

Lutheran Tidings

Volume III

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Number 11

"Min Arbejdsdag er ofte lang"

My working day is often long,
But it is filled with sun and song
From many a festive hour.
To recompense a scanty fare,
The Lord has given me in prayer
A secret source of pow'r.

My feet may lag, my arms may tire,
And yet the Lord's own Prayer will fire
My heart with strength anew.
Though humble be my bed and board,
I live each day by God's own Word,
Like birds of heaven blue.

To me it is not loss of life,
That I must go through want and strife
Without the gold I need.
The school of this benighted earth
Has taught me that of greater worth—
A useful life to lead.

Let heavy clouds but roam the skies,
I know behind them heaven lies
That fills my soul with light.
Let darkness fall and day depart,
There is a hope within my heart
That keeps my pathway bright.

My life is but a working day,
That ends when God to me shall say:
"Come home, your day is gone!"
I then shall lay my head to rest
And sleep with those forever blest
Until another dawn.

Kr. Østergaard,
Tr. P. C. Paulsen, "Ans. Luth."

Worry

By E. Stanley Jones

Worry is sin. For it is a lack of trust in God. It fears circumstances more than it fears God. It is the taking of things out of the hands of God and taking them in our own and dealing with them with our own resources. And our resources are not enough.

What is the cure for worry? Faith! But not a blind, leaning faith that does nothing but have faith. Faith means that you and God can work the thing out together. It means that there is no problem that cannot be solved if we make a complete surrender to God, coordinate our wills with His, and working out from that center to the problem, attack it with a combination of His resources and ours. The problem may not be entirely solved in the sense of its being removed, but it will be solved in the sense either of its being taken away, or in the sense that you will be better in character for attempting with God

its solution. The problem will go, or you will grow. In either case, solution.

But the man who worries unfits himself for a facing of the problem. First of all he borrows trouble from the future by that very worrying. Worry is the interest we are paying on tomorrow's trouble. And it is compound interest too. For by taking tomorrow's trouble into today we make ourselves unfit for the duties of today and also thereby unfit for facing tomorrow's difficulties. It is a losing game. It is under "the law of diminishing returns."

Stop that worry! It may be that we can stop it by facing up to the question as to what is at the basis of that worry. It may be our own sin. We are afraid of the future for we are not right in the present. Then face the matter and surrender that sin. And do it decisively!

Or it may not be because of your own sin, but because of some one's else sin. Then do your prayerful best to get that person to change.

Or it may be that worry is on account of financial problems looming ahead. You are afraid that the future will find you starving. Let us face the facts. But how many have you actually seen starving in your lifetime? Some of you may have never seen a person starving. Very few of us have. I question whether many of my readers have. Such a sight is not very common even in this land of India. The chances that you will starve to death are about a million to one. Then why brood over that one chance in a million! Besides, starving to death is no worse than dying from many other things. We all have to die, then why worry about the route? When some one rushed into Mr. Emerson's presence and said, "Oh, Mr. Emerson, they tell me the world is coming to an end," he quietly replied, "Well, never mind, we can get along very well without it." We are not confined to this physical life. We have within us an enduring life—that is, if we are in touch with God.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews 10:39 we read, according to Weymouth, "We, however, are not the ones to shrink back and perish, but are those who believe and so win possession of their souls." The ones who believe are the only ones who have possession of their souls. They are the ones who can mould circumstances and make things conform to their purposes of life. They are in possession. But the doubters are possessed by their fears. Their fears dominate them. They are at the mercy of their hesitations.

Then lay aside all fears, all worry, all doubt and live constructively and positively. Possess your own souls by believing.

How can one possess his own soul? By losing it! The only way to possess yourself is to lose yourself. Renounce and you will realize. Out of this self-surrender will come a self-finding. You will then have shifted the center from yourself to Christ. Out of this shift love will be born. This love will cast out fears. Just as sunlight casts out darkness so this love of Christ casts out all fear, all worry, all anxiety. We rest in a love that will never let us down. We are sure that we can never drift beyond His care.

We will then live as carefree children of the Father.

The Christian and Society

In "Lutheran Tidings" for December 5, 1936, Mr. Herbert V. Lang raises a few questions relative to my remarks about Dr. E. Stanley Jones and the National Preaching Mission. To quote Mr. Lang: "Is not the economic system, the liquor traffic, the war system, etc., a manifestation of what we, the people, are? An expression of what is really the culture of the individual massed together as a people? Have we not tried by law and force to do away with the liquor traffic, and failed miserably? When the League of Nations was created, we hoped and believed that now war could be no more. But we know now that the efforts of the League of Nations to prevent war have also been futile. I believe the same will be true of any attempt to change any kind of system under which we suffer. The strong will rise to the top and rule and tyrannize over the weak always, because the Christian spirit is lacking, without which there is always greed, power and riches."

Those of us who believe that Christ is our personal savior, as well as the savior of society, will agree that it is supremely important that the lives of individual men be regenerated through Christ. Again, if we have been regenerated, we cannot escape exerting influence upon society and its institutions. But does it follow that the terrible evils under which we suffer cannot be removed till all men have experienced a rebirth through Christ? I do not believe so.

In the neighborhood where I live now, and in other neighborhoods where I have lived, not nearly all the people go to church. It is probable that many of them give very little thought to Christ, and religion in general. But most of them are decent folks. They don't molest my property. I don't molest theirs. Should a very strong man move into this neighborhood and decide that because he was physically stronger he had a right to take any property he might desire, we would report him to the authorities, and he would be punished according to law. Most of us in this and other neighborhoods believe this is a good thing, so we back the law. But we don't wait for a regeneration of all souls.

There was a time during the Middle Ages when anarchy was the prevailing condition. The strong feudal lords rose up and did pretty much as they pleased. That condition became well nigh intolerable. Take France as an example and we find that little by little the central government became strong enough to make itself felt. Laws were passed, with popular backing, which made it treason to defy the monarchy; and one by one the mighty lords were made to behave themselves or eat the dust. But again France did not wait till all Frenchmen became true Christians.

It is probably true that most our modern wars are caused by greed and lust for power. We are having fair success in controlling such national gangsters as Dillinger and Capone. Why should we not some day be able to control such international gangsters as Hitler and Mussolini? It is true that the League failed in its efforts to stop Mussolini in Ethiopia. But it is probably the first time in human history that sanctions have been applied and Italy felt them keenly. This international anarchy is now becoming as intolerable as was feudal anarchy in the Middle Ages. But law came to replace feudal anarchy and the high and mighty had to behave themselves or perish. I can conceive and do believe that some day international law will be backed by a sufficiently strong opinion and force to make the nations settle their differences as do individuals and as do the states within the United States.

My Prayer For My Son

*Lord, make a mighty SOLDIER of my son
To wage the war of life till he has won!
When tempted by some false or fickle friend,
Help him to take a firm, courageous stand;
In every test may he be brave and strong
And never yield, or compromise with wrong!
Lord, keep his body clean, his heart upright,
A soldier of the Cross to win the fight!*

*Lord, make a faithful SERVANT of my son
To serve Thee ever till his work is done!
Direct him in the choice of his career,
And guide and bless my boy from year to year,
That doubtful pleasures, worldly power or praise
May never lead him into sinful ways!
Lord, may his service have the worthy aim
To help mankind and glorify Thy Name!*

*Lord, make a truthful WITNESS of my son,
Complete the work of grace Thou hast begun,
That he may grow in grace, in faith, in love!
Anoint him with an unction from above,
That he with tongue and pen may testify,
And ne'er by word or deed Thy Name deny!
Lord, keep him honest, pure and unafraid,
And may his heart in faith on Thee be stayed!*

*Lord, make a BIBLE-CHRISTIAN of my son,
That spirit-filled and guided he may shun
The many subtle teachings of today
That seek to lead the thinking mind astray!
As he explores the realms of human thought,
And learns to know the works that man has wrought.
Then with Thy Spirit guide his mind and heart,
That he may never from Thy Word depart!*

C. K. Solberg in "The Friend".

September 26, 1936.

In the meantime Christians should do their part to foster the spirit of good will and co-operation in the hope and belief that the kingdom of God will come also among men.

Alfred C. Nielsen.

Why the Home Is Failing

Nowhere is a man's inner life reflected as in his own home. Said a mother, "I cannot understand that none of my boys have any use for the Church." But the reason was most apparent, since this nominally Christian home in which these young men had been reared had never known a quiet hour when the family had been gathered for the reading of God's Word and prayer. Tens of thousands of times the members of the household had gathered about the family board to partake of the good things so abundant in this home, but never once had father or mother bowed head in acknowledgement or thanksgiving to Him from whom all blessings flow. Only when the pastor was present came the pious request, "Will you ask the blessing?" How could this mother ever expect her children to become interested in spiritual things when obviously they meant but little in her own life?

A Sunday school teacher of a primary class taught the little children entrusted to her a table prayer while at the same time she urged them to use it before every meal. "Oh, no," piped up a little voice in protest, "we only do

that when we have company." The brazen inconsistency in this home, which perhaps could well be hidden from both neighbors and friends, would soon be written indelibly into this little child's heart. At what more natural conclusion could this child later in life arrive than that no one took Christianity seriously?

The craze for pleasure has put the altar fires out in many a home. Parents who perhaps themselves attend church occasionally and who send their children to Sunday school but who live a worldly and indifferent life in the home should not ever be surprised if their children become terrifyingly blasé. Prof. George Walter Smith of Oberlin College gives us these rather terrible illustrations:

"'I'm tired of this Jesus business. Let's have a livelier kind of stories,'" was the astonishing remark of an eleven-year-old when a new course of graded lessons was commencing in the fall. 'I've discovered dad is Santa Claus, and I know about the stork, and I'm going to look into this Jesus Christ affair,' said another youngster.

"'Why do you come to Sunday school?'" a teacher asked his junior department, hoping to learn their real motives. Various reasons were offered, then one little girl confessed, 'Well, I was home and father came into the kitchen with muddy boots and tracked the floor. Mother jawed him for it and he talked back. Finally mother said to me, "If I had any way of getting out of this place, I surely would. Why don't you go to Sunday school and get away from it all?"' So I did and so I'm here.'"

Does not all this suggest the need of restoring the faith of our fathers and the family altar in the home? So abundantly does the hallowed custom of family devotion draw down the blessing of God on the household that one can only marvel that parents would forego its blessed privilege. Many family troubles and resultant sorrows would vanish at the family altar, for loved ones cannot help but be drawn closer to one another in mutual love and understanding when they daily together have sat at the feet of Jesus.

Likewise no greater gain could come to any congregation than that in each home of its constituency a family altar was established. As no stream can rise above its head, no congregation can rise above its homes. Christ Himself tells us, "All things ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." There may still be a "home, sweet home" for every family under the gracious guidance of God if parents will say with Joshua of old, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

E. W. Petrusson in "Ans. Luth."

The Fairy's New Year Gift

Two little boys were at play one day when a fairy suddenly appeared to them and said, "I have been sent to give you a New Year present."

She handed to each child a package, and at the same instant was gone.

Carl and Philip opened the packages and found the same thing in each—a beautiful book with white pages, as pure white and beautiful as the snow when it first falls.

After a long time the fairy came again to the boys. "I have brought you each a new book," she said, "and will take back the others to Father Time, who sent them to you."

"May I not keep mine a little longer," said Philip, "I have hardly thought about it lately. I'd like to paint something on the last page that lies open."

"No," said the fairy, "I must take it just as it is."

"I wish I could look through mine just once," said Carl. "I have only seen one page at a time; for when a

leaf turns over, it sticks fast, and I never can open the book at more than one place."

"You shall look over your book," said the fairy, "and Philip his." And she lit for each of them a little silver lamp by the light of which they saw the pages as she turned them.

The boys looked in wonder. Could it be that this was the same fair book she had given them a year ago? Where were the pure white pages, as pure white and beautiful as the snow when it first falls? Here was a page with ugly black blots and scratches upon it, while the very next page had a lovely picture. Some pages were decorated with gold and silver and gorgeous colors, others with beautiful flowers, and others still with a rainbow of softest, most delicate brightness. Yet, even on the most beautiful of the pages there were those ugly blots and scratches.

Carl and Philip looked up at the fairy at last.

"Who did this?" they asked. "Every page was white and fair as we opened to it, yet now there is not a single blank space in the whole book!"

"Shall I explain some of the pictures to you?" said the fairy smiling at the two little boys. "See, Philip, the spray of roses blossomed on this page when you let the baby have your playthings, and this pretty bird which looks so cunning and as if it were singing with all its might would never have been on this page if you had not tried to be kind and pleasant the other day instead of quarreling."

"But what makes this blot?" asked Philip.

"That," said the fairy sadly, "came when you told an untruth one day, and this when you did not mind mamma. All these blots and scratches that look so ugly both on your book and on Carl's were made when you were naughty in any way and did not obey your mamma or papa or your teacher. Each pretty thing in your books came on the date when you were good, and each blot when you were naughty."

"Oh, if we could only have the books again!" said Carl and Philip.

"That cannot be," said the fairy. "See! they are marked '1936' and they must now go back into Father Time's bookcase; but I have brought you each a new one. Perhaps you can make these more beautiful than the others."

So saying she vanished and the boys were left alone; but each held in his hand a new book open at the first page.

And on the back of this book was "1937." It was the book of the New Year.

Emilie Poulsson
in "Julehilsen," New York.

Sincerity in Prayer

A fable is told of a pioneer who, as often as he thought he had prayed with sincerity and fervency, would put a nut in a jar, in order to know how often and how much he had prayed. When he had gathered quite a large collection of nuts, he seemed to hear a voice which commanded him to open the nuts and see how often his prayers had been sincere and fervent, and well pleasing to God. He began to open the nuts and found to his great shame that there was only one among them of which the kernel was half good; the others were either all decayed or wormy.

How many among us Christians are there who imagine they have prayed often and much, but whose prayers, if their devotion and fervency were to be examined and weighed in the balance of God, would be found useless and unavailing like the prayer of the Pharisee!

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EDITORIAL

As we enter the New Year, "Lutheran Tidings" wants to wish all its readers a Happy New Year, a year filled with all the blessings which God in His love is capable of bestowing upon us. His ability to bless us is no doubt limited by what we are able to receive from Him.

At the same time this is a time of taking stock of ourselves. When we look back upon the old year, I realize that "Lutheran Tidings" has not been all that it should have been, nor has the paper always been as good as I could have made it. May God forgive this, and may He help us to do better in the year to come. We are very grateful for the way "Lutheran Tidings" has been received by our people. We have met a great deal of appreciation and understanding. Perhaps an understanding of what we are trying to do is not universal in our church. There may be those who think we are trying to make over our church into something foreign to itself. That is a misunderstanding, however. What we are trying to do is simply this: first, to bear witness of the gospel of Christ; second, to further the fellowship between those who belong to our synod by spreading information and news about what goes on in the different parts of our synod.

In order to further these ends I invite all our people to make use of the columns of "Lutheran Tidings" during the coming year. They are open to all for anything which will help develop our Christian fellowship and build up our Danish Church. Anything not designed for these purposes had better not see the light of day, as far as we are concerned.

Also I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all who have assisted me in any way, by sending material to the paper, by little messages of encouragement, by subscribing to "Lutheran Tidings," or in any other way. It is not always easy to fill a paper with material good to read, and any assistance to this end is keenly appreciated. It is encouraging for an editor to feel that his readers are following his work from week to week—even if this should involve criticism at times.

With best wishes for the New Year and a desire to serve our people and our church in the things that will be of lasting good, I am

Sincerely yours,

C. A. Stub.

BOOKS

Enok Mortensen: Jeg vælger et Land. Danish Book Concern, Cedar Falls, Iowa. \$1.65.

As I just now finished reading this book, I feel that I must say thank you to the author for it. For never before have I read anything which so fully has expressed what I, as another immigrant of just the same generation as Niels Nord, have thought and experienced.

How very true a picture this book gives us of a great percentage of Danish immigrants. It is just as if you have met them all before, only that many of us, of course, have met others also, those for instance for whom the building of a church was their expression of their love for Denmark and its cultural values and for whom that church was a help in solving their problems.

How the reading of a book like this helps one to realize, and to be willing to admit, without being half way ashamed of it, that a deep and true love for his mother country does not hinder him from having just as deep a love and admiration for America, so that even the fact that your children are Americans seems only as it must be, as Niels Nord expresses it in the last paragraph of the book: when immigrants have come here from all over the world, hoping and trusting in this new country, they must some day find each other in a great feeling of fellowship, in their longing for all that is noble and good, and so become a people with culture and creative power expressed in happiness. That country will be his children's country and also his own.

Yes, thank you very much for this book, Enok Mortensen. May it be read, as it ought to be, by all our people. And may we look forward to another one.

Anna J. Stub.

From My Reading

By Bundy

Astonishing. It is nothing short of a wonder that a book of a religious nature, written by a director of a psychological clinic, should attain nine printings since its publication last March. Such is the case with Henry C. Link's book, "The Return to Religion." There is a good reason for this, for the book is a most sincere confession from a scholar and scientist, who in his own personal life for a period of almost twenty years tried to get along without religion, only to find that circumstantial evidence compelled him to advise others as well as himself that the solution of life's gravest problems was not by means of an escape from religion but by the way of a more intelligent application of it. This is not a review, such is hardly needed. The book will make glad the hearts of many of those that have clung to the "faith of their fathers" in spite of indifference of the many that are too mentally lazy to investigate the Christian religion. The book is published by Macmillan and the price is \$1.75.

Personality. The author of the book mentioned above states in a recent number of "The Reader's Digest" that personalities are not developed with more school learning. High school students and college students in general, after several observations, did not have better personalities than eighth grade students. Only variations in contacts and useful hobbies keep personality alive. Preachers better beware lest they read too much!

Changing. About four years ago, Glenn Frank, the illustrious president of the University of Wisconsin, wrote

his book, "Thunder and Dawn"; in it there were many things which we were not yet ready to accept as ultimate wisdom. Mankind must in many cases come of age before it is willing to acknowledge its own looks. Glenn Frank tells of the industrialists of that time as calling most of its critics "damned radicals." Why such an attitude? "Western industrialism was the spoiled child of cocksure capitalism." But this attitude is changing. "Today instead of sending its critics to jail, industrialists are studying their criticisms. In view of late happenings, the confessions of the Boston merchant, Edward Filene, are signs of real repentance."

* * * * *

Ethiopian Wisdom. Ethiopians practice some of Solomon's wisdom. Some years ago we were lured into installment buying. This scheme put us at the mercy of those that control our wealth. In Ethiopia they still think that going into debt is bad for two parties. When debts are unpaid after a reasonable time, they tie the debtor and the creditor together with chains and then turn them loose on the streets until one of them gives in to the other. The debtor does everything he can to drag his creditor to the most impossible places; the creditor makes all the opposition he can and he hollers from the street corners to let everybody know what a trustless person he is tied to. The result is that one of them soon gives up the unpleasant game, and the affair is settled. In the meantime they have taught their fellow citizens the valuable lesson that credit is not only poor business but moral degradation. (Told by Wm. Avenstrup in his book, "I Abessiniens Jungle.")

Correspondence

Muskegon, Mich., Dec. 14, 1936.

Editor of "Lutheran Tidings":

Dear Sir:

So essentially different, but significantly successful was the annual canvass of our Board of Trustees at the Central Lutheran Church of Muskegon, Mich., this year, that we would like to share our experiences with the readers of "Lutheran Tidings."

The Board, departing from the customary policies in regard to the 1937 budget, and following the plan of such local organizations as the Community Chest, decided to put the monetary phase of the church work on a purely business basis. Consequently, at the meeting held November 10, after the itemized budget had been drawn up, a definite outline of procedure was established. It was decided that the canvass, reaching every member of the church, would be concentrated on one day, Sunday afternoon Dec. 6th.

Following a letter which listed the new church budget came a news letter prepared by our pastor, Ernest Nielsen, urging the members of the church to be at home that afternoon. The activities of this Sunday were outlined thus:

1. Morning worship, at which time Rev. Nielsen based an inspiring sermon on the spirit that should exist during the work of the day.

2. Afternoon visitations by the board, their wives, and a selected committee.

3. Evening church services, followed by a social gathering in the church parlors.

The reports at the social gathering satisfied the board as to the success of the new system; results were encouraging. The experiences related by the canvassers displayed the splendid response of the congregation. In that one afternoon we secured pledges which amounted to

nearly a 100 per cent increase over the total pledges for the entire preceding year. Likewise, in the benevolent work of the synod, we went "over the top" with \$184.00—\$34.00 more than our assessment by the synod.

In short, the board's new system saved many hours of work, produced commendable results, put the business matters of the church before the people in a straightforward manner, and rallied our congregation around a task that demanded our united effort.

Yours enthusiastically,

William Sorensen, Jr.

* * *

Benagaria P. O., Nov. 21, 1936.

Dear Friends:

We have now been in Benagaria for about a week and a half and are beginning to get somewhat settled in our new home. For we are not living in the house that I had before, but in the one previously occupied by Rev. Thus. I am sure we shall like it here. It is about the same distance from the hospital (about two blocks), so it is very convenient in that way.

We were very happy to find that Dr. Banerje was in better health than we could have hoped for. He is still on a very strict diet, and so has not the strength to work full time at the hospital, but he is steadily gaining and should soon have regained what he had lost. We are gradually getting back into the old routine again. More patients are coming, and there are quite a number of operations. Tonight there were 42 patients in the hospital.

It was pleasant to see old friends again after nearly three years' absence. The people of the station had arranged quite a welcome for us, with arches of honor made of branches and green leaves, and as we arrived about nine o'clock at night the whole compound was illuminated with numerous small lights, making a very pretty picture as we approached from the distance.

The compounders (male nurses) at the hospital are the same reliable friends that were here before, with the exception of three who passed away during my absence (Lubin, Reuben and Hikim). These are replaced by several others, two of whom we received from Mohulpahari when Mrs. Boddington left. They do their work faithfully and well, but we hope, as we have to take on new ones, that they can be given a more systematic course of training than most of the older ones have received.

Alma is already hard at work studying Santali, besides getting the house arranged. She impressed the servants the other day by saying a whole sentence in Santali. They probably didn't know that she read it directly out of her notebook, where she has some sentences written in English together with their translation in Santali. A kind of a short-cut to learning the language.

Our neighbors here in the compound are the Girtzes, who came here when Rev. Tromborgs left last spring. Joe has practically recovered from his sinus trouble. Sonny has been ill lately with swollen glands, but is nearly well now. Our other neighbors are the Misses Krohn and Pedersen, who are in charge of the nursing work at the hospital. Miss Pedersen is just finishing her first year of language study. The doctor's bungalow is at present occupied by Rev. and Mrs. S. Johansen, who are studying language in preparation to entering Bengali work. Their residence here is only temporary; they expect to move to one of the Bengali stations shortly.

The weather is at this time the most comfortable of the year, not too hot and not too cold. The rains lasted rather longer than usual, i. e. till about November the first. So we are just in between that and what we call the

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"IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE"

By C. S. Hasle

II

Is there any possible chance that this, which has taken place in several countries in continental Europe, may become a reality here?

Since the war the trend in the United States has been to let Europe settle her own affairs. We are not interested in Germany or Russia. Those countries are far away, and what happens there, although it may bring food for thought to a few, is not considered to be serious to the extent that it should cause any disturbance on our national horizon. Even the church people on the Western Continent remain undisturbed at the news of oppression of Judaism and Christianity. Hence the answer: "It Can't Happen Here."

But a few church people believe it might happen. This belief has caused a group of prominent Protestant clergymen under the leadership of Bishop Stanley E. Jones to tour the country in order to make people aware of this danger. This undertaking, which is known as the National Preaching Mission, is not based on propaganda against any person or movement. It is an attempt of serious-minded people to call attention of American church people to the fact that during the last two decades anti-religious forces have almost uprooted Christianity in Russia, and that the same forces are now at work in Germany.

Watching conditions in Europe convinces one that the movement is spreading. It recognizes no national boundaries, and although many well-meaning people believe that it can never reach across the Atlantic, time only will tell whether the movement can be considered strictly a European movement which will limit itself to that continent.

In considering the possibility of its happening here two things must be remembered. What are the political trends of our times, and what is the position of the church among the people of the United States?

In the political life of the United States certain trends are becoming very noticeable, which fills the sane observer with uneasiness. Evidently the trends are toward superman in government. Many may not be willing to admit this, but it is there, marked and easily discerned.

The average American suffers a great deal from the disease of mental laziness. Only a small percentage of the population make a serious attempt at doing their own thinking. For this reason it is easy for any strong individuals to bring the unthinking majority in line for certain policies.

Without the majority realizing it the basis for our political thoughts are being changed a great deal. The last presidential election bears out this fact.

For some time the world has been passing through a crisis. Some may claim that this crisis is merely an economic depression, but it is more than that. It is a general upheaval caused by the fear and hatred which the world war instilled in every heart.

The war left humanity feeling insecure. Neighbor feared neighbor. Up till that time people asked for liberty and opportunity, but during this crisis real opportunity has been limited to the extent that the majority are now asking for security against the fear of unemployment, old age, sickness, and many other things.

To the masses, who demand security, Roosevelt has become the father, who promises to use the government as an agency of human welfare. When he stated during the campaign that the rich had met their match during his first administration, while during his second they would meet their master, millions applauded. This was what they wanted. Security, which has lured millions of people in Europe to exchange liberty and opportunity for bread, is fast becoming the basis of American political thinking.

The vote given Mr. Roosevelt a few weeks ago is greater than any vote of confidence given to any European dictator during modern times. And although people might say: "It can't happen here," this enormous vote of confidence has made it possible. Any ruler with so great a following might without any difficulty set himself up as ruler of a nation's conscience.

"It might happen here." Certain things which preceded the establishment of dictatorships in several European countries have already happened here. To deny this is identical with putting on the ostrich act of hiding one's face to certain undeniable facts.

To the sane observer it is therefore evident that a political stage is being set, probably unknowingly to many, which makes it possible that the same thing which happened in Russia and is happening in Germany may happen here.

What is the position of the church in present day America? In case of a crisis the deciding factor will be whether the majority of people consider the church as essential or not.

The United States has been called a Christian country. This writer had the privilege more than thirty years ago of hearing the great Commoner of Nebraska, William Jennings Bryan, state in a most emphatic way that he was proud of belonging to a great Christian nation. And although it is a known fact that less than half of the population have actually identified themselves with any organized church, it is taken for granted that the United States is a Christian country.

However, it is one thing to profess belief in something, but it is quite another thing to live one's belief. When one notices the unequal distribution of wealth, the crime wave, the corruptness of American courts, the crooked politics, the suffering of humanity caused by the depression, the injustice of practically everything, the selfishness and cynicism, one begins to wonder about the truth of such a statement, that the United States is a Christian nation. At least it becomes proper to ask in all seriousness whether these conditions are the fruits of Christianity.

Undoubtedly a great deal of Christian idealism and tradition is found in the United States. Churches as well as individuals have endeavored to serve the common people in order that the world might be made a better place in which to live. Great activities have been promoted by the church in the past. These activities were generally aimed at the uplifting of humanity, at elevating the human race to a higher plane of life.

But in spite of these activities the so-called Christian church was never quite able to handle the Christianizing of the American people. It even failed at Chris-

tianizing itself, as it often became evident to the casual observer that outward and visible activities really meant more than inward growth and purification.

However, in spite of all errors it must be admitted that the church in general won the respect of everybody throughout the land. This respect has been shown in certain privileges being granted it. Church property is tax exempt. This privilege is extended even to undertakings from which the church derives certain revenues.

Broadly speaking, the church has won a unique place in the eyes of the average American, more so than any other organization or movement. It is taken for granted that it possesses certain elements which are found no place else.

Granted that the church has won a recognition in the United States, which is well to behold, one may in spite of this wonder how much it actually has accomplished with the individual. Has it, as an agency of Christianity, developed dormant possibilities, which have made the individual better equipped for life and enabled him to solve the problems which faced him?

Many appear to be suffering from an acute case of bewilderment at the present time. It is as though a storm has passed over the land and destroyed a great deal of what has been considered both essential and valuable. After the storm has abated, people seem to be at a loss, not knowing in which direction to turn in order to reconstruct their lives.

In the past it has been taken almost for granted that people in case of shipwreck always, like the prodigal son, would seek back to their father's house. Very little indicates that this disillusioned generation will retrace its steps back to the church.

Hence it must be admitted that the church has failed to implant in the hearts and minds of this generation essentials which give a balanced life.

To look at the matter from a different angle, it also must be admitted that the church has failed to take a decisive stand against injustice and evil. The unequal distribution of wealth has cried to high heaven, and yet the church has remained silent. No voice has been heard from the American pulpit which would indicate that the followers of the Prophet of Nazareth are less bewildered than the rest of mankind.

If this is true, it may be concluded that many, although they have become members of churches, remain at heart untouched by the spirit of Christianity. People may at times seek the church on account of certain advantages gained by doing so, but if difficulties arise, such connections may become burdensome, and will therefore be thrown overboard, as no one during such difficult times wishes to carry along a lot of dead material.

Evidently the church in America is facing a crisis. However, this has been predicted many times before, and yet it has not come. But it appears altogether incomprehensible that such a crisis can stay away much longer. If there is any truth in the statement that one can not worship both God and Mammon, this crisis must come. And probably the next score years will prove whether Christianity shall actually become a life-moulding force, as it was intended by the Master, or whether it shall decline toward oblivion.

What the outcome will be no one can say at the present. But in view of the indifference, the craze for publicity, the selfishness and cynicism, the contempt for

people who think and act different from the majority, which is so much in evidence, one must be a born optimist in order to be able to have high hopes for the outcome of this crisis.

III

What has been done, and what may be done in order to avert a possible catastrophe similar to that which struck the church of Russia.

Only little has been done so far which might have direct bearing on the situation. However, it should not be overlooked that the Central Conference of American Rabbis in a so-called Social Justice Message states the position of Judaism toward Communism and Fascism. The last two movements the rabbis consider as political and economic in the modern world, and the opinion of the rabbis is that the only remedy for escaping the dictatorship of Communism on the one hand and the tyranny of Fascism on the other is the establishment of a thorough socialized democracy.

To accomplish this the rabbis invite everybody who love justice and hate evil to come forward and help build such a modern kingdom of God, in which justice shall be the predominating motive in both the social and cultural life. So far this invitation has not been heeded.

But in the past something, which probably will have an indirect bearing on the situation, has been done.

The church of America is finally beginning to realize the necessity of putting its house in order. While in the past a great deal of time has been used in explaining the differences between the various denominations, more time is now being taken up for the pointing out of what they have in common.

This movement, which aims at getting fewer but larger churches, has fair wind at the present time. The average person is not interested in denominationalism. The churches all claim to worship the same God, so why the many denominations?

America probably needs to practice tolerance more than any other nation. This also applies to the American church. The lack of co-operation, the constant disagreements, the petty bickerings, which are not alone weakening, but un-Christian, are in the eyes of the world the glaring sins of the American church. True religion must seek the good of all, and while it is regrettable that many prefer to remain outside the church, it can never condemn anyone for failing to hold the same opinions as those in the church.

In the wake of this movement has followed a general strengthening of the churches. Several denominations have united in one strong body, while others have formed working agreements. Hence is probably found fewer churches today than a few decades ago, but those remaining are larger as to membership and more able to put up a united front toward outward enemies.

This movement, which has brought about the union of several denominations, indicates a new era in American church life. While a few decades ago the prevailing tendency was for each group to isolate itself in small denominations, the tendency now appears to be not alone a willingness to extend the barriers, but actually to organize churches in which all the people may eventually find a home.

The result of this new spirit in American church life can not yet be estimated, but there is more genuine tolerance inside

the churches of the United States than was generally found a quarter of a century ago.

If one were able to notice some of the main undercurrents of American church life today, there would still be some reason for encouragement as to what the future might bring. The crisis, which is grinding much of the best of European life in the dust, has not yet arrived. It may never come in the United States. But if it does, there is still a great deal of healthy blood flowing in the veins of the American church. The cause of this may be found in the fact that on those shores various races have met and mingled, and a healthy race has been the outcome.

Consequently the church is still in a position to speak with authority as to spiritual matters. In case of a dictator the greatest resistance will come from the church, as it has more to lose than any other movement. This resistance should not be based on the church's mingling in national politics, but on its doing the work which the Master left unfinished. Only by setting its own house in order can the church ever have any hope of becoming the light of the world, which will illumine the places that have hitherto remained in darkness.

The church should never be afraid of confessing what it believes. Not alone should it dare a confession of its belief in a righteous God, but also the rights of each individual, which no ruler shall take away from him, and that among these is the right to worship according to one's own conscience.

But strong church organization is not sufficient. In a matter like this inner conviction counts. If the church is organized into one strong body, while its individual members lack faith, it will never be able to resist the onslaught of the modern super-state.

Hence every church member must cultivate his own faith constantly. Faith can not stand still. It must move, either increase or decrease. This cultivation of one's faith must be undertaken with the understanding that the organization never becomes stronger than its weakest member. "It can't happen here!" Many will answer thus and remain happy in their security. But a few will answer "It may happen here!" It all depends on whether the church members will let God's will be done in his heart; for if His will be done, after a while the same will be done on earth, as it is being done in Heaven.

This is the only assurance that it will not happen here. For after all one who has not felt himself touched by the spirit of the everloving and righteous God has very little that he can not give up at the dictator's command.

It is possible to live without the church; but if one has been touched by the spirit of God, there are certain things which can not be given up at the command of someone else. At least if he does, it will never be the same again with such a person.

OUR CHURCH

Church Concert. St. Peder's Church, Minneapolis, Minn., has been making arrangements for a church concert, which was to be held on January 3 in the church. The Male Choir, under the leadership of Mr. Peter Kirkegaard, was to have a leading part in the event, and the soloists Ebba Nelson and Einar Askjaer, as well

as piano and violin soloists, were to assist in the program.

Christmas Baskets. The young people of our Trinity Church, Chicago, Ill., have taken upon themselves again this year to deliver Christmas baskets of groceries to needy families. This is becoming a Christmas tradition in this church, a very commendable tradition. We can rejoice at such expressions of the spirit of Christmas.

A Day's Pay Donation has been solicited by Trinity Church, Chicago. The income from this was to be applied to pay off on the debt of the congregation. Seven hundred and fifty dollars was received on this account, a good help in reducing the debt.

Kimballton, Iowa. Rev. Alfred Jensen writes in his local bulletin: "The Sunday school has enjoyed a steady increase in the English department for some time. Most of the children in the city and nearly all those who reside in the country and whose homes associate with our church, come quite regularly. The attendance is fairly good except when weather and roads are bad. This condition is satisfactory to the teachers, and it is always cheering to find the rooms filled with children."

Rev. Amble's Memorial. For some time funds have been collected to place a suitable memorial on the grave of the late Rev. Ole Amble of Greenville, Mich. This stone has now been erected and, according to Rev. A. C. Kildegaard's report, it is a very beautiful and artistic monument. The unveiling will take place on Decoration Day, May 30, 1937.

New Bible Class. Rev. E. Farstrup is beginning a new Bible class at Menominee, Mich., in January. A demand for such a class has made itself felt by the congregation. "The purpose of this class will be to acquaint ourselves more thoroughly with the writings of the holy book," writes Rev. Farstrup. It is expected that participants in this class are willing to do some real work.

Appeal to the Danes of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn., is made by St. Peder's Church, Minneapolis, for more general support of the Danish work of this congregation. At a recent meeting of the congregation it was unanimously desired that the work now carried on in Danish should continue. The Danish element of the church is dwindling, however. Therefore the appeal goes out to the Danish people of the Twin Cities to support the work.

The Envelope System of financing the work of the church was adopted at the recent yearly meeting of our Bronx, N. Y., congregation.

English Introduced. The Trinity Danish Church, Bronx, N. Y., has decided to hold two morning services in English every month, the second and fourth Sundays. On these Sundays there will be Danish services in the evening.

Mr. Hans Hoiberg, a son of Rev. C. P. Højbjerg, who moved to Denmark last fall, has been appointed assistant to Col. Ward, Regional Director of the Resettlement Administration office at Lincoln, Nebr. This office is the headquarters for Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota. Previously Mr. Hoiberg held the office

of Director of Workers' Education in Kansas.

* * *

Rev. A. E. Sorensen's radio program from Station KJR, Seattle, Wash., on Christmas eve was heard very clearly in the Central States, according to several reports to the editor.

* * *

Los Angeles, Calif. Dec. 10 the plans for the new church at Los Angeles were submitted to the congregation. Blueprints and drawings have been made by Mr. Reiner Nielsen and have been approved by the Building Committee.

* * *

Prof. Sigurd Johansen, whose home is in Tyler, Minn., was married to Miss Alma Pedersen, a daughter of Rev. and Mrs. P. H. Pedersen, Perth Amboy, N. J., on Sunday, December 27. The young couple will make their home in New Mexico.

* * *

English Services. Rev. P. H. Pedersen, Perth Amboy, N. J., reports in "Kirke og Folk" that he has conducted services in English in response to a request by a few people. With the exception of the first English service, so few attended these services that he has decided to give up English services. He is willing, however, to take up English again when there shall be a real demand.

* * *

"Candlelight Service." Rev. J. C. Kjaer, Clinton, Iowa, reports that instead of the traditional Sunday school program at their Christmas tree festival the Sunday school had arranged a candlelight service, "The Light of Men," "A Feast of Lights," which was held Sunday evening, December 27. The play was under the direction of Miss Marian May and Mrs. Soren Juhl, assisted by Miss Betty Jensen. This innovation was very well received by all concerned.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from col. 170)

cold season. The people are gathering in their rice harvest, and we are happy because there was an exceptionally fine crop this year. (After a crop failure last year, with a resulting semi-famine.) The sky is usually clear, with a few clouds coming up in the evening, only to be dispersed shortly after sundown. Then the night is given over, not to darkness, but to a sky studded with a million twinkling stars, whose glow seems to be much nearer here than at home. And then the moon comes up and casts her enchanting brilliance over the sleeping world. November in India, and one forgets that there are four months of dry, scorching heat which dries up your very bones and saps the strength from your body. And four months of rains, with their stickiness, prickly heat, insects and bugs in the house and out, in your eyes and in your soup, with frogs and snakes, malaria and dysentery to make life miserable. These are all forgotten, temporarily, in this delightful November weather. So when you come to visit us, as I hope many of you may, do not come just for the cold season, but come to know India as it is in the heat and rain.

This has become a sort of rambling letter, but as we are getting orientated, it is such impressions that are meeting us these days.

With sincerest greetings,
Alma and Erling Ostergaard.

LUTHERAN TIDINGS

Aalborg, Denmark, December, 1936.
Mr. Editor:

The Dan-America Archives in Aalborg are sending you and all your readers the very best wishes for a "Merry Christmas" and a "Happy New Year." The past year has in some ways been a disappointment to us, because entirely too few of our countrymen in America have written us. You all know that the Dan-America Archives collect any kind of material pertaining to Danes and Danish churches, Societies, etc.: books, pamphlets, letters, newspapers, pictures, etc., even the smallest item will be of value to our collections.

All Danes in America ought to take an interest in the Dan-America Archives; the Archives is an institution for all Danes, both of the first, second and third generations; but if we are left without any support from our countrymen, we cannot do as much as we want to do.

In Denmark people are beginning to realize that if they want to know something about the Danes in America, they have to come to us. All material received is carefully arranged and catalogued, to make it easy for future generations to read and learn about their emigrated countrymen and their lives and deeds on foreign soil.

I do beg all of you to write me, you will always get a prompt answer from me. I ask you to send me whatever you have and can spare of material relating to Danes in America, and please remember

that we are always very grateful for anything you can and will do for us.

With kind regards and the best wishes for a blessed 1937 both for you and for Denmark and the U. S. A., I am

Sincerely yours,

Svend Waendelin, Arkivar,
The Dan-America Archives, Aalborg.

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