

LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER

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Life of Martin Luther by Christian Bunsen & Sir William Hamilton

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CHRISTIAN BUNSEN & SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON

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PREFACE.

THE briefest, most reliable, and, taken all in all, the completest extant life of Luther, is this contributed by the Chevalier Bunsen to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Author and subject need no praise from us. We are happy to place within the reach of all a good and trustworthy summary of the great Reformer's life.

From Carlyle is added an estimate of Luther's Character and Genius — one of those spiritual portraits for which Carlyle will be known as long as literature endures, and on which his fame will ultimately rest.

Following our general plan, we here give a biographical sketch of the author from whom the *Life of Luther* has been taken.

BUNSEN, CHRISTIAN KARL JOSIAS, CHEVALIER DE, a philologist, theologian and diplomatist, was born at Corbach, in the small German principality of Waldeck, on the 25th of August, 1791; and was educated at the University of Göttingen, where he studied philology under the famous Heyne. He distinguished himself greatly as a classical scholar, and in 1813 published at Göttingen a prose essay, "De Jure Atheniensium Hereditario." After being employed some time as a classical teacher, his desire to perfect himself in Oriental languages induced him to go to Paris, where he studied under the noted Orientalist Sylvestre de Sacy. He had it next in contemplation to go to India, in company with an Englishman, in order to acquire a further knowledge of Sanscrit; but having in the mean time determined to visit Italy, he met at Rome his friend Brandis, then Secretary to the Prussian embassy at Rome under Niebuhr. Introduced to Niebuhr, the young scholar

found in him a friend capable of appreciating his merits. Abandoning his intention of going to the East, he settled in Rome as Niebuhr's private secretary — a situation afterwards exchanged for the higher one of secretary to the embassy. Enjoying the benefit of Niebuhr's society and advice, he resumed his classical studies with enthusiasm, turning to advantage the facilities afforded him by his residence in Rome. The results of his inquiries into the antiquities and topography of Rome appeared in his "*Beschreibung der Stadt Rom*," (Description of the City of Rome.) He also interested himself much at this time in the hieroglyphical researches of Champollion; and he was instrumental in inciting the savans of Berlin to betake themselves to this branch of archaeology, and more particularly in determining towards it the rising talent of the great living Ægyptologist, Dr. Lepsius. At Rome Bunsen was one of the chief supports of the Archæological Institute, and indeed

acted as its general secretary. The visit of the King of Prussia to Rome in 1822, made that sovereign acquainted with the abilities of the secretary of his legation; the present king also—then crown prince—made his acquaintance about the same time. The personal esteem which both contracted for Bunsen accounts for his rapid advancement in the Prussian diplomatic service. On Niebuhr's retirement from the embassy at Rome, Bunsen succeeded him, first as Chargé d'affaires and afterwards as full minister. In this capacity he interested himself much in the Protestant Church and Protestant worship at Rome, as well as in his classical and historical studies. A difference between the papal court and that of Prussia on a question of ecclesiastical right in the Prussian States, led to his recall in March 1838. After a visit to Munich and to England, he was again in November 1839, in diplomatic service as ambassador to the Swiss Confederacy; and in 1841 he was appoint-

ed Prussian ambassador to England. Retaining this post till 1854, when his peculiar opinions on the proper policy of Prussia in the approaching European crisis led to his resignation or recall, and having during these thirteen years resided chiefly in London, Chevalier Bunsen became almost a naturalized Englishman; and indeed two of his sons have settled in England, one as a clergyman in the English Church. While discharging with peculiar discretion his duties as Prussian ambassador, he was at the same time widely known in English society as a philologist and a man of letters—a representative, in intellectual English circles, of the erudition and scholarly zeal of Germany. The following list of his works, published since 1841, will indicate the grounds of his well-earned celebrity:—"The Liturgy of the Passion-week, with a Preface," &c., published at Hamburg in 1841, not translated; "The Basilicæ of Christian Rome in their Connection with the Idea and History of

Church Architecture," &c., published at Munich in 1843, and not translated; "The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch, with Annotations," and "Ignatius of Antioch and his Age, Seven Letters to Dr. A. Neander," both published by the Academy of Hamburg in 1844, and the last we believe translated; "Die Verfassung der Kirche der Zukunft," published at Hamburg in 1845, and translated into English in 1847, under the title of "The Constitution of the Church of the Future;" *Ægyptens Stelle in der Weltgeschichte*, Hamburg, 1845, and the English translation of which, "Egypt's Place in Universal History," is perhaps the best known of the author's works; "Memoir on the Constitutional Rights of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein," presented to Lord Palmerston, April 1848, and published that year (about which time other papers on German politics were published by the author;) finally, since 1848, contributions to "The Life and Letters of B. G. Niebuhr," published by an

English editor in 1852, from the German materials; and an important and elaborate work published first in 1851, in four volumes, under the title of "Hippolytus," and again in a revised and extended form in 1854, as "Christianity and Mankind: their Beginnings and Prospects," in seven volumes—volumes one and two containing "Hippolytus and his Age," volumes three and four "Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History applied to Language and Religion," and volumes five, six, and seven, "Analecta Ante-Nicena." It is as an Ægyptologist and ecclesiastical historian that Chevalier Bunsen has most widely affected his time. He now lives in retirement on the Rhine, pursuing his favorite studies, and often reading or writing at a standing-desk sixteen hours a day.

An Appendix, entitled by us the Reverse-side of the Picture, which we confess did not enter into our original plan, will show, in the emphatic language of Sir Wm. Hamilton, the blemishes of Luther's