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Miscellanea

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Miscellanea

Two Types of Christian Schools

Lutheran and Roman Catholic elementary schools represent one type of Christian schools. This type is owned and operated by the congregation and therefore properly termed parochial. The elementary schools within the Christian (Dutch) Reformed Church, recommended also by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which a few years ago separated from the main body of the Presbyterian Church under the leadership of Dr. J. Gresham Machen, represent a second type, being owned and operated by school societies. Thus the second General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church resolved in November, 1936: "that the General Assembly recommend to pastors and members of the Church the formation of *Christian School Societies* which shall have as their purpose the establishment of Christian daily schools." These schools are in all other respects like ours.

In the Christian Reformed Church the local school societies are organized in what is known as the National Union of Christian Schools, maintaining a central office at 10119 La Fayette Ave., Chicago, Ill., with Mark Fakkema as general secretary. The Secretary is personally known to the writer. He has corresponded with our office for years and once also attended our Superintendents' Conference. The National Union publishes an excellent paper, the *Home and School Magazine*, and much other fine promotional material. It was before annual conventions of this National Union that Dr. J. Gresham Machen delivered those powerful addresses known to us under the titles: "The Necessity of the Christian School" and "The Christian School, the Hope of America," both published in pamphlet form and sold for a time also by Concordia Publishing House. The local societies form regional alliances—an Eastern Alliance, a Michigan Alliance, a Chicago Alliance, and so on.

There are approximately one hundred school societies within the Christian Reformed Church, located in sixteen States. Seventeen of them do not as yet have a school. The others maintain some 80 schools, ranging in size from 20 to 747 pupils (on the whole these schools are larger than those of our Synod), many of them including junior- or senior-high-school grades. The number of teachers is 438 (159 men and 279 women), and the total enrolment amounts to 13,668 pupils. In 1930 about one half of the 263 congregations constituting this church-body had such schools at their disposal. Since then the number of schools has increased.

The underlying theory of this type of school organization is discussed by the Rev. Mark Fakkema in the *Presbyterian Guardian* of April 25, the official organ of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. "After experimenting with the church-school form of government," he says, "the Christian school movement in America" (that is, within the church-bodies named) "has adopted the school-society form of government,

not merely because history has taught us that this form makes for the most vital, virile, and healthy school-life, but also because we believe it is implied in a Reformed world- and life-view. Two considerations call for the school-society form of government:

"1. *The character of the Church is such that it cannot properly include the program of the school.* The Church is the visible manifestation of the spiritual body of Jesus Christ. As such it is spiritual in its character and in its program." Discussions of social and political issues, of vocational and economic problems, and of literary, musical, and art productions are not the business of the pulpit, it is argued. "Not so with the school. All that pertains to natural life has its proper place in the instruction given in the day-school. In so far as the Church (the spiritual body of Christ) controls and operates the day-school, the Church will either lose sight of its spiritual character, or it will slight the natural aspects of the school.

"2. *God has assigned the duty of education to parents—not to the Church or the State.* Not even in a theocracy, in which Church and State were one (as in Israel), did God place the responsibility to educate upon public officials. . . . When Moses speaks of this duty, he thus addresses the parents: "These words . . . thou shalt teach diligently unto thy children."

Our theory and Biblical interpretation differ. If the first of the foregoing arguments were to stand, our Church ought not to maintain its colleges and seminaries, for in them we do not only teach religion and theology but also give the students a general education. The result is not that our Synod loses sight "of its spiritual character." The general education in this case is accessory to the major aim of training pastors and teachers, and thus accessory to the chief business of the Church, the teaching and preaching of the Gospel. It is true, God has not commanded the Church to call men to teach mathematics, music, literature, languages, history, and the like, nor to maintain colleges and seminaries, even for instruction in religion and theology alone. He has commanded only that the Church teach and preach the Word, and made certain stipulations as to the character and fitness of those "who labor in the Word and doctrine." Everything that a Church does in liberty and wisdom regarding the education of its servants roots in and serves the primary purpose of the Church.

The same is true of the parochial school. The local congregation does not have the command from God to teach the common school branches, at least not as a primary duty. God has commanded the congregation only: "Preach the Gospel." "Preach the Word, in season, out of season." "Teach . . . and teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." And He certainly has forbidden all false doctrine, all untruth, all that dishonors His holy name and, therefore, also all spiritual falsehoods in a secular education. He warns that "even a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." All secular education (which is not really secular in a Christian school) is incidental or accessory to the achievement of the task which God gave the congrega-

tion. Also the Christian must learn to read, understand, and analyze a language or its construction, for he is to "search the Scriptures." Also he is to be equipped to make a living, for he is to take care of himself "and his household." Also he is to know and understand the wonders of God in nature, geography, physiology, history, and the like. The major object is to train him as an heir of eternal life and as a worthy child of God here on earth; but everything else taught in a Christian school is and should be helpful and accessory to the major aim. The congregation will, least of all, lose sight thereby of its spiritual character and main purpose.

The second point stated by Rev. Fakkema is not Biblical. God has assigned the duty of Christian education to the Church as well as to the parents (though not to the State). The very Bible text (Deut. 6: 6, 7) quoted to prove that parents alone have the duty to educate, is not addressed to parents, but to "Israel," to the Old Testament Church. The nominative of address "thou" used so much in the whole first part of this chapter does not refer to an individual, not to a parent, but to a people. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord, our God, is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, . . . and these words which I command thee . . . thou [Israel] shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." The individual is, of course, meant by implication. Parents are certainly meant so far as their home duties are concerned. But no one is here singled out. The command is given to the people as such.

The Great Commission of Christ to His Church on earth, Matt. 28: 19, 20, to "teach all nations" does not except the children. The servants of the Church are given the special command "Feed My lambs."

Our argument is not that school societies are unscriptural. In emergency cases we have had them. We have also recommended them in emergencies. Dr. C. F. W. Walther wrote in 1872, for example (*Lutheraner*, 28, p. 110): "Just now a faithful, energetic pastor of the far West reports that, when the congregation as such could not be induced to establish a parochial school and to call a teacher, he had organized a school society, whose purpose it was to work toward establishing a regular Christian week-day school. And, sure enough, the project succeeded. The society is right now in the act of calling a teacher. Certainly a worthy example to be emulated under similar conditions." But our principle and theory from the beginning has been that a Christian school should under all ordinary circumstances be a school of the congregation, since not only the parents but all members of the congregation have their duty in this respect.

We admire the wonderful spirit of earnestness and sacrifice in the societies of the National Union of Christian Schools and feel that we can learn from them in this respect; but we hold to our ideal of schools owned and operated by the churches. As Dr. A. L. Graebner put it (*Lutheraner*, 49, 1893, p. 133): "For the purpose of bringing up our youth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, we also have an association, instituted by God Himself, namely, the local Christian congregation."

A. C. STELLHORN

The Organ and the Choir in the Lutheran Church

The Protestant churches of America have, either by agreement or consent, given to the organ a very prominent place in the services. Whereas the Puritans consistently opposed the use of musical instruments in church worship, many of the present Reformed bodies have brought the organ forward into such prominence, both architecturally and liturgically, that a discussion of the place of the organ in the Lutheran service would seem by no means superfluous, especially since an increasing number of Lutheran congregations are taking up the idea not only of giving to the organ a very conspicuous position in the church-building but also of yielding or assigning to it the most prominent part of the service.

The broaching of this matter may seem to some a needless emphasizing of trifles. It may be conceded, of course, that the matter of organ music of every kind is an *adiaphoron*. There is no commandment of God which gives to the organ either a primary or a secondary position or makes music either essential or subsidiary for divine worship. And yet it is not a matter of indifference. In many Reformed churches organ music is placed on a par with the means of grace, and more. In many service "programs" the organ music and the names of the solo singers are displayed in prominent type, while the subject of the sermon, if one is held at all, is announced with a most apologetic air, accompanied, in many cases, with the express assurance that the sermon will not occupy more than ten or, at most, fifteen minutes. It means, in effect, that the audience should not let the few words of the pastor or speaker interfere with its enjoyment of the musical numbers on the "program." There may be no harm intended if such "special music programs" are announced for a Lutheran church in place of the regular service with preaching, but there certainly is danger of harm. A Lutheran congregation will strive to bring out its doctrinal position also in its *cultus* and will avoid everything that may be misconstrued as though the Lutherans had changed their attitude toward the means of grace one whit. The Word and the Sacraments must always occupy the most prominent place before the congregation, and everything that will divert the attention of the audience from these most important parts of the service must be avoided with the greatest care.

In order, however, that this principle may be upheld in the Lutheran Church, it is necessary that the organist (and the music committee) be acquainted with the liturgical history of the Christian Church, especially since the sixteenth century. It may not be necessary to take a full and thorough course in liturgics, though such a course would by no means seem superfluous, but it would certainly be advisable to take up the history of church music from the beginning, with special reference to the liturgy. And the organist should understand that the liturgy represents not merely a form of worship but is a confession of faith. There is such a thing as catering to the spirit of the times and, incidentally, losing some of the greatest treasures of the Lutheran Church.

So far as the history of church music in the narrower sense since the Reformation is concerned, the early church orders restricted its use,

and apparently with the best of reasons. To the liturgists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was an evidence of the decay of the *chorale* that an organ was absolutely required in services. "To say the truth," says the learned but eccentric Flacius, "the strange, manifold squeaking (*Quinkclierung*) of the organ does not fit so well into the church as some people seem to think." Instead of finding rules for the introduction of organs, as we should perhaps expect, we find a number of directions which not only correct abuses of the organ as a factor in the liturgical service but actually restrict its use. According to some church orders the organ was to be used neither on Good Friday nor from the Second Sunday in Advent till Christmas nor from Laetare till Easter. The Pomeranian Agenda also included Rogation week, with the exception of Ascension Day. It was also not customary to have the organ accompany all the hymns or the entire hymns. In many instances the organ merely intoned the melody, and the congregation sang the hymns alone. This was true especially with regard to the German Creed. In addition to these restrictions the attempts at artistic playing were frowned upon. All efforts which savored of concert playing were not looked upon with favor. Motets or other strange pieces in the service proper were not permitted, the organ being strictly in the service of the congregation and its singing. The organist might give evidence of his art in the postlude. Emphasis was placed especially on one point, namely, that the preludes, interludes, and postludes, also other voluntaries, should not encroach upon the time reserved for prayers and the sermon. Above all, secular music was strictly tabu, secular songs and fantasies as well as popular melodies being under the ban.

These orders were given with good liturgical understanding, not in puritanical opposition to music as such. One principle must be maintained in the Lutheran Church, namely, that the organ should not occupy an independent position in worship. Its subsidiary character must be expressed at all times. It should serve the congregation above all in the singing of the hymns. The organist will therefore prepare himself very carefully for each service. His music must be selected with the purpose of bringing out the lesson or the character of the day. This will be apparent even in the prelude or voluntary before the beginning of worship. The hymns must be studied both as to text and music to emphasize the spirit in them. All of joy up to the veriest exultation, all the blendings of sorrow, longing, repentance, and whatever other disposition is brought out in the text must be correctly interpreted in the music. The preludes for the several *chorales* especially must agree with the character of the respective hymns. Interludes should not be longer than to afford a breathing-space for the congregation. Above all, extemporaneous playing and improvising at the organ during regular church services is inexcusable. An artist of the first rank may attempt it at a church concert, but for any one else to test the patience of the congregation in such a manner is little short of an insult. The sacredness of public worship and the exclusive emphasis which we must place upon the means of grace forbid such performances. In many hymns, interludes may be omitted entirely, a long pause being sufficient to

indicate the close of a stanza. The organist should avoid chopping two stanzas which form one sentence, or a closely knit paragraph, apart. This is evidence of great thoughtlessness on his part and seriously interferes with the devotion of the audience.

A Lutheran organist will remember, above all, that the classical choral melodies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries should always occupy first place in his *repertoire*. He will do well therefore to discuss the selection of the melodies with the pastor. To replace the glorious tunes of the "golden age" in Lutheran church music with some of the shallow, sentimental melodies of modern Gospel hymns or operas is little short of sacrilege. The grand old melodies of that age were written for the hymns, or the hymns were written for the melodies, and to divorce them means a lowering of devotional propriety. Only by a consistent combination of forces can the organist serve the edification of the congregation. The words of Kliefoth may well be mentioned here: "The organ deserves special attention in its relation to the singing of church hymns and the liturgy. The idea, indeed, as though the organ enabled the congregation to learn to sing or sing better must be dropped. . . . To educate the congregation in the ability to sing the organ is neither needed, nor is it adapted for this purpose; but it is good and appropriate for accompanying good church-singing, which is learned by singing and in no other way. And since the organ occupies this accompanying position only, it must be retained in this position. In the service of the congregation only such music has the right of existence as is in the service of the Word. The organ dare not play an independent role, without such singing. Long preludes, postludes, and interludes must be discontinued, but, above all, the insertion of self-composed fugues and other devices by which the congregation assembled for services is changed into a concert audience. When the service is over, the organist may exhibit his art and play a fugue or other composition." Lochner, in the discussion of this question, calls attention to several points: first, that a long prelude between the reading of the Gospel and the singing of the Creed is out of order, as well as are interludes during the singing of the Creed; and secondly, that the interludes between the stanzas of the Communion hymn should not be too long. This is more tiresome for the congregation than the singing of several hymns.

A question which is broached by Kliefoth as well as by Lochner is that of having the organ be silent during the liturgical singing, especially during the chanting of the pastor. The argument which has usually been advanced that the organ was to assist the liturgist, is one which will not hold good; for the liturgist is supposed to know the music of the liturgy thoroughly before attempting to sing it before the altar. The other reason advanced, that the solemnity of the service will be enhanced and the devotion be stimulated, has more to sustain it. The proper playing of the melody not only serves the purpose of impressiveness but also has a quieting effect upon the mind. Without encouraging mere sentimental rhapsody, it assists in devotional edification. Local circumstances must therefore decide the question as to the accompaniment of chanting by the organ. If the liturgist has a good voice for singing, the

organist will do well to accompany the chanting with soft chords. If the pastor's voice is not reliable, he should chant either without accompaniment or, better still, read the passages. The rules given by Kraussold are: "1. The organist should use soft stops only. 2. The recitative chant of the pastor should be norm for the length of the chords. 3. The chanting should never be accompanied in *continuo*, the organ being silent where there is no change in harmony. 4. The pedal must not be used during the recitative chanting of the pastor." (*Christian Art*, pp. 405-409.)

The following liturgical notes, adapted from the parish-paper of a large congregation, may have some value in directing the activity of the choir: "Since the altar symbolizes the presence of God, all, in any and every part of the church, should turn to the altar for prayer. This is true of pastor and congregation and therefore also of the choir, even if it has its place in the transept. It should always face the altar in singing or chanting."

The altar is approached from the front only by the officiating pastor, and by him only when he is performing his office during the service. At all other times, before and after the service, he approaches from the side.

The lights on the epistle side of the altar, to the right of the congregation and the left of the cross, are kindled first. The light nearest the cross is kindled first and extinguished last. The altar boy never approaches the altar at the center but always from the sides. His procedure in kindling the lights is the following. He ascends the altar step on the epistle side and from the side, kindles the candles, steps down to the side, walks about the step, bows as he passes the center, proceeds to the side, ascends from the gospel side, steps down to the side. If he wishes, he may first bow at the center and return to the center before leaving the sanctuary. He always bows when passing the center.

Surplices are worn *only during the service*. All offices before and after, kindling of lights, preparing the altar and vessels for the celebration, and the like, are performed in cassock only.

The only purpose of a processional and recessional by the choir in a Lutheran church can be to lead the messenger of God in and out. The fact that some people find a thing "nice" and "pretty" is no reason for doing it in the house of God. Everything must have a purpose and meaning. A choir is vested for the same reason which prompts a congregation to vest all who take part in the liturgy, in serving during the service. The members of the choir lead the congregation in singing and conduct the messenger and representative of God to and from the sanctuary. The choir's vestments are regulated by the principles which regulate the vestments of the officiant, the preacher, or liturgist. The purpose of the vestment is to hide the personality of the individual, all peculiarities and characteristics which might cause the person to obtrude. Cassocks should therefore be as long as possible, without interfering with the freedom of the feet while walking in a reverent and moderate manner. If we consider anything in the pastor's appearance in bad taste, this same thing is equally in poor taste in the appearance of the choir. Colored collars, white or tan or yellow shoes, cassocks of inadequate

length to cover personal peculiarities, such as white or colored trousers and the like, are not in harmony with the principles which govern vestments. Since we have vested choirs chiefly for the sake of uniformity in dress and to avoid invidious distinctions in the garments of rich and poor members, we must truly vest them. Anything in the house of God and in the worship of our Lord is worth doing well and right.

P. E. KRETZMANN

A "Great Gulf" Indeed, But What Is It?

How easy it is to be misled and to mislead! Writing in *Christendom* (an interdenominational quarterly, edited by H. P. Douglass) for the summer, 1940, issue, Prof. Eduard Heimann of New York, member of the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research, tries to show where the difference between Lutheran and Reformed views in reference to the State lies. His article has the striking caption "The Great Gulf." It is further characterized by the subheading "A Study of the Cleavage between Germany and the West." The article does not deal with politics but with religion. In the author's opinion the Lutheran Church, in as far as it presents any teachings concerning the State, merely inculcates the position that the Christian has to obey the government regardless of what the latter may command or demand. He says that this position is taught "to the total eclipse of the other doctrine (which balances it in the later Protestant churches through the influence of Calvin), that one has to obey God rather than man." He thinks that the doctrine of human sinfulness, on which Luther placed tremendous emphasis, is responsible for what he alleges to be the Lutheran view of the Christian's attitude toward the State. Since we are sinful and by nature can do nothing save what is evil, God has instituted the government to keep the world from perishing in strife and disorder, and our duty is simply to obey. That Luther insisted on complete loyalty to the powers that be, he says, is confirmed by what he calls Luther's furious condemnation of the insurgent peasants.

Lutherans must protest against such a presentation of their position as a caricature. An unbiased study of the position of Luther and his followers will lead to conclusions different from those that Professor Heimann arrived at. Let us here merely draw attention to the statement in a document whose authority, when the Lutheran position is to be ascertained, no one can impugn, the Augsburg Confession. In Article 16 it says: "Meanwhile it [the Gospel] does not destroy the state or the family, but very much requires that they be preserved as ordinances of God and that charity be practiced in such ordinances. Therefore Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin; for then they ought to obey God rather than men, Acts 5:29." The very thing which the author says disappears in the Lutheran position is here affirmed with absolute clarity—that obedience to God must always take precedence wherever there is a clash between divine and human authorities.

There is indeed a deep gulf separating Reformed and Lutheran conceptions as to the function of the Church with respect to the State.

According to Reformed theology the Church must endeavor to make the State a righteous organization, an instrument for assisting the Church in spreading and defending revealed truth and making people live according to the precepts of Scripture; it must induce the State to pass legislation which will promote true morality; it must use this organization to fight social evils, such as gambling and drunkenness; it must as a body oppose the waging of wars and make the various States adopt the Golden Rule as their principle of action; it must, again as an organization, work for the adoption of social-welfare legislation, like old-age pensions, the medical examination of all pupils in public and private schools, and the establishment of playgrounds and parks. In other words, according to Reformed theology the Church must consider itself, and actually be, a direct social factor, or agent, in making this world a better place to live in. According to Lutheran theology, on the other hand, the Church has one function, to preach the Word, the Law and the Gospel; it must tell its members how to live, but it has no duty to regulate the lives of those outside its folds; it has no duty toward the State except to make its members good, law-abiding citizens. Accordingly the Lutheran Church opposes the view that the Church has the right to meddle in the affairs of the State, to use the arm of the government to make the members of the community follow the principles of morality taught by the Church, to bring about the enactment of laws which will compel the citizens outwardly to conform to what the Church considers just and right in human relations. In Article 28 of the Augsburg Confession the Lutheran Church declares: "Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the commonwealth. As Christ says, John 18:36: 'My kingdom is not of this world'; also Luke 12:14: 'Who made Me a Judge or a Divider over you?' Paul also says, Phil. 3:20: 'Our citizenship is in heaven'; 2 Cor. 10:4: 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations.'" This is true Lutheranism; and at the same time, we submit, it is true Americanism. In unmistakable terms it voices the principle of separation of Church and State.

It does not follow that in Lutheran countries there is notoriously bad government. The testimony of travelers and observers avers the very opposite. The Lutheran Church has much to say to its members as to what they owe the State, whether they hold office or not, what sort of magistrates God expects them to be, what sort of voters. Its influence on the State is exerted indirectly through the kindling of love toward God and man in the hearts of those that have come to believe in Jesus as their Savior.

That with Lutherans the principle that God must be obeyed rather than men was put into practice can be shown from history. When

Luther in 1522 returned from the Wartburg, it was in opposition to the wish of his government. When Paul Gerhardt, prince of Lutheran hymn-writers, was ordered by his government to cease opposing Reformed errors, he rather suffered removal from his position as a preacher in Berlin than to obey. When the lamentable union of the Lutheran and Reformed churches was proclaimed in Prussia in 1817, many Lutherans protested and rather endured persecution than that they should become disobedient to God.

That the particular conviction of Luther's which was responsible for his emphasis on obedience to the government was his deep realization of the sinfulness of the human race and of the individual, is only partly true. The driving force in the life of Luther was the joyous assurance that God has forgiven our sins for the sake of Christ, our blessed Redeemer. To possess this forgiveness Luther considered the greatest treasure, beside which everything else that is prized and esteemed pales into insignificance. That a person should be assured of God's favor was to Luther a far more important matter than to live in surroundings that were morally commendable. One's relation to God is that which must be given first place, he held; where that relation is of the right kind, proper actions will follow. What gave direction to Luther's course was the conviction that the Christian religion first of all is something inward, an attitude of the heart, having at its center faith in Jesus Christ.

One regrets to see that Dr. Heimann, like hundreds of other writers, misunderstands Luther's position in the Peasants' War. To what extent and how warmly Luther championed the cause of the oppressed peasants is overlooked or ignored, and when his vehement criticism of their course is quoted, frequently no mention is made of the ghastly bloodthirstiness and unspeakable cruelty that marked their progress—features which made stern measures unavoidable.

Thus the existence of a great gulf between the Reformed and the Lutheran conception of the Church's attitude toward the State is admitted, but Professor Heimann's view of the nature of this gulf is far from correct.

When the above paragraphs were to be sent to the printer, the fall 1940 issue of *Christendom* came to hand. It contains six critical evaluations of Dr. Heimann's article, among which that of President A. R. Wentz of Gettysburg Theological Seminary is particularly incisive and illuminating, drawing attention to some of the flagrant misrepresentations of the New York professor.

W. ARNDT