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## Miscellanea

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## 2.

V. 7. Es, das Lamm, nimmt das Buch als Lenker der Geschichte seiner Kirche. Nicht erst in einem zukünftigen Tausendjährigen Reich wird Christus sein Herrscheramt antreten. Dann würde er überhaupt kein König werden; denn ein Millennium im Sinne der Chiliasien wird es nie geben. König war er schon, als er in der Krippe lag, Jes. 9, 6, als er die Huldbildung der Hirten und der Weisen entgegennahm. König war er, als er zuerst mit der Botschaft auftrat: Mark. 1, 14. 15; König, als er seinen Einzug in Jerusalem hielt; König, als er vor Pilatus stand, Joh. 18, 33 ff.; König, als er dem Schächer das Himmelreich öffnete. Nun sitzt er als König zur Rechten der Majestät in der Höhe, Ps. 49, 1—9; Ps. 46. Wie er ein Siegel nach dem andern öffnet, zeigt sich allerdings, daß sein Reich auf Erden ein Trübsalsreich ist, daß die Feinde sich gegen ihn verschworen haben, daß er aber alle ihre Pläne zunichte macht, Ps. 2, 9; andererseits in nie versiegender Gnade und unauslöschlicher Liebe immer wieder zu den Seinen kommt, sanftmütig, ein Gerechter und ein Helfer, Sach. 9, 9, sich des zeitlichen und ewigen Wohles seiner Untertanen annimmt, mit Wort und Sakrament sie stärkt und im Glauben erhält und sie schließlich zum Himmelreich führt. — Bist du ein Untertan dieses Königs? Wenn nicht, dann nimm zu Herzen die Warnung: Ps. 2, 10—12. Bist du aber sein Untertan, dann freue dich seiner Gnade, tröste dich seines Schutzes, diene ihm in wahrtem Glauben!

Die letzten zwei Texte, die, will's Gott, in der nächsten Nummer behandelt werden sollen, sind Offenb. 6, 12—17, „Das Lamm der Weltrichter“, und Offenb. 7, 9—17, „Das Lamm unsere Seligkeit“.

T h e o. L ä t s c h.

## Miscellanea.

### The Beginning of the Year in the Middle Ages.

A little article in a late number of *Der Lutheraner* (Vol. 90, p. 428) called attention to the fact that not always has January 1 been regarded as New Year's Day; that down to the second half of the eighteenth century the nations of Europe had no uniform date for the beginning of the civil year. This has prompted inquiries as to the date on which the civil year began in the reckoning of the Middle Ages. Even the casual reader of history must suspect that there is some confusion in this respect when he finds that reputable historians give different dates for the same events; not events of the dark distant past, where reliable records are rare or entirely lacking, but events of comparatively modern times, where documentation is plentiful. And the student of history knows that this matter is the cause of much trouble. The reason lies in the fact that the nations of Europe were very liberal in regard to the calendar; adjoining lands began the year on different dates; even individual cities had their own calendar; nor was the fact that New Year fell on a certain date this year a guarantee that it would fall on that same date next year.

In the *Proceedings of the British Academy* (Vol. X, 1921) an essay was published by Reginald L. Poole\* on this subject, in which the author sketches the confusion that resulted from this variety of calendars when the year began, in different countries and at different times, on January 1, March 1, March 25, Easter, September 1, Christmas. What confusion, *e. g.*, in reading documents for the province of Reims unless we know that there the year began at Easter in the ninth century, at Christmas in the eleventh, on March 25 in the thirteenth, and on March 25 of the preceding year in the fifteenth. An event, then, falling on the 24th of March, 1050, would be so dated on our present calendar; the same date, however, in 1250 would at present be 1249; in 1450 the dates would again coincide, while in 850 it would entirely depend on the date of Easter in that year; provided always that the scribe dated his document correctly and did not follow some other system which suited him better.

Roughly speaking, these are the successive changes in the calendar.

In ancient Rome the year was reckoned from March 1; hence the names of our last four months. This was changed by Julius Caesar; after his calendar revision the civil year began on the 1st of January except in computing military service; there the old system was retained; and this is probably the reason why some of the Teutonic tribes which came into contact with Rome by war—*e. g.*, the Franks—for centuries began their year on March 1. But the rule is that in pagan circles the year began with January 1.

Just on that account, however, because of the heathen festivities and rites celebrated on that date, January 1 was condemned by the Church of the early Middle Ages as a proper date for the beginning of a new year. Then great confusion resulted as Christianity conquered the nations—except in Spain, where under Visigothic rule the Julian New Year's date was adopted and retained down to the late fourteenth century (Aragon, 1349; Castile, 1383; Portugal, 1420); then Christmas displaced the former date, at a time when this reckoning had already become obsolete in almost all the rest of Europe. In other countries there followed a truly medieval state of affairs, one system superseding the other, here earlier, there later. The trouble was in fixing a day significant in Christian history from which time might justly be reckoned. For a time March was favored as the first month; there was Ex. 12, 2: "This month [the Jewish Abib, or Nisan; March] shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." Then the March moon decided the date of Easter. Another confusing factor was the Byzantine calendar; the Eastern Church counted the year from the 1st of September, and all the acts of the ancient councils were so dated.

With the seventh century a new reckoning begins. Since the chief objection to January 1 was that this day was a great pagan festival, it was natural to look for some date that had only Christian associations. What date, then, more proper than the incarnation of the Lord? Hence, reckoning the year from Christmas became prevalent; it was the official reckoning of the Empire at the end of the ninth century and a little later

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\* Reprinted in *Studies in Chronology and History*, by Reginald L. Poole, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1934.

of the Papacy, though a little confusion entered again from the fact that Christmas and January 1 are only eight days apart and the Christmas season lasted at least eight days, so that some reckoned time from the end of the Christmas season, *i. e.*, January 1.

But we are now entering the age of scholasticism, and it smacks of scholastic argumentation when we hear of the scruples of some that the Lord's incarnation should not be dated December 25, but nine months earlier; thus resulted the reckoning from the festival of the Annunciation, the 25th of March of the previous year. This was called the *calculus Pisanus* because of its later prevalence in Pisa, where it persisted until 1750.

It's not fifty miles from Pisa to Florence; yet their calendars were exactly one year apart. In use in Florence was what came to be called the *stylus Florentinus*, which reckoned the year from Lady Day, the 25th of March after Christmas. It was not invented in Florence, and the reason why it was so called is not known to me. The cause for its adoption was not chronological like that of Pisa; the motive was religious; it reflects the increasing Mariolatry of the time. This method of reckoning was accepted in England in the late twelfth century, superseding the calendar which began with Christmas and continued down to 1752.

Beginning with ca. 1200, France observed Easter as the first day of the new year. It has been conjectured that Philip Augustus wanted to mark his conquest of the English possessions on the continent by adopting a style of reckoning different from that in vogue across the Channel, yet not so different as to cause much disturbance.

In reality conditions were even more complicated than this makes it appear, since individual provinces and cities often had their own calendar differing from their neighbors. It is no doubt due to this general confusion that about the middle of the thirteenth century attempts were made to reform the calendar, and these gradually, very gradually, led to the general adoption of January 1 as New Year's Day. The dates when this change was ordered in the chief countries of Europe follow; it should be observed, however, that the order was not at once executed in some instances.

Holland, 1532. Spain, 1556. The Empire, 1558. France, 1564.

On February 24, 1582, Gregory XIII issued his bull for calendar reform, part of which was that the year should begin with January 1. In most Roman Catholic countries that was adopted at once; in others thus:—

Austria, 1584. Scotland, 1599. Germany (Protestant), 1700.  
Swiss cantons, (1575—) 1739. England and Ireland, 1751.

THEO. HOYER.

### Lutheran Church Music.

In an article which appeared in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* recently (October, 1934, 380 ff.) the author, Fritz-Konrad Krueger, makes some very appropriate remarks concerning the music to be used in Lutheran church services. A few thoughts from this article will prove of interest.

"The *chorales*, the type of hymn tunes developed by the Lutheran Church, were at first not harmonized. Later on the people sang the melody while a trained choir supplied the harmony. The melody was at

first written for the tenors and then transferred to the sopranos. About the turn of the sixteenth century the part of the choir in furnishing the harmony was taken by the organ, which accompanied the unison song of the congregation. Another change in the musical form of the *chorale* took place in the matter of rhythm. The primitive *chorale* had a more flexible movement; there were slides and groups of notes for one syllable; the meter was frequently triple. In the eighteenth century the present style of *chorale* presentation came into existence: the double meter, the equal length in notes, and the abolition of note groups for one syllable. The *chorale* gained by this change, on the one hand, in dignity and solidity, and it lost, on the other hand, in life and variety.

"Not only was Luther interested in hymn-singing, but his music program for the church included also the promotion of choir-singing. However, nothing original was accomplished by him or his collaborators and successors during the sixteenth century. Under the influence of the new Italian secular music and combining it with the stately and devotional *chorale* music, German Lutheran composers of the seventeenth century built up new forms of music, the cantata and the Passion music, which found their culmination in the most profound and heart-revealing devotional music of all ages, that of Johann Sebastian Bach.

"The Passion music has had a long and interesting history, which dates back to the early Middle Ages. The pathfinder of this type of music is Heinrich Schuetz of Dresden, the greatest Lutheran church musician of the seventeenth century and a worthy forerunner of Bach and Haendel. It is significant that his very name is almost unknown among Lutheran choir-masters and ministers [?] in the United States. Yet he is a thoroughly Lutheran church musician of most substantial achievements, who has given our Lutheran Church a wealth of lasting, good music. The culmination of Lutheran church music, as has been stated already, came with Johann Sebastian Bach, cantor of St. Thomas's Church in Leipzig.

"Roman Catholic church music, then, is Romanesque, Reformed is baroque, and Lutheran is Gothic. Roman Catholic music is impersonal, Reformed personal, Lutheran superpersonal. It is of great significance that the outstanding representative of Roman Catholic church music, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, was a man of the cloister; that of Reformed music, Georg Friedrich Haendel, a court musician and a man of the world; that of Lutheran music, Johann Sebastian Bach, a cantor and a man of the people.

"The majority of our church choirs sing the most trite or sentimental trash, which in the worst cases borders dangerously on light-opera melodies and in the best belongs to concert halls. Our largest Lutheran churches frequently have paid quartets, which often sing opera melodies, with religious words substituted for the original ones, such as the sextet from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, airs from *Rigoletto*, etc. *Pomp and Circumstance* by Elgar is a good march melody, properly used by my college in connection with the crowning of the Alma Mater Queen, but certainly not appropriate to be sung in a church service, where the topic of the sermon is the forgiveness of sins. There exists enough good simple Lutheran music which the average choir could sing well."

P. E. K.

### Where Was Haran, or Charran?

Until recently it was generally assumed that the city of Haran, Gen. 11, 31, 32; 12, 5; Acts 7, 2, 4; Gen. 24, 10; 27, 43; 28, 10; 2 Kings 19, 12; Ezek. 27, 23, was located in Western Mesopotamia, was in fact the metropolis of the land "between the rivers," about due east of the city of Carchemish.

But a few years ago W. M. Christie of Haifa, Palestine, published an article in the *Evangelical Quarterly* (Vol. 3, 1931, 85—89), in which he, in the first place, expresses serious doubts concerning the traditional identification, especially on the basis of Gen. 31, 21—23, 49, contending that the journey of Jacob, as there described, would have been an "impossible journey" if the Haran in ancient Mesopotamia were meant. He also refers to an ethnological difficulty, stating that Aram-Naharaim at the time of Abraham belonged to the Mitanni, a race kindred with the Hittites, and that it is hardly probable for Arameans to have settled there at that time.

The author suggests another city and locality as one which satisfies every consideration of the Bible-passages and removes all difficulties associated with the traditional site. He writes: "Now geographical research in modern times has revealed another Haran that fully meets the demands of every Scripture reference. Fifteen miles to the east of Damascus, and quite visible from the hill of Saliliyeh, beside Damascus, there is an ancient site named till to-day Haran el-Awamid, or 'Haran of the Pillars.' Its position is in a stretch of country well watered by the Abana and Pharpar, between the water-courses of which it is situated. . . . The name Haran or Paddan would be quite suitable, as the Great Eastern Highway to Transjordan and Arabia must have passed between this site and Damascus, and besides, in ancient times, when the Syrian Desert was more fertile than it is to-day, there may have been through this district a direct route to Babylonia. . . . The Aram-Naharaim, then, of Terach, Abraham, and Nahor is the district between the Abana and the Pharpar, the latter of which may have been then of more importance than it is now. . . . Then from this Haran to the recognized Mizpah of Laban and Jacob there is a distance of seventy miles in a direct line, and as the road is almost straight, we need reckon the distance traversed as not more than eighty miles."

Christie's contention has found further support in the recent book by Marston, *New Bible Evidence* (p. 96 ff.), where he says: "There is a problem concerning the location of Haran. The place with which it is usually identified is Harran, far north in Assyria; and it is contended that Terah, Nahor, and Serug occur there as place names. . . . On the other hand, it has been contended that the real Haran, to which Terah took his family, was near Damascus and was named after the son of Terah who had died in Ur of the Chaldees. A place about fourteen miles from Damascus has been suggested. . . . The situation of Haran further arises in connection with Jacob's flight from Laban, Gen. 31. The patriarch, traveling with his wives, his children, and his cattle, could not possibly have covered three hundred and fifty miles in ten days. Yet that is the approximate distance from the northern Haran to Mount Gilead, where Laban overtook his son-in-law. On the other hand, the distance from a Damascus Haran would only be about eighty-four miles, which fits the narrative. . . . On con-

sideration it would seem probable that the original destination of Terah and his family was Harran in Northern Mesopotamia, but that later they moved south, near to Damascus, and named their new settlement Haran."

It is well worth while to study the question in connection with these two descriptions and the conclusions drawn therefrom. P. E. K.

### The Choir in the Lutheran Church.

The following paragraphs are taken from an article by Dr. J. F. Ohl in the *Lutheran* of December 27, 1934:—

"When Luther restored congregational singing, what became of the status of the choir? Did he abolish it? No; but what was henceforth to be its function? What must be its function to-day? As a *part* of the congregation and not a separate entity its chief function must be to *lead* the congregation. It must never dominate the congregation nor even sing with a view to entertaining the congregation. Nevertheless in parts of the service it should also alternate with the congregation, as in the introits, graduals, antiphons and responsories, all of which, in a greater or lesser degree, set forth the thought of the day or season as expressed in the lessons. If an anthem be sung, for which there is not much place in the Lutheran orders, unless it be instead of the gradual between the Epistle and Gospel, the words must again fit into the day, season, or occasion.

"Now, what of the music of such parts of the service as are assigned to the choir? For the introits, graduals, and responsories we already have music of a fitting character. But suppose an anthem be used in place of the gradual or in connection with the offertory? One may be selected whose words are altogether proper. But is it a matter of indifference in what kind of music the words are clothed? By no means. Luther properly said: 'The music must transfigure the text.' This means that the music must faithfully interpret what the words say. It is this that makes Bach's *B Minor Mass* and his *St. Matthew Passion* the greatest outstanding choral works ever produced. Filled with the meaning of the text, he poured his deeply religious soul into the music, and whoever hears these works under proper conditions cannot fail to be stirred by them to the lowermost depths of devotion. Compare with these Rossini's theatrical *Stabat Mater*, which deals with the greatest tragedy in human history, the crucifixion of our Lord, but which, in its musical form might almost be called a sacred opera, and you will again at once feel the difference. The music never sanctifies the words, but the words must give form to, and sanctify, the music; and those who then sing it must realize *what* they sing, so that it may become an act of *worship* on their part. Better have no chorus at all than disturb devout souls by the intrusion into the service of choir music that has its place on the stage rather than in the church.

"And now, summarizing what has been said, when has music as a means of worship a spiritual value? When it is the best of its kind; when it does not profane the house of God; when it faithfully interprets the text; when it is a worthy vehicle of our prayers, praises, and thanksgivings; and when, as pure instrumental music, it is filled with the spirit of holy reverence. Unless these elements enter into the music of the sanctuary, neither congregation, choir, nor organist can be said to worship in spirit and in truth."