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## Miscellanea

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**Miscellanea**


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**"Die drei Symbola oder Bekenntnisse des Glaubens Christi,  
in der Kirche eintraechtig gebraucht"**

This is the title of practically the only work of importance which Luther wrote four hundred years ago, in the generally uneventful year of 1538. Even this work, *The Three Symbols, or Confessions, of the Christian Faith, Used in the Church by Unanimous Agreement*, is nothing more than a mere tract, in which the great Reformer treats the Apostles' Creed, the *Quicumque*, the *Te Deum Laudamus*, to which he dedicates forty paragraphs, and the Nicene Creed. His purpose in publishing the tract was to show "by way of superabundance [*zum Ueberfluss*]" that he agreed "with the true Christian Church, which to this day kept such symbols, or confessions, and not with the false, vainglorious papistical Church, which is the greatest enemy of the true Church and has introduced much idolatry in addition to such beautiful confessions."

Of the Apostles' Creed Luther writes: "The first symbol, that of the apostles, is indeed the best of all because it contains a concise, correct, and splendid presentation of the articles of faith and is easily learned by children and the common people." "The second," he continues, "the Athanasian Creed, is longer . . . and practically amounts to an apology of the first symbol." His verdict on the *Quicumque* reads: "I do not know of any more important document of the New Testament Church since the days of the apostles" [than the Athanasian Creed].

The third part of the tract, in which Luther treats the *Te Deum Laudamus*, is by far the most important. Here occur the famous words: "In all the histories of the entire Christendom I have found and experienced that all who had and held the chief article concerning Jesus Christ in its truth remained safe and sound in the true Christian faith. And even though they erred and sinned in other points, they nevertheless were finally preserved."

In these words Luther voices his faith in the *una sancta*, composed of all true believers in Christ, who, just because they cling to Christ as their divine Savior, continue *in statu gratiae* despite their aberrations in other points of doctrine. Luther explains his statement further as follows: "For it has been decreed, says Paul, Col. 2:9, that in Christ should dwell all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, or personally, so that he who does not find or receive God in Christ shall never have or find Him anywhere outside Christ, even though he ascend above heaven, descend below hell, or go beyond the world."

This is Luther's repudiation of the Unitarian tenets, spread even then by various humanistic and Anabaptist groups in Switzerland and Southern Germany, with which at times the Lutherans were identified by the Romanists. Condemning all antichristian doctrines, Luther continues: "I have also observed that all errors, heresies, idolatries, offenses, abuses, and ungodliness within the Church originally resulted from the fact that this article of faith concerning Jesus Christ was despised or lost."

And viewed clearly and rightly, all heresies militate against the precious article of Jesus Christ, as Simeon says concerning Him, Luke 2:34, that He is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and for a sign which is spoken against; and long before this, Isaiah, 8:14, spoke of Him as 'a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.'

How true these words are has been proved again in our own time by the various modernistic and enthusiastic trends in the Church almost throughout the world. From Schleiermacher, the father of Modernism, down to the latest Neo-Modernist, all have with one accord attacked the Christian doctrine of Christ's person and work and of salvation by faith in His blood, Modernism and Papism working hand in hand at this latter point. Luther says: "And we, in the Papacy, the last and greatest of saints, what have we done? We have confessed that He [Christ] is God and man; but that He is our Savior, who died and rose for us, etc., this we have denied and persecuted with might and main." Then: "And even now those who claim to be the best Christians and boast that they are the Holy Church, who burn the others and wade in innocent blood, regard as the best doctrine that we obtain grace and salvation through our own works. Christ is to be accorded no other honor with regard to our salvation than that He made the beginning, while we are the heroes who complete it with our merit."

Very striking are Luther's words also with regard to the insidious manner in which the devil attacks the doctrine of Christ by means of his "three storm columns." He writes: "This is the way the devil goes to work: He attacks Christ with three storm columns. One will not suffer Him to be God; the other will not suffer Him to be man; the third denies that He has merited salvation for us. Each of the three endeavors to destroy Christ. For what does it avail that you confess Him to be God if you do not also believe that He is man? For then you have not the entire and the true Christ but a phantom of the devil. What does it avail you to confess that He is true man if you do not also believe that He is true God? What does it avail you to confess that He is God and man if you do not also believe that whatever He became and whatever He did was done for you? . . . Surely, all three parts must be believed, namely, that He is God; also, that He is man and that He became such a man for us, that is, as the first symbol says: 'conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered, was crucified, died, and rose again,' etc. *If one small part is lacking, then all parts are lacking. For faith shall and must be complete in every particular.* While it may indeed be weak and subject to afflictions, yet it must be entire and not false. Weakness [of faith] does not work the harm, but false faith." (Cf. St. L. Ed., X, 993 ff.; Triglot, p. 14 f.)

In view of the fact that the central doctrine of Christ's person and work is still the one that is most contested in theology, it may be well for us carefully to consider Luther's tract on the *Three Symbols*, privately as well as in conference groups, through topical presentation. The same holds true of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which Luther here sets forth so clearly and convincingly. Luther was a mature theologian when in 1538, eight years before his death, he wrote this simple but

profound and comprehensive declaration of his agreement with the cardinal doctrines confessed in Christendom's ecumenical creeds. It is a priceless treasure of sound Christian theology. J. T. M.

### The Theological USUS LOQUENDI of the Term CROSS

The question has been asked whether the term *cross* should be restricted to the sufferings of Christians which they endure as the direct result of their confession of Christ or whether it may be employed also, in a wider application, of all trials and afflictions which in this life believers suffer *as such*. We are dealing of course with a meaning established not by Scripture but by ecclesiastical usage, and for this reason the matter belongs to the sphere of Christian liberty. Still in the interest of clear understanding, uniformity is desirable also on this point, and so the question deserves discussion. Of all Lutheran dogmaticians in recent times, Dr. F. Pieper (*Christliche Dogmatik*, III, 84 ff.) has perhaps given the clearest and simplest view of the matter when he writes: "Cross comes upon Christians *qua* Christians, that is to say, in the exercise of their Christian calling in the world. When they follow Christ in word and deed, especially when they confess the Gospel of the crucified Christ, who is a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks, they receive the same [evil] treatment from the world which was Christ's lot when He sojourned upon earth, Matt. 10:25." In a footnote he quotes Luther, who writes: "A Christian is subjected to the precious cross for the very reason that he is a Christian (*in dem, dass er ein Christ ist*)." Dr. Pieper next shows that cross-bearing embraces all such things as self-denial (Matt. 16:24), renunciation of everything that interferes with Christian discipleship ("*was sich der Nachfolge Christi entgegenstellt*," Luke 14:33), of the use of reason in *spiritualibus* (Matt. 11:25, 26), of peace and rest (Matt. 10:34; Luke 12:51), of honor before men (Matt. 5:11; Luke 6:22; 1 Pet. 4:14), of the love of relatives (Matt. 10:35-37; Luke 12:52, 53), of earthly possessions (1 Cor. 7:30; Matt. 19:21, 22), and of life (Luke 14:26). So also it embraces the constant crucifixion of the flesh with its lusts (Gal. 5:24; Col. 3:5; Rom. 6:6). We personally favor this more general use of the term *cross*, according to which it embraces all the sufferings which believers sustain as believers in Christ in the proper exercise of their discipleship.

Dr. A. Hoenecke, in his well-known, scholarly *Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik*, fully agrees with Dr. Pieper; for in Vol. III, p. 427, he propounds the question whether all sorrow and tribulation of Christians might be designated as cross, and in refutation of G. Buechner (*Handkonkordanz*, *sub voce*), who, like other theologians, suggests that properly only those sufferings should be styled cross which believers endure for confessing Christ, he writes: "This is an unjustifiable restriction of the Scriptural concept of cross and at the same time also an infringement of the Christian status. Scripture does not restrict the term cross to the sufferings endured for confessing His name. Hence not only disgrace, reproach, and persecution which come upon us directly because of our confession of Jesus are to be considered cross, but also the sufferings of Christians which have no direct connection with their confession. We agree with

Brochmand who (*Systema Theol.*, Tom. II, p. 4075) more generally designates all suffering of Christians as cross when he writes: "The Holy Spirit describes calamities and afflictions to which man in this life is subject by various terms, and indeed by such as are very expressive. [Suffering] is called cross in allusion to the cross of Christ; for as Christ has to suffer and die and in this manner enter into glory (Luke 24:26), so also all who desire to be followers of Christ must justly bear their cross and enter into the kingdom of God by various afflictions.' Also Quenstedt expressly declares all the sufferings of Christians to be cross; for he writes (*Theol. Did. Pol.*, P. IV, p. 348): 'All the afflictions of the pious, I say, come under the head of cross because by His cross Christ has sanctified and consecrated all our suffering, so that they are salutary for us.'" As synonyms of cross Dr. Hoenecke mentions especially *temptation* (1 Cor. 10:13) and *discipline* (Heb. 12:6-8). However, even Buechner does not reject the general use of the term cross in the sense of the dogmatists just named, since in his *Handkonkordanz* he says: "Cross signifies any suffering appointed to us by God and indeed properly and in a narrow sense any suffering because of the confession and imitation of Christ, by which He tries, chastens, or demands our witness to the heavenly truth, but in such a way that all afflictions must redound to His honor, the good of the neighbor, and our own benefit." He explains the expression "to take up his cross" as follows: "To take upon himself his cross" means without murmuring and reluctance, patiently and willingly, to submit to it, not to regard himself worthy of such suffering, and always to remember that he has deserved far more than is laid upon him, and so to bear the cross in quietness and confidence (Is. 30:15)." Buechner therefore does not differ essentially from Dr. Pieper and other theologians who define cross in the more general sense stated above. While the matter of course deserves some academic consideration, it ought to receive above all our constant practical consideration, since the acquisition of the *habitus practicus* of bearing the imposed cross properly is so very difficult also for theologians. But, in addition, it must not be forgotten that the sufferings of Christians often are chastisements (Heb. 12:6 ff.), which they have brought upon themselves through their sins.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

### The Modernism of Reinhold Niebuhr

Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr was born at Wright City, Mo., June 21, 1892, and is two years older than his almost equally famous brother Dr. Helmut Richard Niebuhr, who formerly was professor of New Testament History and Interpretation at Eden Theological Seminary (1919-1922), then president of Elmhurst College (1924-1927), again professor at Eden Theological Seminary (1927-1931), and is now professor of Christian Ethics, Divinity School, Yale University. Reinhold Niebuhr, graduate of Eden Theological Seminary (1913) and Yale Divinity School (1914), was pastor at Detroit (Ev. Synod of N. A.), then associate professor of Philosophy of Religion at Union Theological Seminary, and since 1930 is professor of Applied Christianity at that theological school. He is

editor of *The World Tomorrow* and contributing editor of *The Christian Century*. Some of the numerous books he has published are: *Does Civilization Need Religion?* (1927); *Leaves from the Note-book of a Tamed Cynic* (1929); *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932); *Reflections on the End of an Era* (1934); *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics* (1935); *Beyond Tragedy* (1937). His lectures, magazine articles, and theological treatises are too numerous to mention in this brief sketch, in which it is our aim to delineate in a few paragraphs the peculiar type of theology which Dr. Niebuhr advocates. That he today is among the most eminent of liberal theological writers requires no proof; Niebuhr is listened to whenever he speaks.

To the student of Reinhold Niebuhr's books it appears that in his theological views there is a synthesis of three diverse theological trends: one that keeps him quasi-conservative at least in his theological terminology; another that leads him to cast aside the ancient orthodoxy of traditional Christian truth; and finally one that causes him again to seek a fusion of these heterogeneous theological tendencies. The first is his original Reformed heritage, which he acquired through the early educational agencies in his simple home town. Niebuhr knows very well what Calvinistic theology is, and even his contact with extreme liberalism in the East has not obliterated its tenets from his mind; for he still likes to speak in terms (and respectful terms at times) of Reformed orthodoxy. The second trend is the radically different, modernistic *modus cogitandi*, which faced him first at Eden Seminary (which is most tolerant of Modernism) and then in a yet greater degree at Yale Divinity School and Union Theological Seminary. At Union especially his contact with Dr. Fosdick became a decisive factor in molding his theological thinking. Both now speak the same language, use the same canons of Scripture interpretation, and oppose with the same vehemence the crassly modernistic faction, which "has nothing constructive to offer to the people from whom Liberalism has taken away its orthodoxy." Briefly expressed, both belong to the neo-modernistic wing of Liberals, which is at war with both Modernism and Christian confessionalism. The third and latest element in Niebuhr's theological thought is Barthian dialecticism, which, just because of its peculiar crisis of philosophy and religion, speculation and basic theological truth, seems to suit his theological eclecticism very well. Bearing in mind this old-time orthodox background, his modernistic impregnation and his dialectic re-formation, one need not be surprised if at times Niebuhr speaks very orthodoxly, at others, very liberally, and again at other times very mystically. At forty-seven Niebuhr is still young and as a theologian he is still in the making. As a Liberalist, Niebuhr of course is not vitally interested in being theologically stationary.

How his position works out in practical application may best be learned from his own popular homiletic presentation of his theological views. In 1937 he published a collection of "Essays on the Christian Interpretation of History," entitled *Beyond Tragedy*.<sup>\*</sup> The book is dedicated to Sherwood Eddy and Bishop William Scarlett, the latter

<sup>\*</sup> Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

residing in St. Louis. In his Preface Dr. Niebuhr explains the title of his book as pointing out the ultimate significance of the "tragedy of the cross" as showing how God will finally overcome sin, great though it may be. But there is neither Christian Law nor Christian Gospel in Niebuhr's sermon essays. Just how he wishes to have the facts of (theological) history interpreted he demonstrates in his first sermon, "As Deceivers, Yet True." Briefly expressed, he here endeavors to show that the Christian theological facts are both untrue and true. They are untrue in their literal application, but they are true nevertheless in a higher, allegorical sense. This of course is not what St. Paul means to say in 2 Cor. 6:8 when he declares: "As workers together with Him we give no offense in anything but in all things approve ourselves as ministers of God . . . as deceivers and yet true." St. Paul did not in these words declare that he was deceiving people by teaching them the Biblical truths in a literal sense; but what he meant to say was that he was a true minister of Jesus Christ, though his enemies denounced him as a deceiver. Misinterpreting the apostle's words, Niebuhr asserts that Christianity *deceives* when it claims that *God created the world*. Creation, he holds, is a "mythical idea," not a "rational one." It belongs to the "primitive religious and artistic myths and symbols" which Christianity has taken over without "rationalizing them." There never was a creation in the literal sense of Genesis. And yet there is a grain of truth in this primitive myth because it relates existence to a cause and points out the majesty of God in His relation to the world. So also the Christian doctrine that "*man fell into evil*" is mythical and therefore "deceptive"; in fact, the whole account of the Garden, the apple, and the serpent is historically untrue; there never was a state of innocence. Nevertheless, Christian theologians are "deceivers, yet true" in teaching the fall of man, inasmuch as this is to them a symbol of the rise and character of evil in human life. So also Christian theologians are "deceivers and yet true" when they claim that *God became incarnate* to redeem fallen mankind from sin. To Niebuhr a descent of the eternal into the timely is utter foolishness. There was neither an incarnation of the Son of God nor a redemption by Him of fallen man. Yet 'the gospels of the manger and of the cross,' he says, are again quite true, inasmuch as they demonstrate how God in the end overcomes the tragedy of evil, not permitting human destiny to terminate in perdition. Finally also the Christian teaching of *Christ's second coming* is, according to Niebuhr, both deceptive and true; for according to his philosophy of religion there will be no final judgment. But what will take place is that God, who apparently has been overcome in human history, will finally triumph over the present unrighteousness. Niebuhr thus denies the entire Christian doctrine of sin and grace, Law and Gospel, repentance and faith, and "transvalues values" in the sense that nothing of a positive creed remains except the bare naturalism of a confessional theist. How Barthianism will shape his religious thoughts in the future no one can tell; but so far Reinhold Niebuhr has proved himself no more than a theological twin brother of Harry Emerson Fosdick, whose antichristian sentiments are well known.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

**Roma aeterna — semper eadem**

The Catholic *Brooklyn Tablet*, in announcing a prayer service for all victims of persecution in the world, rightly remarks that because of the loud protests sent in the direction of Germany religious persecution in other lands has been entirely forgotten. It is self-evident, so the editorial runs, that we raise protests against the persecution of Jews and others in Germany; at the same time, however, the persecution of Christians in Soviet Russia must be equally condemned, where two million people were systematically starved out and the entire land is one monstrous concentration camp. We shall pray, the notice continues, that our fellow-men who condemn the persecution of Jews in Germany and at the same time send anniversary congratulations to Soviet Russia, the liquidator of Christians, and those who refuse to raise any objection to persecution of Catholics in Spain and Mexico while they demand disruption of diplomatic relations with Germany, that such fellow-men might see the light of fairness and recognize that it is wrong to persecute any religion, any race, any children of God. — So far the *Tablet*. Reading such statements issuing from Roman Catholic sources must be somewhat stunning to any one who knows a bit of history. One thinks of the dark pages in the past history of the Roman Church (not so far in the distant past either!), and one would like to ask the authority behind the above statements a few questions and somehow evoke a real answer, without the usual subterfuges of Jesuits, Paulist Fathers, etc. Does Rome really mean to set aside that old slogan: *Roma semper eadem*? Does Rome mean to change her ways, but really, with contrition and confession and repentance for the past?

It may not be amiss to devote a few lines to this matter. If we are not yet awakened to the fact that the Catholic Action is active, let us by all means open our eyes. There is, no doubt, deliberate intention behind the spreading of news items of the above nature. They are not isolated. In March, 1934, the (Methodist) *Christian Advocate* brought under the heading "This Is Good Doctrine, and from a Romanist, Too" this statement of the Rev. Urban J. Vehr, Roman Catholic Bishop of Denver:

"The idea of persecuting any group, of hampering the exercise or depriving them of their God-given rights and constitutional privileges because of blood or conscientious convictions, is revolting. It matters little whether this is done by organized groups in open assembly or in the more secret and surreptitious innuendos of interference and retaliation. It is un-American and a violation of the natural rights of citizenship. On the positive side, justice, amity, and understanding in the relations of the several religious groups of our country supposes a religious ideal of the common brotherhood of man with its obligations of social justice and fraternal charity. Legislation cannot create it. It must be an inner development of the noble attitude of soul and mind." This was widely copied.

Emphasis is being given to the support rendered to American liberties by Catholic dignitaries. Archbishop Ireland is quoted, speaking in Paris: "We are not all of one mind upon religious and social questions;



indeed, upon many matters we are at variance. But we know one another, and we love liberty—and we take as our rule to grant to others what we wish to have for ourselves.”<sup>1)</sup> And the same Archbishop, speaking for the Pope, then Leo XIII, in Baltimore: “Leo understands, loves, blesses, the liberty which America guarantees to her people.”<sup>2)</sup> Again, the papal delegate at the Columbian Roman Catholic Congress in Chicago, Cardinal Satolli: “Go forward, in one hand bearing the Book of Christian truth, in the other the Constitution of the United States. Christian truth and American liberty will make you free, happy, and prosperous.”<sup>3)</sup> And Cardinal Gibbons: “A man enjoys religious liberty when he possesses the free right of worshiping God according to the dictates of a right conscience and of practising a form of religion most in accordance with his duties to God. Every act infringing on his freedom of conscience is justly styled religious intolerance. This religious liberty is the true right of every man, because it corresponds with a most certain duty which God has put upon him.”<sup>4)</sup> This late cardinal never tired in reiterating the claim that the Catholic Church is the very mother of civil and religious liberty; so in Baltimore: “I here assert the proposition, which I hope to establish by historical evidence, that the Catholic Church has always been the zealous promoter of civil and religious liberty and that, whenever any encroachments on these sacred rights of man were perpetrated by professing members of the Catholic faith, these wrongs, far from being sanctioned by the Church, were committed in palpable violation of her authority.”<sup>5)</sup> (Shades of the Waldenses, of Hus, and Savonarola!)

Special efforts are being made to “doctor” history. Is that slander? Well, here is what Hilaire Belloc wrote in *Commonweal*, April 17, 1936: “There is in process today a literary movement of the highest interest: it is the rewriting of English history—the establishment of the story of England on a basis of truth. . . . The new rewriting of English history is of universal interest, because it is the statement for the first time of how the disruption of Europe took place in the sixteenth century. . . . On all these matters we have had for three hundred years in England a false official history holding the field; during the last hundred years this false official history has enjoyed a monopoly. Whoever reads any English historian from Burnet to Trevelyan, whoever reads Hume or Gibbon or Freeman or Stubbs or Froude or Bright or Green, is reading on the subject of England and Europe history steeped in anti-Catholicism and is reading in the particular case of England a form of historical falsehood which has become accepted.” Even Lingard, he says, is affected by the spirit around him; outside of him the whole mass of historical writing is directed toward the belittling and misrepresenting of historical truth as to the religion of England and the culture which arose from that religion. Belloc himself has taken a leading role in

1) *The Church and Modern Society*. Lectures and Addresses by John Ireland, Archbishop of St. Paul, p. 363.

2) *l. c.*, p. 403.

3) *The Chicago Herald*, Sept. 6, 1893.

4) *Catholic Mirror*, Baltimore, March 14, 1891.

5) *Catholic Mirror*, Baltimore, March 14, 1891.

this rewriting of English history, producing, besides innumerable volumes, mostly of historical character, a history of England in five large volumes which is all that any biased Catholic may wish for. An example of such "rewritten history" is furnished by G. K. Chesterton in a review of a book called *Roman Catholicism and Freedom*, by the Oxford Professor of Church History Cecil John Cadoux, appearing in *America*, Jan. 30, 1937, reading: "So completely hedged in is the writer in the trim Dutch garden of Macaulay's *Essays*, that he actually adds a note of explanation to the suggestion that James II proposed toleration. That James II proposed toleration is as certain a fact as that Cobden proposed free trade. It is as certain a fact as that his Protestant subjects threw him out of his throne for proposing it. He was a Catholic, who wanted to tolerate Protestants as well as Catholics. There were very, very few Protestants then who wanted to tolerate Catholics as well as Protestants." Which is true; a century of plots against their sovereigns, sanctioned and fomented by high and highest Catholic authorities on the continent, had taught English Protestants that loyalty to the government and Catholicism simply did not grow in the same garden in England. And Chesterton never wrote anything more humorous than this that James II issued his Toleration Decree because he "wanted to tolerate Protestants as well as Catholics"; his was a Protestant country which did not tolerate Catholics, for the reason cited above; Protestants did not need his Toleration Decree, nor was it in James's power to deny them toleration; none but the Catholics could, or were meant to, profit by James's decree, except some dissenters, whom James loved no more than the Anglicans and who became so alarmed by this evidence of royal favor to the Catholics that they joined their enemies, the Anglicans, in opposing and voiding James's act. Solely and alone for his Catholics did James issue that decree giving toleration to all when he found that his Protestant people would not let him extend favors to Catholics specifically.

The persistent relentless pressure exerted by Catholic Action has its effects. Reporting on the fifty-fourth annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Providence, R. I. (*America*, Jan. 30, 1937), the Jesuit Raymond Corrigan records with evident glee that it would have been hard for any one of the thousand or more who wandered about the convention headquarters or read the daily papers to be unaware of Catholic activities; that, though this was not the first time a Roman collar appeared on the platform of the Association, it was the first time a general session was treated with a paper expressly dealing with the Catholic Church; that, incidentally, the paper made big headlines the next day and was given generous space in the columns; that, incidentally, too, the chairman of the Association introduced the speaker, Rev. James A. Magner, with a touching tribute to the Holy Father.— In a review of Joseph Chambon's *Der franzoesische Protestantismus* (in *Church History*, Sept. 1938) the reviewer, Quirinus Breen, professor at Albany College, Albany, Oreg., states: "If church history will make any contribution to the unity of Christendom, Joseph Chambon's book must not be taken as a model. It is an *oratio pro domo* by a vehement Protestant—written in an unrelieved high key; the conflict between

French Protestants and Catholics is described as one between Christ and Satan; there is too much martyrology." Now, Chambon describes the atrocities committed on French Huguenots in lurid colors, it is true, but not, as far as my knowledge goes, violating truth; the reviewer grants that "the portraits of the Huguenots are not exclusively those of saints, and Dr. Chambon concedes this freely. Equally just is he in characterizing some of the Catholic orders and Popes." The point of the criticism, then, is, if I understand him right, that in the interest of the unity of Christendom we, in writing church history, must now overlook and forget the (unacknowledged and unrepented) iniquities perpetrated on Protestants by the Catholics where they had the power.

Has the Roman Church, then, changed so much in principle and practise that we must say, The old things have passed away; forget?—The *Syllabus of Errors*, issued by Pope Pius IX in 1864, still stands, in which the Most Holy Father declares it an *error* to say: "The Church has not the power of availing herself of force or any direct or indirect temporal power; the Church ought to be separated from the State and the State from the Church." Leo XIII, in 1885, indorsed this, and in 1888 condemned what he termed "the fatal theory of the right of separation between Church and State." Leo also declared: "From what has been said it follows that it is quite unlawful to demand, to defend, or to grant unconditional freedom of thought, of speech, of writing, or of worship, as if these were so many rights given by nature to man." Cardinal Gibbons (in *The Faith of Our Fathers*, Ed. 49, 1897, p. 264) admits that "many Protestants seem to be very much disturbed by some such argument as this: 'Catholics are very ready now to proclaim freedom of conscience because they are in the minority. When they once succeed in getting the upper hand in numbers and power, they will destroy this freedom because their faith teaches them to tolerate no doctrine other than the Catholic'; but the best he can offer to relieve their disturbed minds is a quotation from "the great theologian Becanus" to the effect that "religious liberty may be tolerated by a ruler when it would do more harm to the State or to the community to repress it."—In 1887, in the *Western Watchman*, published in St. Louis, Father D. S. Phelan wrote: "Protestantism.—We would draw and quarter it. We would impale it and hang it up for crow's meat. We would tear it with pincers and fire it with hot irons. We would fill it with molten lead and sink it in a hundred fathoms of hell-fire." This excerpt was submitted to the (Methodist) *Christian Advocate*, and when the editor expressed his doubts as to its having appeared exactly as quoted, Bishop (then Chaplain) McCabe wrote to the editor of the *Western Watchman*, who returned the extract with the sentence added: "but would not lay an ungentle hand on a hair in a Protestant head," and then wrote, "That is the sentence in full. D. S. Phelan." On this the *Christian Advocate* commented: "Well, the Roman Catholic Church never changes. We would hate to trust ourselves in many a country in this world in the hands of a man belonging to an infallible Church, the Church of St. Bartholomew and the auto da fé, whose rhetoric would reach so sanguinary a height as this. We fear that to make sure of drawing and quartering Protestantism, of impaling and hanging it up for crow's

meat, of tearing it with pincers and firing it with hot irons, it would be conceived to be the best way to subject Protestants to all these things." We who have heard of the Inquisition also remember that the Catholics have always maintained that fiction: "The Church sheds no blood"; no, Father Phelan "would not lay an ungentle hand on a hair in a Protestant head"; he would hand the whole Protestant over to the secular governments and remind them of the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215, which required secular rulers to execute condemned heretics on pain of being themselves excommunicated, deposed, and deprived of their property.

The *Osservatore Romano* of June 8, 1923, had this: "It would seem that intolerance in politics is allowed. Now, we ask, Why can it not be so in religion, when it is not an opinion that is in danger but the truth, not a form of government but the government of the soul, not questions of earthly and changeable institutions but eternal salvation? We believe in intolerance. According to St. Dominic intolerance is dutiful for men of sincere faith. When he went against the Albigenses, he fought error, but wanted to save the errant ones. . . . When we consider that it was from the Protestant Bible (not from the Holy Bible), which excludes every authentic interpretation, that sprang up the rebellious doctrine which reached the point of denying the Immaculate Conception and the divine and virgin maternity of Mary and begat the doubt and negation of the divinity of Christ, we think that no one can accuse of irreverence the pyre which destroyed with the origin of such blasphemies the sources which curse purity and morals." (*L. u. W.*, Vol. 69, 351.) Even if this Italian journal is not the mouthpiece of the Pope, it is surely close enough to him that he would know what is printed in its pages and could change it if he had experienced a change of heart. Dr. F. Pieper said to the above citation: "Rom beansprucht das Recht, alle wahren Christen, die sich gewissenshalber der Tyrannei, Irrlehre und Abgoetterei des Antichristen entziehen, zu verfolgen und auszurotten. Niemals hat der Papst darauf verzichtet, und ohne sich selber aufzugeben, koennte er das auch nicht."—By the way, that campaign of St. Dominic against the Albigenses to which the *Osservatore Romano* alludes led to that notorious crusade against the heretics which exterminated them by massacres extending over twenty years (1209—1229); and though Dominic was probably not responsible for it, a responsible leader was the papal legate Arnold, Abbot of Citeaux, whose atrocious conduct in this "war" is well known. At the storming of Beziers he was asked how they were to distinguish between Catholics and heretics, and he answered: "Kill them all; the Lord knoweth His own!"

A few examples may be added to show how Catholic winds are blowing at the present time where they have free course. A few months ago (before the action of Germany) the *Lutheran* reported: "The 'Los von Rom' movement in Czechoslovakia, which led more than 2,000,000 out of the Church of Rome into the Evangelical ranks after the World War, is now being placed on the defensive. The Catholic Church has quietly staged a comeback. Specially trained priests have been established in strategic places; a strong political party, a copy of Germany's old 'Catholic Center,' has been set up. Catholic diplomats have adroitly

captured controlling positions in the state administration; an aggressive 'laymen's movement' is hard at work to bring personal influence to bear on their neighbors—all with the usual results. Adopting the ruthless tactics of Austria's brand of Fascism, the Church has set to work to break up mixed marriages, much in the manner in vogue in French Canada. There is no place left for the practise of Christian toleration; for the Church has repeatedly declared that it is against her principles to grant toleration to heresy, though she claims it for herself in heretical lands. And so in Bohemia the spirit and method, if not the machinery, of the medieval Inquisition has been established to the glory of the Catholic Church and its God."

Finally the case of Alfred Noyes. Again I quote the *Lutheran* (Sept. 28, 1938): "Eleven years ago Alfred Noyes, English poet and one-time professor of poetry at Princeton, abandoned the Church of England for Catholicism as the only sufficient and authoritative faith. Recently Noyes issued a biography of Voltaire, published by a noted Catholic firm, in which he fully exposed the ecclesiastical and secular corruptions of the times and approved Voltaire's judgment of a certain ecclesiastic, that 'to receive the host at his hands would be like swallowing a spider.' The Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office, whose distinguished head is the Pope himself and which has authority over all questions of faith, morals, heresies, mixed marriages, and the Index Expurgatorius (which passes final judgment on all books offered to Catholic readers), condemned Noyes's *Voltaire*, ordered it withdrawn from circulation, and expressed its willingness to receive a recantation. The publishers hastened to submit. Noyes, however, who had defended Voltaire from the charge of atheism, picturing him rather as 'a Deist without quite enough insight to become a full Christian,' in rather a refreshing way asked for reasons why he should recant. Evidently he had carried more of his Protestantism with him on his hegira into Catholicism than he realized; for when he was admonished to submit first and that afterwards he would be given the reasons, Noyes replied in a public letter to Cardinal Hinsdale of Westminster, which appeared in the *Times* of London: "So far as I know, it is the first time in history that any English writer of any standing or indeed any English writer who in his work—whatever his personal failures may be—has revered "conscience as his king" has had such an order addressed to him in such terms.' Noyes's spirit is worthy, even if his historic recollection is faulty; but his independence has had its effect. Cardinal Hinsdale has replied mildly that he knows nothing of condemnation, but he would like to have a private talk with Noyes. However, the end is not yet for Noyes."—This last surmise was correct; for on December 7, 1938, the same paper reported: "The fine gesture of freedom made by Alfred Noyes toward the Vatican's ban on his *Life of Voltaire* quickly stiffened into a salute of submission. The publishing house, which had been 'severely warned,' got out from under by selling out its interests to another firm. But Mr. Noyes has agreed—following the bland assurance of Cardinal Hinsdale that the dose would not taste too bad—to accept any suggestions that may be made by the church authorities. One thing asked is that Mr. Noyes should remove a good bit of the

black from the French Catholic clergy of Voltaire's time. For another, the church dignitary who made Voltaire feel that 'to receive the host at his hands would be like swallowing a spider' is to be revised into respectability in some tolerable measure. All of which is puzzling; for wasn't Mr. Noyes nobly claiming his right to, and his utter devotion to, historical integrity? Poor man! Mr. Noyes is discovering, as did Cardinal Newman, that, when once you accept the Vatican's premises, you can't beat the system." H.

### Eine Kirche auf dem Holzweg

Prof. Lic. Dr. Martin Gerhardt, Göttingen, trifft in einer Arbeit, „Der Wittenberger Kirchentag 1848“, die er in der Septemhernummer des Monatsblattes „Die Innere Mission“ veröffentlicht, folgende drei wichtigen Feststellungen:

1. „Als im Sturmjahr 1848 die Märzrevolution über Deutschland dahinging, wurde dem mannigfach zersplitterten deutschen Protestantismus die Stellungnahme zu einer Frage aufgezwungen, an der die Generation der Ära Metternichs, wenige rühmliche Ausnahmen abgerechnet, zu ihrem Schanden vorübergegangen war, nämlich zu der Frage eines Zusammenschlusses aller deutschen evangelischen Landeskirchen. Nichts beleuchtet greller die damalige Schwäche des deutschen Protestantismus als die Tatsache, daß die evangelischen Kirchen sich jezt das Gesetz ihres Handelns von außenher, von der plötzlich veränderten politischen Lage, vorschreiben lassen mußten. Schuld an dieser Schwäche war — nicht ausschließlich, aber doch zu einem guten Teil — das Staatskirchentum damaliger Prägung, das einerseits der Kirche zu einem starken Eigenleben wenig Raum gelassen und andererseits ihre verantwortlichen Amtsträger in eine falsche Beamtenficherheit einwiegt hatte. Jezt war es mit einem Schlage so weit gekommen, daß niemand wußte, was aus den einzelnen Landeskirchen werden würde. Man mußte gefast sein auf eine plöbliche radikale Trennung von Kirche und Staat, und man mußte schleunig Vorsorge treffen, daß man einer drohenden Neuordnung der Dinge nicht völlig unvorbereitet entgegenging. Dazu hatte die Revolution in erschreckender Weise dargetan, wie weit die Entchristlichung des Volkes in allen Schichten bereits fortgeschritten war. Demgegenüber war es hohe Zeit für die Kirche, ihre Kräfte zusammenzuraffen, um den Boden im Volk nicht ganz zu verlieren.“

2. „Als dann die Katastrophe des unglücklichen Kriegsausgangs und der Novemberrevolte von 1918 über Deutschland hereinbrach, da rächte es sich nur zu bitter, daß die evangelische Kirche die Bismarcksche Reichsgründung in der Einigungsfrage so gut wie unbenutzt gelassen hatte und daß sie sich in den langen Friedensjahren zwischen 1871 und 1914 abermals in eine falsche bürgerliche Sicherheit hatte einwiegen lassen. Wieder wie einst im Jahre 1848 mußte sie sich in beschämender Weise das Gesetz ihres Handelns von den veränderten politischen Verhältnissen vorschreiben lassen. Erst infolge der neuen Bedrohung des deutschen Protestantismus durch den Marxismus und durch das mit ihm verbündete romgebundene Zentrum ist im Jahre 1922 der Deutsche Evangelische Kirchenbund entstanden als ein verfassungsmäßig begründeter Zusammenschluß aller deutschen Landeskirchen, der freilich immer noch sehr lose war und dem kirchlichen Partikularismus noch reichlich Raum gewährte.“

3. „Erst als das Weimarer Staatengebilde durch die mit einer bis dahin unerhörten politischen Dynamik erfüllte Bewegung des Nationalsozialismus hinweggefegt wurde, da zerbrachen auf der ganzen Linie die letzten Illusionen über die Wirklichkeit unserer kirchlichen Lage. Zur tiefsten Beschämung aller kirchentreuen evangelischen Christen hat der deutsche Protestantismus in seiner inneren Unselbständigkeit und Ohnmacht sich zum dritten Male das Gesetz seines Handelns von der plötzlich und gründlich veränderten politischen Lage her aufnötigen lassen müssen. Aus dieser Notlage heraus ist die Reichskirche geboren worden. Auch sie ist bis zur Stunde kaum etwas anderes gewesen als ein in sich zerrissenes, ohnmächtiges Gebilde, das ohne den starken Arm des Staates nicht leben und nicht sterben kann.“

So weit Martin Gerhardt. Mit solcher schonungslosen Offenheit hat wohl selten ein Vertreter der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche ihre fürchtbare Entwicklung und ihren noch schrecklicheren Zustand geschildert.

Daß der Verfasser, der als bedeutender Wichern-Forscher der Gegenwart gilt, als einzigen Lichtblick in solcher traurigen Gegenwart seiner Kirche die Innere Mission sieht, ist selbstverständlich.

Aus diesem Grunde denkt Martin Gerhardt wohl auch an keiner Stelle seiner Arbeit daran, nach dem Grunde und der Ursache der bleibenden fürchtbaren Not der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche zu fragen. So tief das auch zu bedauern ist, so selbstverständlich ist es, denn es ist die Mentalität dieser Richtung, nur immer in kirchlichen Machtgedanken denken zu können. Volkskirche, Landeskirche, Staatskirche, Reichskirche und Nationalkirche sind die Gedankenkerne, um die sich alles dreht. Man gibt sich keine Rechenschaft darüber, daß dies Wollen konkurrierender Machtwille der alleinberechtigten Macht der weltlichen Obrigkeit gegenüber ist. Da, wo wirklich Kirche Jesu Christi ist, verzichtet die christliche Kirche gern auf jeden Machtanspruch an den Dingen dieser Welt, weil er ihrem Wesen widerspricht, und unterstellt sich willig der Macht des Staates, der ihr Gastrecht gewährt und der allein von Gott dem Herrn Auftrag und Aufgabe zur weltlichen Machtentfaltung hat.

Von solcher Sicht her kann auch nur eingesehen werden, daß die Innere Mission, wie sie sich in der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche ausgewirkt hat, einen bleibenden Eingriff in die Hoheitsrechte des Staates darstellt und insofern auch gar nichts mit christlicher Nächstenliebe zu tun hat. Nur der Abfall von der reformatorischen Lehre vom Wesen der Kirche konnte zum kirchlichen Machtwillen führen, und nur die Abkehr von Luthers Lehre vom Verwurf konnte zum Irrtumsweg der Inneren Mission werden.

Wenn es dafür noch eines Beweises bedarf, so kann er nicht besser erbracht werden als durch F. G. Wicherns grundlegende Rede für die Innere Mission auf dem Wittenberger Kirchentag am 22. September 1848. Da heißt es:

„Die Innere Mission hat es jetzt schlechterdings mit der Politik zu tun, und arbeitet sie nicht in diesem Sinne, so wird die Kirche mit dem Staate untergehen.“

„Der Staat für sich allein ist nicht befähigt, direkt die ganze Lösung des Problems [der sozialen Frage] heraufzuführen, wiewohl er jetzt auf indirektem Wege die Lösung um so viel mehr angebahnt hat in der Gewährung des großen Rechts der freien Bergesellschaftung [Vereinsrecht].“

Wenn in bezug auf diesen Punkt die Kirche sich ihres neuen vollstümlichen Berufs bewußt wird und von diesem Recht im vollsten Umfang für sich Gebrauch macht, um es mit dem christlichen Geist zu erfüllen und in der Richtung der Inneren Mission also zur Rettung des Volkes sich entfalten zu lassen, so wird sie als Retterin des ganzen Gemeinwesens gesegnet werden." (Wicherns Ges. Schriften, Bd. III, 233 ff.)

Diese Sätze bedürfen nur einer oberflächlichen Überprüfung, um sofort die Vermanschung von Kirche und Staat, das Hereingreifen der Innern Mission in die Hoheitsgebiete des Staates und damit den Willen der evangelischen Kirche zur weltlichen Macht zu erkennen. Daß aber das Wichernsche Rezept kein Heilmittel darbot für die todkranke Kirche, zeigt ihre Entwicklung seit dem Wittenberger Kirchentag bis in unsere Tage, in denen sie sich „als ein in sich zerrissenes, ohnmächtiges Gebilde“ zeigt, „das ohne den starken Arm des Staates nicht leben und nicht sterben kann“.

Das ist der Holzweg, auf dem sich die Deutsche Evangelische Kirche und ihre Innere Mission befindet und der zu Zielen führt, wie sie Martin Gerhardt sichtbar gemacht hat.

Wann wird sich diese Kirche auf ihr Wesen und ihren Ursprung besinnen?  
Ev.-Luth. Freikirche

### „Was tust du für mich?“

Bei Gelegenheit einer Rezension der Hollenbergischen Schrift über die „freie christliche Tätigkeit“ schreibt Ströbel in dem ersten Quartalheft der Rudelbachschen Zeitschrift von diesem Jahre: „Unsere Vorfahren hatten starke apostolische Gründe, dem gekreuzigten Versöhner nichts weiter in den Mund zu legen als das lautere Evangelium, ‚Das tat ich für dich!‘ Die salzornlose Gesehanslickerei ‚Was tust du für mich?‘ gründet sich nicht auf Gottes Wort, sondern auf Zinzendorfs Meißtift und predigt in diesem Zusammenhang einen andern Christus als den, der gekommen ist, nicht um sich von uns dienen zu lassen, sondern um uns zu dienen und sein Leben zur Erlösung für uns zu geben; — sie ist eine Unterdrückung des Evangeliums durch das widerhergestellte Gesetz. Und gesehtreiberisch wie ihr Stichwort ist auch die gesamte ‚christliche Freitätigkeit‘; hätte sie auch nur eine schwache eigene Erfahrung vom Evangelium, von der freien Gnade Gottes in Christo, von der Rechtfertigung, Sündenvergebung und Seligkeit durch den Glauben ohne unser Werk, Verdienst und Zutun, so würde sie nicht ein so marktstreuerisches Gewerbe mit den absonderlichen Leistungen ihrer gespreizten Liebestaten vorlesen, als wollte sie sagen: ‚Sehet, so viel muß man für den Herrn tun, so viel Geld für ihn ausgeben, so viel beten, laufen und rennen, wenn uns das, was er für uns getan, wirklich zugute kommen soll!‘ Nachdem hierauf Ströbel Beispiele aufgeführt hat, wie man den Leuten jetzt vorrechnet, was die Vereine Großes zusammengebracht haben, setzt er hinzu: ‚Siehst du wohl, St. Petrus, jetzt spricht man nicht mehr: ‚Silber und Gold habe ich nicht‘ oder gar: ‚Daß du verdammt werdest mit deinem Gelde!‘ Jetzt ist in der Kirche das glorreiche Zeitalter der metallenen und arithmetischen Heiligkeit angebrochen, welche nicht mehr fragt: Was glaubt —? sondern nur noch: Was zahlt der Christ?‘ — Wollte Gott, auch unserm werktätigen Amerika würde ein solcher Kritiker wie Ströbel beschernt! Wir bedürften seiner gar sehr. (Lehre und Befehre, 1859, S. 62.)