

of event allows a fascinatingly large number of providential arrangements for our musing.

We are regularly amazed at the times when two persons meet by chance, neither one planning nor manipulating the situation. Likewise the occurrence of situations in which multiple complexities abound and the timing factor is decisive. Consider the time when Henry VIII sought the annulment from Katherine of Aragon. That Katherine should be an honored aunt to the Emperor, that the Emperor should at the very time be intensely angry with the Pope, that the Pope dared do nothing to infuriate further the Emperor, and that the legates of England in Rome could do nothing to budge the Pope to aid the king who at the time was perhaps the most Romanish of all the kings in Europe, were startling factors in an amazing web of coincidence or, should we say, providential arrangements. That the necessary ingredients for this plot should all mature at the same time is too incredulous for mere fiction but it is somewhat typical of what happens with true life fact. The coincidents offer a fascinating field of study for the church historian.

(3) Personality Changes, etc.

Possibly this heading might belong to a different class of materials but we have placed it at this point since the government of such seems to be beyond our general control. Changes of moods and feelings may be analyzed without great resolution but they are worthy of observation. Substantial changes in attitudes are not easily predicted and often lack rationale when studied but they occur and are often decisive in a historical flow.

It is true that from a spiritual viewpoint some changes are effected by change in spiritual outlook. We can understand these better due to our perspective of life from a Christian point of view. They are still providential in that the occurrences are induced by external powers which are somewhat beyond our prediction and certainly beyond our control. We often Meet a Wallenstein, a Moritz, a Novatus, etc., where a change of interest or direction has made a large difference in the direction of history. It may be argued that better sources may be seen for this sort of action than a providential arrangement but the result suggests that if the act were not specifically prepared by God, it was working in harmony with the interest of God. As with other notes in our study, these providential arrangements do not always favor the same sides or parties. From a theological viewpoint we note that the ultimate purpose of God is served in various ways.

All of the foregoing make history worthwhile; they are content items and history has merit in its content regardless of our apprehension of it. Note how these content items are seen in a single historical account. e.g.. Irenaeus' note on the Apostle John meeting the heresiarch Cerinthus at the public bath in Ephesus:

There are also those who heard from him (Polycarp) that John the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus, and perceiving Cerinthus within, rushed out of the bathhouse without bathing, exclaiming, Let us fly, lest even the bathhouse fall down. because Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth is within.^10