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THE REFORMATION IN ITS RELATION TO ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

A Thesis presented to the  
Faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Divinity

by

E. P. Weber

Concordia Seminary,  
April 15, 1941

Approved by

Richard P. Cavanaugh

J. E. Meyer

## Foreword

Like most forewords this one is being written after the completion of the thesis. Since our sentiments in regard to our study already have been expressed in the conclusion, little remains to be said. We would like to thank Prof. R. Caemmerer, our adviser, for his many practical hints and also for his searching questions which opened many new avenues of thought. Our appreciation is also extended to Miss Catherine Hoffmann for her willing assistance in negotiating with the Library of Congress. We also thank Mr. William Luecke for his patience in typing the manuscript.

1. Introduction

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## The Reformation in its Relation to Education

### I. Introduction

Just before our Lord Jesus ascended into heaven some nineteen hundred years ago, he gave to his holy church a twofold commission, namely, "to make disciples of all nations" and "to teach them to observe all things", or, as expressed in modern terminology, a commission concerning mission work and concerning Christian education. Ever since its inception a few more years than a century ago the Missouri Synod has been fully aware of this twofold divine command. Therefore, when it celebrated its centennial in 1939, one of its resolutions was to reanalyze and reemphasize for its members the duty of mission work and the duty of Christian education. During the year 1940 its energies were concentrated upon mission work. During the current year, 1941, its intention is to devote them to Christian education.

Since the Missouri Synod is a division of the Lutheran Church, and since its founder, therefore, is Luther, considered to be one of the leading educators of all time, it is apt and quite natural that in this emphasis upon education many references will be made to the great Reformer and his educational work. As we try to conceive of some such possible references, there are certain questions which come to our mind, questions which in turn question the accuracy of some frequently quoted statements. For instance, is

the Reformation actually an exceptional period in the history of education? Did it actually contribute as much as we would like to believe? Again, is Luther truly one of the outstanding educators of all time as educational writers like Painter maintain? Then, can we attribute to the Reformation period the origin of popular education? Or to make the question more pertinent to our interests, does the parochial school, a phase of popular education, owe its existence to the Reformation?

Now, it is not the intention of this thesis to attempt to answer these questions or any similar ones. While here and there a practical deduction may be drawn, the one aim of this paper is to present from an historical angle the Reformation in its relation to elementary education. In order to limit ourselves to the requirements of a treatise of this sort, we shall refer for the most part only to the educational thoughts of the Reformation author, Martin Luther.

If the reader will glance at the references used, he will notice immediately that all the sources are of a secondary nature. In fact, in some cases quotations were taken from authors who in turn were quoting another writer. We realize that such writing is not a good representation of genuine historical research technique. But time, space, library facilities, and, may I emphasize, personal research experience for the present discussion were so limited that a more thorough study was almost out of the question.

At this time the writer wishes to acknowledge the immense research of Dr. Georg Mertz contained in his volume, Das Schulwesen des deutschen Reformation im 16. Jahrhundert. His work is the most detailed piece of research in the field of Reformation education that the writer has ever seen. It is mentioned in almost every bibliography pertaining to the subject. For the present writing his material was used very extensively. His plan of discussion and his views form the basis of the entire discussion.

## II. Various Views Concerning Reformation Education

Before we begin the actual discussion of our topic it will be well for us to get some idea of the attitude which various men have taken toward Reformation education. In a letter to Spalatin on July 6, 1520, the renowned humanist, Erasmus, writes:

"Ich wollte, dass Luther jene Haendel einmal liesze und die Sache des Evangeliums rein und ohne Beimengung von Leidenschaft treibe; vielleicht ginge es besser. Jetzt beladet er die klassischen Studien mit Hass und Verdacht, der uns verderblich, ihm nicht foerderlich ist."

Writing to Pirkheimer he states: "Wo der Lutheranismus herrscht, da ist der Untergang der Wissenschaften."<sup>2</sup> In a similar vein the well known Catholic writer of German history, Janssen, writes:

"Am schwersten wurden von der 'Ungunst der Zeit', wie die Neuglaebigen sich ausdrueckten, zunaechst die schoenen Wissenschaften, die humanistischen Studien betroffen. Vor dem Beginn der religioesen Streitigkeiten standen diese in einer solchen Bluete, dass Cicero sich bald 'haette in einen Winkel verkriechen muessen', in Kurzem aber war kaum noch eine Spur dieser Bluete mehr vorhanden."<sup>3</sup>

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1) Quoted in Mertz, Das Schulwesen der deutschen Reformation im 16. Jahrhundert (Heidelberg, 1902), p. 1.

2) Ibid. One can well understand the basis for Erasmus' attitude. He lamented the fact that Luther discarded many of the humanistic features in the schools. Still, there is much truth in his statement.

3) Johannes Janssen, Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1883), p. 294.

Throughout his writing Janssen gives little credit to the Reformation. All the confusion such as existed in Saxony at the time of the visitation, he claims, was the direct result of the change in order.



A few pages later he specifically refers his remark to the Volksschule: "Wie die hoeheren wissenschaftlichen Studien und die gelehrten Anstalten, so geriethen auch die niederen Volksschulen von Jahr zu Jahr in tiefere Zeruetzung."<sup>4</sup> The present Catholic historian, Marique, is of the same mind as Janssen.

On the other extreme of Janssen are such writers as Painter, Haumer, Eby<sup>5</sup>, and Schwiebert.<sup>6</sup> Painter, of course, is flowery in his praise of the Reformation:

"Looking back over the ground traversed, we realize that the great Reformer accomplished scarcely less for education than for religion. Through his influence, which was fundamental, wide-reaching, and beneficent, there began for the one as for the other a new era of advancement."<sup>7</sup>

Haumer writes: "So wie die Reformation der Kirche erst in Luther und Melanchthon zur Reife kam, so auch die Reformation der Schulen."<sup>8</sup>

Taking a middle stand between these two extremes is the attitude so well described by Leach in his contribution to Monroe's Cyclopedia of Education:

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- 4) Ibid., p. 299. We quote this passage particularly, since the Volksschule is considered an elementary school.
  - 5) Cp. Frederick Eby, Early Protestant Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1931), p. 1.
  - 6) Cp. E. C. Schwiebert, "Elementary Education in Germany at the Time of Luther." Lutheran School Journal, LXXVI, 202.
  - 7) F. V. N. Painter, Luther on Education (St. Louis; Concordia Publishing House, 1889), pp. 166-167. This work is the source of those views generally held by Missouri Synod pastors and teachers.
  - 8) Karl von Haumer, Geschichte der Paedagogik vom Wiederaufbluehen klassischer Studien bis auf unsere Zeit (Gutersloh, 1890), I, 102.

"There are few subjects on which such great diversity of opinion has been and is expressed than on the relation of the Reformation to education, the natural result of the diversity of opinion which has been and is held as to the Reformation itself. One point, however, recent research has now definitely settled, that neither in institution, method, nor matter is the education of post-Reformation times separated by any great gulf from that of pre-Reformation times..... Neither in Germany nor in England nor in Scotland is it now possible to believe (except by those who either have not seen or refuse to look at the evidence available) that Luther or Cramer or Knox created a new heaven and a new earth in the sphere of education or that the schools of those countries, and by consequence of America, were a new birth due to the genius of the reformers."<sup>9</sup>

Paulsen, Scheel,<sup>10</sup> Cubberley,<sup>11</sup> take a similar stand. Paulsen spares no words on his denunciation of the first effects of the Reformation upon education. But he closes his discussion in complimentary fashion: "Allerdings das letzte Wort der Reformation in diesen Dingen war noch nicht gesprochen."<sup>12</sup>

As one examines the various views it immediately becomes apparent that all views can be categorized into three

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- 9) A. F. Leach, "Reformation and Education", A Cyclopedia of Education, ed. by Paul Monroe (New York: Macmillan Co., 1925), III, 133.  
The statement in my opinion is classical. Therefore, I include it in its entirety.
- 10) Otto Scheel, "Luther und die Schule seiner Zeit", Jahrbuch der Luther-Gesellschaft, 1925.  
His attitude is given by Schrieber, op. cit., pp. 199-200.
- 11) Ellwood P. Cubberley, The History of Education (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920), pp. 307-318.
- 12) Friedrich Paulsen, Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts auf den deutschen Schulen und Universitäten vom Ausgang des Mittelalters bis zur Gegenwart (Leipzig, 1896), I, 195.

**divisions:**

1. The "negative" view. This view attempts to nullify the contributions of the Reformation. It attributes all the chaos of Reformation days to the Reformation itself. Generally speaking, most Catholic historians fall into this group. Janssen is undoubtedly the most popular exponent.
2. The "positive" view. This view exaggerates the accomplishments of the Reformation. It considers the Reformation an exceptionally outstanding period in educational history. In general, it is the group of the Lutheran writer. Painter is among the most widely read. Schwiebert of Valparaiso University is a contemporary exponent.<sup>13</sup>
3. The "neutral" view. This view regards the Reformation as a mere stage in the evolution of education. Some of its adherents border on the negative side. Generally the opinion of the indifferent, non-religious scholar falls into this category. Paulsen is a good example.

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13) Of all the teachers under which the present writer studied he considers Dr. Schwiebert among the best.

### III. Elementary Education before the Reformation <sup>14</sup>

In order to establish the contributions which the Reformation made to education, it is imperative that we have some idea of the educational status before the Reformation. To arrive at some such conception is not at all an easy task. Adequate figures of the number of schools and of other items are still only a desire of the pre-Reformation historian. True, figures for certain areas are available; yet, to judge one area by another or one country by another country is precarious reasoning and not complimentary to sound research. Despite these handicaps we shall attempt to present to the reader some idea of the educational conditions of that time.

Our first task is to gain an understanding of the various types of schools. From all appearances there seem to be three classes of schools; namely, those controlled by the church, those controlled by the municipality, and those controlled by private individuals.<sup>15</sup> Among those schools controlled by the church were those which prepared the clergy, namely, the monasteries (Klosterschulen) and the cathedral, college, or bishopric schools (Stiftschulen).

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14) To establish with any degree of certainty just which schools are elementary and just which are secondary is a confusing and even hopeless task, especially in view of the fact that a regular system of grading was first adopted many decades later.

15) Like all categories these classes are not ironclad. There may have been schools which were controlled by both church and municipality; cp. S. Lorenz, Volkserziehung und Volksunterricht im spaeteren Mittelalter (Paderborn, 1887), pp. 52-53.

The origin of the Klosterschulen dates back to the seventh century when Irish and Anglo-Saxon monks brought Christianity to the German tribes. At that time monasteries were established in certain centers like Fulda and St. Gallen. It was in connection with these monasteries that schools gradually came into being with the purpose of developing future members of the convent. While at first membership was restricted to prospective monks, later boys not destined for monastic life were permitted to attend. As their number grew, a separate schola externa was added to the already existing schola interna.<sup>16</sup> Usually the schola externa had less pupils than the schola interna. However, it is surprising to note that at Reichenau in the ninth century the externa was larger, having four hundred pupils while the interna had only one hundred.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to these monastic schools there were also the cathedral schools. These were established by the bishop of a diocese for the purpose of training the secular clergy of his territory. Since one of the cathedral clergy was usually appointed to superintend instruction the name cathedral schools arose.<sup>18</sup> These cathedral schools were soon followed by the college schools. In these institutions

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16) Paulsen, German Education Past and Present, trans. F. Lorenz (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), p. 10.

17) Lorenz, op. cit., p. 43.

18) Paulsen, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

the clergy of a collegiate church sought in a similar manner as the bishop to provide a training for their successors. Since the nature of the cathedral and collegiate schools is much the same, the title of Stiftschulen<sup>19</sup> can be applied to both.

The goal of instruction of these Stiftschulen was "a scientific comprehension of divine wisdom as revealed in the Holy Scriptures."<sup>20</sup> In the attainment of this goal three natural stages are distinguishable. The first stage began with the learning by rote of the alphabet with the aid of an A B C tablet. Then followed reading which of course was in Latin and finally writing. Side by side with these exercises singing was practiced. The second stage comprised studies of a general nature. It was arranged according to the well known medieval system of the seven liberal arts (artes liberales) consisting of the Trivium and the Quadrivium. The former (artes formales) included grammar (Latin), rhetoric, and dialectics; the latter (artes reales), arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. The one aim of all these secular subjects was to contribute to the ultimate goal, namely, theology, the study of which constituted the final stage. No subject had a right to be included in the curriculum unless it served this ultimate

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19) Just why I consider these partially elementary schools will be demonstrated later. Infra, p.

20) Paulsen, op. cit., p. 16.

objective.

Besides schools for the regular training of the clergy, the church also operated schools for the training of its lay members, generally designated as parish schools. The chief purpose of these schools was to prepare the children for activity in the church. Hence, they are often called chantry or song schools. A statement of the Archbishop Engelbert II of Cologne indicates that these schools were more than mere religious schools:

"Hirto sell de Kuester glykermaten verbunden syn, wenn de Pastor nit ander verordnen wirtt, die Kirspels Jugentt in schreiben unt lesen den summer morgens von sibem, des winters von achten bis teen uhren und nachmittags des summers von ein bis drey oder vir..."<sup>21</sup>

Usually the instruction was given largely or wholly in Latin.

Just how numerous these parish schools were is difficult to say. A ruling of Charlemagne in the year 802 may bear a slight indication: "dass jeder seine Kinder zur Schule schicken muesse, und dass diesselbe mit aller Sorgfalt so lange besuchen sollen, bis sie genügend unterrichtet sind."<sup>22</sup> However, despite such proclamations such as given by Charlemagne, these parish schools were not widespread until about 1200. Then they began to increase

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21) Dr. Schmitz, Das Volksschulwesen im Mittelalter. Quoted by Lorenz, op. cit., p. 80.

22) Lorenz, op. cit., p. 45. Lorenz also quotes a similar statement by Pope Eugene II given in the year 826.

rapidly and at the dawn of the Reformation were quite numerous. A statement given at the Synod of St. Omer in 1183 seems to bear this fact out:

"Da die Schulen zur Heranbildung aller derer dienen; welchen einmal die Leitung der weltlichen und geistlichen Angelegenheiten in Staat und Kirche abliegen soll, so befehlen wir, dass in allen Staedten und Doerfern die Pfarrschulen, wo sie zerfallen, wiederhergestellt, wo sie noch erhalten sind, mehr und mehr gepflegt werden."<sup>23</sup>

The third type of church school is the school for girls (Maedchenschulen). For the most part these schools trained nuns. However, often young girls of good families were permitted to attend.<sup>24</sup> Paulsen remarks: "It may be assumed that during the height of chivalric culture the intellectual and literary education was, with hardly any exceptions, at least not inferior to that of the stronger sex....."<sup>25</sup> Lorenz also refers to certain cities which maintained their own schools;<sup>26</sup> at the same time, however, he mentions that references are very sparing, indicating that female education was not very popular as yet.<sup>27</sup>

Besides schools controlled by the church there were also schools controlled by the municipality. When in the

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23) Schmitz, op. cit.; quoted by Lorenz, op. cit., p. 49. The prevalency of schools before the Reformation shall be considered again, Infra, pp. 14-16.

24) Lorenz, op. cit., p. 75.

25) Paulsen, op. cit., p. 19.

26) Lorenz, op. cit.

27) Ibid., p. 74.



thirteenth century cities began to increase as a result of a decided increase in commerce, there arose a great demand for lay education. This demand lay in the fact that people began to grasp for culture and also that trained men were needed in the various occupations. While the existing monasteries and bishopric schools took care of some of the demand, it was mandatory that the cities erect schools.

These became known as Stadtschulen or Ratsschulen. At first the church objected to the municipality's invasion of the field of education.<sup>28</sup> Pope Alexander II prohibited the clergy from teaching in such schools.<sup>29</sup> Gradually, however, the town council took over the administration. Often the city aided in payment of the teachers' salaries; generally, however, it was dependent upon the fees of the pupils. Sometimes the instruction of these schools was comparable to that of the clerical schools offering instruction in Latin. At other times it was given for commercial training, developing writers and accountants and often presented in German. Often religion, manners, and reading were taught.<sup>30</sup>

The third and final class of schools were those

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28) Paulsen, op. cit., p. 29.

29) Mertz, op. cit., p. 166.

30) Cubberley, op. cit., p. 308. These schools were often called Knaben-, Rechnen- und Schreibschulen.

controlled by individuals. They were called by various names: Schreibschulen (Hamburg), Beischulen (Netherlands), Winkelschulen, Klippschulen, Nebenschulen. They were taught by private teachers who taught at the home of the pupils and often wandered from city to city. It is generally believed that they arose with the city-schools and provided instruction on a more elementary level. Paulsen maintains that toward the end of the Middle Ages they were found in all large towns, often in considerable numbers.<sup>31</sup>

While we have discussed the prevalency of schools under the various classes, it is yet desirable for us to look at this problem in more detail. Lorenz, to whose work we have referred before,<sup>32</sup> is of the conviction that elementary education was quite general before the Reformation. And in proving his thesis he quotes the research of two men who have investigated old records of the Wuerttemberg and the Middle Rhine Areas.<sup>33</sup> In discussing the latter area he mentions "nicht weniger also neun Schulen" for Mainz<sup>34</sup>

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31) Paulsen, op. cit., p. 30.

32) Infra, Note 15.

33) "J. E. Schoettle in 1. Quartalheft pro 1882 des "Magazin fuer Paedagogik", und einer Abhandlung: "zur Geschichte des Volksschulwesens im Mittelalter" im 1. Quartalheft pro 1884 derselben Zeitschrift" investigated the Wuerttemberg territory. Cp. Lorenz, op. cit., p. 54.  
Epreng, "zur Geschichte des Schulwesens in Deutschland," and Falk, "Schulen am Mittelrhein, vor 1520" have investigated the Middle Rhine area. Lorenz, op. cit., p. 56.

34) Lorenz, op. cit., p. 58.

and no less than six for Worms.<sup>35</sup> To give the reader some idea of the nature of his tabulations, a paragraph dealing with the Middle Rhine area is hereby included:

"Die ehemals freie Reichstadt Oppenheim gehoerte zumteil zur Diocesse Mainz, teilweise zu Worms. In dem Mainzer Bezirk lag das St. Katharinenstift; die Stiftsscholaster reichen hier bis 1323. In dem Wormser Teil lag die Pfarrkirche St. Sebastian; eine Schule ist hier fuer das Jahr 1496 nachgewiesen. Auch Oppenheim hatte eine Stadtschule; eine Deduktion von 1614 erwachnt vom Jahre 1519 die Praesentation eines gewissen Jodocus durch den Bischof Heinrich von Straszburg fuer eine zu Oppenheim erledigte, vom Rat zu vergebende Schulstelle."<sup>36</sup>

He concludes his entire discussion with a statement from Falk: "So viel steht jedoch jetzt schon, wenigstens fuer den Mittelrhein, fest, dass es ganze Striche Landes gab, in welchen um 1500 alte zwei Stunden eine Volksschule war."<sup>37</sup>

Leach, to whom we also have referred, also has some interesting figures. He found that in England prior to Henry VIII confiscations there were no less than three hundred grammar schools or one for every 8,300 people.<sup>38</sup> True, it does not follow that just because education was prevalent in England, it was also prevalent in Germany. Nevertheless, it is an indication. Paulsen also has some figures.

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35) Ibid., p. 58-60. It should be added that he does not distinguish between elementary, secondary, and higher schools. Yet, elementary schools are frequently referred to.

36) Ibid., pp. 60-61.

37) Ibid., p. 69.

38) A. F. Leach, English Schools at the Reformation, p. 5; quoted by Pierre J. Marique, History of Christian Education (New York: Fordham University Press, 1926) p. 100.

In 1485, according to him, there were in Nuremberg "four schools with four schoolmasters, twelve ushers, 245 sons of citizens as paying pupils, and a considerable number of external poor scholars."<sup>39</sup> He concludes: "After all has been said it seems safe to assume that, at the end of the Middle Ages, the entire population of the towns, with the exception of the lowest classes, was able to read and to write."<sup>40</sup>

In view of these facts and statements it seems that education was far more prevalent than many wish to admit. From all indications the following statement from Painter no longer can be held: "If here and there.....popular schools were established, they were too few in number and too weak in influence to deserve more than passing mention. Popular education was the outgrowth of the Reformation."<sup>41</sup>

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39) Paulsen, op. cit., p. 32.

40) Ibid., p. 30.

41) Painter, op. cit., p. 87.

#### IV. Elementary Education during the Reformation

It is a commonly known fact that whenever a revolution or a drastic change takes hold of a country the existing institutions undergo a violent change. And the more serious the change in order the more serious is its effect upon the various institutions. Hence, when the Reformation invaded the various parts of Germany its first effect upon the education of the day was destructive.

Yet, while it is true that the change in order was the basic cause of this educational deterioration, certain intermediary causes should also be noted. As we might well expect, as soon as the Reformation took effect upon the various sections of Germany, the entire educational setup of the church collapsed almost in its entirety. Monks left the cloisters and journeyed to other lands; as a result, the monastic schools faded. Many priests left their parishes, others became disinterested; parish schools and congregational instruction, as a result, were woefully neglected. The collapse of the cloisters left the numerous foundations which heretofore had financed many schools without an owner. It was not long until the greedy princes began to lay hold on them and use the monies for their own administrative use.<sup>42</sup> This action of the princes Luther often condemned. He remarks about it in a letter to

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42) Mertz, op. cit., pp. 215-216.

Elector John in the year 1526.<sup>43</sup> In his Tischreden he blankly states: "Mein Rat und Bedenken ist allezeit gewesen, dass man die Stifte und Bistume liesze bleiben, zu Nutz und Brauch fuer arme Studenten und zu Schulen."<sup>44</sup>

Not only was the Reformation hampered in its educational work by the collapse of the schools but also by the misinterpretation which many placed upon the Reformation. Chief among these offenders were Carlstadt and his party of "Schwaermers". Carlstadt, a colleague of Luther at the University of Wittenberg, concentrated his thinking upon the Reformer's emphasis on the Bible as the all important book of instruction, eventually went to the very extreme, and maintained that education was not necessary since the Holy Spirit was the author and giver of all knowledge. He, therefore, urged the people to return to their plows and obey the Lord's command by working in the sweat of their brow. Attending schools, he held, was sinful; for the Lord forbade his disciples to nominate masters.<sup>45</sup> This attitude of Carlstadt was by no means of small effect. With the help of men like Mohr, Kuhlmann, and Stuebner, it spread rapidly. Many schools ceased instruction, notable among which was the Latin school of Wittenberg (1528).

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43) Luther, Brief an Kurfuersten Johannes; quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 215.

44) Mertz, op. cit., p. 215.

45) Ibid., p. 7.

This "enthusiastic" view was still present even toward the close of the century, as is evident from the Niedersaechsischen Kirchenordnung of 1586:

"Denn woher wirt man sonst duchtige gelerte Leute haben koennen.....? Vom Pfluge und Sewen wirt man sie nicht hiez zu nemen koennen, und wirt auch Gott nicht jemande, ohn vorgehende institution, den vorstand.....gehen....."<sup>46</sup>

Luther, of course, had nothing to do with this destructive attitude. In his Vorrede zum Gesangbuechlein he flatly opposed "etliche Abergestliche".<sup>47</sup>

Besides the misinterpretation of the "Schwaermer" there was also a misunderstanding among the laity which retarded educational advancement. Some lay people reasoned that since the priesthood and the monasteries were abolished there was no longer a need for educating their children, especially in view of the fact that the bounties had been abrogated. In his An die Rathsherren<sup>48</sup> Luther bitterly attacks this attitude. He admonishes the people to think of the souls of their children, not only of their temporal welfare.

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46) Reinhold Vormbaum, Die evangelischen Schulordnungen des sechszehnten Jahrhunderts (Guetersloh, 1860), p. 397.

47) Luther, Erste und alte Vorrede D. Luther's zu dem Joh. Walther'schen Gesangbuechlein von 1525, Saemmtliche Schriften (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1885), X, 1424.

48) Luther, An die Rathsherren aller Staedte Deutschlands, Saemmtliche Schriften, X, 460. From henceforth the first three words shall be used in designating this treatise.

Not only the collapse of the church and the misinterpretation of the "Schwaermer" and certain laity but also certain policies of the Reformers themselves were influential in abolishing schools. In the first place, the Reformers opposed the so called Winkelschulen or private schools.<sup>49</sup> Their reasons were numerous. These schools, they claimed, interfered with the regular congregational schools. They were deficient in discipline and organization. They failed to teach singing, one of the firm requirements of Reformation education. And, finally, many of these private teachers were "Schwaermer" and, in addition, often retarded the pupil with the intention of assuring themselves of a job.<sup>50</sup> In the second place, the Reformers opposed some schools because of their humanistic tendencies. Because of these pagan elements the Reformers often would have nothing to do with these schools. As a result, "manche Schulen gingen deshalb beim Auftreten der Reformation ein, weil sie auf einer unevangelischen Grundlage aufgebaut waren....."<sup>51</sup>

As is very obvious, the Reformation had many obstacles in its educational work. To add to the already numerous difficulties, the Peasants' Revolt broke out over Germany in 1525. It brought untold devastation to the schools and

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49) Supra, p. 14.

50) Cp. Kertz, op. cit., pp. 167-169.

51) Ibid., p. 66.



retarded advancement for many years.<sup>52</sup>

All of these handicaps and adverse circumstances troubled Luther much. In his An den Christlichen Adel of 1520 he writes:

"O wie ungleich fahren wir mit dem armen jungen Haufen, der uns befohlen ist zu regieren und zu unterweisen.....Diesen elenden Jammer sehen wir nicht, wie jetzt auch das junge Volk mitten in der Christenheit verschmachtet und erbaermlich verdirbt...<sup>53</sup>

In his An die Rathherren he remarks: "wie man allenthalben die Schulen vergehen laeszt"<sup>54</sup> Even as late as 1530 he shows his dissatisfaction.<sup>55</sup>

Just how the schools fared after the introductory storms had been quieted is difficult to state with any certainty. In his Predig, Kinder zur Schule halten, in which he also shows his dissatisfaction, he has a few kind words:

"Und sonderlich zu unsern Zeiten ist's ja leicht, solche Personen zu erziehen, die das Evangelium und Katechismus zu lernen vermoegen, weil jetzt nicht allein die heilige Schrift, sondern auch allerlei Kunst reichlich am Tage ist mit so viel Buechern, Lesen, Predigen, Gottlob! dasz man in drei Jahren mehr lernen kann, denn vorher in zwanzig.....<sup>56</sup>

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52) Paulsen, op. cit., p. 54.

53) Luther, An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, Saemtliche Schriften, X, 341. From henceforth the first four words of the title shall be used in designating this treatise.

54) Luther, An die Rathsherren, op. cit., X, 460.

55) Luther, Predigt dasz man die Kinder zur Schule halten soll, op. cit., X, 436. Instead of this lengthy title we shall use from henceforth, Predigt, Kinder zur Schule halten.

56) Ibid., 435.

Whether facts are available or not, there seems to be every reason to believe that education progressed rapidly after about 1640. Paulsen limits the degeneration to the year 1535.<sup>57</sup> Leach, however, maintains that "it is clear from contemporary statements that the Reformation failed to produce during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries intellectual and educational results anticipated."<sup>58</sup>

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57) Paulsen, op. cit.

58) Leach, "Reformation and Education", op. cit., p. 134.

## V. Educational Theory of the Reformation

While it may not be certain that the Reformation made far-reaching contributions to the educational system of its own time, it is certain that the Reformers realized the value of education with commendable insight. Since a discussion of the views of all the Reformers would take us too far afield, we shall limit ourselves in this treatise to the thoughts of Luther.

Every one of Luther's three educational treatises demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt the high value he placed upon schools. Above all, he valued schools from a religious standpoint. He realized their importance in training of the clergy:

"Denn wo man nicht Schueler seucht, so werden wir nicht lange Pfarrherren und Prediger haben, wie wir wohl erfahren; denn die Schule musz der Kirche geben Personen, die man zu Aposteln, Pfarrherren, Regieren, machen koenne."<sup>59</sup>

He saw their value in preserving the pure Word:

"...dass wir Gottes Wort mit Ernst meinen, und dasselbe helfen mit allem Fleisz erhalten fuer uns und unsere Nachkommen; sonderlich durch Erhaltung guter Schulen und Aufziehung der Jugend."<sup>60</sup>

He saw their importance in training children for membership

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- 59) Luther, Verhandlung wegen eines Concilii, Saemmtliche Schriften (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1907), 2300.
- 60) Luther, Predig am sechsundzwanzigsten Sonntage nach Trinitatis, Lk. 19, 41-48, op. cit., XII, 1437.

in the kingdom of God.<sup>61</sup> Occasionally, he expresses his conviction in strenuous terms:

"Ich achte auch, dass unter den aeusserlichen Sunden die Welt vor Gott von keiner so hoch beschwert ist und so greuliche Strafe verdient, als eben von dieser, die wir an den Kindern thun, dass wir sie nicht sehen."<sup>62</sup>

Just why Luther took such a favorable attitude toward education is very understandable even if his statements were not available. The difference between Lutheran and Roman Catholic doctrine points out very clearly the urgent necessity of education in the Lutheran Church. And Luther was fully aware of this difference and necessity.

In the first place, the differences between these two religions in the doctrine of the church necessitate a more extensive education in the Lutheran Church. In the Roman Church the church itself is the authority. It dictates and it must be obeyed without question, for through its head, the pope, it is God's agent here on earth. In the Lutheran Church every individual is responsible to God directly. Here membership in a church body does not save. Every individual must know for himself the way to heaven. As a result of this individual responsibility, one can readily

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61) Luther, Predig am sechsundzwanzigsten Sonntage nach Trinitatis, Matth. 28, 31-42, op. cit., XI, 1898.

62) Luther, An die Rathsherren, op. cit., I, 465. It would be well for the Missouri Synod at large to re-analyze statements like this.

see the greater need of education in the Lutheran Church. Everyone must know the Scriptures. Therefore, we find Luther translating the Bible into the language of the people and, in addition, urging the establishment of schools and of catechetical instruction.

In the second place, the difference in conception of the various ceremonies demands a greater educational program in the Lutheran Church. Sacrament of the Altar, Confirmation, and other rites in the Roman Church are mere opera operata, that is, one needs not understand the meaning of the rite to receive the full benefit. In the Lutheran Church, however, a proper conception must be there before the benefits are received. To receive the Sacrament of the Altar worthily one must in addition to having faith, know the meaning of the Sacrament. If Confirmation is to mean anything at all, instruction must precede it. For that reason the church ordinances, such as Waldecker Kirchenordnung (1556), make definite stipulations for catechetical instruction: "Die Pfarrer sollen die Jugend das ganze Jahr hindurch den Katechismus lehren."<sup>63</sup> In addition, certain educational requirements are demanded before reception of

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63) Waldecker Kirchenordnung, 1556. Contained in Mertz, op. cit., p. 512. Mertz includes from pages 457-648 a number of ordinances. However, only the parts dealing with education are given.

the Lord's Supper is permitted. In the Lippe'sche Kirchenordnung, 1538, no youth is permitted to participate unless he has been examined in the Catechism.<sup>64</sup> This difference in doctrine and the resultant necessity of much education Luther realized with complete insight. He refers to this fact often, especially in his Deutsche Messe und Ordnung:

"Denn darum sind die pabstlichen Gottesdienste so verdammlich, dasz sie Gesetze, Werke, und Verdienst daraus gemacht und damit den Glauben unterdrueckt haben, und diesselben nicht gerichtet auf die Jugend und Einfaltigen, diesselben damit in der Schrift und Gottes Wort zu ueben....<sup>65</sup>

Not only from a religious but also from a secular standpoint did Luther value the schools. He was convinced that schools were absolutely necessary for the welfare of the state. Unlike the view of the Roman Church he gave the state a place coordinate with the church. He believed that both must cooperate in education.<sup>66</sup> In favor of civic education he therefore states:

"Wenn nun gleich...keine Seele waere, und man der Schulen und Sprachen gar nicht beduerfte um der Schrift und Gottes willen; so waere doch allein diese Ursache genugsam, die allerbesten Schulen, beide fuer Knaben und Maeglein, an allen Orten aufzurichten, da die Welt, auch ihren weltlichen

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64) Lippe'sche Kirchenordnung, 1538. In Mertz, op. cit., p. 484.

65) Luther, Deutsche Messe und Ordnung des Gottesdienstes, op. cit., I, 227-228.

66) Mertz discusses this cooperation in much detail under the title, "Die Verwaltung und Aufsicht der Schulen", op. cit., pp. 219-230. This matter, of course, raises the age-old question of Luther's attitude on the separation of church and state.

Stand aeußerlich zu erhalten, doch bedarf feiner geschickter Maenner und Frauen."<sup>67</sup>

Sentiments like this he expresses time and again. The second part of his Predigt, Kinder zur Schule halten is devoted just to this point.<sup>68</sup>

To summarize Luther's attitude of education for church and state, and at the same time to give the reader some idea of his attitude of cooperation between church and state, the following quotation is presented:

"Summa, die Schule musz das Naechste sein bei der Kirche, als darin man junge Prediger und Pfarrherren zeuget, und daraus hernach diesselben an der Todten Statt setzt. Darnach des Buergers Haus naechst an der Schule ist, als daraus man Schueler kriegen musz; darnach das Rathaus und Schloss, so Buerger schuetzen muessen, damit sie Kinder zeugen zur Schule, und Schulen Kinder zur Pfarre aufziehen, und darnach Pfarrherren wiederum Kirchen und Gottes Kinder (es sei Buerger, Fuerst oder Kaiser) machen koenne, Got aber musz der Oberste und Naechste sein, der solchen Ring oder Zirkel erhalte wider den Teufel."<sup>69</sup>

Besides education for church and state Luther apparently also believed in education for cultural reasons. Mertz makes much of this point.<sup>70</sup> And he seems to have some point to his contention. He refers to Luther's

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67) Luther, An die Rathsherren, op. cit., 476-477.

68) Luther, Predigt, Kinder zur Schule halten, op. cit., X, 439-458. The entire treatise is from column 422 to column 459.

69) Luther, Verhandlung wegen eines Concilii, 1539, op. cit., XVI, 2300.

70) Mertz, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

statement in his "Predigt, Kinder zur Schule halten":

"Ich will hier schweigen, wie eine feine Lust es ist, dass ein Mann gelehrt ist, ob er gleich kein Amt nimmermehr haette, dass er daheim bei sich selbst allerlei lesen, mit gelehrten Leuten reden und umgehen, in fremde Lande reisen und handeln kann.<sup>71</sup>

He also mentions the fact that the Augsburger Schulordnung, 1558, speaks of the importance of secular knowledge for life and for the morals of man.<sup>72</sup> Outside of Mertz the writer was unable to find any reference to this attitude of Luther except, of course, in Painter, who is always profuse in his compliments to Luther.

That these views and convictions of Luther<sup>73</sup> were not mere verbal utterances is substantiated by the great number of ordinances issued during Reformation days. Since these ordinances so well demonstrate the attitude of the Reformers toward education and since they in themselves are extremely interesting, a discussion of them is probably very much in place at this point. As mentioned previously, the first effect of the Reformation upon the established educational system was destructive. The entire organization fell into a precarious and chaotic condition. Therefore, when the Reformation came into its own and began to

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71) Luther, Predigt, Kinder zur Schule halten, op. cit., 445.

72) Augsburger Schulordnung, 1558; in Mertz, op. cit., p.515.

73) Essentially, they were also the views of the other Reformers.



reorganize, it was almost imperative that certain general plans be adopted according to which reconstruction could take place. These adopted plans were set forth in the various church ordinances, school regulations, visitation instructions, and general articles. Of this group of four the church ordinances (Kirchenordnungen)<sup>74</sup> and school regulations (Schulordnungen) are the most numerous and undoubtedly of the most importance. In contrast to the school regulations the church ordinances include stipulations pertaining to all the affairs of the church. They generally contain three considerations: administration of functions and sacraments of the church, care of poor, and the nurture of the young. As a rule there is a first part called "Credenda", dealing with matters of doctrine, and a second part called "Agenda", containing besides <sup>other</sup> items regulations concerning the schools. The school regulations, on the other hand, are very limited in content dealing only with matters of education.<sup>75</sup> Some are very short and simple; others,

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74) Robbins gives an excellent definition of the Kirchenordnungen: "...the name given all those regulations, especially those issued by cities and sovereigns, by means of which the church regulations which had previously been given were modified according to Reformation ideas, and the newly developed church system was more fully organized." A typical example of such a church ordinance is Hamburg, 1529. Cp. Charles Leonidas Robbins, Teachers in Germany, in the Sixteenth Century (New York: Teachers College, Columbia U. 1912) p. 10.

75) A typical example of a school ordinance is Baden-Durlach, 1526.

very comprehensive prescribing hours, textbooks, methods, and the like. Often the material is of a very trivial nature. Nevertheless, whether the ordinances are church or school ordinances the following stipulations are usually given in regard to education: 1. Schools must be orthodox; 2. adequate support must be provided; 3. a sufficient number of boys must be trained for the ministry; 4. suitable teachers must be provided; 5. proper education for participation in church services must be given; 6. there must be proper supervision of the schools.<sup>76</sup>

The authorship of these various ordinances can be traced to the leading figures of the Reformation. Melancton, the leading educational figure, was concerned in the writing of at least nine. Bugenhagen had his hand in ten; Luther, four; and Johannes Aepin, three. Among the other writers are Trotzendorf, Krage, Winkel, Butzer, and Brenz. While many of the ordinances are ascribed to different men, it is very apparent that some are based on others. In fact, one can classify them according to groups or families, as has been done by Robbins.<sup>77</sup> The regulations laid down by Bugenhagen and Melancton often served as models upon which others were based. For instance, the Visitation Instructions of Saxony, 1528, a product of Melancton,

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76) These points are stated by Robbins, op. cit., p. 11.

77) Ibid., p. 16-17.

formed the basis of Eughenagen's ordinances for Brunswick (1528). These two, in turn, formed the basis for a long list of others.

The total number of ordinances of various kinds number several hundred. According to Robbins, Schling has 209 in his first volume, 153 in the second, and 119 in the third, with perhaps two volumes to follow.<sup>78</sup> Hertz has a list of 115 ordinances which he regards as particularly significant.<sup>79</sup> The authority under which they were promulgated may be summed up as follows: 1. by the ruling prince; 2. by a committee appointed by him; 3. by the prince and the local magistrates; 4. by the local magistrates and council; 5. by the local council with consent of citizens, parish, or guilds; 6. by a bishop, and 7, even a pastor.<sup>80</sup> The enforcement was usually carried out by the secular authorities. They were, however, not laws but as

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78) Ibid., p. 16.

79) Hertz, op. cit., pp. 161-165. Three outstanding collections of these church and school ordinances are available. There is Amilius Ludwig Richter, Die evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrhunderts (Leipzig, 1871), 2 volumes, dealing primarily with material concerning the church. Then, there is Vormbaum, Die evangelischen Schulordnungen im 16., 17., und 18. Jahrhunderts (Sustersloh, 1860), dealing primarily with schools, though including sections of both church and school ordinances. Finally, there is Emil Schling, Die evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrhunderts (Leipzig, 1902-1909), 3 volumes with others to follow. Schling is the most complete of the three. Certain volumes of the Monumenta Germania Paedagogia (Berlin, 1888-1910) also contain some ordinances.

80) Robbins, op. cit., p. 18.

Robbins puts it, "there was behind the church regulations a general background of secular support."<sup>81</sup> Generally, the clergy were in charge of the administration.<sup>82</sup>

From the preceding survey of the Reformation ordinances it should be quite obvious that the Reformers not only spoke about the value of education but endeavored to carry out their educational principles. This fact is further evident from their view in regard to compulsory education. Only one fully convinced of the value of education could write as Luther did:

"Ich halte aber, dass auch die Obrigkeit hier schuldig sei, die Unterthanen zu zwingen, ihre Kinder zur Schule halten sonderlich die, davon drohen gesagt ist."<sup>83</sup>

In view of all of the preceding facts and statements the writer wishes to present the following four conclusions:<sup>84</sup>

1. Education before the Reformation was rather extensive, far more extensive than many staunch Reformation scholars like to admit.

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81) Ibid., p. 19.

82) Kertz discusses the administration of these ordinances under the title, "Errichtung und Unterhaltung des Schulwesens", pp. 211-219.

83) Luther, Predigt, Kinder zur Schule halten, op. cit., 457. Cp. also Luther's letter to Elector John, 1526.

84) I present these conclusions with all humility. In no argument would I insist upon them, for my experience and study have been far too limited. I present them merely as a summary of the preceding discussion.

2. In actuality the Reformation accomplished little before 1540 in establishing and furthering schools. The real effects of the Reformation upon education first began to take hold in the late sixteenth and in the seventeenth centuries.
3. While comparatively little was accomplished in actuality before 1540, the Reformers (here Luther) from the outset had sound and progressive educational views and were convinced of the value of elementary education.
4. Instead of viewing the Reformation as giving birth to many new educational ideas and institutions, it would be far better to view it as merely an outstanding stage in the evolution of elementary education.

## VI The Elementary Schools of the Reformation

Up until this point we have discussed to some extent the educational contributions of the Reformation, endeavoring to present to the reader some general conception of Reformation education. In the next two chapters the writer shall attempt to give the reader some idea of the actual condition of education during the Reformation days. In the first chapter the various types of schools shall be discussed.

When the Reformation invaded a particular territory, it did either one of two things in regard to the schools; either it reformed according to its own principles the schools already established, or it established schools of its own. Mertz gives us some idea of how this was done.<sup>85</sup> He, for instance, mentions that in Naumberg in 1523 a Latin school was erected and in 1538 the cathedral school was reformed; that in Nordhausen in 1524 a city school was erected; and that in Oehringen also in 1524 the bishopric school was reformed into a city school.

One of the types of schools mentioned as having been reformed or erected is the Volksschule. During the Reformation this type of school manifested itself in various forms.

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85) Mertz, op. cit., pp. 192-204. Within these pages Mertz lists a number of schools which were either reformed or established. He includes city and year.

Above all, there was the Knaben-, Rechnen- und Schreibschule.<sup>86</sup> According to Mertz, these schools before the Reformation were merely vocational schools, but through the introduction of religion into the instruction they eventually became Volksschulen.<sup>87</sup> Wherever the Reformation found such schools they introduced religion into a curriculum already consisting of reading, writing, and arithmetic. It is just these schools which are meant when the ordinances speak of "deutschen Jungenschulen", "deutschen Schreibschulen", "Pfarrschulen", or merely "deutschen Schulen". The Braunschweiger Kirchenordnung, for instance, under the title "Deutsche Jungenschulen" speaks of two "deutsche Schulmeister" who are also to teach religion.<sup>88</sup> The "Pommer'sche Kirchenordnung, 1535, gives the council the right to establish "Schreibschulen" on the condition that the catechism be included in the instruction.<sup>89</sup>

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86) Supra, p. 14.

87) Mertz, op. cit., p. 172. It is necessary at this point to give Mertz's definition of a Volksschule: "Die Volksschule verfolgt den Zweck, durch eine planmassige Mitteilung eines Mindestmasses von Kenntnissen und Fertigkeiten in der Muttersprache alle Menschen ohne Ausnahme zu religios-sittlichen Charakteren heranzubilden und sie bildungsfahig zu machen." p. 170. It is considered by all that these schools were of an elementary nature.

88) Braunschweiger Kirchenordnung, 1528, in Mertz, op. cit., p. 467.

89) Pommer'sche Kirchenordnung, 1535, in ibid., p. 461.

Usually these Knaben-, Rechnen- und Schreibschulen existed in the large cities. In the small cities and villages, therefore, different arrangements were made, namely, to have the janitor (Kuester), who generally gave catechetical instruction, also teach the other fundamentals. The Hessische Reformationsordnung, 1526, for instance, demands that schools be established in every city. Wherever this is impossible, it continues, the pastor and his assistant should teach in addition to religion reading and writing.<sup>90</sup> With these increased demands upon the Kuester in regard to instruction there followed also increased demands in regard to his ability. According to the Braunschweig-Wolfenbuetteler Kirchenordnung, 1569, no Kuester should be hired unless he is proficient in reading, writing, church singing, and catechism.<sup>91</sup>

Sometimes the Volkschule existed in conjunction with the Latin school. In such cases the Latin school served a double purpose, namely, to educate those who intended to continue to study and also those who only were interested in the mere fundamentals. Usually all the instruction was given in Latin. Hence, Luther remarks: "Und wenn schon ein solcher Knabe, so Latein gelernt hat, darnach ein Handwerk lernt und Buerger wird, hat man denselbigen im Vorrat..<sup>92</sup> Sometimes, however, it was given in both German and Latin.

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90) Hessische Kirchenordnung, 1526, in ibid., p. 460

91) Braunschweig-Wolfenbuetteler, 1569, in ibid., p. 1569.

92) Luther, Predigt, Kinder zur Schule halten, X.PP. 434-435.



The Stralsunder Kirchenordnung, 1525, states:

"Der Kirchenordnung ist eine Verordnung des Rats vom November 1525 angefügt, nach der zwei Schulen errichtet werden sollen, naemlich eine lateinschule fuer die Knaben, in welcher Latein und Deutsch gelehrt wird...."<sup>93</sup>

That the German and Latin schools actually existed together is plainly evident from the prohibition of the Wuerttemberger Instruktion fuer die Visitationsraete, 1546:

"Weil in vielen kleinen Staedten neben der lateinschule auch deutsche Schulen bestehen, durch welche jene verdorben und viele Knaben...versaemt werden, so sollen...solche deutsche Schulen in kleinen Staedten abgeschafft werden."<sup>94</sup>

Another exponent of the Volksschule is the Maedchenschule.<sup>95</sup> While before the Reformation it was largely taught in Latin, after the Reformation the German was also introduced. The Stralsunder Kirchenordnung stipulates "eine deutsche Schule fuer die Maedchen."<sup>96</sup> The Schleswig-Holsteiner Kirchenordnung, 1542, requests the majesty to establish "deutsche Knaben- und Maedchenschulen" in which only that should be taught which is necessary for a godly life.<sup>97</sup>

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93) Stralsunder Kirchenordnung, 1525, in Mertz, op. cit., p. 458.

94) Wuerttemberger Instruktion fuer die Visitationsraete, 1546, in ibid., p. 502.

95) Supra, p. 12.

96) Stralsunder Kirchenordnung, 1525, in Mertz, op. cit., p. 458.

97) Schleswig-Holsteiner Kirchenordnung, 1542, in ibid., p. 458.

Despite all these references mentioned above certain men refuse to believe that the Reformation actually understood the true meaning of a Volksschule. Paulsen states:

"Even in theory the 'German school' was only gradually acknowledged as a special educational institution, independent of the grammar school, and a still longer time had to elapse until its emancipation actually took place."<sup>98</sup>

There are many points in favor of such an attitude; above all, that German was forbidden to be spoken in certain schools;<sup>99</sup> in addition, that in some orders it was permitted to be spoken on the streets only where absolutely necessary.<sup>100</sup> Such restrictions and prohibitions are quite understandable. Latin was the language of communication; the textbooks were written in this language, and the German of the time was somewhat corrupt. Yet, the constant insistence upon Latin seems to bear some weight in the argument.

The real solution of the question again seems to be in the evolutionary conception referred to before.<sup>101</sup> At the time of the Reformation the idea of popular elementary education still is in a process of crystalization. While Luther demands catechetical instruction for all, it seems

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98) Paulsen, op. cit., p. 75. This problem also involves the question whether the origin of our parochial school can be attributed to the Reformation.

99) Cp. Altdorfer Schulordnung, 1576, in Kertz, op. cit., p. 597.

100) Cp. Braunschweiger Schulordnung, 1535, in ibid., p. 479.

101) Supra, p. 33.

that he still does not quite see the importance of a full education for all, though, it must be admitted that here and there he approaches that idea in statement at any rate.

The words of Robbins describe the process excellently:

"Although the German school was not completely developed, it was slowly progressing from the stage where the chief purpose was to give catechetical instruction, to a higher plane where the work embodied at least rudiments of intellectual education."<sup>102</sup>

A second type of school--which the Reformers were erecting interested in reforming or ~~exciting~~ was the Latin school. It has been mentioned previously that such schools existed in quite a large number during the pre-Reformation days.<sup>103</sup> While it is true that these schools are generally considered secondary schools, there can be little doubt that they also enrolled boys of elementary level. Especially was this true during the age of the Reformation when the tendency was to place much of the preparatory work generally given at the university in these secondary schools and also to begin schooling at an earlier age.<sup>104</sup>

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102) Robbins, op. cit., p. 21.

103) Supra, pp. 14-16.

104) I have tried desperately to establish the age at which boys entered the Latin school, but my efforts were of little avail. The fact that there was between the Partikularschule and the university the Gymnasium and often, in addition, the Gymnasium Academicum, that the age requirement for entrance in the Fuerstenschulen was between 12-14, and that Luther himself attended a Latin school at the age of seven, tends to convince us that Latin schools were also of an elementary nature, and not only of a secondary nature as most educational historians maintain. However, we leave the question open. We state again, it is impossible to set the various levels to any degree of accuracy.

To try to distinguish between the various types of Latin schools is almost an impossible task. The number of classes vary considerably, some having one and others six. The number of teachers is by no means according to a certain proportion. And above all, the names given to the schools bear different meanings in the various territories.

There were, for instance, the Trivialschulen and the Partikularschulen. These were schools of the lowest order. In some places the meaning was as follows:

"Den Namen Trivialschulen fuehren sie deshalb, weil der Unterricht in ihnen nicht ueber das Trivium der Alten, naemlich Grammatik, Dialektik, und Rhetorik, hinausging. Partikularschulen wurden sie genannt im Unterschied zu dem Studium generale, wie damals die Universitaetstudien bezeichnet wurden."<sup>105</sup>

At other times the distinction between the two was made on the basis of the number of classes: "Die kleinen Schulen wurden dann Trivialschulen und die groesseren Partikularschulen genannt."<sup>106</sup> Since in most cases the city established these schools, they were also called Stadtschulen. However, these distinctions were not always observed. Luther, for instance, in his Tischreden identifies the Partikularschulen as a school on the same level as the university.<sup>107</sup> The Herzoglich Saechsische Schulordnung, 1573, calls all preparatory schools Trivialschulen.<sup>108</sup>

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105) Mertz, op. cit., p. 186.

106) Ibid.

107) Ibid., p. 187.

108) Herzoglich Saechsische Schulordnung, 1573, in Mertz, op. cit., p. 587.

Sometimes the student went directly from the Trivialschule or the Partikularschule to the university. Mostly, however, there followed upon these schools a Paedagogium or Gymnasium.<sup>109</sup> These schools were those which took over much of the preparatory work previously given at the university. In them the Latin was fully developed and Greek and Hebrew were begun. Sometimes they were mere additions to the Partikularschulen.<sup>110</sup> Sometimes they were entirely separate.<sup>111</sup> As a general definition of these schools, Hertz gives "alle mehrklassigen Schulen in groeszeren Staedten."<sup>112</sup>

Another secondary school besides the Gymnasium was the Klosterschule. In the medieval period they were of a lower level but during the Reformation they began to invade even the field of higher education. Comparable to the Klosterschule was the Fuerstenschule. In contrast to the city schools, it was controlled by the state. The classic example is the school of Duke Moritz of Saxony.

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109) These schools are definitely of a secondary nature. We mention them only to be complete in our classification.

110) Wuerttemberger Kirchenordnung, 1559.

111) Ordnung des Paedagogiums zu Gandesheim, 1571, in Ibid., p. 580.

112) Hertz, op. cit., p. 188

## VII. The Curriculum

As might well be expected, the basis for all education during the Reformation was religion. Whenever Luther speaks of education in any of his treatises he is always assuming religious education. He just did not imagine education without its being religious. The other Reformers bear the same attitude. Melancton in his dissertation concerning theological studies calls theology the highest study, the beginning, middle, and end of life, a study without which other studies bear little meaning.<sup>115</sup> Religion, in their opinion, should dominate the entire curriculum and be integrated with all the subjects. It is very evident that their convictions were placed into practice. The textbooks contained much religious material. The grammar of *Teusius* (1562), for instance, contained the creed, the Lord's Prayer, and a survey of the New Testament. The subjects of declamations and debates were often of a religious nature. The school began and closed with prayer.

However, not only was there integration of religion with other subjects but there was also a special period for religious instruction. The time stipulated by the various ordinances varied greatly. The Eislebener Schulordnung, 1525, demands only a short period on "Sonn- und Fest-

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115) Ibid., p. 233

tagen."<sup>114</sup> The Unterricht der Visitatoren suggests all day Wednesday or all day Saturday. The Wittenberger Kirchenordnung, 1533, and others set aside two whole days. Finally, the Baden-Durlacher Schulordnung, 1536, advises as much as a short period every day. The Volkschulen and the Maedchenschulen, of course, spent most of the time in religious instruction.

The main purpose of this instruction was to acquaint the children with the Bible. Luther plainly states this: "Vor allem sollte in den hohen und niedern Schulen die vornehmste und gemeinste Lection sein die heilige Schrift."<sup>115</sup> However, because of the rank ignorance of the people and also because of the limited time, Luther deemed it wise to introduce the catechism.<sup>116</sup> True, the epistle and Gospel selections for the various Sundays were studied in the lower classes and quite extensive Bible study was carried on in the upper classes, but, generally speaking, the catechism was the book of instruction at the lower level. Generally, in the deutschen Schulen and in the lower classes of the

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- 114) Since there will be too many references to the ordinances in the present chapter, we shall not include a footnote for each reference. All these references are in the ordinances included by Mertz in his work. Vide pp. 457-648.
- 115) Luther, An den christlichen Adel, op. cit., I, 340.
- 116) Mertz lists fifty-eight authors of various catechisms used during the Reformation. Mertz, op. cit., p. 247.

Latin school a German catechism was used. Sometimes, however, a Latin catechism was used in the lower Latin school and often also in the upper Latin school.<sup>117</sup> In accordance with the educational principles of the time, extreme emphasis was placed on memorization, very often to the neglect of an understanding of the text. Luther warns against this method in his Deutsche Messe und Ordnung: "Nicht allein also, dass sie die Worte auswendig lernen nachreden, wie bisher geschehen ist, sondern von Stueck zu Stueck frage und sie antworten lasse, was ein jegliches bedeute und wie sie es verstehen."<sup>118</sup>

Besides the regular classroom instruction certain services were also set aside for catechetical instruction. Luther wished such services to be held every day as he ordered in the Braunschweiger Kirchenordnung, 1528, and in the Hamburger Kirchenordnung, 1529. But his plea was not carried out. Some like the Wuerttemberger Kirchenordnung, 1559, held them on Friday, Saturday or another day, and Sunday. Later some like the Wittenberger Kirchenordnung, 1533, abolished them altogether since they disturbed the regular school instruction.

In his Deutsche Messe und Ordnung Luther describes

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117) Cp. Brandenburger Schulordnung, 1564.

118) Luther, op. cit., 230, X.



the procedure of such services:

"Die Woche ueber taeglich, vor der Lection, singen sie etliche Psalmen lateinisch, wie bisher zur Metten gewohnt. Denn, wie gesagt ist, wir wollen die Jugend bei der lateinischen Sprache in der Bibel behalten und ueben. Nach den Psalmen lesen die Knaben einer um den ander, zwei oder drei, ein Capitel lateinisch aus dem neuen Testament, darnach's lag ist. Darauf liesset ein anderer Knabe dasselbe Capitel zu Deutsch, sie zu ueben, und ob jemand von Laien da waere und zuhoerete. Darnach gehen sie mit einer Antiphone zur deutschen Lection, davon drohen gesagt ist. Nach der Lection singt der ganze Haufe ein deutsch Lied, darauf spricht man heimlich ein Vater-Unser, darnach der Pfarrherr oder Capellan eine Collecte, und beschliessen mit dem Benedicamus Domino, wie gewohnt ist."<sup>119</sup>

In close connection with the religious instruction was the instruction in music. Like the medieval period the Reformation emphasized music in its curriculum. Luther expresses his desire for its inclusion in his An die Rathsherrn.<sup>120</sup> In his other writings he had high words of praise for the subject. In his Gedanken von der Musika, 1538, he writes:

"Und ist in Summa unmoeglich, dass man diese edle Kunst genugsam loben oder erheben koenne und moege... Denn nach dem heiligen Worte Gottes nichts so billig und so hoch zu ruehmen und zu loben ist, als eben die Musika... Darum will ich jedermann und sonderlich jungen Leuten diese Kunst befehlen."<sup>121</sup>

The Braunschweiger Kirchenordnung, 1526, gives us some idea

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119) Ibid., 234-235.

120) Luther, op. cit., 478.

121) Luther, Gedanken von der Musika; quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 250.

of what was expected:

"Dat se allen kynderen groet unde kleyne, gelert und ungelert, singen leren... gemeynen sauch duedesch ynde latinisch, dar te eck in figurativis, nicht alleyne na gewaenheit, sonder och mit der tidt kunstlich, dat de kyndere leren vorstan de Voces, Claves, unde wat mehr hoeret so sulker Musika, dat se leren vaste singen unde renlich..."<sup>122</sup>

The time devoted to music usually varied according to the different orders. Generally, the time is one hour each day. Sometimes besides instruction in the religious song there also was instruction in the secular songs and even in technique. The Eittenberger Kirchenordnung, 1533, is one of the orders which carries this stipulation. The reason for such instruction is not only explainable in church singing but also in the fact that the students sang for various occasions such as banquets, weddings, and before the houses of various people.<sup>123</sup>

Next to religion the most important feature of the curriculum was the languages. This is plainly evident from the educational writings of Luther and Melancton and also from the many references in the various ordinances. This emphasis was well in harmony with the popular educational philosophy of the day, namely, humanism, which considered the languages the chief among subjects. It attributed to

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122) Braunschweiger Kirchenordnung, 1528, in Vormbaum, op. cit., p. 16.

123) Cp. Hertz, op. cit., pp. 434-435.

them a peculiar charm, as Paulsen indicates in the following words:

"Das Thema aller dieser Schriften ist: dass der Mangel an Eloquenz Schuld sei an allen Uebeln in der Bildung und den Sitten des Klerus, ueber welche auf allen Konzilien und Reichstagen geklagt werde; mit der Eloquenz wuerden auch Weisheit und Tugend, die mit jener ungetrennlich verbunden seien, ihren Einzug halten."<sup>124</sup>

While the Reformers were somewhat influenced by this humanistic attitude, their basic reason for language emphasis was somewhat different.<sup>125</sup> In their opinion the importance did not consist in philology or in a historical interest but in the practical element, namely, in mental gymnastics, in understanding past learning, and above all, in a proper interpretation of Holy Scripture. Luther states: "Und lasset uns das gesagt sein, dass wir das Evangelium nicht wohl werden erhalten ohne die Sprachen. Die Sprachen sind die Scheide, darin dies Messer des Gustes steckt..."<sup>126</sup> Yet, in addition to such references as this, here and there a remark occurs which smacks of humanistic influence.

Luther states:

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124) Paulsen, Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts auf den deutschen Schulen und Universitaeten vom Ausgang des Mittelalters bis zur Gegenwart, I, 80.

125) Hertz discusses the relation of humanism to the Reformation under the title, "Das Verhaetnis des Humanismus zur Reformation auf dem Gebiete des Schulwesens," pp. 447-456.

126) Luther, An die Rathsherren aller Staedte Deutschlands, op. cit., 470.

"Ja, sprichst du abermals, ob man gleich sollte und muszte Schulen haben, was ist uns aber nuetzte, lateinische griechische und hebraische Zungen und andere freie Kuenste zu lernen? Antwort: Ja, ich weiss leider wohl, dass wir Deutschen muessen immer Bestien und tolle Thiere sein und bleiben..... Die Kuenste und Sprachen, die uns ohne Schaden, ja groeszeren Schmuck, Nutzen, Ehre und Frommen sind, beide, zur heiligen Schrift zu verstehen und weltlich Regiment zu fuehren, wollen wir verachten."<sup>127</sup>

According to the Reformers the most important language was the Latin. The reason, of course, is very obvious. It was the language of commerce, of the textbook, of the learned, and also of the humanist. It was emphasized throughout all periods of instruction besides being taught in regular periods.<sup>128</sup> Use was also made of it in the services. In his Deutsche Messe und Ordnung, Luther not only suggests for each service "ein Capitel lateinisch aus dem Neuen Testament,"<sup>129</sup> but also that one service each week should be conducted in Latin.

The procedure used in instructing Latin was that laid down by Melancton in his Ratio discendi, 1522. It consisted of three divisions: Praecepta (Regeln), Exercitatio (Uebung), Imitatio (Nachahmung). The purpose of the praecepta or grammar is well stated by Melancton:

"Da man die Reinheit der goettlichen Lehre ohne Wissenschaft nicht bewahren kann, viele Streitigkeiten ueber die wichtigsten Fragen nach dem Wortlaut

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127) Ibid., 468.

128) Naturally, we are here speaking of the Latin school not of the deutsche Schule.

129) Luther, Deutsche Messe und Ordnung, op. cit., 234.

zu entscheiden sind und man zur Auslegung die genaue Kenntnis des sprachlichen Ausdrucks braucht, was wird ein Lehrer ohne grammatische Kenntnisse in der Kirche anders sein als ein blosser Schatten oder ein unverschämter Fabulist?"<sup>130</sup>

The study of the praecepta consisted in the learning of forms and etymology and also in syntax and sentence structure. At the lower levels it usually was studied from a compendium such as from the one written by Donat.

Generally the instruction in grammar was begun in the first class of the Latin school at which time Donat was read and the paradigms for declensions and conjugations were learnt. Sometimes all the grammar instruction was completed in the first few years; at other times it was taught throughout all the years of the Latin school. In the upper classes dialectics and rhetoric, generally considered a part of grammar instruction, were studied. The purpose of dialectics was "ein Ding fein, rund, kurz und eigentlich definieren und beschreiben, was es gewisz ist;"<sup>131</sup> the purpose of rhetoric "ein Ding fein nach der Laenge mit Worten weitlaeufig schmueckt und ausstreicht."<sup>132</sup>

The second division in instructing Latin was the Exercitatio (Uebung). This phase consisted in memorizing words, phrases, and sentences. Generally, these were written on the board just before the close of school in the

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130) Quoted in Mertz, op. cit., pp. 269-270

131) Luther, Tischreden, quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 257.

132) Ibid., quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 275.

evening and were to be recited on the following morning. Later, books containing such words and phrases were published, thereby eliminating much of the burdensome copying. Examinations were held at regular intervals.

The chief aim in instructing Latin was to have the children speak it as soon as possible. Luther refers to this fact in his Tischreden: "Ist es nicht wahr, dasz auch die Sprachen, so die allergewissesten Regeln haben, als die lateinische und griechische Sprache, vielmehr aus Übung und Gewohnheit denn aus Regeln gelernt werden?"<sup>133</sup> Thus, as soon as a sufficient number of words and phrases were memorized, such memorization having been begun in the first year, the language itself was to be spoken, often even to the exclusion of the German.

The third division of Latin instruction was the imitatio (Nachahmung). Like the humanists the Reformers were convinced that true eloquence can only be attained by imitation especially of the classics. In studying the classics the aim was to get a general conception of a good style (imitatio generalis) and also to analyze the grammatical construction (imitatio specialis). The study in imitation was to begin as early as possible. In the first

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133) Ibid., quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 275.

years books of Latin collections were used. Probably the two outstanding ones are Catonis disticha de moribus containing 164 sayings and Aesop's Fables. Concerning these two books Luther remarks: "Und ist eine sonderliche Gnade Gottes, dasz des Catonis Buechlein und die Fabeln Aesopi in den Schulen sind erhalten worden. Es sind beide nuetzliche und herrliche Buechlein."<sup>134</sup> Besides such collections, dialogues concerning the subject of curricula, holidays, religion, and the like, were used. Two such collections were Paedagogia Petri Mosellani Protogensis and Colloquia Erasmi, the latter of which Luther bitterly condemned. After these introductory collections were studied the classics were then introduced. This reading, however, was almost always done in the upper classes. The most popular authors were: Terence, Plautus, Vergil, Ovid, Horace, Livy, Caesar, and Cicero.

The language second in importance was the Greek. During the Middle Ages little use was made of it. Erasmus at one time exclaimed, "In meiner Jugend lag auf unserm Deutschland eine so dicke Finsternis, dasz man den sogar fuer einen Ketzer hielt, der die griechische Sprache verstand."<sup>135</sup> With the introduction of humanism, however, it was again emphasized. While the humanists regarded it as

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134) Luther, Tischreden, quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 282.

135) Quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 297.

the original language of philosophy which aided in making them free, the Reformers valued it because a knowledge of it lead to a better understanding of Scripture. Luther particularly valued it. He wished that a church service be given in Greek once a week.<sup>136</sup>

The study of Greek was as a general rule reserved for the upper classes. Luther and Melancton make such a stipulation in Unterricht der Visitatoren, 1528. The method of instruction was the same as with the Latin, the three previously mentioned divisions being used. Several different grammars were in use, Hertz mentions nineteen of them.<sup>137</sup> Among the Greek authors studied were: Homer, Aristophanes, Hesiod, Sophocles, Euripedes, Xenophon. Occasionally the Christian Greek writings were also studied.

In addition to Latin and Greek Hebrew was also studied. During the Middle Ages little use was made of it. With the exception of a few men like Reuchlin humanism too had little respect for it. Its interest was mainly in the Latin and Greek. The Reformers, however, valued it highly. They realized its value in understanding the Scriptures. Luther states: ".....zu deren Erlernung ich oft die Jugend anreize, aber fast vergeblich, denn ihre Kenntnis

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136) Luther, Deutsche Messe und Ordnung, op. cit., 228.

137) Hertz, op. cit., p. 309. Melancton's was the most popular.



traegt auszerordentlich viel dazu bei, die Schrift klaerlich zu verstehen.<sup>138</sup> The instruction in the Hebrew was always given in the upper classes.

Of all the languages the German was the most neglected. It lay far behind the others in importance. It was repudiated during the Middle Ages and it was not held in much higher regard during the Reformation. Of course, much use of it was made in the deutschen Schulen and in the Maedchenschulen. Only seldom was it used in the Latin schools. It was used in teaching the elements of Latin. Quite often a reference occurs which speaks of a German catechism for Latin pupils. Then participation of the Latin school children in the German services was required. However, outside of these few uses German was generally repudiated. Nevertheless, it must be said of the Reformers that despite the widespread hatred of the German they were not ashamed to use it when it involved the spreading of the Gospel. To them the Gospel came first and then the language. While men like Sturm and Tratzendorf, extreme classicists, opposed it, Luther lauded it. He used it in his writings. He translated the Bible into it. He bemoaned the fact that it had been corrupted in the cloisters.

With so much emphasis upon the languages little time was left for other subjects. As a result, the so called

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138) Luther, Auslegung des zweiten Psalms, op. cit., V, 112.

"Realien" were woefully neglected. Here and there a reference does occur. Luther once remarked:

"Wir sind jetzt in der Morgenroete eines kuenftigen Lebens; denn wir fengen an, wiederum zu erlangen das Erkenntnis der Kreaturen, das wir verloren haben durch Adams Fall."<sup>139</sup>

Of all the "Realien" mathematics and history were particularly stressed. Guenther even claims that the Reformation was the first to introduce mathematics in the Volkschulen.<sup>140</sup>

Generally speaking, however, it was studied in the higher schools. Even there the use was not widespread. In regard to history, little more can be said. In his Vorrede zur Geschichte des Herzogs Franz Sforza zu Mailand von Capella Luther makes an advanced statement: "Es spricht der hochberuehmte Varro, dass die allerbeste Weise zu lehren sei, wenn man zu dem Wort Exempel oder Beispiele gibt.....

Darum ist's ein koestlich Ding um die Historien."<sup>141</sup> Yet, few references to history are to be found in the ordinances. Seldom is a special time set aside. When it is mentioned, it usually is taught in connection with the catechism.

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139) Quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 325.

140) Guenther, Geschichte des Mathematischen Unterrichts im deutschen Mittelalter bis zum Jahre 1525, Berlin 1887. Mon. Germ. Paid. Bd. III. Quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 327.

141) Luther, Vorrede zu Geschichte des Herzogs Franz Sforza zu Mailand. Quoted in Mertz, op. cit., p. 331.

Besides mathematics and history other "Realien" mentioned are nature study, jurisprudence, architecture, agriculture, and industrial training. With the exception of nature study these are generally reserved for the upper classes.

Just what the Reformation contributed to education in respect to the curriculum is beyond the judgment of the writer. His study was too limited for him to be able to make a statement. Leach's conclusion is:

The net result of the Renaissance and Reformation on the curriculum and methods of grammar schools was little more than to place Greek in the same position as Latin; with more éclat attaching to real knowledge of it, but less consequence attached and less effort made to attain that knowledge in the majority of pupils.<sup>142</sup>

Painter is a little more complimentary: "He (Luther) brought about a reorganization of schools introducing graded instruction, an improved course of study, and rational methods."<sup>143</sup>

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142) Leach, "Reformation and Education," op. cit., p. 142.

143) Painter, op. cit., p. 167.

### VIII. Conclusion

Thus with the study of the curriculum we close our thesis with the fond hope that future time will bring future study and that future study will unveil many of the problems confronted in the thesis. If there is any one truth that was reemphasized for the writer time and again throughout this entire study, it is the great difficulty of historical research to arrive at certainty. No matter how clear the facts may be, there still are usually two or more points of view, especially in dealing with a period like the Reformation which is subject to much religious bias.

Though the study has by no means solved the problems which we had expected it to unravel, we nevertheless are appreciative of the time spent in the field. It is our fond hope, if God wills, to continue this investigation at some future date, perhaps in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts degree. At that time the writer would like to trace the influence of the Reformation upon modern Christian education in addition to completing the study of Reformation education itself. In that field the study of the teacher, the pupil, the methods, etc., must be pursued. We leave our paper in utmost humility hoping that no one places too much confidence in our conclusions. We prefer to regard the thesis as a phase of factual admission rather than factual emission.

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Cubberley's survey is generally considered one of the best. It was used not so much in gathering material as in determining his attitude toward Reformation education.

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His book is particularly valuable because of its inclusion of the translations of most of Luther's educational writings and statements.

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Leach, A. F. "Reformation and Education," A Cyclopedia of Education. Edited by Paul Monroe. Vol. III, 1926. Pp. 133-134.

In my opinion this article is classical. It presents the education of the Reformation so reasonably and fairly.

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This German work is an excellent piece of research in regard to pre-Reformation education. The writer throughout maintains the thesis of widespread education before the Reformation. From all indications the writer is a Catholic. The book is from the shelves of the Washington University library.

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Mertz, Georg. Das Schulwesen der deutschen Reformation  
im 16. Jahrhundert. Heidelberg, 1902. 648 pp.  
This work of Mertz is without a doubt one  
of the greatest contributions to Reforma-  
tion education. The research is immense,  
involving a thorough study and analysis of  
the numerous ordinances of time. A glance  
at the chapter headings will give the reader  
some idea of the content: I. Die prinzi-  
pelle Stellung der Reformation zum Schul-  
wesen und Zweck ihrer Erziehung; II. Die  
Schulmaenner der Reformation und ihre be-  
deutendsten Paedagogischen Schriften;  
III. Die evangelischen Kirchen und Schul-  
ordnungen des 16. Jahrhunderts; Iv. Die  
Schulanstalten; V. Die Unterrichtsfaecher;  
VI. Die Unterrichtsmethode; VII. Die  
Erziehungsmittel; VIII. Die Lehrer;  
IX. Die Schueler; X. Das Verhaeltnis des  
Humanismus zur Reformation auf dem Gebiete  
des Schulwesens; XI. Anhang. Die evan-  
gelischen Kirchen- und Schulordnungen im  
16. Jahrhundert.

Of course, Mertz is definitely of the convic-  
tion that the Reformation is an outstanding  
period in the history of education. In order  
to maintain his thesis, it seems that he often  
forces the facts. Throughout his work he  
first makes a statement and then sets out to  
prove it. Instead of first gathering the  
facts and then making a statement, it seems  
that he first has an idea in mind and then  
he goes on to find factual substantiation.

Painter, F. V. N. Luther on Education. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889.

Painter's attitude is known to all. He seems to be much too enthusiastic in his praise for Reformation education. The absence of footnotes detracts much from the writer's contribution. The book contains the writer's translations of Luther's two great educational treatises, And die Rathsherren aller Staedte Deutschlands, and Predigt, Kinder zur Schule halten.

Paulsen, Friedrich. German Education Past and Present. Translated by T. Lorenz. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908.

This translation of Paulsen's shorter work is an excellent survey. Much pertinent material is presented both on pre-Reformation and on Reformation education. Especially valuable are the terminological notes contained in the introduction, pp. IX-XVIII. "In Prussia the Mittelschule (intermediate school) is the name of a higher grade primary school, standing on the border line of secondary education." XIV.

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Generally, Kertz was used when referring to the ordinances. However, occasionally we used Vormbaum when Kertz was inadequate.



