would he not, in effect, introduce his beloved Order into new places, fortify its flourishing colonies both by word and deed, maintain them in their first fervour, and preserve them from the threatening monster of moral corruption?

The German Province, at that period, embraced all the countries which stretch from the Hungarian frontiers to the mouth of the Rhine; namely, Austria, Bavaria, Suabia, Alsace, the Rhenish countries to Geldern and Utrecht; Holland, Zealand, Friesland, Brabant, and Flanders; then again Westphalia, Hesse, Saxony, Thuringia, Meissen, Holstein-Schleswig, and the towns of the marshes, among which was Lübeck.<sup>1</sup>

What an immense scope for the apostolic zeal of Albert! To bid farewell to his dear cell and the silent cultivation of the sciences, to burden himself with the government of a large number of Convents and Friars, required the Divine Will to be manifested to him through that of Superiors. No matter, he will prove himself a faithful steward

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph calls these latter towns the Marshes. Prussia gives them the nomenclature of all these countries (p. 204).



of his Master, a true shepherd of his flock. Wonderful old man! He first commences by surpassing all others in the rigorous observance of the vows of his Order, and in the life which leads to evangelical perfection. Although far advanced in years, he made all his visitations on foot. He never carried money,<sup>1</sup> but as a faithful lover of religious poverty, when necessity obliged him, he begged with his Brethren from door to door the scanty food he had need of. So do generous souls ever act who have become poor for Christ's sake.

In order to encourage those of his companions who did not love, as he did, this painful destitution, he everywhere gave them a most striking example of it. In the Convents where he resided he wrote books with his own hand, and left them at his departure, either to idemnify the house for the little he had consumed, or to afford his Brethren a share of the fruits of his learning.

“He was not an egotist in regard to his knowledge,” says Prussia, “and he acted thus in order to show that he renounced all claims to property, and that he did not even consider the books which issued from his own prolific pen as belonging to himself.” As he set the first ex-

<sup>1</sup> Prussia, I. c., and Rodolph. He wore shoes, for in his Commentary on St. Luke he wages war on the discalceated, whom he treats as heretics.

ample of evangelical poverty, he claimed a right to exact its practice from his Religious. Being unable of himself to visit all the houses of the Order in Germany, he addressed to them letters of advice and of holy remonstrance. Prussia quotes one of them, which commences thus:—

“Brother Albert, Provincial, and the servant of all, to our beloved Brethren, the Priors and Convents of the German Province: health and brotherly charity in Christ. Fearing lest the evil of proprietorship, which is contrary to our blessed condition of the poor ones of Christ, should be introduced among you, we forbid every Religious to possess money or any other object for his own personal use, or for that of others. The Superior should himself know how this money or other objects are employed. Should any one contravene this prohibition, that is, should any Religious, whosoever he be, dispose of money, or retain any object, unknown to his Superior, we shall hold him to be a proprietor, and punishable according to the utmost rigour of our laws, as a violator of the Constitutions of our Order.”

We can, moreover, form some notion of the holy zeal which animated him under these circumstances, by a severe measure which he adopted in the Chapter at Worms, where his election to the Provincialate took place. Having learnt that

clothing and money had been found with a deceased lay-brother (*conversus*) at Pettau, in the diocese of Salzburg, and that the unhappy Brother had possessed these unknown to his Superior, the Chapter decreed that his body should be exhumed, and cast into the common sewer. Such was the zeal of Albert and of the other Priors in pursuing, even after death, the violators of the vow of poverty, as of old Ananias and Saphira were, for the same crime, subjected to a terrible chastisement by the Prince of the Apostles.<sup>1</sup>

Albert also made other ordinations to strengthen the love of holy poverty among his Religious. The same Chapter of Worms published the following decree: "Whosoever exercises the ministry of preaching in country districts should know that he is absolutely forbidden the use of vehicles in his journeys. He cannot, without a lawful reason, enter any one's carriage. By a lawful reason, we mean the case when, travelling in uninhabited districts, he is unable to meet with an inn or the means of subsistence, when it is needful to visit the sick, and when there would be danger in delay; when it is necessary to convey a Brother to a Convent who has fallen ill on the way; when a Prince sends for us on important business, and

<sup>1</sup> Prussia (p. 212), and Rodolph.

in order to arrive the sooner. Let all who act contrariwise receive the discipline in presence of the whole community, and fast on bread and water in the middle of the Refectory. These punishments cannot be remitted by dispensation.”

Such were the measures decreed at Worms. The Capitular Assembly having met in the following year at Augsburg,<sup>1</sup> under the presidency of Albert, this decree was rigorously carried into effect. The following sentence was there pronounced: “We impose upon the Prior of Rheims, for having used a carriage and clothed two lay-brothers without permission, seven days’ penance on bread and water, five Psalters, and five disciplines; on the Prior of Minden, five days’ penance on bread and water, five Masses, three Psalters, and three disciplines, for having come to Chapter on horseback; on the Brethren of Treves, for taking women into the Choir of their Church, the Convent, garden, and workrooms, three days on bread and water, three Psalters, and three disciplines. Likewise the Religious who this year have come to the Chapter in carriages or on horseback, or who, on other occasions, have made use of the same, must be punished for this grave and scandalous violation of rule.”

<sup>1</sup> Albert was then also at Augsburg at this period. Echard is of opinion that this assembly was held there in September 1255 (“Script.” I. p. 168).

These resolutions taken by Albert show the austerity of discipline which then prevailed in all the Convents of the Friar-Preachers throughout Germany. What is now permitted to us, or what appears to us of small account, was then expiated by severe penances, as being contrary to the religious life of the cloister. Yet despite the rigours observed in the Dominican Order, the houses established in Germany were soon insufficient to contain the great number of the nobility who asked to be admitted into them—an incontestable proof that this multitude were not drawn thither by flesh and blood, but by the Spirit of God, Who was pleased, with the assistance of the two new Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic, to renew the face of the earth.

We are in possession of another ordination published in a letter by Albert during his glorious Provincialate. He says, after the usual salutations : “The memory of the painful burden imposed on my feebleness by holy obedience, and the daily solitudes which it causes me, press me to impart to you, who are absent, the counsel given to the Brethren present at the Provincial Chapter. In order then that the government of the Religious committed to my care, a government for which I am no longer alone sufficient, may be effectually shared by the Priors of the respective Convents, I hereby

put in force as a salutary measure what the General Chapter long since decreed, and which the Provincial Chapter has since ordained, namely: that each Religious shall lay open his conscience once a year to his Prior, and declare to him every fault of which he finds himself guilty, so that the state of his soul may be perfectly known."

It is clear that Albert, by this ordination, was desirous to increase the virtue of humility in the souls of his Religious, since he exacts of them such a painful sacrifice, and at the same time to afford facilities to Superiors to censure and direct the Brethren committed to their care.

Observe how, during the whole course of his Provincialate, the great man shows himself an indefatigable sower of saintly virtues and an earnest extirpator of every disorder. The Chapters which were held at Worms, Augsburg, Erfurt, and Ratisbon restored, at his instance, a great number of wholesome decrees of the highest importance in the establishment and development of the Order, which increased with incredible rapidity in Germany at this period. Albert was another St. Dominic, a second founder of the Order in the German Empire. He is the first who appears to us here as having received from God not only the gift of knowledge and wisdom, but even the rare talent of administration (*chrisma gubernationis*).

## CHAPTER XIII.

## ALBERT FOUNDS A CONVENT OF NUNS AT PARADISE.

THE fire of Divine love which the disciples of St. Francis and St. Dominic spread abroad by their preaching and holy example, inflamed not only a multitude of men in Germany, who consecrated themselves to God's service, but even a great number of women who aspired to the same sacrifices. When they saw how the Religious of the new Orders trod the paths of perfection, they were inspired with the desire to live according to the same rules and to follow the same course. Germany soon beheld a number of Religious houses under the patronage of St. Dominic rise on its favoured soil. The most celebrated of these owes its origin to Albert the Great; and, as this foundation dates from his Provinciate (1259), we cannot omit to speak of it here. This event initiates us into the life of this period; it enables us to admire the wonders wrought by the Divine Word in the souls of the young and old, great and small, rich and poor, and that marvellous spirit of sacrifice, the natural out-come of a living



faith, which then showed itself for the kingdom of God. Albert appears to us here as a Religious full of modesty and tender piety, whose sole happiness consists in advancing the perfection and salvation of souls. What a delightful oasis of peace, in his life, is this event, compared with the periods of tumult and anarchy which are soon to be disclosed to our view!

Much of what we are about to relate will be the simple and touching narrative given by Brother Rodolph.<sup>1</sup> "In the Diocese of Cologne," this historian says, "is the city of Soest, which was once very opulent. Here a Religious of the Order of Friar-Preachers, named Eberhard, often announced the Word of God, and many of the nobility of the neighbourhood, distinguished alike for their rank and wealth, resolved, with his advice, to consecrate their daughters to the service of God."

A contemporary, Henry d'Hosthoven, enters more in detail into the origin and foundation of this Convent. He says that the first idea of erecting a Dominican Convent in the place where Paradise afterwards sprung up, is due to the General of the Order, John, who came to Soest in

<sup>1</sup> We have also consulted the work entitled, "Histoire de la fondation du Couvent de Paradis près Soest" par le Conseiller de justice, J. Seibertz, dans la feuille périodique consacrée à l'histoire de la patrie et aux monuments antiques (vol. vii. p. 287; Munster, 1856). The author has confined himself to the account given by the contemporary Henry d'Hosthoven.

1252. He commissioned Brother Eberhard Clodt, who joined Henry d'Hosthoven, to secure the necessary land. The Religious encountered innumerable difficulties and open enemies who opposed the projected undertaking. They however obtained the means to establish a Convent, into which a considerable number of women and daughters of the nobility asked to be admitted. The Chevalier Arnold de Widenbrügge, moved by the preacher's sermons, came, with his wife and daughters, to consecrate himself and all that belonged to him to God. The Chevalier Gerard de Lo and his wife Agnes brought their two daughters; Adelade de Rotheim entered with hers; Henry de Rüden, with his wife and daughter; Christina de Dortmund offered her daughters in sacrifice to God, with her houses and property; other lords and citizens of the neighbourhood imitated their example. Let us now hear the remainder of Rodolph's story: "The women and young maidens inhabited a common dwelling, and commenced to climb the mountain of perfection, without, however, binding themselves to any specific rule or adopting any particular habit. The reputation of these noble virgins soon spread abroad like the aroma of precious nectar, and the number of those who were desirous to conform their lives to their example daily increased. The necessity

of giving form and stability to this holy enterprise was now felt, and the Chevalier Arnold,<sup>1</sup> minister of the Bishop of Osnabrück, sought out the illustrious servant of God, Albert, in order that he might found, by his authority and wisdom, a Convent of women, according to the Rule and with the habit of St. Dominic. Albert consented; and when he learnt how this pious community was prepared to run after the sweets of the Spouse, he praised God with all the powers of his soul. He instructed them in all that related to the Rule of the Order and the enclosure to which they would be obliged to submit; then, when he saw these souls established in the love of God, he fixed the day on which he would separate these daughters of the world, these precious stones, these choice flowers, in order to lead them into the place where they would be able, like wise virgins with their lamps burning, to serve Christ, the Spouse of virgins. On a Friday, after he had offered the holy Sacrifice before them, and in presence of many noble knights, he conducted them in procession, accompanied by the clergy and people, to a spot outside the city walls, and which was called

<sup>1</sup> Henry d'Hosthoven draws the following picture. He was a most amiable man, well-made, tall in stature, severe in regard to his companions in arms, and most skilful in all military operations. He was eloquent, faithful, and sincere in counsel, formidable to the enemy, the assured support of his Bishop and his Church, of his relations and friends.

at that period Alvoldinghusen.<sup>1</sup> The virgins walked bare-footed and were clothed in poor garments, for they had devoted their persons and possessions to the sanctuary wherein they purposed always to dwell. Before the Altar of an ancient Oratory dedicated to the holy Virgin, they made in Albert's hands a vow to embrace, they and their successors, the Order of St. Dominic." Henry d'Hosthoven adds, "In a fervent address, he pointed out to them how it behoved them henceforth to live according to the Rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of the Friar-Preachers, to love the community for the love of God, to despise self, to obey humbly, patiently, without murmuring, without hesitation, and joyfully; how they ought also to comport themselves, regulate their occupations, cordially love one another, and thus render themselves worthy of the benefits which the Order accorded them. He explained to them the nature of the monastic vows, and promised them the rewards of heaven if they faithfully persevered therein." Then the venerable Father closed on them the doors which would for ever separate them from the world and guarantee the observance of the Rule. The Sisterhood chaunted during this ceremony, "I have despised the kingdom of the world and all earthly attire for the

<sup>1</sup> Alvenshausen.

fervent love of my Lord Jesus." All being now finished, Albert bestowed on them his benediction.

"He also allowed, with the sanction of the Apostolic Legate, Cardinal Hugo, the two daughters of the Chevalier Arnold, Gertrude and Oda, to pass from the Benedictine Order into the newly founded Convent. Arnold himself quitted the world, received the habit of St. Dominic, and undertook the temporal administration of the new Convent,<sup>1</sup> while his wife Gunigond was elected its first Superior. Thus were they able to choose the sublime life of evangelical perfection. From that moment Arnold desired that the place should be called Paradise, either on account of its charming situation, or for a spiritual reason. As our first parents, by their disobedience, lost the happiness of paradise, these spouses of Christ must strive to recover its joys by obedience." Thus speaks Rodolph. Albert remained for some time in the new Convent, whose fervent Religious he delighted with his salutary instructions. He earnestly exhorted them not to ruin themselves by a too easy admission of many novices and by building beyond their means; but to patiently wait until their income or alms should enable them to erect other buildings without compromising the regular

<sup>1</sup> As Procurator of the Convent, Seibertz describes his fitness in this capacity. He went so far as to beg with a wallet.

discipline.<sup>1</sup> Afterwards, when Albert was raised to the episcopal dignity, he returned thither to consecrate the Church which had been built.

Thus did the great master, full of experience and zeal for the salvation of souls, build up a sure ark, in whose bosom a flock of timid doves would find a refuge against the waters of the deluge and the tempests of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Seibertz, from Henry d'Hosthoven. Seibertz unfortunately gives us only an extract, instead of the whole of the original text.

## CHAPTER XIV.

ALBERT IS SENT INTO POLAND TO EXTIRPATE THE  
VICES OF PAGANISM.

ALBERT at this period heard the voice of the Sovereign Pontiff, which sent him to a people who were still buried in ignorance and sitting in the shadow of death.<sup>1</sup> The inhabitants of Poland and the surrounding countries had, it is true, for two centuries received the light of the Christian Faith. They had even risen in arms to defend it against their idolatrous neighbours; they had been governed by Princes of exemplary power; but interminable wars, intestine discord, the disastrous invasions of the Mongols, and the commerce maintained with pagan peoples introduced among them at this period frightful ferocity of manners. Christianity was much weakened thereby. Sinful superstitions had been so deeply rooted that they were never entirely eradicated; under cover of the darkness of the

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph and Jammy, who rest on Albert's own narrative. If we admit the authenticity of our Doctor's "Politics," which Jourdain himself does, it is impossible to deny this legation.



sun of faith they reappeared. It was for this reason that the Popes frequently sent their Legates into Poland to uproot these pernicious tares, to establish its relations with Rome on a solid basis, and to undertake the reformation of the morals of the clergy and people.<sup>1</sup> This mission was also confided to Albert the Great, as he himself tells us.<sup>2</sup> He obeyed the commands of the Pontifical Court and set out on his journey, accompanied by Religious and Ecclesiastics. After much fatigue he reached the frontiers of Saxony, and penetrated into the interior of Poland. What was his sorrow in finding this unhappy people still under the barbarous laws and customs which sprang from the most brutal paganism.<sup>3</sup> It was a received law among them not to allow their malformed offspring to live, in order that parents and the State might not witness the growth of men who were unable to serve them. They even determined the number of children to be

<sup>1</sup> Thus in 1123 the Legate Egidius was sent into Poland to inspect the dioceses; Cardinal Hugo in 1146, Cardinal Malabranca in 1189, and Cardinal Peter in 1197.

<sup>2</sup> "Polit." VII. xiv. p. 461. It is there said that among the Slavonians, called the Cuman, deformed children and decrepit old people are put to death. "Hunc ritum servant hodie homines habitantes in confinibus Saxonie et Polonie, sicut et ego oculis meis vidi, qui fui nuntius Romanæ Curie ad partes illas, filiis demonstrantibus mihi sepulchra patrum quos ita occiderant."

<sup>3</sup> Rodolph cites the laws of the Prussians and Vandals.

reared, lest they might not be able to support them. Decrepit old people, unfit for labour, were unmercifully put to death; and they regarded this barbarous act as a certain proof of filial piety, since they were thus, they said, delivered from the miseries of old age.<sup>1</sup> There were those unnatural beings who pointed out the graves of their parents whom they had massacred. Albert groaned over the blindness and impiety of those men, who still dared to call themselves Christians. These frightful customs might perhaps be excused among the nations whom the torch of Faith had not yet enlightened, and who laid no claim to the rights and dignity of man; but with Christians, who ought to know that all men, the living images of God, and creatures redeemed at the price of the Blood of Jesus Christ, are worthy of inviolable respect; and that, consequently no one has rights over his fellow-creature as though he were no more than a mere brute—such crimes ought naturally to excite horror. That which till then had been uselessly attempted roused the energy and victorious eloquence of our apostle. We do not meet with, it is true, any detailed account of the results of his labours,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We find the same infamy among the pagans of antiquity and of our own times. Christianity alone treats man as man.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph, from whom we borrow our account, complained of it in his own time.

but it is known from an assured source that the illustrious Doctor, by his preaching, revived the feelings of humanity in the hardened hearts of these people, who humbled themselves beneath the yoke of God's law, and that he terminated his apostolic mission with the consolation of having restored many souls to the Church.<sup>1</sup> Albert was, then, a missionary, and laboured among a half-savage people as he had done as the oracle of civilised nations and the master of learned men.

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

## CHAPTER XV.

## ALBERT A PEACEMAKER IN COLOGNE.

WHILE Albert extended afar his salutary influence a great quarrel between the Archbishop and the citizens disturbed his dear and beloved City of Cologne.<sup>1</sup>

The City merchants,<sup>2</sup> possessed of immense wealth and great privileges, were desirous at that period of universal violence, to withdraw themselves by degrees from archiepiscopal sovereignty. But Conrad de Hochstaden was not the man to support quietly this blow to his prerogatives. Next to the Emperor, he was the most powerful and the first Prince of the State. He therefore resolved to humble the pride of

<sup>1</sup> Dante neatly styles him, on account of his long residence in this City, Albert of Cologne.

<sup>2</sup> Ennen, I. c. p. 37, who apparently confines himself to the chronicle in verse of Godfrey de Hagen, to the chronicle of Cologne, to the "Securis ad radicem posita" (Documents, No. 72, 75, 76, 78, 79, 86, 88, 89, 171), and the Apology of the Metropolis of Cologne. Albert is sometimes called therein, *Lector Fr. Prædicatorum*, sometimes *Chori Episcopus*. This latter title, however, is only to be found in later documents. (See Kreutzer, "Christl. Kirchenbau," I. p. 375.)

the citizens, to make them feel the weight of his wrath, and not to rest until they submitted to his will. He began by revoking the freedom of toll which the City enjoyed, by subjecting all goods belonging to the merchants of Cologne to the archiepiscopal impost established at Neuss. He no longer respected their monetary rights. The custom till then was that the Archbishop should mint money on three extraordinary occasions only: on taking possession of his See, on the reception of the pallium, and for the expenses of the envoys of the Roman Court. But Conrad, disregarding the expostulations and traditions of the inhabitants, coined money at his pleasure. The Municipal authorities then repaired to his palace and remonstrated with him on these encroachments on their rights. Conrad, little habituated to resistance, and still less to reproach, gave them an indignant reply, and ere long prepared himself for his departure from the City. Arrived in his fortress at Andernach, he declared war against the revolted citizens. He caused a certain number of boats-of-war to be hastily constructed, descended the Rhine during the Lent of 1251, and landed at Neuss, a small town situated opposite Cologne. When he saw that no other result was to be hoped for than a siege, his disappointment was

extreme. He was about to retire, when an engineer of his suite offered to destroy with greek-fire the merchant fleet, which lay at anchor on the opposite shore. The Prince-Bishop gladly accepted the proposal, for he hoped that such considerable losses would constrain the merchants of Cologne to come to advantageous terms. But the attempt failed; the boat laden with combustible materials was itself destroyed by the flames, without causing the smallest damage to the enemy's vessels. Then the Chevalier Herman de Rittenhoffen counselled Conrad to abandon the siege and come to friendly terms. "The citizens," he said, "are intelligent, they are abundantly provided with ammunition, and consequently difficult to constrain." He added that they were in Lent, a time that was little suited for battle. The Archbishop, all passionate as he was for war, willingly listened to these wise remonstrances, suspended hostilities, and made proposals of peace to the City.

The decision on the points in dispute was put into the hands of Cardinal Hugo of Sancta Sabina and Brother Albert, Lector of the Dominicans, both members of the Order of Friar-Preachers. Strange, indeed! Two poor Friars are the men in whom both parties confide; the

stem Archbishop and the citizens of Cologne throw themselves on their wisdom and justice.

It was necessary to wait a whole year until the definitive conclusion of the agreement, which would regulate reciprocal rights for the future. The Archbishop could only coin money twice, and with a good stamp. The rights of toll, established contrary to privilege at Neuss, and in other places, were to be abolished; the citizens, in exchange, were obliged to take an oath that they would never introduce contraband goods in their name, in order by this means to avoid the City tolls. Finally, a general peace was to reign between the Archbishop and the people of Cologne, Christians and Jews. The Archbishop engaged to defend the City; the latter, on the other hand, should always embrace the interests of its lord, since it had sworn obedience to him in all things that appertained to his rights and jurisdiction. Such was this memorable act of reconciliation drawn up by the sublime wisdom of Albert, which, recognising and protecting the interests of both parties, ought to inaugurate peace for all. But human passions did not suffer it to exist long. The impetuous Archbishop, deceived in his hopes, resolved to renew the war on the first occasion. After much previous wrangling, the dispute was re-



newed, about the year 1256, while Albert was in Italy. He might perhaps have been able by his presence to stifle the discord at its commencement. The citizens made formidable preparations, and swore to defend their common rights at the risk of their lives. At the head of a troop of desperate mutineers was Thierry of Falkenberg, who challenged the enemy to open conflict. The impetuous army of citizens fell like a thunderbolt, near the village of Frechen, on the troops of the Archbishop, who, armed from top to toe, stood in the front ranks to share the combat. A terrible and bloody encounter ensued. An indomitable bravery and courageous disregard of death reigned on both sides. When, after a long and eager contest, the Prince-Bishop, who fought with the bravery of a lion, thought himself master of the field, Thierry of Falkenberg hurried up with his men, and fell impetuously upon the enemy. Conrad's troops, dismayed, began to yield, and soon the whole army was completely routed. In vain did the courageous Archbishop perform prodigies of valour, in vain did he strive to keep his soldiers together; he was at length obliged to abandon his heavy war-horse, mount a fleet charger, and seek safety in precipitous flight. This brilliant victory inspired the City with the hope of being

for ever screened from its Prelate's oppression. The negotiations lasted long. Finally, on Maundy Thursday, 1257, both parties resolved to refer the decision of this important matter to arbiters, who were Gosswin, Dean of the Cathedral; the Provosts of St. Severin and of the Holy Apostles; Philip, Warden of the Cathedral; and Brother Albert, Lector of the Dominicans, who was returned from his mission to Anagni.

Albert appears to us, then, once more as an angel of peace. He was doubtless the soul of this important debate. His indefatigable zeal, his impartiality, his incorruptible love of justice, would render him master of the thorny points submitted to his judgment. He unravelled their numerous complaints, wrongs, and pretensions, and finished by drawing up an arbitral verdict which accorded with every notion of justice, he replaced the rights of the Archbishop as well as those of the citizens within their proper limits, and prevented all acts of violence for the future. Although this arrangement was not destined to last long, as we shall see further on, Albert, nevertheless, did all that it was possible for man to do in order to establish in his beloved City of Cologne a solid and lasting peace among a people who surrounded him with respectful affection, and who reposed entire confidence in him.

We have given a longer description of the political strife which re-echoed round Albert's peaceful retreat than was perhaps necessary for a perfect knowledge of his life. But does it not throw light on the history of the period to which he belongs? Are we not painting the character, the morals, and acts of the most influential personages with whom he was constantly brought into contact? They exhibit to us the groundwork of the picture in which his personality is to be produced. This majestic figure will doubtless appear even more worthy of admiration, if we call to mind that during those incessant storms, those tumults and constant clang of arms, Albert was seated in his chair at Cologne, teaching the peaceful sciences and governing one of the most flourishing schools; yes, while the billows of civil war roared around the walls of his Convent, our illustrious Doctor, tranquil in his humble cell, wrote the most voluminous and profoundest of his works! Where shall we discover a surer testimony of the tranquillity of soul and energy of character of this great man? We are about to contemplate him under another aspect, that of diplomatist. He holds himself above party interest as a heavenly messenger with whom temporal rewards are of no account; while the eyes of all are turned upon him with unbounded confidence. He knows by his

eloquence and his zeal full of charity how to unite the most discordant elements, to remove the obstacles to peace, to reconcile minds and hearts, and to conduct all to a happy issue. One cannot deny that he exhibited a master-mind in these perplexing circumstances. Long years afterwards he was still from this point of view the admiration of the entire City of Cologne, since Kœlhoff, the first publisher of his biography, in 1492, finds no more lofty praise to bestow upon him at the end of his book than the following: “How happy art thou, O Cologne, to have possessed Albert the Great, who, by his eloquence, put an end to thy wars and internal seditions!”



## CHAPTER XVI.

PERSECUTION AGAINST THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS, ESPECIALLY IN FRANCE—ALBERT DEFENDS THEM BY SPEECH AND WRITING.

WHILE Albert stayed the ravages of political storms in Germany, traversed the country to found, visit, and strengthen the houses of his Order in the observance of Rule, or devoted himself to deep meditation in the shadow of the cloister, in France the dark hatred of the University against the Mendicant Friars degenerated into open and implacable war. In consequence of the bad treatment received by some of the students, in the year 1253, the lay Professors closed their classes. The Religious, on the contrary, continued their lectures. This was the spark which caused the flame of heated passion that smouldered under the ashes to burst forth. An oath was required of the University Professors which the Religious did not consider themselves bound to take ; they were then deprived of their chairs, and, as they complained of this to Pope Innocent IV. and to the Vicar of the kingdom, the Count of Poitiers, the University, on the other

hand, addressed a circular to all the Bishops to claim their assistance. This occurred in 1254. The Count sought to calm them; Popes Innocent IV. and Alexander IV. sent Bulls in which they represented to both parties how necessary a right understanding between the two corporations was to the well-being of the Church, and how they were required to unite their common efforts for its glory and defence. They compared the University to the tree of life in the midst of the terrestrial paradise, and to a lamp burning in the house of the Lord; but decreed at the same time the reinstatement of the Religious in their duties.<sup>1</sup>

Still the tempest was not appeased. Then a war of the pen ensued, which, according to the usage of the time, was violent and offensive; at this period, as a modern historian<sup>2</sup> cleverly observes, the art of stifling an enemy by covering him with roses was not known. At the head of the University men was William of Saint-Amour, a Burgundian by birth, a man full of audacity, deceit, and pride, who wrote malicious pamphlets against the Religious, and made incredible efforts to deprive them of the esteem of people and princes. He not only attacked their manner of life, but denounced to public opinion the very Rule and organisation of

<sup>1</sup>For details, see Du Boulay, "Histoire de l'Université de Paris," and Harry Hoertel, Thomas of Aquin (p. 73).

<sup>2</sup>Ennen, I. c.

these Orders as something indecent and contrary to Christian perfection. He styled them false apostles, because, according to him, they preached without mission, and also usurped the power of the Bishops and Parish Priests; he maintained that their renouncement of temporal possessions was not in imitation of Jesus Christ and the Apostles, who did not live upon alms collected. Finally, said he, Christian perfection consists in imitating Christ in His works, that is, in labouring and not begging. This pamphlet, which was circulated with frightful rapidity, and which abounded in the blackest calumnies against the new Orders, was condemned. The Religious laid their complaints at the feet of St. Louis,<sup>1</sup> who was returned from the Crusade (1255), and who strove by every means possible to quell the dispute. He loved the University as his eldest daughter, but he would also voluntarily have given his life for each of the new Orders.<sup>2</sup> He resolved then to submit this libel to an assemblage of Bishops in order that it might be condemned; but the Dominicans requested permission to submit it to the Pope himself. Having obtained their request, they despatched two Doctors of Theology to Anagni,

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph says, "Our adversaries were so cruel that, if the pious King Louis and his brother Alphonsus had not taken the interests of the Order into their hands, they would have exterminated the Friars and all that they possessed."

<sup>2</sup> Harry Hœrtel, p. 73.



where the Pontifical Court then was. The University, on the other hand, sent seven theologians to the Sovereign Pontiff, among whom was the notorious William of Saint-Amour, with a view to the condemnation of another work, entitled, ‘Introduction to the Eternal Gospel,’ which was falsely attributed to the Friar-Preachers. The debate was therefore brought before the highest jurisdiction of the Church; it was there also that it received a prompt solution.

Pope Alexander IV. referred the book of Saint-Amour to a commission of Cardinals appointed to examine it, and commanded the General of the Friar-Preachers to submit it to the careful perusal of four of his most skilful theologians. We cannot imagine Albert being overlooked on this solemn occasion. He had, in point of fact, already passed the Alps and reached Anagni, in obedience to the Pope’s behest,<sup>1</sup> while his beloved disciple, Thomas of Aquin, arrived from Paris, and the Friars-Minor, on their side, sent the illustrious Bonaventure (1256). Albert the Great, who was engaged to defend the Dominicans, was careful to have the book of Saint-Amour hastily transcribed,<sup>2</sup> in order to serve his purpose when

<sup>1</sup> Thomas of Cantimpré expressly says that Albert was specially sent for by the Pope. (See the whole passage in Prussia, p. 227.)

<sup>2</sup> According to James of Soest, says Prussia (p. 233), Albert purchased it at a very high price.

before the Court. He spent day and night in studying its articles one after the other, and finished by retaining the whole work in his memory. When it was read in presence of the assembled judges, he rose up and replied to the audacious reproaches of the adversaries with such delicacy of mind, such experience of matters, with an eloquence so animated, that all his auditors were in admiration of his wisdom, and blessed God for having sent such a hero to deliver the camp of Israel from the devastation of the Philistines.

These replies of Master Albert to the attacks of his enemies were carefully joined in by his old disciple, Thomas of Aquin, and reproduced by him, with some abbreviations, in a book entitled: "Perfection of the Religious State against its Detractors."<sup>1</sup> The Angel of the Schools<sup>2</sup> sets forth therein the substance of Albert's pleading, the arguments even of our

<sup>1</sup> The whole is from Prussia and Rodolph, who rely on Thomas of Cantimpré. St. Thomas's biographers attribute to him the principal part in this affair; but it is hardly to be supposed that the holy Doctor would have spoken before his old and illustrious master.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas has moreover treated of this matter in three different writings: "Contra Retrahantes Homines a Religionis Ingressu," "De Perfectione Vitæ Spiritualis," "Contra Impugnantes Dei Cultum et Religionem;" and in his Summa, 2a, 2æ, q. 186, 189. There was no jealousy, at this period, with regard to the proprietary of a person's ideas or of his personal works. Each one used the works of another, fre-

great Doctor. The following are the more salient points: "The cloister life enables man in a higher degree to preach the Gospel, inasmuch as being freed by his vow from the care of temporal goods, he can apply himself more steadily to study and contemplation. There has been no reason then, until now, for excluding them from the corporation of secular professors. When it is affirmed that a Religious can neither preach nor hear confessions, even when authorised by his Superior or with the Bishop's consent, it is an assertion altogether gratuitous. The Religious Orders certainly do not claim to discharge the sacred ministry alone, their intention is to offer their zealous assistance to the secular clergy for the greater good of the people. That a Monk ought absolutely to live by the labour of his hands is likewise an error, for mental occupations, as well as a care for the salvation of souls, are of equal merit to the Monk. To renounce exterior goods through Christian charity is not a thing which merits blame, seeing that in this we have the example of Jesus Christ, the Apostles, and many Saints. A forced mendicity, and voluntary poverty which subsists on alms, frequently even without naming the author. They desired only the diffusion of good, and thought as did Francis of Baader: "If these ideas are borrowed," said he, "I will circulate those of others."

are not the same thing. The latter rests on the words of the Apostle: 'They who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.' The Religious who devote themselves day and night to the study of the Holy Scriptures and sacred sciences, with a view to publish and interpret Christian doctrine, whether from the pulpit or by their writings, have a just right to count on the alms of the faithful for their bodily sustenance."

Such is the substance of the discourse delivered by Albert at Anagni. The Pope published a Bull, dated October the 18th, 1256, which condemned the book of Saint-Amour as an execrable calumny, and commanded it to be destroyed. This sentence was publicly read in the Church at Anagni, and the book was burned in presence of the Sovereign Pontiff. A copy of the same met with a similar fate before the University College, and in the presence of the King, St. Louis.<sup>1</sup> Moreover the lay deputies were constrained to take an oath to admit the Professors of the new Orders into their corporation, not to close their schools without the consent of the Pope, and to teach everywhere that poverty embraced for the love of God leads to perfection; and that it is permitted to Religious to live on alms, especially when they devote themselves to study and preaching.

This ordinance was promulgated on the 23rd

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

of October, 1256. As to the other work, "Introduction to the Eternal Gospel," on which they intended to attack the Friar-Preachers, and which did not belong to them, the latter condemned it themselves as heretical and execrable, and it was equally anathematised by the Holy See. The Mendicant Orders, then, came out victorious from this ever-memorable contest, which originated chiefly from the pride, envy, and jealous pretensions of members of the University. Observe how Rodolph relates this event in his poetical language: "When the heavenly warriors Dominic and Francis established the camp of the Friar-Preachers and the Friars-Minor against the Babylon of the world, and when with God's help their armies began to spread themselves over the whole surface of the earth, the old enemy of salvation feared lest these warriors might rob him of much booty and power over sinners. He therefore urged certain men, who ranked as sages of the world, to invade and devastate the camp of Christ, and to overturn the pillars of the Church with the arms of calumny and falsehood. But the Great and Sovereign Priest, Jesus Christ, who called these Orders into the Church, consecrated by His Blood, in order that evil might be combated and uprooted, cast a look of mercy on His ser-

vants, and chastised in an exemplary manner the disturbers of peace. Their bows were broken, the arrows rebounded on themselves, and the people of God were saved.”

Moreover a great number of the more enraged adversaries of the Friars recognised later their injustice, and repaired it with benefits. This, it must be owned, was one of the characteristics of the Middle Ages. Human passion would often burst forth into violent flames; infatuation, a momentary error, would drive men to commit great crimes, but it was rare indeed that injustice and hatred were persevered in. Men were often at this period great in crime, but they were also great in repentance and penance for their crimes. Such was the case in the present instance. One of the most implacable enemies of the two Orders was Christian of Beauvais.<sup>1</sup> Falling dangerously ill shortly after this deplorable strife, he bitterly repented the wrongs he had caused the mendicants. He implored them to pardon him, and, as a proof of his perfect reconciliation, he chose his place of sepulture among the Friar-Preachers. It was the same with Lawrence of England, who, after having persecuted the Friars in the most unseemly manner, sincerely regretted it, bequeathed all his books to

<sup>1</sup> He was also a Millenarian, and was for this reason combated by Albert in his Commentary on St. Matthew. The passage extracted from Thomas of Cantimpré is found in Prussia.

the children of St. Dominic, and also found his last resting-place among them.<sup>1</sup>

Thus was this violent struggle happily terminated; and it is to the zeal, erudition, and burning eloquence of Albert that the first crown in the achievement of this victory is due. That which decided especially the judges of this matter, the Pope and Cardinals, in favour of the Order of St. Dominic and its representatives, was Albert's pleading before this illustrious assembly. His reputation as the first interpreter of the Scriptures, and as a distinguished preacher, had for a long time already stirred up Italy. They were unwilling, therefore, to allow the occasion to pass without gathering some fruit from this beautiful tree of sacred science. While Albert sojourned at the Pontifical Court, in order to arrange the affairs of his Order, Pope Alexander IV. appointed him to lecture in presence of the assembly, even of the judges, and especially to explain the Gospel of St. John. This was to confer on him the office of Lector, or Master of the Sacred Palace, a post which his blessed Father St. Dominic had held with great success, and which has remained in the Order of Friar-Preachers ever since. The servant of God eagerly obeyed this glorious call, and opened his course of lectures before a circle of the most

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.



illustrious auditors in the world. He first explained the whole Gospel according to St. John by word of mouth and in writing, and with such depth and erudition that the assembly confessed they had never before heard anything like it from the lips of any man.<sup>1</sup>

If it be matter of surprise that such an exposition could be given in so short a space of time, and after such little preparation, the method of interpretation followed at this period must also be borne in mind. The historical and grammatical meaning of Scripture was then but little attended to, which required much time. They were more intent on the moral explanation, which was inspired by solitary contemplation and the inspiration of the moment. This enables us to understand how Abelard was able to explain after a preparation of twenty-four hours the most difficult book of Holy Scripture, and how he grasped the meaning of the prophecies of Ezechieh. Such was also the path pursued by Albert in his exposition of the Gospel of St. John, and which is contained in a work which he afterwards corrected.<sup>2</sup> This Commentary

<sup>1</sup> "Miro et inaudito more supra omnem hominem exponendo Evangelium Joannis totaliter legit." Thus speaks Cantimpré in Prussia, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. xxi. in Jammy. The manuscript of this Commentary (Prussia) would be found at Nuremberg. If we believe that this Commentary was afterwards retouched, it is because Albert

is a very extensive work,<sup>1</sup> which is of importance at the present day. It is by the bringing together of numerous passages drawn from Scripture; by quotations from the Greek and Latin Fathers, especially Saints Basil, Chrysostom, John Damascene, Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory; the first mystics of the Middle Ages, St. Denis, St. Bernard, Hugo and Richard of St. Victor; as also the ancient Philosophers, such as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero; that Albert seeks to penetrate the meaning of the Gospel, that he discusses, according to the true scholastic method, every question even to its smallest details, that he undertakes to solve all the difficulties that spring up in his path. The prologue, which contains a warm eulogy on the Evangelist St. John, renders what we have said obvious. He commences with this passage from Ezechiel: "A large eagle with great wings, long-limbed, full of feathers, and of variety, came to Libanus, and took away the marrow of the cedar" (xvii. 3). The Evangelist St. John, he says, is commended for four things which distinguished him as a sacred author. First, by the emblem, hence he is called a great eagle. By the sublimity of

refers, even from the outset, to the exposition which he gave of the other Evangelists.

<sup>1</sup> On the cover the following indication is found: "Luculenta expositio ad instantiam Alexandri IV., pro extirpandis hæresibus tunc vigentibus lecta."

his contemplation, as it is written, "With great wings." By the depth of the matters of which he treats, therefore it is said, "Long-limbed." By the great number of mysteries and sacraments contained in his Gospel, hence it is said, "Full of feathers, and of variety." A fifth characteristic is the attainment of the end of the composition of the Gospel; therefore is it figuratively said, it "came to Libanus." A sixth, and last, is the gift of incorruptibility, which he shared in by the description of the Divine mysteries. This is expressed by the words, it "took away the marrow of the cedar." Albert goes on to develop the analogies of St. John with the eagle. The Apostle has six properties similar to this bird of prey. The eagle's sight is so acute that it is capable, he says, of looking stedfastly on the disk of the sun. Hence it is called aquila (from *acumen*).

It tests its young to see if they belong to it. In fact, as soon as the latter leave the shell their eyes are naturally closed. The eagle then seizes them one after the other, compels them to gaze on the solar disk, and violently shakes those whose eyes it discovers moistened; those, on the contrary, that are able to look immovably at the sun are owned, nourished, and cared for, as belonging to it. It is thus that St. John, with bold speech, turns to the light of the Word, and chases from the nest

of the Church all the heretics who are incapable of contemplating it. As to Catholics who look upon this Divine Sun with sincere faith, he feeds and maintains them with the milk of his doctrine in the bosom of the Church. Hence Ezechieel says, "The figure of the eagle is above the four." For the other Evangelists describe the Humanity of Jesus Christ and occupy themselves but little with His Divinity; whereas St. John rises to the eternal heights of the Divinity and attaches himself less to His human birth. Ezechieel again observes, "The figure of the eagle ascends on high." St. John is, in effect, so sublime that if, as St. Augustine says, he had soared higher the whole world would not have understood him. It is for this reason that the Church sings of him, "Never did a pure mind behold in a purer light so many mysteries accomplished or to come."<sup>1</sup> With regard to the remaining qualities proper to the eagle, Albert adds, "Its flight is bold; it is a bird of prey, but loves to share its spoil; it perches and flies alone, and not in flocks like other birds; it builds its nest in the crevices of rocks, or in other inaccessible places; it, in short, very often puts an amethyst among its eggs to deter the serpents<sup>2</sup> from ap-

<sup>1</sup> "Tam implenda quam impleta nunquam vidit tot secreta purus homo purius."

<sup>2</sup> St. John, in effect, places his Gospel last in the nest of the Church in order that the old serpent may not have power to distil his poison of heresy into the doctrine of the other Evangelists.

proaching it." He applies all these details symbolically to the person of St. John.

We will give an example of the exegetical method of the great man by reproducing a passage of the Commentary itself. In his explanation of the triple question, addressed by our Lord to the Apostle St. Peter: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?"<sup>1</sup> Albert says: "It is the test of those to whom the pastoral office is confided. They are not examined with regard to knowledge, for they ought to receive this from the Holy Ghost, but with respect to love, for it is love which is the measure of life, merit, and reward; as it is the cause of fidelity towards the flock. But why is the question put three times? It is because the love of our neighbour exacts three things: firstly, the ardour of charity, which enables us to love with strength and zeal. Hence it is said, 'The lamps thereof (love) are fire and flames' (Cant. viii. 6). Secondly, discernment in love, which causes us to love what ought to be loved, and to know the reason and the means of loving. This is the meaning of the word love (*dilectio*, from *dis* and *legere*). It is also said, 'I am the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope' (Eccles. xxiv. 24). Thirdly, the order in charity, so as

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xxi.

to know in what degree each sheep of the flock ought to be loved. ‘He set in order charity in me’ (Cant. ii. 4). Divine love possesses also three characteristics, since it is written, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole mind, and with thy whole soul’ (Deut. vi. 5). With the whole heart, so that nothing may turn us from the Sovereign Good; with entire submission of mind, in order that we may never be deceived; with our whole soul, so as to be screened from every distraction. When the sacred writer adds: with all the strength of the soul, it means the same thing, because the power of the soul must be used in order to love perfectly.”

It is thus that Albert analyses and interprets the sacred text by entering into every detail with admirable depth. We find also many pearls of ancient tradition buried in this luminous Commentary. “It is related,” says our Doctor, “that John the Evangelist never died. He was placed in an open tomb, and, when later on this tomb was visited, only manna was to be found, a symbol of the great purity of his soul.” Albert, however, as well as Hugo of St. Victor, does not share this opinion: they merely think that the beloved disciple was resuscitated immediately after his death, and that he was received into heavenly

glory with his body. It is even said that St. Ann had three husbands:<sup>1</sup> Joachim, by whom she bore the Mother of our Lord; Cleophas, by whom she had the mother of Simon, Jude, and James the greater; lastly Joseph who was called Barsabas, and who received the surname of Just." We read, moreover, that John the Evangelist was so sweet and amiable, that the enemies of Christ themselves were constrained to love him. It is said of Antichrist that he will spring from the race of Dan, and will have the Jews for his first disciples.

These extracts suffice to give a notion of the sublime work of our illustrious Master. But he had not only on that occasion to expound the Gospel of St. John in presence of the Pontifical Court;<sup>2</sup> all the canonical books passed likewise through the crucible of his profound science. Were these latter lectures edited by the author, or were they lost? We know not; they, however, no longer exist.

Albert would also publicly treat of philosophical matters, for he speaks of it in his *Summa of Theology*.<sup>3</sup> There again he refutes with equal penetration the pantheism of Averroës, who affirmed that all bodies together possessed but one

<sup>1</sup> It is thus that the holy family is represented in a great number of ancient engravings.

<sup>2</sup> To this day this work has not been published.

<sup>3</sup> In the Treatise, "De Animâ."



intellectual soul. "This error," he says, "is threefold; it is most dangerous, and counts many partisans. Since its upholders maintain that philosophy imposes it, although it is contrary to faith, it is necessary to combat it with philosophy." After throwing his adversaries to the ground by his solid reasoning, he tells us: "All these doctrines were once maintained by me before the Pontifical Court, when I resided there by order of my Lord, Pope Alexander." This same period saw also the birth of the book which many have in their hands, and which is entitled: "Liber xv. questionum contra Averroistas,"<sup>1</sup> which proves that the subject of the heresy was then treated before the Roman Pontiff, and that Albert then gloriously defended the cause of Christian science.

It was by these admirable public lectures that the great Doctor conquered all hearts and gained them over to the new Orders, which were become, by the intrigues and odious calumnies of William of Saint-Amour, the object of universal mistrust and hatred. The process of the Religious against the University was happily terminated. The Pope and the Cardinals were attached to the Friar-Preachers by the bonds of sincere affection and goodwill, and supported them in everything and everywhere against their enemies.<sup>2</sup> Magnificent

<sup>1</sup> In Jammy, vol. xx.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph.

testimony of the deep impression which the person, eloquence and stupendous erudition of Albert the Great made at Rome.

“It is thus,” says Rodolph, “that Albert became the instrument in the hands of Providence, or rather of the glorious Virgin Mary, towards whom the Friar-Preachers had ever the most tender devotion, to deliver the new Orders from persecution, and to put their redoubtable enemies to flight.”

This great storm against the Friars, and the victory achieved by Albert’s pleading had already been foreseen two years before at Rome by a pious pilgrim. Since the contemporary Thomas of Cantimpré reproduces this legend, and as it moreover contains interesting intelligence, we are unwilling to pass it over in silence.<sup>1</sup>

“The Provost of a Monastery of Augustinians,<sup>2</sup> in Bavaria, Gavilus by name, a man of most holy life, went to Rome two years before the great tribulation fell upon the Friars, in order to transact his affairs. Being one day at prayer in the Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles, he beheld in ecstasy the church suddenly filled with a large multitude of serpents, whose frightful hissing

<sup>1</sup> “In Libro Apum,” in Prussia, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to determine which Monastery is here referred to. It would not, we imagine, be far from Oettingen, seeing that mention is made below of a Count of Oettingen being a resident near it.

alarmed not only those who were present, but even the whole City of Rome. Seized with fright, the Provost soon beheld a man clothed in the habit of the Friar-Preachers enter the temple. While with astonished looks he viewed the unknown, it was divinely revealed to him that this stranger's name was Albert. Then the reptiles fell impetuously upon the Mendicant Friar, covered him with stings, and clung to his feet, hands, arms, breast, and his whole body. But the pious Friar with manly courage soon shook himself free from their mortal grasp, and ran to the ambo,<sup>1</sup> where he began to read the Gospel according to St. John. When he came to this passage, "And the Word was made flesh," the hissing of the reptiles suddenly ceased, they were chased from the church, and peace was restored. The holy man understood not this vision, and he returned into his own country. But one day while he related to his sister, a holy Recluse of Germany, what he had witnessed at Rome, the latter, being filled with holy joy, replied, 'Marvellous thing! this Albert whom you beheld in your ecstasy has arrived, I am told, at the Count of Ottenheim's<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An elevated pulpit from which the Gospel was formerly read. It would, then, appear that it was customary to read this last Gospel of St. John to the people, but on Festivals only.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas of Cantimpré. Comes de Oettingen was probably meant. (See "Hundii Metrop. Salisb." II. 216.)

to treat with him respecting this country.<sup>1</sup> The Provost rejoiced exceedingly at this news, and said, 'I am desirous to see and examine if it be really he, for I hope to recognise again the countenance which he had during the vision.' He then ran in haste to the Castle of Ottenheim, where he identified Albert by certain marks, his attitude, countenance, the colour of his hair, and his small chin. He related to him his vision, but neither could comprehend its meaning. What is certain is that in the famous dispute which took place later on between the Mendicant Orders and the University of Paris, the whole occurred exactly as the Provost had seen it in his vision."

Such is the legend which Thomas of Cantimpré has preserved. We see no reason to doubt it; for who can deny that a similar view of the future, caused by an elevation of the powers of the soul in prayer, may not be possible and has not often occurred, especially when we consider the lives of the Saints: might not the soul in the natural state of sleep sometimes raise the veil which hides the free events of the future? What! might not that which is given in a small degree to the indus-

<sup>1</sup> In Prussia we find, "Prope terram istam." Rodolph says better: "Propter." It was doubtless during his visitations as Provincial of Germany that Albert stayed with the Count of Oettingen, and treated with him concerning the establishment of a Convent in that small territory.

trious spider and the small green frog on our windows, namely, to show the future by displaying the variations of temperature, be possible to the soul of man on the Thabor of his transfiguration in the ardour of holy prayer? We believe, then, that this German pilgrim really foresaw the coming tempest. The Basilica of St. Peter figured the Catholic Church, and the reptiles, with their hissing, represented the bitter foes of the Orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis. Albert, by his admirable Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, in which the Religious Mendicants were represented as so many true disciples of Christ, confounded, as we have seen, their enemies, and peace was restored to the Church.

After having spent nearly a year in the Italian Peninsula (1256-57), amid painful labours but fruitful in blessings, the great and holy Doctor returned into Germany and took in hand the culture of the scientific ground confided to his care.

## CHAPTER XVII.

ALBERT BECOMES PROVINCIAL IN GERMANY A SECOND TIME—HIS PORTRAIT AT THIS PERIOD.

Few men in history have proved as Albert did the truth of these words: "Human life is but a pilgrimage." A great part of his life was spent in journeys.<sup>1</sup> And the difficulty of travelling was great at this period; instead of our railways and steam-engines, the stranger had before him only wretched roads, and even these frequently did not exist. Albert moreover imposed on himself the rigorous law of always going on foot, through love of holy poverty. How painful and meritorious then must his journeys have been!

It was thus that, towards the end of the year 1256 or 1257, he returned from Italy to his dear City of Cologne, by roads<sup>2</sup> which are unknown

<sup>1</sup> He says himself in his "Mineralogia," "Multos annos exulavi;" that is, "I was for many long years absent from my country." According to a touching interpretation received in the Middle Ages, every man separated from his native country was an exile.

<sup>2</sup> It is possible that he might have travelled with Thomas of Aquin, by way of Marseilles, towards Paris, where the latter received the doctor's cap in the year 1257. We possess no information, however, on this subject.

to us. He had scarce arrived when his assistance was called for on every side, his wisdom and experience were put under contribution. He was at first called upon to arbitrate in the violent strife which had arisen in his absence. We have spoken above of the skill which he employed to re-establish peace, with the aid of many other noble personages. He forthwith sets out to traverse the cities and small boroughs, for he always bore the burden of the Provincialate. We find no mention made of the places and Convents which were then the object of his visitations. Rodolph only relates that he presided over the capitular assemblies held at Erfurth and Ratisbon, which would take place in the years 1257 and 1258. We meet him in the following year at Valenciennes, in Flanders,<sup>1</sup> at a General Chapter of the Order, where, with the concurrence of his disciple Thomas of Aquin, Bonhomme, Florentius, and Peter of Tarentaise,<sup>2</sup> he drew up a statute to regulate the general studies.<sup>3</sup> We discover no record of this plan of studies, which was generally regarded as being most appro-

<sup>1</sup> Valencenis in Hannonia (Hainaut).

<sup>2</sup> For the Biography of these personages, see Quetif and Echard, "Script. Ord." I. 139, &c.

<sup>3</sup> It is said in the Acts, "De mandato magistri generalis et definitorum ad promotionem studii ordinatum est per fratres Bonumhominem, Florentium, Albertum Teutonicum, Thomam de Aquino, Petrum de Tarentasia, magistros theologiæ Parisiis qui interfuerunt dicto capitulo quod lectores," &c. (Echard, I. 140).



priate to the wants of that period. Albert, at his own pressing solicitations, was then relieved of the cares of the Provincialate, for we read in the ordinances of this Chapter the following passage : "We dispense from their office the Provincials of Germany, Palestine, and Provence."<sup>1</sup> Such are the records of history respecting the acts of the great man during those years. We possess no certain data in regard to the works which he wrote at this period. It is, however, probable that he then composed the Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew,<sup>2</sup> which is carefully preserved, such as it was written by the hand of the author, at Cologne.<sup>3</sup> We can see by this monument the diligence and care with which he transcribed his works on parchment ; no trace of hurry or distraction is visible ; the whole is written in straight lines, by a steady hand, with great elegance and neatness, a striking picture of the order which reigned in the interior life of the great Master.

In giving this date to this work of Albert, we have reason to believe that it is to it that he so frequently refers in his Commentary on St. Luke,<sup>4</sup> which he wrote during his Episcopate at Ratisbon. In character it resembles that of the

<sup>1</sup> Echard and Quetif, I. 168.

<sup>2</sup> Jammy, vol. viii.

<sup>3</sup> We shall describe it in detail farther on.

<sup>4</sup> P. E. Commentary on St. Luke, c. xi. p. 47.

other exegetical works already studied in the foregoing chapters. We will borrow only one extract from this rich treasure, which relates to the traditions and symbolism of the Middle Ages. The author therein explains the emblems of the Evangelists in the following manner: "The symbol of Matthew," he says, "is a man, because he chiefly describes the Humanity of Jesus Christ in His birth. Mark has a lion, for he paints Christ as a lion in His Resurrection; Luke is represented with a bull, because he exhibits our Lord especially in His Passion; John has the eagle, since he relates the Ascension into heaven." He further adds, "The Apostles of our Lord were prefigured by the twelve sons of Jacob, by the twelve springs, by the twelve stones attached to the robe of the high-priest, by the twelve stones of the Jordan, and by the twelve stars of the Apocalypse. Jesus was bound to spend seven years in Egypt, and to attain the age of thirty-two years and a half. The plants which touched the hem of our Lord's garment acquired a virtue analogous to that of the garment itself. James fasted until he saw Jesus after His Resurrection. Ann had by her three husbands three daughters who were all called Mary."

We shall say no more on the subject of this book. We pass now to a description of the

life and influence of Albert at this period. It is an extract from the recital of Humbert of Romans, General of the Order of Friar-Preachers, a contemporary and friend of Albert.<sup>1</sup> "This celebrated man, Brother Albert, seems like the tree of life planted in the centre of the terrestrial paradise, bearing incessantly the fruits of honour and grace. In outward appearance he was of noble stature, and endowed with great physical strength. His body was well proportioned,<sup>2</sup> and perfectly fitted for all the fatigues of God's service. From the day when he entered the Order he walked courageously in the path of justice, by the observance of its Rule and the mortification of his flesh, seeking thus by a long martyrdom to triumph over the solicitations of the enemy. He frequently passed the nights in prayer, and in his sublime contemplation offered himself a holocaust on the altar of the heart. In the morning he celebrated the Divine Mysteries with the greatest purity of soul and the most ardent love. He was incessantly occupied either in reading, writing, dictating, preaching, or hearing confessions.<sup>3</sup> He never allowed

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph equally adopts this recitative, saying that he is content to clothe it with other words.

<sup>2</sup> He was, then, noble both as to body and soul.

<sup>3</sup> Prussia relates, on the authority of a contemporary, that Albert, as a Confessor, even imposed penances of seven years;

his mind to repose where there was question of divine works. And as wisdom cannot enter into an evil soul, nor dwell in a body that is enslaved to sin, he ever preserved the purity of his conscience, that he might read with fruit the Holy Scriptures, which he passionately loved. Consumed with the fire of charity, he laboured for the salvation of his neighbour with untold success. The example of his life, his angelic piety, his stupendous learning, and his indefatigable zeal in uprooting error, procured him an incredible influence, not only in Germany, but in almost every part of the earth. Although most amiable in his exhortations, he was severe in his reproofs, and the mortal enemy of vice. He was also a model of greatness of soul; for, in his care of his brethren in Jesus Christ, he knew neither kings nor the powerful ones of the earth. As a preacher, he weighed all in the balance of justice, and distributed to each one according to his needs, whether he preached to the rich or the poor. He struck every one with the arrow of truth. He edified wherever he abode. He ever showed himself truly evangelical by the observance of humility and poverty which the Rule of the Order exacts. When, on his visitations of the Convents, but that he knew how to address souls in language so sweet that they willingly accepted these severe satisfactions.

he excited the brethren to the practice of holy zeal, all heard with extreme pleasure the Word of God, which fell from his lips as from a source of paradise. His ordinances, which are still to be found in many Convents, prove the solicitude with which he watched over his Religious. When, sometimes by order of the Holy See, or at the instance of the Bishops, he visited the houses of Monks, Canons Regular, or Nuns in their Dioceses, in order to discover what was practised therein contrary to the rules of perfection, he, with admirable zeal, brought back into the path of observance all those who had unhappily departed therefrom. He even adopted the severest measures when these were needed. But as he was a spotless mirror of every virtue, and as it might be said of him that he had no equal, that no one observed the Commandments of the Most High in the same degree, he was loaded with God's favours, and was the object of the goodwill and love of all. Far from glorifying himself in this, he referred all to grace; filled with deep humility, he perceived the spirit of pride which sought to rise within him on such occasions. He ever strenuously avoided the thrusts of the enemy, in order not to fall, dazzled by the glare of human flattery, into the abyss of pride. As he beheld everything in the light of

God, he walked in His Presence, ever ready to go whithersoever the inspirations of the Holy Spirit called him. He despised earthly honours, and esteemed not the tiara or the episcopal crosier more than the wallet and staff of the monk. He loved nothing here below except Christ and His justice.”

Such is the faithful picture which a contemporary witness gives us of Albert. The aureola of every virtue illumines his brow. He appears in the midst of his brethren full of grace and strength. It will not astonish us to see this brilliant light placed on one of the noblest candlesticks of the Church.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

ALBERT IS NOMINATED TO THE BISHOPRIC OF RATISBON.

THE far-famed Church of Ratisbon, where Albert had already appeared with blessings as a Confessor, had at this time fallen into deplorable disorder. Bishop Albert I., Count of Pottingau, was far from worthily discharging his sublime ministry. Like many Prelates of that period, who suffered their thoughts to be diverted by the splendours of honour and the clang of arms, he was a bold tilter and a skilful politician, but not a good Bishop. After having inflicted many evils on his flock, he moreover nourished the germs of discord and of cruel war between the Bohemians and the Bavarians which then ravaged his Diocese. He persecuted the citizens of Ratisbon on account of their attachment to the Emperor. He maintained no order even in his own house; he squandered the patrimony<sup>1</sup> of the Church, and applied it to his own ambitious purposes. The exasperation of the people was soon at its height. Has not the Church—

<sup>1</sup> Gumpelzheimer, "History of Ratisbon," I. 189 (Ratisb., 1830).



thanks to the wise disposition of its Divine Founder—a supreme head whose eyes and arms are extended over all the regions of the earth to protect the flock from mercenary pastors and ravening wolves? Citizens and Chapter were united in appealing to the Pope; they complained of their Bishop, and requested that a more worthy Prelate might be given to them.<sup>1</sup> Alexander IV. investigated the matter, discovered the wrongs inflicted by the Bishop on the people, deposed him from his office, and enjoined penance on him in a Monastery. The accused, in obedience to this sentence, retired into the Convent of Sittenberg. It was necessary then to find a man who was able to heal the bleeding wounds of this vacant See, and to restore to its first splendour the Church of Ratisbon overthrown and dishonoured.

The Pope<sup>2</sup> naturally casts his eyes on the man who then enjoys the highest reputation for learning and sanctity: he chooses Master Albert. He had reached his sixty-sixth year,<sup>3</sup> but, despite his great

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> The Chapter, on this occasion, had not the liberty of election. The Canons themselves say, in a document which regards the incorporation of Chammünster, “Brother Albert whom the Pope has imposed upon us.” And in Hochwart (*Æf. I. 207*), it is said, “*Hic Alberto I. dejecto suffectus est per legatum Apostolicæ sedis anno Domini 1260, sub Alexandro IV. campano romano pontifice.*”

<sup>3</sup> Rodolph merely observes here that he had completed his sixtieth year. But Humbert writes to Albert himself that he is already

age, that which the Scripture says of Saul might be applied to him, that "from his shoulders and upward he appeared above all the people" (1 Kings ix. 2); the shoulders of the venerable old man were still strong and able to support the burden of the Episcopate.

Albert had been elected Definitor in the Chapter at Strasburg,<sup>1</sup> where it was announced to him that the Supreme Pontiff destined him to the Episcopal See of Ratisbon. He for a long time resisted,<sup>2</sup> alleging his incapacity. Had he not before<sup>3</sup> refused the honours which were offered him? How will it be possible for him now to bear the crosier and the mitre? However, the General of his Order, Humbert of Romans, being apprised while in France of Albert's promotion to the Episcopate, wrote a pressing letter to him<sup>4</sup> conjuring him not to accept this dignity. As this letter is a testimony of the high esteem in which Albert was held on the decline of life, and that for this reason he ought not to accept the episcopal dignity. St. Anselm likewise was not a Bishop until he was sixty.

<sup>1</sup> According to Jammy, it is not known exactly where Albert then was. Rodolph and Prussia mention Rome, where the Pope, they say, had quite recently sent for him. Others affirm that he was at Cologne; others that he had come by order of the Pope to the Chapter at Strasburg ("Vie des Saints," tom. viii. p. 25).

<sup>2</sup> This is said by the contemporaries Ptolemy of Lucca and Bernard Guidonis (Quetif and Echard, I. 168).

<sup>3</sup> Fleury, "Hist. Ecclesiastique," tom. xvii. 606.

<sup>4</sup> Related in Prussia, p. 253.

in the Dominican family we ought to quote it here. It is as follows:—

“ We, Brother Humbert, an unprofitable servant in the Order of St. Dominic, desire eternal salvation in paradise, and on earth the renown of innumerable merits and of good example to our beloved son in Christ, Albert, Lector at Cologne. We have received news from Rome which would deeply concern us did we not place the fullest reliance in you. We learn that the Court of Rome destines you to a Diocese. We must credit the report, since it comes from the Pontifical Court, yet no one, of all those who know you, believes that it will be possible to gain your consent thereto. Who would imagine that you, having now reached the term of your glorious career,<sup>1</sup> would be capable of imprinting a stain on your own glory, and on that of an Order to whose progress you have so largely contributed? Who, then, we ask you, beloved and dear Brother—we do not speak of our own, but of all the poor Orders—would henceforth be able to resist the temptation to accept these appointments if you receive them? Oh! we implore you not to suffer yourself to be moved by the counsels and importunities of their Lordships of the Court of Rome, where they do not view these matters in so serious a light. Let not the slight

<sup>1</sup> “ In ultimo vitæ.”

imperfections of an Order which cherishes and honours all its members, and glories especially in possessing you in our Lord, discourage you. Should these moral hardships, moreover, become still greater, ought not they to be borne by a man of your merit, with the shoulders of a giant? Suffer not yourself to be overcome by the Pope's command, which, in such cases, is more in words than in intention. Violence is offered to no one who seriously resists. This holy and passing disobedience will augment your glory rather than diminish it. Consider the lot of many of those who are raised to this eminent position. What is their reputation? What good have they performed? How have they ended? Reflect attentively on the troubles and hardships which they encounter in the government of the Churches in Germany, and how difficult it is not to offend God or man therein. How will you be able to bear the embarrassments of temporal concerns and the danger of committing sin, after having cherished the Holy Scriptures and purity of conscience so much? If it be the good of souls that tempts you, remember that you will annihilate, by a change of state, the innumerable fruits which you have borne, not only in Germany, but in almost every part of the world, by your reputation, your example, and writings; while those which you will produce in the Episcopate are very uncertain. Ob-

serve, moreover, beloved Brother, how the Order has been delivered from great tribulation, how it is now re-established in peace; what then will befall it if you plunge it again into deep sorrow? We would rather learn that our beloved Brother is in the grave than seated on an episcopal throne. We implore you, then, on bended knee, and in the name of the humility of the most holy Virgin and of her Divine Son not to abandon your state of abasement. All that the enemy of salvation has perhaps planned in darkness for the ruin of many will then be changed into a twofold glory both for yourself and for our holy Order. Forward to us a reply which will console and rejoice us and our Brethren. Pray for us! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! Amen."

We see by this letter the high importance which the whole Order attached to the possession of Albert. It is clear at the same time that the Superior-General regarded the reception of dignities as a fault against the religious virtues, against poverty and humility. Hence his energetic language. But Albert had no need of the exhortations of his Superior. He had already implored mercy with tears; but the Pope, who until then perhaps had only intimated his choice conditionally, addressed a Brief to him from Anagni, which declared a longer resistance to be

punishable. This document shows us once more in a clear light the merits of our great Master.

“Alexander, Bishop, Servant of the servants of God, to Brother Albert, Lector at Cologne. The duties of the office which has been committed to Us, oblige Us to occupy Ourselves with the churches, and to labour for their increase. But it is incumbent on Us before all to provide with great care for those in widowhood, in order that they may not remain too long destitute of pastors capable of discharging the ecclesiastical functions, and of increasing their temporal interests. But as the Church of Ratisbon is now deprived of this consolation by the retirement of Our Venerable Brother, its former Bishop, We are interested, as is fitting, with paternal affection in all that concerns it. Knowing then your numerous merits, and having agreed with Our Brethren the Cardinals, We have resolved to place you over this Church. For, as you have ardently drunk of the pure source of the Divine law, and of the salutary waters of science, in such sort that your heart is replete with the fulness thereof, and your judgment is sound in all that relates to God, We firmly hope that this Church, which is overturned in spiritual matters as well as temporal, will be healed by you, and that your unceasing efforts will repair all its injuries. We therefore command you to obey Our will, or



rather that of Divine Providence, to submit to Our choice, to repair to this Diocese and assume its government according to the prudence which the Lord has imparted to you. May you, with God's grace, make constant progress in its reformation! Given at Anagni, this ninth day of January, in the sixth year of Our Pontificate."<sup>1</sup> This letter is dated the 9th of January, 1260.

A similar document was addressed to the Dean and Chapter of Ratisbon, to recommend to them the newly elect.<sup>2</sup> The matter was now settled. God's Will was manifested. Resistance was no longer possible. Albert remembered the words of Scripture, "Not to obey, is to resemble those who sacrifice to idols; and not to act in consequence, is a crime of rebellion." It then behoved him to be consecrated with the oil of gladness, to climb the heights of the episcopal dignity,<sup>3</sup> and to bear on his shoulders the heavy burden of the apostolate.

The Superiors of the Order also gave their consent, since no Religious was allowed to accept an ecclesiastical dignity without the permission of the Master-General. Albert was even exempted,

<sup>1</sup> See "Script. Ord. Præd." of Quetif and Echard, tom. i. p. 168; Fleury, "Hist. Eccles." XVII. p. 606. All three hold to this document of Bzovius, who borrowed it from the Archives of the Vatican for his Annals of the Order. Prussia likewise reproduces it.

<sup>2</sup> Quetif and Echard, I. p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> Rodolph.



both by his Order and the Holy See,<sup>1</sup> from his vow of poverty, seeing that, as a Bishop and a temporal Prince, the possession of property was indispensable. Albert, after his ineffectual resistance,<sup>2</sup> set out with great fear and regret for Ratisbon, to the large flock which awaited him. He reached the Bavarian frontiers<sup>3</sup> wearied out with the length of his journey, and accompanied by a suitable number of Religious. To avoid all pomp and confusion, he did not enter Ratisbon till after sunset and in the greatest silence; he went immediately to the Church of St. Blase, served by the Friar-Preachers. He knew this Convent well. Twenty years before he had spent many happy days here as a Professor. It was the same little Roman church, some remains of which are still to be seen in the northern part of the city; here he had often announced the Word of salvation; here he finds once more the lecture-hall wherein he had so often broken the bread of science to multitudes of young men hungering after truth. It is here that he asks to pass the night. The Friars, who

<sup>1</sup> Albert expressly mentions this in his will.

<sup>2</sup> "Post infructuosa tædia," says Rodolph.

<sup>3</sup> Prussia (p. 262) says that Albert left Rome fortified with the Apostolic blessing, and travelled into Bavaria. Did he really arrive in Italy after the reception of the Brief? We are unable to decide. However this may be, the time (it was winter) was ill-suited and too short for such a journey. Moreover Albert, as we have seen, was at Valenciennes in 1259.

beheld a member of their Order promoted to the illustrious See of Ratisbon, received him with true enthusiasm.<sup>1</sup> On the following day, about the hour of Office, the venerable Pastor, surrounded by Religious, repaired to his Cathedral, which is at this day dedicated to the Apostle St. Peter. This temple was not the beautiful Gothic edifice<sup>2</sup> which the traveller contemplates at the present day, but an ancient church of the Roman period, smaller and more sombre, but richly adorned with altars, sacred treasures, and works of art. The clergy and people, who had heard of their Bishop's arrival, flocked in great numbers to the church. Albert, surrounded by the clergy and the chief men of the City, enters the sanctuary, approaches the high altar, prostrates himself on his face on the earth, and devoutly pours forth his prayers in presence of his God.

The crowd steadily increases; men and women hasten from every part of the city. When Albert had finished his prayer, the clergy seated him, amid the cries and chaunts of gladness, on the episcopal throne in his capacity of Chief Pastor, and commended him to Jesus Christ, the Sovereign

<sup>1</sup> Prussia, p 262. "A fratribus miro cum more receptus est."

<sup>2</sup> On this point, see the excellent "History of Ratisbon Cathedral," by Schuegraff. The Church of St. John formerly stood where the nave now rises. The inclosure of this edifice was then much smaller.

Pastor of souls.<sup>1</sup> All praised the Almighty for having bestowed on them a Prelate whose holiness and brilliant learning were renowned throughout the entire world. This touching enthronisation took place on Tuesday in Holy Week, the 30th of March, in the year 1260.<sup>2</sup>

Here a new and most important phase of the life of Albert commences. Hitherto we have admired his acts as a learned man and a Religious; he now appears as a Prince of the Church, governing one of the most extensive dioceses in Germany with such lofty wisdom and a success so full of blessing, that even from this point of view we cannot but pay him the tribute of our recognition.

<sup>1</sup> No reference to the place where Albert received episcopal consecration is to be found.

<sup>2</sup> Hockwart, the Ratisbon Chronicler, expressly says, "Venit super episcopatum suum Ratisponnensem feria tertia post Ramos Palmarum" (*Æf.* I. 207). And Palm Sunday fell that year on the 28th of March. Other historians differ as to the period of his promotion to the Episcopate. Herman of Altaich gives the year 1258 as being that of his nomination (*Æf.* I. 679).

## CHAPTER XIX.

## CONDUCT OF ALBERT AS BISHOP OF RATISBON.

ALBERT, being now installed Chief Pastor of a flock which so many holy Bishops had led to the pastures, took possession of his episcopal residence, situated in the vicinity of the Cathedral. This dwelling was very small and of mean exterior,<sup>1</sup> for the public buildings had until then preserved their ancient simplicity. Grandeur, magnificence, and wealth were reserved only for the churches. The Palace was surrounded with a solid wall, destined to defend its lord, in those times of brutal force, against a surprise of the enemy. It was in this fortress that Albert established his abode. The old historians are acquainted with many charming anecdotes in reference to his mode of life as a Bishop. They relate before all that in laying aside the habit he did not abandon the life of a perfect Religious. "Like the illustrious Martin of Tours,"

<sup>1</sup> The episcopal residence extended from the Church of St. John to the ancient Cathedral of this name. The Danube flowed close by (Gumpelzheimer, "History of Ratisbon," I. 201).

says Rodolph, "Albert preserved in all their freshness and vigour his old humility and his inviolable love of the lily of virgins." As the Constitutions of the Order prescribe poverty and moderation, he knew how to conform his life thereto during the whole of his episcopal career. Thus he was not ashamed to appear in public with the thick shoes in use in the Order of Friar-Preachers, which secured him the surname of the Bishop with big shoes or laced shoes.<sup>1</sup> But what did the pleasantries of the multitude matter to him? Adorned with beauty of soul, he was little concerned about his outer dress. He manifested also supreme contempt for the pomp and the richly caparisoned horses in use at this period among the German Bishops and in the wealthy City of Ratisbon. It is even said that he traversed his vast Diocese on foot, supporting himself only with a modest staff, while a beast of burden carried his episcopal robes and books.<sup>2</sup> This manner of making his diocesan visitations, usually adopted by Albert, ought the more to excite our admiration, inasmuch as he had then attained his sixty-

<sup>1</sup> Prussia (p. 254) and Rodolph. The Ratisbon Chronicler, Audipresbyter, also says: "Hunc populus ligatum calceum cognominabat eo quod ferret ligatos calceos, sicut est mos deferre patribus Præd." (*Æf.* I. 36). These are the shoes laced upwards which we see on the old statues.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph. This (episcopal) staff of wood is perhaps the same as that which is preserved at Cologne in his tomb.

seventh year, and that the surroundings of the other Bishops of Ratisbon, when they appeared in public, were far different. It was even necessary in the fourteenth century to forbid the Prelates of this City to attend the Diet of the Empire with more than thirty horses.

Albert would not reserve for himself anything out of the revenues of his Diocese, which consisted in tithes, quit-rents, and the fruits of real estate. He subtracted therefrom only what was strictly necessary for the maintenance of the Episcopal Court; the rest he employed partly in paying off the debts of his predecessors, and partly in remittances to faithful administrators for the relief of the necessitous. It is thus that this great servant of God still observes the rules of evangelical poverty, although it no longer touches him personally. He reserved for himself only his episcopal robes, his plate, and books. As he loved not the outward manifestations of regard with which the multitude overwhelmed him whenever he appeared in public, he never went into the City, except in cases of urgent necessity. He was then accompanied by fervent Religious distinguished for their sweetness of manner or the purity of their lives, and conversed with them on edifying subjects, such as the spirit and means of piety, progress in virtue, &c. Such conversations were sweet to his

mouth; but when he was obliged to treat of matters of temporal administration with those who sought his advice, this intercourse brought neither sweetness to his mind nor profit to his soul. In short, when he was more occupied than usual with a multitude of affairs he would call to mind his former happy existence in the midst of his Brethren in the silence of the cloister, and sigh deeply to see himself thus deprived of it.<sup>1</sup>

What proves how he preserved his attachment to his Order is his introduction of the Feast of the holy patriarch Dominic<sup>2</sup> into the Diocese of Ratisbon, and the grant of certain revenues to the Canons who assisted at that function.

We see from all this that Albert, now at the summit of ecclesiastical dignity, acts with the same simplicity, the same spirit of devotion, as when he was subject to the lowliness of the religious life. We should greatly err, however, in supposing that he applied himself solely to practices of piety, and that he thought only of the salvation of his own soul in peaceful abstraction from the world. He was, on the contrary, a Bishop in the truest sense of the word; he discharged all the duties of the Bishop as well as those of a temporal Prince with such

<sup>1</sup> Textually from Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> Prussia and Rodolph. This Feast must have fallen into desuetude, since Hockwart observes that it was no longer kept in his time.



lofty wisdom, with such astonishing exactitude and indefatigable zeal, that he claims a right to rank in the number of the most illustrious Bishops who have ever lived. All the historians, the chroniclers of Ratisbon, as well as those of the Order of Preachers, are unanimous on this point. Let us proceed, then, to unfold the admirable characteristics of the public life of our Master.



## CHAPTER XX.

## ALBERT'S ADMINISTRATION OF HIS DIOCESE.

ALBERT found his vast Diocese in a deplorable condition. The constant strife and incessant warfare between the lords of the City, the neglect of episcopal duty of which his predecessors were guilty, the ever-increasing ambition and thirst after pleasure which absorbed every condition of life, introduced great moral depravity among the clergy and people. If we read the letters addressed, in 1260, by Pope Alexander IV. to the Archbishop of Salzburg, and consequently to the Bishop of Ratisbon, if we listen to the words of holy indignation uttered by our Master himself in his Commentary on St. Luke, which he composed at this period, we shall have an idea of these evil abuses. The Pope<sup>1</sup> complains, in accents of bitter sorrow, of the shameful and impudent violation of the holy virtue of chastity by certain members of the clergy. "It is through these men," he says, "that the

<sup>1</sup> The entire Brief, with its details, is related by the Abbot Herman of Altaich in his Annals (*Æf.* I. 680). It is dated February 15th, 1260.

Name of God is blasphemed on earth ; it is through them that the Sacraments of the true Faith suffer, for the vessels of the Lord are profaned by their sacrilegious hands ; it is through them that religion loses the respect of the faithful ; it is through them, in short, that the property of the Church is wasted in the most guilty dissipation. They are the cause of the Word of God not being heeded, because they preach it with impure lips ; hence the reason why heretics make us the subject of their bitter mockeries. If the powerful ones of the earth are filled with indignation, if the wicked persecute us, if the profane boldly lay hands on the heritage of Christ, if the whole body of our holy mother the Catholic Church is become the object of scandal and universal shame, it is because of this corrupted flesh which the knife fails to cut off." He continues thus to call upon the Bishops to repress abuses by the severest measures, and to introduce a reformation among the clergy, threatening them with the lot of Heli if they obey him not. "Act in such a way," the Pope concludes, "that, when the great Prince of pastors shall come and shall claim from each one of you the fruit of his ministry, you may stand without fear before His face, and be able to render Him an account of your administrations."

Albert himself speaks, in his Commentary, of the

vices of the Monks, the Bishops, and Clergy of his time with great openness and freedom. Apropos of this passage: "There shall appear signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars," he exclaims: "The stars are the Religious, who, like the stars, should remain fixed in the firmament; they should also persevere in a celestial life, for our life is in heaven. And in the Book of Judges it is said, 'The stars remaining in their order and courses fought against Sisara.' These stars have three parts to fulfil, which are the observance of the vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty. The vow of obedience they in some sort still observe, as also that of chastity; but the renunciation of the perishable goods of this world is clearly lost, for nearly all are drawn to the love of possession, and even more than the people of the world; therefore it is said in St. Matthew that they shall fall from heaven" (xxiv. 29).

As to the history of Lazarus (in St. Luke xvi. 21), "who desired to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table," Albert says: "They who are set over the churches ought to be rich in science and Divine speech, in order to draw sinners and the poor to repentance; and they should bestow on them at least six crumbs" (which he goes on to explain). But at the end he exclaims in accents of deep sorrow, "Woe to us! for there is

no one at the present day to give to the poor ; the Pastors of the Church are consecrated, according to the expression of the Prophet, with the best oil, without heeding the sufferings of Joseph, that is, of the poor. They delight in repeating these words of the sinner : ‘ I have at length found repose ; I desire to enjoy my goods alone ! ’ ”

He yields himself still more to his holy lamentations when speaking of the signs that shall precede the general judgment (Luke xxi. 25). He paints the sloth, the passion for pleasure, the unbridled ambition of the clergy, saying : “ These stars are obscured, they have gone backward in their course ; for they are returned to their vomit, that is, to the guilty life of the laity. Yes, the clergy, this sun of the world, have receded, and hence the reason why the moon also, namely, the community of the laity, has become darkened and is changed into blood ; that is, turned to the love of the flesh.”

We find still more severe reproaches on the subject of the passage wherein the Sadducees inform our Lord of a woman who had married seven brothers one after the other without having borne children to them. “ Many of the churches now-a-days,” observes Albert, “ resemble this woman, which have received spouses one after another—not seven, but a hundred Prelates without deriving any benefit from them.” We see from this picture

what was, at this period, the state of public morality and the surroundings of Albert. It is true that he, encompassed as he was with the bright light of great moral purity, perceived these stains in all their deformity, such as God Himself beholds them, and was bound to paint every abuse, even the smallest,<sup>1</sup> in the most striking colours. Is not the same phenomenon reproduced in every age? The Saints, like the mountains in the midst of a vast plain, rise up in their day in the desert, and cease not to declaim against the decadence of morals and the depravity of the people. Their gaze is fixed on the mirror of the most sublime moral ideal, the Humanity of Christ; and the contrast between the world and this Divine Model must be to them a sorrowful and discouraging spectacle. Albert may perhaps be accused of having painted his age in too exaggerated colours. But the desolation of the Empire, deprived of its Ruler; the constant quarrels and dissensions, the increase of wealth and luxury, necessarily led to many abuses in Church

<sup>1</sup> We have related above how indignant he was with the Canons who did not so much as open their lips in choir. In the third sermon for the Third Sunday of Advent, he severely condemns certain abuses which were very common in his time. Thus women who paint themselves, dye their hair, and twist golden jewels in their tresses; men and women who wear woollen, silk, or linen garments fastened with clasps of gold; they who expose indecent pictures in their homes, and they who take pleasure in harps, kettle-drums, flutes, trumpets, and theatres: all these have leprosy.

and State ; the people and clergy had need of reform, if we are to accept the testimony of all contemporary writers on this point. The two new Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic had, it is true, done much to improve the state of morals ; but there yet remained much more to be done.

Albert, far from losing courage, began to oppose the evil with all his might. His biographers supply us with many details of this period of his life. "What the venerable Bishop," they say, "had first at heart, was his ecclesiastical calling. He was justly concerned, like the Chief Pastor of all the faithful, about the sheep as well as the lambs, and, for this reason, he devoted himself above all to the guidance of souls. But he laboured with such prudence, that, like that creature which has eyes in every part of its body, he avoided every fault, and ever appeared blameless in the sight of his flock !"<sup>1</sup>

By a spiritual circumcision, he caused all that was amiss and disorderly in morals to disappear, commencing first with the clergy, in order to finish with the people. But he sought before all to assure himself of the succours of grace from on high. To escape the tumult of the City and noisy visits, he frequently retired to his little residence at Stauff,<sup>2</sup> distant two miles. Secluded there, as in an ora-

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph. He speaks of this house at Donaustauf, now in ruins, opposite the Walhalla, and in a charming situation. For



tory, he devoted himself to holy contemplation, and strove to protect his flock with the shield of prayer from being attacked by wolves. He went forth to visit the Monasteries, where he was particularly desirous to see virtue flourish which would gladden heaven and earth with the odour of its perfume.<sup>1</sup>

It was thus that he visited, either himself or by a delegate, in the year 1261, the ancient Benedictine Cloister of Metten, near Deggendorf; he drew up the result of this visit in a memorial<sup>2</sup> written with his own hand, and strongly recommended particulars of this mansion, its situation and history, see Adalb. Müller, "Donaustauf and Walhalla." They also give a view of its ruins.

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> It is said to be still extant, and commences with these words: "Albertus frater, divina miseratione Ecclesiæ Ratisponnensis episcopus, refert de visitatione monachorum Metæ." It is dated the 25th of March, 1261. Thus speaks A. Niedermayr in the inscription quoted above. It is moreover said in the "History of Metten," by Father Rupert Mittermüller (Stauby, 1857; p. 40), "Not only was Albert (Abbot of Metten) employed by the Pope in negotiations; but his Diocesan, Blessed Albert the Great, made use of him for similar ends." We read also in the Codex of the Benedictine Rule which was written at Metten in the year 1414, that the pious and learned Bishop, possibly in consequence of orders emanating from the Roman Pontiff and the decisions of the General Chapter of Salzburg, addressed a Constitution to all the Abbots of the Order of St. Benedict, in which he rests chiefly on the observance of the Rule, and charges the Abbots of Metten and Upper Altaich to visit the Monasteries. This, perhaps, has some relation with Father Hermanuer's data in his "Abridged History of Upper Altaich," p. 174, according to which Blessed Albert the Great commanded Herman Abbot of Lower Altaich to undertake, in 1261, the visitation of the Monastery of Metten.

therein the observance of the holy Rule. It would appear that, besides Herman of Lower Altaich, Poppo, the new Abbot of Upper Altaich, availed himself of his help in the re-establishment of ancient monastic discipline. For we read in the annals of Altaich: "In the year 1260, the Monk Poppo, a man of great penetration and piety, was elected to the abbatial dignity at Upper Altaich. It was through his zeal that monastic discipline began to be re-established in many parts of the Diocese of Ratisbon.<sup>1</sup> It is then presumable that Albert's intervention under these circumstances was not without its results. He was not less careful of the moral improvement of the people. Every time that a Festival occurred, he performed the sacred Offices in his Cathedral and preached.<sup>2</sup> It is not difficult to represent how Albert, on these occasions, discharged the sacred functions of his ministry at the Altar, he, who in his outward appearance was most edifying, dignified, and venerable. He was clothed in an alb without lace, which reached to the feet, and was marked on the breast and at the extremities with four red lines in memory of the wounds of the Sacred Body of Christ. On his

<sup>1</sup> "Annales Hermanni Altahensis Abbatis," in *Æf.* I. 681.

<sup>2</sup> We surmise this from the vestment of the Bishop's body in the tomb, and which is still to be seen in the Church of St. Andrew, at Cologne: it is the chasuble which he used in penitential times.

breast were crossed two long narrow bands (the stole) on which figures of the holy Apostles were embroidered. He wore on his left arm a similar band, but smaller (the maniple). The whole body was clad in a vestment used for the holy Sacrifice (the chasuble), fashioned of velvet on silk with a pallium cross on both sides worked in gold. He held in his hand an episcopal staff, very simple and suited to his first state as a Religious. The stem was of carved wood, while the curved part, made of ivory, doubtless represented the Angel saluting Mary.<sup>1</sup> His brow was crowned with a low mitre, adorned with embroidered figures and other ornaments. He proceeded thus to his throne, placed on the right-hand side of the Sanctuary, and sate facing the Altar, constructed, no doubt, in the Roman style, of most precious materials and brilliant metals. On each side, in the magnificent stalls of the choir, were his Chapter, whose chief members were Henry, the Provost; Leo, the Dean; Bergthold of Oberndorf, Archdeacon; Albert of Hutte; Ubrich of Dornberg, Provost of St John's; Calhoch, Archdeacon; Albert of Pleistein; Master Perchtold, Provost of Spalt, and Ulrich of Hackel-

<sup>1</sup> This is merely a conjecture, seeing that the staff, which is still in the tomb at Cologne, no longer possesses this ornament of former times, and that the curvity of the metal alone is still visible. Moreover Albert speaks frequently of the use that was made of ivory in his time for similar purposes, for example ciboriums.

stat,<sup>1</sup> with a goodly number of choristers and Vicars. This was a majestic crown around the Bishop, engaged in offering the sublime Sacrifice amid the solemn tones of the Gregorian chaunt.

His ancient biographers inform us that Albert often discharged the ministry of preaching. We have already spoken of the doctrinal and literary merit of his sermons; they were preached to the people in German, although those that have been preserved are for the most part written in Latin. The custom pursued in the Middle Ages by the old Schoolmen, in Monasteries, was to compose them in Latin and deliver them in the language of the people.<sup>2</sup> The labours of such men as Albert were not confined to a parish or a country; their services were especially brought into requisition by the members of the Order, which gathered within the enclosure of its Convents the *élite* of the youth of all nations; they must therefore bear fruit throughout the whole extent of the Church. Hence their writings were composed in the language of the Church, which is Latin.

It is to be regretted, however, that the German discourses of Albert should not have been pre-

<sup>1</sup> Reid, "Cod. Diplom." tom. i. p. 453, speaks of these ten Canons in a document dated September 1259.

<sup>2</sup> Because so few German discourses of the Middle Ages have been preserved, some have concluded that there was generally little preaching at that period. This, however, is wrongfully asserted, as a Priest of Hamburg has recently proved.

served ; they would doubtless have been rare specimens of German literature of high interest, like the sermons of his contemporary, the Franciscan Berthold, who, immediately after Albert's resignation, wrought true prodigies by his preaching in the Diocese of Ratisbon and the surrounding districts.<sup>1</sup> Was it not, in effect, the golden age of German literature, the period of Wolfram of Echenbach, Walter of Vogelweide, Conrad of Wurzburg (1287), and other princes of German poetry ? Prose also soon began to display its bright flowers, under the pen of Henry Suso and John Tauler.

Albert's house was nevertheless open to all when necessity required it. Whoever had need of advice could fearlessly approach him, and receive from his lips useful counsel. He was truly the shepherd of souls. He never removed the burden of business entirely from himself, however painful it might be. With what ardour would he not sigh to be ever free from distracting cares in peaceful contemplation !<sup>2</sup> But he considered it an important part of his duty

<sup>1</sup> See "Anonymi farrago Hist. Rerum Ratisp." in *Æfel.* II. 505. Berthold, a native of Ratisbon, passed for the Elias of his time. When he preached, heaven and hell seemed to open before his auditory. Sinners fell down senseless, struck with the sorrow which their crimes caused them ; notorious robbers restored their ill-gotten goods ; and the wicked immediately changed their conduct. Forty to a hundred thousand auditors assembled to hear him. The sermons of this celebrated Religious have been published by Pfeiffer, Gaisser, and Stolz, with slight modifications.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph.

to preserve and protect the patrimony of his church ; he was desirous to show himself in this point of view a good and faithful steward of his Master. On assuming the government of his Diocese, the episcopal residence was in a state of utter disorder. The coffers were empty ; numerous debts had been contracted, the barns were swept clean of everything, and not a drop of wine was to be found in the cellars.<sup>1</sup> But order was speedily re-established in this shapeless chaos. Albert surrounded himself with faithful and disinterested men, who would trustily serve him in the administration of affairs. The whole property, the land and the vineyards, were put into excellent condition. Then, as we have observed, he restricted himself, in his own house, to the most rigorous economy. Many rich bishops, won by the renown of his virtues, made him presents.<sup>2</sup> And soon the necessary means were got together in order to lessen the crushing

<sup>1</sup> So speaks Hochwart, from an ancient document. He says, “Ego in quodam vetusto codice nostræ Bibliothecæ sic lego : Sciendum est quod fratre Alberto, ordinis Prædicatorum, qui dictus est Magnus, quondam Ratisponnense episcopo, veniente super episcopatum suum feriâ tertiâ post Ramos Palmarum, nec in cellario episcopali unicam invenit guttam potus, nec in granario unicum granum bladi, et simpliciter pro se vel equis suis pas-cendis non invenit quidquam, etiam valens unicum ovum. Item ad culturam vinearum qua tunc imminabat, nec ad fimum comparandum nec ad præbendam vinitoribus administrandam, unicum invenit denarium” (Æf. I. 207).

<sup>2</sup> Rüdiger of Bachem made him a present of a vineyard (Reid, I. 470).



weight of rents. The chroniclers of Ratisbon cannot withhold the expression of their astonishment at the re-establishment of the episcopal finances during Albert's short administration. They have transmitted to us the amount of debt covered by him in the space of two years.<sup>1</sup> They show about 442 livres, a considerable sum at that period. His predecessors had even borrowed of the Jews, who carried on a thriving business as bankers in all the great German cities. Albert was, moreover, occupied in another manner with the well-being of the patrimony of his church. He assisted at the Provincial Synod, held at Landau on the Isar towards the end of the month of September, 1260.

<sup>1</sup> Hochwart relates (I. c.), "Ab eodem die quo episcopatum intravit usque ad secundum annum, quo ei successor fuit substitutus, ecclesiam suam infra scriptis debitis exoneravit. Videlicet apud Aaron Judæum in centum libris, apud Treunspergarium in l. tt. In quibusdam obligationibus in Hohenburgk ante montes in LV libris. Apud Tysbach, in XX libris; Ad Poxavarium apud Wolfhardum in X libris; apud Gozoltragerium in XXIII libris; apud Dominum Fridericum de Perge in L libris; apud dominum de Rorbach in XVII libris, in Engelhoweheim; apud relictam Domini Goswini in XV libris. In quadam hubâ ibidem in VII libris. Item in aliâ hubâ ibidem in X libris, et in censu cameræ ibidem in XII solidis. Apud Turrinbart in XVI libris; apud Hanbergarin in XIII tt. Apud præpositum in Stauffe in XXIV libris; apud dominum Z. in Werde pro XII solidis et in carrata vini, quæ tunc valuit V libras; apud Palmaharium in XXV libris et dimidia; apud Conradum Ergoltangarium in VI libris; apud fratres Ab. et H. de Porta in IX libris; apud Wisentfarium in IX libris; apud Orelhaimarium in III libris. Apud Essenbach in hubâ III libris. Apud Raichenbucharium in V libris, pro quibusdam pistationibus."



The assembled Bishops — Ulrich of Salzburg, Metropolitan, Conrad of Freising, Albert of Ratisbon, Henry of Chiemsee, and Otho of Lavant,—adopted two resolutions,<sup>1</sup> having reference to the putting in force of ecclesiastical discipline and the protection of Church property. The Bishops decreed that the sentences justly passed by any of them upon an inferior should be valid and binding for all. There were doubtless many instances of persons bound by ecclesiastical censures having gone into neighbouring dioceses and thinking themselves thus freed from penalties ; a salutary punishment would thus easily become illusory, and it was to this abuse that the Prelates were desirous to apply a remedy. The second decree had reference to those who unjustly retained church dues, collecting or appropriating the tithes without authorisation.

Many frauds and acts of violence of this nature had probably been committed in those times when might took the place of right, and the claims of justice were the sport of lawlessness and disorder. The Bishops therefore ordained that a declaration should be published from every pulpit, to the effect that those who committed such crimes, and did not make reparation within the space of one month, should be deprived, with their families and servants, of Holy Communion, and be refused the rites of

<sup>1</sup> Both are preserved in Reid, "Cod. Diplom." I. 469.

of ecclesiastical burial. Albert took part in the Synods, and exercised an active vigilance over the patrimony of churches, as his episcopal oath obliged him to do. Yet his solicitude did not extend merely to his own affairs and to the protection of churches; he was, moreover, eagerly concerned in procuring what was necessary for those who were consecrated to the service of the Altar. Many documents give proof of this paternal tenderness of his. On the first day of his entering on his episcopal charge, the Abbot of Lower Altaich having gone to offer to the new Bishop the homage and respects of his numerous community, Albert confirmed and increased a splendid donation made by his predecessor, Albert I., in favour of that Monastery, for the generous hospitality which he had on many occasions received, and because of the exquisite fragrance of virtue which it exhaled afar.<sup>1</sup> He renewed the decree that out of all the tithes on the new plough-lands in the estates or on titheable land belonging to the Monastery, the latter might reserve two-thirds of what belonged to the Bishop, but should give a third to the local Parish Priest; and as the payment of the small

<sup>1</sup> The act is in the "Monum. Boicis." XI. p. 229. The Bishop says, "Quoniam multa hospitalitatis obsequia, quæ nobis et nostris antecessoribus a vestra Ecclesia sunt impensa, et præcipue conversatio laudabilis ejus odor per Dei gratiam de vobis ubique respergitur, ad favorem vestri non immerito nos inclinât." It was published in the year 1256.

tithes was denied only to the laity and not to the clergy, the Monastery should also receive this in places where it collected the large tithes.<sup>1</sup> Albert thus recompensed the salutary influence exercised by this Monastery, by increasing its revenues out of his own resources. The members of his Cathedral Chapter felt equally his generosity. He saw with sorrow that their revenues were diminished in consequence of the vicissitudes of the times and divers troublesome eventualities. To remedy this state of things, he leased the Parish of Cham to the Canons, which till then had been in the patronage of the Bishop. Every member of the Chapter who was present at the solemn Mass, at Matins and Vespers, was to receive a donation out of the income of this Parish with a share of the overplus. As this document<sup>2</sup> bears on the face of it certain marks of originality, and as it was doubtless dictated by Albert himself, we will reproduce it in full. It is as follows :—

“In the Name of the Most Holy Trinity. Amen. Brother Albert, by the Divine mercy, Bishop of Ratisbon, health to all for ever! The poor and the faithful have met together, the Lord hath enlightened both. We as faithful, our Cathedral Chapter as poor, are met together; for by the

<sup>1</sup> “*Monum. Boicis.*” XI. p. 230. The date of the year 1270 is incorrectly given. It is said at the end, “*Ratispon. Pontificatus nostri die primo.*” <sup>2</sup> July 16th, 1260 (Reid, “*Cod. Diplom.*” I. 458).

Providence of God we are united by the same piety and by mutual esteem and protection. But the Lord hath enlightened us both. First ourselves, in order that we may mercifully regard the well-known poverty of the Chapter and the Brethren; then the Chapter, that through our efficacious care its unbecoming misery may be removed. We have discovered, in effect, that the Prebends of the Brethren, from their very foundation, were small and inadequate; that they have, moreover, been so greatly diminished through the ingratitude of men, and especially through the long and expensive law-suits necessitated by the defence of their immunities, that they are insufficient of themselves either for our use or that of the Church, as they ought to be and as is fitting. But as we witness with deep sorrow such an illustrious and distinguished Chapter, renowned for its virtues and zeal, living in such painful and dishonourable poverty, we hereby cede the Parish of Cham to the Chapter for the improvement of its Prebends, for God's glory and the beauty of our Church, in order that the Brethren may serve God more freely, may live more becomingly, and may henceforth become more zealously and effectually the bulwarks of the Sanctuary. We nevertheless desire that this munificence should benefit and not injure the aforesaid church of Cham. The more

numerous and vigilant they are who are interested therein, the greater also must be the care with which it will always be served. An experienced Priest shall be appointed to the Parish, powerful in work and word, who shall instruct as well by his example as by his preaching. He shall be empowered to appoint in his cure of souls, according to the number of chapels-of-ease, the size and condition of the locality, as many Priests and Clerics as shall be necessary and expedient. He shall deliver the whole of the taxes of the Cathedral as well as other rents to his Diocesan, the Archdeacon, the Dean, and Treasurer. The pension granted to this Parish must be such as to enable it to pay the imposts and, moreover, to afford hospitality. The issue of one year must not occasion either complaints or difficulties in regard to the payment of the pension; but a calculation must be made in reference to future years, and the pension, whatever may happen, shall be paid annually without dispute. In order to confirm and perpetuate the memory of this grant, we have caused the present testimonial to be drawn up in writing, to which we have affixed our seal. Given at Ratisbon this 16th day of July, in the year of our Lord 1260.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In a later Act of the 26th of February, 1262, the Chapter declares having let this Parish under colour of pension to the

Albert was thus constantly occupied in improving the temporal and spiritual condition of those who fought with him in the army of the Lord, in stifling the germ of discontent, in extending the reign of peace and concord, and seeking the prosperity of of the churches.

We have seen above that he interested himself with equal solicitude in regard to the sick and necessitous. We have before us an authentic document wherein he purposes to make munificent grants<sup>1</sup> to the Hospice of St. Catherine, near the Bridge at Ratisbon. He addresses himself to all the Abbots, Provosts, Deans, Parish Priests, and Curates of his Diocese. "As the Apostle says all must appear one day before the tribunal of Christ, there to be rewarded according as we have done good or evil in this mortal life, it behoves us to anticipate the day of the last harvest by works of mercy, and to sow on earth in the hope of eternal reward, in order that we may reap in heaven its fruits multiplied an hundredfold; well knowing and being confident that whosoever sows sparingly will reap little, and that he, on the

Priest Otho of Hagenbül; but the latter being dead, the Parish shall pay for the future the annual sum of 60 livres with the Prebends; to wit: every Friday of the year, 1 livre; the other eight on the Feast of the blessed Bishop Albert (4 pfd.); the Feast of the Finding of the Relics of St. Stephen, 2 pfd.; and on the Feast of the former Bishop, Albert I., 2 pfd. (Reid, "Cod. Diplom." I. p. 463).

<sup>1</sup> Reid, "Cod. Diplom." I. 459.

contrary, who sows abundantly will reap eternal life. Now, as the Hospital of St. Catherine, at the foot of the Bridge, in Ratisbon, is so overwhelmed with a multitude of poor and indigent as to be unable to support them without the assistance and alms of the faithful, we admonish you all in the Lord, and impose on you, for the remission of your sins, the duty of inviting and exhorting the faithful of Christ subject to your care to bestow out of their means alms and charitable donations on the aforesaid Hospital. Let them seek by this means and other good works which they shall undertake for the glory of God to obtain eternal reward." Then he accords to all who shall have relieved these poor people by their alms an indulgence of forty days and a dispensation from fasting for one year (*karrinnam annalem*).<sup>1</sup> He went so far as to absolve great sinners who had violated their vows, maltreated their parents, or who had not performed a promised pilgrimage, provided they gave to the poor Hospital an alms corresponding to their misdeeds.<sup>2</sup> Thus did the holy Bishop share the sufferings of the poor and afflicted. He was, indeed, convinced, according to the spirit of mediæval times, that the unfortunate belong especially to the followers of Jesus Christ, Who

<sup>1</sup> Whoever had received this penance in confession could be released from it through alms bestowed on the Hospital.

<sup>2</sup> These were reserved cases at this period.



Himself chose poverty as His companion.<sup>1</sup> He knew that whatever is given to the poor for the love of Christ, Christ regards as done to Himself.

We are, moreover, in possession of another document which shows how Albert also extended his solicitude to even the smallest and most indifferent things in appearance, in order to stir up and increase devotion in his Diocese. There was an ancient custom in the Diocese of Ratisbon of going three times a year in procession to the splendid Basilica of the Benedictines of Prufening, namely, on the Feast of St. George, Rogation Tuesday, and the 12th of May, the Dedication of the Church. But as the last of these processions fell almost always on a work-day, which debarred numbers of the faithful from taking part therein, Albert resolved to transfer the Feast of the Dedication to the first Sunday after the Ascension, in order thus to afford facilities to all to join in the edifying and pious procession. The diploma of this concession bears date the 10th of May, 1260.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hence the solicitude of the primitive Church for the poor. Hence the love which the Saints bore towards them. In the ancient paintings, as at Strasburg, the poor are called the "Family of Christ."

<sup>2</sup>This diploma is reproduced in the "Monum. Boicis." XIII. 217. The editor observes in a note, "Ratisbona ante tempora sic dictæ reformationis sicut festo B. Georgii Martyris, et feriâ tertiâ Rogationum, ita quoque die anniversario dedicationis, de quâ diploma ait, Priffingam quotannis publico supplicantium ritu procedebat, cui supplicationi anniversario dedicationis

Thus nothing that related to God's glory or the edification of souls appeared small or indifferent to this great and sublime intelligence.

We have endeavoured to exhibit by these generous characteristics the practical life of Blessed Albert from existing historical testimonies. He was, as we have seen him, an excellent administrator and a happy economist.<sup>1</sup> His biographers exclaim with admiration, in speaking of the results of his episcopal government: "Albert realised what Cicero wrote of Thales and Pliny of Democritus, namely, that a philosopher knows how to make gold when necessity requires it." He was, moreover, a zealous preacher of the Gospel; we meet him as Bishop sometimes in his Cathedral, celebrating the Sacred Mysteries; sometimes in Synods, taking part with his fellow Bishops in their deliberations; sometimes undertaking journeys for the reformation of discipline in religious houses: finally, we see him incessantly occupied with the *agendæ si non auctor, aptum diem assignando, cum antea non semper in diem Dominicam non incidere, sed in 12 Maii, adjutor certe per diploma istud exstitit Beatus Albertus Magnus.*"

<sup>1</sup>Hence, when Rixner says of Albert, in his "History of Philosophy," p. 85 of the third vol., that he was altogether unskilled in the management of the commonest business of life, that on this account he was formerly regarded as an imbecile by his fellow-disciples, and was treated by his diocesans as a simple, good-natured monk, we have proved, it seems to us, from the above sources, that M. Rixner is at fault, and that all that he advances is contrary to truth.

poor and the sick, to whose misery he strives to apply a remedy by his abundant charity.

In truth, he exhibits here a rare and exceptional phenomenon. While the majority of the men of genius, whose existence is spent in the calm and peaceful culture of science, often know only how to move and reign in the world of thought, and seem to have no aptitude for the daily requirements of life and for the practical functions of employment, we admire in Albert's person the most beautiful and harmonious combination of theory and practice, of thought and act, of speculation and life, of the heavenly and the human. Although called, like another Moses, to treat with God on the mountain of contemplation, he is not less skilful on earth, in the low walks of life, in governing the people of God, in leading them, chastising them, and feeding them with the solid bread of the soul and body. The eagerness with which he pursued science never interfered with the knowledge of the different relations of life; he merely soared to a sublime height, from whence he judged of things in their relations to each other and with eternity.

Our great Master, then, realised in himself the ideal of the Christian and the Philosopher in its highest perfection.

CHAPTER XXI.

ALBERT COMPOSES PIOUS WORKS DURING HIS EPISCOPATE  
 —ON THE PART WHICH HE TOOK IN THE BUILDING  
 OF CHURCHES IN RATISBON.

ALTHOUGH Albert, as we have seen, devoted himself with marvellous earnestness and indefatigable zeal to the duties of his pastoral charge, he did not, however, lose sight, during those years, of the object of his first holy affections, namely, the study of wisdom and the culture of science. In those happy hours which he was permitted to spend, far away from the busy tumult of affairs, in the seclusion of his delightful little mansion at Stauff, he applied himself chiefly to meditation on the Sacred Books, and once more committed his laborious studies to writing.<sup>1</sup> On this aerial height, where the small manor-house, surrounded with wood, was enthroned in silence and solitude never disturbed either by its delightful proximity to the Danube or the confused din of the numerous towns and villages that lay within view, he felt himself once more in his native element, in that peaceful

<sup>1</sup> Prussia, Rodolph, and the Annalists of Ratisbon.

freedom from the world so necessary to the coming of the Holy Ghost into the soul.

It was there that he wrote, probably in the course of the year 1261, his ample Commentary on St. Luke,<sup>1</sup> a work which the ancient historians cannot sufficiently admire, saying that Albert exhibits himself therein as a second St. Luke, that is, as a physician who thoroughly knows how to heal souls.<sup>2</sup> This last characteristic might spring from the fact that in this Commentary he attacks more violently than is usual with him the vices of his age, and seeks to apply an effectual remedy thereto. Albert, it is said, transcribed with his own hand this work, which forms a bulky volume. But Hockwart, who saw this book in the sixteenth century, declares that it seems to him impossible that a person, in the space of one year, could have transcribed such a volume, even if he had had no other occupation.<sup>3</sup>

However this may be, whether he wrote it himself or dictated it to copyists, this huge quarto

<sup>1</sup> Vol. x. in Jammy.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph and Prussia. The latter says, "Insigne volumen super Lucam edidit; quod profecto volumen, quam liber ab omni seculari actione Deo soli adhærens exstitit, quo spirituque fervebat declarat lucide, ita ut plerique constanter dicere audeant, quod specialissimo dono Sancti Spiritus pro tunc cum dictaret et conscriberet hoc volumen, sic inspiratus; liber enim ille spirat cœlestium charismatum singularem suavitatis odorem, prolixiorque est liber ipse aliis per ipsum editis voluminibus in Bibliâ" ("Vita Alberti," p. 265).

<sup>3</sup> In *Æf.* I. p. 207.

was left by him as a souvenir to the Friar-Preachers of Ratisbon, who carefully preserved it and exhibited it with enthusiasm to visitors till the commencement of the present century, when it disappeared amidst the ruins of the Monastery.<sup>1</sup> This Commentary is the *chef-d'œuvre* of the holy Bishop on the Sacred Scriptures. Its composition resembles in general that of the other exegetical books of the great Master. The author presents the texts of Scripture in verses, shows their connection, and then develops the meaning of each word by numerous parallel texts drawn from the Bible, the Fathers, and profane writers. He seeks before all, as he himself declares, the literal, then the moral meaning, while the typical or prophetic meaning is admirably applied thereto.

We, moreover, find in this work many interesting notes and remarks. The author relates that in St. Luke's time certain men, under a borrowed name, like Apelles and Basilides, propagated many errors respecting our Lord; that an apocryphal Gospel existed on the infancy of Jesus, the acts of St. Thomas and St. Matthew, which embraced a great

<sup>1</sup> Neither the public library in Ratisbon, nor that of the Palais Royal at Munich, where we have examined Schmeller's catalogue, without finding any reference to Albert's manuscript works, possess this autograph now. Heideloff points to the public library at Ulm, but this is incorrect. Hence it follows that the Cologneese are the more fortunate in this reference.

number of absurdities. They went so far as to affirm, in the Acts of St. Thomas, that heaven is situated on a mountain whose summit touches the moon, which, for natural reasons, is impossible. Then he relates that even as Jesus delivered Magdalen from seven devils, He also cured Martha of a bloody flux, and raised Lazarus from the grave; that the little child presented to the disciples was Martial, who became Bishop of Limoges. Further on he tells us that the seamless garment of Jesus was made in a manner similar to that in which certain kinds of gloves are manufactured at the present time. It must have been the work of the holy Virgin. It was she also who, according to the opinion of the Fathers, wrapped the loins of her Divine Son with a veil, which she took from her head, when the executioners despoiled the Redeemer of His garments (II. p. 345).

Albert makes a comparison at the commencement of his precious work which is deserving of notice. "Heretics," he says, "resemble Sampson's foxes; like those animals, they all have different heads, but they are bound together by the tail, that is, they are always united whenever there is question of opposing the truth." We shall not say more for the present on this great and luminous Commentary.

Our great Master did not undertake, so far as



we know, any other literary work at this period. Rodolph, it is true, affirms, on the authority of other biographers, that he then composed the Little Office of St. Joseph, Spouse of the most holy Virgin. But he appears to doubt it himself. Besides, no work of this description has been preserved among the great man's productions.<sup>1</sup> Yet the bare mention of such an Office having been composed at this period in honour of the foster-father of Jesus Christ is worthy of consideration ; for it testifies in favour of the worship paid to the Saint, whose devotion, if we may trust the researches that have been made up to the present time, was not so much developed then as it was later on. The Middle Ages, in fact, appear to have had a certain aversion to giving scope to the heretical idea of the natural conception of the Son of God. It is not unlikely, however, that Albert, in his capacity of administrator and nursing father of one of the largest dioceses of the Church, would have had a special devotion towards the foster father of his Saviour.<sup>2</sup>

Had he written only his Commentary on St. Luke<sup>3</sup> in the midst of the overwhelming

<sup>1</sup> Albert, moreover, always speak with great reverence and love of St. Joseph in his Commentaries. Thus in that which he composed on St. Luke, he speaks admirably on the subject of the four biblical personages who bore the name of Joseph.

<sup>2</sup> See Father Faber's book on devotion to St. Joseph and its history ; "The Blessed Sacrament," paragraph v. ; "The Foster-Father and his Child."

<sup>3</sup> Jammy, vol. x.

pressure of business which weighed upon him during his Episcopate, this work alone would have been more than a proof of his indefatigable activity in the domain of sacred science. Yet this is not all: pious tradition attributes to him a large share in the erection of churches at this period within the walls of Ratisbon. It points to him as the author of the remarkable plan of the Cathedral, and credits him at least with that of the Gothic Church of the Dominicans. The construction of the Cathedral, however, cannot be due to the genius or munificence of Albert, since it was not mooted<sup>1</sup> till the great fire in 1270, eleven years, consequently, after his Episcopate, when he was in his eightieth year.<sup>2</sup> It was, moreover, impossible that during the short period of his administration he should have contemplated rebuilding the Cathedral, for we have seen that the finances of the church and the Diocese were in a wretched condition.

We might with greater show of probability grant him a share in the construction of the Dominican Church; even before his arrival in Ratisbon the old Sanctuary of St. Blase, served by the Friar-Preachers, was insufficient for the needs of the people, who loved these Religious exceedingly, and

<sup>1</sup> Less important restorations were previously needed (Schnaas, V. p. 585).

See the "History of Ratisbon Cathedral" (Schuegraff).

assisted by preference at their preaching. In the year 1263 we find that donations were made to the Convent which were probably intended for the new buildings;<sup>1</sup> but these offerings were made immediately after Albert's Episcopate. Four years later we read that the great Master, although removed, lovingly remembered his dear Dominican Church at Ratisbon, since he granted an Indulgence of forty days, applicable to three Festivals, to those who shall visit it.<sup>2</sup> Was this Indulgence to attract offerings to the new edifice? We know not, for the Brief contains no condition of this sort. It was only in 1273 that the actual work of restoration was begun, which was executed in the short space of four years. It is the most complete and the oldest Gothic edifice that we know of in Bavaria.<sup>3</sup> This church, with a nave and two aisles, terminates in a choir of three bays with very low aisles. The pillars are octagonal, with small columns and capitals destitute of ornament.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reid, I. p. 470; but there is question only of the accommodation of the Religious.

<sup>2</sup> In Reid, I. p. 493, it is said, "Cum Dominus ad statum episcopalem nos dignatus sit misericorditer promovere, dignum arbitramur, quod nos ipsius Dei cultui impendamus diligentiam ampliorem." The date is the 6th of May, 1267.

<sup>3</sup> A portion only of the ancient Parochial Church of Ratisbon remains, that is, the old Gothic building of 1250. The Dominican Church now serves as the College Chapel; but it is unhappily disfigured by hideous altars and other similar enormities.

<sup>4</sup> See Schnaas, vol. v. p. 584; the figures in Kollenbach,



This beautiful monument exhibits Gothic art in its highest simplicity, so much so that the Mendicant Friars of that period adopted its design through love of the virtue of poverty. It is thought that its plan was probably given by Albert, who designed it during his sojourn at Ratisbon. This opinion would appear to be the more likely, inasmuch as there is a great analogy between this church and the monuments of the thirteenth century belonging to the Friar-Preachers, and in whose existence tradition also assigns a share to our great Bishop.<sup>1</sup> The extreme simplicity in the design, the ornaments, the mouldings of the arches, the absence of the transept and the tower, the plainness of the columns, &c., might lead us to suppose that a like genius had produced the plans of all the buildings, or at least had the direction of them.

It must, however, be observed, with regard to the church at Ratisbon, that the historians do not say a word on the subject of Albert's supposed artistic labours. Prussia even asserts, when speaking of his episcopal administration, "He erected no monument, but in his humility contented himself

"History of Christian Architecture," plates 30, 6. The most accurate description of it has been given by A. Niedermayr in the *Gazette des Postes* for the year 1856, No. 88.

<sup>1</sup>Such are those at Bale, Strasburg, Friburg, Berne, Eslingen, and Würzburg.

with the existing churches.”<sup>1</sup> Moreover, would not the constant application to the abstract studies of the schools render artistic labours extremely unlikely, which necessitate great development of creative thought? Do reason and imagination ever attain to an equal degree of power? All the great architects of the Middle Ages were pious artists, but not learned scholastics. As to the resemblance of the earlier Dominican churches, it consists especially in the simplicity and purity of the whole, not in the detail and variety of its parts. This characteristic is, moreover, sufficiently explained by the extreme moral austerity of these Religious and by their love of the virtue of poverty, which should be reproduced even in the construction of their churches and monasteries. It is understood even by the rapidity with which they built these edifices, in order to be more speedily in possession of a temple fit for Divine Service. If we attribute to our Master all the monuments which bear this stamp, then we must proclaim him the architect of most of the Dominican and Franciscan churches throughout Germany, France, and Italy, and even of the numberless Gothic churches which sprang up

<sup>1</sup> It is said in Prussia, p. 265, “In memoriale sui ipsius puta in ædificiis novis construendis et ampliandis terræ terminis nihil attentare voluit, qui ampliorem, non manufactam æternam in cælis domum intrare cupiebat.”

with a credible rapidity in the thirteenth century. Albert, although removed, was able to help by his advice and donations the holy place he built at Ratisbon. He could, as Provincial, have determined in what the style<sup>1</sup> of building in use in the Order of Friar-Preachers consisted; how the church might better answer its purpose; how the means necessary for the enterprise might be secured; but to admit his influence as architect on this occasion we ought, it seems to us, to have more certain evidence.<sup>2</sup>

Let us not then fix any pearl in the rich and pure diadem of our great Master before we are assured that it suits it.

<sup>1</sup> The Dominicans appear to have had special regulations with regard to the construction of their churches; for Bishop Leo observes, in a grant in favour of the new Dominican church, that they should build "secundum morem Ordinis" (Reid).

<sup>2</sup> The Mendicant Orders, to whom the reformation of morals and the defence of the Faith were confided, especially in the first years of their existence, appear not to have applied themselves to art as the old Monks did. At Rome even, in the time of St. Dominic, they were lay architects who built the first monastery, and who perished through being crushed by the fall of a portion of the building.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## ALBERT RESIGNS THE BISHOPRIC OF RATISBON.

WE have seen with what marvellous success Albert governed the Church of Ratisbon. His acts ever bore the impress of genius, whether he laboured as the Bishop of an immense flock, as a preacher of evangelical truth, as a reformer of the morals of the clergy and people, as the administrator of the temporalities of the Church, or as a philosophical writer. Yet his life was beset with grave difficulties, and he was doomed to tread a thorny path. The calumnies which surrounded his name naturally fostered in him the desire to be freed from this sphere of duty. For, if we are to credit his biographers, he had incited numerous enemies<sup>1</sup> against himself, who sought to blacken his reputation. These charges were probably based upon his study of the natural sciences, and of Mahometan and pagan writers. He was doubtless accused of being occupied in his retirement at Stauf with forbidden arts, of receiving the visits and services of unclean spirits. All his wisdom flowed from this impure

<sup>1</sup> Prussia (p. 266) and Rodolph.



source, and the culture of mysterious sciences imperilled faith, which he himself had already lost. If we weigh the testimony of the Ratisbon Chroniclers and Albert's own words, we cannot doubt these deplorable rumours, so calculated to wound the heart of the holy Bishop. Hochwart expressly says that he was accused of necromancy,<sup>1</sup> and Gumpelzheimer tells us that an automaton, fashioned like a young girl, which was able to move and sweep the floor, was found in a secret chamber of the house at Stauf. As to Albert, observe how he expresses himself with holy indignation, at the end of his Commentary on Aristotle's Politics, which, like his Ethics, must have been written at this period:<sup>2</sup> "We have explained this

<sup>1</sup> *Aef.* I. 208. Hochwart says, "De necromantia illius nonnisi blaterones ridiculi fabulam commenti sunt, cum virum tam bonum malis artibus studuisse non sit verisimile multoque minus credible."

<sup>2</sup> This work and the Commentary on Ethics differ somewhat in character from Albert's former Commentaries. They are more like paraphrases, but personal commentaries, betraying some knowledge of the Greek language. Might not St. Thomas's Commentary have appeared in the mean time, and Albert availed himself of it? It is scarcely probable that he should have been later on engaged with works of this nature, seeing that, in his Commentary on St. Luke, he selects theology to the almost disdainful exclusion of the other sciences, saying: "Pulchræ sunt genæ tuæ, ut turtûris, hoc est pudoratæ virtutis et castæ veritatis, quæ est Theologia; quæ casta stat intra limites fidei, nec luxuriatur per phantasias, sicut scenicæ meretriculæ aliarum scientiarum. Hæc mulier est de quâ dicitur: Tu gloria Jerusalem, tu lætitia Israel, tu honorificentia populi nostri" (*Ad caput I. Evang. Luc.*). We may suppose that

book, as also other works on physics and morals, for the use of students. We pray our readers then to observe that there is question only of the voluntary acts of man, which, according to Aristotle, cannot be submitted to any rule. (Albert, as we see, excuses the introduction into a country, of divers customs and dispositions which do not accord with Christian ideas.) Aristotle confines himself chiefly to the countries of the East and of Egypt, where marriage and worship were always impure, as they are even at this day. And Aristotle does not relate these things as being his own personal views, but he is content with observing that those peoples have thus disposed their governments. We also have merely explained in this book what happens, being satisfied with giving the proofs and reasons thereof; as in other works on physics, we have said nothing of ourselves, but hold ourselves responsible for as faithful a transmission as possible of the peripatetic ideas. We address this to certain idlers who, to screen their sloth, search into books with a view only to discover what they may criticise therein. Since idleness has benumbed them, they desire, in order not to appear dead, to tarnish the reputation of those who distinguish themselves. Such are the men who slew Socrates, who drove

with such views it would be difficult for him to occupy himself afterwards with philosophical researches.

Plato from Athens, and persecuted Aristotle. These individuals are to the world of science what the liver is to the body. There is, as is well known, a kind of mangy humour which agglomerates in the liver, and distributes bile throughout the entire body. Even so there are in the domain of science certain minds full of gall who pour affliction on their fellow-creatures, and will not suffer them to investigate truth in peace." From this it would appear that Albert,<sup>1</sup> at the time when he wrote his Commentary on Politics, had to endure violent accusations on the subject of his scientific labours. What could have been the motive of such vile and unjust animosity against the person of the venerable Bishop? The chief cause was doubtless the stupidity of the multitude, who easily undervalue what is out of the ordinary run, who esteem only what is commonplace, who misunderstand and misconstrue whatever is new to them; but we must lay other motives to the credit of those whose education or merit have raised them high in the social scale.

It is very certain that the moral austerity of the great Bishop, as well as his severe exhortations on the reformation of morals, was a rock of scandal and a constant reproach to many. "Would you learn the motives of this hate against Albert," says

<sup>1</sup> "Politic." vol. iv. p. 500, in Jammy.

Rodolph in his laconic language, "search the Holy Scriptures and you will discover why a spotless lamb was a subject of horror to the Egyptians. The friends of pleasure were said to abhor the Bishop because he was too severe; the sincere, on the contrary, because he was too mild. The true reason is that false and deceitful men detest the man of right and innocence." Albert himself avers, in his Commentary on St. Luke, that the severity of his conduct had incited many storms of persecution against him during his episcopal administration, and which rendered his sacred office almost insupportable. He says, in reference to these words of the Evangelist, "Let him who is the greater among you become the least," "Let him who is the greater among you in ecclesiastical authority become the least, who is not raised to any dignity; for," says the Philosopher, "no one will appoint young men generals of an army, because they clearly have not as yet experience. 'Whoever shall humble himself as this little child,' it is said in St. Matthew xviii. 4, 'he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven,' because he is fittest to support the Church. Among the first Christians little regard was had to authority and importance, but all were intent on humility and the example of virtue. It was moreover this that our Lord desired when He said, 'Learn of Me, because I am meek

and humble of heart. Submit to My yoke,' &c. Nothing is more easy than to lead inferiors with mildness and humility, as far as circumstances permit. But, when the irruption of evil constrains one to act seriously and with severity, the pastoral office becomes to a Bishop, as of old to Moses, an insupportable burden, especially when he is unwilling to tolerate and protect evil-doers, as certain Prelates are wont to do in these times, who act the part of Sardanapalus rather than that of Jesus Christ."

Albert shows forth then sufficiently the cause of this hate, this system of calumny employed against him personally. It was because he declared implacable war against vice.<sup>1</sup> He had nevertheless for a long time patiently drunk of the bitter cup of persecution for the love of His Divine Model, the eternal Shepherd of souls, but he had yet more powerful motives of dislike for so high a dignity. The position of a German Bishop, at this period, was so totally opposed to his inclinations, the desires of his heart, and the ideal which he had formed of a representative of Christ, that he felt himself continually a prey to uneasiness and the troubles of conscience.<sup>2</sup> He was not only a pastor of souls, but a Prince of the Empire, a governor of a wide

<sup>1</sup> Prussia says that Albert had resigned: "Cernens in populo duro non posse proficere" (p. 266).

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph.

and extensive territory ; it behoved him to grasp the crozier with one hand, and to wield the sword with the other ;<sup>1</sup> he was called upon not only to dispense the spiritual treasures, but also to preserve and protect the temporal possessions of his Church and subjects. To attain this end numberless law-suits were inevitable, and his duty required him to bring them to a favourable issue. His rank as a temporal Prince obliged him to take part in festivities, to be present at public gatherings, which could not be done without considerable expense and that exterior pomp which his dignity exacted.

Although the union of the temporal and spiritual power in the ecclesiastical Princes of that period was doubtless imperatively called for as a safeguard against the caprice and tyranny of coarse, brutal lords, who were possessed of excessive power, it could not but draw in its train troublesome results. It held out to the Bishops and Abbots the constant temptation to lose sight of eternity for time, to fall from the sublimity of their sacred calling into the tumultuous vortex of the world, and thus to prepare

<sup>1</sup> Ptolemy of Lucca, Albert's contemporary, says with reason on this subject, " Albertus factus est Episcopus Ratisponnensis in ducatu Baviaræ qui multum honorabilis est. Cœpit onera episcopatus subire, quæ in Teutonia nimis sunt militaria, quia conservari non possunt nisi cum ense, quæ sibi incubuerunt pro tempore illo. Considerans igitur statum tranquillum quem dimisit et barathrum in quem incidit, nec quievit, quousque accepta fuit, sua renuntiatio per summum pontificem" (Quetif and Echard, " Script. Ord." I. 169).



the destruction of their flocks with their own ruin. This sort of life would especially fetter the aspirations of the soul of Albert, who, as a Religious, had learnt to cherish evangelical perfection, and whose whole spiritual efforts had no other end than its attainment. He let it be seen, as a Bishop, that he was able to unite all these apparently contradicting elements, since he well knew how to adapt himself to all the requirements of his office ; yet he sighed none the less after his deliverance from these painful bonds, that freedom of mind which he formerly possessed. The holy Bishop groaned deeply when he thought of the Jerusalem of his soul, and from the height of earthly honours he sighed for the humble and solitary abode of the religious life.<sup>1</sup> His tender delicacy of conscience left him no repose, for he was in constant dread lest, in these ever-recurring law-suits, he might injure either the rights of the Emperor, the citizens, his subjects, or of his own church. "He well knew," observes Rodolph, "how difficult it was to govern a diocese in Germany without offending God or man."<sup>2</sup> The fear of seeing robbers profit by his negligence and enter his sheepfold<sup>3</sup> was not less a subject of torture

<sup>1</sup> Jammy, I. c.

<sup>2</sup> Prussia says the same: "Timebat de periculo quod Alemanniæ episcopo ob temporalis dominii gravamen ad multa damnabilia quandoque pertrahit" (p. 266).

<sup>3</sup> Rodolph. This period and those countries were not free from the machinations of heretics. In a letter on Indulgences



to him. In short, he could not conceal from himself the thought that he could do more for God's glory and the salvation of souls by the culture of science than by governing a particular diocese.<sup>1</sup> His scientific works were, in effect, destined to bear fruit throughout the whole Church. They would form an arsenal for the defence of the Faith, for the training of valorous champions of Christ,<sup>2</sup> while his episcopal duties would extend but to a very limited portion of the Lord's vineyard.

All these considerations would doubtless render his administration of the Diocese of Ratisbon exceedingly painful to him, and cause him to long to be freed from it. Thus he looks anxiously towards Rome which had forged these heavy chains, and supplicates the Sovereign Pontiff to release him from them.<sup>3</sup> He prayed long and addressed by Bishop Henry, in 1277, to the Friar-Preachers of Ratisbon, he expressly exhorts them to protect the Diocese against existing errors, "*contra profligendas hæreses.*"

<sup>1</sup> Ptolemy of Lucca assigns this as the motive which induced the Pope to allow Albert to resign (Quetif and Echard, I. 169).

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph. Prussia observes, "*Elegit magis contemplationi et meditationi scibilibus et sacrarum litterarum in Ordine de quo assumptus fuerat intendere quam pastoralis curæ negotiis sine fructu servire*" (p. 267).

<sup>3</sup> The Pope himself says, in the Bull of Leo's installation, "*Sane Ratisponensis Ecclesia per cessionem venerabilis fratris nostri Alberti episcopi quondam Ratisponensis ab eo petitam instanter et tandem de consilio fratrum nostrorum ad nobis admissam vacante,*" &c. (See Reid, "*Cod. Diplom.*" I. 465). Ptolemy of Lucca, above named, adds, "*Non quievit donec accepta fuit sua renunciatio per summum pontificem; quod*

earnestly, but in vain. At length Pope Urban IV. yielded to his pressing solicitations, and, with the assent of the Cardinals, imposed upon Leo of Tondorf, Dean of Ratisbon—who had bound himself by oath not to accept the Episcopate, to which the Chapter had unanimously elected him, without a formal injunction from the Sovereign Pontiff—the government of this important See.<sup>1</sup>

Rejoiced at the fulfilment of his desires, Albert laid down the crozier and the mitre, and speedily returned to his lowly convent life. This is related by a contemporary and friend of Blessed Albert, Bernard Guidonis, in whose chronicle we read, “Brother Albert was reluctantly burdened with the Church of Ratisbon; thus he casts it far from him, as a hot coal which burns the hand, as soon as he has obtained permission, and returns to the poverty of his Order.”<sup>2</sup>

*facilius impetravit ex sua gratiositate sermonis et ex maximâ famâ suæ doctrinæ, quæ totaliter peribat cum ense et lanceâ curæ pastoralis Germaniæ.*”

<sup>1</sup> Prussia and Rodolph err in pointing to Clement IV. as the Pope who yielded to Albert's solicitations (see Prussia, p. 267). He says, “De licentiâ igitur impetratâ per eum a summo pontifice Clemente quarto, successore Urbani prædicti, relicto præsulatu, relicto patrimonio episcopali, insignique urbe suâ Ratisponnensi, ad ordinis sui paupertatem voluntarie rediit secundo anno præfati Clementis papæ.” The documents produced by Reid contradict this opinion. The solution of the difficulty is that Albert reappeared at Cologne in the Pontificate of Clement. Moreover, Herman of Altaich asserts that Albert tendered his resignation to Pope Urban (*Æf.* I. 682).

<sup>2</sup> Quetif and Echard, “*Script. Dom.*” I. p. 169; and Rodolph.

When did this resignation take place? We have no precise idea. Yet the documents which are extant appear to indicate the period when Albert was released from his Diocese. In the diploma of the 26th of February, 1262, which relates to the Cathedral Church of Cham, the great man appears as Bishop, the Chapter still call him their venerable lord and Bishop.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it clearly follows from the Brief published by Pope Urban on the 11th of May, and reproduced by us, that Albert's resignation had already taken place some time, seeing that the Chapter had appointed a commission of five of its members, who elected Dean Leo to the Episcopate. It must, then, have occurred between the 26th of February and the 11th of May, 1262. Besides, the answer of the Holy See, dated from Viterbo, arrives in the month of May, which supposes the intimation made to the Apostolic See of Dean Leo's promotion by the Chapter. We must therefore suppose, since the means of communication were so limited at this period, that he had retired from his Diocese two months previously,<sup>2</sup> so that we may conclude

<sup>1</sup> Reid, "Cod. Diplom." I. p. 464.

<sup>2</sup> Everything in the Apostolic letter leads us to suppose a certain number of days. It is said, "Cum postmodum inter prædictos quinque tractatum fuisset diutius super substitutione pastoris, quatuor ex eis in dictum electum (Leonem) unanimiter et concorditer consenserunt et ipsum elegerunt canonice postulandum in episcopum et pastorem Ecclesiæ memoratæ."

that his resignation occurred in the month of March 1262.

Albert's hand had grasped the pastoral staff of Ratisbon for the space of two years only.<sup>1</sup> This was a brief occupation it is true, of the illustrious See of St. Wolfgang, but great things were accomplished during this short administration. Our Master had fulfilled his task according to his strength, and effectually cured the disorders of his Diocese. Peace had been re-established between the Bishop and the Chapter and the citizens, debts had been paid off, the moral condition of the clergy, the monasteries, and the people ameliorated as much as possible by visitations, synods, the employment of suitable remedies, the example of holiness, his preaching and numerous writings. Albert could, then, even from this point of view, lay aside the mitre with a safe conscience, or rather transfer it to his venerable successor. Let us, therefore, apply to this glorious Episcopate these words of Scripture: "Being made perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time" (Wisdom iv. 13).

<sup>1</sup> The different data furnished by the Chroniclers on the duration of Albert's administration (some say one year, others two, others, again, three or four) arise partly from his nomination having taken place in the year 1259, and partly from the fact that he returned to Cologne much later. Ptolemy of Lucca says, moreover, that Albert resigned in 1262. Hochwart maintains that he was Bishop a year and several months (*Æf.* I. 208).

## CHAPTER XXIII.

ALBERT PREACHES THE CRUSADE IN GERMANY AND BOHEMIA—HIS JOURNEYS THROUGH BAVARIA, SUABIA, AND FRANCONIA.

ALBERT being now restored to that liberty which he had so long desired, resumed his religious life with the joy of a bird that escapes from the fowler's net. It is difficult to determine where he sojourned during the first years which followed his retirement from Ratisbon. His biographers who lived after him in the Convent of Cologne have left us completely in the dark on this point; it is true they tell us that he returned immediately to his cell at Cologne, but the Bavarian accounts differ from this opinion, and even afford us glimpses of his life and labours at this period. The great Master would appear to have retired, immediately after his resignation, into some convent of his Order in Bavaria, there to rest and refresh his soul after the fatigues inherent to his former dignity. He was then verging on his seventieth year. Did he reside at Ratisbon in the Convent of St. Blase? Did he retire to Salzburg or to some part of that

Diocese which has so faithfully preserved his memory?<sup>1</sup> We are not in a position to state.

His separation from the world was not long. The delights of repose were soon troubled, through a mission which the supreme head of the Church, despite his great age, was pleased to impose upon him. He was called upon to preach in behalf of the Holy Land. The time of those mighty enterprises, known as the Crusades, was not yet passed. Often in the course of the two preceding centuries, was the voice of the Father of Christendom heard inviting the people of the West to wrest from the sons of Mahomet, the persecutors of the Christian name, the Holy Places, those ancient witnesses of the life and sufferings of the Redeemer of men.

Armies of a hundred thousand warriors obeyed this voice from on high; those noble sons of holy Church raised the glorious ensign of salvation and went forth to challenge to mortal combat the blasphemers of Christ. The Crusades were a magnificent testimony of the unshaken faith and ardent love which animated the Middle Ages, since they were chiefly spiritual and religious motives which provoked so many heroic acts of courage and devo-

<sup>1</sup> In many of the churches in the country round Salzburg pictures of the Bishop are suspended in the portico. He is there represented in the act of consecration, while Christ communicates to him the answer to twelve questions having reference to perfection.



tion. We know with what brilliant success the first of these enterprises was crowned. The Holy Land and Jerusalem, the gem of cities, fell into the power of the soldiers of the Cross; but alas! the crimes of the Crusaders themselves, the jealousy that consumed them, the frightful corruption of their morals, and the almost invincible bravery of the enemy who surrounded them, led to the rapid decline of Christian empire in those countries, and soon caused its complete annihilation.<sup>1</sup> The successive expeditions of the Princes and people in the East resulted in mere transitory success, and the West learnt in 1265 that the Turks were besieging Acre, the last bulwark of Christianity in Palestine. Nothing was more calculated to bring shame on the Christians for their culpable supineness and to rouse them to unite their efforts to attempt once more the deliverance of the Holy Land.

<sup>1</sup> Walter of the Vogelweide, himself a Crusader, informs us how the Crusades were regarded in Germany in the thirteenth century. "None of us is ignorant how unfortunate, isolated, and abandoned that country is. Weep, Jerusalem, weep on, for there is no one who is mindful of thee. Life flies rapidly on, and death will surprise us in crime; but pardon is gained amidst danger and warfare. Let us bind up the wounds of Christ, and break asunder the fetters of the Holy Land. O you, Queen of all women, grant us your aid! It is there that your Son was immolated. It is there He was baptised, He, heavenly purity itself, in order to purify us. It is there that He suffered Himself to be sold, He Who is rich *par excellence*, to redeem us who are poor! It is there He endured a most cruel death! Hail, O sacred Lance, Cross, and Thorns! Woe to you, pagans! God will avenge Himself on your crimes by the arm of His champions."



The Pope resolved that a new Crusade should be preached, especially in those countries which were free from the troubles of war. Spain was at war with the Moors, England with the revolted Barons who had put their King in fetters; Prussia and Lithunia had risen against the savage hordes of pagans; Hungary, Poland, and the surrounding countries, against the invasion of the Tartars;<sup>1</sup> it was Italy, France, and Germany whom the Pope called to the rescue of Palestine. The standard of the Cross is unfurled. Urban IV. addresses a Brief to King Ottokar of Bohemia, Otho Margrave of Brandenburg, the Dukes of Brunswick, Saxony, and Bavaria, inviting them to join in the expedition and to cause it to be preached in their dominions.<sup>2</sup> Albert, who shared equally the sorrows and the joys of his age, could not remain a mere spectator of what was going on. He undertook to preach the Crusade in Germany and Bohemia; although close upon his seventieth year, he did it with the enthusiasm of youth.<sup>3</sup> It was not the first time that he received this mission. It was imposed upon him in the year 1263, two years previously.<sup>4</sup> Albert was

<sup>1</sup> Fleury, "Hist. Ecclesiast." liv. lxxxv.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid. I. c. p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Jammy says, "Albert was employed, at this period, by the Apostolic See, to preach the Crusade, and to rouse the ardour of the people for this enterprise in Germany and Bohemia."

<sup>4</sup> Conrad of Marburg, Confessor of St. Elizabeth, likewise fulfilled this office (Le Comte de Montalembert, "Vie de Sainte Elisabeth," Cologne, 1853, p. 89).

unwilling to bear an empty title, and therefore commenced to traverse the cities and boroughs to interest the Princes and nobles in saving the Holy Land.<sup>1</sup> We are unhappily left entirely in the dark as regards the route followed by the great apostle, and the result of his negotiations. His venerable figure appears only here and there as a luminous spot on the horizon, to vanish still more quickly. It is thus that, in the month of May of the year 1263, we meet him in the Monastery of Polling, situated in Upper Bavaria, one of the oldest and richest foundations in Germany.<sup>2</sup> He doubtless came there from Ratisbon, by way of Landshut, Freising, and Munich, enkindling throughout his journey a pious ardour for the deliverance of the Holy Places. Consumed with thirst for the salvation of souls and the glory of God's house, he published at Polling a Brief by which he granted an Indulgence of forty days to all who should visit, on three days, the Monastic Church and receive therein the Sacraments. This interesting document is worded thus: "Brother Albert, late Bishop of Ratisbon, by the authority of the Apostolic See, Preacher of the Cross in Germany and Bohemia

<sup>1</sup> Fleury expressly says that the preaching of the Crusade was committed to the Provincials of the Friar-Preachers and Minors.

<sup>2</sup> "Monumenta Boica," tom. x. p. 55; et Hundii, "Metrop. Salisb." III. p. 117.

for the deliverance of the Holy Places;<sup>1</sup> to all the faithful of Christ, health in the Lord! We doubt not that the merits of the Saints will procure the heavenly consolations of Christ for those of the faithful who render themselves worthy of their intercession through proofs of sincere piety, and who honour in them Him Who is their glory and recompense. But, being desirous to afford the faithful an opportunity of participating in these consolations, We grant an Indulgence of forty days for penance imposed, to all who, having confessed and being contrite, shall piously visit the Monastery of Polling on three days: the Finding and the Exaltation of the Cross, and the Patronal Feast. Given at Polling,<sup>2</sup> on the 5th of May, in the year of our Lord 1263.”

We know not if, in granting these spiritual favours, Albert imposed the condition of almsgiving for the Crusade. It would seem not, for the document does not speak of it. His motive, no doubt, was to draw a multitude of the faithful to the church. The Monastery would probably reap

<sup>1</sup> The document commences in these words: “Frater Albertus episcopus quondam Ratisponnensis, Apostolicæ Sedis auctoritate crucis prædicator per Alemanniam et Boemiam, pro subsidio Terræ Sanctæ.”

<sup>2</sup> “Apud Pollingam” might also mean that Albert sojourned in the neighbourhood, probably at the castle of some lord. Certain passages in his writings prove that he frequently dined at the table of rich persons. He relates, in effect, that, eating oysters one day at dinner, he found the shells filled with pearls.

some benefit therefrom. History represents it as being very poor at this period.<sup>1</sup>

We are equally ignorant whether, in his journey, he visited the other celebrated Bavarian monasteries of the neighbourhood, whose tall thin spires were mirrored in the tranquil waters of the azure lakes, or whose austere walls were concealed in the depths of gloomy forests, like Diessen, Andechs, Wessobrün, Benedictbeurn, Rothenbuch, Steingaden, all homes of civilisation, sanctuaries of learning and refuges of souls in search of peace and prayer; where boundless hospitality was practised, especially towards the pilgrims who came from the countries of the North to visit the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles.<sup>2</sup> There unhappily exists no datum respecting the journeys of our apostle. If, however, the book on Alchemy included in his works is due to his pen (which is scarce presumable),<sup>3</sup> we might suppose that he visited these Convents through his love of science, since the author observes in the introduction that he had gone through nearly all the convents and monasteries in order to discover the progress of alchemy.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hundii, "Metrop. Salisb." III. p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Thus speaks Count de Montalembert in his "Vie de Saint Elisabeth," c. xx.

<sup>3</sup> See Quetif and Echarid, "Script. Ordin. Dom." I. p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> "Operum Alberti Mag." tom. xxi. The contemporary Roger Bacon relates, moreover, that learning was generally cultivated in mansions and monasteries. "We notice," he says,

Nor do we discover the route he took on his departure. We may conjecture that he returned through Suabia to Ulm the Magnificent, then to Eslingen, and thence to Gmund, through the delightful valleys of the Rauhen-Alp, since he afterwards numbers the Dominican Convent of the latter City among his heirs.<sup>1</sup>

We find no positive allusion to him except in a document dated the 27th of May, the period when the venerable Master was at Würzburg. It was in this Episcopal City of Franconia, so agreeably situated and so rich in sacred buildings, that he appears to have resided during the following months. Tradition states that Albert dwelt at the Hôtel de Wiesenfeld,<sup>2</sup> situated behind the deanery, doubtless because the Convent of the Dominicans of Würzburg was in course of erection. Here, as elsewhere, he appears full of zeal for the advance-

“especially forty years ago, a passionate desire for learning in the mansions and convents side by side the universal ignorance of the people” (*Récherches critiques sur le développement historique des connaissances géographiques du Nouveau Monde*, par Alexandre de Humbolt; trad. Allem. d’Ideler; Berlin, 1852, p. 70).

<sup>1</sup> In an earlier work he speaks of the sudden disappearance of the waters of the Neckar; of a stone which a Suabian Countess gave him (“*Mineral*.” p. 231).

<sup>2</sup> See Fries, “*Chronique Württembergeoise*,” I. 355; Oberthür, “*Albert le Grand à Würtzbourg, dans le Mnémosyne*,” 1829; de même, “*Würtzbourg et ses environs*,” par Heffner et Reuss, 1852. After them, Bianco, “*Hist. de l’Université de Cologne*,” p. 54.

ment of the religious spirit and the prosperity of monastic institutes. The Bernardine nuns were building a large church for their Monastery of the Gate of Heaven, established near the City, on the charming banks of the Mein. Albert was desirous of contributing to this great and beautiful work. He granted, in virtue of his episcopal character, an Indulgence to all who should aid the building with their alms, provided they were willing to fulfil the conditions prescribed. The diploma<sup>1</sup> which is extant proves the interest which he took in this church, and affords certainty that he still bore the title of Preacher of the Crusade. The venerable old man no doubt desired to take some repose, and he sought it in a neighbouring Dominican Convent, of which his brother Henry was the Prior. But he did not stay long there; the Apostolic See had not yet discharged from his shoulders

<sup>1</sup> Lang, "Regesta," vol. iii. p. 205. It is there said: "Alberti episcopi quondam Ratisponnensis per Alemanniam et Boemiam crucem prædicantis, indulgentiæ pro conventu monialium Cœli portæ, Cisterciensis ordinis. Herbipolensis diæceseos ob oratorii sui sumptuosam constructionem. Datum Herbipoli, VI. Kalend. junii (27 mai)." In 1264, Iring, Bishop of Würzburg, also granted Indulgences in favour of this Monastery, which it is said had been "magnificè inchoatum" (p. 227). If in a document dated from Cologne in the month of May 1264 there is question of an "Albertus chori episcopus," it cannot be our Albert, who from the moment of his retirement always styled himself "quondam episcop. Ratispon." (See "L'Apologie de la Cathédral de Cologne," p. 60.) "Chori episcopi" might also mean regent of the choir.



the painful burden of preaching, which rendered retreat from the world impossible. He was unwilling, then, to pass for an idle and unprofitable servant. He therefore resumed his journey, and continued to rouse the Princes and the people to war against the fanatic disciples of Mahomet.

Here again we lose sight of the course of his journeyings. He probably returned through the delightful country of Franconia, by fair Bamberg and imperious Nuremberg, where later on, according to Prussia, his signature was to be seen, and where a modest Convent of Friar-Preachers was erected.<sup>1</sup> We next find him at Ratisbon, where he publishes, on the 18th of March, 1264, a diploma on the subject of an oath made in his presence by the Chevalier Zachary of Hag, who promised, as a feudatory of the Bishops of Ratisbon, not to marry his children without the Bishop's authorisation.<sup>2</sup> This document shows that after his divers perigrinations Albert returned to his old episcopal

<sup>1</sup> See Ussermann, "Episcopatus Bamberg," p. 425.

<sup>2</sup> Reid, "Cod. Diplom." I. p. 473. It commences thus: "Nos Albertus quondam Ratisp. episcopus, universis presentes litteras inspecturis volumus esse notum, quod in nostra præsentia constitutus Zacharias de Hage miles fide data promisit in manibus domini Leonis Ratisp. episcop., et nihilominus corporaliter præstitit juramentum," &c. On Albert's seal is inscribed, "S. Frater Alb. quondam ep. Ratisp. de Ord. Præd." Ratisbon, it is true, is not cited as the place of publication; but, all the witnesses being of that country, it is difficult to doubt of Albert's presence in that City.



residence, where he probably chose to dwell in the Convent of the Dominicans. He is once more the man of public confidence, since in his presence and under his testimony an important act of fealty is passed. But we may also observe that he no longer bears the title of Preacher of the Crusade. He obtains, in consideration of his great age, his freedom from a burden which he hastens to place in the hands of the Superior of the Monastery where it had been imposed upon him, namely, that of Ratisbon. Thus we have been enabled to witness our great Master, in old age, fulfilling the task of St. Bernard, though within a less extensive sphere. His animated eloquence wakes the Princes and the populations of Bavaria, Suabia, and Franconia from the sleep of indifference, and once more animates their ardour for the deliverance of the Holy Places. His efforts are not solely directed to the reconquering of the Jerusalem of science as a Christian scholar, but he also generously labours to rescue the earthly Sion from the hands of the barbarous followers of Islam.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## PROLONGED RESIDENCE OF ALBERT AT WÜRZBURG.

THE blessed Master had scarce recovered his liberty when he hastened his return to Würzburg. His numerous friends who urgently invited him thither, and the Order itself, rejoiced to see the new colony which had been sent into the great capital of Franconia benefited by his counsels. The mildness of the climate and the beauty of the surrounding country, and the rich sloping vineyards which crowned it, doubtless decided the Superiors to allow him to prolong his stay. It is there that he seeks to rest from the excessive fatigues of the preceding years. He returns, then, to Würzburg in the year 1264, and remains there three years. Very little is known of his life and labours during his sojourn there. What is certain, is that the venerable Master was the object of universal consideration. The Bishop, the nobility, and the citizens covered him with tokens of esteem, respect, and confidence. Numerous documents of the period prove this, which exhibit him sometimes as a peace-

maker, at other times as a witness in some important act.

On the 4th of December, 1264, at the Convent of the Friar-Preachers, in concert with Poppo, Provost of the Cathedral, he brought to a happy issue a dispute between the Church of St. John of Haug, and the noble Godefried of Hohenlohe, on the subject of the rights of the Provost of Hopferstadt and Rudershausen.<sup>1</sup> He appeared again as mediator in the following years. Iring, Bishop of Würzburg, and Albert terminate another difference between the same Chapter of St. John of Haug and Count Hohenlohe, respecting the rights of the Provost of Koenigshoffen, Wolkshausen, Eichelsee, and Herchsheim. This occurred on the 10th of April, 1265.<sup>2</sup> Some months afterwards he again appears as arbiter with the Commander of the Knights of St. John, Ulrich of Velberg, and decrees that the proprietors of the manor of Wegenheim, who had erected stables at Würzburg, could not obstruct by the building the view of the Hôtel des Dimes.<sup>3</sup> In the mean time violent disputes arose between Bishop Iring and the citizens. We will give a rapid sketch of

<sup>1</sup> The document is found in Lang's "Regesta," III. p. 235. He is styled therein, "Frater Albertus, episcopus quondam Ratisponnensis. Actum in clauastro Fr. Præd., in die Barbaræ Virginis."

<sup>2</sup> Lang, "Regesta," III. p. 245.

<sup>3</sup> "Regesta," III. p. 24; and the "Würzburg Chronicle," of Fries, 1848, 1.355.

this strife, in order to show the sort of political whirlpool in which Albert lived at Würzburg, and to give an idea of the disastrous storms which his admirable wisdom was able to appease.

At Würzburg, as in almost all the large cities of Germany, the Low Countries, and France, the citizens, proud of their wealth and strength, had for many years raised the standard of revolt against the power of the Bishops; not content with refusing obedience and contributions to them, they even engaged in various acts of hostility against them and the nobility. The interposition of the Counts of Henneberg at length effected a compromise with the Bishop in 1261. The citizens engaged to recognise and preserve intact the rights, authority, and immunities of the Bishop their lord, to protect the Chapter and all the clergy in their rights, and not to admit any one to citizenship nor to elect to the Council without the knowledge of the Bishop; to regard the episcopal money as lawful, to pay the customary dues to the Bishop, not to disturb or injure the Jews (living under episcopal jurisdiction) in their commerce; finally, to respect and defend the surroundings of the Bishop.

Peace, however, did not last long, and observe the cause. For nearly thirty years King Henry VII. had abolished and forbidden trades corporations throughout the Empire. The carpenters, bakers,

and butchers imagined they could re-establish them on their proper basis at Würzburg. The Bishop and Chapter wishing to interdict them anew, this measure excited general commotion among the citizens, which, in 1265, resulted in open war. They took possession of the thoroughfares and gates of the City, stirred up the populace and servants of the clergy, drove the Jews and others who would not join them from the City, coined money in the Bishop's name, and surrounded the ramparts with bastions to defend themselves against a surprise. The people employed in these works of defence clamoured at the doors of the Convents and Monasteries for wine; the Religious were sparing of it. Irritated by what they termed an unpardonable avarice, they invaded the cloisters and emptied the cellars, then in their drunken fury fell upon and pillaged the Bishop's Palace, the residences of the Canons and the Episcopal Counsellors.

To repress this disorder, Bishop Iring had recourse to arms, and was resolved to repel force by force. On Saturday before the Feast of St. Margaret, July 11, 1265, he granted to the Lord Conrad of Trimberg a hundred and fifty measures of oats on his farm at Rieden and the tithe of Weitoldshausen, on condition that he would assist him against the citizens. The Lords of Hohenlohe and Weinsberg, as well as other vassals of the

Cathedral, alike promised to supply him with knights and soldiers.

A terrible war was imminent, when, through the interposition of some noblemen, especially Count Louis of Rineck and Henry of Brauneck, a new reconciliation was effected on the 26th of August, 1265. Albert was doubtless a trusted man, since he appears as the first witness in the treaty, and his seal is affixed thereto. It is enough, moreover, to read the contents of this contract to understand what was the effect of his eloquence in pacifying those minds and the severity of his justice. The citizens, in fact, after having renewed the oath of fidelity and submission to the Bishop, promised to place in his hands the seal and the keys of the City, to pay afforage for eight years, to admit no one whosoever as a citizen or counsellor unknown to him, to respect his officers; not to molest the clergy, nobility, or the Jews, but, on the contrary, to protect their rights and immunities; to recognise the value of episcopal money, and to deliver forgers into the hands of justice; to reinstate the Jews and Christians in their possessions whom they had driven from the City during the rebellion, and never more to disturb them in their affairs.

A sum of two thousand silver marks was to be remitted to the Bishop, Canons, and Counsellors

in restitution for the losses they had sustained; their houses were to be rebuilt and refurnished at the expense of the City. The preservation or abolition of the trades corporations was left to the decision of the Bishop. The bastions and other works of defence were to be destroyed; finally, it was left to Albert's sense of justice to determine the amount of indemnity to be awarded to the Abbot of St. Burkhard. The citizens named twenty-four of their principal townsmen as guarantees of these promises, and Albert affixed his seal to the treaty. Besides the great Master and the afore-named Counts, the Dean and Provost of Haug<sup>1</sup> were also present as witnesses. Thanks to his wisdom and the esteem in which he was held, Albert rendered the discontented citizens tractable to justice, and stayed, for a time at least, the ravages of the storm.<sup>2</sup>

But alas! fresh disputes soon arose. Bishop Iring having died at the commencement of the year 1266, the electors were divided in their choice of his successor. Some elected the powerful Count Berthold of Sternberg, others the learned and pious

<sup>1</sup> From the "Würzburg Chronicle," I. 355; and Lang's "Regesta," III. 251.

<sup>2</sup> Some months afterwards—23rd of December ("Reg." III. 255)—he again confirms a yearly endowment made by the Superintendent of the Imperial kitchens, Lupold of Nordenburg, to the Monastery of Rottenburg.



Conrad of Trimberg. As each of the candidates maintained that his election was valid, a violent dispute arose between them. Count Berthold attempted to take possession of the Episcopal See by force of arms; but the administrator of the Diocese, Berthold of Henneberg, whom the citizens of Würzburg and many of the nobility supported, defeated him in the battle of Kitzingen on the 8th of August, 1266. The former lost five hundred men, while among the latter many Canons appear to have been slain. Conrad, in the mean time, hastened to Rome in order to procure the confirmation of his election, but died of fever while he was returning. It was then that the Chapter elected the warlike Berthold, who at length occupied the Episcopal See, despite the opposition of the Count of Henneberg.<sup>1</sup> While these deplorable contentions lasted, Albert, it would appear, kept at an equal distance from both parties, and employed himself with his scientific labours in his cell. It is only in 1267 that a public Act exhibits him anew re-establishing peace between the Brothers Hospitalers of St. John at Würzburg and the Chevalier Marquard, surnamed Cruso, and a debtor of the Hospital.<sup>2</sup>

These documents and details prove the truth of

<sup>1</sup> Fries, I. c. 1, p. 371.

<sup>2</sup> "Regesta," p. 295, in the year 1267.

what we have said above : that Albert, at Würzburg as elsewhere, was the man of public confidence ; the belief in his sense of justice induced those at variance to submit their differences to his decision ; and the aged Master could not altogether enjoy the sweets of repose which he had hoped for in the shade of the cloister.

How often was he thrown into the midst of worldly tumult, to listen patiently to tiresome debates, to sift the true state of things, to balance party interests, and to decide in a way that would give satisfaction to all ! What a sacrifice for one whose mind dwelt in the sphere of ideas, and who valued only the things of eternity ! Nevertheless, as it was to establish peace, and thus procure the fruits of salvation among men, he never refused his services ; for he well knew that a great reward is promised to those who are peacemakers, and who restore calm where the tempest reigns.

Such are the facts which written tradition relates in regard to Albert's influence at Würzburg. We should also add that he was no doubt occupied with the Convent of the Dominicanesses of St. Mark, to which he afterwards bequeathed a donation in his will. This was probably a young colony of virgins, whose virtues drew upon them the munificence of the venerable Bishop. Tradition also tells us that Albert undertook the direction of the building of

the Dominican Convent which was begun at this period, as well as of their Church, dedicated to the Apostle St. Paul<sup>1</sup> in the year 1274. If we are to understand by the word *direction* Albert's participation in the work, who had taken part in the building of many hundred convents and churches, we can imagine that the good Master did not refuse his Brethren the benefit of his counsel and experience; but if we are to conclude from his presence in Würzburg at that period that he was the author of the plan and superintended the execution of it as the architect, we must repeat once more that this hypothesis does not rest on any historical testimony.

We can, however, accept as certain the tradition which asserts that Albert passed those years at Würzburg in preaching,<sup>2</sup> teaching, and writing. For how can we represent the venerable senior Master of professors and writers otherwise than in the chair or at his writing-table? It was the necessity of his life. It is beyond doubt that he recommenced his lectures in the Convent of Würzburg, and sought every opportunity to gain souls to Jesus Christ by his preaching.

We have no precise data, nothing beyond mere conjecture, regarding his works published at this

<sup>1</sup> See Oberthür, I. c., and Bianco, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> See the authorities quoted above.

period. But as Albert, in his Commentary on the Evangelist St. Mark, refers to his former explanations of the Gospel, it is not unlikely that this work was written during those latter years. Its exegetical character<sup>1</sup> altogether resembles that of the other Gospels which we have examined above.

Among the traditions contained in this book, it is said that the Evangelist St. Mark, in the night when our Lord was taken in the Garden of Olives, where he was himself seized half-naked by the soldiers, not only lost his clothes but also a thumb. Further on it is stated that the Gospel written by the hand of St. Mark is preserved at Aquileia. Finally, we learn that the woman who exclaimed, "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee," was called Marcella, and had been a servant of St. Martha.

We believe that we may equally assign to this epoch the Commentary on the "Valiant Woman." The oldest catalogues of Albert's works always number it among his later productions. When, indeed, would it have been more fitting for him to have commenced his researches on the Church Militant, her gifts and economy, and to bring to light the admirable conceptions of his genius, if not after having been, as a Bishop, a member of the

<sup>1</sup> This Commentary is the smallest, and consists only of 134 pages. It might possibly have been written in the Convent of his Order, St. Mark's, in honour of this Evangelist, to whom the Church was dedicated.

ecclesiastical hierarchy, and having closely studied by experience its marvellous organisation.

We imagine then that we are not departing from the truth in supposing that he selected at this period the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs as the subject of his lectures on the essence of the life of the Church.

He gives us here an admirable insight into the doctrine of the inner life of the Church. We confess that the form with which he clothes his arguments, that his analysis and divisions, stretched to the minutest detail, do not accord with our own taste; but it is impossible, nevertheless, not to do justice to the intrinsic and positive value of this work, which frequently contains in the simplest words the most brilliant thoughts and imagery, or not to admire the extraordinary knowledge of Scripture and the Fathers which appears in every page. These rare documents, which are often no more than mere conjectures, embrace all that we have been able to meet with respecting Albert the Great in the City of Würzburg.

## CHAPTER XXV.

ALBERT RETURNS TO COLOGNE—HE APPEARS ONCE MORE  
AS A PEACEMAKER—HE CONTINUES HIS TEACHING BY  
WORD AND WRITING.

IT is difficult to state how long the venerable Albert resided in Franconia, amidst those plains so fertile, but so terribly ravaged at that period by civil discord. The latest Franconian documents which speak of the great Master give the year 1267 as the date of their publication.<sup>1</sup> Wearied no doubt by the constant din of arms and those interminable party contests at Würzburg; called perhaps by the Brethren of other houses of the Order who desired his presence and his counsel, but especially faithful to the old maxim that a preacher of the Gospel ought not to reside long in the same place,<sup>2</sup> he left the capital of Franconia in the spring of 1268, to visit the new Dominican foundations of Suabia and Alsace. The flames of discord which were formerly stilled, again reddened with their glare the political

<sup>1</sup> The letter of Indulgences granted to the Dominicans of Ratisbon (Reid, I. p. 493) is also dated 1267. It is therefore probable that it was published at Würzburg.

<sup>2</sup> In the Commentary on St. Matthew.

sky of his adopted country, the cradle of his greatness, his beloved City of Cologne. In the struggle which ensued between Archbishop Engelbert of Falkenberg and the citizens, the former fell into the power of his enemies, who detained him a prisoner twenty days. At the instance of certain influential persons, both parties agreed to submit their cause to a new arbitration, which resulted in a reconciliation in the year 1264;<sup>1</sup> but it was short-lived. A few years only had elapsed when peace was again disturbed by those unruly people, who would not submit to the extravagant authority of the Archbishop. Having formed an alliance with Count Jülich, who was at variance with the Elector of Cologne, they sent him numerous troops well-inured to war. In the unhappy combat which took place near Lechenig, in 1267, Engelbert fell into the hands of Count Jülich, who confined him for the space of three years in his castle at Nideggen. The Holy See launched forth its interdict on the City and the rebellious Count. The most melancholy depravity reigned in Cologne and throughout the vast domains of the Archbishop. Albert, then, either because the confidence of the belligerents or his ardent affection for his beloved City drew him thither, hastily quitted the Upper Rhine, in 1269,

<sup>1</sup> Albertus chori episcopus Coloniensis is found among the arbiters chosen. (See "L'Apologie de la Cathédral de Cologne," p. 60.)



and returned to Cologne to put an end to this deplorable anarchy. He no sooner set foot within this unhappy City, than he was received with extraordinary honours, not only by his Brethren in Religion, but especially by the heads of the Church and by the people.<sup>1</sup> All were eager to behold the venerated Prelate once more in their midst. All were ready to recognise in him that authority of intelligence and wisdom which were necessary in order to appease enmities and to bring about a lasting peace.<sup>2</sup> Won by the holy eloquence of the venerable old man, the Prince-Bishop promised not to avenge his wrongs on Jülich or the City of Cologne, but to pardon everything in consideration of their repentance. The citizens, on the other hand, swore to recognise the Archbishop as their lord, and faithfully to acquit themselves of whatever was due to him; finally, both parties swore to keep their mutual promises.

Thus did Albert unceasingly fulfil the glorious

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph. The "Cologne Chronicle" says the same: "He was received with great honour by every one."

<sup>2</sup> The Apology of the Archbishopric of Cologne says, "In the year 1270 it was added to the sentence emanating from the Holy See, through the interposition of the Bishop of Ratisbon, that the Archbishop should not avenge himself either on Count Jülich or the City of Cologne; but on the contrary he should forget the past, in his quality of father of his flock; and that the citizens, on their part, should acknowledge Engelbert as their Archbishop and lord, and that they should acquit themselves of every duty which they owed to him, which they moreover promised." This interesting document unfortunately has not been reproduced.

ministry of an angel of peace. We might say of him that peace sprang up beneath his very footsteps in an<sup>1</sup> age of discord and civil war. He might be styled the successor of St. Bernard. Like that great oracle of the eleventh century, who rose as it were by enchantment from his bed of death to reconcile the knights and civilians in the City of Metz,<sup>1</sup> whose battalions were in actual combat, Blessed Albert appears in the arena of the political world armed with union and concord against those whom hatred leads to cruel slaughter.<sup>2</sup> Both Albert and Bernard preached war against the enemies of the Christian name, and peace between the children of Christ. They were diplomatists in a truly Christian sense, whose efforts were crowned with admirable success. Peace be with you! Such was the Gospel greeting which the late Bishop of Ratisbon bestowed on his beloved children when he reappeared within the walls of Cologne. Let us now follow him into the solitude of his Convent. "He occupied his old cell," Rodolph tells us, "and returned to his former mode of life. But the exactitude with which he observed each point of the Rule, even the smallest, was greater in consequence of his having held an influential position in the ecclesiastical hierarchy." We have seen that

<sup>1</sup> "Histoire de Saint Bernard," par Théod. Ratisbonne; trad. 1845, 11<sup>e</sup> partie, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph.

as a Bishop he was dispensed from his vow of poverty.<sup>1</sup> This accounts for there being in the Convent of Cologne an ample store of valuable books, an episcopal chapel, costly relics, furniture enriched with diamonds, gold, and silver, and a host of other objects of art which had been presented to him and which he brought from Ratisbon.

His biographers, his Brethren in Religion, are at one respecting the manner in which he spent the latter years of his life. They tell us that he had scarce returned to his cell when he commenced to write books and to feed those who hungered after knowledge.<sup>2</sup> What a friend of science! and what a Professor! Teaching and writing, such were ever the needs of his soul.

Although white with age,<sup>3</sup> and might have thought himself now exempt from further laborious pursuits, he nevertheless allowed himself no repose. He was loth to abandon the sciences which had captivated his youth, and for the culture of which he felt himself gifted with a marvellous aptitude. He resumed his lectures<sup>4</sup> in the enclosure of the

<sup>1</sup> He mentions this himself in his will.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph. Jammy says, "Daily lectures, conferences, and meditations were his occupation."

<sup>3</sup> We observe this in the portrait of the Master, painted by Fiesole, a copy of which is placed at the beginning of this work.

<sup>4</sup> The contemporary Ptolemy of Lucca says that Albert discharged for eighteen years the duties of Lector in the Convent of Cologne, after his retirement from the Bishopric of Ratisbon.

Convent of Cologne, whose Religious surrounded him with every mark of deference and zealous care.<sup>1</sup>

But Cologne was not alone privileged to draw from this source of vast and profound knowledge; he was appealed to from the most distant parts of the earth for a solution of some obscure point of science or for his decision in matters of controversy. Haughty Paris herself did this, she who was esteemed the very centre of learning, and who was more proud of her twelve Masters than ancient Greece was of her seven Wise Men. At this period the followers of the Arabian School brought back the pantheistical errors of Averroes,<sup>2</sup> errors which Albert had victoriously overthrown in Italy before the Pontifical Court. These sectaries maintained that after the separation of souls from their bodies they would all constitute but one single intelligence. Having frequently fought against this damnable doctrine, the Masters in Theology turned to Albert to find in him fresh strength to sustain the combat. One of the Friar-Preachers of Paris addressed a letter to him which contained eleven questions, to which he implored the learned Lector of Cologne to give a reply. The following are the

<sup>1</sup> As may be seen in his will.

<sup>2</sup> Prussia says, "Idem error Averrois iterum pullulavit Parisiis post mortem Alexandri, ita ut magni doctores ibidem contra Averroistas frequentius disputarent: quorum disputatio per Alberti sententiam robur accepit, licet absens esset corpore" (p. 239).

contents of this interesting missive : “ Egidius, an unworthy Religious of the Order of Preachers, to the venerable Lord and Father in Christ, Albert, formerly Bishop of Ratisbon. . . I deem it fitting to lay before you, my Father, who are enlightened with true intelligence, the following propositions taught in the schools at Paris by those who profess to be Masters in Philosophy, in order that, in your leisure moments,<sup>1</sup> you may give an accurate decision, which will put an end to these questions that are discussed in so many assemblies.” Then follow the eleven propositions, which Albert, with great lucidity of argument, disposes of.<sup>2</sup>

This measure proves that, in questions of philosophy, Albert was esteemed an oracle in Paris, and that he reigned as a prince in the empire of science, to whose judgment and authority all were eager to submit. These answers, however, are not the only work which he published at this period; he doubtless composed many others, but about which we are left to mere conjecture. We might trace to this later period of his life the Commentaries on the Psalms,<sup>3</sup> the Lamentations of Jeremias, Baruch, Daniel, the Minor Prophets,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “*Otio vestri imperii;*” that is, “When you shall be free from the government of your school.” Every approved Professor of Science in a school is styled “*Regens.*”

<sup>2</sup> This writing is found among the minor treatises (vol. xxi.). It commences in these words: “*Intellectus hominis.*”

<sup>3</sup> Vol. vii.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. viii.

and the Apocalypse,<sup>1</sup> relying on the universal testimony of his biographers, who say that in proportion as Albert advanced in years he applied himself more and more to the culture of Divine science, and that meditation on the Holy Scriptures became the daily food of his soul. It is probable that he shared with his Brethren in Religion the fruit of his daily study, and that this was the origin of the Biblical Commentaries which we are about to notice. Although these works are not so comprehensive as the former ones, and the interpreter for the most part confines himself to the meaning admitted by St. Jerome and to Aimon's Exposition of the Apocalypse, they are nevertheless marvellous proofs of the unwearied diligence, the deep learning, and unflagging spirit of the holy Doctor. We will give some extracts for the purpose of exhibiting the charm of these luminous writings. In Jeremias, Albert treats of the lamia,<sup>2</sup> which he styles creatures that tear open the breast of the mother in order to devour the offspring. He views them as a species of monster, and thus shows the biblical antithesis: "These creatures," he observes, "are so cruel that they pursue and annihilate even that which is not yet born, yet do not neglect to feed their young. But the mothers of Jerusalem leave their children to perish from exhaustion by the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xi.

<sup>2</sup> Translated "Marine Monsters."

wayside, because they are themselves without food!" He then compares the prophecies of Daniel, from St. Jerome, to the crypt of an ancient church, which is shrouded in darkness on entering it. He here sets forth this maxim, wonderfully concealed in a strongly tempered soul: "The chidings of the envious," he says, "ought never to deter us from doing good!" When the Prophet relates that the King selected for his service only faultless young people, our Master interprets these words, saying: "The King of kings also desires that they only should be admitted to the Priesthood who are stainless in soul and body."

He treats the celebrated vision of the statue fashioned out of divers metals as a prophecy relating to the four great Empires of the world: that of Assyria, typified by gold; that of Persia, by silver; the Empire of Greece, by clay; and that of Rome, by iron. Speaking of the persecutions incited against the children of Israel, Albert says: "The Church of God has also to endure persecutions on the part of tyrants, heretics, and false brethren, who undermine the edifice of morals. These will fall upon her in the day of the great persecution." In the passage where allusion is made to the deceration of temples, he exhibits anew his ardent zeal for the beauty and magnificence of churches, sharing in this the maxim of Aristotle: "It is



fitting that He Who is the most distinguished should inhabit the most elegant dwelling." He compares the twelve Minor Prophets to the twelve oxen under the sea of brass (3 Kings vii.), for they tilled the garden of the Mosaic Church with the plough of preaching, or to the twelve fountains of water discovered at Elim by the children of Israel, because they sprinkled the people with the water of salutary doctrine.

The terrible threats of these Prophets afford him an opportunity to unmask with holy zeal the vices of his age. Commenting on Osee, he exclaims: "There are at this day Priests and Judges who too often sacrifice to two idols, their belly and sensual enjoyments (*ventri et veneri*)." Nor does he spare the faults of women. He brands their immorality and immoderate speech, admitting the truthful saying of Seneca, that the fickleness of a woman can keep nothing secret but what she is ignorant of.

As to the contents and plan of the Apocalypse,<sup>1</sup> he explains them in his Preface: "Even as man has three periods of life; the time of childhood, maturity, and old age, so also the Church at her commencement was in a state of infancy, she passed thence to maturity, but in the end will

<sup>1</sup> It is said in reference to the author of this book: "Many suppose that it was written by Cerinthus, and not by St. John; but '*tota Ecclesia recepit hunc librum, et ideo tenendum est pro constanti.*'"

sink into a state of feebleness and old age. St. Luke describes the former state in the Acts of the Apostles; the Epistles of St. Paul, and all the canonical letters contain the portraiture of the second; the third age is traced out in the Apocalypse under the sublime pencil of St. John, as God revealed it to him. In this last state, at the coming of Antichrist, dreadful persecutions will fall upon the Saints, the sacred Name of Christ will be profaned; then will come the punishments of the wicked, and the inexpressible joys of the elect. This picture of the latter times ought to inspire the wicked, who are the wise ones of this world, with a salutary dread; and, on the other hand, to console the just, who are the humble and little ones, by showing the punishments inflicted on the former, and the eternal rewards bestowed upon the latter.”

Albert tells us, in reference to the seven Churches of Asia, that they are symbolical of the Universal Church by reason of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, the seven virtues (three theological, and four cardinal) which she possesses, and the seven works of mercy which she performs. They, moreover, signify the seven phases of the Church's development in the time of the Apostles, which is shown by the very name of those Cities.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is thus that Ephesus is equivalent to “*Voluntas Mea*.” It was the Mother Church wherein God's Will was the law of all, &c.

They may likewise designate the seven periods of the Church's history. The Church of Ephesus signifies the Apostolic age; that of Smyrna (derived from "canticum"), the time of the martyrs; that of Pergamus ("divisio carminum"), the age of heretics; that of Thyatira ("illuminata"), the time of confessors and doctors; that of Sardis ("pulchritudo"), the period of the simple elect, when the Church received temporal possessions for her exterior adornment; that of Philadelphia ("salvans hærentem Domino"), the epoch of the children of the world who love themselves with a sensual affection; that of Laodicea ("laudato tribus Domino"), the age of Antichrist, when the strong shall constitute the cherished people of God.

Albert explains three biblical images in reference to Antichrist. "Antichrist," he says, "is compared to a panther, a bear, and a lion: to the speckled panther, on account of his multiform cunning; to the bear, on account of his dissoluteness; finally, to the lion, by reason of his insufferable pride."<sup>1</sup>

These few extracts abundantly show the character of Albert's minor works of exegesis. It now remains for us to speak of two other sublime productions which undoubtedly owe their existence to the latter period of our blessed Master's life.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xi. p. 67. We will add, moreover, that Albert views as an error of Cerinth (whom he calls Cerinthus) the opinion of those who limit the reign of Jesus Christ to a thousand years.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

ALBERT'S LOVE FOR THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE  
ALTAR—HIS WRITINGS ON THIS MYSTERY.

THE nearer Albert approached the term when he should pass from the regions of faith to those of the beatific vision, the clearer his perception of the Divine Mysteries became, the more also did his love increase towards Him Who, after becoming incarnate for us, bequeathed Himself to us in so marvellous a manner in the Adorable Eucharist.<sup>1</sup> The veil which hides the Invisible from mortal gaze in this life seemed ever uplifted before his mind, and he wrote what he beheld of this Mystery in enraptured devotion, what he imbibed from the sources of sacred science, in order that these germs of thankfulness might fructify a hundred-fold in every heart.

“In the books,” says Rodolph, “which Albert wrote towards the close of his life, on the Mystery of the most Holy Sacrament of the altar, he no longer appears a mere mortal, but as one filled with the Holy Ghost and fed with celestial bread; he might be likened to the beloved disciple repos-

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

ing on the breast of Jesus and contemplating at leisure those awful mysteries.”<sup>1</sup>

That those works on the Holy Eucharist were written in the latter days of his life is clear, not only from the two oldest of his biographers, but also from his contemporary and associate Bernard of Castres, who says: “Brother Albert, Bishop of Ratisbon, so illustrious in sacred and human science, left to the world many and varied works for the exposition of the Holy Scriptures and other doctrines. To enumerate them would be too laborious a task. Towards the end of his life, when preparing for his passage from time to eternity, he wrote a book on the profound mysteries of the Sacrament of the Altar. He clearly shows the sweetness which inundated his soul when studying the Holy Scriptures, the purity of his faith, the liveliness of his hope, and the ardour of his love for God.”<sup>2</sup> There are three of Albert’s works which we are desirous to bring under the

<sup>1</sup> Prussia holds the same language when speaking of these books: “In tractatu quem de mysterio Missæ composuit, et in libro de Eucharistia, innotescit omnibus, non communium hominum more illum fuisse locutum, sed tanquam inebriatus in cellaria vinaria nostræ redemptionis mysterium devotius excellentiusque, quam credi potest, exposuit, nec cujusvis doctoris in hac re tractatus valet hominem in amorem divinæ bonitatis et ad regratiandum tantæ dignationi, vel etiam Missarum solemniam ut quis libentius frequentet quotidiano officio, efficacius si studiosè Alberti librum præfatum perlegerit, allicere” (p. 178).

<sup>2</sup> The same passage occurs in Prussia, p. 179, but is somewhat abridged.

notice of our readers: the book on the Sacrifice of the Mass, that on the Holy Eucharist,<sup>1</sup> and the thirty-two sermons on the same Sacrament.<sup>2</sup>

We might suppose that he first wrote these popular sermons on the action and words of the Mass, since he therein refers<sup>3</sup> to the more voluminous treatise which he purposes to compose on the Eucharist as a complement to them. The book on the Holy Sacrifice is full of sublime interest, for it is not only an original, profound, and connected exposition of all the parts, prayers, and ceremonies of the Mass, but, moreover, because it describes certain liturgical proprieties, as well as the religious practices and meditations of the period in which our great Master lived.

After explaining himself in his Preface in reference to the work in hand, he then enters into an exposition of the Mass, in which he judiciously adapts to his purpose the researches of the Fathers of the Church and of other ancient writers. Like a true scholastic, he seeks to discover the reason of all the practices and prayers contained therein. He then lays down six motives why the Patriarchs so ardently longed for the coming of the Messiah, namely, the severity of their lot, the pursuits of the enemy, the certainty of the promise, the irksome-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xxi.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. xii. "Sermones plane divini," appears on the frontispiece.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

ness caused by long expectation, and the defect of that which should have consoled them in waiting for our Lord's coming.<sup>1</sup>

In answer to the question why the *Kyrie* is sung in Greek and not in Latin, he gives four reasons: "First because it was in Greece that the most sublime wisdom flourished, as it is said in the Epistle to the Corinthians: 'The Jews require signs, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.' But to show that this prayer flows from the most profound wisdom, it is said in Greek. Even as the Jews knew God by the Scriptures, the wise pagans and philosophers knew Him by the natural wisdom of reason, whence they were constrained to render their homage to Him. It is also written in the Epistle to the Romans: 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel. For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and to the Greek.'"

The Jew first recognised the power of God in the Gospel through the Scriptures, then the Greek drew his knowledge of this same power in the Gospel through wisdom acquired by means of reason; the Greek, in effect, was the only one among all the Gentiles who was wise with this wisdom.

As for the second reason, the Fathers point out

<sup>1</sup> "De Sacrif. Missæ," I. ii. p. 10.



the observance of the laws which flourished first among the Greeks, as enabling them to see the laws of the Twelve Tables and to acquire a knowledge of the Pandects, which, coming from Greece, hold a high place among us even to this day. And it was by this justice that they discovered the justice of God's law, and were the first among the pagans to receive it. Therefore the Apostle says : " Justice is revealed to the Gentiles from faith unto faith ;" for as the Jew recognised this justice of the Gospel through faith in the justice of the Mosaic law, so also the Greek discovered the justice of the Gospel through faith in natural justice.

The third reason relates to language. The Greeks were the first who received from the Apostles the expression of faith (in their own language), as may be seen by the Epistles of St. Paul, which, with the exception of the first and last, were all written in Greek. The Gospels, except that of St. Matthew, as well as the Acts of the Apostles and the Apocalypse, were likewise written in the Greek tongue. The seven first Churches, which represent the Universal Church, were founded in that part of Asia Minor which is called Greece. The fourth and last reason is that faith came to the Latins from the Greeks ; for Peter and Paul came from Greece among the Latins, and were to

us the source and beginning of salvation. Therefore to honour the wisdom and justice of the Greeks, to remind us that they were the first to receive from Paul and Barnabas the grace of salvation (Act. Apost. xiii.), and that this same grace was borne from Greece into the West, we preserve in the Kyrie the words and syllables which that people first used to implore the mercy of God.<sup>1</sup>

We have felt it incumbent on us to reproduce this exposition in all its details, so as to afford a fresh example of Albert's method of treating every question which comes before him, and also to show the high esteem in which he held the wisdom, justice, and language of the ancient Greeks. Other interesting remarks follow.

Albert is of opinion that all that relates to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was regulated by the four first Councils of Constantinople, Nice, Antioch, and Ephesus ; that Pope Gregory the Great did no more than dispense with what was superfluous, and arrange the whole such as it now stands. He observes with respect to the *Dominus vobiscum*, that the Priest turns and greets the people on the right side of the altar, from which we gather that at this period the celebrant no longer said the whole Mass turned towards the people, but in the

<sup>1</sup> L. c. p. 12. He adds that, in some places, the Gospel for the same reason is read in Greek on great Festivals.

manner observed at the present day. The Sequences, he says, are chiefly from Notker, Abbot of St. Gall, and are composed from the grand *Alleluia*. The subdeacon, according to our author, does not read the Epistle from the ambo without acolytes, because he announces hidden and obscure things (Old Testament). All rise at the reading of the Gospel, and put aside the ornaments which cover the hands, in order to be free to combat Satan. Veils and hats are removed so that the ears may be open to hear the word of God.<sup>1</sup> The twelve Articles of the *Credo* are attributed by Albert to the twelve Apostles, and explained so as to form so many arguments against heresy. "In the Canon," he says, "the Pope, the Bishops, and the King are prayed for by name."<sup>2</sup>

Speaking of the names of the Saints in the Canon, it is said that James the Less resembled Jesus in his exterior and by the holiness of his life; that Bartholomew wrote a Gospel, and that Clement collected the Acts of St. Peter<sup>3</sup> into twelve books. "At the *Memento* of the dead," he says that we should never pray for those who are proclaimed wicked, such as Jews, pagans, heretics, blasphemers, nor for those who persevered to the end in crime, or who are unworthy of the prayers of the Church; nor ought we to pray for the

<sup>1</sup> "De Sacrif. Mis." p. 31.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 48.    <sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 52.

perfect, namely, the Saints, who no longer stand in need of prayers ; but for those who are guilty of venial faults only, or who have expiated their grave faults by penance. As for the excommunicated and those who are publicly interdicted, the Church prays for them interiorly.”<sup>1</sup>

We read with reference to the breaking of the Host : “ By a decree of Pope Sergius, the Host was formerly divided into three parts, one of which was immediately consumed by the Priest as a symbol of the union of the Church triumphant with Christ ; the second was put into the chalice as a symbol of the Church militant floating in a sea of tribulation ; the third was reserved till the end of Mass, as a symbol of the Church suffering, which will only be reunited to the Body of Christ at the end of time. But as the faith of Christian people is now grown weak, the Priest immediately consumes the parts which represent the Church militant and the Church suffering.”

As for the Communion, Albert says : “ Before giving the kiss of peace, the celebrant kisses the altar or the chalice, or even the Sacred Body of our Lord. The words used by him at that moment vary ; with us it is said : “ Hold fast the bond of

<sup>1</sup> “ De Sacrif. Mis.” p. 76. For the Pater noster, Albert refers to his old Commentaries, saying : “ In our writings on St. Matthew and St. Luke we have fully explained the words ‘ panem nostrum.’ ”

peace and charity." In other places they add : " that you may be worthy of the holy Mysteries." And elsewhere it is said : " May the peace of Christ and the Church superabound in your souls !"

" The Postcommunion," continues our author, " is a cry of joy caused by the reception of God, either because it was formerly transmitted to each other by singing, or because the Priests repeated it."<sup>1</sup> In conclusion he says : " Such are rapidly, and in few words, the thought which we have to express on the Sacrifice of the Mass ; leaving to more cultivated minds to write new and more sublime things concerning it." Let us admire here once more the humility of the great Doctor, who has certainly given proof in this work of extraordinary erudition and ability. He nevertheless refers his readers to a work in which he purposes to speak largely, and more to the point on this Adorable Sacrament. This work was written, and comes to us under the title of " Book on the Sacrament of the Eucharist." The author expresses himself on the scope of this new work thus : " Since there are many special difficulties touching the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, we have reserved this subject to the last, in order to speak of it at leisure. And as we frequently apply to the Eucharist, in the Mass, the terms grace, gift,

<sup>1</sup> " De Sacrif. Mis." p. 90.

nourishment, communion, sometimes sacrifice, and often also sacrament, we shall divide the subject-matter into six points, and examine all that is possible to be said on each of them according as God may be pleased to enlighten us.”

In these six articles Albert passes in review the general teaching of the Church and the Schools on the Holy Eucharist with such vast erudition,<sup>1</sup> lucidity, depth and beauty of thought, that the book might be styled the *Summa* of all that was ever written or could be written on this Sacrament. The types, the matter and form, the institution and effects of the Eucharist are so extensively set forth therein as to forestall the exaggerated subtleties of the future scholastic. All that modern times have brought to light on this sublime subject of contemplation is, as it were, but a fragment, a faint echo of this first song sung by Albert to the glory of the Holy of holies.

The great Doctor does not flatter himself with

<sup>1</sup> He not only calls to his aid the Holy Scriptures, with its imagery and narratives, he avails himself equally of the opinions of the Fathers of the Church which have reference to the subject. The Pagan writers themselves are put under contribution. Virgil, for example, appears with this beautiful maxim, which Albert seems to have made his own:—

“*Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.*”

Aristotle, Euclid, Cicero, Avicenna, Galenus, find their best thoughts clothed in poetic garb by Albert, who sings:—

“*Rex sedet in cœna turba cinctus duodena.*

*Se tenet in manibus, se cibatur ipse cibus.*”

having explored the impenetrable mysteries of the Sacrament of the Altar. He contents himself with saying: "A host of things which the human mind cannot grasp still remain hidden in the secrets of God; it behoves us to leave them to the light of the Holy Ghost, to the fervour of piety, without dissertating longer on them."<sup>1</sup>

Our blessed Master finishes this sublime work with these touching words: "See what we have felt it incumbent on us to write concerning the most Holy Eucharist, for the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ; but how many beauties may still be found therein! Should the reader meet with anything in our words which is not agreeable to him, let him refer it to our ignorance. Although what we have said has no claim to depth, he will nevertheless meet with much useful teaching therein. Amen." It is thus that Albert is able to set forth this most intricate doctrine of the eucharistic mystery, in a way that enables us to see in his book a work which is clear and complete, which is as instructive to theologians as it is intelligible to less cultivated minds.

Yet the zeal which incited him to glorify these holy mysteries, and to enkindle everywhere in their honour thankfulness and love, was not satisfied. He ardently desired that all preachers of the Gos-

<sup>1</sup> P. 115.



pel should select the Holy Eucharist as the theme of their popular instructions, and make known the prodigies of the Divine Bounty. In order to render this task, so rich in blessings, less laborious, he remodelled the whole of his doctrine on the Eucharist in a series of thirty-two sermons, which are still extant, and which the editor of Albert's works styles truly Divine discourses.<sup>1</sup> He himself says in his Preface that the object of this work is to open out a mine of matter from which preachers may extract what is needful for the advancement of souls, and adds: "Out of all that we have said, established, and proved by the most lucid passages of Scripture, have sprung, with God's help, a multitude of sermons. Sometimes one, sometimes another, or at least one portion or other of these homilies will, according to time and place, serve to confirm faith in souls, or to perfect the life and revival of pity in them." This is obviously true, for these discourses, with their divisions, so admirably chosen, offer a superabundance of matter to the preacher for months, and even for whole years, on the Sacrament of love.

Since we esteem these discourses as precious pearls in the treasury of Albert's homiletical works, we will give some extracts from them.

After dividing the matter of the Eucharist into

<sup>1</sup> Tom. xii. "Sermones vero divini."

seven chapters, which set forth each portion of the doctrine in a complete and continuous whole, the Master begins by treating of the ends of the institution of the Sacrament, namely: the Eucharist as a commemoration of our Lord's sufferings, as a sacrifice, and as a spiritual food. After this he inquires into the form under which Christ left this Sacrament to us. "Our Lord," he says, "conceals Himself therein under the appearance of bread, and moreover under the appearance of wheaten bread." Further on he describes the wonders of the Divine power, which shine forth in the Eucharist. Indeed, the true Body of Christ is present therein under the appearance of bread. The whole substance of this food is changed into the Body of the Lord, and this marvellous transformation is wrought while the accidents remain.<sup>1</sup>

He next speaks of the dispositions necessary for its reception, which require solid faith, great purity, and ardent devotion.

Then follow the various ways of receiving it. We may participate in this Sacrament: sacramentally (as the unworthy do who possess it without the effects of grace); spiritually (like the

<sup>1</sup> Here Albert compares the production of the Body of Jesus Christ in the chaste womb of Mary, by the Holy Ghost, to that which takes place in the bread by Consecration. The relations of the two births are expressed in the following verses:—

"Corpus de pane, corpus de Virgine. Primum  
De conversivum, sed materiale secundum."

devout who cannot receive it in reality); finally, sacramentally and spiritually at the same time.

He then defines the effects of the Sacrament, and shows it as a tree of life in the terrestrial paradise of the Church, a tree which bears twelve fruits, the remedies of the twelve evils caused by the eating of the apple in Eden. These twelve evils are : temptations of the devil, the resistance of the passions, the stains of the heart, the offence of God, the feebleness of the knowledge of oneself, of the love of one's neighbour, the loss of interior sweetness, weakness in the preservation of good, the cause of eternal death, the rapid disfigurement of a virtuous life, exile in the midst of worldly miseries, the conversion of all matter into ashes<sup>1</sup> [at the last day]. Finally, he treats of the merit, utility, and sweetness of the Precious Blood, and shows how worthy It is of the remembrance of man, of his respect and most ardent desires.

If this rapid sketch has enabled us to glance at the whole of this magnificent work, the few extracts which follow will show us the method employed by the author in developing his thesis.

The excellence of the Sacrament of the Altar is shown by the names which it bears. The first of these is Eucharist,<sup>2</sup> which is interpreted *bona*

<sup>1</sup> These twelve evils are divided into three categories : *Vincula culpæ, defectus gratiæ, mortis plagæ.*

<sup>2</sup> P. 290.

*gratia.* Grace is the infusion of the Divine goodness into the soul which assimilates it to God, renders it pleasing to Him, and enables it to merit eternal life. In this point of view, the Body of our Lord produces three effects: It renders the soul like to God, pleasing in His sight, worthy of Him, and procures for it a share in heavenly glory. It is said of the first of these effects, in the Second Epistle of St. Peter i. 3, 4: "Christ has given us, by His own proper glory and virtue, most great and precious promises: that by these you may be made partakers of the Divine nature," that is like to God through grace. It is written of the second in the Canticle of Canticles: "How beautiful and full of grace art thou, my beloved and delight of My Heart!" As if the Holy Ghost would say: Because you have been nourished with the fair Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ, you are become beautiful and most pleasing to God. St. John says of the third effect: "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life" (vi. 55).

With regard to the question why Christ used wheaten bread for the consecration, Albert, after giving six other motives,<sup>1</sup> winds up by saying:

<sup>1</sup> Here the renowned opinion of Albert comes to hand: "Even as gold, according to Alchymists, is prepared with every sort of metal, by means of purification, so also every species of grain may become corn through the goodness of the earth in which it is sown (?)."

Because of the resemblance of His Body to wheaten bread, which may be considered under a threefold aspect: when it is in a mass, when it is in the earth, and when it becomes bread. Firstly, it represents His Body such as It was conceived by the holy Virgin; secondly, such as It suffered for us in the world; and thirdly, such as It is now glorified in heaven. In the first case the Mother of Jesus is loaded with homage; in the second the sinner is freed from his bonds, and in the third the blessed are glorified. With reference to the first, it is said in the Canticle of Canticles vii. 2: "Thy bosom is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies." This bosom is that of the Blessed Virgin. We read also in St. Luke: "Blessed is the womb which bore Thee." The heap of wheat signifies the members of Christ, such as they reposed in the womb of Mary. The lilies are the virginal purity which adorns His members and all His senses. It is said of the second in St. John xii.: "Unless the grain of wheat falling into the earth die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;" for by His Death Christ has delivered all men, guilty of eternal death. "God commendeth His charity towards us: because when as yet we were sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8, 9). It is because He styles Himself a grain of wheat (*granum frumenti*) that the Church con-

tinues to use no other kind of bread for the consecration of the Body of our Lord. Lastly, it is said in Zacharias ix. 17, "What is the good thing in Him, and what is the beautiful thing, but the corn of the elect?" That is to say, the most beautiful, the most delicious, the most excellent of bread, the Body of Christ in the glory of the blessed.

The holy Doctor also speaks of the dispositions of the soul required for the reception of the Eucharistic Sacrament, of the necessity of celibacy for Priests and Religious.<sup>1</sup> "St. Luke," he observes, when speaking of the continency of Monks and of those in Sacred Orders, "says (xii. 35, 36), 'Let your loins be girt, and you yourselves like to men who wait for their Lord.' Indeed, since Priests and Religious ought ever to watch and be in readiness to receive their Lord, they can never untie the girdle of continency. They are, on the contrary, bound to wear it at all times and in all places. It is written in the Book of Leviticus (xxi. 6), 'Priests shall be holy to their God, and shall not profane His Name: for they offer the burnt-offering of the Lord, and the bread of their God, and therefore they shall be holy.' Venerable Bede observes, 'If the Priests of the old law were obliged to separate themselves from

<sup>1</sup> P. 274.

their wives when their turn came to offer the prescribed sacrifices in the temple, how much more ought they of the new alliance to preserve perpetual chastity who are bound to be always prepared to consecrate the Body of our Lord! ”

In some of the discourses wherein allusion is made to the wonders wrought by God in the Eucharistic Sacrament, Albert relates many beautiful legends, of which we will give an example. The reader will see how the holy Master has preserved the living faith, as well as the charming naïveté which characterise this period. “There was,” he observes, “a Priest named Giles, who was renowned for sanctity. For a long time he fervently besought God to permit him to behold the natural Flesh and Blood of his Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ. One day, then, while he offered the Holy Sacrifice, as was his custom, he sank upon his knees after the *Agnus Dei*, and exclaimed, ‘Almighty God, my Creator and my Lord, make known to me, although a sinner, the nature of the Body of Christ: let me contemplate It under the appearance of a Child, such as It was when It reposed on the virginal breast of Its Mother.’ Behold an Angel came down from heaven and said to him, ‘Rise quickly; if thou desirest to see Christ, He is there at this moment, clothed with the garments which He received from His holy Mother.’ The



Priest being greatly moved, rose up, and perceived a little Child seated on the altar. Then the Angel said to him, ‘Since it is given thee to behold Christ, Whom thou hast blessed under the species of bread by mysterious words, contemplate Him with thy eyes, and touch Him with thy hands.’ The happy Priest, full of confidence in the Divine mercy, took the little Jesus into his arms, trembling with emotion, and pressed Him to his breast. Then, yielding to the irresistible transports of his love, he closed his lips on those of Christ, and imprinted many holy kisses on his God. Having replaced the Child on the altar, he knelt down and besought our Lord to resume His former appearance. When he rose up, he saw that the Sacred Body had returned to Its former state, and it was thus that he was united to It in the Holy Communion.”

Before closing this chapter we will reproduce the explanation which Albert gives of an ancient painting, well known in his time. It will be a proof, added to so many others, that he utilised the expressive language of art in order to render the truths of salvation more intelligible. “In certain places,” he says,<sup>1</sup> “painters are wont to represent on the right hand of the crucifix a young girl of smiling and beautiful countenance, and whose brow is encircled with a crown. She typifies the Church,

<sup>1</sup> P. 297.

which lovingly receives into a cup the Precious Blood of her Divine Spouse. On the left hand is seen the Synagogue; her eyes are covered with a veil, her countenance is impressed with sadness, and from her inclined head falls a diadem. It was she who shed this Blood and who still despises It. This would mean that the Synagogue, like every one who sins mortally, loses three benefits: the light of grace, peace of conscience, and the crown of immortality. Therefore the Prophet says: "Woe to us, because we have sinned. For this our eyes are darkened, our heart is a prey to sadness, and the crown falls from our brow." The young girl on the right receives, on the contrary, the Blood into a cup, because every faithful soul who turns a pure heart to Christ's Wounds, who receives His Blood spiritually and with great devotion, obtains likewise true light, joy of heart, and the crown of immortal glory.

We have endeavoured to show by these short extracts what are the language and writings of Albert on the most Adorable Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is the sublimest object of Christian faith and science. We have likewise observed, from what has gone before, that he is inexhaustible when he speaks of the object of his ardent love and adoration. The same may also be said of the prayers which he composed in honour of the

most Holy Sacrament.<sup>1</sup> Let us unite, then, our voice with that of the old chroniclers, and say with them that he has dealt with these questions, not as a stranger to whom they are unknown, but as the beloved disciple, who, reposing on the breast of his Divine Master, gathered from Him all His secrets.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prussia gives three of them in the Appendix to the "Life of Albert." One of them is as follows: "Salve, Salus mundi, Verbum Patris, hostia vera, viva caro, Deitas integra, verus homo. Tibi incorporati mereamur offerri in templo majestatis divinæ, ad corpus tuum, quod in dextra Patris est, tibi sociati, ut æternitatis tuæ futuri simus participes, et beatitudinis tuæ consortes, et sanctæ incorporationis tuæ concorporales; quia tibi est honor et gloria in sæcula sæculorum. Amen." Rodolph is even of opinion that Albert composed an Office of the Holy Eucharist. This has not been preserved, or it might have been eclipsed by the masterpiece of St. Thomas of Aquin.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

ALBERT'S LOVE FOR THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY—HIS  
WRITINGS IN HER HONOUR.

IF the fragrance of the Eucharistic Sacrament<sup>1</sup> absorbed, above all, the contemplative and amorous soul of our great Master, the holy Virgin Mary must needs be the next object of his unceasing contemplation and ardent love. His biographers and his own writings supply us with numerous proofs of it. "Albert was so devoted to the holy Mother of God," says Rodolph, "that he could not conceal her praises, and that he, moreover, appended to all his works something in praise of his beloved Lady, or closed his studies with a song to her glory. He composed many sequences<sup>2</sup> in honour of the glorious

<sup>1</sup> If we have delayed until now to speak of Albert's devotion to the holy Virgin, it is on account of the striking analogy that exists between the subject-matter of the present chapter and the preceding one, and also because Prussia, in his "Life of Albert," does not allude to it till after having entertained his readers in reference to the building of the choir of the Dominican Church at Cologne.

<sup>2</sup> These are not to be met with in the collection of Albert's works. May they not possibly be among the collection of Canticles? Rodolph, moreover, gathers this passage from an old Dominican legend, in which it is said: "Ob singularissimam devotionem ad Dominam nostram in horto vel in alio secreto loco solus quasi studens, cantionem cum lacrymis ad beatam Virginem frequentissime suspirando atque singultus immiscens cantare solebat" (Prussia, p. 190).

Virgin, which are as remarkable for their depth of meaning as for their harmony and interior spirit. In the Convent garden and elsewhere he delighted to sing them with intense sweetness, devotion, and enthusiasm. His sighs and tears would often interrupt his song, and thus disclose his fervour, love, and ardent piety. What a touching sight to witness the greatest scholar of the Middle Ages, who combined in himself every species of science, walking alone in the garden of Cologne Convent, and singing with tears the praises of Mary his queen !

Nor does Prussia seem able to tell us enough of our Master's devotion to the holy Mother of God. He styles him Mary's secretary, who surpassed all who have ever written concerning her. "For," says he, "the Jeromes, the Ambroses, the Augustines, the Bernards, the Anselms, and the John Damascenes have extolled her in rapturous language and with all the charms of the most fragrant devotion ; they have shown, in a style brilliant with beauty, how amiable she is, how powerful, full in merit, rich in virtue, in short, how good and compassionate she is ; but, despite their reasoning, which amounts even to evidence, they know not how to convince the mind of the auditor as our venerable Master does when he speaks of Mary in his sermons." Another speciality, adds this same

biographer, which proves still more the tenderness of his love for the Immaculate Virgin, is that he never mentions her name alone, but always with one or other of these titles : the happy, the most pure, the Blessed Virgin, the Mistress and the Mother of God, the incomparable Mother of the Creator. He himself shows, in a touching prayer contained in the above-named litanies, what his confidence in her intercession was, and the numberless favours which he obtained of her whom the Church styles "full of grace." This prayer commences thus : "Holy Mary, luminary of heaven and earth, as your name implies ; of this earth, which you have enlightened on the mysteries of your Son, the Word of the Eternal Father, mysteries hidden in God from the beginning ; you who have illumined the brightness of the Angels themselves." . . . He exclaims at the end : "Enlighten my understanding, give me a right conception, a vigorous mind, true knowledge, a firm faith with corresponding speech, which will convey grace to my hearers ; speech which will tend to the establishment of the Faith, the edification of holy Church, and the honour of the sacred Name of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ ; speech which will fail not to proclaim your praises and to declare your mercies. May this speech, O Mary, tell again and again that you cease not to load with the gifts of your mercy an unworthy

sinner like myself, and to manifest through his mouth the prodigies of your omnipotence.”<sup>1</sup>

Albert, however, was not satisfied with being the zealous panegyrist and follower of Mary; his ardent love led him to procure for her other faithful and devoted children. Observe how he expresses himself in his collection of sermons.<sup>2</sup> “Mary became, without sorrow (A—VE), in solitude, the retreat of the Word, the nuptial bed of the Eternal Betrothed, the palace of the Son of God and of the Great King, the tent of the Holy Trinity. . . . Let us, then, praise her frequently and wisely (*sapienter*). Frequently, that she may never be separated either from our hearts or our lips, as Isaias says: ‘Sing well, sing many a song, that thou mayest be remembered’ (xxiii. 16). Wisely, that our praises may be sincere, lest she one day say of us: This people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they praise me without reason. Wisely, in such a manner that he who praises may resemble her who is praised, and that this praise may be the faithful expression of the heart. How, indeed, can the voluptuous praise the Virgin? How can the proud man praise her who was humble? How can the cursed praise her who was loaded with heavenly blessings?”

Albert is, then, incessantly occupied with Mary’s

<sup>1</sup> P. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Prussia, p. 193.



honour. But there exist many important works, imperishable monuments of his love for the Queen of Virgins, of his constant contemplation of her glories, and of the mysteries which relate thereto. Since we cannot attribute to him the authorship of the great work, "De laudibus Beatae Mariæ," although ancient authors reckon it among his writings,<sup>1</sup> his work entitled "Mariale" alone suffices to convince us of his love for Mary, and of the knowledge which he had of the part played by her in the work of Redemption, its excellencies and its glories. He lays down in this bulky work<sup>2</sup> two hundred and thirty questions relating to the mystery of the Annunciation, and expresses himself thus, in his Preface, on its object and origin: "It

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph styles it (though the terms which he employs might also refer to the authentic work of Albert) a book full of piety, unction, strict orthodoxy, and delicate praise. He goes so far as to suppose that the author was favoured with a vision of the holy Virgin. Yet this book is not by Albert, but by Richard of St. Lawrence, Penitentiary of Rouen (Rothomagensis), as is decisively shown by Natalis Alexander, "Hist. Eccles." tom. xv. p. 238. We share this opinion, seeing that the pompous and bombastic style of the Prologue, as also the want of tact and taste in the choice of matter, do not accord with the illustrious Dominican's method of dealing with his subject. This huge work contains, moreover, all that has ever been said or even could be said in praise of the Mother of God. All the possible virtues, privileges, beauties, all the figurative images of Mary, are fully treated therein, even to the smallest details. The author has purposely concealed his name. (See Prologue II.)

<sup>2</sup> Jammy, vol. xx. St. Antoninus, in his Chronicle, cap. ii., designates it the only genuine writing of Albert on the most holy Virgin.



is written in Eccles. xxiv. 29-31: 'They that eat me shall yet hunger: and they that drink me shall yet thirst. He that hearkeneth to me shall not be confounded: and they that work by me shall not sin. They that explain me shall have life everlasting.' It is in the hope of these promised riches that we undertake this work; otherwise we should be too much exalted above our narrowness of mind and knowledge. But we know that God's arm is not shortened, and that everything, on the contrary, is possible to him who has faith. The work that we are entering upon portrays the beginning of our Lord's Incarnation and the mystery of our Redemption. We undertake it for the praise and glory of the most illustrious of all creatures, the honour of the incomparable Virgin Mother of God, full of faith in her special help and mercy, who is the surest anchor of our hope. It is from her that we expect the happy completion and reward of our task. It is she who guides our will, who determines us to write, and who knows our intentions. We implore, then, above all, the mercy of God, the Father Almighty, Who dwells in the inaccessible abode of the Divine brightness, to dispel, by the splendour of His light, the illusions of error, the deceits of falsehood, the desire of vain glory. May He vouchsafe to enable us to see what is right, and to declare what is true regarding the Mother of mercy and of truth itself.

We also pray those who read this book not to attribute to our presumption anything which, through its novelty, may be a scandal to them, but rather to patiently bear with the seeming exaggerations of our unbounded devotion. God forbid that we should exalt the glorious Virgin through falsehood, or that we should use emphatic language to speak new and abstruse things to the educated, and to seek thereby, not the glory of the incomparable Queen of Heaven, but our own gratification. We are desirous only to render ourselves useful, through these unpretending pages, to simple and untaught people, like ourselves. Having nothing more worthy to offer to our beloved Sovereign in our misery and ignorance we shall be exceeding glad if they who are more gifted would take occasion to speak of her and to proclaim her praises.”

It is with this lofty purpose and this deep sense of sincere humility, which is not merely in words, but in a truly Christian knowledge of himself, that Albert enters on this work. Taking, then, the Gospel on the Annunciation as its basis, he develops, in the usual scholastic form, his doctrine on the Mother of God. He gathers up every imaginable difficulty, discusses the reasons which may be brought in favour of or against it, then draws his conclusions. This book might justly be styled the most comprehensive work on the glories of Mary, for it contains

a description of the most exalted qualities, spiritual and corporal, of the Queen of Virgins. He grounds his answers on texts of Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, and on proofs drawn from reason. Failing to deduce precise conclusions from these sources, he has recourse to conjecture, in order to give scope to the imagination, and to invite it also to glorify the Divine Mother. We will give a series of questions with which the treatise opens, in order to illustrate the method adopted in this remarkable work, which represents the style and character of the writings of the Middle Ages.

Albert inquires : Was it necessary that an Archangel should be sent to the Virgin ? What messenger was most befitting the Annunciation ? This question is included in the following : Ought the messenger to be an Angel ? an Archangel ? some spirit among the Principalities ? Powers ? Virtues ? Thrones ? some one of the Cherubim or Seraphim ? Ought the message to be confided to three categories of Angels or to all the heavenly spirits at the same time ? Ought the Annunciation to be accomplished by the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, or by the whole Trinity ?

The third inquiry is thus conceived : Under what form did the Angel appear ? Had it the form of a serpent, a dove, or that of a man, and why ? To what sex did the Angel belong ? What was its age

at the moment of the apparition? Was it a child or a young man? What was its clothing? Was it white, black, or of various colours? At what moment did the Annunciation take place? Was it morning, mid-day, evening, or midnight? What city was most suited for the accomplishment of this mystery? &c. . . . The author inquires further on whether the holy Virgin possessed every grace, sanctifying and gratuitous graces (*gratis datae*), and the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost; whether she is the Queen of each Choir of the Saints; whether she had experience of the cardinal virtues, the theological and particular virtues; whether she possessed the eight beatitudes; whether she comprised in herself the prerogatives of all beings; what she was as to height? what was the colour of her skin<sup>1</sup> (fair and ruddy)? that of her eyes (dark)? her hair (dark)? how old was she? Did the holy Virgin receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Order, and Extreme-Union? Did she possess all knowledge and art? the works proper to a woman? the liberal arts, such as logic, metaphysics, astronomy, music, medicine, jurisprudence, theology?<sup>2</sup> It is even

<sup>1</sup> These are everywhere physiological and physiognomical proofs. It is said, for example, of a yellow complexion: "This colour indicates the prevalence of cold in the body. The colder the body is naturally, the purer it is. Also the purer the body is, the more necessarily it has this complexion."

<sup>2</sup> A knowledge of the Sentences of Peter Lombard? (q. 85).

asked if she understood everything; whether she was foretold, miraculously conceived,<sup>1</sup> subject to sin and death; how she was conceived and brought forth; and, finally, whether she was received, body and soul, into heaven.

We will give here an example of the manner in which Albert deals with these questions. The ninetieth question is answered thus: Did the Blessed Virgin possess a perfect knowledge of the seven liberal arts? "It seems to me that she did," says Albert; "for it is written, 'Wisdom hath built herself a house, she hath hewn her out seven pillars' (Prov. ix. 1). This house is the Blessed Virgin; the seven pillars are the seven liberal arts.<sup>2</sup> Mary was, then, endowed with a perfect knowledge of them."

<sup>1</sup> On the subject of Mary's conception, Albert here, as in all his other works, pronounces in favour of the opinion that the Blessed Virgin was cleansed from the original stain at the moment of her conception. He discovers this opinion in the text, "*Nigra sum, sed formosa.*" Yet he sometimes speaks of it in such a manner as to come near the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. These are his words: "*Puritas Dei hominis est, peccatum originale nec habere nec unquam habuisse; major quidem post illam est, originale habuisse, sed statim et omnino ab illo mundatum esse: ergo B. Virgo debuit quidem in originali concipi, sed statim ab illo mundari.*" This opinion, which was permitted in the Middle Ages, and even till the year 1854, is no longer allowed, since the Church, through the mouth of the infallible Pontiff Pius IX., has declared the Immaculate Conception of Mary to be an article of Catholic Faith.—TRANSLATOR.

<sup>2</sup> Grammar, rhetoric, dialectics in which Albert here includes jurisprudence, logic, and physics; music, astronomy, arithmetic, and geometry.

In Exod. iii. 22 it is said, "Every woman shall ask of her neighbour and of her that is in her house vessels of silver and of gold." The Saints understood this to mean earthly science. But the Saints ought to know these sciences, and consequently the Blessed Virgin also.

It is said in the *Canticle of Canticles* iv. 4: "Thy neck is as the tower of David, which is built with bulwarks; a thousand bucklers hang upon it, all the armour of valiant men." The tower of David is the Holy Scripture, the bucklers are the natural sciences; but the liberal arts are the arsenal of the Scriptures, and it belongs to the Saints to know them. The same privilege, therefore, is due to the Mother of God.

Many holy personages are lauded because of their ability in science; like St. Dominic, who was first instructed by the Divine Writings, and who proceeded thence to the study of the most sublime truths. In like manner St. Gregory, who is second to no one in the knowledge of the liberal sciences; St. Vincent, St. Catharine, and a host of others. These praises ought not, then, to be denied to the Queen of Saints.

From these extracts it will be easy to form a notion of the entire work. It is less a dogmatic and learned treatise than a poem, in which the imagination, like an industrious bee, gathers from every



object of creation and from the flowers of science the honey of its arguments in her praise. It is true that all those dogmatic questions which continually arise on the subject of the Mother of God are also to be met with in this work in a more clearly developed form; but they are, as it were, lost in a multitude of inquiries which must appear singular, forced, puerile, and sometimes even ridiculous. We must, however, pardon the love of the venerable Master. Love is never satisfied with the object beloved; it each day finds some fresh charm, some beauty or perfection which he who loves not fails to discern or regards only with indifference. Such was Albert at the feet of Mary the queen of his heart. Each time that he contemplated her she appeared before him clad in new privileges and new glories. If we wonder to hear him speak of the physical beauties of Mary, to see him search so minutely into all her exterior charms, let us bear in mind that he is composing in her honour a poem in which he strives to paint her with such elegance and precision that nothing more can be desired. Let us, moreover, add that he adapted to his purpose a magnificent original, the *Canticle of Canticles*, and that, after all, the Middle Ages had a different idea from the nineteenth century of the relations that subsist between the soul and body. To the old masters there is nothing that is abso-

lutely exterior, accidental, or void of meaning. Sensible things are the evidences and the mirrors of the moral world. Hence the great importance which they attached to the conformation and height of the body, in which they imagined that they discovered, as it were, a reflection of the soul.

However this may be, the "Mariale" is a wonderful proof of the learning, the intellectual acumen, the imagination, and the simple love of the great Doctor for the Mother of God. A Marian Bible<sup>1</sup> is even attributed to him, in which are brought together and briefly explained the various passages of the Old and New Testament which have reference to Mary, from the first verse of Genesis to the last of the Apocalypse. A boundless patience alone could have brought to light a work like this. On whichever side Albert turns his contemplative glance, whatever page of Scripture he touches, he everywhere beholds Mary.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xx. pp. 1-40.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

ALBERT ONCE MORE VISITS THE CONVENTS AND CONSECRATES CHURCHES—HIS PIOUS MAXIMS.

THE last chapters have enabled us to see how deeply absorbed in the contemplation of the sublimest mysteries of Faith Albert was in the Convent of the Friar-Preachers at Cologne, and how, both in the professor's chair and in his writings, he shared with his Brethren the savoury fruits of those happy hours. We might perhaps be tempted to imagine that the last ten years of his laborious life were spent by the venerable Master beneath the Convent roof in the enjoyment of that solitude which he so ardently longed for. Alas! this perfect peace was not granted him till two years before his death, as a prelude to and preparation for the repose of the tomb. Till then, as long as he remained in possession of bodily and mental vigour, he did not relax his employments.

He would doubtless have wished to remain unknown in the silence of his Convent; but the importunities of religious communities and of the people, and the commands of ecclesiastical

superiors, frequently obliged him to quit the cloister, to mix in the tumult of the world, to undertake long and wearisome journeys, to bear on his enfeebled shoulders fresh burdens, and to render public testimony to the truth. We shall have to reproduce in the course of this chapter a long train of facts, all of which belong to the last period of our blessed Master's life.

Albert had ever at heart the moral splendour of the religious life; and every time that duty imposed upon him the Provincial visitation, his zeal for the beauty of God's house did not suffer him to delay any journey, however wearisome it might be. He only desired to do good. If he learnt that a house, in whose foundation he had been concerned, did not succeed, he at once set out to visit it, and encouraged its Religious by his wisdom and salutary advice. He was not afraid to condescend even to fatherly entreaties, which only ceased when the abuse was got rid of. The same solicitude was extended not only to the numerous houses of his own Order, but to other communities also whom he was desirous to place in a healthy condition. Then, ever and anon, the voice of Bishops, Religious Superiors, and cities would call him forth to fulfil the functions of the Episcopate, in order to honour the sanctity and modesty of the great man, or to supply the place of Bishops, who

were ill or otherwise incapacitated.<sup>1</sup> It was thus that, returning from Franconia, during his stay in Suabia and Alsace, he undertook, with the sanction of the Bishops of those dioceses, the consecration of many churches and altars. He appeared at this time in fair Esslingen, where the Dominicans had occupied, from the year 1219, a residence in the outskirts, and in 1233 built a magnificent convent in the heart of the City. Their church, which was designed in the primitive Gothic style, being then completed, the venerable Prelate, with the leave of the Bishop of Constance, consecrated it to the Apostle St. Paul, on the 29th of April, 1268.<sup>2</sup>

The City of Bâle next claimed the honour of his presence within its walls. The Friar-Preachers, who had been long resident there, commenced to erect a convent and church in the year 1232, the building of which lasted many years. In 1261 they determined to add a large and magnificent choir to the nave, which was completed in 1264.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> See "Christian Art of the Middle Ages in Suabia," by Heideloff, I. iv. p. 59, and plate xvi., which gives the design of this church. At the present time this remarkable edifice is used as a wine store. Heideloff has adopted the same date as Rodolph in his legend. Binterim gives the year 1271 as the date of the consecration of the church. See also "Christlicher Kirchenbau," by Kreuzer, I. 378. Anno MCCLXXI. Esslingæ et Antverpiæ Divo Paulo ædes dedicabat. We abide by the local historians.

<sup>3</sup> This magnificent church still exists, but is in a state of utter desecration. On this subject, see the work, "Church

The consecration had not yet taken place. How ardently these good Religious must have longed for the arrival of Albert among them! The holy Prelate, yielding to their entreaties, blessed the choir of the church and dedicated it to the patriarch St. Dominic, with four altars in the aisles.

Although we cannot state with certainty the year in which the great Master discharged this act of episcopal duty at Bâle, there is nevertheless every reason for supposing that it was in the year 1269.<sup>1</sup> Colmar also rejoiced at having been honoured by the presence of the holy Bishop. Tradition says that he there consecrated two sanctuaries—the elegant church of the Friars-Minor and that of

of the Dominicans at Bâle," by L. A. Burkhardt and Chr. Rieggenbach; "The City of Bâle," by Bachmeier, 1855. The body of the church is a nave and two aisles, with eight columns and a lofty flat roof (between 1232-64?). The choir, altogether different in style, has seven pointed windows with mullions. Round and slender columns support the vaulting-ribs. Writers speak of Albert the Great as the probable author of the plan of the choir, without any other grounds for their supposition than the resemblance which it bears to the Dominican churches at Berne and Ratisbon(?). This resemblance, common to all the churches of the Mendicant Orders, consists in the absence of transept, tower, and interior and exterior decoration.

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph gives the year 1268, but we read in "Sunthemii Monasteriologiæ Frankoniæ" (*Æf.* II. p. 609): "Anno Domini MCCLXIX.: Chorus, majus altare ecclesiæ et quatuor altaria in dicto conventu Basileensi, ab Alb. Mag. episcop. Ratispon. consecrata sunt."

the Augustines, then under the direction of the Friar Preachers. This latter edifice was dedicated to St. John the Baptist.<sup>1</sup> That Albert, in his journeyings after his resignation of the See of Ratisbon, again visited Strasburg, the proud Imperial City, where he had formerly taught with renown, cannot be questioned, although we are unable to point to the precise year.<sup>2</sup> Strasburg, like many other cities, was in those times the theatre of bloody strife between the inhabitants and the Bishop, from whose power they were desirous to escape. But these troubles in no way hindered the erection of grand churches. Foremost among these was the splendid Cathedral, whose majestic interior, in the purest French style,<sup>3</sup> was fast approaching to

<sup>1</sup> So speaks Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph states that, at the instance of Bishop Walter of Geroldseck, he ordained at Strasburg, in 1268, one hundred and fifty priests and four hundred clerks. But as Bishop Walter died in 1263, there is necessarily some inaccuracy either in the date or in the name. The chronicler has beyond doubt confused this Prelate with Henry IV. of Geroldseck, who occupied the See of Strasburg in 1268. This opinion is shared by Wimpfeling, who (in *Æf. I. p. 207*) proves: "Albertum episcopum venisse Argentinam ac in æde Sancti Petri junioris aram quandam in honorem Sanctæ Columbæ V. et M. consecrassse manibus suis, anno Domini MCCLXVIII." Moreover, Binterim adds that this ordination took place on Holy Saturday, April 7, 1268. (See Kreuzer, "Christl. Kirchenbau," I. p. 378).

<sup>3</sup> It was finished in 1275, having been begun about the middle of the century. The author of the design is unknown. Erwin of Steinbach only completed the façade in 1277. (See Schnaas, "Hist. of Art." V. p. 509).



completion. Albert first honoured with his presence the Convent of the Dominicans, whose large and elegant church, like all the monuments of the Order, was doubtless then completed.<sup>1</sup> At the request of the Bishop, who received him with every mark of esteem, he ordained one hundred and fifty priests and four hundred clerks. It is also said that he consecrated an altar in the little church of St. Peter.<sup>2</sup>

It is much to be regretted that the documents relating to his apostolic journeys in the south-west of Germany have not been preserved; for he no doubt often performed episcopal functions in those parts.<sup>3</sup>

Returning to his retreat in Cologne, the same duties awaited him. Rodolph relates that the Archbishop of Cologne, Siegfried of Westerburg,<sup>4</sup> who

<sup>1</sup> It is now a public library.

<sup>2</sup> The most interesting edifice among the churches of Strasburg. The allusion to the ordained is made by Rodolph and Wimpfeling, I. c. Prussia merely says that he ordained one hundred clerks in one day, p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> The memory of him is preserved at Strasburg in the above cited legends. Königshofen and Closener call him the great Master Albert, who compelled a demon to disclose to him secret things. (Kreuzer, I. p. 379.)

<sup>4</sup> This Bishop did not begin his Episcopate until 1275. It is beyond doubt that Albert lived on the same terms with his predecessors, as the episcopal functions performed by him under their jurisdiction sufficiently prove. Prussia says: "Archiepiscopus Siffrius de Westerborch affectuose patrem Albertum dedit" (p. 272).

entertained a sincere affection for Albert, allowed him to officiate pontifically in every place in his diocese to which he was called. He gave orders that he should be everywhere received with befitting honours, forbidding that marks of distinction should be denied him under colour of his having resigned the Bishopric of Ratisbon that he might return to the humble life of the cloister. Prussia adds that Albert frequently held ordinations<sup>1</sup> in place of that Prelate, and discharged other duties of the Episcopate. Observe how he, on numberless occasions, was called upon to pontificate in the Archdiocese of Cologne and its environs, especially in the consecration of churches and altars. Was it not, in effect, the time when hundreds of new sanctuaries rose up on all sides? Was it not the period when architecture had attained the highest degree of splendour that history perhaps has ever known? The new Orders were spreading with wonderful rapidity from city to city,<sup>2</sup> and had need of churches corresponding to their aim. The more ancient bodies, like the Cathedral Chapters, were desirous, through a holy emulation,<sup>3</sup> to enlarge

<sup>1</sup> Prussia, says on good grounds: "Qui virtutibus plene adornatus extitit, ab omnibus amabatur; in reverentiaque magna habitus est non solum apud populares, sed ab ipsis prælatis plurimum honorabatur" ("Vita Alb." p. 272).

<sup>2</sup> See the number of monasteries existing in Würtemberg alone, in Stælin, "Hist. of Wurtemb." II. p. 740.

<sup>3</sup> A French Bishop observed that there was no other reason

their churches and to adorn them with all the charms of newly erected edifices by introducing into them the pointed arch, with its majestic symbolism and marvellous effect. Princes and people were eager to erect similar structures, in order to give to God a tithe of the wealth which they had received from His bountiful hands, and to embellish their beloved country with monuments worthy of it.

It need not surprise us, then, to find in this age of church building, consecrations follow each other in rapid succession, nor to see Albert's assistance called for on every side. In the City of Nymwegen (subject to the Diocese of Cologne at this period) he consecrated the splendid basilica of the Canons Regular, built in the very centre of the City in honour of St. Stephen.<sup>1</sup> The old edifice, which had lasted until then, and was situated outside the City, was rased to the ground.<sup>2</sup> A souvenir of this consecration, which Albert undertook at the instance of Count Reinold of Geldern, is preserved in an inscription, which may be read on the wall of the church, and which is as follows: "Albertus Magnus templum sacravit ut Agnus." He also consecrated the

for restoring his Cathedral than *because building was going on everywhere.* (See Schnaas, V.)

<sup>1</sup> From Rodolph's data.

<sup>2</sup> To perpetuate the memory of it, a procession of the Blessed Sacrament and relic takes place every year on the site of this ancient sanctuary.

church of the Dominicans at Antwerp in 1271;<sup>1</sup> that of Utrecht, placed under the invocation of St. Andrew;<sup>2</sup> and that of Maëstricht.<sup>3</sup> In Bochem church, near Brühl,<sup>4</sup> he consecrated the high altar in 1274, and two altars in the church of the Friar Preachers at Louvain in 1276.<sup>5</sup> The consecration of the Gothic choir of the church of Xanthen<sup>6</sup> is also attributed to him, as well as that of the claustral church of Paradise near Soest.<sup>7</sup>

We would fain conclude, from his having consecrated so many churches, that Albert had been concerned in their erection as the architect, that he had designed their plans, or at least superintended the execution of them. We can only repeat what we have already insisted upon, that historical documents are altogether silent on this supposed co-operation; that, moreover, the immense number of these edifices and the endless variety in the style of architecture make this absolutely impossible. As the old traditions speak only of

<sup>1</sup> Echard, "Script. Ord. Præd." I. 168.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph.

<sup>3</sup> Bianco, "Hist. Univ. Cologne," I. p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. I. c.

<sup>5</sup> In the certificate of the consecration of the first of these altars, it is said: "In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, est hoc altari consecratum in nomine B. Catharinæ et Marg. et Nicol. a vener. Fr. Alb., &c. . . Anno. MCCLXXIV." Bianco, "Hist. of the University of Cologne," I. p. 31.

<sup>6</sup> Binterim. "Suffraganei Colonienses extraordinarii," p. 40. "Xanthis sancti Victoris insignis basilicæ chorum consecravit." "Christl. Kirchenbau," by Kreuzer, I. p. 377. (See Schnaas, V. p. 577.)

<sup>7</sup> Rodolph.

the consecration of churches and altars, we cannot offend against the rules of history by stretching our conjectures too far. Once more, we have no wish to cast a shadow of doubt on the fact that the great Master took a lively interest in the existence of those churches,<sup>1</sup> that he afforded those who founded them the benefit of his advice, that he visited with heartfelt joy,<sup>2</sup> and blessed with holy ardour those newly blossomed flowers of Christian art, those Gothic edifices which rose up on every side, adorned with their rich and marvellous ornaments, those hymns of prayer, in short, exalting to the clouds the glory of the Most High. These are but the natural consequences of his simple faith and apostolic zeal at this period. What we cannot admit, is his share in these works as the architect and artist. But while we refuse him the technical part which is attributed to him in the erection of those material temples, it is indisputably true that he laboured with great ardour in his many journeys for the edification of souls.

He was doubtless often appealed to in trying circumstance when visiting cities and monasteries. All were eager to press around him ; some through

<sup>1</sup> This is shown by the letters of Indulgences in favour of the two churches in course of erection.

<sup>2</sup> He would applaud, as we have stated above, the maxim of Aristotle : "Magnificum decet magnifica domus !" an admirable motto for a Bishop in regard to God's house.

curiosity to see the man who had filled the world with his renown ; others drawn through a desire of perfection, to obtain from him prudent advice for their guidance in life. Was he not, in effect, esteemed everywhere as the Doctor *par excellence* ! Here a thousand questions were submitted to him for solution ; there some souvenir of him would be asked for, just as in our own days the signature or portrait of a distinguished person is eagerly sought after. Frequently also, he would meet on his way some soul a prey to uneasiness and trouble, and he would strengthen his courage with words of consolation. Many of these maxims were doubtless preserved in the archives of some monastery or in the bosom of a family, and handed down from one generation to another. Many of these sayings of his are current among the country people at the present day. We cannot answer for the authenticity of each one of them in particular ;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Laicus, a citizen of Cologne, reproduced them in his "Petit Trésor," p. 132. These maxims, moreover, are but fragments of the Albertine paintings (seventeenth century) which are found suspended in church porches in the mountains around Salzburg, as we have before observed. Albert appears in the middle of the picture in the act of consecration ; on his right are seven small images, and as many on his left ; these represent the counterparts of perfection which are named in the text. Albert is enlightened on the subject of them by Christ Himself. Unhappily we have but a very imperfect recollection of them. The Royal Library at Munich possesses three manuscripts, belonging to the Monastery of St. Emmeran, which contain these sentences, No. 513, 746, and 835, fol. 321, 308, 136.

yet they are worthy of him, and might well be received as the sayings of the holy man, and for this reason we are loth to pass them over in silence.

He says : “ If all creatures were in the power of one man, and he were generously to set them at liberty at the hour of his death for the love of God, this act would not be so profitable to him in regard to eternal reward as an alms given for the love of God during his life.”

On another occasion he said : “ If we pardon those who have injured us bodily, in our possessions or reputation, this act will be of greater service to us than if we crossed seas for the purpose of visiting the Holy Sepulchre.”

“ To accept from God’s hand love and suffering with perfect humility, recognising both as the gifts of Providence, is of more value for the salvation of our soul than to break a waggon-load of birch rods on our shoulders daily.”

“ If I were desirous to meet with learned ecclesiastics, I would go to Paris ; but to inquire about the Divine mysteries, I would address myself to the poorest person who was voluntarily poor. We must be ever ready to exchange what is least for that which is greatest.<sup>1</sup> This is what Christ teaches us in regard to the young man to whom He

<sup>1</sup> That is : We should be ready to part with the goods of this world in order to attach ourselves to God and His wisdom.”



said : “ If thou wilt be perfect, sell what thou hast ; give the price of it to the poor, and follow Me.”

Albert going one day to a Convent of Nuns of his Order, the Sisters asked him to tell them something edifying ; he then said : “ Man receives God spiritually into his soul, as the Priest receives Him corporally at the altar, every time that, through love of Him, he abstains from some fault, whether it be a word or a useless glance.”

“ When a person is in a state of suffering,” he would say to sick people, “ he often imagines that his life is useless in the sight of God. But when he is unable to pray or to perform good works, his sufferings and desires bring him face to face with the Divinity, far more than a thousand other persons are who are in health.”<sup>1</sup>

Albert was ever thus occupied during the latter years of his life in consecrating to God’s service, not only temples of wood and stone, but likewise souls, whom he edified by his visits, his wise counsels and consolations. The distance, the hardships of journeys through impassable roads, the loss of time so precious to him in the composition of his learned works, never deterred him ; he made himself all to all in order to gain all.

<sup>1</sup> That is, he knows more of God than a thousand others who are in good health. These three last maxims betray more the later mysticism of Suso and Tauler.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

ALBERT BUILDS THE CHOIR OF THE DOMINICAN CHURCH  
AT COLOGNE, AND ENRICHES IT WITH HOLY RELICS  
—TRANSLATION OF THE BODY OF ST. CORDULA.

IN the many journeys which he performed in Germany, Albert was a witness of the marvellous development of that holy passion for building which was the distinctive characteristic of the thirteenth century. He beheld new churches rising up everywhere, clothed with an elegance and stateliness, a symbolism and beauty till then unknown. The old sanctuaries were adorned with the imposing proportions and splendours of the new style of art. His own Conventual church alone, an old structure of the Roman period, withstood the general movement, doubtless because it was in a state of perfect preservation. But he had no sooner set foot within the walls of the German metropolis, after resigning his See, than he determined that it too should be enlarged and beautified in a manner befitting it. Peter of Prussia observes with reference to this work, so meritoriously undertaken by the venerable octogenarian: "When

Brother Albert perceived that the choir had become too small to hold the number of Religious engaged in the Divine Office, he enlarged it, with the sanction of the Superiors and the contributions of the faithful.”

Rodolph, a later biographer, speaks of it at greater length. “Albert,” he says, “seeing that the choir of the Church of Holy Cross, which was served by the Friar Preachers, was too small contain the multitude of Religious who sung the Divine Office, caused the old structure to be demolished, having first obtained the permission of the Superiors and the concurrence of the good people of Cologne. He levelled the ground, laid new and solid foundations, then erected an elegant building according to the rules of geometry, like the most accomplished architect (*“tanquam peritissimus architectus”*).<sup>1</sup>

With reference to the date of this building, it is stated to have been begun in 1271 and completed in 1278.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So speaks Rodolph. Prussia says: “Cum Fratrum necessitatem cerneret, studuit quantocius relevare; locum namque chori pro psallentium Fratrum caterva considerans nimis esse angustum, de majorum suorum beneplacito latiore fecit, fultus fidelium auxilio in opere incepto” (*“Vita Alb.”* p. 271).

<sup>2</sup> See Gelenius, “*Vita t. t. Engelberti*,” p. 461; and Boisserée, “*Histoire de la Cathéd. de Cologne*,” p. 11. Gelenius relates that Bishop Siegfried, who was promoted to the Episcopate in 1275, assisted Albert in the building of this church. Albert himself says in his will that the choir was unfinished, but this

In order to show to posterity that this work was due to the late Bishop of Ratisbon, a magnificent stained-glass window was placed in the choir, bearing the figure of Albert, with that of Engelbert, as a benefactor, with the following inscription: "This sanctuary was built by Bishop Albert, the flower of philosophers and of learned men, the school of morals, the glorious destroyer of heresies, and the scourge of the wicked. Enroll him, O Lord, in the number of Thy saints!"<sup>1</sup>

The courage of the great Master in undertaking to build such a sanctuary at his advanced age is worthy of admiration. Do we not perceive in him that holy passion which inflamed the Bishops, Princes, and Abbots of the Middle Ages, the passion for glorifying the Most High through the erection of some sacred monument, or the embellishment of His temples with the richest and most costly ornaments? Like David, who swore in the presence of his God that he would not

document was not written till 1278. Why, then, does Schnaas give the year 1261 (p. 545) as the date of the commencement of these works? This we cannot understand.

<sup>1</sup> Prussia says: "De quo retro summum altare ob eandem causam post obitum ipsius in vitrea fenestra ubi ipse depictus est una cum Archiepiscopo Coloniensi, qui eum sepulture honorifice tradidit, hi versus inscripti sunt:—

"Condedit iste Chorum præsul, qui philosophorum  
Flos et doctorum fuit Albertus, scolaque morum,  
Lucidus errorum destructor, obexque malorum:  
Hunc, ergo, sanctorum numero, Deus, adde tuorum."

look upon his couch, nor cross the threshold of his palace, nor give sleep to his eyes, until he found out a place for the Lord, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob, no pious person at this period of faith, Prince or Bishop, was willing to descend to the grave without having built a sanctuary in honour of the Most High. This remark is fully borne out by Albert's conduct.

We have unhappily no notion from our own personal knowledge of the structure of this new choir, for it was destroyed, with other portions of the church, by the vandalism of '93. An old parchment, however, informs us that Albert built the choir with two aisles.<sup>1</sup>

The venerable Walraff, who must have been well acquainted with it, often related to his disciples that it was, on a small scale, a most faithful reproduction of the great Cathedral of Cologne; that, like it, it consisted of a nave and two aisles surrounded by chapels.<sup>2</sup> Admitting this to be true, this edifice would be the only one of its kind among the Dominican churches of this period. No other church of the Mendicant Orders had, so far as we are aware, chapels around the choir. This was

<sup>1</sup> "Vinc. Just." p. 50. "Relicto episcopatu ecclesie Ratisponensis, Coloniam venit, et Ecclesiam F. Præd. amplians chorum tripharium extruxit. (Kreuzer, "Christl. Kirchenbau," I. 376).

<sup>2</sup> See Kreuzer, I. c.

the arrangement of the magnificent Cathedrals of France;<sup>1</sup> but it was less suited to the monastic churches, since the Rule insists on the separation of the choir from the other portions of the edifice.

If, then, this Dominican sanctuary was really constructed in the manner supposed, it can only be accounted for by its proximity to the Cathedral, which would then have been begun, and the plans of which were in existence.<sup>2</sup> We must suppose that Albert, won by the beauty of that structure, resolved that the choir of his Convent should be built on this splendid model. To carry out his design, he would doubtless employ the workmen, the skilled sculptors and their apprentices, engaged in the Cathedral; while the people would undertake, for the love of God, to demolish the old building and to remove the materials.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Royal Chapel of St. Louis at Paris, which was built at the same period, and probably of the same dimensions as the Dominican church at Cologne, is without this feature. The church of the Friars-Minor of Cologne (consecrated in 1260), erected a short time before, and, if we can trust to tradition, was built by the workmen of the Cathedral in their leisure hours, is likewise void of this peculiarity (Schnaas, V. 546). It is without doubt to be found in the Cistercian Abbey of Altenberg, near Cologne.

<sup>2</sup> As the conqueror of Morungen (1288), John, Count of Brabant, had already bestowed windows of stained glass on the choir, the building ought to have been tolerably advanced at this period.

<sup>3</sup> It was usual for the Monks of the old Orders devoted to agricultural and intellectual pursuits to take upon themselves the building of their own churches. This accounts for the

It now remains to be seen what share Albert had in the erection of this edifice. We naturally inquire whether he stood in relation to it as the proprietor who took in hand the general management and expenses of it, or as the architect, or whether he fulfilled both of these functions. We have consulted authentic records on this subject. The oldest of these is supplied by Albert himself, who, in his will, refers specially to the building of this choir. This is, word for word, what he says: "I bequeath the gold, silver, and precious stones, which may be converted into money for the completion of the choir of our Convent, which I have founded and entirely rebuilt out of my own resources."<sup>1</sup>

The venerable Bishop contents himself, then, with saying that by means of his own fortune he provided for the total erection of the choir, the completion<sup>2</sup> of which he could not have witnessed,

multitude of lay brethren (*conversi*) in their monasteries; but it was not so with the Mendicant Orders, whose object was to labour for the conversion of souls by preaching and study. One can easily conceive that manual labour would not harmonise with such a calling.

<sup>1</sup> The passage is as follows: "Aurum vero et argentum et gemmas quæ possunt in argentum commutari ad perficiendum chorum domus ejusdem quem ego de pecunia mea fundavi et a fundo erexi, nec volo quod ad usus alienos convertantur." (See the "Bavarian Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences" for the year 1850, No. 5).

<sup>2</sup> From 1278 until 1280, he lived entirely separated from the outer world, and was occupied only with the business of eternity, as we shall see hereafter. As to the will, it is dated 1278.



and still less could he have directed. When on the point of reaching the bright shores of eternity he experienced great consolation and peace in the thought of having accomplished this work and made such a worthy use of his wealth. As for the carrying out of the work itself and his artistic concurrence therein, this document affords us no information whatsoever.

The inscription on the windows of the choir, to which we have already alluded, supplies us with the oldest datum in the order of time. It merely states that Albert entirely rebuilt the edifice (*condidit*). But as this may also mean the founder or the builder as well as the architect, we are unable to solve the problem, and there the contemporary documents cease.

As for the later biographers, Peter of Prussia, the first of these, contents himself with saying that Albert enlarged the choir, which was become too small for the Religious, without any reference to the artistic part which he took in it. Rodolph of Nimwegen goes more into detail, and begins by saying that he constructed the edifice according to the rules of geometry, like a most skilful architect. What he evidently wishes to say is that he designed its plan in accordance with the rules of Gothic art. Since his time this assertion has been almost textually reproduced by all historians. The Cologne

chronicler, when speaking of the year 1499, says : "Albert built the choir with a masterly hand."<sup>1</sup> Vincent Justinian and Heister relate, in the seventeenth century, that he, "like the best architect, and observing the rules of true geometrical art, imparted to the choir its present form."<sup>2</sup> The latter adds : "Albert traced out with his own hand the form and idea of the choir ;"<sup>3</sup> in other words, he designed its plan. Finally, Jammy remarks : "He erected the choir of the Friar Preachers exactly in accordance with the rules of architecture which are generally known to every one at this day."<sup>4</sup>

Such is the knowledge that we gather from witnesses of different periods respecting the celebrated choir of the Dominicans of Cologne. Thus, it cannot be decided, according to the oldest and even contemporary documents, whether Albert only exercised a general surveillance over the building and defrayed its cost, or whether he was the author of the architectural plan. All that is certain is, that this opinion was prevalent for two hundred

<sup>1</sup> Kreuzer, "Christl. Kirchenbau," I. 376.

<sup>2</sup> Boisserée, p. 11, and Schmaas, V. p. 546. It is said, "Chorum F. Prædic. Coloniae civitatis tanquam optimus architectus juxta normam et verè geometriæ leges in hanc quam hodie cernimus formam crexit."

<sup>3</sup> Schmaas, I. c., and Merlo, "Documents on the Cologne Artists," p. 19: "Chori formam et ideam suis manibus expressit."

<sup>4</sup> "In Vita Alberti."

years after his death, and is reproduced by all the later writers.<sup>1</sup>

There is nothing to prevent us, we think, from adopting this view, namely, that if it be true that the edifice was a miniature of the Cathedral, it is clear that the architect confined himself to a reduced plan of it. That Albert engaged the director of the Cathedral works in a similar undertaking appears to us very probable, considering his numerous other occupations and the nature of the enterprise. Moreover, we may be allowed to hold, especially if we take into account the labour and duties of an architect, that he could not, despite his mental and bodily vigour, which he preserved to the age of nearly fourscore years, have superintended personally the building, which lasted at least ten years, and which was not even completed when he retired from public life. However, this may be, there will ever be due to Albert

<sup>1</sup> It is surprising that there should be no certain indications of the artistic knowledge and productions of Albert! Nor does he ever speak of this himself. He enters minutely into the subject of the Shrine of the Magi Kings; but it is only the treasures of natural history that appear to interest him in this master-piece of art, such as the precious stones with their natural symbolism. He does not make the remotest allusion to its artistic form. Can we accept the opinion of L. Schuckling, who maintains that Albert's advice was sought for at Rome in reference to the building of St. Peter's Church? ("Dome of Cologne," p. 80.) Which Church of St. Peter does he speak of? The old basilica which bears this name was not restored until 1450. See Kugler, "Hist. of Art," first edition, p. 341.

the merit of having, before his death, added to his Conventual church a spacious and imposing Gothic choir. There is within this edifice a stately tomb, wherein he found his last repose, as we shall hereafter relate. Not satisfied with what he had done to beautify his church, he further enriched it with precious relics.

The Abbess of St. Ursula, Elizabeth of Westenburg, having given him several bodies <sup>1</sup> from among the multitude of virgins who were martyred with the illustrious Saint, he received them with inexpressible joy, and piously arranged them on the altars and in other parts of the church.<sup>2</sup> He would doubtless provide metal shrines to contain them, in which they might be exposed on the walls and altars. He also bequeathed to his Convent a costly reliquary enclosing a portion of the true Cross. The saintly King of France, Louis IX., having presented him with a small piece of this sacred relic, he procured a monstrance enriched with gold and precious stones, in order to expose it to the veneration of the faithful.<sup>3</sup> The traditions

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph states the number of these precious relics to be three hundred. Peter of Prussia makes no special mention of this gift; but as Rodolph himself resided in the Convent of Cologne he would be able to authenticate the existence of these relics.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph and Jammy.

<sup>3</sup> Prussia observes: "Hic crucis amator Albertus, pretiosi ligni portionem non parvam Coloniensi conventui dereliquit in puro auro inclusam, atque gemmis circumdatam: quod etiam

of the Convent state that he, in his episcopal capacity, consecrated this reliquary, out of respect to the holy Cross, with the same solemn blessing which is imparted to chalices, and that he even tested the authenticity of the relic by casting it into the fire, out of which it immediately came forth uninjured. It is, moreover, stated that he subjected to the same ordeal another portion of the Cross possessed by the Church of St. Cunibert.<sup>1</sup> He expresses a further proof of his deep veneration for the Cross by another offering to his Convent church. Having ordered a large crucifix to be made, he enclosed within it relics of the Saints<sup>2</sup> with particles of the Cross, and suspended it between the nave and the choir that it might be adored by the faithful.<sup>3</sup> To excite still more the devotion of pious souls towards this holy

*aureum clenodium, quemadmodum calices altaris solent benedici, ob reverentiam salutiferi ligni inclusi, est consecratum, ut celebri fama cognoscimus, eo quod præfata portio ligni fertur ab Alberto probata fuisse: et licet scripto commendatam non invenimus examinationem ejusdem ligni, quia forte amissæ sunt litteræ ex negligentia; ab antecessoribus tamen nostris continue hæc narrari sine hæsitatione solent, quod ipse venerabilis Albertus, dum viveret, jam dictam ligni portionem sic probaverit. Ne enim ipse incertis fidem accommodaret, de Dei clementia confisus, accepit lignum illud, atque in ignem projecit, credens non posse consumi ab igne, si pretiosissimam Christi glebam portasset, et ecce, mox ut rogam tetigit, illico resiliit ex ipso intactum” (“Vita Alb.” p. 188).*

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 189. <sup>2</sup> Ibid. Rodolph says, “particles of the Cross.”

<sup>3</sup> This image was then suspended from the triumphal arch, as we still see it in many Gothic churches.

image, he petitioned Brother Salvus, Bishop of Recanati and Vicar-General of Pope Nicholas, for an Indulgence of one year and forty days to all who should venerate it.<sup>1</sup>

Thus did the holy old man enrich the church of his Order at Cologne with treasures suited to its grandeur. "This proves," say the biographers, "the depth of his love for the Cross." He expresses the same sentiment himself in all his writings whenever an opportunity occurs.<sup>2</sup> To be convinced of this it is enough to read his words on the power of the Cross in his Commentary on St. Luke (ix. 23), where it is said: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." "Each church," says he, "is specially consecrated to the holy Cross, and the Crucifix, like a master who contemplates his dwelling, looks down upon the altar, surrounds with outstretched arms the Holy of Holies,"<sup>3</sup> and seems to protect the sanctuary with its adorable body."

<sup>1</sup> Prussia, p. 187. This author names Pope Nicholas IV.; but as this Pontiff did not assume the tiara until 1288, he must mean Nicholas III.

<sup>2</sup> Prussia says: "Sed de Salvatoris veneranda passione et vivificæ crucis signaculo non tantum locis debitis et aptis, verum et incidentaliter sæpe aliis materiis aptando, te immemor crucis, de eadem est prosecutus," &c.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 185. It appears to have been customary in Albert's time to place a large crucifix in the most conspicuous part of the church.



The blessed Master was so filled with love for the sacred instruments of Redemption that he was loth to be separated from them either in life or after death. When, in 1483, his tomb was opened in this same choir of the Dominicans at Cologne, the Religious discovered suspended from his neck a portion of the holy Cross, an *Agnus Dei* in virginal wax and a pfenning [a small coin] which had been pierced by one of the sacred nails. It is beyond doubt, says Peter of Prussia, that he carried these emblems of salvation on his person during life in memory of our Redeemer's sufferings, and that he wished them to be buried with him that even his mortal remains might not be deprived of them.<sup>1</sup>

Albert again affords us a striking proof of his tender piety towards the instruments of salvation and the relics of the Saints. The following is related by the chroniclers who rest on the testimony of contemporary documents preserved in the archives of the church of the Joannites at Cologne:<sup>2</sup> "On the Feast of St. Valentine, 1277, while working at the church of St. John the Baptist, the body of the pious Queen Cordula, one of the heroines of that immortal phalanx of holy virgins martyred at Cologne, was discovered. A

<sup>1</sup> "Vita Alberti," p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph and Prussia, p. 274. The latter gives the year 1278.



Brother of the Order of St. John having been warned on three different occasions to transfer those sacred remains, he at once set about the task, and found in the spot indicated the holy body with the signs that usually distinguish these admirable Christians. A most delicious fragrance exhaled from the place. The Prior, uncertain how to act in such important circumstances, did not hesitate to seek advice. As Albert, the former Bishop of Ratisbon, a member of the Order of Preachers, and a Lector in Theology, who was unequalled in divine and human science, had come to Cologne to repose in his old age, the aforesaid Prior resolved to ask his advice, and meanwhile left the body untouched. He then repaired to the Prelate, and related to him his triple warning as also the finding of the holy relics. When the venerable Father had heard his account, he was filled with joy, and rising, said: 'I will also accompany you and see how God has accomplished this vision.' The Joannite Brother had indeed seen a virgin on whose forehead were written these words: 'Cordula, Queen and Virgin.' Albert followed the Prior and arrived at the Convent of the Joannites. When he had listened to Brother Ingebrad's account of the finding of the relics, he wept, praised God from the depth of his soul, and requested the bystanders to sing the *Te Deum*.

Then vesting himself in his episcopal robes, he removed the relics from under the earth, and solemnly translated them into the church of the monks of St. John. After singing Mass, he deposited the holy body in a suitable place, which God has since made illustrious by many miracles.”

We experience a certain emotion in recounting these acts and words of the holy Master. This powerful thinker is not satisfied, in his ardent zeal, with having built a sumptuous sanctuary to God's honour, and to supply the needs of his Brethren, we see him moreover honouring the instruments of Redemption and the precious relics of the Saints with fervent piety, with supernatural love and faith!

Where shall we find a more complete refutation of the opinions of a notorious free-thinker<sup>1</sup> of the last century, who affirmed that love dies in man as soon as he begins to think? The spiritual life of Albert unfolded itself before all in the domain of thought; his great intellect traversed the regions of divine and human science. The boldest problems, before which the mind shrinks, were embraced by him with a holy calm, an insurmountable courage; while he brought to his aid rare powers of reasoning and depth of penetration to enable him to solve them. And it was with

<sup>1</sup> J. J. Rousseau.

this precious wealth, gathered in this continuous and sublime flight of his genius, that he completed, as a writer, the treasure of his works, which comprise more than twenty folios. After having thus laboured almost uninterruptedly for more than half a century in the field of thought, he still remained filled with simple love for God and His Saints. He was ever penetrated with a tender devotion towards the instruments of our Lord's Passion and the relics of the martyrs, like a simple child who receives from its mother's lips the holy doctrines of religion ; or, again, like the rustic, who, naturally and without an effort of the mind, lovingly attaches himself to whatever reminds him of the sufferings of his Divine Lord.

Long and unwearied study did not, then, stifle in the soul of the venerable Prelate this elevated, supernatural faith, which alone makes man happy. The continuous and almost excessive strain upon his powerful intellect could not quench in him the warmth of his simple and holy love.

## CHAPTER XXX.

ALBERT ANNOUNCES THE DEATH OF ST. THOMAS OF AQUIN, AND REPAIRS TO PARIS FOR HIS DEFENCE.

WHILE the venerable Father was occupied with the building of his Conventual choir at Cologne and the instruction of souls by his words and writings, a grave and solemn event for the whole Church was in preparation. A General Council was to be convoked, and the City of Lyons, situated in the centre of the Catholic populations of the West, was chosen as the place of meeting. One of the chief subjects to be discussed was that of the Holy Places in Palestine. It was, moreover, hoped that the Greeks, who had existed so long in schism, might finally be reunited to the Roman Church. The Greek Emperor, Michael Palæologus, pressed on all sides by his enemies and counting on help from the West, manifested a disposition to return to the true Faith. The Patriarch of Constantinople and many Bishops also showed a like desire.

Pope Gregory X., in the holy ardour which animated him to reunite to the deep-rooted and living trunk of the Catholic Church its scattered branches, convoked, then, this Council, to which he invited all

the dignitaries, the kings, and potentates of Christendom; and that he might be benefited by the learning of the most illustrious doctors in the discussion of the important matters that were to be dealt with, he brought with him to Lyons St. Bonaventure, who had been recently promoted to the Cardinalate. That other light of the Church at this period, the Angel of the Schools, Thomas of Aquin, the worthy disciple of Albert the Great, was also summoned to attend. The voice of the Sovereign Pontiff called him to the Council at a moment when he was teaching with marvellous repute in the great University of Naples. Although bent beneath the weight of a painful malady and exhausted by the multiplicity of his labours, the Saint, listening only to the inspirations of the most perfect obedience, at once set out on his journey, accompanied by some Religious of his Order, and bearing with him the book which he had written, by command of the Pope, against the errors of the Greeks. But after some days' journey, when crossing the plains of the Campania, the progress of the evil from which he suffered compelled him to halt at a Monastery called Fossa Nuova.

“It was there,” says Rodolph, “that Thomas, that disciple so conformed in everything in Christ to his blessed master Albert, quitted, by God's decree, this world of darkness, to live with the

Angels in the glory of paradise. He died on the 7th of March in the year 1274."

At the same hour when Thomas left the earth his ancient and venerable master, seated at table with his Brethren in the Convent of Cologne, suddenly began to weep. The Prior and the other Religious having pressed him to tell them the cause of his tears, he exclaimed, with a mournful voice, "Thomas, my son in Christ, the bright luminary of the Church, passes at this very moment from the world to his Lord!" And he shed plentiful tears and sighed deeply at the thought of his own pilgrimage being so prolonged. His bitter regrets sufficiently showed how much more he loved the ineffable joys of heaven than to sojourn on the earth.<sup>1</sup>

The Brethren were astonished at hearing these words, and were careful to note the day and the hour when they were spoken. When the messengers at length brought them the tidings of St. Thomas's death it was evident that Albert had spoken at the very moment when the Angelic Doctor departed this life.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Textually from Rodolph. Prussia relates this fact in almost the same terms, resting on the legend of St. Thomas and the chronicle of St. Antoninus. It is, moreover, said in the process of St. Thomas's canonisation: "Albertus qui fuerat doctor ejus, audiens mortem ipsius, ploravit tunc fortiter, et quotiescumque audiebat postea memoriam ejus, plorabat." <sup>2</sup> Rodolph.

For those who know the intimate union that existed between these two souls, illuminated with the same light and filled with the same love ; who consider that one was in some sort the reflex and complement of the other ; that St. Thomas spent long years in Albert's company, that he drank from the source of his deep knowledge, and multiplied a hundredfold the rich store of wisdom which he drew therefrom, it will be easy to conceive that the death of one would be a counter-blow to the existence of the other, and that the harmonious string of one of these lyres would make its plaintive notes heard when the other was broken.

All the biographers, moreover, appear to look upon this prophetic insight as a favour from God, as an evidence of grace bestowed upon the aged man. "Almighty God," they say, "was pleased immediately to make known to Albert the entrance of the great Thomas of Aquin into glory, in order to afford him an assurance that, having been equal to each other in light and charity, they should likewise enjoy in heaven an equal degree of the beatific vision."<sup>1</sup>

We gather from the written testimony of Brother Hugo of Lucca, who lived with Albert in the Convent of Cologne, how much the great Master was attached to his disciple, and also how free he was

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.



from every sentiment of rivalry at seeing his own glory obscured by the splendour that encircled the brow of his pupil.<sup>1</sup> In the process of St. Thomas's canonisation, Bartholomew of Capua was cited as a witness, and deposed to his having frequently heard Brother Hugo relate the following: "Whenever Albert heard Thomas spoken of he began to weep. He was, he would exclaim, the flower and the ornament of the world. He could never hear his name pronounced without immediately shedding tears."<sup>2</sup> These constant tears greatly afflicted the Religious, for they feared, considering Albert's great age, that they were the result of an enfeebled brain (*ex levitate capitis.*) Thus did the venerable old man love, with the tenderness of a father, the dear disciple whom death had taken from him.

We shall now witness a proof of this love both in word and in deed. A report having gained ground some years afterwards that St. Thomas's writings were become the object of furious attack, Albert resolved to go to Paris in order to defend them; but his Religious brethren fearing for him on account of his great age, and the consequent fatigues of the journey, endeavoured for a time to

<sup>1</sup> See "Acta Sanctorum. Mens. Martius," VII. p. 714. "Processus de vita S. Thomæ Aquinatis."

<sup>2</sup> "Idem frater Hugo retulit ipsi testi, nunquam idem frater Thomas fuit nominatus, quod ipse non prorumperet in lacrymas" (Ibid.).

dissuade him from his purpose. The venerable Prelate was, however, deaf to all their entreaties, and declared once more that he would go to Paris to uphold the precious works of his great disciple. He then set out on his journey attended by Brother Hugo of Lucca as his sole companion. Arrived in Paris, he assembled the University, and ascending the Dominican chair, commenced to address his auditors in these words: "What a glory it is for one who is living to be praised by the dead." Continuing thus to represent St. Thomas as being alone endowed with life and all others as covered with the shades of death, he eulogised his great and extraordinary qualities, and declared that he was prepared to defend before an assemblage of competent men the works of Thomas of Aquin as being resplendent with orthodoxy and sanctity. And after many discourses and measures adopted for the defence and approval of the writings of the Angelic Doctor, he set out for Cologne in company with Brother Hugo, who related all that had transpired to the witness Bartholomew of Capua.

Returning to his humble cell, he commenced to read, one after the other and in their proper order, all the works of Thomas of Aquin. This done, he convoked a second assembly, loaded the illustrious Doctor with lofty praise, and finished his pleading by saying that this Dominican Friar had

by his writings laboured for all to the end of the world, and that henceforth all others would work in vain.<sup>1</sup>

We have no certainty as to the date of Albert's journey to Paris, yet we think it must have occurred between the years 1274 and 1278. This contemporary's account is thoroughly characteristic of the Master. He describes him as a man of iron will, whom no consideration of age or infirmity, or the remonstrances of the Religious of Cologne, could deter from the resolution he had made to proceed to Paris for the purpose of defending his beloved disciple. We shall not be less touched by the humble opinion which he had of himself. The rude expressions under which he sought to hide it only serve to make us the more sensible of it. Did he not, in effect, regard in that solemn assembly at Paris Thomas of Aquin alone as living and every one else, not excepting himself, as dead? He goes so far as to entirely forget the value and merit of his own works when he extols the Angelic Doctor as being he who discovered all truth and solved every problem.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Acta SS. Mart." 714.

<sup>2</sup> We are not alone in saying that this last encomium ought to be heard "cum grano salis," since Albert himself on a former occasion said: "Inasmuch as a writer is not God, but a man, he is capable of being deceived, and should therefore always subject his opinions to control, proof, and correction." Albert applies this to Aristotle.

This recital moreover enables us to view the heart of our aged Master with all the life and youth that still encompassed it. Is it not expressly said that the bare mention of the name of Thomas was enough to cause him to shed torrents of tears, as was witnessed when he learnt the sorrowful tidings of the death of the illustrious Doctor?

The ancient biographers consider themselves in some sort bound to defend the great man, in order that these abundant tears shed on the tomb of a friend might not serve as a cause of reproach to his weakness. Our own opinion is that Albert the Great has no need of justification; for his tears cannot imprint the smallest stain on his noble and magnanimous character. It is not in the nature or the largeness of the human heart to be cold and insensible as the rock that breasts the billows of the ocean. Man, on the contrary, is only great, we think, when he takes a lively interest in what touches his heart, and when he severs the cord of human affections, provided he walks in the path of God and observes the Divine precepts without departure therefrom.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## ALBERT ASSISTS AT THE COUNCIL OF LYONS.

THE voice of the Sovereign Pontiff was heard inviting the ecclesiastical and secular Princes to the Council of Lyons in order to adjust the important affairs of the Church. Did Albert receive an invitation? was he really present at the Council?<sup>1</sup> Contemporary authors are silent on this point; but he himself relates in the second part of his Theological Summa<sup>2</sup> that the Greeks, in the Council of Lyons were compelled to retract the following proposition: "Simplex fornicatio non est mortale peccatum." This fact, which historians do

<sup>1</sup> In the lessons for the Office of Blessed Gregory X., P.C., it is said: . . . "arcessitis etiam eximiis doctrina, et sanctitate viris, uti sancto Thoma Aquinate, in ipso itinere vita functo, sancto Bonaventura, sancto Philippo Benitio, beato Alberto Magno, Petro de Tarantasia Ordinis Prædicatorum, qui eidem in Pontificatu successit." ("Brev. Sac. Ord. Præd.")

—TRANSLATOR.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. xviii. in Jammy, p. 560, tract. xviii. distinct. cxxi. it is said: "Absque dubio et absque ulla ambiguitate secundum fidem catholicam tenendum est, quod concubitus soluti cum soluta peccatum mortale est, sicut expresse innuit Apostolus Hebr. ult. in auctoritate superius inducta. Et propter hoc Græci qui dicebant quod fornicatio non esset mortale peccatum, in concilio Lugdunensi coacti sunt hoc revocare."

not advert to, would doubtless be related by those who returned from the Council. Hence the critic Echard thinks it desirable that there should be more authentic testimony of the presence of Albert the Great at the Council held by Gregory X.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as the ancient biographers of the Master are not content with describing in a general way the period of his departure from Cologne, his arrival at Lyons and his labours in that City, but even reproduce the substance of a discourse which he pronounced before the Papal consistory, it would be difficult to deny this journey of the great man without offending against the rules of history.<sup>2</sup> Facts of this nature are not invented. The silence of ecclesiastical historians on this subject may be easily accounted for. Albert did not at that time occupy any post, either in his Order or in the Church, that would have entitled him to assist in the Council, where he had neither a seat nor a deliberative voice. That the Pope summoned him to attend, as being an authority in the

<sup>1</sup> "Script. Ord. Dom." I. 168: "Concilio Lugdunensi II. affuisse quidam dicunt. Id probat Petrus de Prussia ex eo, quod in Summa Albertus referat in eo concilio errorem Græcos, quo dicebant simplicem fornicationem non esse mortale peccatum, revocare coactos fuisse. Sed cum id aliunde discere potuerit forsitan quis magis authenticum hujus facti desiderabit testimonium." Jammy and Fleury are for Albert's presence at the Council.

<sup>2</sup> Prussia speaks of it at pp. 278-80. Rodolph gives still further details.

debates on questions of theology, may be doubted, seeing that he had reached an age which rendered a long journey and great mental application impossible, and moreover because Thomas, his disciple, had been invited to attend as the representative of the Order and of Science. Albert could not then have occupied in this great assembly a position whose importance would be likely to attract the attention of history. He might possibly have been there, not as a Theologian of the Pope or as having a deliberative voice in the Council, but as a diplomat, a delegate of the illustrious German Monarch, Rodolph of Hapsburg, who on the 29th September, 1273, was promoted to the supreme government of the State, in order to put an end to its long and deplorable disorders, and to consolidate peace between the Church and the Empire. Albert, whose political influence had so often been crowned with signal success, would doubtless, by his testimony, his great wisdom and eloquence, obtain of the Pope and the high dignitaries of the Church the solemn recognition of the newly elect. Possibly also the electors of Cologne and Mayence, the authors of Rodolph's promotion, might have confided this delicate mission to him knowing his extraordinary aptitude for business. Besides, Rodolph had but recently passed through Cologne after his coronation at Aix-la-Chapelle, and had



held conversation with the great man. This political negotiation would not take place at the sitting of the Council, but in a consistory held in the Pope's Palace for that purpose. In this way then may we account for the silence of historians in respect to Albert's presence<sup>1</sup> at the General Council of Lyons. We can therefore readily admit the statements of old biographers who would make it appear that he repaired thither in the year 1274.

Rodolph, according to the traditions of his Order, speaks thus: "Having mourned the death of his beloved disciple, Albert immediately started on his journey to take his place. He overcame the grief which so great a loss inflicted on his soul, and, making no account of his advanced age,<sup>2</sup> he shaped his course with some Religious towards Lyons. Arrived at the end of this long and wearisome journey, he found the venerable assembly met together, and was received by it with every mark of honour. Cardinals, Bishops, and more than a

<sup>1</sup> Carranza, "Summa Conciliorum," edid. Schramm, tom. iii. p. 159, says: "Lugduni eodem tempore actum est de Romano imperatore creando et Germanici oratores ad sacramentum, Nomine Rudolphi Habsburgici nuncupandum admissi sunt, et Othonis IV., Frederici II., et ipsius Rudolphi privilegia et sacramenta lecta fuerint. Sed hæc non in concilio, sed in consistorio acta sunt." Albert was one of these orators. Cosart relates this fact in the "Chronologia Sacrosancta Conciliorum Omnium" of Labbé.

<sup>2</sup> He had attained his eighty-first year.

thousand other personages, both Prelates and Priests, were gathered round the Pope." King James of Aragon, the Ambassadors of the Kings of France, Germany, Sicily, England, and of other Princes, were likewise present.<sup>1</sup> There were of the Order of Friar-Preachers alone, three Cardinals, and about thirty Bishops, from all parts of the universe.<sup>2</sup> "Two especially," adds Rodolph, "surpassed all others in glory and erudition. One was Peter of Tarantaise, Archbishop of Lyons, and for some time Cardinal Bishop of Ostia. He afterwards ascended the Pontifical Throne, under the name of Innocent V. It was he who, at the solemn obsequies of St. Bonaventure, who died on the 15th July, amidst universal regret, celebrated the Holy Sacrifice and preached the funeral oration on the text: 'I grieve over thee, my brother Jonathan, because I have lost thee.' He spoke on this occasion with such effect in praise of the deceased, that all present were bathed in tears. The other was the illustrious Brother

<sup>1</sup> Fleury and Hardouin, "Act. Conc." VII. p. 687. Prussia and Rodolph are at fault when they state: "Veniens Lugduni, invenit congregatos Ecclesiæ prælatos, inter quos fuerunt septem reges, quingenti episcopi, abbates et alii prælati plurimi, Græcorum nuntii centum viginti."

<sup>2</sup> Jammy, in "Vita Alb. Mag." Prussia, says: "De Prædicatorum autem ordine præter alios doctos viros episcopi plusquam triginta clarissimi; quibus tamen omnibus eminebant duo clariores," &c.

Albert, the former Bishop of Ratisbon, whom all received with great marks of distinction.”

It was, then, Albert's privilege and happiness, in his extreme old age, before leaving this life, to enjoy the vision of his God, to witness the grandest and most interesting spectacle that can greet mortal eyes: the spectacle of a holy General Council, the grouping together, around the visible representative of Jesus Christ, of a vast number of Princes and Doctors, gathered together from every corner of the earth. The second Council of Lyons, indeed, holds a distinguished rank in the Assemblies of the Church, whether because of the importance of the business transacted therein, the happy results that were accomplished, the unity and admirable spirit of sacrifice with which all its members were animated, or because of the numerous encouragements which it received from all parts of the Catholic world, or the pomp and splendour with which it was solemnised.

We shall endeavour to sketch the imposing sight such as Albert doubtless had the happiness to contemplate. These great sessions certainly form one of the most remarkable events of Albert's age. They connect the whole of his life, and ought consequently to find a place in this history.

When the members of the Council were met

together, the Chief Pastor of the Church,<sup>1</sup> Pope Gregory X., on the 2nd of May, imposed a fast of three days on all the Prelates and their Chaplains, and published the opening of the Council to take place on the 7th May, 1274, in the Cathedral of St. John at Lyons. This was on a Monday, and the Sovereign Pontiff, attended by two Cardinal Deacons, proceeded from his apartments to the Metropolitan Church, in the choir of which a stately throne was erected, and recited Tierce and Sext according to custom, it being a fasting day. At the close of the Office, the Subdeacon put on the sandals, while the Chaplains chaunted the customary Psalms. Then he washed his hands, and vested himself in his pontifical robes of white, with the pallium, as though he were about to celebrate Mass. The Deacon and Subdeacon, preceded by the cross, accompanied him to the ambo, where he seated himself under a rich baldachin; while Simon (of the title of S. Martino) assisted him as Priest, and Cardinal Othoboni as Deacon. Near the ambo, as Cardinal Deacons, were also: Othoboni (S. Adriano) already mentioned, James (S. Maria in Cosmedin), Gottfried (S. Giorgio in Velabro), Hubert (S. Eustachio), and Matthew (S. Maria in Porticu). By the side

<sup>1</sup> We shall reproduce almost word for word the recital of Sev. Einn, *Editio Concilii in Hardouin*, VII. p. 687.



of the Pope sat the King of Aragon, also assisted by his Chaplains in their choral habits. In the middle of the church were the Patriarchs Pantaleon of Constantinople, and Opizius of Antioch. On the right hand of the Pope were John of Porto, (S. Rufino), Peter of Tusculum, Governor of Prenesti, Br. Bonaventure, Bishop of Albano, and Br. Peter of Ostia and Velletri, Bertrand (S. Sabina) and all the Cardinal Bishops. On the left were: Averus (S. Praxede), William (S. Marco), Simon (S. Cecilia), and all the Cardinal Priests. After these were ranged, right and left, the Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, and Priors, together with numerous other ecclesiastical Prelates without distinction of rank. Above the ambo were William, Grand Master of the Hospitallers, and Robert, Grand Master of the Templars, with others of their Orders. And finally, the Ambassadors of the Kings of France, Germany, England, Sicily, and other Princes or Barons, with the Procurators of Chapters and Churches.

The chaplains then intoned the antiphon, "Exaude nos, Domine!" after which the Pope rose up and sung, "Oremus!" Cardinals Orthoboni and James on bended knee responded, "Levate!" and the Pope, in a loud tone of voice, sang the usual prayer. The Litanies were next intoned by one of the chaplains, to which the



Pontiff, Cardinals, and Bishops, kneeling without their mitres, responded. The Pope then rising, sang, "Oremus!" Gottfried and James answered, "Levate!" and the Pope sang another prayer in the same tone as the former.

Then Cardinal Othoboni, inclining before the Pontiff, received the customary blessing, and sang the Gospel according to St. Matthew: "Designavit Dominus et alios septuaginta duos," &c. This being finished, the Pope intoned in a loud voice the hymn, "Veni, Creator Spiritus!" which was devoutly sung by the whole assemblage without mitre. Then seating himself under the baldachin, he commenced to speak from the text, "With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer" (Luke xxii. 15). Having ended his discourse and rested awhile, the holy Pontiff addressed an allocution to the Council, in which he expressed his happiness and the desires of his soul, as also the reasons why he had brought them together, namely, to elicit help for the Holy Land, to effect the reunion of the Greeks, and to reform their morals. When he had ceased to speak, he rose from his seat and announced the day on which the next Session would be held. Then returning to the place where he had vested, he laid aside the pontifical robes and recited None.

The second Session was held in the same year

and in the same month; that is, on the 18th of May. Everything took place as in the first, except that no fast was imposed, that Avernus assisted as Cardinal Priest, James in quality of Deacon, and that the Gospel was sung according to St. Luke, "Vos estis sal terræ." The Pope did not preach, but confined himself to an allocution on what had been done in the preceding Session. The Constitutions on Zeal for the Faith were then read, after having dismissed all the Procurators, Abbots, and Princes who did not wear the mitre, except those who had been personally called to the Council. The mitred Prelates of inferior rank were also dismissed. Finally, the last act was the fixing of the third Session on the Monday after the Octave of Pentecost, namely, the 28th of May.

Between the first and the second Session the Pope summoned to his Palace the Archbishops, Bishops, and Prelates, and demanded of them a tithe of the revenues of their churches for six years, in order to relieve the necessities of the Holy Land. In the same interval Brother Jerome and Brother Bonagratia, of the Order of Minors, who had been sent with two other monks to the Greeks as nuncios of the Roman Church, sent letters to the Sovereign Pontiff which rejoiced him exceedingly, for they announced their approaching return with the Ambassadors of the Emperor. The Pope



having immediately assembled all the Prelates in the Cathedral of Lyons, Brother Bonaventure, Bishop of Albano, delivered a discourse on this passage of Baruch, "Look about thee, O Jerusalem, towards the east, and behold the joy that cometh to thee from God. For behold thy children come, whom thou sendest away scattered; they come gathered together from the east even to the west" . . . . (iv. 36, 37). The letters were then read amid signs of general rejoicing. The third Session took place on the 7th of June, and was conducted as before, with this difference: that Gottfried (*S. Giorgio in Velabro*) fulfilled the functions of Deacon, and the Gospel was according to St. Matthew: "Tunc accesserunt discipuli ad Jesum," &c. (xvii. 18). The sermon on this occasion was preached by Brother Peter, Bishop of Ostia,<sup>1</sup> on this text: "Lift up thy eyes round about, and see all these are gathered together, they are come to thee" (Isaias xlix. 18). The Constitutions were then read, and the members of the Council were permitted to absent themselves from Lyons at a distance of six leagues (*leucas*). Finally, on the 24th of June the Ambassadors<sup>2</sup> of Michael Paleologus arrived. All the Fathers of

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated confrere of Albert the Great.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph states their number to have been one hundred and twenty. Hardouin gives their names.

the Council with their suite, the Chamberlains of the Papal Court, the Vice-Chancellors, the Notaries, the whole retinue of the Cardinals, went forth to meet and conduct them with special marks of honour to the Palace of the Sovereign Pontiff.

The Holy Father, surrounded by his Cardinals and many Prelates, received them in the Palace and bestowed upon them the kiss of peace. The Envoys then presented to him letters from their Royal Master, with others from several Bishops. Those of the Emperor were inclosed in cases of gold. They stated that they came to tender their obedience to the holy Roman Church, to confess the Faith which it professed, and to acknowledge its primacy. This done, they retired to their lodgings. On the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, which followed their interview, they assisted at Divine Service, which was celebrated by the Pope in the Cathedral, in presence of the whole Council. The Epistle, as also the Gospel, was sung in Latin and Greek; after which Brother Bonaventure finished his discourse.

Having chaunted the Apostolic Symbol, in which the Cardinals, Bishops, and all present joined, the Greek Patriarch, with all the Calabrian Archbishops, the Friar-Preacher Morbecca, and the Friar-Minor, John of Constantinople, Penitentiaries of the Pope, well versed in the Greek

tongue, commenced to sing the same Symbol ; and when they came to the celebrated passage, " Qui ex Patre, Filioque procedit," they repeated it three times with solemn effect. The Patriarch and the Archbishops sung Greek hymns in praise of the Pope, who continued the Divine Sacrifice, while they surrounded the altar.

On the 3rd of May the Pontiff sent for the Bishop of Louvain, and reproaching him for his many grave faults, compelled him to lay aside his dignity. On the following day he received the Ambassadors of the King of the Tartars, who was desirous to contract an alliance with the Christian Princes against the Sultan of Egypt and Syria. The Cardinals and the Bishops, with their attendants, also went, by command of the Pope, to meet the new comers.

In the fourth Session, which was held on Friday, the 6th of July, the Greek Ambassadors were placed on the right hand of the Sovereign Pontiff after the Cardinals. When Cardinal Humbert had sung the Gospel, and Cardinal Peter, Bishop of Ostia, had preached the sermon, the Holy Father commenced an allocution to the assembly. He unfolded to them the motives for which he had summoned the Council, and related how the Greeks had voluntarily returned, contrary to all expectation, to the obedience of the Roman Church ; how they had acknowledged its Faith

and Primacy without exacting any temporal compensation. He recalled to their minds how he had written to the Greek Emperor to the effect that if he was not freely disposed to return to the pale of the Roman Church, he would at least send deputies with whom he might deliberate. "But," continued the Pontiff, "this Prince, without accepting our conditions, has spontaneously acknowledged, by God's grace, the Belief and Primacy of the Latin Church, and has sent legates charged to express by word of mouth what he himself states to us in his letters."

Having thus spoken, he caused the letters of the Emperor, those of his son and of a great number of Bishops of the same communion, to be read. They were all inclosed in magnificent cases of gold and translated into Latin. These having been read, one of the Legates in a loud voice made known that he had, on the part of the Emperor his master to swear to acknowledge the Faith of the Roman Church, and to promise that he would be for ever faithful thereto. The Pope then intoned the *Te Deum*, which was sung to the end with great unction and amidst general tears. His Holiness then addressed the assembly in a short allocution, to express the joy which inundated his soul. It commenced thus: "With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you." The

Patriarch and the Greek Archbishops afterwards descended to the nave and took possession of seats raised immediately behind the Cardinals. When the *Credo*, which the Holy Father intoned in Latin, had been sung, the Bishop of Constantinople, with all the Greeks present, took it up in their own tongue and solemnly repeated twice the passage : " Qui ex Patre, Filioque procedit." After this the Pope made a short address ; then he caused the letters addressed to the Council by the King of the Tartars to be read, while the Ambassadors of that Prince stood facing the ambo, and fixed the day for the following Session.

This general gladness was however to be troubled by a sorrowful event. On the 15th of July, towards the hour of Matins, died Brother Bonaventure, Bishop of Albano, a man of rare wisdom and eloquence, of a sanctity beyond all praise, endowed with meekness which gained all hearts to him. He was good, affable, sweet, compassionate, full of virtue, loved by God and men. He was buried on the Sunday among the Friars-Minor at Lyons. The Pope himself assisted at the funeral ceremony with his whole Court and with all the Bishops who were present at the Council. Brother Peter, Bishop of Ostia,<sup>1</sup> celebrated the Mass, and preached

<sup>1</sup> The traditional relationship that exists between the Order of St. Dominic and that of St. Francis requires that a Dominican should preach the funeral oration of a Friar-Minor.

on the text: "I grieve over thee, O my brother Jonathan, because I have lost thee." Plentiful were the tears that flowed, and deep the sighs that were heard on every side; for the Lord had accorded this man the grace to make himself loved by all who had the privilege to know him.

The sixth Session was held on the following day. Before the Pope entered the Church, Brother Peter, Bishop of Ostia, baptised one of the Ambassadors of the Tartar King with two of his companions, and the Sovereign Pontiff caused scarlet habits to be provided for them such as are worn by the Latins. All passed off in this Session as in the former one.

When Cardinal Matthew had sung the Gospel of the day, the newly written Constitutions were read, after which Gregory X. preached a discourse in which he set forth the irreparable loss sustained by the Church in the death of Brother Bonaventure. He ordained that all Prelates and Priests throughout the entire world should sing one Mass for the repose of his soul, and a second for those who died in coming to the Council, during its sitting, or in returning therefrom. As it was already late, the Session was postponed to the following day.

The last Session took place on the 17th July. The Pope, vested in his pontifical robes, repaired

to the Church and ascended the ambo with some Bishops who read aloud the Constitutions. The Pontiff then addressed a last allocution to the Council, in which he once more reminded them of the three motives which induced him to call them together, adding with extreme joy that the affair of the Greeks and that of the Holy Land had been, through God's grace, brought to a happy issue. As for the reformation of morals, he observed that the representatives of the Church would lead the world to its ruin, and that he was astonished that some should be unwilling to abandon their evil ways. He warned them to amend, in order that he might not have to pass decrees for their reformation; "independently of which," he added, "we shall adopt energetic and stringent measures for your moral improvement. For the good administration of the parishes which demand suitable representatives, and who will be faithful to their residence therein, we shall presently do all that is necessary." It had been impossible for the Council to occupy itself with this measure, on account of the numerous matters which it had to deal with. After the customary prayer had been sung, the Pope, in dismissing the Bishops, gave them the Apostolic benediction. Then Cardinal Othoboni said: "Go in peace!" and the great Council of Lyons was brought to a close.



Such were the remarkable events of which the venerable Albert was a witness. What holy joy this signal triumph of the Church must have given him ! How the meeting of so many illustrious men of his Order must have gladdened his heart ! What satisfaction to have been able to converse with those Greeks and Tartars ; but, above all, what consolation to have heard from the mouth of the Sovereign Pontiff the echo of his own unceasing complaints respecting the decadence of morals, and that he would adopt strong measures for their reformation !

We may be permitted, before closing this chapter, to offer a few thoughts in reference to Albert's influence in this memorable meeting. We have already stated that the venerable Religious had no special duty to perform in the Council. Yet his biographers attribute to him a twofold act in this assembly. They speak of the success of his negotiations in favour of Rodolph of Hapsburg, and of his struggle against the errors of the Greeks. They say, in regard to the German Prince : " Albert pronounced, in a secret consistory before the Pope, a thrilling discourse in behalf of King Rodolph, from these words : ' He shall send them a Saviour and a defender to deliver them ' (Isaias xix. 20)."<sup>1</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> Prussia observes : " Frater Albertus coram Domino papa Gregorio X. atque concilio verbum fecit pro domino rege Romano-

would appear, then, to have painted in brilliant colours this founder of the House of Hapsburg, and to have represented him as having all the requisite qualities for a good Prince, and a settled determination to restore justice and order to the State after a deplorable interregnum, to re-establish peace between the Church and the Empire which had been so long disturbed, and finally to rescue the Holy Places from the pagans and fanatical followers of Mahomet. Rodolph had indeed given striking proofs of his personal valour, his incorruptible love for justice, and tender devotion. This latter quality was especially shown at his coronation at Aix-la-Chapelle, where, in the absence of the Imperial sceptre, he seized a crucifix amid the hearty acclamations of the people.

That Albert's efforts and those of the German Ecclesiastical Princes, in whose name he spoke, were crowned with happy results in behalf of Rodolph, is fully borne out by history. From that moment the Pope was thoroughly gained over to his cause, and made every effort to bring about the abdication of his rival, Alphonsus of Castile,<sup>1</sup> who had never set foot in Germany, and thus insure to the newly elect the peaceful enjoyment of the crown.

rum, sumens pro themate illud: Ecce ego mittam eis salvatorem et propugnatorem qui liberet eos" (p. 280).

<sup>1</sup> By many letters, and finally in an interview with him at Beaucaire, where he prevailed on him to renounce his claims (Fleury, "Hist. Ecclesiast." I. lxxxvi. p. 203).

Gregory wrote soon afterwards to Rodolph informing him that he recognised him, with the assent of the Cardinals, as King of the Romans. He moreover added: "We warn you to prepare yourself to receive from our hands the Imperial crown when we shall command you, which we hope will not be long."<sup>1</sup> He wrote a second letter to the new King to repair to the nearest frontier of the Empire, and to apprise him of it. He had publicly shown himself desirous to become personally acquainted with the man whom Albert had so admirably described.<sup>2</sup>

If we inquire now what share Albert had in the theological discussions that were set on foot in the Council, Rodolph answers us in these words: "The venerable Father Albert refuted many errors at Lyons, and particularly that of the Greeks. In a public disputation he was able to convince and lead to a retractation those who strove to stain the Church of God by their impure contact with it. At his voice, like croaking frogs which the rolling thunder subdues into silence, the enemies of the Faith, as if struck by a thunderbolt, dared not move.

From this it would appear that the Greeks main-

<sup>1</sup> The letter is dated September 7th, 1274.

<sup>2</sup> The interview took place in the following year at Lausanne. Rodolph repaired thither with all his family and many German Princes. He swore to defend the rights and possessions of the Roman Church. He there, in fine, took up the Cross, with all his nobility (Fleury).

tained many errors which they were compelled to retract. But so far as one can judge from the very Acts of the Council, there never was question of any such errors, since the Greeks, from the day of their arrival, declared themselves ready, in the name of their Emperor, to recognise every point of doctrine which is taught by the Roman Church. We can therefore only meet the difficulty by a twofold hypothesis: either there had been discussions on the errors of the Greeks during the weeks that preceded their arrival, and the points to be retracted were decided upon;<sup>1</sup> or it was resolved during the sitting of the Council that the Masters in Theology should hold public disputations, a sort of intellectual tournament, having for its object the real errors or those falsely attributed to the Greeks. Did the theologians of Constantinople provoke those opinions on incontinency<sup>2</sup> and defend them by means of interpreters? We know not; yet the allusion

<sup>1</sup> This might have sprung from St. Bonaventure's Sermon, or from the work composed by St. Thomas of Aquin against the errors of the Greeks. There are besides many things which are not related in the Acts of the Council, as for example the collections for the building of Ratisbon Cathedral. (See Schuegraff, History of this Cathedral, I. p. 82.)

<sup>2</sup> It is no injury to the quarrelsome and quibbling character of the Greeks of that period to state with certainty that they did not consider incontinency a grave matter, on the ground of its being a *natural* thing. Albert refutes them in an article of his Summa, saying: "Nativa naturalia in homine sunt ordinandæ lege, civilisatione et ratione, quia ratio est natura formalis hominis," &c. (Summa, II. xviii., xxii. p. 550).

to Albert having refuted them by unassailable arguments tends to confirm the latter hypothesis.

These few reflections must suffice to show the part which the great Master took in the Council of Lyons. The mere certainty of his presence at that distant assembly would lead us to admire his wonderful old age, and the vigour of soul and body which were needed for such a journey; and when we read that he brought his diplomatical negotiations to a happy close, that he laboured for the well-being of the German Empire by his animated eloquence, and distinguished himself in learned controversies, we must agree that old age had respected his strength, although he was then in his eighty-first year.

In many parts of Italy, winter, so far from injuring the fruits of the orange tree, imparts to them sweetness and a delicious perfume.<sup>1</sup> In like manner the frosts of old age did not affect Albert, this noble fruit growing on the majestic tree of the Church, and his intellect would seem to have received from it a most delicate ripeness and refined taste. Let us apply to him, then, the expression of the celebrated Michael Angelo: "Virtue imparts eternal youth."

<sup>1</sup> Erdmann, "Letters Psycholog."

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## LAST WRITINGS OF ALBERT.

“AT the close of the Council of Lyons the venerable Master returned to Cologne, and again applied himself with his wonted zeal to God’s work.” Thus speaks Prussia.<sup>1</sup> What is to be understood by this work of God? The same biographer explains it, saying that the holy Doctor wrought wonders by his preaching and scholastic teaching. Rodolph however comes nearer to the meaning when he says: “Albert, reflecting on his great age, from that moment waited the hour of his approaching deliverance, which nevertheless did not hinder the accomplishment of other salutary works. He wrote, after the Council, the last portions of his great work on the admirable omnipotence of God, the book on the Eucharist, and the interesting opusculè, “*De Adhærendo Deo.*”

Thus did Albert labour in the sacred vineyard until the moment of his departure to his eternal home. We will endeavour, then, to give a brief

<sup>1</sup> “*Vita Alb.*” p. 280: “*Peracto concilio Lugdunensi, venerabilis Albertus Coloniam rediens, operi Dei, prout illi consuetudo erat, institit ferventer.*”

sketch of the works which his fruitful pen brought to light in the last years of his earthly pilgrimage.

As we have already given an analysis of his work on the Eucharist,<sup>1</sup> it only remains for us to subject the other two to a short and diligent examination. One of these is the ripe and savoury fruit of his rich theological knowledge, his deep penetration, and marvellous talent for teaching. The other is a simple and delicate flower inclosed in the garden of his soul, with whose delicious fragrance he wished to fortify himself and others at the approach of death. In the first he teaches the sublimest science, in the second the highest art; in one he shows himself the distinguished scholastic, in the other he appears to us surrounded with the lovely aureola of the discreet mystic full of experience.

In Albert's soul, as in all the great minds of the Church, these two tendencies, so far from opposing each other, are on the contrary rooted, by the profession of the same faith and sanctity, in an intimacy of the tenderest relationship.

We will observe on the subject of the first of these works, that Albert wrote at this period of his life, as we have stated above, the second part of his "Summa Theologica,"<sup>2</sup> or at least enlarged and com-

<sup>1</sup>This book was discovered later at Cologne. It was transcribed, partly by Albert's copyists, and partly by himself ("Script. Ordin. Dom." p. 175).

<sup>2</sup>The contemporary Ptolemy of Lucca says: "Hic Summam



pleted it, since he alludes therein to matters that were discussed in the Council of Lyons. He had doubtless already finished at an earlier period the first part, together with a plan of the whole, and drawn from it the subject-matter of his public lectures, a proof of which lies in the fact that he does not in any way allude to the masterpiece of his disciple Thomas of Aquin, which appeared ten years previously. It would appear that he was ignorant of the existence of this celebrated Summa with its logical divisions, its original and briefly explained proofs; for he follows with an almost servile fidelity in the track of the Master of the Sentences.

This Theological Summa of Albert,<sup>1</sup> which was only undertaken at the instance of his Brethren and some other persons,<sup>2</sup> is not a subject of dogma and moral in the modern sense of the terms, but of the universal knowledge of God and the world, heaven and earth, the existence of God, creatures and human acts. It is rather a mirror which was intended to reflect God and things in their true light, through the medium of positive revelation *theologiæ inchoavit, sed non complevit. Fecit tamen duo volumina quæ ad divinam naturam pertinent et emanationes creaturarum,*" &c. <sup>1</sup> Vol. xvii. and xviii. Jammy.

<sup>2</sup> It is said at the commencement: "Cupientes igitur petitionibus fratrum satisfacere et multorum aliorum nos quasi ad hoc compellentium, de hac scientia et scibilibus ejus inquiremus" (p. 5).

and of natural inquiry after truth. It treats in the first part, after solving the preliminary questions on the object and merit of theology, of the doctrine of the One and Triune God, of the essence, properties, and Divine processions. To do this, it goes into the minutest details, and gives evidence of an erudition which would involve stupendous efforts of research among sacred and profane writers. The object of the second part is the world of creatures and its corruption by sin. The being and properties of creatures,<sup>1</sup> as also the essence of every sin, are likewise subjected to the fullest inquiry. The third part treats of the Liberator from those evils, Christ, and of the means taught by Him for the acquisition of virtue. The fourth part speaks of man's participation in the graces of Redemption through the Sacraments, as also of the ultimate return of all creatures to God. This part was not finished by Albert, who was probably unwilling to extend it further<sup>2</sup> out of regard for the *Summa* of Thomas of Aquin, which had appeared.

For those who are desirous to know what rela-

<sup>1</sup> Albert treated the same subject in another work, entitled: "*Summa de Creaturis*" (vol. xix.) He speaks therein at greater length and more learnedly, "1° de quatuor Cœlis" (*materia prima, tempus, cœlum, angeli*), and "2° de Homine."

<sup>2</sup> It was not till later that a Religious extracted these two latter portions of Albert's Commentary, in order to append them to the Sentences of Peter Lombard. (See Echard, "*Script. Ord. Præd.*" I. p. 176.)

tion these works bear to each other, we would say that the work of the Angelic Doctor claims the advantage, on account of the originality of its divisions, the conciseness and precision of the theses and proofs, the exclusion of a multitude of useless researches, and of the almost total completion of the parts which were not even touched upon by Albert. The Albertine Summa, on the other hand, unquestionably claims the merit of having opened the way to the work of St. Thomas. We cannot but suppose, on comparing these two colossal productions, that Thomas availed himself of the first works of his master when writing his Summa, that he profited by his ideas, divisions, and arguments.<sup>1</sup> It would even seem that he intended only to write a short manual for the use of students, which should embrace all that was necessary of theological science, and that he deemed the great Summa of Albert very suitable for cultivated minds and theologians.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> They frequently divide a subject into several articles, and raise many questions to that purpose. Thus, for example, in explaining the "Liber Vitæ," both have three articles, and use very often the same passages from Holy Scripture and the Fathers. (See the "Summa Divi Thom." I. quest. 24, and the "Summa Alberti," I. quest. 69.) But St. Thomas is always more concise; he is more careful in the selection of the proofs which appear to suit him, and puts aside those that are superfluous. He takes up and discusses whatever is useful in his predecessor, in order to dispense with what he deems imperfect.

<sup>2</sup> St. Thomas says, in effect, at the commencement of his Summa: "Quia catholicæ veritatis doctor non solum provectos

Another merit which Albert's work possesses is its abundance of detail and copious matter. These two works, however, bear a common resemblance to each other in their rigorous orthodoxy. Both observe the scholastic method which rouses the imagination, lays bare and overthrows every difficulty; both, in short, were left unfinished by their illustrious authors.

We learn, then, from his biographers that Albert was still occupied in writing and correcting his principal work on the science of theology in his extreme old age (1275-78). This was moreover followed by a small ascetical work,<sup>1</sup> doubtless to relax the *debet instruere, sed ad eum pertinet etiam incipientes erudire,*" &c.

<sup>1</sup> An excellent little book similar to that which is known under the title of "*Paradisus Animæ; or, Enchiridion de virtutibus veris et perfectis.*" in Jammy, vol. xxi; re-edited in the year 1823, by the late Bishop Sailer, for the clergy of the Diocese of Ratisbon; Ratisb., Rotermond. No reference is made to the date when Albert wrote it. It is full of wise instructions on the true essence of particular virtues. "It is necessary to be enlightened on this point," says the author; "for as we cannot purchase anything with bad money, so it is impossible to gain heaven with the appearances of virtue." He adds in conclusion, with feelings of deep humility: "I acknowledge, O most Holy God, that I have not even begun to acquire one of these virtues which I am describing in all their perfection." Then he adds in behalf of the reader: "Grant O God, true and perfect virtue to those who shall read and meditate on these pages. I am persuaded that he who shall acquire one of these will receive all; that he who shall progress in one will advance in all; that he who shall flinch in one will retrograde in all, and that who is not possessed of one of them will be wanting in all, because all are bound up in grace. Amen."

fatigues of teaching, to edify his Brethren, and to prepare himself for his happy exit from this life. This opusculè exhibits the great man to us in all the beauty of his moral maturity, his perfect humility and generous renouncement of all that is earthly. According to the testimony of the biographers, this little book treats of the manner in which the soul should cleave to God,<sup>1</sup> and was the last work which Albert wrote. In the Introduction, he expresses himself thus on the substance and object of this delightful work: "Being moreover desirous to write something with a view to a happy end, so far as that is possible in this land of exile, we ask ourselves in what way ought man to rid himself of everything in order to attach himself to God alone, without obstacle and free from every fault. The end of Christian perfection is love, and it is through love that we become united to God. To attain salvation, all must tend to this union with God through charity, which manifests itself in the observance of the Commandments, and in the conformity of our will to that of the Most High, which excludes every act that is contrary to the essence of love, namely, mortal sin. Religious pledge themselves to strive after evangelical perfection and to observe its counsels as a means

<sup>1</sup> "De Adhærendo Deo," vol. xx., in Jammy. A free translation of it has been published by Casseder; Cologne, Heberle, 1851.

of enabling them more easily to arrive at their end, God. The observance of the evangelical counsels excludes all that would impede the desire of being entirely swallowed up in God. To this end therefore the renouncement of everything (the monastic vows excepted), body and soul, is necessary. As God is a Spirit, they who glory in being His servants must adore Him in spirit and in truth; that is, with knowledge, love, reason, affection, and detachment from every creature. This is what is implied in these words: "When you pray, enter into your closet, and having closed the door, pray to your heavenly Father in secret." That is, retire into the interior of your heart, close the door of the senses, and pour forth your supplications to your Father in spirit and in truth, with a pure heart, a tranquil confidence, and sincere faith. This can be only done when man, freed from all distracting thoughts, retires within himself, and excludes from his soul the recollection of every object; when in the presence of Jesus Christ, while the lips are silent, the soul confidently offers to God the object of its desires, and is thus completely absorbed, poured out, and dissolved<sup>1</sup> in Him."

<sup>1</sup> There is doubtless no need to remark that these expressions must not be taken in a pantheistical sense. Throughout the whole work there is question only of the unity of the will with God and not of the unity of substance.





Albert treats of this high perfection, this renouncement of every creature and the absorption of the soul in God, in sixteen chapters, with the method and charming simplicity of the ancient mystics. If we do not meet with the sombre or the bright imagery, the effusions of love which characterise the latter, it is because of the clear, precise, and vigorous style in which he expresses himself, which is doubtless the result of his scholastic studies.

He then goes on to show how the soul that aspires to the highest perfection should purify its will, its mind, and understanding from all that is not of God ; how it should be interiorly recollected ; how, in every event, it should refer all to God and look up to Him. "Nothing ought further to disturb thee, my soul, neither the world nor thy friends, neither happiness nor adversity, neither the present, nor the past, nor the future ; neither thyself nor thy fellow-creatures. Even thy faults should not afflict thee immoderately ; imagine, on the contrary, in the simplicity of thy heart, that thou art out of the world with God, that thou art already in eternity, separated from the body, and no longer disturbed by the things of earth. Seek rather to conform thyself entirely to God, to live only for Him and to be inviolably attached to Him."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chap. viii.



The author then speaks of contemplation as a most important practice. "There can be no kind of contemplation that is more useful, more perfect, and in which more sweetness is felt, than that of God Himself, the Creator, the true and only good, to Whom, in Whom, by Whom, and for Whom all things exist, Who is infinitely sufficient for Himself and for all others; Who unites in Himself entirely, and for all eternity, every perfection; in Whom nothing exists which is not Himself, Who is the cause of all transitory things, and the immutable principle of everything that changes; Who embraces in Himself all and each thing in particular; Who is more closely and intimately united to everything than it is to itself; in Whom all are united and live eternally."<sup>1</sup>

Such is the sublime object of this contemplation. But Albert allows weaker souls to look upon creatures in order to lift themselves up to the Creator, and to inflame them with love for Him. Yet progress in Divine knowledge and love should ever be the end of all meditation. "For," adds our author, "there is the contemplation of the Christian and that of the pagan philosopher. The philosopher meditates for his own interest; and observe why he employs his reason. His end is solely to acquire knowledge. The Christian, on the

<sup>1</sup> Chap. ix.

contrary, meditates through love for that which he contemplates, through love for God; thus he not only has a rational knowledge in view, but he passes from love to holy affections.”

Albert afterwards shows why sensible devotion is not so much to be desired as conformity to God's Will,<sup>1</sup> and why the latter is alone necessary. He, moreover, shows how one ought to act under temptations and interior trials. He then passes on to the necessity of prayer and its conditions. “Since of ourselves,” he says, “we are incapable of anything, and especially of good, and as we can only offer to God what already belongs to Him, we should always pray, as He has taught us with His own blessed lips and by His own example, like guilty persons, poor, infirm, without help—like children and those who mistrust themselves. We should lay open to Him, with humility, fear, and love, with true and sincere sorrow, with singleness of heart and entire confidence, the dangers that surround us on every side, so that we may repose and confide in Him to the end.”<sup>2</sup>

Examination of conscience, contempt of oneself and submission to Divine Providence are also excellent means for placing oneself unreservedly in God's hands, like the child that quietly trusts itself in its mother's arms. “Let us be comforted,” says

<sup>1</sup> Chap. x.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xii.

Albert; "we have the blessed assurance of the Apostle that our Lord knows His own, and it is impossible that any of them should be lost amid the trials, tempests, errors, tribulations, schisms, persecutions, discords, heresies, troubles, and temptations of hell; for the number of the elect, as also their merits, have been foreseen from all eternity, so that good and evil, happiness and adversity, shall aid their salvation. Moreover, suffering will but render them more glorious. Let us abandon ourselves, then, with full and entire confidence, to the merciful Providence of God."

Thus does Albert, after having disentangled himself from all creatures, point out to others in an easy and attractive manner, in this delightful book, the only path of perfection and salvation. This is a worthy crowning of his career as a writer!

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## WILL OF ALBERT.

ALBERT'S thoughts were ever fixed on the hour of his departure to his Lord, and, although still vigorous both in mind and body, he was desirous to make an early settlement of the possessions which the paternal hand of Providence had bestowed upon him. It was his wish that the choir of his conventual church, which he had himself begun, should be continued and finished after his death, and that his valuable collection of books, composed with so much labour, and at the cost of numberless sacrifices, should not be dispersed, but should, on the contrary, be turned to profitable account. He was, moreover, anxious to bequeath offerings to those monasteries which had particular claims on his munificence or which stood in need of alms. He therefore drew up a will, which was duly approved and attested by competent witnesses. The following is the tenor of this remarkable document,<sup>1</sup> which we reproduce in the Latin text from

<sup>1</sup> One of the numerous merits of Professor Schmeller, Bavarian Librarian, is that of having extracted from the treasures contained in the Library of Munich, till now unknown, this document, so full of special interest. He discovered it in the supplement of the work entitled "Summa Naturalium," attributed

Schmeller, a copy of which did not come to light until some years afterwards :—

“*Testamentum domini Alberti. Universis præsentibus has literas inspecturis: Frater Albertus, episcopus quondam Ratisponnensis, ordinis Fratrum Prædicatorum in Colonia salutem cum plenitudine caritatis. Cum sit omnibus manifestum et non possit in dubium aliquatenus devenire me posse in rebus temporalibus propria possidere ratione exemptionis ab Ordine et a summo Pontifice mihi factæ et pro voluntatis meæ arbitrio possessa prout mihi placuerit dispensare, cogitavi et statui de rebus meis vivens, sanus et incolumis ordinare, ne post mortem meam cujusquam auctoritate vel ordinatione ad usus alios transferantur, quam ad quos ego ipse concepi a multo tempore deputare.*

“*Quia igitur fratres domus Coloniensis apud quos mansi et docui pro majori tempore vitæ meæ*

to Albert (not in manuscript, but printed under the title of “*Biblia Pauperum*”), written by Pfister, a member of the Benedictine College of St. Ulrich at Augsburg, who copied it from the original at Cologne, as he himself affirms, “*Istam copiam rescripsi Coloniæ de littera originali de verbo ad verbum, nec addendo nec demendo, sub anno Domini MCDII. quart. Calend. Febr., quæ dies tunc fuit Dominica in Sexagesima.*” The original was never recovered at Cologne, notwithstanding the many researches made by M. de Bianco. Schmeller published his fortunate discovery to the Academy of Sciences at Munich, in a lecture given in 1850. (See “*Learned Notices,*” 1850, n. 5, p. 44.)

erga me promeruerunt beneficiis et obsequiis pluribus et diversis, ut ipsorum affectum pariter et officium merito prosequi debeam speciali gratia et favore, quapropter etiam apud ipsos eligo sepulturam, universa quæ habeo do et lego conventui memorato ipsa trifarie dividendo, scilicet libros meos universos librariæ communi, ornamenta mea omnia sacristiæ, aurum vero et argentum et gemmas quæ possunt in argentum commutari, ad perficiendum chorum domus ejusdem, quem ego de pecunia mea fundavi et a fundo erexi, nec volo quod ad usus alienos convertantur.

“Volo tamen quod tribus claustris sororum, videlicet ad Sanctum Marcum apud Erbipolim et ad Sanctam Catharinam in Augusta, et in Gamundia apud Ezelingam, nonaginta libræ hallensium de dictis bonis meis dentur : triginta cuilibet æqualiter dividendo. Si vero aliquis, quod absit, post mortem meam hanc ordinationem meam attentaverit immutari, maledictionem omnipotentis Dei se noverit incursum et mihi in die iudicii coram summo Iudice de violentia responsurum. Exsecutores autem testamenti mei ordino provincialem Teutoniæ, priorem Coloniensem, Fratrem Hainricum priorem Herbipolensem fratrem meum carnalem, Fratrem Godefridum physicum<sup>1</sup> et Fra-

<sup>1</sup> In the language of the Middle Ages, *Physicus* almost always signified physician. The knowledge of this art was not the

trem Godefridum de Duisburg,<sup>1</sup> ut omnia supradicta sicut eis confido fideliter et immutabiliter exsequantur. In cujus rei testimonium præsens scripsi, sigilli mei appositione una cum sigillo Prioris ibidem decrevi munimine roborandum, et ad majus firmamentum omnium prædictorum, sigilla duorum militum civium Coloniensium, videlicet domini Brunonis dicti Hartfust procuratoris Fratrum et domini Danielis dicti Judæi presentibus volui applicari, quos ambos etiam statuo executores præmissorum cum Fratribus supradictis. Actum anno Domini MCCLXXVIII. mense Januario."

This last act of the venerable Master exhibits him to us once more in all that strength of character, that precision both in word and deed which was so visible among the great men of that period, and especially in Albert. We can here admire his gratitude, that habitual virtue of the Saints, his spirit of sacrifice, and the renouncement of all that he possesses to consecrate it to God's glory, to the erection of a church and religious foundations.

He thus with full and perfect freedom disposes of all his earthly possessions, and can henceforth tranquilly await the hour of his deliverance.

privilege of any particular body at that period. In Paris, the practice of the medical art was generally entrusted to women.

<sup>1</sup> His Confessor, according to Prussia.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

CLOSE OF ALBERT'S TEACHING—HIS LAST DAYS AND  
HAPPY DEATH.

ALBERT viewed the Professor's Chair as the post assigned him by Providence to be the chief occupation of his life. In this conviction he continued to teach at Cologne until our Lord made known to him the near reward of his numerous and arduous labours. But the event which brought his glorious career to a close is variously related by the chroniclers. Contemporary authors content themselves with saying that the venerable Bishop's memory completely failed him two years before his death. In his history of the Church, Ptolemy of Lucca<sup>1</sup> states that, "after resigning his bishopric, Albert returned to his school at Cologne, where he resumed his lectures until his death, which embraced a period of nearly eighteen years. He attracted to that City a vast number of students, and there composed some of the above-named works.

"Finally, in the year of our Lord 1280, he slept the sleep of the just, being then more than eighty

<sup>1</sup> See Echard and Quetif, "Script. Ord. Præd." I. p. 169.

years old. And although for nearly three years before his decease he had lost the use of his memory, so necessary for the development of his doctrine—he who before, by a special favour from above, surpassed all his brethren in the professorship—his piety and his zeal for God never slackened and he ever performed with scrupulous precision all that his religious profession exacted of him.” Thus speaks Ptolemy of Lucca. Bernard Guidonis mentions in his history of the illustrious men of the Order that he died in the year of our Lord 1280; but makes no allusion to any special event before his death.

In the year 1413, Valeoletanus<sup>1</sup> wrote: “The blessed Father Albert, now bent with age, was one day delivering as usual his lecture to a numerous and illustrious audience in the Convent of Cologne, and while he painfully sought for proofs to establish his thesis his memory suddenly forsook him, to the great surprise of every one. After a brief silence he recovered from his embarrassment and expressed himself thus: ‘My friends, I am desirous to disclose to you the past and the present. When in my youth I devoted myself to study and distinguished myself therein, I chose for my inheritance, under the impulse of the Holy

<sup>1</sup>“Script. Ord. Dom.” I. p. 169. This legend is entitled in his Life of Albert the Great: “De Termino Alberti Magni.”

Spirit and the Blessed Mother of God, the Order of Friar-Preachers, and the Divine Mother encouraged me to apply myself unceasingly to study. This I have done through persevering efforts and with the help of prayer. What I could not gather from books I have ever obtained through prayer. But as I frequently with sighs and tears besought this sweet and compassionate Virgin, and on one occasion ardently importuned her to bestow upon me the light of eternal wisdom, and at the same time to strengthen my heart in faith that I might never be absorbed by the science of philosophy nor shaken in my belief, she appeared to me and comforted me with these words: 'Persevere, my son, in virtue and in works of study. God will guard thy knowledge and preserve it pure for the good of His Church. In order not to waver in thy faith, all thy knowledge and philosophical distinctions shall vanish at the close of thy life. Thou shalt become like a child in the innocence and simplicity of thy belief: after this thou shalt depart to God. And when thy memory shall one day fail thee in a public lecture it will be a sign of the approaching visitation of thy Judge.' My friends, what was then foretold is about to be accomplished. I know and recognise now that my time is spent and that the term of my life is at hand. I confess, then, in presence of you all that I firmly believe

every article of the Christian Faith, and I earnestly implore those whom it concerns to administer to me the Sacraments of the Church when it shall be fitting. If I have spoken or written anything whatsoever, or if in future I shall give utterance to anything, which is not in harmony with Catholic belief, let it be destroyed.' Having thus spoken, he ended for ever his teaching. He then descended from his chair bathed in tears, and, bidding an affectionate and tender farewell to his students, retired to the privacy of his humble cell."

Rodolph also avails himself of this account given by Valeoletanus, but adds something of his own besides. "Every philosophical principle," he says, "then escaped his recollection; and he remembered no more than the text of Holy Scripture and that of Aristotle." This legend has received a higher importance and still richer embellishment from the pen of Prussia. This author puts into Albert's mouth, on this occasion, the story, which is already known, of his supposed early incapacity for study and of the apparition of the Mother of God accompanied by two virgins.<sup>1</sup> We notice how he develops

<sup>1</sup> Already reproduced by us. On reading Prussia's Life of Albert a second time, we think we have discovered the meaning of the legend which speaks of the feebleness of Albert's intellect in his youth and of his attempt to escape. We refer our readers to the "Vitis Fratrum," in which it will be seen that he often related to his Brethren, as a subject of edification, the following story; "When I was Provincial of Germany,

and graces this legend, which is founded merely on the old tradition of the feebleness of the Master's memory during the last years of his life. Later biographers have for the most part contented themselves with a reproduction of the story given by Valeoletanus and Prussia. We cannot therefore be charged with a violation of the laws of history for adopting the opinion of the critic Echard, who was himself of the same Order as Albert.

“That a man of eighty-four years,” he says, “should be enfeebled, broken down by vigils, fasts, and constant application to study; that he should lose his memory and become again, if you will, a child, is neither surprising nor extraordinary: it is a condition inherent to human frailty, so that there is no need to have recourse to visions and miracles which Ptolemy of Lucca does not allude to.”<sup>1</sup>

All that is certain is that for nearly three years there was in a certain convent a novice who was very backward in age and knowledge, but who was not wanting in monastic fervour and other qualities not less precious. The Religious having on one occasion told him playfully that the Provincial would send him from the Order, he became exceedingly alarmed. Hearing at Mass on Christmas night those words of St. Ambrose: ‘Shall I behold Thee, my God? Shall I persevere? Shall I be saved?’ &c., he burst into tears, and began fervently to pray; then, applying this passage to himself, he said: ‘Lord Jesus, what thinkest Thou? Shall I behold Thee? Shall I be suffered to remain in this Order?’ And after he had repeated these words for some time, he heard a voice, which said: ‘Thou shalt behold Me and shalt persevere in the Order!’” (See Prussia's “*Vita Alberti*,” p. 234.)      <sup>1</sup> “*Script. Ord. Dom.*” I. p. 170.

before his death <sup>1</sup> the venerable Master so far lost the strength of his memory as to be incapacitated for his scholastic duties, either suddenly, through apoplexy, or by degrees. Aged people often lose the recollection of things which they have learnt in the course of their life through severe mental application, and preserve only the memories of childhood and the principal truths of salvation.<sup>2</sup> Albert likewise paid this tribute to poor human nature, and looked upon this defection of memory as an intimation from God to resign his chair of sacred science, which he had adorned for more than half a century.

He then lived only for God and his salvation, as we learn from the historians of Cologne, who say : “ When the holy Bishop knew through this incident that his pilgrimage was at an end, he withdrew his mind from all exterior things ; nor did he write or lecture any more ; but, separated from the earth and living only for God, he journeyed in thought and desire to his eternal home.”<sup>3</sup> He moreover ceased

<sup>1</sup> In the month of January 1278 he wrote his will, in which he speaks of himself as being physically and mentally well. He died in November 1280. The feebleness of memory ought not, then, to have shown itself till after the drawing up of the will.

<sup>2</sup> The great Newton, although he attained the summit of natural knowledge, forgot all his wonderful discoveries towards the end of his life. The same may be said of Kant.

<sup>3</sup> Rodolph. Prussia says : “ Venerabilis Pater Albertus, tali signo sui recessus certificatus, ex tunc nunquam aliquid scripsit; quasi puer innocens et columbinus inter fratres, quamdiu supervixit, conversatus est, orationibus continuis insistendo ” (p. 303).



all intercourse with persons who still dwelt amidst the tumult of the world, as the following fact abundantly shows. Some time after the event recorded above, Archbishop Sigfried came to the Dominican Convent to visit, as usual, his dear Albert, the friend of God and man, and knocking at the door of his cell, called out: 'Albert, are you there?' The venerable Master did not open the door, but merely answered: 'Albert is no longer here; he was here once upon a time.' The Archbishop, hearing these words, heaved a deep sigh and burst into tears. 'It is true,' he exclaimed to those who accompanied him. 'Albert was once here, but he is here no longer.' He meant to say that this renowned man, after spending himself on earth in teaching and preaching the Gospel, in writing and in the practice of the greatest austerities, now detaches himself from everything here below, and lives only as an inhabitant of heaven whose eyes are henceforth fixed on his everlasting home."<sup>1</sup>

What courageous abnegation of himself and of the things of this world! The great Archbishop of Cologne, the first Prince of the Empire, his Superior, his benefactor and friend, is refused the favour of seeing him. The venerable Master will no longer look upon anything but what is eternal!

From that moment the thought of death was

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.



ever present to his mind. He had always desired that his body might repose among his Brethren in the City of Cologne. He hoped on the day of the general resurrection to meet his Judge in company of all those Saints among whom so many thousand martyrs awaited the coming of their Lord; and therefore, like the early Saints, he chose his place of sepulture in the church of his Monastery. He daily visited his grave, and prayed for himself as for one who was already dead to the world. He also visited the altars and tombs of the Saints. He devoutly saluted them at a distance as fellow-citizens and friends of God, and besought them with tears in his eyes to help him by their charitable intercession.<sup>1</sup>

The great servant of God sighed thus after death until the solemn moment of his deliverance came, when, worn-out with age and work, he heard those cheering words from heaven, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Having devoutly received the Sacraments of the Church, surrounded by his weeping Brethren, and repeating with holy enthusiasm these words of the Psalmist, "We shall behold in the city of God what we have heard,"<sup>2</sup> he gave up his beautiful soul into the hands of Him Whom he had so faithfully served. It was on Friday, the 15th of November, 1280, in the

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

seventh year of the reign of King Rodolph of Hapsburg, in the sixty-fourth from the foundation of the Order, six years and four months after the death of St. Thomas of Aquin, that Albert the Great, that bright luminary of the Church, set.<sup>1</sup> He had attained his eighty-seventh year.

The body of the illustrious Dominican, clothed in pontifical robes, was placed in a sarcophagus of wood. All the Religious and Clergy of Cologne, Archbishop Sigfried, many of the nobility, and a vast crowd of people<sup>2</sup> accompanied the procession. The remains were deposited in the choir of the Conventual church, near the holy Cross, facing the high altar. This mournful ceremony took place in the midst of sorrow and general weeping, and was followed by a gorgeous funeral service.<sup>3</sup>

The Church of Ratisbon, of which the great Master had been Bishop, being desirous to possess the precious remains of its holy Pastor, immediately sent commissaries to Cologne to claim them,<sup>4</sup> but the Friars refused to part with their

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Prussia expresses himself thus: "Consummatis vitæ suæ annis octoginta septem, gloriosus senex in cella sua sedendo super sedile, circumstantibus eum fratribus ac orantibus ubertimque flentibus, in Coloniensi conventu feliciter in Domino obdormivit."

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph. Fleury, "Hist. Ecclés." livre lxxxvii. p. 303.

<sup>3</sup> Rodolph. An admonition given to all not to be ashamed of weeping over the tombs of great men. Does not Holy Scripture itself extol Moses, Joshua, Josias, and Judas Machabeus with lamentations of deep and bitter sorrow? <sup>4</sup> See Fleury, I. c.

treasure, and sent only a relic to Ratisbon (*exta*, the intestines), which were buried, it is said, behind the high altar.<sup>1</sup>

A magnificent marble slab was placed on the great Master's tomb in the Church at Cologne, bearing this inscription: "Anno Domini, MCCLXXX. xvii. Calend. Decembris, obiit venerabilis dominus Frater Albertus, quondam Eccles. Ratisponnensis episcopus, magister in theologia. Requiescat in pace. Amen."<sup>2</sup>

We have already stated in the foregoing pages that the central window in the choir of this church was enriched with portraits of Albert and of Archbishop Sigfried. To his tomb was added also a wooden slab, on which were engraved the following verses to his praise:—

Phœnix doctorum, paris expers, philosophorum  
 Princeps, verborum vas fundens dogma sacrorum,  
 Hic jacet Albertus, præclarus in orbe, disertus  
 Præ cunctis, certus assertor in arte repertus,  
 Major Platone, vix inferior Salomone,  
 Quem tu, Christe, bonæ sacrorum junge coronæ.  
 Annis bis denis minus actis mille tricennis  
 Christi nascentis de corpore exit habenis,  
 Quinta post festum Martini luce molestum

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph and Winheim, "Sacrarium Aggripense," p. 172; Bianco, "History of the University of Cologne," p. 34. The new buildings of the Cathedral were so far advanced that this interment could take place in the recently finished choir. The (provisional) consecration by Bishop Leo had already been performed in the year 1276 (Schuegraff, "History of Ratisbon Cathedral).

<sup>2</sup> Bianco, loco citato, p. 34.

Omne petendo Deum transivit, agens jubilæum.  
 Qui legit hos versus, mox ad tumulum retroversus  
 Inclinas dicat Collectam cum *Requiescat*.

It is thus that Albert happily closes his long and fruitful career. After spending eighty-seven years in this world, after edifying the Order of St. Dominic for nearly sixty years, and labouring therein with glory for more than half a century in teaching, as perhaps no other professor has ever done; after undertaking numberless journeys for God's honour, enduring untold fatigue and hard struggles, filling twenty-one folio volumes with the results of his laborious researches, his soul, like sweet and precious fruit, was received by the Lord of the harvest into the eternal granaries, while his body, which had never known repose or inactivity, was now laid to rest beneath the shadow of our Lord's Cross, in order that, thus placed among the martyrs, it might, on the day of resurrection, go forth with them to meet its Judge.

Albert thus closes the bright train of heroes of learning and sanctity which the thirteenth century gave to the Church—those great lights, St. Dominic, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Antony of Padua, St. Thomas of Aquin, St. Bonaventure, and St. Elizabeth of Hungary—whose sublime virtues claimed for them a renown such as the world had never before witnessed since the days of the Apostles and Martyrs.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

IN WHAT MANNER GOD GLORIFIED HIS SERVANT AFTER  
DEATH.

WE know not whether Albert during his earthly career was ever gifted by God with the power of working miracles.<sup>1</sup> These however were not needed to establish his high virtues.<sup>2</sup> Was he not throughout his whole life, in his intellectual development and wonderful aptitude for work, a prodigy himself. His erudition, his prolific genius as a writer in every branch of natural knowledge, his marvellous labours as a Professor, a Superior of the Order, and as a Bishop—his high moral perfection, his austerities, his humility, the simplicity of his faith, the generosity of his love for God and his neighbour—all these seem inexplicable by mere natural means. Was he not also esteemed among his contemporaries as a miracle of grace?

His success in the domain of science, his struggles

<sup>1</sup> His disciple Thomas of Cantimpré says: "Miraculis multis claruit," but does not specify any. (Prussia, p. 377.)

<sup>2</sup> Prussia and Rodolph refer to St. John the Baptist and St. Augustine, who performed no miracles. Prussia thinks that the cause may be attributed to negligence on the part of the Religious in making them known.

against all that is termed anti-Christian, the victories which he gained in the empire of souls for Divine truth and for God, are facts which cannot be explained but by a special share in heavenly favours. Once more, Albert had no need in his lifetime to work what we call miracles. But when once his soul was admitted into the mansions of bliss, our Lord showed to the world how pleasing to Him this instrument of grace was by striking wonders, a record of which is supplied us by historians. His omnipotent hand was pleased to guard in a marvellous manner the grave of His faithful servant. "Blessed Albert's body," Rodolph tells us, "was not laid in its final resting-place until the completion of the choir. This done, the remains of the venerable Bishop were deposited therein. On opening the tomb in which they were first placed, extended on the back, the body, with the pontifical robes in which it was clothed, was found in a state of perfect preservation and exhaling a delicious fragrance; but on this occasion it was turned facing the earth, the position in which the Blessed was wont to pray. It had assumed, then, the position that was natural and habitual to it." Such is the record given by Rodolph, on the testimony of the hermit Jerome of St. Paul, who assisted at the translation.

It is impossible to determine the precise date

when the tomb was opened. Rodolph is of opinion that it took place about three years after the Master's death. Valeoletanus<sup>1</sup> says, "a long time after the interment," so that Echard presumes that it did not occur until the fourteenth century. However this may be, we can gather from these statements some notion of the time it took to build the choir of the Dominican church, and of the elegance of the structure.

What is very remarkable in this translation, is that after so long a series of years the body, preserved from corruption, should still exhale such fragrant odour. The Religious poured forth their praise to God, and carefully replaced the sacred remains in the old coffin and deposited them in a newly made vault.<sup>2</sup> It was only, then, at this period that the stone vault was made in which the wooden coffin containing the holy relics was afterwards found. This translation contributed greatly to the exaltation of the servant of God; but even before this—that is, some time after his death—pious souls who were favoured with heavenly visions beheld the glory of Albert in the other life. Brother Gottfried of Douisburg, who was his Confessor and companion, prayed unceasingly for the venerable Father's repose. But one night, while he

<sup>1</sup> "Script. Ord. Dom." I. p. 170. Valeoletanus observes, c. ii. "Longo tempore post sepulturam facta est." <sup>2</sup> Rodolph.



remained in the church after Matins, Albert appeared to him, surrounded with marvellous light and clad in splendid pontifical robes. His head was surmounted by a mitre, on which sparkled a superb diamond, which lit up the whole sanctuary with its magical brightness. The good Friar, whom this apparition almost deprived of his senses, recognised Albert, and inquired of him what he wanted. "My son," said he, "the mind of man cannot comprehend the light and splendour with which the Lord in His mercy has been pleased to encompass me. This corporeal beauty gives but a faint and imperfect idea of it. The luminous rays which shed their abundance from this mitre on my brow, signify the ineffable glory which I possess. The precious stones which cover my robes are the books on Holy Scripture which I published, with God's grace, in defence of the Faith and to make the Divine Wisdom known. And because in my lifetime I drew many persons out of the darkness of ignorance to lead them to the light of truth and the knowledge of God, the Lord has accorded to my prayers the deliverance of six thousand souls from the flames of purgatory." With these words he disappeared. A woman from Vilsarbrück, who had faithfully served God until the eightieth year of her age, died at Treves.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prussia, p. 325.

Fifteen days after her death she appeared to her Confessor Theodorich, a Lector in the Order of Preachers at Treves, saluted him, and assured him of her happiness in the possession of God. The Friar having asked her if she knew Albert, who lately died in the Convent of Cologne, she replied: "I know him well." "Where is he?" interposed the Lector, and she answered: "He is far above us, in the enjoyment of unspeakable happiness."

A German Cistercian Abbess prayed with her Sisters for Albert at his death, forasmuch as his learning and counsels had frequently led them in the path of spiritual progress. Falling asleep for a short while one morning, she beheld him before the altar about to address the people; he stood without touching the ground. "Great God," she exclaimed with alarm, "Brother Albert will fall." But a personage who stood near observed, "Brother Albert need not fear, it is impossible that he should henceforth fall." Thus comforted, the pious Abbess heard his sermon, which opened with these words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." He followed the Gospel text until he came to the words: "Full of grace and truth," to which he added this reflection: "Such are the marvels which my eyes now behold."

Lastly, Blessed Mechtild of Helpede, a Cistercian

Nun who from her childhood vowed her virginity to God and was gifted with angelical innocence, relates in her "Little Treatise on Spiritual Grace"<sup>1</sup> that "she beheld the souls of Albert, of revered memory, and Brother Thomas of Aquin, of the Order of St. Dominic, enter heaven. She saw a throne on which was seated the King of the mansion of the Saints, and two venerable personages who advanced towards the King. On their robes were written, in letters of gold, words of marvellous brightness, and which exhaled a fragrant smell. Before them walked two Angels bearing candlesticks of ravishing beauty, and who tarried before Him Who sate upon the throne of majesty. It was then revealed to her that these two personages were no other than Albert and Thomas of Aquin. Being illumined here below by Divine knowledge and inflamed with the fire of spiritual love, both were presented by the two Angels to the King as participators of the gifts of the Cherubim and Seraphim. The bright letters of gold written on their garments represent their knowledge of the Divinity and Humanity of Jesus Christ, which they taught in their numerous works; therefore their souls are now in possession of happiness that has no equal. They are now become like the Saints, because they sought during

<sup>1</sup> A new edition of it, carefully revised, has been recently published at Ratisbon, G. J. Manz, 1857. There is no question of the apparition. Prussia relates it, p. 328.

their passing life to resemble them in everything by their virtues and knowledge.”

It was thus that holy souls revealed to the world after Albert's death the happiness with which God inebriated His servant. Without exaggerating the value of these visions, we must nevertheless observe that it would be wrong to completely throw them aside; for that period of living faith was much nearer to the world of spirits than our own, which is frozen by the icy breath of doubt, and which seems to have no understanding but for things that are sensible to the touch. If the feeblest being can communicate itself to us through the influence which it exercises over our organs, why should a like manifestation be impossible to spirits eminently superior, as, for example, the King and Creator of the world of spirits? Were all these visions but the reveries of a pious and contemplative imagination, they would still deserve to be known on account of their poetical value and the simplicity of their character.

For nearly two centuries after the first translation, the body of Albert remained in the choir of the Dominican church of Cologne, an object of deep veneration and of many holy pilgrimages. But when the University of Cologne, which grew chiefly out of Albert's school, rose to its highest point of splendour, the humble tomb of the great

Master of science no longer appeared to the students suitable for his relics. They were desirous to erect to the memory of this extraordinary genius a splendid mausoleum, seeing that many learned men of far less merit were honoured in like manner. Moved by the repeated importunities of this illustrious school, Sixtus IV. permitted the opening of the tomb, as well as the translation of the body, to take place, requesting Hermann, Archbishop of Cologne, not to impede the carrying out of so laudable an enterprise.<sup>1</sup> But as the General of the Dominicans, Salvius Casetta, was at Cologne at this period, the opening of the tomb was delayed until the 11th of January, 1482.<sup>2</sup> The Provincial

<sup>1</sup> See the Brief addressed by Pope Sixtus IV. to Hermann, Archbishop of Cologne, dated April 26th, 1483. It says: "Venerabili fratri Hermanno Archiepiscopo Coloniensi: Venerabilis Pater, salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Petit, ut nobis relatum est, dilectus filius Salvius Casetta Ord. Præd. Magister generalis, corpus bonæ memoriæ Alberti Magni Ratisponnensis Ep. ex humili, in quo jacet, loco elevari, eo consilio, ut honoratius illi sepulchrum concederetur, supplicante et insistente maximo studio universa Albertistarum Scola, quæ in illa Universitate maximæ est auctoritatis; quoniam indignum videtur memoriam tam illustris viri carere eo sepulcri honore, quo minoris meriti homines sæpe decorantur. Quare cum pro parte Scolæ prædictæ nobis de hoc fuerit vehementissime supplicatum, hortamur fraternitatem tuam, ut honoratissimum hujusmodi eorum desiderium non impedias, quo memoria tanti viri hoc genere ornamentum honestari possit. Datum Romæ anno Domini MCDLXXXIII. die vigesima sexta Aprilis, Pontificatus nostri anno duodecimo" (Bianco, p. 50).

<sup>2</sup> Prussia and Rodolph relate this occurrence as auricular witnesses; the latter especially gives the whole account in



of Germany, James Stubach, the Prior of the Convent of Cologne, James Sprenger, who was to direct the undertaking, the Rector of the University, Ulrich of Esslingen, the professors, doctors, and students were all present.

It was necessary to use strong efforts to remove the enormous stone that closed the entrance of the vault; but they at length discovered what they sought for. The stone sepulchre with the wooden coffin containing the sacred relics soon appeared. The latter were still adorned with episcopal robes. The mitre on the head was somewhat damaged; the right hand held the pastoral staff, the upper extremity, which was of lead and the lower part of wood, being likewise injured. A copper ring was found on the finger of the left hand, and sandals on the feet. If all these objects proved Albert's love for the virtue of holy poverty, evidences of his ardent devotion were by no means wanting. Round the neck of the body was suspended a small crucifix containing a particle of the holy Cross, a silk bag inclosed an *Agnus Dei* in wax, also a pfenning [a coin] which had been pierced with one of the sacred nails. The body itself had scarce undergone any change. A very small quantity of earth covered it. The lid of the wooden coffin had been his "Lib. Manuscrip." fol. "De Viris Illustr. Ord. Præd." The copy which we have made use of is in the archives of Ratisbon which relate to Albert.





destroyed by age and damp. The Religious having removed the earth without touching the body, found the head almost intact, the eyes still in their sockets, and the chin was covered with flesh and part of the beard. One ear could still be seen. The shoulders were entire, the members were coated with dried flesh, and the feet joined to the legs.

The bystanders were astonished to find that the body which had lain so long in the earth should still exhale a delightful fragrance. The right arm was detached and sent to Pope Sixtus ;<sup>1</sup> the other holy relics, with their primitive attire, were deposited in the new tomb, which was constructed in such a way as to be accessible to the veneration of the faithful.<sup>2</sup> We are unhappily not able to afford our readers a description of this new and remarkable monument, since it disappeared with so many others at the commencement of the present century. We may reasonably suppose, however, that it was constructed of stone above ground, and enriched with sculpture, and that the wooden coffin would be so arranged as to afford a sight of the relics.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Who presented it to the Friar-Preachers of the Convent of Bologna.

<sup>2</sup> The General of the Order granted a special permission to this effect (Bianco, p. 50).

<sup>3</sup> Prussia affirms four years after the translation: "Totum corpus superius indissolutum quoad ossa et indivisum usque hodie in eadem tumba jacet."



After this memorable translation vast numbers of the faithful visited the relics, and very many sick persons were cured of their maladies, among whom, according to Prussia,<sup>1</sup> a blind girl, a poor artisan of Cologne, suddenly recovered her sight at the tomb of the great Master, and was thus enabled to engage herself as an apprentice to a business.<sup>2</sup> A woman who was for many years confined to her couch through severe sufferings, was perfectly cured after making a vow to Albert. A man, who was completely deprived of the sense of smell, visited with many other pilgrims the tomb of the venerable servant of God. While he devoutly looked upon the holy relics, he perceived, to his great astonishment, the fragrant odour which exhaled from them. Another sufferer was cured of dysentery at Cologne; a Friar of the Order who was afflicted with such violent pains in the head

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 336-49.

<sup>2</sup> The miracles of Albert were sung by Prussia and Flaminius. The poem of the latter was published at Bologna in the year 1517. The following is from the pen of Prussia :—

“ Illuminans oculos, Pater,  
 Ægramque sanas feminam,  
 Confers odoratum tui  
 Corpusculi fieri redditus,  
 Prope integer divinitus,  
 Fluxumque sanguinis sistis  
 Sanum caput reddis, gravem  
 Paralysim solvis. Cum eo  
 Grati fideles prædicent  
 Cœleste bonum quodlibet ! ”

that he could neither sleep, nor assist at Choir, nor hear the shrillest sound, was also cured.

Such are, among a vast number of others, the marvels which the omnipotent hand of God wrought at the tomb of the great Doctor. Not content with preserving the body from corruption, our Lord was pleased to reveal to the world, through visions, the beatitude accorded to his soul, and vouchsafed that numerous bodily cures should be accomplished at the splendid mausoleum which the piety of the illustrious school at Cologne erected to his memory.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN WHAT MANNER MEN HAVE EXTOLLED THE MEMORY  
OF ALBERT.

WHILE the Almighty testified to the glory of His illustrious servant, men among whom he had lived, for whose health and instruction he wrought such wondrous things, were ever intent on extolling his name, his merits, and his memory. Every age, since his death to the present, has laid its fresh crown upon his tomb in token of its love and veneration for him. Public monuments were everywhere erected in the places which Albert had honoured with his presence; his relics, books, and manuscripts were eagerly sought after; his soul was glorified by songs, legends, histories, and public discourses. All these evidences show the high esteem in which the great Master was held in the Middle Ages, as a Professor, a Theologian, a Philosopher, a Naturalist, and, above all, as a model of Christian perfection.

There have been few men in history whose brows were encircled with a more brilliant aureola; few who have been better known or more applauded

in so many countries by the most learned and by those who were less polished in matters relating to religion. We shall enumerate in the first place the public monuments which testify to the remembrance which Albert left behind him.

We have already stated how the Dominicans of Cologne perpetuated his memory in their church, by the erection of a superb tomb, by an epitaph to his praise, and by magnificent paintings on glass. In the Convent attached to their church were also two cells that were formerly occupied by Master Albert and his beloved disciple Thomas of Aquin, and which were still to be seen at the commencement of this century.<sup>1</sup> These were afterwards converted by the two coadjutors of Walenburg into a chapel where the Divine Office was yearly celebrated. This cloister was privileged to possess, till a very late period, relics of Albert still more precious, because they were the relics of his beautiful mind, namely, the manuscript of his Commentary on St. Matthew and that of the Book on Animals. The latter disappeared in the ruins of the Convent at the time of its destruction, but the former was saved and preserved in the Archives of

<sup>1</sup> Bianco. A striking analogy with the benches and walks of Nymphæum, near Mieza, where Aristotle and his renowned disciple Alexander the Great walked and rested together. These benches and walks were for a long time the object of the traveller's curiosity.

the City of Cologne through the wise care of Professor Walraff.<sup>1</sup> It is a magnificent quarto volume, comprising two hundred and fifty-one pages, on the frontispiece of which the following words are written by an unknown hand: "Albertus Magnus hunc codicem proprio suo digito sive calamo conscripsit." Great care, exactitude, and neatness appear on every page of this manuscript. The second part appears to have been copied more rapidly.

The binding in parchment which covers this remarkable work is of great value, inasmuch as it bears on the outside the impress of a portrait of Albert slightly injured. He is there represented as a Bishop seated on a throne, the head inclined as if meditating on some scientific problem. The face wears an expression of seriousness very characteristic of him; it is somewhat broad, and is beardless. The nose is large, the lips contracted, the eyes full of fire and expression. One can, however, easily discover from the general execution, the ornamentation, and the folds of the drapery which adorn one corner of the book, that the binding as well as the portrait are not of Albert's time, but belong altogether to the fifteenth

<sup>1</sup> It is to the special courtesy of the Archivist, M. de Fuchs, and the Intendant of Justice, that we owe the privilege of having been able to examine, at Cologne, this interesting manuscript of Albert.

century. The extravagance which after - ages lavished upon this manuscript, out of respect for it, seems like a reward to the great Master's humility, who in his lifetime was averse to his books being covered with ornamental bindings.

There is also preserved at Cologne the famous cup, the supposed magical virtue of which we have already spoken of.<sup>1</sup>

It is remarkable also that the French nobility sought at the beginning of the present century to do honour to the glorious memory of Albert the Great. In the year 1811 the Rue de Stolk, where the illustrious Dominican once taught with such marvellous results, and where the Convent of the Friar-Preachers was built, was named after him. The principal monument in this street, Albert's creation, the beautiful choir of the Dominicans, with the whole church, was destroyed by the modern Vandals in the early part of this century, as were also eighty other edifices, churches or monasteries, in the City of Cologne. An artillery barracks now occupies the site of the old Convent of the Friar-Preachers. Even the very mausoleum in which the body of Albert

<sup>1</sup> It was formerly kept among the treasures of the Convent of Cologne. It afterwards came into the possession of Dr. Comes, at Cochem on the Moselle; and in 1847 was presented to the Museum of that City. It bears an inscription in these words: "Scyphus B. Alberti Magni Ord. Præd."

reposed did not escape the fury of the destroyers. When the sarcophagus was then opened, the sacred remains fell almost to dust; the robes and a portion of the pastoral staff alone remained entire. The relics were all conveyed to the Cathedral Church of St. Andrew. The bones, as well as the pieces of the pastoral staff that remained, were inclosed in a small wooden chest and suspended on the wall over the north door of the church.

On the lid of this strange reliquary is the figure of a Bishop with a book and pastoral staff. It is said to represent Blessed Albert.<sup>1</sup> As for the robes, they were preserved in the sacristy of the church, where they may still be seen. They consist of a chasuble, maniple, and stole, the material of which is velvet on rare silk and of violet colour.

The chasuble is of great weight, and is made in the antique shape of a mantle, with folds which cover the whole body. In front and behind is a pallium-shaped cross, made of cloth of gold and ornamented with red and green spots or stars.

The stole, a long narrow band descending to the extremity of the alb, is adorned with small figures of the Twelve Apostles. The maniple, which is

<sup>1</sup> The Acts of this translation are to be seen in the parochial Archives of St. Andrew's at Cologne. We are indebted to the kindness of the Parish Priest of St. Andrew's for the historical notices recorded here.



similar in shape, but much shorter, is worked with figures of holy virgins, and, at the extremities, with two Saints of the Order of St. Dominic.<sup>1</sup> This remarkable vestment furnishes us with information which is not without interest. Supposing it to be the one in which the mortal remains of Albert the Great were clothed when laid in the tomb in 1280, how substantial must have been the ancient materials out of which ecclesiastical robes were then made, seeing that this was proof against every cause of destruction, and is serviceable even to this day! The violet colour itself is not without its meaning. It would appear that at this period it was frequently used instead of black even in these countries.<sup>2</sup> Was it perhaps the custom to bury Priests in penitential colours?

Such are the precious souvenirs of Albert the Great, contained in the Albertine College, so long celebrated, and which are still preserved at Cologne.

Ratisbon, whose Episcopal See the illustrious Dominican once occupied, doubtless holds the second place among the German Cities which

<sup>1</sup> To say that a maniple dating from 1280 already bore the figures of two Saints of the Order of St. Dominic might create doubt in the minds of some people. Yet it is certain that such a maniple was, for four hundred years, buried in Albert's tomb.

<sup>2</sup> We read in W. Durand, "*Rational des divins offices*," livre iii. c. xviii., "*Violaceo colore uti in diebus quibus est usus nigri coloris non est inconveniens.*"

reckon him among their worthies. We have already observed that there is in this City a magnificent hall of the Middle Ages which bears the name of the Albertine School. It was in this square building attached to the old Convent of the Friar-Preachers, and from the beautiful Gothic chair still facing the entrance, that the powerful voice of the blessed Master resounded in the ears of his numerous disciples. It is true the ornamentation and carving of the hall and the choir<sup>1</sup> give evidence of a later period; still there can be little doubt that Albert gave his learned lectures there. A later Bishop of Ratisbon, Albert Ernst, Count of Wartenberg (born in 1636), who was a warm admirer of the virtues and stupendous knowledge of the Master, converted this hall into a chapel, without, however, altering its primitive arrangements.<sup>2</sup> He erected an altar (of pyramidal design), which still rests against the wall on the right-hand side of the entrance, and on which stands a silver bust of Albert holding in his hand a book and a serpent (the ancient symbol of logic). In the lower part of the bust an aperture is contrived, in which a large relic of him appears, with the following inscription:—

<sup>1</sup> On the outer part of the chair is a figure of St. Vincent Ferrer, and on each side of the door are those of Blessed Albert and St. Thomas of Aquin.

<sup>2</sup> See "Hist. of the Provostship of Heinspach," by Zierngibels.

“Reliquiæ sacræ scapulæ B. Alberti Magni<sup>1</sup> episcopi Ratisponnensis, Ord. Præd. meritissimi.” Another inscription is given in these words: “Scolam hanc B. Alberti Magni episcop. Ratisp. patroni diœcesis meritissimi, in quâ et D. Thomam discipulum habuit, suâ adhuc antiquitate venerabilem Albertus Ernestus episcop. Loadicensis administrator Ratisp. can. gen. et cap. imp. in sacellum et altari instructam ac insignibus ejusdem sancti reliquiis decoratam solemnî S. Rom. Eccl. ritu consecravît anno Dom. MDCXCIIII. die 18 Jul. Dom. sept. post Pentecost.”

This chapel was afterwards renovated, as the inscription over the entrance indicates: “B. Alberti M. O. Pr. episcop. Ratisp. scola consecr. MDCXCIII., renov. 1768.”

<sup>1</sup> A shoulder-bone which Bishop Albert obtained from the Convent of Cologne, as we have stated. Some important inscriptions and epitaphs are still to be seen in this hall. Thus on the right hand and on the left on entering are the figures of a Bishop, probably that of Albert (under which are the words, “Mirabilis est scientia sanctorum”), and of St. Thomas of Aquin, incrusted in the benches. We, moreover, find this singular epitaph engraved in gilt letters on a column: “Anno 14(09?) in oct. D. Barth. obiit venerab. P. Joh. Herold sacræ theologiæ lector et prior conventus Nuremb. Hic sepult. fuit doctissimus vir et sanctific. seipsum discipl. christiana, qui multa erudite scripsit. Cujus sepulchrum cum Suevi violare tentarent, sacro horrore percussi (?) recesserunt. Sub eodem tumulto requiescit Henricus Comes de Monte et Sausen quibusdam Suso dictus, qui obiit anno millesimo trecentesimo in die Thomæ ap. quem B. Henricus Suso, filius ejus, Ord. Præd. e purgat. flammis suis precibus in cœlum venire vidit.” Allusion, then, is here made to the father of the celebrated Henry Suso, Ord. Præd., a sufficient proof of the antiquity of the chapel.

When the revolution devastated these countries, the Convent and chapel of the Dominicans of Ratisbon were profaned. It was not till within recent years that this sanctuary was freed from the lumber which filled it, and restored to a holy use. It is here that students now receive religious instruction. And could there be a spot more suited for the moral training of youth than this ancient school, wherein the accents of the Master of sacred science once resounded? In the still existing church of the Dominicans, which, moreover, of itself sufficiently recalls the memory of Blessed Albert, are merely some modern pictures destitute of artistic value.<sup>1</sup> Many biographers contend that there is in this same church a stone pulpit from which Albert in former times preached the Word of God.

When Ratisbon, like many other German cities, yielded to the schism of the sixteenth century, this sanctuary fell into Protestant hands. But it is said that on the first occasion when the heretical minister ascended this pulpit he suddenly lost the power of speech, and did not recover it until another was erected by its side.<sup>2</sup> However this

<sup>1</sup> The statue placed near the doorway, and which is generally considered to be a representation of Albert, is doubtless no other than a statue of St. Dominic, which was later on absurdly crowned with an episcopal mitre.

<sup>2</sup> Thus speaks Jammy in his Preface to the complete works of Albert the Great.

may be, we have never been able to discover the smallest trace of this monument of the period in which the holy Bishop lived. Ratisbon, then, possesses nearly all the buildings consecrated to the memory of its glorious master and Bishop, Albert II.

Lauingen, the cradle of the great man, is not less faithful in preserving a remembrance of him. Not only does this town exhibit, in a corner of the Market Place, the house which was privileged to give him birth, but it also possesses a remarkable inscription relating to him whose brilliant reputation has made the name of Lauingen known throughout the universe. In the same Market Place is still to be seen a tower which we have before alluded to, and which was built from the year 1457 to 1478, with a view to protect the inhabitants from being attacked by their enemies. This tower is square, of elegant gothic structure, the upper part being octagonal, and surrounded by a graceful cupola. Although specially intended for an observatory, it is also made to do honour to illustrious personages and to the *fêtes* of Lauingen. At its base are two painted figures of natural height, one of which represents Albert the Great in pontifical attire, and the other the benefactress of Lauingen, Gisel de Schwabek.<sup>1</sup> Under the

<sup>1</sup> See in reference to this the *Legendary of Mittermayer*.

picture of Albert is the inscription: "Albert the Great, illustrious by his science, was born at Lauingen in the year 1193. He was a Bishop, and lived eighty-seven years." The following is the tenor of another inscription carved under the picture of Albert:—

Albertus Magnus civis clarissimus olim  
 Lauingæ doctor magnus præsulque sacrorum  
 Inclytus, omnigenæ scriptor celeberrimus artis,  
 Sic oculos, sic ora senex vultumque gerebat.

Above the two figures is a representation of the white horse of Lauingen, which, it is said, lived in the town in Albert's time. It is doubtless a symbol of his intellectual greatness. An inscription in these words is engraved above it:—

Miræ molis equus, velox et saltibus aptus,  
 Prælongus ter quinque pedes et corpore magnus,  
 Nascitur Alberti Lauingæ sub lare magni.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately these paintings do not date further back than the years 1685 or 1782, the period when the tower was restored. The inscriptions profess an exact resemblance with the originals; this, however, cannot be supposed, for Albert's figure is bearded, is exceedingly common, and devoid of expression. The head is sur-

<sup>1</sup> There is an old popular tradition that this animal would never allow itself to be led by any one but little Albert, who already, then, in his childhood showed the marvellous power which he would one day exercise over nature. We also find other stories about this white horse in the legendary of Lauingen. Raiser speaks at greater length of these inscriptions in his "History of the Town of Lauingen," 1822, p. 79.

mounted by a ridiculously tall mitre, such as appear in the paintings of Bishops of that period. The inhabitants of Lauingen honoured the memory of Blessed Albert by dedicating to him the second altar of their beautiful church, and enriching it with several relics of the Saint.

Nor was Bavaria behindhand in her praises of the great Master. The Walhalla, near Ratisbon, exhibits with pride, among the paintings of her worthies, an inscription commemorative of Albert in these words: "Albert the Great, Bishop of Ratisbon, born in 1205, died in 1280." To the provinces beyond the Rhine which have done honour to the great Professor of Philosophy and Theology may be added Italy, the theatre of his secondary education, of his religious vocation, and his brilliant struggles with and triumphs over the adversaries of the Religious Orders.

Padua, where he received his higher education, shows his bust in the Prato della Balle, where she honours those who have cultivated science with marked success within her walls. His statue is also seen in the Choir of the Cathedral of Orvieto.<sup>1</sup>

We moreover meet with traces of his memory in different parts of the Peninsula, where the

<sup>1</sup> See the "Christlich. Kirchenbau," by Kreuzer, p. 379. In "La Storia del duomo di Orvieto," p. 106, he is called, "Alberto cognominato il magno Vescovo di Ratisbona."



great geniuses of the Catholic world or the illustrious men of the Order of St. Dominic are grouped together. Thus, in the cloister of the Convent of St. Mark at Florence, where the famous Dominican artist, Giovanni da Fiesole (born in 1387, died in 1455), has painted in beautiful frescos the portraits of all the celebrities of the Order of Friar-Preachers,<sup>1</sup> near the Cross of Our Lord, by the side of Pope Innocent V., Cardinal Hugo, St. Antonius, Blessed Jordan of Saxony, St. Raymund of Pennafort, St. Vincent Ferrer, and many others, appears also Albertus Magnus de Alemania,<sup>2</sup> as a venerable old man, clad in pontifical robes, full of solemnity and beauty. It is an admirable painting, which shines like a star of the first magnitude in the bright firmament of Dominican portraits. Pictures of the great Master are still to be met with in many other parts of Italy.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For an account of these paintings by Fra Angelico da Fiesole, consult the remarkable work, "San Marco convento dei Padri Predicatori in Firenze illustrato et inciso principalmente nei dipinti del B. Giovanni Angelico, colla vita dello stesso pittore e un sunto storico del convento medesimo di P. Vincenzo Marchese, Domenicano," Fir. 1845, two volumes.

<sup>2</sup> We have selected the portrait of Blessed Albert which serves as a frontispiece to this work, as being the oldest, truest, and doubtless also the most expressive of all his portraits. We obtained a copy of the original painting of the Convent of Florence.

<sup>3</sup> It is met with in copperplate in Bullartius, Raderus, Jammy, and in the "Enchyridion," of the Master, edited by

But it is not only in the language of painting that the world has paid its tribute of admiration to Albert. Poetry, eloquence, and history have rivalled each other, in every age, in honouring his tomb with most delicate praise. We shall instance only the most important of these testimonies.

Let us first hear the Prince of Christian Poetry, Dante. He has not forgotten Albert in that immortal work of his which gathers up all the general knowledge of his epoch, and which might justly be styled the prelude to the great judgment. In the tenth canto of the "Paradise,"<sup>1</sup> the poet passes in review all the great Doctors of the Church, when, in his ascent, he reaches the sun. There, in the name of all, Thomas of Aquin addresses him thus: "I was a sheep of the sacred flock which Dominic leads through pastures fair, wherein he who turns not aside finds abundant food. He who stands on my right hand nearest me was my Brother and master, he is Albert of Cologne, and I am Thomas of Aquin." It certainly is glorious for Albert to find himself in such company and in such an abode!

the venerable Bishop Sailer. Though called "Veræ effigies," these portraits bear no resemblance to Albert. They are simply pictures of monks of the seventeenth century, destitute of life and expression.

<sup>1</sup> Verses 94-100. (See the learned translation and commentaries on Dante, by Philalethus, VIII. p. 127.) One can even find in this author an abridgment of the life of Albert and a frequent use of his doctrines.

Later, a confrere of Albert clothes his whole life and works in poetic garb. It is the "Legenda Metrica B. Alberti," which James of Baden published in hexameter verse.<sup>1</sup>

The miracles were sung by Friars Prussia and Flaminius, as we have elsewhere observed.

Later still, the name of the great man was extolled in epigram and poetry of different sorts. Cardinal Bembo, known for his little attraction for the scholastic, says of Albert :—

Naturæ si quid te rerum forte latetat :  
Hoc legis in magno, Teutone magne, Deo.

Janus Vitalis<sup>2</sup> eulogises him in these terms :—

Natura has violas, ratio hæc tibi lilia passim  
Ad tumulum spargunt, Teutone magne, tuum :  
Purpureis quorum tribulos avellis ab hortis ;  
Et pulchris violis lilia mista seris ;  
Aviaque abstrusa pandis penetralia causa ;  
Vere igitur Magni nomine dignus eras.

Ferdinand Palamius :—

Magna parens altrixque virum Germania, alumni  
Incedis merito laude superba tui.  
Naturæ ac rerum vires, causasque latentes  
Hoc nemo nobis doctius explicuit.  
Magnus ob egregias fœcundi pectoris artes  
Dictus es : at Christi nunc ope major eris.

Antoninus Flaminius :—

Qui docuit rerum Albertus cognoscere causas,  
Non rerum oblitus jam jacet in tumulto :

<sup>1</sup> Appendix to the "Legenda Alberti," written in prose, by Rodolph of Nimeguen, and published at Cologne in 1490. Royal and National Library of Munich.

<sup>2</sup> This quotation is taken from Bianco.

Sed cœlo meliore sui cum parte receptus,  
Nunc gaudet melius discere, quam docuit.

John Latomus :—

Quantum erat, hoc quondam cognomen, Magne, tulisse,  
Quum solide doctus nullus in orbe foret !  
Esto : vetustatis factum laudatque probatque,  
Et tibi posteritas sancit habetque ratum.

Henry Bebel joins the panegyrists of the great man in these verses :—

Cedite, philosophi, quos Græcia jactat alumnos,  
Extulit et si quos Itala terra suos.  
Quos longe Albertus vicit tam nomine claro,  
Gloria Suevorum Teutonicique soli  
Par decus ingenii : nec fas sperare nepotes :  
Hic novit, quidquid tota Sophia docet.

Jerome Treuteler paints the marvellous appearance of such a luminary amidst the supposed darkness of the Middle Ages :—

Magnus eras, quamquam te barbara sæcla tulerunt :<sup>1</sup>  
Attamen ingenio divite magnus eras.  
Celsa nec est varias famam quæsisse per artes :  
Pluribus hoc vitii quando cuculla parit !

Ortwinus Gratius, a Professor of Cologne, who published, in 1508, a discourse in praise of philosophy, also extols Albert in a piece of greater length, and composed in a thoroughly antique style. He expresses himself thus :—

Græcia quid jactas Socratem, divumque Platonem,<sup>2</sup>  
Quid vel Aristotelem, Thespiadumque choros ?  
Palladiosve viros omnes, turbamque sophorum  
Et veterum quosvis fama senilis habet.

<sup>1</sup> "Epigrammatography" of Hübsch, second part, p. 21.  
Reusner, "Icon." ed. Basil, tom. ii., in Bianco, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Bianco, p. 38.

Romæ potens quondam vasti decus et caput orbis,  
 (Ebalium quid tu fers super astra Numam ?  
 Quid Lepidum, geminos quid tu venerare Catones,  
 Aulum, Scipiadas, Fabriciumque gravem ?  
 Illustrem Syllam, fortem quid tollis Iulum,  
 Et capitulos laudibus usque patres ?  
 Discite certatim dignis extollere divum  
 Laudibus Albertum, Pontificemque pium.  
 Umbram illi Sophiæ solum, non mystica norunt,  
 Non arcana Dei, cœlicolasque Deos.  
 Contra hic doctrinâ præsul consultus in omni  
 Et scripturarum frugifer auctor erat.  
 Aera, Vulcanum, mare, cœlum, sidera, terram,  
 Novit, et immenso quod tenet orbis agro.  
 Elysiis alii (si dignum est) vallibus errant,  
 Noster Olympiaco regnet in orbe pater.  
 Quin vos nunc superat hic philosophotatos omnes,  
 Qui Polyphemus erat, Christicolûmque caput.  
 Huic Eoa domus, huic serviat ultima Thule,  
 Et tota pergat posteritate frui.  
 Hunc celebrent Latii, meritosque adjungat honores  
 Hellas, et hunc orbis totus ad astra vehat.

Lastly, Raderus, in his "Bavaria Sacra," I. p. 281, says :—

Quod tibi, magne Pater, natura noverca negarat,  
 Mater cœlestis præstitit ingenium.  
 An sua noluerit prodi miracula mundus,  
 Nescio, Magne ; tibi prodita euncta scio.  
 Præsea Stagira suum tot ab annis jactet alumnum.  
 Non canat Albertum Norica terra suum :  
 Illius doctas mirentur sæcula chartas,  
 Miror ego solvas post tria sæcla manus.

Janmy appends to the first volume of the collection of Albert's works a Latin poem, whose exuberant praise is showered upon master and disciple. Encomiums on the great Doctor equally resound throughout Italy, Germany, and France.

But how shall we weave a crown of all the opinions passed upon his merits, in every branch of human learning, by the greatest savants, the most competent and distinguished writers? All are at one in their sentiments of admiration and praise. We will instance the most illustrious of these, beginning with the opinion of Pope Pius II. recorded by ancient biographers. Observe how this Pontiff expresses himself in a letter: "Dominic, a native of Spain, shed new light over the terrestrial globe. Among his disciples were many who achieved wonderful success in preaching the Gospel. Others were distinguished by their learning, like Albert the Great, to whom, it is thought, no branch of human science was unknown."<sup>1</sup> We have frequently before stated what his own disciples thought of him. Thomas of Cantimpré, whose acquaintance we have already made, says: "Albert surpassed all others by his learning." Ulrich Engelbecht of Strasburg,<sup>2</sup> observes: "My

<sup>1</sup> Rodolph, and Prussia, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> See "Scriptores Ord. Præd." I. p. 107. He speak of him in the book entitled, "De Summo Bono," lib. iv. tract. iii. cap. 9: De Subst. Spiritualib. de modo apparitionis Angelorum. He says in the latter treatise: "Aliter ab omnibus præmissis sentit doctor meus dominus Albertus, episcopus quondam Ratisponnensis, vir in omni scientia adeo divinus, ut nostri temporis stupor et miraculum congrue vocare possit, et in magicis expertus, ex quibus multum dependet hujus materiæ scientia." What is here called a knowledge of magic would doubtless be termed in our day natural mysticism and not witchcraft.

master Albert was so learned in every science that he might justly be styled the wonder of our age. He was not less versed in magic.”

The illustrious Sixtus of Siena (born in 1520), himself a religious preacher, did not hesitate to rank him among the most distinguished exegetes. “Albert,” he says, “was a man of extraordinary learning. There was little in sacred science that was unknown to him; as for human knowledge, he was perhaps acquainted with everything. By his almost incredible quickness of perception and extent of memory, he ranked the first among the theologians and philosophers whom Germany produced either before or after him. He obtained on account of the vast extent and refinement of his knowledge the surname of Great, an honour that was never accorded to any man of learning since the world began.<sup>1</sup> Along with Pope Alexander IV., Urban IV., Clement V., Gregory X., Innocent V., Adrian V., John XXI., and Nicholas III.,<sup>2</sup> St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, styles him a man who illuminated the world by the holiness of his life, and the reputation of his learning.”

If we consult historians, we find the same unanimous praise accorded him. “After Blessed

<sup>1</sup> “Bibliothèque Sanct,” livre iv. Echard, “Script. Ord. Dom.” I. p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolph.



Albert," observes Trithemius, "we have not seen a man who could equal him, who was so skilled in every science, so learned in art, and who was acquainted with everything in the same degree."<sup>1</sup>

We meet with this well-known eulogy in the Belgian Chronicle: "Albert was great in magic, greater in philosophy, and greatest in theology."

The Bavarian historian Aventine<sup>2</sup> compares him with Varron, and extols his learning and linguistical knowledge. "Albert," he says, "was greater than Varron, for nothing was strange to him. He knew everything to perfection, and we know of no more fruitful interpreter of nature after Aristotle. Read his works on dialectics, mathematics, physics, ethics, metaphysics, and theology; peruse even—why not say it?—his work on magic, so remarkable and accurate. One would suppose that he was never attached to more than one only object. He was not less acquainted with the doctrines of Plato, Epicurus, Pythagorus, and other philosophers, than with those of Aristotle. He was the first Latin who sifted out what was good in the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Arabian, and Egyptian

<sup>1</sup> "Script. Eccles." p. 195, ed. Col. 1546.

<sup>2</sup> Fifth Book of the "Annals of Bavaria." All who wrote at this period about Albert for the most part knew him only from hearsay. Modern writers alone have made an effort to arrive at the truth of facts. Ritter, Humboldt, Jourdain, Neander, and Frederic de Mayer read the works of Albert.



philosophers. He was the first among the Latins who wrote commentaries on the works of Aristotle, Euclid, Peter Lombard, and others. He was, in short, the eloquent man of his age, and is still the most learned of our own.”

Hochwart of Ratisbon says in the third book of his chronicle: “Albert II. of Lauingen, surnamed the Great, not on account of his stature, but because of the evidences which he gave of his erudition and most varied knowledge.”<sup>1</sup>

The Priest Andrew, in his chronicle of the Bishops of Ratisbon, says: “Albert the Great, Lector of the Order of Friar-Preachers at Cologne, was a man of truly stupendous learning, as his writings testify.”

The historians of Cologne especially are indefatigable in publishing the glory of their illustrious townsman. Let the above-named Ortwin speak in the name of all, who in a pompous panegyric, expresses himself in the following terms: “Above all the geniuses who have cultivated philosophical science, appears the venerable Albert the Great, who combined in himself the wisdom of Socrates with the exuberance of Plato, the originality of Aristotle, the depth of Pythagoras, the charms of Isocrates, the suavity of Theophrastus, the energy of Demosthenes, and the eloquence of Cicero. He

<sup>1</sup> See “Æf.” I. p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. I. 36.



equalled all others in merit, and won heaven by the eminent holiness of his life. There is no spot between the seas, however distant or unknown, but rejoices in his science and elevates him to the sky by its constant applause. . . . Reading his numerous works shows us, with the clearness of noonday, that no true science failed him; for he was not only skilled in grammatical science and rhetoric, but he also dipped into dialectics, music, geometry, and thoroughly mastered the whole system of philosophy."

If the old authors are agreed among themselves that Albert merits the surname of Great, which his contemporaries already bestowed upon him, modern men of learning do not yield to them in their appreciation and admiration. We shall say nothing of the exalted opinions of Johann von Müller, Mentzell,<sup>1</sup> Wachler,<sup>2</sup> or Grösses,<sup>3</sup> because their knowledge of the productions of the great thinker is not based upon their own personal studies, and who, consequently, often express incorrect views respecting them. The same may be said of Buhl, Rixner and Hegel. But as for the important testimony of Jourdain, that able connoisseur of the

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Germans," third edition, Stuttgart, 1837, p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> "Literary History."

<sup>3</sup> "Manual of the Literary History of all the Peoples of the World," II. 2, i. p. 244.

philosophy of the Middle Ages,<sup>1</sup> of Henry Ritter, and Alexander von Humboldt, the illustrious interpreter and historian, they must have a hearing.

“As a theologian and philosopher,” says the first, “Albert was the most extraordinary man of his age, and perhaps of all antecedent time.”

Ritter, who in his “History of Philosophy” shows the Scholastic the esteem and consideration which are his due, who has striven to initiate himself into the labours and mind of that famous school,<sup>2</sup> and who for this reason studied many of Albert’s works,<sup>3</sup> bestows upon the great man his tribute of praise and admiration. He says: “An ardour like that of Albert’s was needed to penetrate the formidable labyrinth of the Aristotelian writings, in order to master the doctrines of the old Philosopher which were multiplied at that period, and to become acquainted with all the philosophy of former times, without getting bewildered by this compact mass

<sup>1</sup> “History of the Writings of Aristotle in the Middle Ages.” Trad. Alein. de Stor. Heidelberg, 1831, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> We have only to regret in Ritter the absence of Catholic theology, without which, it must be owned, it is next to impossible to thoroughly understand the Scholastic.

<sup>3</sup> He read the “Summa Theologica,” the “Summa de Creaturis,” the “Philosophia Pauperum” (?), as also other treatises of less importance, as those of “De Natura et Origine Animæ,” “De Unitate Intellectus contra Averroem,” “De Intellectu et Intelligibile,” “De Causa et Processu Universitatis.” (See Ritter’s “History of Philosophy,” part viii. pp. 184–250; Hamburg, 1845.)

of tradition. The expositions which he added to the Sentences of Peter Lombard, his "Summa Theologica," and pious writings might appear incompatible with this immense undertaking, but they are only a stronger proof of his ability to unravel the intricacies of the old philosophy without being ensnared by it. It was not a question of learning and appreciating Aristotle's Philosophy, but the most difficult part was to bring it within the range of the received ideas of Western Christendom. Albert the Great did this. The Aristotelian Philosophy was nothing strange to him; he knew what could be retained of it and what must be rejected. He dealt in like manner with the Arabian Peripatetics and Plato. He fulfilled, we must own, a task that would require a lifetime to accomplish. The whole of the later philosophy of the Middle Ages rests on his success." Ritter then adds: "We recognise in him a man who, by his application and perseverance in the labour of research, claims for the period in which he lived a distinguished rank in the history of natural science. Let us add to this that he did not neglect his labours on dialectics or his system of theology, and we shall then be able to appreciate the magnificent genius with which Divine Providence endowed him. Thomas of Aquin and Duns Scotus have put his system of theology into the shade; Roger Bacon has, perhaps, surpassed him by

the subtlety of his researches into nature by means of mathematics ; but all have utilised his labours, and not one of them has been able like himself to unite both sides of this laborious task.”

Alexander von Humboldt, that prince of modern natural-science, who frequently meets in his inquiries the imposing figure of Albert, also bestows upon his memory words of recognition and admiration. He observes, in that remarkable work of his on the “Historical Development of the Geographical Knowledge of the New World :”<sup>1</sup> “Albert, by his zeal in making Aristotle’s works better known, which began gradually to spread in Spain, under the influence of the Arabs and the Arabian Rabbins, was to Christian Europe what Avicenna had been to the East. His divers treatises are more than simple paraphrases of the works of Aristotle. The work already alluded to: ‘Liber Geographicus de Natura Locorum,’ is an abridgment of the physical knowledge of the earth in which the author cleverly develops how the difference of latitude and the superficial structure of the earth cause the difference of climate.” Humboldt adds in a note: “Albert’s remarks and conclusions on the heat, more or less great, which is estimated by the angle of incidence, the variations with the degrees of latitude and the seasons, cold and heat, the agitations of mountains, are

<sup>1</sup> German translation by Ideler, vol. i. p. 66 ; Berlin, 1852.

admirable beyond expression for the period in which this man, so celebrated for his universal knowledge, lived."

Jourdain is not less flattering in his remarks about the great Master.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, we cannot dispense ourselves from mentioning once more a spiritual panegyrist of Albert of modern times. This is Doctor Erdmann, a Professor at Halle. Having called attention to his high worth in philosophical matters, in a brilliant discourse<sup>2</sup> which he gave, he proclaims him, with Paracelsus and Jacob Boehm, the chief model of German Philosophy. After some keen remarks, he says: "Albert the Great was the Godfrey de Bouillon in the crusade of ideas. He was the channel through which the flower of ancient philosophy, namely, the doctrines of Aristotle, and the Alexandrian Philosophy, born of Judaism after its contact with Greek ideas, made their appearance in the Middle Ages. These two doctrines, driven forth from the Catholic world, met with protection, translators, and commentators among the Arabs. Translated from the Arabic into Latin by Jewish physicians, these writings, with the Musselman commentaries, fell into Albert's

<sup>1</sup> See Linnæa de Schlechtendal, vol. x. p. 659, and vol. xi. p. 547.

<sup>2</sup> Ueber die Stellung, "Deutscher Philosophen zum Leben" (Berlin, 1850, W. Herz).



hands. A convincing proof of the attention with which he studied them is the twenty-one folios which are in great part taken up with the defence and exposition of their doctrines. What an admirable sight to witness the great Doctor of the Church seated at the feet of the pagan Aristotle as a disciple, who (as if the Philosopher of Stagira was not unchristian enough) causes him to be commented on by infidels, interpreted by Jews, and afterwards brings forth himself with like reverence quotations from Scripture, maxims of Aristotle, opinions of the Fathers of the Church, of Avicenna, and the Israelite David, in order to give a more solid basis to the truth of Christian doctrine. A wonderful thing, yet conceivable, for it was fitting that the whole sphere of anti-Christian ideas should be made subservient to the spirit of Jesus Christ. Let us understand, then, the persevering endeavours of the Scholastic to mould the Greek Philosophy, namely, that of Aristotle, with the doctrines of the Church, and we shall be obliged to look upon Albert (whose works have left scarce anything to be done by his successors) as its most illustrious representative. The same may be said of his method of treating philosophical questions, as, for example, the astounding subtlety with which he analyses his conceptions; none who have come after him have surpassed him so much as he outshone his predecessors.

Finally, the employment of a severe terminology, for the most part Aristotelian, often indifferently translated into German, and which is still indispensable to philosophy beyond the Rhine, dates from the Scholastic and his illustrious ancestor. Most of the scientific terms used in philosophy, and which appear in Kant and his successors, are to be found in the writings of Albert the Great.”<sup>1</sup>

Every age, then, as we have seen, has laid its crown of praise and admiration on the tomb of our Master. Men of every tongue, of every condition and belief, have not refused him their tribute of homage. All are agreed that the surname *Great* was justly bestowed upon him, and that he was the prodigy of his age.

<sup>1</sup> These splendid eulogies bestowed upon Albert by Erdmann are of no great value, for he clearly knows little of his hero. All that he tells us respecting his life is incorrect or has been inferred from caprice. When he affirms that the twenty-one folio volumes are chiefly taken up with the defence of the Aristotelico-Arabian Philosophy, we clearly perceive that he has seen no more of them than the binding; had he looked into them he would have found that only six volumes are devoted to philosophy, and that the others treat of theological and ascetical subjects.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

ON THE VENERATION WITH WHICH THE CHURCH HAS  
SURROUNDED ALBERT.

To the sublime praise which the world showered in such profusion on the illustrious son of St. Dominic was added a recognition of a still more noble kind, we mean the sanction of his admirable virtues by the mouth of holy Church. While men admired only his natural talents, his human greatness, and the conquests gained by him in the domain of science by the laborious employment of natural faculties, the Church, on the other hand, was concerned only with the exaltation of his individuality through the lights of grace, resulting from the simultaneous concurrence of human liberty and the love of God. While the world looked on in wonder at the vast extent and depth of his knowledge, the Church passed judgment on the perfection of his will, his vigorous perseverance in serving his God to the end, and the transcendent holiness of his life. From Albert's death, the belief in his glory in heaven was universally established in the places which he had honoured with his presence. Devotion to him was successively

developed. Some of the faithful began at first to invoke him in their needs or to piously visit his tomb. Fifty years after his death, the question of his canonisation was already mooted.

If Rodolph<sup>1</sup> is to be relied on, it would appear that Pope John XXII., that great friend of science, ordered in 1334 the proceedings relating to the canonisation to be begun. However, for reasons unknown to us, the process did not follow at that period.

Meanwhile, devotion to Blessed Albert daily increased among the people of Cologne. The Dominicans then saw themselves under the necessity of opening the tomb. Having attested many cures obtained through contact with the sacred relics, they published, with the sanction of Pope Innocent VIII., an Office in honour of the blessed Master.<sup>2</sup> They, moreover, erected to him an altar, and celebrated the anniversary of his death with great pomp in the Convents of Ratisbon and Cologne.

<sup>1</sup> Prussia merely says: "Cum beatus Thomas, ejus discipulus, sanctorum adscriberetur catalogo, de Alberti etiam canonizatione, ut aiunt, tractabatur; licet propter negligentiam fratrum qui causam non agitabant, prosecutione careret" ("Vit. Alb." p. 220).

<sup>2</sup> It was Peter of Prussia who, in 1487, composed the whole of the history intended to be sung in the choir, as well as the antiphons, responses, lessons, hymns, and the Mass with its sequences. The original Acts concerning what has been said or may hereafter be said are still at Ratisbon.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century a Bishop and Bavarian Prince, who, besides bearing the name of Albert, bore also great veneration towards the servant of God, took the matter in hand, pending the beatification, with all the zeal and perseverance imaginable. This was Albert IV., Count of Torringen and Bishop of Ratisbon (+1649). He first satisfied himself as to how the Feast was celebrated at Cologne. Two years afterwards he importuned the Friar-Preachers of that City to give him the head of Blessed Albert, expressing to them his desire to expose that relic in his Cathedral Church inclosed in a precious shrine. But the Dominicans refused to part with their treasure. However, to satisfy in some sort the Prince-Bishop, the bone of the left arm was extracted from the sepulchre and sent to Ratisbon on the 18th January, 1619. About the same time Bishop Albert petitioned Pope Paul V. to allow the Feast of Blessed Albert, which was already kept at Cologne and Ratisbon, to be extended to all the parishes subject to the latter City; but the negotiations dragged on for a considerable time. The congregation at Rome, at whose head was the illustrious Bellarmine,<sup>1</sup> replied that nothing was known at Rome of the

<sup>1</sup> The autograph letters addressed to the Bishop are exceedingly interesting.

matter, and of the supposed miracles of Albert, and that it was necessary to institute a process, to which they were disposed. When this answer reached Ratisbon steps were immediately taken to prove that the said Feast had for a long time been celebrated in the Church of the Dominicans in the presence of an immense concourse of people, that Albert was honoured with the title of Blessed in all the old martyrologies, and that he was known to have wrought a great number of miracles. Finally, the Count of Toringen sent his chaplain, Menzel, to Rome with instructions to push the matter on vigorously; he at the same time begged Duke William of Neuburg, the Elector Maximilian at Munich, and Ferdinand, Emperor of Germany, to interest themselves in his behalf at the Pontifical Court. All this was in the year 1622. But when the matter had passed through the necessary stages of inquiry, Pope Gregory XV., who had in the interval succeeded Paul V., on the 15th September, 1622, granted permission to the Church of Ratisbon to celebrate yearly, on the 15th November, a solemn Office in honour of Blessed Albert.<sup>1</sup> In other words, that they might count the great man in the number of the Saints

<sup>1</sup> Thus speak Altamura, p. 55, and the "Vie des Saints," tome viii. (Paris, chez Louis Germeau, 1739). The documents preserved at Ratisbon show, on the other hand, that in 1623 this decree was not even known.

of the Church, that he had practised virtue in an heroic degree, and that miracles had evidenced his glory.

Bishop Albert provided, moreover, in 1622, a foundation of five hundred florins, with the Pope's sanction, for the yearly celebration of the Feast of Blessed Albert in the Cathedral choir. Pope Urban VIII., in his turn yielding to repeated solicitations, extended the privilege of the Church of Ratisbon to all the houses of the Order of Preachers throughout the Roman States, Germany, and Italy.

Finally, Clement X. permitted all the Dominican Convents of the Order to observe the anniversary of the death of Albert the Great. The canonisation, however, has not taken place, doubtless because the long series of years that have passed, and the negligence of his contemporaries, render this solemn act impossible.<sup>1</sup>

Thus many Popes have declared the memory of Albert blessed, and that his soul is, without

<sup>1</sup> When the Catholic Episcopate of Germany met at Fulda in the month of September 1872, their Lordships petitioned the Holy See to take in hand the cause of Blessed Albert the Great. "The honours of canonisation," they said, "have not yet been accorded to Blessed Albert, whom the whole world proclaims Great. He was the master of the Angelic Doctor, he adorned by his immense learning and the perfection of his sanctity not only the most celebrated chairs of France and Germany, the second Council of Lyons itself, but also the entire Christian world." We have every reason to believe that these sacred honours will ere long be rendered to him.—TRANSLATOR.



doubt, in the possession of heavenly glory. And as from that time his Feast was celebrated with pomp in the whole Diocese of Ratisbon, so also at Cologne and in many other localities the 15th November soon became a day of solemnity. Scarce had the decree of beatification been promulgated when Cologne showed her eagerness, in 1624, to manifest her lively joy by solemn Offices, processions, and panegyrics, at which the magistrates, the whole University, and the Apostolic Nuncio, assisted.<sup>1</sup> From the year 1602, the 15th November was also solemnised with royal pomp in the Church of the Friar-Preachers.

The Masters of Arts, the Doctors, the Albertine College, and the three Gymnasiums of the City, honoured this Festival yearly with their presence, renewing each time their consecration to the great Master of Philosophy.

Thenceforth altars were erected in honour of Blessed Albert in many cities of Germany, as at Ratisbon, Cologne, Lauingen, and the whole Dominican Order recites his Office on the 15th November. The lessons are taken from the Book of Wisdom, the legend was composed by Prussia, and the rest is from the Common of a Confessor and Bishop, with the following prayer:—

“Hear, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the prayers

<sup>1</sup> See Bianco, p. 51.

which we offer Thee on this festive day of Thy blessed Confessor and Bishop Albert, and vouchsafe to pardon our sins through the merits of him who obtained grace to serve Thee faithfully. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Thus does the Church herself crown the offerings of praise with which the world has so largely honoured the memory of Albert the Great. She has declared that this illustrious and immortal genius practised the virtues of the supernatural life—faith, hope, and charity—in an heroic degree ; that no one ever surpassed him in wisdom, moderation, and justice ; in short, that God really wrought prodigies through his intercession. Science and holiness, which glorify man most among the things which depend on the will, are the two crowns that will encircle Albert’s brow as long as the invincible Church of God shall reign.





## APPENDIX.

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WE read in the "Legenda Aurea" of Blessed James of Voragine, touching the death of St. Thomas of Aquin, "Three days before the great Doctor's decease, there appeared in the heavens, over the Convent where Albert resided, a star which had a tail of extraordinary length. But as soon as the venerable Master was seated with his Brethren at the evening repast, this star paled and suddenly disappeared. Seeing this, the illustrious Bishop became alarmed, he burst into tears and exclaimed with a prophetic voice, 'Brother Thomas of Aquin, my beloved son in Christ, the luminary of the Church, is at this moment called into the bosom of the Eternal!'" (See Pouchet, p. 241.)

The Society of Artists delayed for some years the project of executing a costly shrine; nor was this project ever carried out, for what reason we know not. But it pleased God, Who exalts the humble, that the mortal remains of His servant, illustrious not less by his humility than by his doctrine, should receive anew the honours due to the Saints. He inspired some of our townspeople with the pious thought to provide a tomb for his relics in the Church of St. Andrew. One of them generously gave an antique shrine artistically wrought in the mediæval style; and married people, in thanksgiving for the graces which God bestowed upon their union, not only defrayed the expenses of restoring this shrine, but have also erected a magnificent altar in a chapel of St. Andrew's Church, where a remarkable chasuble belonging to Albert is deposited.

The Sovereign Pontiff having, by a decree of the Congregation of Rites, dated November the 27th, 1856, placed Albert in the number of the Saints of the Archdiocese of Cologne, and ordained that his Feast should be kept on the 16th of November, this was chosen also as the day for the translation of the holy relics and the consecration of the new altar. In the afternoon of the 14th of November the opening of the chest which inclosed

the relics took place. His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop deputed as commissioners MM. Strauss and Schnepfer, the Dean. There were also present MM. Stupp, the chief Burgo-master; Wayer, the retired City architect; the Council of the Churchwardens; two Physicians, two Notaries, and some other persons. After the reading of his Eminence's letter, and of the act drawn up in 1804 by M. Glesser, Canon Protonotary, on the translation of the body of Blessed Albert the Great to the Collegiate Church of St. Andrew, the identity and integrity of the chest were attested. It is easy to conceive the emotion of the bystanders when they beheld the lid of the old chest raised, and the bones of the great man appeared, after removing the red silk which covered them. These blessed relics were reverently taken out, arranged, and counted by the Physicians, and an authentication of them was drawn up by the Notaries. Besides the bones, which were still almost entire, nearly every portion of the crozier which had been buried with the chest was found in it, as well as a small cushion, on which this verse of the Psalm was symbolically expressed: "As the hart thirsteth after the fountains of water, so doth my soul thirst after Thee, my God!"

Beneath the cushion which supported the head was found a document of the Apostolic Nuncio at Cologne, dated June the 2nd, 1693, attesting that a relic of Blessed Albert the Great had been abstracted from the shrine for the Bishop of Ratisbon. All these relics were wrapped up in red silk and placed in a new and magnificent shrine, and the authentication of them was drawn up in Latin by the two Notaries, signed by all the assistants, and to it was attached the Archiepiscopal seal. A duplicate of the document written on parchment was deposited in the shrine, and was also marked with the same seal.

On the 16th, the Coadjutor arrived at an early hour for the solemn consecration of the altar, at which a great multitude of the faithful assisted. The leaden box was found in the Archives of the church in which the Suffragan John Nopelius, at the time of the consecration of the altar, on the 10th of August, 1512, inclosed and sealed the relics of the martyrs with their authentications. It was deemed fitting to inclose this box with its relics and the three grains of incense in the new altar, adding thereto relics of St. Andrew the Apostle, Blessed Albert the Great, and his illustrious disciple, St. Thomas of Aquin. A

parcament copy of the deeds, with that of the new consecration, was likewise deposited in the box, which was sealed by the Coadjutor and secured in the centre of the altar.

At the close of this solemn function, the Coadjutor, wearing the chasuble in which the venerable body was buried in 1280, inaugurated the altar. Although this altar could not be finished for the day of the ceremony, it was easy to perceive that this would be an abode worthy of the Saint. Its base and slab are carved in beautiful stone. The front part of the slab is supported on three marble pillars, whose capitals, as also the back, are covered with delicately carved foliage. The reredos is formed of rich massive sculpture in oak, supporting on each side statues of the Emperor St. Henry and of St. Gertrude. The statue of Blessed Albert, placed under a superb canopy, adorns its summit. These statues are due to the talent and piety of a youthful Brother of the Third Order of St. Dominic, whose many works of this kind have met with the approval of those who are competent to judge of works of art. The altar bears the following inscription:—

“Henricus Schollenberg, Civis Colon., et Gertrudis Nargau, uxor ejus, post conjugium xxv annorum feliciter peractum, in honorem B. Alberti Magni, Epi., dono dederunt hoc altare A rmo. Dno. Joanne Ant. Fried. Baudri, epo. Arethusin., in part. Emi. Archiep. Jois., Cardinalis de Geissel, Vicario in Spirit. Generali, die xvi Novembr. MDCCCLIX consecratum.”

No doubt could possibly be entertained of the lively interest felt by the people of Cologne on that solemn occasion, at seeing persons of every rank in life eager to visit the Church of St. Andrew, not so much for the purpose of admiring the beauty of the monumental structure as to offer their homage to the relics of a Saint who adorned their City. But it was especially in the evening that the church was filled with a compact congregation, who came to hear the panegyric, in which the preacher portrayed the characteristics of that wonderful genius of mediæval times. He first spoke of Albert as a young man of highly cultured mind, who was able to preserve his mind from all disorder in his search for knowledge, and to join the faith and simple piety of childhood to prodigious learning. Then he showed the services rendered by the Master in the domain of natural science, of philosophy and theology, without ceasing to

be the poor and humble Brother Albert. He could not omit to mention the services he had also rendered to the Church and the State by combating perverse doctrines, by re-establishing peace among princes and people, and by reforming the morals of his time. He concluded his discourse with the humble avowal of the fault which the people of Cologne had committed in delaying to give to those relics the honours of translation; but the present solemnity, he added, was a reparation, a generous movement of patriotism and of piety. He blended with the praises of Blessed Albert, reflections, replete with eloquence and to the point, on the aberrations of modern sciences and their causes.

This great solemnity was finally crowned by an imposing ceremony. In the midst of a pressing multitude a long procession of pious people threaded its way, carrying lighted tapers and singing canticles. They were followed by six Priests, who bore the shrine which inclosed the venerated relics. Having deposited their precious burden on the altar destined to receive it, the *Te-Deum* was intoned and sung with religious enthusiasm by the assembled multitudes. Thus was this memorable day brought to a close, which left imperishable recollections in every Christian heart in Cologne, and especially in the hearts of the children of St. Dominic. (Extract from the "Année Dominicaine.")—TRANSLATOR.







