

The Northwestern Lutheran

Jan 18
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The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our father
and not leave us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

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THE REDEEMER

Blessed Jesus! when Thy cross I view,
That mystery to th' angelic host,
I gaze with grief and rapture too,
And all my soul's in wonder lost.

What strange compassion filled Thy breast,
That brought Thee from Thy Throne on high
To woes that cannot be exprest,
To be despised, to groan, and die!

Was it for man, rebellious man,
Sunk by his crimes below the grave,
Who, justly doomed to endless pain,
Found none to pity or to save!

For man didst Thou forsake the sky,
To bleed upon th' accursed tree:
And didst Thou taste of death to buy
Immortal life and bliss for me!

Had I a voice to praise Thy name,
Loud as the trump that wakes the dead,
Had I the raptured seraph's flame,
My debt of love could ne'er be paid.

Yet, Lord, a sinner's heart receive,
This burdened, contrite heart of mine,
(Thou knowest I've nought beside to give),
And let it be for ever Thine.

COMMENTS

A Confirmation Vow Not long ago a church was dedicated and part of the ceremony was the pledging of the boys and girls of this parish to loyalty to the church. This, we assume, was a ceremony similar to our confirmation, which is also a pledging of loyalty. In our churches the preparation for this act is now going on. We have found the institution of confirmation so beneficial that we do not stop to point out how necessary it is; every Lutheran Christian knows that. That pledge exacted from those boys and girls at the dedication is worthy of reproduction, though; if for no other reason, to show how thankful Lutherans should be that in their church the confirmation pledge is something quite different. This is the vow:

"Here at the meeting place of the village streets our parents have built this house of prayer. We, their children, pledge to it our honor and respect. We promise to love it as our parents' gift to us,—and so forth As men we will protect our church from all evil; as women, we will keep it fair and beautiful for our children's children. We promise to enter into its

services with gladness, to behave in it with reverence, and to help fill it with the joyful friendly spirit of Jesus. We will do our part to make it the best church in all the world, so help us God."

And this is the stuff that is hailed with ecstatic joy and with tearful streaming eyes by many as "beautiful and inspiring"! Not a word of it should stand. Every phrase is wellnigh blasphemy. It is outrageously conceited in what it teaches the children to say, and it is positively ungodly in the omissions it makes. Read it again. Is that your conception of church loyalty? Almost hidden in the gush of self-praise there is an allusion to Jesus; at the end the rigmarole of the oath is attached with the name of God. Is that all of Jesus that this Christian church cultivates? His "friendly spirit"? We fear it must be so; and then the "friendly spirit" soon becomes apparent as the spirit which is naturally at home in the breast of the modern Christian, without further divine aid. There is much said of what these children are to do **for the church** when they grow up; nothing is said of that which the church is to do **for them**. There is no Christ in this beautiful declaration; and without Christ and His Grace, this building could have been a Mohammedan mosque or a Chinese joss house just as well, for all that is said in the vow—modern Mohammedans and Chinese would not even necessarily object to the reference to the friendly spirit of Jesus. Not much need be said of the vulgar and, we fear, typically American bluff of the last line about making it the best church in the world. If the church is conducted in the spirit of this children's pledge, then we are sure it will not be one of the best but one of the very worst churches of the world. When confirmation time comes we follow the ceremony with a feeling of very proper sentiment; we see it every year, yet it never fails to awaken in us anew a desire to receive the blessings which Christ has for those that confess Him. May that sentiment never be in danger of becoming the sickening sentimentality that feasts on ignoble and un-Christian performances such as this unholy vow.

H. K. M.

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What Constitutes a Thinker? The "Northwestern Lutheran" had just come. The writer of these lines took it from his post-office box, and was reading it as he awaited his turn at the stamp window. There were several in line. The writer was interested in a certain article, and al-

though he noticed that somebody was reading over his shoulder, he didn't give the matter much attention.

At last a voice said, somewhat sneeringly, "You Lutherans are always reading and writing about doctrine. But in this day and age it is a waste of time."

"Is it though?" we asked somewhat warmly, for the speaker was a sectarian preacher of our town. "Here is a news item about a poor, spineless nominally Lutheran pastor who joined a pastoral association. They appointed him to read an article on Justification by Faith, which he did. The sectarians were loud in their ridicule. The so-called Lutheran was very much disgusted."

"They ought to have ridiculed him!" exclaimed the man behind us. "Any man who upholds such an antiquated, sixteenth century doctrine ought to be ridiculed. I don't believe in it myself. Man is potentially divine. No, no **thinker** believes in justification by faith!" And he turned on his heel, and made a dive for the revolving door.

We started to reply that there is a word that sounds very much like "thinker" that describes these brilliant-minded sectarians, who have "evolved" so far that they can no longer endure sound doctrine, but before we could complete the sentence, the post-office door revolved viciously, and he was gone—without stopping to get his postage stamps.

If a man of his type is a "thinker" then the writer wants to be what twentieth century terms a bone-head!

W.

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A Dissertation on "Bones" The editor of a church paper recently subjected his denomination to an osteological examination; he examined the structure of its skeleton and found certain bones to be the ground work upon which the church was built up, as far as appearances went. He classified the bones of this body under three heads: first, jaw bones; secondly, wish bones; thirdly, back bones. The jaw bone is he who does the talking about the things to be done—and little else. The wish bone is he who wishes that things might be done and is so busy wishing that he never gets beyond that stage. The back bone is he who works and gives, that some of the wishes of the wish bone, and some of the things the jaw bone talks about, might be realized. This classification may have its serious defects as a scientific grouping. But there are some things about it that call to our mind certain manifestations in our own church organization. The jaw bone is there. He is in the congregation and in the synod. Ever ready to talk and always ready to talk more. Talking is so much a necessity to him that if there is nothing to talk about at a meeting, he will create an issue. That would not necessarily be unwelcome if it did not have a very detrimental effect on the aims and objects of the meeting. The jaw bone has no time to act, very

frequently even little time to think. But his talk cannot avoid raising more and more questions in the train of the original one, rarely contributing the slightest bit toward the solution of any. The greatest danger lies in the concessions the meeting must make to the jaw bone; for the sake of peace many things are done that were better left undone—just to satisfy the jaw bone and gain a respite from his rhetoric. — The wish bone is largely the result of the jaw bone. He sees what little good results from the jaw bone's exertions and resolves to avoid the same mistakes. He confines himself to wishing. When in the circle of his own friends he knows precisely what should be done. He thinks a little more than the jaw bone and therefore has occasion to discover the many weak points of our church organism. He wishes so industriously that his wishes outstrip all Christian experience and are, when fully developed, little short of the Millennium. Of course, to interest any such lofty dreamer in the ordinary, every-day problems of church and synod government would be lost energy. How to raise money for shingling the roof of the parsonage, or how to decide which one of three mission fields we must give up because our funds or men are lacking, problems such as these are too petty to engage the interest of the great mind of the wish bone. When practical measures are debated he yawns apathetically and possibly votes "no," when an appropriation is asked for, because, being so busy dreaming, he does not see how one is to get money to carry out plans until all the thousand reforms he is thinking of are realized. If the jaw bone is provoking in his behavior, the wish bone is irritating. — But then, there is also the class to which all of us belong—the back bone. Those that work and give that the church may prosper. When the three "bones" were mentioned every one of us just naturally plumped himself down on the bench marked "back bones." That speaks very well of the opinion we have of ourselves, but a little reflection may make us a little more modest. If we are entirely innocent of the pernicious activities of the jaw bone, we will have a hard time convincing truth that we are equally innocent of the wish bone's vain exercises. The truth will out; we are, most of us, a mixture of the three varieties of bone—and the back bone, however prominent it may be in supporting our physical body, is of very tiny bulk when compared with the imposing volume of our wish bone and our jaw bone—unless the Lord has made us dumb. We are all agreed on three things: the church can get along with very little jaw bone; the wish bone is sorely in need of reconstruction and should do less wishing and more praying; the back bone is capable of almost unlimited development. The Church of the Lord is not dependent on the actions of men, but men, by their acts, may forfeit the blessings of the Church. It is not really so much a question of building and enlarging the Church,

as it is a question of retaining it in our midst. Those that constantly talk, or indulge in vain dreams, are overestimating the importance of their contribution to the cause for which we labor. Virtually all questions that arise are solved for us, there is little need of further talking and wishing, there but remains that the Christians carry out with good will what every Christian sees is needed.

H. K. M.

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A Brand From the Burning

A Denver news dispatch ingeniously reported the conversion of Col. William F. Cody to the Roman Catholic faith. "Buffalo Bill," as Col. Cody was popularly known, had not been a Romanist nor had he ever manifested any desire to become one. The Denver dispatch said that "while unconscious he was baptized into the Catholic church the night before he died. His sister, Mrs. L. E. Decker, said no attempt was made to arouse him because 'we were sure it was what he would have wanted.'" The Catholic church is known to value the influence over children during their tender years very highly. "Give us your child until it is ten years old, say they, and then it will be ours forever, no matter who gets it thereafter." But it is equally evident that Rome watches the death of prominent men even more sharply than it does the births of children. Ever and again we run across a news story relating that so-and-so embraced the Catholic faith before he died. This was done in the case of Buffalo Bill, but unfortunately the reporter said more than he should have said. That part of the story relating to Col. Cody's unconsciousness during the rite was never passed by a Romanist censor. Nevertheless, it is entirely in keeping with the usual practices of Rome and quite agrees with their wholesale baptisms of heathen. The priest hovers about the death bed of a prominent man whenever there is the faintest hope of getting his name to grace another advertisement for Mother Rome.

H. K. M.

THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

Article VI — Of New Obedience

"Also they teach, that this faith is bound to bring forth good fruits, and that it is necessary to do good works commanded by God, because of God's will, but not that we should rely on those works to merit justification before God. For remission of sins and justification are apprehended by faith, as also the voice of Christ attests: "When ye shall have done all these things, say, We are unprofitable servants. Luke 17: 10. The same is also taught by the Fathers. For Ambrose says: "It is ordained of God that he who believes in Christ, is saved; freely receiving remission of sins, without works, by faith alone."

Human nature continually seeks some way to save

the honor of humanity by imputing to man some share at least in the way of salvation. It claims some power of its own and some merit for the exercise of that power. To the question: How shall we be justified before God? the answer of human reason is always to the effect that we must gather all our energies to do right.

This characteristic of human nature undoubtedly is the parent cause in that doctrine of the Roman church, which is the corner stone of her whole structure—the doctrine of justification by inherent righteousness, i. e. that man is justified before God not solely by faith in the merits of Christ, but upon the merits of his own works. As a matter of fact the Romanists teach that good works are meritorious for the forgiveness of sins, for grace and salvation, while, on the other hand, it is claimed by them that justification by faith alone would be dangerous and pernicious to the morals of men, on the assumption that it undermines all motive to sanctification, as man would then be at liberty to live and act according to his own pleasure.

This accounts for the need which our fathers felt for the introduction into our Confession of an article on the new obedience, or good works. In this article the Augsburg Confession sets forth the plain truth when it declares the teaching of our churches to be "that this faith should bring forth good fruits, and that men ought to do good works commanded of God, because it is God's will."

Two things are here brought to the notice of Christians. One is that the test of good works is the commandment of God. The other is that faith brings forth the good fruits which the commandment of God requires. Both are important for all men, but can appeal effectually only to Christian believers.

As to the first point, what are good works? Individuals and societies and churches have flooded the world with social and humanitarian movements, compliance with which are accounted good works. They boast of their beneficence and the wonderful deeds which they have done for the amelioration of human suffering; and the Romanists and kindred sects exhaust their vocabularies in praise of their good works. Are they such? The test which must be applied are not the sentiments of men, or the necessities following out of existing conditions, but the question whether God has commanded them in His Word, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," says the Lord. Matt. 15: 9. Not those are good works which men devise and ordain, but those which God has commanded. And God has commanded all good works to be done in His holy Law. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and have mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6: 8. "This is the love of God,

that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5: 3.

To do good works commanded of God, however, is not within the power of natural man. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, nor is he capable to keep God's commandments because of his spiritual death. The works of the natural man, though dictated by a sentiment of benevolence, are not for that reason good. Unless man is regenerated through faith in the redemption of Christ he cannot do works that are good in the sight of God.

Hence the second point to be noted in our article is that faith brings forth good fruits. In setting forth the doctrine of Scripture concerning good works our Confession again as always puts forth faith in the foreground. Faith which appropriates the righteousness acquired by our Savior and thus alone justifies before God is bound to bring forth good fruits. Faith is indispensable for the accomplishment of the divine will in this regard. By faith man becomes a free servant of the Lord, with a desire to do His will. As the water flows from the spring so good works from faith. Therefore Christians do good works which are commended of God, not because they must, but because by grace they desire to do them. Having been made free by grace from the service of sin they now become the servants of righteousness because they are brought into harmony with the will of the Savior, who has fulfilled all righteousness for us and now leads us in the ways of holiness. And since we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ our Lord or come to Him, but the Holy Ghost has called us by the Gospel, enlightened us by His gifts, and sanctified us in true faith, good works are produced by the Holy Ghost alone. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2: 10.

Such good works are necessary because of God's will. Our Confession rightly gives utterance to this truth. It is laid to the charge of the Lutheran Church by her Romish adversaries, as also by social and religious organizations in our days, that she denies the necessity of good works. Nothing is more false than such a charge. Our church never questioned whether good works are necessary or not. Lutheran Christians are people who know the Lord and hearken when the Lord speaks. They know that it is God's will to do good works, and that all they, who shall, as the blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for them, shall also have a record of good works as evidences of their faith. See Matt. 25: 34-36. Good works will at the end of time and shall at all times redound to the glory of God. True Christians are the light of the world; hence they heed the admonition of the Lord, "Let your light so shine before

men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5: 16.

But while good works are necessary they are in no wise meritorious; they are done "not that we should rely on those works to merit justification before God." It is a vain thought to merit eternal life by them. Such thoughts renounce the grace by which alone we are saved and reject the righteousness of Christ by faith which alone avails before God. Salvation by divine grace—not by human merit; by faith, not by the deeds of the law—this is the teaching of the Scriptures and the confession of the Church from the beginning.

J. J.

BISHOP RHINELANDER AND LUTHERAN SCANDINAVIANS

The following letter, which appears in The Churchman, and which is addressed by Bishop Rhineland, of the Episcopal Church, to Scandinavians living in or near Philadelphia, is characteristic: "We recognize that Scandinavians do not segregate themselves from native Americans and from men of other races, but identify themselves with the land and the people of their adoption. There are no 'little Swedens' or 'little Norways' or 'little Denmarks' anywhere within the United States. Being comparatively few in number, and these few living scattered over a large territory, they naturally find it difficult to build and maintain churches of their own.

"To all such we bring the message that they are and always will be welcome to all Episcopal churches and that the Church in this diocese is anxious and able to minister to their spiritual needs.

"Of all American churches, the Protestant Episcopal Church is the one which is nearest in its doctrines, discipline and forms of worship to the established churches of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. By becoming identified with it you will not have to give up any part of the Christianity taught in your childhood by your mother and your mother Church. You will not have to adopt or subscribe to any doctrine upon which your mother Church has put its ban."

We called this a "characteristic" letter—that is, characteristic of the way in which officials and priests of the Episcopal Church generally put things when they seek to win people from other folds. First, it assumes that because these Scandinavians come from countries that can lay claim to an unbroken line of bishops from the early Christian centuries down, and because their forms of worship are somewhat similar to those of the Episcopal Church, therefore their proper place is in the Episcopal Church. Does the bishop need to be informed that with these Scandinavians the episcopal form of government in their home countries is purely an historic accident and of quite secondary importance? Does he not know that they have

all been taught Luther's Catechism from childhood, and that the Augsburg Confession as a definite declaration of the faith of their fathers, which marks a sharp dividing line between their Church and other communions, is by no means regarded by them as having become obsolete, as is the case with the "Thirty-nine Articles" of the Church of England, at one time in accord with the Augsburg Confession and virtually a copy of it? It seems impossible to convince these bishops that with these Lutherans, if they have been rightly trained, the faith is everything, and forms of worship and government altogether secondary. Two churches may seem very much alike on the outside that are quite different within; for in the one the faith receives the emphasis and in the other the form.

A second characteristic of this letter is the studied omission of the word "Lutheran." Surely the bishop knows that these Scandinavians have been taught and trained in the faith by Lutheran pastors and mothers, with here and there an exception. Why not recognize that fact? And why not recognize that other fact, that these Scandinavians, particularly the Swedes, are stepping on historic Lutheran soil when they come to Philadelphia? Long before the Episcopal Church was known along the Delaware, three "Old Swedes" Lutheran congregations served by Lutheran pastors were in existence in this section. Today Episcopalians are justly proud to be the inheritors of three "Old Swedes churches"—buildings erected and owned by Lutheran immigrants. No one disputes the right of the Episcopal Church to their ownership; but their earlier history is Lutheran, and why should that fact be studiously concealed? Buildings may change ownership, but history never does. And why should the bishop be oblivious of the fact, that there are three Scandinavian Lutheran churches in this city, and more than eighty others, so that the problem of building and maintaining Lutheran churches is already solved? Why should the bishop not advise these Scandinavians to anchor themselves in these Lutheran churches—where they belong? That would look like real Christian comity.

A third characteristic is the weak and compromising position into which the bishop puts his Church. Does he really believe that a Lutheran surrenders nothing when he enters the Episcopal Church? Why then should he be re-confirmed? Confirmed away from what and confirmed in what? And how can the Episcopal Church be **nearest** to "the established (the bishop forgot the word Lutheran) churches of Norway, Sweden and Denmark" and yet receive a Lutheran without obliging him to "forsake a single part of the Christianity he was taught in the Lutheran Church"? In the one case, two things are quite nearly alike and yet only relatively near each other; in the other case, the difference disappears altogether—no

Lutheran need surrender anything to become an Episcopalian. Does the Episcopal Church offer a Lutheran something which before he did not have? Would the bishop make the same offer to Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and others? Is the Episcopal Church merely a catch-all institution for the housing of people of differing faiths, or does it stand for a clear, distinct and definite faith and message of its own that is to make the world richer for its being in it? No church will ever occupy a strong ethical, spiritual position before the world which does not have a positive uplifting faith for which it can give a reason. If external union is the chief thing it is after, and if internal unity based on conviction is a matter of indifference, it places itself in a position far weaker than that of the Roman Catholic Church and is anything but a "pillar and ground of the truth." In that position the bishop seems to us to have placed his Church.—The Lutheran.

DR. W. B. RILEY ON THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA.

Dr. W. B. Riley, pastor of the First Baptist church in Minneapolis, speaking on the subject, "Is the University of Minnesota a Hotbed of Heterodoxy?" claimed that there was influence at work in the university inimical to the Bible and to old-fashioned religion, and is strong enough to make itself felt most unfavorably. "I have found," says Dr. Riley, "by personal experience that when a man comes to Minneapolis who stands for the old-fashioned things, he does not find favor with the powers at the university. But not long ago a representative of a freak theological school was here and was given a hearing. In twenty years the ultra-conservatives in religion have not been sought for, but the radicals and the extremists and any man who had notions of heterodoxy has been welcomed."

W. L. Peacock, who is spoken of as director of the religious work of the University Y. M. C. A., has taken issue with Dr. Riley, and mentions a number of pastors from different denominations who have spoken at the university, among them Rev. Marion D. Shutter, a Unitarian, and Rev. Francis Jaeger of the Catholic church of St. Bonifacius, "no one of whom," he says, "I am very sure can by any possible construction be considered as heterodox."

In the first place, we do not understand by what right any person can be considered director of religious work at the university under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. or any other organization. The university is a state institution, and as such has nothing directly to do with religious education of any kind. It is contrary to the state constitution to carry on any religious propaganda under the auspices of the state university. The present controversy proves that the constitution

is right and should be lived up to. In Mr. Peacock's list of pastors who have spoken at the university no Lutheran was mentioned. If pastors are to speak at the state university, why should not the strongest denomination in the state be entitled to be represented? The Lutherans of the state consider Mr. Peacock very heterodox, when he believes that both the Unitarians and the Catholics are orthodox, and as citizens of the state, paying taxes to support the state university, we object to having him or any one else director of religious work at the University of Minnesota.

—Luth. Herald.

SPIRITUAL POISONING IN GIRLS' SCHOOLS

We sometimes feel called upon to object to statements in some of our exchanges from the Reformed churches, especially, but we are often pleased with the strong, well-written editorials of papers like "The Presbyterian," which comes out squarely in defense of the Bible against present-day liberalism, whether it is found in their own church or in others. In a current number this paper quotes from the "Presbyterian Training School Herald" the following clear-cut confession about its stand to the Bible:

"We hold the Bible to be the inspired word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. It reveals the plan of salvation. It is God's revelation of Himself and a true textbook in the science of living. It states great principles upon which all present-day problems are to be solved. It is God's answer to questions now confronting us. Our sympathy is wholly with the reverent attitude which is content to bring to us more fully the truth as revealed by God. We are more concerned to study individual, church, and community needs in the light of the Bible than to study the Bible in the light of historical research or scientific difficulties."

The editor adds this comment:

"We are glad to note this decided stand taken by this training school, in view of the destructive teachings which are found in some schools, especially eastern girls' schools. We congratulate President McAfee upon this testimony from his institution."

The same paper has this to say about eastern girls' colleges:

"The article by Dr. Burrell, appearing recently in 'The Presbyterian,' and exposing the infidel teachings of professors at Smith College, has awakened a widespread interest among parents, and we have been receiving letters protesting against this infidel propaganda among the young women, and especially among those coming from Christian homes. Dr. Burton, in his recent book, 'On Being Divine,' is of the same anti-evangelical character. A New England friend writes that Mt. Holyoke is also promoting the same propaganda. 'The Presbyterian Banner' not long since contained the following editorial:

"A volume has come to us on the problems of religion by a professor in Vassar College. It bears the marks of scholarship and culture, and is written in an engaging style. One is surprised, however, to find that it reduces the whole matter of religion to pure naturalism. According to its teaching, there is no supernatural element in the Bible, the miracles of Jesus are myths, the forty years elapsing between his death and the writing of the gospels allowing plenty of time for the growth of legendary tales, and even the resurrection of Jesus has no sufficient evidence and is unimportant. Jesus was only a Jewish prophet of rare spirituality and enthusiasm, and we once more hear the story of Renan's "sweet Galilean vision." Now, this professor has a right to his conscientious views on the subject of the origin and nature of Christianity, but is Vassar College the place in which they should be taught? This is a Christian college, founded by Baptists, and always regarded as an orthodox institution. The Baptists control it, and they stand true to historic Christianity. Young women go into its classrooms out of Christian homes in all of our evangelical churches. Do they know into what religious atmosphere they are being invited when they receive its catalogs? Do the trustees and Baptist leaders, who are responsible for that institution, approve of such teaching? We know this involves a difficult and delicate problem, but there is a line to be drawn somewhere, and at least the Christian public has a right to know when such an institution as Vassar College so widely departs from historic Christian faith and teaching."

"This is an alarming array of defections in schools which were founded in loyalty to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The case is the more aggravated in so much as it is an attempt to paganize the women of our nation and age, and to turn our future families back on to the grounds of a cultured heathenism. No greater peril could face the family and the nation. From all the world, heathen and Christian, barbaric and civilized, there comes no louder cry for energy, bravery and loyalty to truth than this. There can be no compromise nor parleying here. It is a life and death case, and the church must defend her young girls from this as from any other moral, spiritual, or physical pestilence. There is a reaction against this kind of thing in the men's colleges, and there should be a decided reaction in girls' schools. The schools themselves, with their fine culture and sacred funds, should be rescued. If they cannot be rescued, then the girls should be withdrawn, these institutions spiritually quarantined, and loyal schools should be strengthened and enlarged. Every effort should be made to avert this religious and moral calamity."

Our Lutheran church schools are free from the taint of this destructive liberalism. A teacher who does not believe in the Bible will not be tolerated in our

schools. The future success of our schools and our church will be in proportion to our faithfulness to the fundamentals of our church, which is identical with a strict adherence to the truth of the Bible. Because of this position of our schools and their great value to the church, our people should support them by giving them financial aid when needed and by sending their young people to our own schools.—Lutheran Herald.

"THE EDUCATIVE METHOD"

The Church and the Lodge

Prof. G. H. Gerberding (General Council) in his "Problems and Possibilities" uses the expression "the educative method" to designate the lodge practice of some Lutherans in distinction from that of others, which he calls the "disciplinary procedure." What these expressions mean becomes clear to us when we read what the writer says on the subject:

"Six-sevenths of the Lutherans have officially declared themselves as opposed to Masonry and kindred secret societies. These great Lutheran bodies, made up of earnest men who dearly love their Church, are all firmly convinced that there is a deep antagonism between the religion of the lodge and the religion of the Gospel as taught by our Church. Therefore, all the general bodies but one and all the independent synods, with possibly one or two exceptions among the very small ones in which the matter has never come up, have officially declared themselves as opposed to oath-bound secret societies. They differ somewhat as to what is the best method of dealing with what they all recognize as an evil. They do not all debar all lodge members from the communion. Some believe more in the educative method, others more in disciplinary procedure as far as the laymen are concerned. But all these have officially forbidden their ministerial members to belong to such secret societies."

We do not find the expression "educative method" and "disciplinary procedure" well chosen, for to us they present no contrast. The disciplinary procedure we know is educative in the fullest sense of the word; its aim is to train the lodge member, be he in the church or outside of it, to see and to do the will of God in the matter; its only means is the Word of God, by which the Holy Ghost performs his saving work in the heart of man. The "educative method" must, if it is to be Scriptural, have exactly the same aim and employ the very same means.

The point of difference is this: they who believe in the "disciplinary procedure" hold that it is their duty to debar a person from communion as long as he belongs to a lodge, and to excommunicate the church member who has joined a secret organization, if he, after due instruction and admonition, refuses to sever his connection with that body; while the advocates of the "educative method" accept the lodge member and continue their work on him without ever bringing the matter to an issue.

While Prof. Gerberding seems to consider this difference as of no great importance, we regard it as a barrier that separates us from those who follow the "educative method." Consistency demands this of us. We cannot well refuse to admit a person into our own church and then recognize him as a brother when he joins a congregation of some other synod with which we hold fellowship. If we are right in disbaring him, they do wrong when they admit him. This is not merely a question of expediency, it is a matter of conscience. We have no right to refuse the hand of fellowship to one whom God would have us receive.

But are we right in excluding lodge members from our churches? The writer states very correctly the chief objection we raise against the lodge, "we are firmly convinced that there is a deep antagonism between the religion of the lodge and the religion of the Gospel as taught by us." As six-sevenths of all the Lutherans are, according to Prof. Gerberding, agreed on this, we shall offer no further proof that this our common conviction is well founded and does the lodge no injustice, contenting ourselves with reprinting from the Lutheran Standard a letter which appeared in the Ohio State Journal of Dec. 28, 1916. It is written by a Mason and reads as follows:

"Accepting the principle laid down by Paul (namely, Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap), the great Masonic order makes the following declaration, found in our Standard Monitor, which is an open book: 'Although our thoughts, words, and actions may be hidden from the eyes of men, yet that All-seeing Eye whom the sun, moon, and stars obey, and under whose watchful care even comets perform their stupendous revolutions, pervades the inmost recesses of the human heart, and will reward us according to our merits.' Nearly all our great modern fraternities follow the lead of Masonry in this matter and condition future rewards upon personal merit. They accord to a man the right to get his inspiration to a noble life from Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Krishna, Jesus, or any other one or more of the great religious leaders, but teach him that in the end he must stand or fall on his own merit. That this principle is commending itself to the modern Western world's sense of justness and of the eternal fitness of things is evidenced by the fact that our modern fraternities are going forward by leaps and bounds, while the churches, still more or less bound by the old sacrificial and dogmatic forms of religion, are having a struggle to maintain themselves. Religion is not wanting, but the old sacrificial and dogmatic forms are giving place to the ethical and spiritual form, according to which all men, including those killed in battle, will, as Paul puts it, reap as they have sown, or, as the great fraternities put it, be rewarded according to their merits."

We have seldom, if ever, found so clear a statement of the position of the lodge. The author of it not only boastfully admits that the lodge rejects in full the Gospel our Lord Jesus Christ, but also immediately draws the correct consequences: the work of the lodge is directly opposed to that of the Church; the rise of the lodge is the fall of the Church; every success of the Church is a defeat for the lodge. No heart can be divided between the two; no man can

give intelligent and honest support to both. Our Savior places men before this same alternative: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."

The Church as preacher of the Gospel is by its very nature the opponent of the lodge. It cannot but condemn secret societies as ungodly institutions that teach blasphemous and soul-destroying doctrines. There can be no compromise, no equivocation. 2 Cor. 6: 14-18: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what Concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for we are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." J. B.

TROUBLES THAT NEVER CAME

The story is told of a lady who, for a time, kept a list of impending troubles. It was a relief to set them down in black and white. Some months later, in looking over this list, she was surprised to find that nine-tenths of these troubles had never materialized. They were only imaginary.

The troubles that never come form the heaviest part of our daily load. The worry, the fear caused by these apprehended miseries, often work sad havoc with brain and nerves. The actual sorrows, the bereavements, the disappointments, have their comfort and cure; but there is no cure for troubles that never come. They are haunting ghosts, yet very real in their depressing, harmful power over us.

Each day comes as a fresh gift from the hand of God. In it are just the experiences his loving wisdom has ordained. Meet with a brave heart all that is in the day's portion, but shrink not from shadows that seem to blot out the sun.—Selected

CHRISTIANITY AND HEATHENISM

"While the heathen had their gods of battle, of beauty, etc. they had no god of holiness, nor are their sacred laws holy laws."

—"Hem the day well with prayer and praises, and it will be less likely to ravel out before night."

FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY

"Now abideth these three,"—Faith, by which we see the glories of the eternal sphere; Hope, by which we mount toward them; and Love, by which we grasp and inherit them,—therefore the greatest of these is Love.

"Love, amid the other graces in this world, is like a cathedral tower, which begins on earth, and, at first, is surrounded by the other parts of the structure. But, at length, rising above the buttressed walls, and arch, and parapet, and pinnacle, it shoots spire-like many a foot right into the air, so high that the hugh cross on its summit glows like a spark in the morning light, and shines like a star in the evening light, when the rest of the pile is enveloped in darkness. So Love, here, is surrounded by the other graces, and divides the honors with them; but they will have felt the wrap of night, and of darkness, when it will shine, luminous, against the sky of eternity."—Beecher.

—"Believers must be emptying the measure of Divine judgment with their prayers, which others are filling with their sins."

—"Our prayers are often heard and granted, though we may not be permitted to see it. A father sends out his ship, and dies before the ship returns home; but his son is still living, and he receives the benefit."

—"Faith is the outward, not the inward, look. The object on which faith fixes its eye is, not the heart's every-varying frames, but the never-varying Christ."—Baillie.

—"Heaven's gates are not so highly arched as princes' palaces; they that enter them must enter them upon their knees."

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