

related to St Augustine (Epistle 206 on the miracles of St Jerome)⁴³ the story, true in every respect, of a monk who had an image of St Jerome in his cell. It was his established practice each day when he looked upon it to commend himself to the image and bow before it. When at nights he wanted secretly to pursue dissolute activities outside the cloister, this image miraculously prevented him for three nights, until, inspired by the Devil, he tore down the image and got rid of it. Why, therefore, should we not look willingly on the image of St Christopher or the images of other beloved saints, and day and night confidently trust ourselves to their intercession with God? They often appear visibly to their servants and come to their aid. In my first book against Luther's Reformation I related many stories about such things that are worthy of belief and the legends of the saints are full of them.

KARLSTADT

Because of this scandalous state of affairs you should counsel the belief that all images should be dragged down to the Devil.

EMSER

If everything that causes scandal should be dragged down to the Devil, then Karlstadt and Luther, who have made so many pious Christian hearts err and waver in their faith, must have fallen headlong to the Devil in the bottom of hell. Indeed, even the Holy Gospel might not escape hell, since so much scandal and heresy has come out of it and still does come daily. As I in my *Quadruplica* clearly showed, and the saintly old Simeon prophesied: Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel (Luke 2:[34]). Therefore, one must not immediately cast something aside because some particular evil or foolish people misuse it or cause some scandal with it. For just as the bee draws honey and the spider poison from every plant, so there is nothing on earth so good that evil cannot pervert or misuse. But to the pure all things are pure, as the apostle says (Timothy 1:[5]).

KARLSTADT

You must also admit to me that many of the laity put much hope and trust in other images etc.

EMSER

I do not admit in any way that these laity who hear sermons daily

⁴³ This letter, reproduced in Migne, ed., *PL*, vol. 33, 1127ff., was wrongly attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem: see *PG*, vol. 33, 1210, and *PL*, vol. 33, 1121.

and in these and other cases receive good Christian instruction are so foolish that they place any trust or hope in images, but they bear love and devotion to images for the sake of the beloved saints. In order that they may understand that that is no idolatry, the holy Gregory writes as follows to Secundinus: We know very well that you do not request the image of our Saviour because you want to worship it as a god, but, rather, that through memory and by looking upon it you will become the more inwardly ardent in the love of Christ, just as we prostrate ourselves before the above-mentioned image not as before God, but rather, we pray to him whom the image represents to us, and thereby move beyond visible to invisible things. And just as his image on the crucifix makes us grieve through the contemplation of his sufferings, so we rejoice in other images, as of his birth and resurrection, because of the benefit we have received from those events. For this reason we now send to you by our deacon Dulcidius two panels, in one of which is an image of our Saviour and his Mother Mary. In the other are painted likenesses of the two apostles Peter and Paul.⁴⁴ Thus Gregory: From which we may take it that neither Saint Gregory nor the Christian church teaches us to put any sort of trust and hope in an image, but rather, in God, and that we do not worship images otherwise than the Christian councils mentioned above established and taught.

KARLSTADT

Look! You have permitted the laity to light candles before images of St Paul, Peter, and Barnabas and bring them offerings etc.

EMSER

The heretic Vigilantius also wrote and complained against setting up candles. St Jerome answered him in a letter which begins *Multa in orbe monstra*. He says: Since God is venerated in his saints, what harm does it do to you or what do you lose if a pious person sets up a candle to honour a saint, although I certainly acknowledge myself that they do so out of well-meaning simplicity and might do something better.⁴⁵ Thus St Jerome. Wycliffe and Huss also complain that we burn out our eyes to the day with our candlelight.⁴⁶ And Erasmus of Rotterdam, although he chastises us and says in his *Enchiridion* or *Handbook of the Christian*

⁴⁴ Migne, ed., *PL*, vol. 72, 988ff., esp. 991.

⁴⁵ This is from *Contra Vigilantium, liber unus*, in Migne, ed., *PL*, vol. 23, 353ff.

⁴⁶ Which is to say, we blind ourselves to daylight (i.e. the truth) by staring at banks of burning candles.

Knight, that many seek something more for their own benefit than to honour the saints when they light a candle—such as the women who light candles to St Blasius to protect their pigs, to St Apollonius to make their wash white, or to another to insure that the beer is well brewed, and the like. Still, despite this, he does not condemn in general the lighting of candles or other outward ceremonies, but only the abuse of over reliance on these external things, in favour of which the inward, spiritual things, which concern us more, are omitted, for there is no offering more pleasing to God than a spirit grieving over its sin. So we can give our beloved saints no greater joy and do them no greater honour than to follow them diligently in their holy lives. The words of Erasmus are as follows: What then shall a Christian do? Shall he neglect the commandments of the Church? Shall he disdain the honourable traditions of the Fathers? Shall he condemn pious customs? On the contrary, if he is weak he shall observe them as necessary things, but if he is strong and perfect he shall observe them even more lest he harm a weak brother by his knowledge and kill him for whom Christ died. Physical works are not condemned, but invisible ones are preferred. Visible cults are not condemned, but God is pleased only by the invisible cult. And a little further on: You think a burning candle is a sacrifice. But David said an afflicted spirit is a sacrifice to God etc. Thus the text of Erasmus.⁴⁷ Therefore, although it were perhaps better that one should give to poor and needy people the money one pays for unnecessary wax, nevertheless, when a man is so rich that he can do both without hurting himself, then I do not want to chastise [him], even as the angel did not chastise the three Marys because they had paid so much money for ointment, which, since the Lord was no longer in his grave, but was risen, was to no purpose and of no use.

KARLSTADT

If you are such an erudite fellow, I beg you, in a friendly way, to tell me whether Paul, Peter, and Barnabas in person would have permitted us to place them on altars.

EMSER

Yes, the more the beloved saints shunned veneration in their lifetimes, the more worthy they are to be held in veneration after their death, as is written in Matthew 18[:4]: Every man who humbles himself shall be raised up. Indeed, God promised not only to place them on altars, but to

⁴⁷ *Enchiridion militis Christiani*, in Erasmi, *Opera omnia* (Leiden, 1704), vol. 5, col. 37.

give them charge of all his possessions (Matthew 24:[45ff.]). Moreover we place them thus on altars not as gods, but as friends of God, as Saint Paul himself says (Ephes. 2[:19]): You are now not strangers or foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Since, then, Saint Paul calls them members of God's household, why does Karlstadt want to eject and drive them out of the house of God.

KARLSTADT

O how evil it will be for those who, caught in the throes of death, cleave unto idols and bow and kneel before them.

EMSER

Neither in death nor in life do we fear images which can neither help nor harm us, unless one might chance to fall occasionally, as the old god from Schaffhausen toppled down and killed a man. But those whom they depict can no doubt protect and assist us at the end of our lives, as the Christian church sings—Mary, Mother of grace, Mother of mercy, protect us from the enemy, sustain us in death.

KARLSTADT

Now I come back to the beginning and turn to Isaiah, who says: They are of no use (Isaiah 44:[10]). Books are useful to readers. It follows that images are not books for the laity, contrary to what Gregory and his entire company say.

EMSER

I freely acknowledge that Karlstadt returns right to the beginning, for just as he deceitfully distorted Scripture at the beginning, so does he here. For the prophet in these words spoke not of our images, but rather, of idols and their images. The text is as follows: They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit. And further on [verse 10]: Who has formed a god, or molten image that is profitable for nothing? But to suppose, and not to acknowledge it, that these words were also spoken of our images does not follow, as Karlstadt wants to conclude in the following false syllogism: Images are useless. Books are useful. Therefore images are not books of the laity. For when in the second figure the major premise is a particular, nothing can be concluded; the same is true of mere affirmations.⁴⁸ Therefore, we do

⁴⁸ Emser's comment on Karlstadt's syllogism reads, "Quia in secunda figure maiore existente particulari nihil sequitur. Similiter ex meris affirmationibus." It is difficult to make sense of the first sentence because of the syntax, but what

not accept this conclusion. Karlstadt then tries to demonstrate with better reason that images are not the books of the laity.

KARLSTADT

Listen to what Ezekiel says, you Gregorists and papists. If any renounces me and sets his heart upon idols etc. (Ezekiel 14:[7]).

EMSER

Listen, you Arianist and Wycliffist, the text of the prophet reads as follows: Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols [Ezekiel 14:6]. And a little further on: For every one . . . which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart . . . [Ezekiel 14:7]. Why do you then turn words spoken of idols onto our images and falsify the Scripture of the Holy Spirit? Have you not perpetrated the crime of fraud by doing this, or even committed a sacrilege?

KARLSTADT

Hear what follows in Ezekiel 14[:9]: If a prophet errs, I, the Lord, have made him err and will destroy him from the midst of my people.

EMSER

Mark these words yourself, for they have been written about you and other heretics.

KARLSTADT

If a man knows the commandment and will of God, he should follow it strictly and listen neither to angels, nor to saints, nor to prophets.

EMSER

There is no one who knows the will of God so completely that he does not also need the counsel, teachings, and instruction of the Christian church. For although Paul received his gospel from Christ himself, as he acknowledges in Galatians 1, nevertheless he did not want to preach without the instruction, advice, knowledge, and will of the other apostles who were at that time in Jerusalem (Gal. 1 and 2). By contrast Semeas allowed himself to be deceived by the lies of the false prophets, and that was his failing. Therefore, St John warned us to test whether the spirit is from God or not (1 John 4:[1]): Believe not every spirit. The stories of Nadab and Ahiu do not have anything to do with images, but rather

it seems to amount to is a refusal to accept the major premise as universal—i.e. that *all* images are useless—and to insist that it is particular—i.e. *some* images are useless. For the definition and discussion of the second figure, see Aristotle, *Prior analytics* I, 5.

teach the laity that they ought not to presume upon and arrogate priestly authority. But when Balaam said that there were no images in Jacob and idols in Israel (Num. 23) he spoke of the images of idols only, otherwise he would have been lying, for already the cherubim of the tabernacle and the brazen serpent were daily displayed before the Jews (Num. 21).

KARLSTADT

If someone comes and says that images teach and instruct the laity just as books do the learned, answer: God has forbidden me to use images etc.

EMSER

Regarding this and similar fables, it has been sufficiently demonstrated and shown above that God has not forbidden our images. When John says that God is a spirit and we must worship him in spirit and not in images, we agree, since we do not worship God in images, but in the presence of images are mindful of him alone, thereby awaken our spirits. The statement of Isaiah (44): Your foolish and senseless heart worships them etc. is not about our images, but about idols, as we have often heard. But what John says about how we must all be students of God, concerns not only the laity with their images, but also the learned with their books. For if God does not touch and attract our hearts, neither book nor image can help.

KARLSTADT

Whenever I want to have an outward admonition and reminder, I should desire the kind of reminder which Scripture indicates. I would much rather fall with horse and cart into sore tribulation and distress than come to an image etc.

EMSER

Perhaps Karlstadt means the cart with which he fell into the mud at Leipzig.⁴⁹ And not only did he come to grief in that same cart and through Doctor Eck, but he also suffered mockery and cat-calls enough from all the listeners (because he did not debate but read from cards) when he wanted otherwise to become enlightened and according to the text of Isaiah 28[:19] such vexation might have given him understanding. But, as the prophet Ezekiel says: He whom God makes to err and the

⁴⁹ Emser refers to the accident which threw Karlstadt from his wagon as he entered Leipzig in June 1518 for the debate with Eck. See Sider, *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt*, 71.

Devil blinds by God's decree cannot be helped by either inner or outer warnings. For he is in himself hardened and calloused, as we fear may have almost happened to Karlstadt. The passages from Isaiah 2 and 13, and Micah 5 speak only of idols and not of our images. Even if Karlstadt produces a whole sack full of texts about idols, he cannot thereby prove that all images are forbidden, since otherwise God himself would not have commanded Moses and Solomon to make and set up images.

KARLSTADT

A Christian therefore can understand that pictures should not be called books. Books instruct. But images cannot instruct, as Habakkuk says in chapter 2[:17]. Is it possible that it can teach? And further on he writes: From all this everybody can recognize that Gregory the pope has indeed taught in a papish, that is to say, unchristian, way when he gives pictures to the laity as books.

EMSER

Habbakuk also speaks of the images of idols, which the heathen do not use as signs, but as actual gods: Therefore they say to them, Wake up! or Stand up!, as the text says. Since, however, we Christians use our images only as signs, and each sign is made to signify or indicate something, as a drawing of a hoop or circle in front of a house teaches or shows me that beer or wine is sold there, how can then anyone who has a drop of understanding deny that our images teach and show us, just like books, what this or that saint suffered, or why St Lawrence is depicted with a grill, or St Catherine with a wheel, or St Sebastian with a pillar. For they bring home to us their sufferings and martyrdoms not less than if we had read about them in books. Why then does Karlstadt accuse and slander St Gregory and all the popes [by saying] that they have taught in an unchristian way in these matters? O holy Father Gregory, how long can you bear this insult of the heretics? I would almost like to say to you, wake up, stand up, and defend your honour yourself, for the obdurate people will never attend to me.

KARLSTADT

Scripture compares images and idols to whores and says in many places that the godless commit whoredom with images as whores do with dissolute men.

EMSER

All the passages of Scripture which Karlstadt adduces speak of the worshippers of idols or (according to the spiritual sense) of the heretics, as

Jerome teaches, and not of our images. And that it is true is demonstrated by the text of Ezekiel 6[:4]: And I will cast down your slain men before your idols. Again, Ezekiel 16[:16]: And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places. Moreover, thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured [Ezekiel 16:20]. Again, Hosea 2[:16-17]: And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth. Therefore, one cannot conclude that our images may be called whores and the churches whorehouses, as that presumptuous, shameless man without any fear of God dares to describe them.

KARLSTADT

We call the image of the Crucified One a lord god and sometimes say that it is the Lord Jesus and venerate it as if it were Christ himself. We say also that this image is St Sebastian, that one St Nicholas, etc. The wicked popes and foolish monks have brought us to this.

EMSER

That we give to images the names of those whose shape and figure they represent is a tired refrain and is masterfully answered by Augustine above. The divine honour and reverence we offer the crucifix is in no way offered to the wood or other materials, but to God himself. But whether in this matter the popes or monks, or Karlstadt himself has written as a wicked, crazy simpleton, I will let the Christian churches decide. That God is a jealous God, together with the claims in Exodus 20, Hosea 2 and 7, Isaiah 1 and 44, is to be understood to mean that God can tolerate none next to or beside him who wants to be as much and as greatly venerated as he; as Lucifer wanted to be. For as Augustine and Lactantius demonstrate, it is not possible for there be two Gods. But towards his own, who are willing to be subordinate to him and do not wish to challenge him, he is not an angry God. Therefore he says (Isaiah 42[:8]) not that he would take away or begrudge the saints their proper veneration. But, rather, he says I will not surrender my divine veneration to another, that is to the idols. Karlstadt also falsely says that Deut. 17[:2-5] condemns all those who carve or worship images, for the text speaks only of those who serve and worship alien gods, such as the sun or moon. Since Karlstadt saw this chapter, why then has he not also taken to heart the words about him and others who insult popes or priests which follow immediately after: Whoever rises up in court and will not be obedient to the priest who at all times administers the office of God, he shall die by the judgement and

law of the judge, so that the people who see such things are afraid and no one so easily puffs himself arrogantly against the priest [Deut. 17:12-13]. Now, Karlstadt, since you have insulted and slandered so many of God's popes and priests, both dead and living, and still daily insult and slander them, say for yourself whether you have not earned a sentence of death a thousand times over.

KARLSTADT

Now I want and shall say to all pious Christians that all those who stand in awe before pictures have idols in their hearts.

EMSER

Let him who is afraid don armour. Perhaps Karlstadt thinks that because he trembled and was in awe before images, and, as he says, was concerned that some devil's dummy might injure him, that we are also accustomed to stand in awe of images. But we more love and venerate them, than fear them. So Karlstadt has not yet escaped the fool-eater⁵⁰ before he trots out for us passages from Judges 6 and 2 Kings 17 which are not about images, but, rather, about alien gods: that we shall not stand in awe of them . . . etc.

KARLSTADT

From the texts quoted above it follows that Christians should strictly observe God's counsel, will, and command and no longer permit images. And this notwithstanding the old evil custom and the pestilential teaching of priests that they [images] are the books of laity. For God has prohibited the making and keeping of images.

EMSER

Indeed, when Karlstadt first irrefutably proves that God forbids the making or keeping of all images, and, again, that the old custom of the churches and the teachings of the holy Fathers and the councils is pestilential, then we could send images packing. It has, however, not happened so far, so I think we will be wanting to bake flat cakes several times before he brings that about.⁵¹

KARLSTADT

Thus we have documented and given honest proof of our first two articles through the testimony of the Holy Spirit etc.

⁵⁰ I.e. the bogeyman.

⁵¹ So-called flat cakes were eaten at Eastertide, so that the sense here is that it will be many years before Karlstadt proves anything.

EMSER

So arrogant is this man that he can even attribute lies to the Holy Spirit. Yet it is not the Holy Spirit but rather Karlstadt himself who falsely claims that God said through Jeremiah that images pollute or stain his house. For the prophet does not speak of images in general, of which there were many in the temple of Solomon without transgression, but spoke rather of the two idols Baal and Molech, as the letter of the text clearly indicates. It reads as follows: But they set their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech [Jer. 32:34-35]. From this text it clearly appears that the Holy Spirit does not bear witness to Karlstadt's lies, and that the said Karlstadt has not proved thereby his two articles.

KARLSTADT

The third article flows naturally from the passages of Scripture which have been cited. Nevertheless, I want to adduce particular testimony from Scripture. Thus shall you deal with them, says God (Deut. 7[:5]): You shall overthrow their altars. You shall smash their images. You shall hack down their groves etc.

EMSER

This passage proves nothing against our images but, rather, against the images of the seven heathen kings and their altars, as the text which follows makes clear: Thine eyes shall have no pity upon them, neither shalt thou serve their gods, for that will be a snare unto thee [Deut. 7:16]. Karlstadt's claim that we Christians have no divine altars but only heathen or human is also not demonstrated by the text of Exodus 20 as he proudly claims. Moreover, since he himself earlier called divine the altars which Noah, Jacob, Moses, and others set up to God, why should not the Christian altars, which we now set up for the veneration of the same God of old, also not be called divine? Indeed, the holy Dionysius never calls our altars anything but divine. But how could we have a better testimony against Karlstadt than that even the holy Paul did not remove the altar in Athens which was dedicated to the unknown God, nor smash it, but, rather, gave his first sermon about it: that it was the altar of the very God he wanted to proclaim (Acts 17). Augustine deals with this in the book on baptism addressed to Constantine.

KARLSTADT

The secular authorities should remove images and subject them to the judgement to which Scripture has subjected them.

EMSER

If our images should not be judged in any other way than they are in Scripture, then they would long ago have been left in peace, since Scripture has not touched on them with a single word, much less forbidden them.

KARLSTADT

I should also have hoped that the living God, having inspired in us a healthy desire for the removal of images, might have seen the task to its conclusion.

EMSER

Indeed, you should certainly believe, were it God's work, that it would have long since been done. Since, however, whoever destroys images extinguishes thereby also thoughts of God and the saints and God does not wish us to forget him or his elected, you can do, write, make, and order as long as you want and nothing will ever come of it and you will receive nothing from it but mockery and abuse. I pledge you my oath to that.

About Hezekiah, why he is praised in Scripture was discussed above. But in regard to Karlstadt's wish that our kings and princes were as pious as the Jewish kings, it seems to me beyond all doubt that we have much more pious kings and princes than the Jews. And the fact that King Josiah took the idol Baal out of the temple and burned it is not conclusive proof that the pope together with the entire priesthood should be subordinated to the secular authorities, since there is now another arrangement regarding the priesthood than in the Old Law, as I have written in my *Quadruplica*, where I showed why Moses spoke of a priestly kingdom and Peter of a kingly priesthood etc.

We also do not concede in any way to Karlstadt that our fathers were Amorites or our mothers Hittites, and that we should not follow them in that which is Christian and praiseworthy, for they were all pious Christian people, and may God permit that we do not become worse than the fathers, as Horace laments: Our parents' age, worse than our grandfathers', has brought forth us less worthy and destined soon to yield an offspring more wicked.⁵²

⁵² Horace, *Odes* iii, 6.

KARLSTADT

Certain image-kissers say: The Old Law forbids images; the New does not. And we follow the New, not the Old.

EMSER

Our images are forbidden neither by the New nor the Old Testament. And we know very well that Christ did not suspend or discard the Old Law, but, rather, fulfilled and illuminated it. Therefore it is idle prattle and empty words that Karlstadt wants here, from a false assumption, to drag erroneously [into the argument].

Finally, Karlstadt undertakes to harmonize Moses and Paul with the first Epistle to the Romans. There it is written that they have exchanged the splendour of the immortal for the likeness not only of a mortal man, but also of birds, of four-footed and creeping animals etc. But just as previously Karlstadt misunderstood Moses, who in Exodus 20 wrote only of images which had been worshipped as idols, so the poor man also does not understand Paul rightly, who, just as Moses, speaks only of likenesses and figures which the heathens have worshipped as gods, as the Egyptians worshipped storks, the Romans the geese who awakened them at night on the Capitoline hill, and the Babylonians the dragon which Daniel slew. And Jeroboam also effected images of calves in Samaria, and various heathens have worshipped ravens, and in this land one animal and in that land another, as St Ambrose has clearly explained and interpreted the words of St Paul [in his commentary on] the first Epistle to the Romans. Paul spoke also in other Epistles not of images but of idols, in all of which passages the worship of idols is expressly named as one thing among others which excludes us from the kingdom of God. Thus Moses and Paul are indeed in agreement, but not in the sense which Karlstadt wrongly understands and sets out, but rather in the way that the holy Fathers have interpreted Scripture for us and the Christian councils have established. With this, convinced that I have refuted Karlstadt's three heretical propositions and proved my own, and trusting that there is little or nothing at all in his book that remains unanswered, I set out my conclusions for the edification and enlightenment of the entire Christian church and every reasonable, God-fearing reader.⁵³

Nevertheless, I do not want to defend or excuse in any way in this

⁵³ Emser follows here a medieval tradition, also to be found in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa*, that the pagans venerated animals and other natural forms like the sun and moon, and that this was another basic difference between pagan idolatry and the Christian use of images.

book the abuses of images which go on in our times, abuses which do not please me at all and are not in accord with the opinion of the holy Fathers. I will briefly indicate what these abuses are.

First, our ancestors, as I have seen in many old cloisters and collegiate churches, placed quite simple images in the churches. This was not done because of any decline of art (for in earlier times there were no doubt capable painters, although they were not so common as they are now) but for two other reasons, namely that the people preferred to give the vast amounts of money which we spend on pictures today, often paying six, seven, eight, and even a thousand guilders for a single panel, to the blessed poor. The other reason is that the more artfully images are made the more their viewers are lost in contemplation of the art and manner in which the figures have been worked. We should turn this contemplation from the images to the saints which they represent. Indeed, many are transfixed before the pictures and admire them so much that they never reflect on the saints. Therefore, it would be far better for us to follow the old custom and have simple pictures in the churches so that expense would be spared and God and the saints would be venerated more than in this new manner which we now have.

The second abuse is that the painters and sculptors make images of the beloved saints so shamelessly whorish and roguish that neither Venus nor Cupid were so scandalously painted or carved by the pagans. The holy Fathers would not have approved of this. For when we look at the old picture, it is an honourable thing and all the limbs are covered so that no one can conceive from it an evil desire or thought. Therefore I believe that God will now punish the painters and forbid them the practice of their craft if they do not abandon these scandalous ways. For it would be far better to lay such improper and shameless images in the fire than to set them up on altars or in the churches. Indeed, even secular pictures should not be painted so shameless and naked, for they greatly stimulate the desires of the flesh, sin, and scandal. But that is the fault of a perverted world, not of images, and therefore not all images should be removed.⁵⁴

The third abuse is that we are too ready to burst in and offer candles and other things to images. Thus one should not believe in miracles or other signs unless they have been examined, evaluated, and authenticated by pope and bishops. That monks and priests foolishly allow such things

⁵⁴ The criticism of licentious images had already been expressed in the previous century, as Eck notes (see Eck, note 36), but this was never an important issue for the Reformers.

in their churches is inexcusable and one is afraid that they, for the sake of their own advantage, are more diligent regarding their images (so that the churches will be decorated and have great congregations) than they are in caring about the living images, which are the souls of men who were created in God's image (Gen. 1[:26]). These and similar misuses are not, in my opinion, to be defended, but, rather, all the leaders and prelates of the Church ought to establish and enforce, in accord with God's will, those rules governing the use of images which were established by the holy Fathers and the councils. Then the heretics will not find reason so mercilessly to rebuke, burn, and hack images to pieces as has happened in various places and perhaps because of the abuses mentioned above. For where one uses images as they were used and set up in earlier times, they are, as I said in the beginning, praiseworthy, Christian, and divine. They cannot justly be removed, for had God wanted them removed, the matter would not have been reserved for Karlstadt, for much serious effort has gone into this matter. Moreover, Scripture has also never forbidden images, as even Christ did not say the image of the emperor on the coin which the Jews gave to him should be expunged, because the emperor's image was struck there not as an idol but as an emperor, and Scripture only forbids images of idols, as I have convincingly demonstrated above.

From all this any reasonable man can judge from himself that since Christ did not begrudge the emperor veneration and did not forbid us to place his image on coins or to have among us other memorials and objects of veneration, how much more would he not begrudge such veneration to his saints. Therefore, I am afraid that this business of the heretics began solely because they wanted to tear from our hearts all veneration and regard for our beloved saints. They have already written that the saints cannot help us at all nor pray for us, and thereby hope that they would talk us out of serving the saints. But since we do not heed them and they note the images of the saints that stand daily before our eyes do not allow us to forget our beloved saints, they want to remove their images. Not only Karlstadt, but also his teacher Luther. For although Luther now preaches and scolds because his monks have so precipitously taken images away (that is, they should have held back the jack for a while longer and abided until the Imperial Diet in Nuremberg was over), nevertheless, he cannot conceal his own heretical heart and himself preaches that one should talk people out of their need for images and then gradually, over a period of time, remove them.⁵⁵ But I have no doubt that pious Christians will not

⁵⁵ Emser recognized that Luther, and not Karlstadt, was really responsible for

heed his brilliant and polished speech. The Christian church will also not permit that. For since Luther allows his own charming features to be painted and publicly displayed, why should the Church not treasure and venerate images of the beloved saints?

But if you, Karlstadt, are not pleased with this answer and want to respond to it, I will have you first forewarned that I have at home two boxes or trunks. In the one I am in the habit of putting words of abuse, and Luther and his followers have filled it entirely. In the other I put good rejoinders and refutations of my arguments. It is quite empty. Therefore, if you want to write something against me, spare the abusive words, for I already have enough and do not know how to store more, and bring forth something substantial. Then I will respond to you in the same way. But I will give you some good advice. Stay home and recant your heretical book, for as it is you have enough to answer for. May God have mercy on you so that you may better know, venerate, and be thankful to him and to his saints than you have up to now. That I will not begrudge you from the bottom of my heart, and I hope by virtue of my little book you will become a good Christian again, learn to interpret Scripture correctly, and note how scandalously the books of Wycliffe and Huss have led you astray. Here I will let matters stand for now.

Praise, honour, and thanks be to God and the entire heavenly host forever and ever. May the author be granted eternal forgiveness for his sins, and may God grant his mercy and eternal salvation to all pious Christian hearts. Amen.

all the disruptions taking place in Germany. For Luther's view of images, see Christensen, *Art and the Reformation in Germany*, 42ff.

On Not Removing Images of Christ and the Saints

by Johannes Eck

Wherein it is argued that images of Christ and the saints should not be removed, and against the heresy of Felix of Urgel¹ which was condemned under Charlemagne and rose again under Charles V.

To the most worthy Bishop of Brixen, Sebastian Sprenger,² from Johannes Eck:

I remember, most reverend Bishop, that when I was returning from Rome, I digressed from my way to see you and we deliberated over the veneration of the saints. Then, when I arrived in Ingolstadt, I discovered that the Lutheran faction, while scheming all sorts of evil, had in addition removed crucifixes and images of the Virgin and the saints. And so I immediately resolved that before undertaking a more serious study, I would set out in a brief treatise the reason for the use of images. Now I have striven to publish that work desired by many under your auspices and dedicated to your name. For although the gifts of your intellect, your exceptional learning, and distinguished virtues of spirit would deserve greater things (you who previously, while earning pay as a teacher of literature in our university at Ingolstadt, climbed steadily through the grades of offices to pontifical rank as your merits deserve), so great is your modesty and your sense of humanity that you will not disdain this

1 While Emser mentions Wycliffe and Huss as the forerunners of the iconoclasts and calls this heresy Beghardic, Eck prefers to focus on Felix of Urgel and to call iconoclasm the Felician heresy, perhaps because Felix was condemned at the Council of Frankfurt of 794, while the iconoclastic tendencies of Lollards, Hussites, and Beghards had never been condemned by Church councils.

2 On Sebastian Sprenger, see Iserloh, "Die Verteidigung," 76.