

**SELECTIONS FROM  
TABLE TALK OF  
MARTIN LUTHER**

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Selections from Table Talk of Martin Luther by Martin Luther

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THE  
TABLE TALK OF MARTIN LUTHER.

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**TABLE TALK**  
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TRANSLATED BY  
CAPTAIN HENRY BELL.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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MARTIN LUTHER died on the 18th of February, 1546, and the first publication of his "Table Talk"—*Tischreden*—by his friend, Johann Goldschmid (Aurifaber), was in 1566, in a substantial folio. The talk of Luther was arranged, according to its topics, into eighty chapters, each with a minute index of contents. The whole work in a complete octavo edition, published at Stuttgart and Leipzig in 1836, occupies 1,390 closely printed pages, equivalent to 2,780 pages, or full fourteen volumes, of this Library.

The nearest approach to a complete and ungarbled translation into English was that of Captain Henry Bell, made in the reign of Charles the First, under the circumstances set forth by himself; but even that was not complete. Other English versions have subjected Luther's opinions to serious manipulation, nothing being

added, but anything being taken away that did not chance to agree with the editor's digestion. Even the folio of Captain Bell's translation, from which these Selections have been printed, has been prepared for reprint by some preceding editor, whose pen has been busy in revision of the passages he did mean to reprint. In these Selections every paragraph stands unabridged, exactly as it was translated by Captain Bell; and there has been no other purpose governing the choice of matter than a resolve to make it as true a presentment as possible of Luther's mind and character. At least one other volume of *Selections from the Table-Talk of Martin Luther* will be given in this Library.

Johann Goldschmid, the Aurifaber, and thereby true worker in gold, who first gave Luther's Table-Talk to the world, was born in 1519. He was a disciple of Luther, thirty-six years younger than his master. Luther was born at Eisleben in 1483, and his father, a poor miner, presently settled at Mansfeld, the town in which Goldschmid afterwards was born. Johann Goldschmid was sent by

Count Albrecht of Mansfeld, in 1537, to the University of Wittenberg, where Luther had been made, in 1508, Professor of Philosophy, and where, on the 31st of October, 1517, he had nailed his ninety-five propositions against indulgences to the church door at the castle. Luther had completed his translation of the Bible three years before Johann Goldschmid went to Wittenberg. In 1540 Goldschmid was recalled from the University to act as tutor to Count Albrecht's children. In 1544 Goldschmid was army chaplain with the troops from Mansfeld in the French war; but in 1545 he was sent back to Wittenberg for special study of theology. It was then that he attached himself to Luther as his *famulus* and house-companion during the closing months of Luther's life, began already to collect from surrounding friends passages of his vigorous "Table Talk," and remained with Luther till the last, having been present at his death in Eisleben in 1546. He then proceeded steadily with the collection of Luther's sayings and opinions expressed among his friends. He was army chaplain among