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Miscellanea

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Miscellanea

A Grain of Wheat in a Bushel of Chaff

Continuing our review of E. Stanley Jones's latest book, *The Choice before Us*, we excerpt the following: "I am a missionary, and my calling is supposed to be sacred, but it is no more sacred than any other Christian's. Every Christian is a missionary. By the very nature of the Gospel he holds he is bound to share it. The fact is that the whole of the Christian movement was in the beginning a laymen's movement. Jesus and His disciples were all outside the stream of so-called sacredness that flowed through priest and Temple. 'By what authority do you do these things?' and neither He nor His disciples could claim any sacred authority, for they were all laymen. His only authority was the things He was doing. . . . We have talked about the man who said he was making shoes to pay expenses while he served God, and it is good but not good enough. Why shouldn't he serve God in the very making of the shoe, building justice and the love of God into it, so that the making of that shoe should be the extension of the incarnation—God incarnated in the material? Why shouldn't the business man go down to his work in the morning with that same sense of mission that the clergyman has when going to his pulpit? Why shouldn't he handle his ledgers with the same feeling of reverence as the minister handles his hymn-book in the pulpit? Why shouldn't numbers be just as sacred as Numbers? Is the teacher who is teaching mathematics teaching a secular subject? Secular? Who made mathematics? Who built the universe on a mathematical basis? Apparently, 'God mathematizes' or, as Sir James Jeans says, 'God is a pure mathematician.' When the teacher teaches mathematics, is he not following the footprints of the divine through the universe? Are the truths found in mathematics different from the truths found in the Bible? Or is all truth one? The Indian Christian judge who arises at four o'clock for an hour of prayer and then, continuing to kneel, writes his judgments for the day in that kneeling position, is striving to bring the eternal justice down into the court-room to make it function in terms of human relationships. When a Brahmin lawyer got out of hand one day in the court and the judge said that he was sorry but he would have to fine him, the lawyer replied, 'Sir, if you fine me, I shall take it as the very judgment of God; for when you speak, God speaks.' Don't tell me that is a secular occupation. It isn't. The disciples came near catching this truth when they said, 'Brothers, look out seven of your own number, men of good reputation who are full of the Spirit and of wisdom. We will appoint them to this duty,' Acts 6:3 (Moffatt)—the business of the daily distribution of food. They saw that spirituality was a prerequisite and that it must function in this business of food distribution. But they missed their step when they said, 'It is not desirable that we should drop preaching the Word of God and attend to meals'; for here they made a distinction which has become a very disastrous one in Christian history. They were

untrue to the Master, who did not hesitate to 'attend to meals' for the multitudes in the wilderness and who made of a last meal a sacrament which lives through the ages and who after His resurrection prepared a morning meal for His hungry disciples by the lakeside after a night of toil. The apostles withdrew from that stream of the sacredness of all life and of all tasks in the Kingdom and started a tendency to try to spiritualize life apart from the material. This has made the clergy into a group apart, looked on as impractical visionaries instead of the solid architects of a new order working their way through material relationships to the establishment of the Kingdom within those relationships. God did His best to break up that distinction, for He used Stephen as an evangelist far more than the apostles, who thus separated themselves. . . . Paul saw the principle of the unity of the so-called secular and sacred more than the other apostles. So Paul felt himself outside of that stream of apostolic life which was hardening into a class apart, a so-called sacred class. He stood for the lay side of things and was looked on as a layman — and he was! But in doing so, he was true to the genius and spirit of the Gospel. For Christ was a layman, and His movement was a lay movement, bringing the Kingdom down into the total life and making the total life sacred. . . . Those who have built up life into secular and sacred classes throw up their hands in horror and say that life is being secularized. But in wiping out this distinction, the Communists are closer to the Kingdom idea than the other; for they are trying to build their ideas into matter and not apart from it, as religion has often attempted to do. When Oman says that 'the test of a true religion is the extent to which religion is secular,' he is stressing the necessity of religion being interpreted in terms of so-called secular life." (Pp. 144—149.)

Sift away the great amount of chaff (this talk about the extension of the Incarnation and the apostles missing their step and the source of Christ's authority) but keep the grain of truth, of the important truth, concerning the sacredness of the Christian's secular calling. Read less of Dr. Jones's books and more of Dr. Luther. Luther wrote just as strikingly and popularly on the sacredness of our secular calling and the dignity of common labor. ("Die Vernunft denkt also: Diese Magd milket die Kuh, dieser Bauer pflueget den Acker; solches sind alles gemeine, geringe Werke, welche auch die Heiden tun; wie koennen es gute Werke sein? Aber dieser wird ein Moench, jene wird eine Nonne, siehet sauer, zeucht eine Kappe an, traegt ein haeren Hemd: solches sind sonderliche Werke, die andere Leute nicht tun; darum muessen es gute Werke sein. So denkt die Vernunft." (IX, 952 ff. See other references in Pieper, *Chr. Dog.*, III, p. 50.) But he did not do it at the expense of the glory of Christ's prophetic office and of the preaching of the Word.

E.

Father Heyer

In an interesting, informing article published in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* for April, 1938, Dr. George Drach, of Baltimore, Md., writes on a remarkable character of American Lutheranism, the Rev. Christian Frederick Heyer, usually referred to as Father Heyer. This extra-

ordinary man was born in 1793 in Germany. Coming over to America as a young man, he became a pastor in one of the Eastern synods. In 1841 he for the first time went to India, being sent by the Missionary Society of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. His salary was \$600 a year, and it was stipulated that, if this amount should prove to be greater than needed, the salary should in future years be reduced. In the fifteen years that he served abroad the salary never was increased to more than \$900. The first trip to India required almost six months in "an uncomfortable sailing-vessel around the Cape of Good Hope." His mother tongue being German, he had been compelled here in America to learn English. In India he founded the station known as Guntur, where the Telugu language is spoken. Another important station where he worked is Rajahmundry. In our country he served congregations in Maryland and Pennsylvania. He was also a traveling missionary; among other places he worked in St. Paul, Red Wing, Stillwater, and New Ulm, Minn. He was made the President of the Minnesota Synod and was its delegate when the General Council was organized. Among his achievements in India was the translation of Luther's Small Catechism into Telugu. He died November 7, 1873, more than eighty years of age. At the time of his death he was "housefather" of the newly founded Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, now located at Mount Airy. A.

A Romanist for President

Under this title the Rev. David De Forest Burrell, D.D., in a recent issue of the *Presbyterian*, contributed valuable material on this question, which is not merely a political one, but which affects the welfare of the Church of Christ.

"The press tells us that some of President Roosevelt's close associates, including the ubiquitous Mr. Farley, have been sounding out the South as to its attitude towards the suggestion of a Roman Catholic for the Presidency, and that they are quite jubilant over what they have discovered.

"It is impossible for us to believe that the political oil-hunters have found as rich a pool as they report. The great Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist constituencies of the Southern States cannot be ready to sell their birthright at such a price. It is conceivable of course that reaction against the New Deal has made some Southerners feel more warmly towards the sane and broad-minded Catholic Al Smith than they did when he was a candidate for the Presidency. And it is certain that the generosity of the Administration towards most of the Southern States has reacted on the state of mind of many individuals. But it is not conceivable that the great Protestant constituency of the South has forgotten the essential difference between the American point of view in political matters and the official view of the Roman hierarchy in this field.

"We are concerned not with party politics to the smallest degree but with keeping our nation free from entangling alliance with Rome. For there can be no doubt whatever that the Church of Rome lays claim to all civil authority in all lands. This is historic fact, established not only by Romanist policy through the centuries, but by specific and

repeated declaration of the Popes and by the teaching of the printed standards of that Church. John Langdon-Davies, in a recent article, furnishes one more illustration among many when he quotes the *Brief and Simple Explanation of the Catholic Catechism*, by Father De Arcos, of the Society of Jesus. We quote from Mr. Davies' quotations from this book:

"Q. Is every liberal government hostile to the Church?

"A. Evidently, since whoever is not with Christ is against Him.

"Q. How do those sin who, with their vote or influence, help the triumph of a candidate hostile to the Church?

"A. Usually mortally; and they are accomplices in the wicked laws contrary to the Church voted by their candidate.

"Q. Can the Church take part in politics?

"A. The Church can and must take part in politics when it is a matter of faith, morals, customs, justice, and the salvation of souls.'

"On an earlier page of Father de Arcos's book we are enlightened as to the Roman Church's definition of liberalism:

"Q. What are liberal principles?

"A. Those of 1789; so-called national sovereignty, freedom of religious cults, freedom of the press, freedom of instruction, universal morality, and such.

"Q. What consequences result from these?

"A. Secular schools, impious and immodest periodicals, civil marriage, heretical churches in Catholic countries, abolition of ecclesiastical immunities, . . . , etc.

"Q. What does the Church teach about these?

"A. That they are most disastrous and antichristian.

"Q. What more?

"A. That they never can be accepted as good and may be tolerated only for as long and in so far as they cannot be opposed without creating a worse evil.'

"With these quotations we place others that serve to enlighten us still more:

"Q. Then a Catholic must be antiliberal?

"A. Without doubt, exactly as he must be anti-Protestant or anti-Freemason; in short, against all the contraries to Christ and His Church.

"Q. What of Communism, Socialism, Modern Democracy, Anarchism, and the like sects?

"A. They are contrary to Catholic faith, to justice, and to all virtue, and as such are condemned by the Church.

"Q. Do not they say that they want to root out from the world the abuses of the rich and to regenerate society?

"A. They say so; but their doctrines and works prove the contrary.

"Q. To what do they pertain?

"A. To Luther and other arch-heretics who, with the pretense of reforming the Church, teach and practise all kinds of vices.'

"In the official Romanist mind, Luther is still the representative of the entire Protestant movement, which in Father de Arcos's book, as in many others, is joined in one with all such radical forces as he mentions above. The plain doctrine of Rome is that we Protestants are heretics,

that we are in the same class as the Socialists and Communists, and that our belief in freedom of religion, of the press, of speech, of education, is wrong and antichristian. The policy of the Church of Rome is to endure such things as long as they must be endured but to secure political control and destroy them as soon as possible.

"As Dorothy Thompson recently and boldly said: 'This is a Protestant country.' Our nation was founded by Protestants mainly, two thirds of Washington's army having been of Presbyterian extraction, most of the members of the Constitutional Convention and the first Congress having been Protestants, and every fundamental principle of our free Government and Constitution having sprung from the Protestant mind and soul.

"We are not fanatical. We have many good friends in the Roman Church and some among its clergy. We acknowledge with gratitude the many services rendered to the nation and to society by Catholics of the finest spirit and broadest tolerance. But we are bound to protest against the nomination of a Romanist as the candidate of one of the great political parties for the Presidency. No Catholic holding consistently to the position of the Catholic Church could do anything less than favor his own Church in policies and political appointments. He might not get very far, but his election would be one long step towards the realization of the Romanist ideal of control of civil government.

"In Dubuque, Iowa, for forty-five years the population was predominantly Catholic; and for all those years the archbishop sat in his palace and dictated the names of the men who were to constitute, each year, the new school board. The result was inevitable: not only were nearly all of the teachers in the public schools Catholic, but every policy of the school board was framed in the archbishop's palace.

"Today the representation of Romanists in public office in our land is far beyond proportion to population. The election of a Romanist President would greatly enlarge that representation. But far worse than such a prospect is the prospect of seeing public funds flow — as certain bills now before Congress would make them flow — to the support of Catholic parochial schools. And far worse than that would be the prospect of seeing the day brought nearer when freedom of speech and press and religion would be lost to us. For whatever might be the tolerance of the Catholic placed in the White House, he would be regarded by Rome as the providential instrument for the advance of Romanism and the destruction of Protestantism in our nation.

"We believe in toleration. But we face the hard facts. And one of these facts is this: Rome, officially, has tolerance neither for us who are Protestants nor for the basic principles of our Government, which also are Protestant in essence." A.

Checking Up on Modern Luther Biographies

There is no doubt that the far-reaching modern Luther research in Germany and other countries during the last half century has proved itself of the greatest value in bringing about a deeper and truer appreciation of the Reformer's heroic person and monumental work in the

sixteenth century. In view of the numerous Luther "legends" which have been forced out of existence and the many new facts brought to light by this painstaking, scholarly Luther research, historians are actually speaking of a "new" Luther, who is strikingly different from the "old" Luther of orthodox Lutheran tradition. Rudolf Thiel, one of the modern Luther students, in his excellent biographical work entitled *Luther*, sums up (so far as the Reformer's *Werden* at least is concerned) the results of this new study as follows: "The external history of his struggle has been revised and supplemented. The most profound and stupendous exposition of his doctrine has been discovered in an early lecture written by his own hand. His original religious experience has been reconstructed, by way of experiment, from his first documents." (*Vorwort*, p. 7.) Thiel's own canons of judgment to estimate Luther's personality and Reformation activity are as striking as they are correct. He rightly insists that the biographer must primarily study Luther's remarkable personality from the viewpoint of the monumental task to which he dedicated all his intellectual, moral, and spiritual talents. ("Den Menschen Luther kann man nicht erleben, wenn man sein Werk zurueckstellt, dem er alle Kraefte seines Lebens schenkte.") So also the true biographer of Luther must personally favor his doctrinal and other convictions, be in accord with his aspirations, and present the entire subject-matter objectively. Lastly, in all cases the hero of the biography must speak for himself and thus himself supply the clue to the lucid understanding of what he meant to be and to do.

But Thiel himself complains that his new views on Luther and his work have met with considerable contradiction on the part of his colleagues. He writes: "Im Kernpunkt meiner Lutherschau, der ewigen Ungewissheit, melden freilich viele Forscher ihren Widerspruch an," though he immediately adds by way of explanation: "wie es auch nicht anders sein kann angesichts eines solchen Umbruchs der gewohnten Anschauungen." This means that modern students of Luther do not agree with one another so far as their new views on Luther are concerned; and Thiel does not challenge this. All he desires is that his presentations should be confuted, not from supposed "authorities" but from the "sources." He closes this consideration with the truly laudable and pious wish: "Moege dieser Streit zu einer tieferen Erkenntnis Luthers und der lutherischen Lehre fuehren!"

It is just this wish that prompts us to bring this important matter to the attention of our readers in this place. What we plead for is that they themselves (as much as their time allows) study the new Luther biographies and check up on them by a thorough reading of Luther's works, as also, of course, by a critical perusal of traditional orthodox Luther biographies. Thiel closes his *Vorwort* with the remark: "Ich glaube, dass das zwanzigste Jahrhundert eine neue Anschauung von Martin Luther braucht. Ich versuche, diesen Luther zu gestalten." We ask: Does the twentieth century really need a new view of Luther? Has the view of Luther presented in the past by competent historians been substantially imperfect or directly faulty? We concede that there are *accidentia* which require reexamination and perhaps correction. But

is the Luther of modern scientific research actually so radically different from the Luther of orthodox tradition that we are forced to revise our judgment on this score? Have the older writers erred so greatly that we need an *Anschauung* which is basically new? Certainly these questions are worthy of careful consideration.

What has clarified Luther's life and work even in the past is the fact that the great Reformer, both before and after his death, was so severely attacked by enemies of all sorts and so ardently defended by friends of all colors that he easily became the best-known personality in history. His foes left no weakness of his uncriticized, no opportunity for attack unutilized, and no sphere of his life and work concealed; and, of course, in every case his friends rallied to his defense. In this way, thanks to his enemies and friends, there has come down to us a "Luther in the limelight" whose thinking, living, and doing have been so thoroughly explored and so completely publicized that we know this man as we know few others in history. In view of this fact there remains for our modern Luther-research students no more than to investigate the work of the past and, in the light of the new Luther material and of the new approaches of study, to ascertain where the old views have been at fault. But the essential Luther-research work, we believe, has been accomplished long, long ago, and the Luther of orthodox Lutheran tradition will, in the main, stand in history as the *wirkliche Luther*. Certainly no modern Luther biography may be received as substantially sound which does not depict Luther as a *spiritual* Reformer and his Reformation as fundamentally a *spiritual* movement. In the Reformation we indeed find social, economic, political, and other elements; Luther, too, remained to the end a true German and was never ashamed of his nationality. But neither did the social, economic, political, and other elements basically form his work, nor was his work the result of his German idiosyncrasies and prejudices. The history of the Reformation is not only *Vaterlandsgeschichte*, but, above all, *Kirchengeschichte*. Clannish and provincial as Luther in many respects may have been, in his religious conviction and struggle he was ecumenical, and therefore he belongs to the ages and not to any period or people. In the "Luthers of the twentieth century" these facts often do not receive sufficient consideration.

"Ich versuche, diesen Luther zu gestalten," writes Thiel. In that very attempt, honest though it may be, lies the modern historian's danger. Does he form Luther correctly? Does he exaggerate? Does he underestimate? His works of course must be studied. They are of eminent value. They contain valuable information and the very novelty of their approach often renders them interesting. But let the student of history not be carried away by them! Let him read carefully, judiciously, critically, and then check up on them discriminately by reading Luther's own works and testing the historian's statements in the light of his *ipsissima verba*. Such continued study of Luther will lead to a profounder knowledge of the great Reformer and of the Lutheran doctrine. A "Zurueck zu Luther" movement is certainly greatly needed in the Lutheran circles of our country.

J. THEODORE MUELLER