

Lutheran Tidings

Volume III

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LIVING IN THE WORLD

To bring Christianity into our daily life, into our earthly relationship, our work and all our secular pursuits, to live as a Christian in the midst of the world, that is the great art of living for a disciple of Jesus Christ.

There are some who say this can not be done, it is hopeless to attempt it, for that would be to undertake the impossible.

The same was the opinion of the ancient hermits: We can not live in the world as Christians. If we want to live in the world, our Christianity must perish. Consequently, if we want to preserve our Christianity, we must flee away from the world. This is also the opinion of the modern enemies of Christ: To live as a Christian is incompatible with living in the world. In this they are in complete agreement with the Christian hermits, with this difference that they draw a different conclusion: Consequently, we shall have to let Christianity go and arrange our lives the best we can without it.

On the middle ground between those two groups stand those persons who agree with them that Christian life and secular life can never coincide and be united, but who, on the other hand, are loath to choose between the two. They do not want to be separated from the world and its concerns, nor are they willing to give up their faith; so they compromise by dividing their lives, giving a part to each side. They are Christians on certain solemn occasions in life, perhaps once a week or for a few minutes or hours every day; as for the rest of the time they are business men, politicians, the heads of families, and citizens. And, if Christianity wants to obtrude itself on these precincts also, they will have none of that. They bisect themselves and their lives, dividing them vertically. The world is good, religion is good, but each one by itself. This conception of life seems to satisfy a great number of people.

But it is not the way designated by Christ. He does not say: You must choose between God and the world. Nor does He say: You must divide yourselves between God and the world. He says: Live with God in the midst of the world.

He says: Rid yourselves of everything that does not belong to the world, everything which has come into it unjustly; but the world as God made it, which He commanded man to subdue, you must inhabit with all your faith and hope and mutual love. He says: Make use of the world, learn to know it, work with it, and rejoice in it; have no faith in them that say the most Christian way of all is to despise this world and spurn it. On the contrary;

you should live so that you christen everything you touch, for it is all meant to be christened, not to be rejected and put aside, but to be cleansed and redeemed and saved.

It is not a Christian, rather an old pagan conception that the sinful, temporal, earthly things are really evil and hostile to God and ought to be renounced, or that it is most pleasing to God for us to have as little to do with earthly things as possible. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," said the ancient Israelites. And it is Christian to say: The Son of God has been revealed that He might reconquer God's earth for Him as well as the whole of human life, not only the Sundays but all the days, and not only the churches but all the houses of men, their workshops and factories, their nurseries and schools, even their theatres and taverns. God wants to possess us completely, nor can we ever be entirely satisfied with anything less than to give ourselves completely to Him.

Therefore no Christian should say: Unfortunately I can not avoid having to do with the things of this world; one must tread upon the earth and live from it; one is obliged to do business and make money; but I will endeavor to do as little of that as possible so that as much as possible of time and energy will be left for the one thing that is needful. For the one needful thing is not something we must have apart from other things. Our relationship to God, our faith in Him and our work in His service is not something that must occupy a certain portion of our soul with our relationships to other things occupying other portions so that the more the one is increased the less room there will be for the other. But the one great thing must be included in all the other things, support them and imprint itself upon them, penetrate them, become the soul and vital principle in them.

A Christian life is not one that falls apart or goes to pieces, so that we do a Christian act when we take our hymnal and confess our faith and say our evening prayers, or when we give alms or teach Sunday School, or when death comes; and are worldly when we go to the store or sit at home reading the morning paper, or when we go to a party or to the polls to vote. It is a life upheld by the Spirit of God, always and everywhere; it is at all times and places imbued with the will to serve God in all things.

If we are asked whether it is easy to attain to such a way of life, we must answer: This is the great and difficult art of living, but Jesus Christ has come to give men the power to learn that art.

Emil Koch in "Christian Living."

CHRIST AND CONSTITUTION

By Thomas P. Christensen.

The Medieval Danish kings were large landowners under whom were lesser landowners, the lords of the manors, who exercised powers of government locally. Lower in the social scale were the yeomen or free farmers who owned their farms; and the serfs or tenant farmers who lived on farms belonging to the king, the lords, and the church. Both free and tenant farmers (Bønderne), however, were generally under the jurisdiction of the local lords.

A third class was rising—the burghers, that is the merchants and mechanics of the growing towns. The latter had received grants of commercial privileges from the kings in return for which they were obligated to pay regular taxes and also such extraordinary contributions as to furnish ships for the royal navy in time of war.

There was but little manufacturing in the Medieval Danish towns. Their prosperity depended mainly on a lively business turnover in retailing services and goods. Then as now wars greatly stimulated trade. Each major war produced its crop of war profiteers, and might be followed by a period of urban prosperity.

There were only a few towns of any size in Denmark until after the Crusades and none of any great importance until after the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). Then as now Copenhagen was the largest city in the country. It became the capital of the country during the reign of King Christopher of Bavaria (1440-1448). In 1656 it had a population of 29,000.

The economic power of the Medieval kings, as we have seen, depended mainly on the number and size of the royal manors. Accordingly the kings strove to possess as many manors as possible. The results would be varying, but according to what they were the king would be up or down—or out. Queen Margaret was successful in her land policy and her reign was orderly and prosperous. But her successors down to Christian II (1513-1523) were constantly in financial straits because they had—besides their own extravagance—a continual series of civil and foreign wars to contend with, during which it often became necessary to turn many of the royal manors over to creditors as usable pawns. Denmark had its last civil war at the beginning of the reign of Christian III (1533-1559) the so-called Count's War, but foreign wars were frequent until 1720.

Partly at least, the Count's war had been caused by the refusal of the spiritual lords, that is the Catholic bishops, to participate in the immediate elections of a new king upon the death of Frederick I in 1533. At the close of the war the successful aspirant Christian III, supported by the nobles and burghers confiscated the tithes and landed property of the bishoprics. The property of most of the monasteries was also seized and a general reform of the church from Catholic to Lutheran in doctrine and organization was carried through. The seizure of the church and monastic lands and the large fines imposed on those who had fought against the king enabled him, without any financial breakdown, to handle the huge national debt, estimated to have been about the same as it had been at the accession of Valdemar Atterdag.

Though all-powerful, Christian III made no major changes in the constitution. The monarchy remained elective, but without any explicit law or decree it was actually becoming hereditary.

Frederick II, the successor to Christian III, was a large landowner like his father, a good manager, and a strong king. His son and successor, Christian IV, on the

other hand, was extravagant and fought several costly wars—against the advice of the nobles, and again many a good royal manor passed to the latter as usable pawns.

If it were not that the matter of peace and war is so complicated, we might express the pious wish that there had been more pacifism. The matter of peace and war was complicated, for instance, by such factors as the rich herring fisheries of the Sound. These fisheries had begun to attract foreigners already in the 12th century. Bishop Absalon, one of the first noted Danish churchmen and statesmen, taxed the fisheries for the benefit of the church. King Eric of Pomerania (1412-1440) made these Sound Dues a permanent institution, levying them, however, on the rapidly growing number of ships which came to the fisheries or sailed farther on to the cities on the Baltic Sea. This then was a new source of royal revenue from the manors and towns. Dues yielded considerable sums. At one time they constituted about one fourth of the royal income. Christian IV considered them the brightest jewel in his crown. He built Glückstadt near the mouth of the Elbe in an effort to extract a similar toll from the shipping on that river.

There were other factors making peace difficult, especially for that time. From time immemorable the provinces east of the Sound—Skaane, Halland, and Blekinge had been Danish territory. Only during the troublous times of Christopher II had they for a short time been under Sweden. But the latter country became a great power during the Thirty Years War, and from territorial aggrandizement in Germany was but a short step to similar action nearer at home.

The opportunity for Sweden came in 1657 when the Danish King Frederick III foolishly declared war. By the treaty of peace the next year Sweden obtained the three provinces, besides part of Norway. It was then the turn of the Swedish king to act foolishly by renewing the war, hoping to conquer all of Denmark, when the taking of Danish territory seemed so easy. In this second war everything finally hinged on the defense of Copenhagen. The burghers defended it bravely and beat back the Swedish storm troops, thereby saving both capital and country. Disheartened by military reverses and also by the threats of the Dutch, who did not relish the idea of one country owning both shores of the Sound, the Swedes sued for peace. By the terms of the treaty of peace in 1660 they gave back to Denmark the island of Bornholm and central Norway, but they kept the provinces east of the Sound, and have held them ever since.

It was the special duty of the nobles before 1660 to defend the country in time of war at their own expense in return for such privileges as the exemption from regular taxation. During the four wars of the 17th century they had acquitted themselves so poorly of the task that the country had suffered grievously and the whole class of nobles became the object of general contempt and hatred. Nice *Haremand* (rabbit men) those *Herremænd* (lords of the manor) were failing the country in the hour of its greatest need! The burghers proudly pointed to the fact that they and not the nobles had defended and preserved the realm in the last war. Would the king recognize them as a new power behind the throne? During the siege of Copenhagen he had promised the burghers economic equality with the nobles. Would he keep his promise now that the danger of conquest had been removed?

(Continued on column 364)

The Christian Student and the World Crisis.

In the last analysis there are but two types of warfare in the fight against the evils of the world, the one which leads in case of necessity to take the blood of others, the other to give one's own blood.—Jacques Maritain.

Walter Lippman speaks somewhere of a French peasant who lived not far from Paris at the beginning of the last century, but who had never heard of Napoleon. Any one who is unaware of the crisis through which the world is passing today, Lippman goes on to say, must be somewhat related to that peasant of Napoleon's time. So true is this that it has become almost a commonplace to speak of the "world crisis" in which we find ourselves. Even startling words can lose their power by being oft repeated.

Yet surely a time of crisis it is, in every aspect of man's life. In politics the old forms of democracy are hurled into the abyss and absolutisms of every variety surge to power. In economics there is a world-wide "revolt of the masses" against bourgeois capitalism and the tyranny of the machine. Culture is being gradually remolded according to the patterns of the new economics and politics. Age-old questions of morality are being re-thought, now not merely by the armchair philosopher, but by the man in the street. And religion and the church, too, are thrown into the testing-fires of the new age that is upon us. The world of mankind is being reborn.

Whether it will be a new birth of life and freedom, or of the opposite of these, remains to be seen. Few wise men today dare seriously to count themselves among the prophets. But that we live in a time of world crisis, all are agreed.

Russia's one hundred and eighty millions fling the challenging red banner of materialistic Communism in the face of all "Christian" nations. China and Mexico are in the throes of a new birth of national unity. Nazi Germany, driven to the wall by the inequities of the Versailles Treaty, threatens the peace of Europe—and of the world. Japan marches boldly forward to ever new places of power. Britain feverishly prepares to defend her shores and cities from the death that may any day rain down upon them from the skies above. And in our own America, even the humblest citizen realizes that a new day is being ushered in, even though he does not understand what kind of day it will be. Men's hearts are awake today. Humanity is on the march.

But whither?

The answer lies with God—and with the leadership of the tomorrow that is already dawning.

To be a Christian student in a time such as this is one of the most thrilling privileges that has ever been accorded to any human being. To seek to understand this day—and then participate in its struggle! To see the need, to feel the quick pulsing of mankind's passionate and suffering heart, to hear the cry of anguish—and then to have the answer! What adventurous heart of youth would ask for a more challenging lot on earth? Who would not envy such an opportunity, even though it should also involve the bitterness of inward struggle and of outward suffering?

The Christian student has been liberated from the truncated view of life that modern materialistic science today presents, and has learned to look upon life in all its many-sided fulness.

The Christian student furthermore has begun to learn the meaning of real freedom, man's highest earthly good—the freedom that is not merely outward, economic and

political, but from within. He knows that only the Truth really sets men free. And he believes in freedom, for himself and for all men!

For him this freedom is not abstract, but a concrete reality centered in Christ. He is our freedom. To be his bondsman is to walk at liberty.

"Old things are gone, but I have found a Master

By whom my soul, in silver tether held,

Grows strong,"

is the exultation of Marguerite Wilkinson, released into the new realms of personal Christian experience. And her words find an echo in the hearts of all those whom Christ has set free.

*Dr. Bernhard M. Christensen,
Augsburg Seminary, Minneapolis, Minn*

The Listening Congregation

The congregation has as much to do in determining the effectiveness of a sermon as does the preacher himself. If when you stand before a congregation you can assume that your hearers have some knowledge of the lore of religion, and some heritage of loyalty to the institution of religion, you will get one kind of result. But if you cannot assume these things you will get another kind of result. The major problem of contemporary preaching arises from the fact that not one of these primary conditions can be assumed. Modern congregations do not do their part in making the sermon! Our generation has lost contact with the Christian tradition. It knows but little of the lore of religion—the Bible, the great doctrines, the hymns, the poetry, the art, the lives of the church's great men, the history of the church. Certain it is that a congregation relatively unacquainted with the Christian lore greatly narrows the range and richness of the sermon. Our generation has lost, too, the vivid sense of religious experience or conviction which it could once be assumed was either the actual possession or the felt need of every person in the congregation. And the sense of belonging to an institution whose organs were the natural media for the most appropriate and satisfying expression of religious feeling, this cannot now be taken for granted in any congregation. Yet the preacher is highly trained in this Christian tradition—he thinks in terms of it, and his sermon patterns are derived from it. I am not suggesting an apology for ineffective preaching; but while we are trying in all good conscience to improve the sermon, it is no less important that the Christian intelligence and conviction and loyalty of the people who hear the sermon shall be improved by other methods than preaching.

Charles Clayton Morrison.

The Annual Festival

at Eben-Ezer will be held this year from July 9th to 11th. There will daily be services, lectures and Bible hours by visiting pastors.

We desire to invite all friends of the institution to be with us and we are looking forward to some good and pleasant days together.

There are accommodations for all; but we would appreciate a post card announcing your intention of coming.

In behalf of the Motherhouse,

J. Madsen, Pastor.

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EDITORIAL

The convention is over, and we have all returned to our own local churches again, to the fundamental work of our churches, the work of spreading the gospel and the administration and participation of the means of grace. This work is the fundamental fact and purpose of our church, or any church. If we are true followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, we will try to obey his injunction to go out into the world, making disciples of all nations by baptizing them in His name and by teaching them all the things he has revealed to us.

We come to convention once a year to feel a sense of fellowship in the things of God and in the things we have in common as a group with a common origin and a common cultural background; and we come to consider the questions that confront us in our common Christian enterprise and association. We come to convention expecting to feel that we are not a few but many who live the same life of grace from God, and share in the joys and sorrows of the whole synod more keenly than we can do when we live quietly at home reading about them and experiencing them second hand. We come to feel and to shoulder some of the common burdens and responsibilities directly.

Our convention this year was unique at least in one way. Not for many years has such oneness of purpose been felt as at this meeting. Momentous questions came up for decision and, while the discussions did not come off without stirring the feelings of many of us, nevertheless there was no wavering when decisions came to be made. It was not without fear that some came to the convention, but I am sure many went away with a deep sense of satisfaction—but also a strong feeling of responsibility.

It is too early to know what will be the outcome of the decisions made at this convention; but whatever it may be, we shall need all the blessings of God we are able to lay hold of.

C. A. Stub.

Correspondence

Editor, "Lutheran Tidings":

As I promised your business manager, Rev. Ernest Nielsen, when he visited us in Troy some time ago, to send in some news from our church once in a while, it is about time I fulfill my promise.

"Lutheran Tidings" is a welcome guest in my home. It is well edited, it is broad-minded and, to my mind, it is needed to shape the future course of our synod. The future belongs to our young people, they should be encouraged to build for the coming ages. We older people should be broad-minded enough to trust them; we should cultivate the so-called culture in our homes so as to balance matters of tradition.

As an old congregation, we have in Troy quite a few old honored members, who in years gone by and at present as honored members have advised our course for the future, and their advice is received with gratitude.

We have lately had several golden wedding celebrations in our midst; these events have been held in our church parlors.

In March Mr. and Mrs. Peter Jensen celebrated theirs, and their numerous relatives and friends were there to show them their love and respect. Mr. Jensen was president of our congregation years ago, a position now ably filled by his son, Johannes Jensen.

Mr. and Mrs. Niels Schmidt celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary at their home in Troy in March of this year. They are also honored members, whom we appreciate.

On June 12, Mr. and Mrs. Hans J. Madsen observed the 50th anniversary of their wedding vows with a very beautifully arranged celebration, surrounded by friends and relatives. Mr. Madsen built our church and was president of our congregation in 1886; he is at present a trustee and vice-president.

At these celebrations our pastor very ably talked about these foundation builders of our congregation and about what they had done in bygone years. They all deserve the greatest honor and respect.

Our Ladies' Aid Society under the very able leadership of Mrs. H. C. Hansen, our Men's Club, with Fred Beck as president, and the Young People's Society, with Johs. Nielsen at its head, all, with the able cooperation of our pastor and of the Board of Trustees, are trying their level best to steer our church in the right direction.

Fourteen young people, who were baptized and confirmed in our congregation, joined as members last year.

With kind regards from Troy, N.Y., and best wishes for the future . . . "Forward, no retreat!"

Cohoes, N.Y., June 1937.

Oscar C. Tofte, Sec'y

A Plea.

LORD, let me like a lighthouse stand
Above life's troubled sea,
And let me speak of love and land
Across its mystery.
Let me give to some mariner
Who fears the stormy gloom
The comfort that a candle brings
To a long, lonely room.
Lord, let me like a lighthouse stand
Above the ocean's fear;
Lord, let my glow be like a hand
That draws a lost soul near.

D. K. M. Work

Our Danish Women's Mission work had, as it had been planned, their yearly meeting during the church convention at Askov, Minn., and are now starting on a new year with new hopes and new plans.

Mrs. Kjølhedde, who lost her husband just before the convention, again asked not to be reelected president; so Mrs. Seeley Knudstrup, of Manistee, Mich., was chosen to take her place. Mrs. Ottar Jørgensen, Cedar Falls, Iowa, was elected as treasurer, and Mrs. Ernest Nielsen, Muskegon, Mich., to take the place of Mrs. O. C. Olsen. The other members on the board are Mrs. C. Arild Olsen, Des Moines, Iowa, and Mrs. C. A. Stub, Ringsted, Iowa, who is secretary.

Inspired by being together at Askov and by the attitude many of the women of our church are taking toward this mission, we are hoping that in the future as in the past it may be a help and a blessing in the work of our church.

We are planning within the next month or so to send out letters to all the ladies' aids in our synod with a few new plans and ideas about the work; and we hope you will receive them favorably and give us the support this cause deserves. We shall keep you informed of the progress of the work through the columns of our church papers.

Anna J. Stub.

BOOKS

The Castle of Contentment. By Jægermester Plov (Gunnar Nislev). Willet Clark & Co., 440 So. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. \$2.00.

Some years ago a farmer in Denmark began to write observations from his surroundings to the largest Danish daily, "Berlingske Tidende." Those letters became immensely popular, and later, when put in book form, these "Breve fra Landet" quickly became "a best seller." How the book was discovered to have interest for us in America and to be translated by Astrid Rosing Sawyer and Llevellyn Jones, might be an interesting story, which, however, is beyond my purpose.

It's a good sign that people in Denmark will read such a book; for it is not a novel, but observations from the farm, the field, the barn, lake, garden, the sky and the people, who share with each other in these circumstances. When I read the first few chapters, I could hardly get placed; what was I reading, a novel, philosophy, esthetics, nature study, or what? I had become so used to seeing Americans who read nothing but artificial and super-thrilling novels that I could hardly imagine reading a book that was neither theological, scientific, nor pathological. What else do men write about in these prosaic times? Well, here is something different, a delightful series of chapters of a man who has found life in his surroundings, who has become attuned, not to the things that run mechanically, but to these things which have always been companions of man. Once again we are standing with Adam, listening to him call all things by name as they pass.

The book is dedicated to Mrs. Bryan Owen Rhode, who states that "it portrays charmingly the spirit of Danish country life, but also an outstanding achievement in literary form and human philosophy."—I am going to keep on reading, over a period of several years, a chapter now and then from this book, so many still small voices speak to one

Unto Thee, O Lord

*O, Lord our God, upon this erring world
We see thy justice and thy judgment fall
Swift as the sweeping sword of love divine
That smote, in ancient times, and brought to nought
The proud prosperity of heedless hosts,
Moving in ways lascivious, lower far
Than Abram's flocks that grazed the grasses green
On Mamre's fertile plain.*

*Dark o'er the world descends the day of doom—
God's wrath is kindling on the fields of Spain,
While nations hear the thunderings of hell—
The hell that built our Sodom with past sin,
And set Gomorrah in infernal gloom
Upon this happy earth, that God designed
To be the vestibule of light and love
Through which, in mutual fellowship divine,
The children of one Fatherhood might come
To heaven and home.*

*"Too late! Too late!"—dear God, in mercy stay
The accents of that dreadful cry of doom,
That, o'er the citied hosts of human kind,
Shall herald forth the final end of all,
And shut the door of heaven against the world.*

*O, Christ, we come—thou only art the Way
From darkness and from death, and thou alone
The Truth that sets the striving nations free
From the foul bondage of un-Christ-like war
And breathes the breath of life in mortal man,
That maketh man once more a living soul.*

Gilbert Rae.

from its pages. To give an outline or even quotations is almost impossible, unless it might be these words from the chapter entitled, "Grown Up;"—"Down by the lake the dark shrubbery-lined foot path opens into a clearing with a flower bed which the gardener calls "the three-cornered heart." . . . "If you continue down the path you see the boat and the white bench where guests in summer sit and envy the farmer who owns all this and still goes about looking worried."

"How many of our guests have sat here exchanging their thoughts about the ingratitude of human beings, about the loathsome life in the city and the constant joy of the country. And young men envying none and each with but one thought in the world—the girl by his side—they, too, have sat here on warm summer evenings while the fishes leaped among the rushes and the ducks quacked among the water lilly leaves."

Each page is full of such delightful pictures and it is difficult to say which page may be most important to the reader. An intimate acquaintance with each chapter, which can be read without any reference to the previous one, is the only way to become at home in these surroundings of the author.

L. C. Bundgaard.

Are There Difficulties in the Apostles' Creed?

By L. C. Bundgaard

How the Church in Denmark Looks at This Doctrine

(Concluded.)

A quotation from one of the present Theologians in the Church of Denmark may not be amiss: "Outside of Matthew and Luke there is hardly any reference in the New Testament to the virgin birth of Christ, apparently this doctrine was not of vital importance in the message of the Apostles. For some reason or other it is always this miracle that the rationalistic critics attack first. The doctrine is not a cornerstone of the Christian faith. We cannot advance any proof that when God wanted to send His Son into the world, it had to be in this manner and in no other. We presume that it is possible to believe in Jesus as the Son of God without accepting the virgin birth. On the other hand, it is hard to understand why this miracle always is the target of critics. It is not more nor less understandable than any of the other miracles. And much is in favor of the belief that Luke, the careful historian, gathered his material from the nearest relatives of Jesus. We know that he visited James, the brother of Jesus in Jerusalem (*Acts 21:18*), and there is nothing to hinder us from believing that on that occasion he must have asked for information on some of the things that are written in the first and second chapters of his gospel. His remarks that "*Mary hath kept all these things in her heart*," indicate that he also had met Mary." Knud Hee Andersen, in "*Jesus af Nazareth*." (p. 33)

From the recent book by Teunis E. Gouwens, "*Can We Repeat the Creed?*" I quote these words: "We are not saying that you must believe in the virgin birth or be rejected by Christ. We cannot say that. But we do say that you may believe in the virgin birth, and that every line of investigation indorses such faith. And we believe that those who accept this doctrine enjoy a larger understanding of the power and excellence of the Redeemer than those who dismiss it." (p. 39)

From the standpoint of science we may justly ask the question: Are we sure the miraculous conception is against so-called natural law? Mary thought that nothing was impossible with God. She kept all the things in her heart that would be unintelligible to ordinary minds until late in her life; when she finally gave her secrets to Luke the Physician, she gave it to one who would not flippantly betray a sacred trust. It certainly is significant that he who traced everything from the beginning should be the one to give us the simple story of the beautiful birth of Christ.

Not all scientists deny the virgin birth. Some years ago I took a course in Genetics from Dr. Whitney, at the University of Nebraska. One day he lectured to us about the strange one-cellular birth of certain insects. Dr. Whitney spoke of it very respectfully as a "virgin birth," indicating that such things as we call a virgin birth, or miraculous conception, is known to science in the word Parthenogenesis.—Partheno-Virgin; *Genesis-origin*.

Science has become very cautious about its religious deductions. We may safely say that they have no more definite information about the mysteries of life than is suggested on the first page of the Bible. *The spirit of God brooded above the waters*, and when he

spoke His incomprehensible but ever mysterious word: *Let there be light*, He revealed the source of an ever unfolding, but yet never fully understandable mystery and power. If we grant that power, shall we not at least begin to appreciate that this power was at work in the conception of His son?

"*He descended into hell*." This clause most scholars agree is a later addition. Historically we cannot trace its beginning. We may judge from this that the early Christians did not deem it important as a part of the confession of the church. How it finally got into the creed is beyond the purpose of my discussion. I shall briefly touch upon the difficulties which may be advanced against a literal acceptance of the clause. That difficulty lies undoubtedly in the too universal idea of a Jonathan Edwards concept of Hell.

Peter, who alone speaks of Christ's work between His burial and His resurrection, does not speak of it as a descent into Hell, but that He went away and preached to the spirit in prison. *Pet. 3:19*.

In the Danish churches in America, as well as in Denmark, we have used interchangeably the words: "Descended into the realm of the dead" with "descended into hell." And as far as I know, neither theologian nor layman has ever protested publicly against this liberty. We have in this wording come closer to the meaning of Peter's words; but we have also made it plain as to what we mean by "hell."

Teunis E. Gouwens concludes his article on this clause with these words: "In some liturgies the article 'descended into hell' is inclosed by brackets. An asterisk refers to a note which says that this article may be omitted or that the word *Hades* may be substituted for the word *hell*. I prefer not to avail myself of either privilege. Both the omission and the substitution suggests a desire to make the creed smoother and easier. But the gospel is not smooth and easy. It was not an easy thing for Christ to provide a gospel. I want a gospel which recognizes life as it is, and which can rise above it with an everlasting triumph. That is the kind of gospel you want. It is the only kind that will do. And it is the kind we have in Christ. I will not lower my voice when I say that Jesus 'descended into hell,' for the issue of that descent was the world's most glorious victory." (p. 53)

The resurrection of the flesh. It has been contended that this part of the creed conflicts with 1 Cor. 15:35 ff.; but I think that depends upon what we mean by "flesh" or body. Certainly whether we arise with a glorified body, a spiritual body does not necessarily mean that we arise with a body that is different is composition from the one that we have now.

McFaydes states that the change in the clause "The resurrection of the flesh" to "the resurrection of the body" does not involve any change in doctrine; but that the idea of continual fellowship, in a body, is preserved." (p. 21)

Perhaps human minds can not come much closer to expressing our ideas of the future state than we have it in the words of Teunis E. Gouwens: "We believe that in the world beyond our souls will have bodies or forms, or organs or instruments appropriate to their new environment. We do not know just what these forms will be and therefore our vocabulary fails us." (p. 134)

Is the Church Limited in Its Creed?

The criticism has often been advanced that the church has limited itself to creeds. There is some truth in the statement. There are many who have not seen the double implication in the words of Paul that *with the heart we believe unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Rom. 10:9 ff.* In other words that our whole personality must be an open book in our relation to the God in whom we believe and toward the world in which we are selected to be the salt of the earth.

That human beings have their limitations even as members of a church should neither surprise us nor make us cynical toward our creed. This danger was undoubtedly foreseen when the Lord shortly after Peter's confession at Casarea Philippi began to speak to His apostles about the larger obligation in a confession, that of taken up our cross, denying our own lives in order that we might gain His.

In many Danish homes the Apostles' creed has become part of the daily devotion. And very seldom, if ever, have I seen a Danish church gathering, informal or formal, where the leader did not say: "*Let us together confess our Christian faith!*" I have always felt that we were thereby saving: I rely upon this God and Christ and this Spirit for strength to live the life of which He is our example in His life and in His teaching; such as it is left us by His apostles in the writings that they have given us: Finally I hope to be redeemed by Him who gave me His word in baptism.

Grundtvig.

I have now come to the place where I must tell a part of the history of the church which is not commonly known. More than a hundred years ago a young newly ordained minister was preaching his first sermon in the city of Copenhagen.

It was during the critical period of rationalism, which had swept over all of Europe. He had chosen for his subject: "Why has the Word of God disappeared from His House?" The sermon was a vigorous attack upon some of the outstanding clergymen and professors of the time. The incident led to a long theological battle between this youthful preacher and friends that rallied to his side. The result was a religious crisis in this young man's life that was not less severe than that of Martin Luther. One day the question came to him: "Are you, who are trying to reform the church, a Christian? Do you have the assurance of forgiveness of your own sins? The result of this searching question was a battle with the forces of darkness; but from that darkness he walked into the beautiful light which gave to the Christian church one of its most prolific hymn writers, a treasure just recently discovered by the English speaking church. The result of the crisis and the theological battle, where scripture passage was shot against scripture passage, was a discovery which, at least as far as he was concerned, brought peace, joy and new life into his existence. It brought about a revival of the church of Denmark which unto this day is producing an abundant harvest in religious literature and congregational life. Here I must quote the words of Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, for that was the man's name, who later came to be known as the Prophet of the North, or in the words of the Norwegian poet Bjørnson, "the visionary of the North." To his most intimate friend Ingemann, Grundtvig wrote these words:

"We have experienced a remarkable hour (Time). I have daily been drawn into a battle that I have not loved for its own sake, but which must be fought to a victorious conclusion in the name of Christ. The enemies of the church are raving in their blindness. And it is clear to me that the celebration of the one thousandth anniversary of the church in the North will be unforgettable.... God be praised, that before this hour of crisis I have discovered the rock upon which with Luther, God be praised, we have built, but which for many hundred years has been hidden to the church: it is the original unchangeable confession, the three articles of faith, which together with the sacraments have done all the work of the church and is now its true testimony. Now, I am no longer in danger of judging anyone according to my explanation of the scripture, which even when most correct does not tell me where the boundary line is between heresy and Christianity. O, learn thou also with me that confession, which, sealed in the blood of martyrs, has given us baptism and the Lords Supper. Assimilate these omnipotent means of grace in unreserved faith and you shall not be destitute of spirit, but shall be led by it into the great spiritual treasure chamber of scriptures, where there is plenty in store to make us all abundantly rich; often we have been recreated by the hand of the spirit to understand the heavenly gems.

The Lord bless thy coming in and thy going out for evermore.

Your friend,
Grundtvig

The spiritual transformation which took place in the church wherever this view was accepted can only be explained upon the ground that upon the rock of a child-like confession the church became victorious. ...Historically Grundtvig never claimed that the Apostle's Creed could be proven; he simply had made the discovery that the "word of faith" was an inheritance, and upon that inheritance together with Prayer and Sacrament he lived a fruitful life until he on a Monday afternoon two days short of ninety years of age fell asleep after having preached his usual sermon the day before. Since the days of Grundtvig many have made a study of the Apostolic Fathers to rediscover the traces of an inherited faith in history and scripture.

Are there difficulties in the Apostle's Creed? It is always difficult to think the thoughts of God after him.

Tennyson, on one of his morning walks, stopped before an old stone wall and looked in wonder upon a flower that grew there, his reflections were given us in these words:

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here in my hand, root and all.
Little flower: if I could know what you
are—root and all,
I would know what God and man is.

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OUR CHURCH

Rev. Frede Støttrup. It will be remembered that Rev. Støttrup, who for many years has suffered grievously from arthritis, lives at Askov, Minn. He has been confined to his bed for several years unable to move. Now he has also lost his sight, and his hearing is much impaired. During the convention at Askov many of his fellow pastors and others visited his home. On one occasion a worship and communion service was held with him.—In spite of his great suffering Rev. Støttrup keeps up his interest in what takes place in the synod. He loves to sing; and he is wonderfully strengthened by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The patience, fortitude, and sweetness of mind with which he bears his heavy burden is a gripping sermon to behold.

Rev. H. C. Strandskov, whose last service was at Hampton, Iowa, is now living at Askov, Minn. His health is not very good, and he has difficulty in walking. His memory sometimes fails him, and it is hard for him to recognize people. During the convention a great number of his old friends paid visits to him at his home, as he was unable to take part in any of the meetings. A number of his friends partook of the Lord's Supper together with him at his home one of the days of the meeting.

Prof. P. Jorgensen, Grand View College, is the temporary editor of "Dannevirke", a position he also held for a few months a year ago.

Rev. A. Th. Dorf, Brooklyn, N. Y., took part in the Rebuild Fourth of July festival this year as a radio speaker. His speech was broadcast from New York. Mr. Wm. S. Knudsen, president of General Motors, was the other speaker to be broadcast from this country.

Rev. Holger O. Nielsen, who has served the congregation at Fredsville, Iowa, for the last several years, has accepted a call from the church at Junction City, Ore. He will move to his new charge some time this fall.

Danebod People's College, Tyler, Minn., which is now in the midst of its summer session for girls, has an enrollment of 25, and the work is going forward successfully.

Dagmar, Mont. The Dagmar congregation celebrated its Midsummer Festival July 2-4. Rev. Aage Møller was the guest speaker. This festival has been held annually for many years now. It is admirable that the church can keep up this tradition in spite of the many discouragements they have had the last years in the form of drought and crop failures.

Rev. August Faber died recently at Frederikshavn, Denmark, at the age of 71. He received his theological education at the old Seminary at West Denmark, Wis. For many years he served as pastor in our synod, also as secretary of the synod for a time and business manager for "Kirkelig Samler". His last service was at Frederikshavn, Denmark.

Mr. Halvor Jensen, a son of Rev. V. S. Jensen, Hartford, Conn., and Miss Jorgine Andersen, a daughter of Mr. Marius Andersen of Brooklyn, N. Y., were united in

marriage on June 9. The ceremony was performed by Rev. A. Th. Dorf, Brooklyn. Congratulations!

Rev. P. Kjølhed, Grant, Mich., passed away at his home June 18. Rev. Kjølhed was the oldest pastor of our church; he was in active service until quite recently, and he was the Ordinator of our church until a year ago. At one time Rev. Kjølhed was the president of our church; he has also been editor of "Kirkelig Samler". From this it will be clear that he was a very active man in the service of his church. We have much to be thankful to him and to God for.

Sunday, July 20, a large number of friends paid their last respects to their departed leader, first at his home at Grant, Mich., and later at the church there, where a memorial service was held under the leadership of Rev. A. C. Kildegaard, president of the district. Participants in the service with him were Rev. H. Juhl, Grayling, Mich., Rev. Otto Nielsen of the United Danish Church, Rev. Ernest D. Nielsen, Muskegon, Mich., and Mr. C. A. Graham of Ashland Folk School, Grant, Mich. Mrs. Karoline Kjølhed expressed her gratitude to God and men for the sympathy and assistance given, and for the long and fruitful service God had given her husband to perform. On Tuesday, July 22, Rev. Kjølhed was laid to rest in the family burial grounds in the Newell, Iowa, cemetery.

CHRIST AND CONSTITUTION

(Continued from column 356)

The government was in sore financial straits. Through the royal debt may not have been greater than it had been in the two earlier major crises (1340 and 1534), it must be remembered that the monarchy now recently had been dismembered and much of the rest of the country devastated by a succession of foreign invaders. Many of the peasants were ruined. The Sound Dues also had declined. It was clear that a larger part of the tax burden would have to be borne by the nobles and burghers.

To deal with the revenue problems the king called a parliament (*Rigsdag*) in 1660. It was composed of nobles, churchmen, and burghers. The peasants were not represented except as they might be said to be through the representatives of the other estates. The government laid a proposal before this parliament to abolish the old tax system and to levy new taxes, notably a consumption tax, not unlike our present sales taxes. The nobles were quite willing to have the "un-free" commoners pay the new taxes, but they refused pointblank to pay them themselves. The commoners insisted on equality and easily won the king over to their side. In the face of this combination the nobles deemed it wise to yield.

The commoners, convinced of their power, then pressed for further measures to increase the equality between the estates. As the nobles were in no mood for this, the commoners proposed to change the form of the government from an elective to a hereditary monarchy. The nobles fiercely remonstrated that this was a violation of the charter (*Haandfæstningen*). There were looks of swords and daggers, and pointed questions about treason and revolution, but after a show of force on the part of the king and days and nights of deliberations on the part of nobles, the latter joined with the commoners in offering Frederick III and his descendants Denmark as a hereditary monarchy. At the same time the king was also asked to

formulate a fundamental law (*formere en Reces*) is place of the charter—that is, to draft a new constitution. If the nobles and commoners had hoped to have had a share in the making of this constitution, they were doomed to disappointment. But the change from elective to hereditary monarchy was further approved by the head of the families of the nobles, the bishops, the ministers of the church, the professors of the university, and the leading burghers signing the act of 1660, establishing the absolute rule of Frederick III. It is said that none of them dared to refuse to sign.

The king at once set to work to reorganize the administration. A supreme court assumed the judicial functions of the former Council of the Realm (*Rigsraad*). Several colleges similar to modern departments or ministries took over matters relating to the army, navy, and treasury. State and church matters continued to be handled by the chancery. In the administration of local affairs royal officers (*Amtmænd*) replaced to a large extent the former nobles, now shorn of many of their ancient privileges. Modern Denmark was in the making.

The king was assisted in this great work of reorganizing the government by such men as Peder Griffenfeld and Hannibal Sehested. The former was born a commoner; the latter belonged to the nobility, and was a brother-in-law of the king. Sehested assumed the important task of rehabilitating the royal financial system as minister of finance (*Rentemester*). He was a man with a program and the ability to carry it out. He solved the financial problem by increasing the national income through the new taxes, by cutting expenses, and by adjusting the huge national debt which had been made by giving the creditor usable pawns and also by the newer method of selling future taxes—a method akin to the present day method of raising revenue by selling tax anticipation warrants. In the adjustment of the national debt the creditors were compelled to buy royal manors at the government's price. Frederick III kept the Sound Dues for his own private use and his treasury was well filled at the time of his death. He owned less land than some of his predecessors, but then the economy of the country was becoming more and more a money economy.

There was still the important matter of writing the new constitution, known in history as the King's Law (*Kongeloven*). This appears to have been begun in 1665. Several outlines were made, but the final draft was the work of Peder Griffenfeld. It was kept a secret for several years and not published in full until 1709. It has the dubious honor of being the only written constitution in the world establishing an absolute government in all its detail, the most thoroughgoing absolute government in Europe excepting Turkey, it has been said. This would seem to indicate that it was a thoroughly objectionable constitution, and it is scarcely necessary to add that it does not satisfy conditions and demands of modern democratic countries. Yet recent Danish historians have found much in it to commend. Indeed, they consider it quite modern if the word State is substituted for the word King. By no means can it be called an unrestricted grant of powers for erratic personal rule. The law itself prescribes some and assumes numerous important limitations. The monarchy was hereditary to Frederick III and his descendants. With the recent dismemberment of the realm freshly and painfully in mind, the constitution forbade the king to diminish its territory. The king must be a member of the Lutheran church and he is

responsible to God. To what extent that would be a limitation may be left to the reader. That it would be a limitation where there was a live church can scarcely be doubted. There were other limitations—the orderly manner in which the constitutional change had been made, the promise of Frederick III that this should accrue to the benefit of all the people, the well-established institutions of the country which no ruler could safely ignore.

To contemporary Denmark the constitutional change of 1660 and the subsequent King's Law meant the breaking down of the barrier between nobles and commoners, which had been maintained by the oligarchy of nobles which had ruled Denmark since the death of Erik Klipping in 1286. It meant freedom, equality, and opportunity for larger numbers of people. Henceforth all would pay the regular taxes and both nobles and commoners were eligible for lower and higher administrative offices. It is true that the earlier absolute kings preferred commoners for these offices, but even Frederick III employed Hannibal Sehested, a member of the old nobility, for the most important administrative post, though he was not on intimate terms with the king, because he was capable and loyal to the people and country.

Though strict regulation and censorship were by no means unknown under the absolute kings who ruled Denmark from 1660 to 1849, there was, generally speaking, no cruel and unusual punishments meted out to individuals, and no massacres of protesting groups. The fact that such critics of society and government lived under Danish absolutism as L. Holberg, the Heibergs, Malte Conrad Bruun, and Bishop Grundtvig also speaks well for the good sense and liberality of the abso-

lute kings, though it is true that P. A. Heiberg and Bruun were exiled and Grundtvig for several years forbidden to publish what he wrote. Grundtvig coined the phrase: Freedom for Loke as well as for Thor, which was liberal enough for the liberals under the constitutional kings after 1849. But a wag suggested that there be added to it: But no state aid for Loke!

To sum up, Danish absolutism was thoroughgoing in theory, orderly and liberal in practice. One great defect of the King's Law was the lack of provision for calling parliaments or otherwise consulting the people. The early absolute kings mended this defect by consulting special groups, especially the merchants, on technical matters.

Of the later absolute kings, Frederick VI in an unguarded moment had said that "we alone know what is best for our subjects;" but in 1831 he felt constrained to institute district parliaments (*Stændermøder*) with advisory powers. Frederick VII, the last of the absolute kings, after the people had hinted at the possibility of a resort to the "selfhelp of despair," of his own "free will and consent" granted the liberal constitution of 1849, by which the government of Denmark was changed from an absolute to a limited monarchy with a national parliament.

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