

The Northwestern Lutheran

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Jan. 20

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not forsake us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

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THE REWARD OF FAITH

(Reminiscere)

O Love Divine, Thou camest down from Heaven,
From realms of joy to this drear vale of tears,
To save the lost Thy precious life was given,
To ransom rebels from their trembling fears;
Thou camest down to bind the broken-hearted,
To free the captives from the prison-cell,
To rescue those who from Thy fold departed,
To preach deliv'rance unto Israel.

Anointed One, the Spirit hath descended
In pow'r upon Thee, bidding Thee to seek
The sheep whose loss the Father apprehended,
Entrusting Thee with tidings for the meek.
But art Thou not the Light of Gentile Nations?
Is Thy redemption only for the Jew?
Ah no, Thy love, Thy grace, Thy tender patience,
Embraces in its scope the heathen too!

Thou Who didst heal Capernaum's afflicted,
Canst also heal in Sidon and in Tyre,
O Son of David, — Savior long-predicted,
A heathen's child is vexed with Satan's ire!
Its burdened parent Thy dear Name is calling,
O harken to her oft-repeated cry!
Before Thy feet, dear Lord, she now is falling,
Light of the Gentiles! Wilt Thou pass her by?

O wondrous Faith! O courage still unbroken,
Though with the lowliest her lot is cast,
O to have heard the words of promise spoken,
By Him Who heard her pleading prayer at last!
"Great is Thy faith", replies the Son of David,
"And even as Thou wilt be unto thee!"
He came not to destroy the soul, but save it, —
And lo, from Satan's bonds the captive's free!

O for a Faith, that constant in its pleading,
Content with crumbs that from the table fall,
Still follows on, where Thou, dear Lord, art leading,
In hopeful trust, that Thou wilt hear its call!
O for a Faith, whose mountain-height exploreth
The boundless realms of Thy eternal love,
And finding Thee, all earthly things ignoreth,
To find its dwelling-place, — its rest, above!

O for a Faith, that never ceases praying,
But, like the Can'nite for her loved child,
At Thy dear feet its heavy burden laying,
Trusts in Thy pow'r, Thy love, Thy mercy mild;
O for a Faith, that in its sore affliction,
Though all petitions seem to be ignored,
Still sees through clouded skies Thy benediction,
And trusteth still Thy promise, dearest Lord!

O for a Faith, of towering expansions,
That fears not Sinai, nor hell, nor death,
But through the mists beholds the "many mansions"
Built by the Carpenter of Nazareth!
That soars in spirit to the realms elysian,
To find in Thee the fount of endless bliss,
Till dawns the day of glorious transition,
Grant us, O Nazarene, a faith like this!

ANNA HOPPE, Milwaukee, Wis.

On the Second Sunday in Lent,
Reminiscere, — 1919.

COMMENTS

The American Home The most alarming phase of American life is the prevalence of divorce.

This has been recognized for a long time and has inspired many attempts at reform. The results of all such attempts at correction have been negligible. Recent census figures are startling. One out of nine marriages ends in divorce. It is found in all walks of life. It is not confined, as was once thought, to the theatrical profession and to other artists. A perfunctory reading of newspapers will convince every reader that the astounding ratio of one out of nine does not show the whole extent of the demoralization of the American home. It is safe to assume that comparatively few of the cases of domestic unhappiness find their way into the papers, yet the number that do so is so large that it compels one to assume that many more than one out of every nine marriages are utter failures.

It is useless to look for specific causes or specific effects. In this, as in other matters of morality, it is not a mere knowledge of the right which insures its observance; nor does a knowledge of attendant evils prohibit indulgence in the wrong.

The incalculable wrong done to the children of disrupted homes is recognized but does not stop the grinding of the divorce mills. The hopeless weakening of the moral fibre of children of divorced parents is a matter of experience. The divorces of to-day are largely caused by the divorces of parents twenty-five and thirty years ago. And if it was not a divorce that poisoned the mind of the child so that it inevitably grew up to think of marriage as nothing better than a conventional companionship, to be terminated at the pleasure of either of the "contracting parties," it was the irresponsible attitude which parents assume toward their children.

For this reason we must look forward with a shudder to the future of the American home. If it is one out of nine to-day, it will probably be one out of two before another generation.

The great cause of divorce is the spiritual neglect of the child. And the child is neglected in the American home because the American parent of the last generation has become incapable of giving his offspring spiritual nutriment. Himself reared in an atmosphere of worldliness, scrupulously kept at a safe distance from any religious schooling, save for a scant minimum of Sunday school attention, the American parent washes his hands of responsibility of his child and permits girls' and boys' clubs and committees from "welfare organizations" and study clubs to take charge of his own flesh and blood—and of the soul that dwells in it. The miracle is that the damage is not greater than we find it to be.

Cause and effect have become fused into a vicious circle that is ever bringing new misery, as it is the result of past sin. The neglected child becomes a neglecting parent and a neglecting spouse.

Among the hundred and one leagues and uplift agencies and welfare societies and clubs and unions for the reform of other people, there is room for just one more organization that should embrace the members of every other: the MIND-YOUR-OWN-BUSINESS CLUB. The constitution of this club would be in its title; the by-laws would be equally brief: As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. There would be no membership-dues. Only dividends. Those fine mouth-filling phrases about reform and uplift would be lost, of course; but that would not matter because there would be no necessity to employ them.

It is too much to hope for any event as entirely happy as that, but it remains quite within the bounds of reasonable expectation that Lutheran Christians can insure their immunity from the evils that are disrupting modern life and making it an ugly thing by living as Christians, even if that separates them from those who have other standards. H. K. M.

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Intolerance We take the following from the Lutheran Witness: "Among the forces active for the passage of bills abolishing all parochial schools, are the sectarian preachers. On Sunday morning, January 27, the Rev. A. A. De Larme, pastor of the First Baptist Church at Omaha, Nebr., said in the course of his "sermon":—

"I most heartily approve of some of the bills regarding the public schools of the State that have recently been introduced in the legislature. One of the most important, in my estimation, is that introduced by Senator Perry Reed of Hamilton County, requiring boys from seven to sixteen years and girls from seven to seventeen years of age to attend the public schools during the full school-year. A similar bill has been introduced in the lower house by Representative Maurer, which would restrict the parochial and other church-

schools to such time as the public schools are not in session. These bills deserve the full support of all who are interested in the education of our boys and girls."

Citing his reasons for the abolishment of church-schools, the preacher said: ". . . Thirdly, parochial schools devote considerable time to the teaching of antiquated creeds and dogmas that are anachronisms to this age. If taught at all, these things should be taught in the home."

This preacher, then, wants to legislate out of existence religious teachings in which he does not believe. He is a fit subject for Americanization." G.

No doubt, the Rev. De Larme, in speaking of "antiquated creeds and dogmas that are anachronisms to this age," has reference to the Story of Creation as recorded in Genesis, the Story of the Flood; the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures; the actual delivery of the Law to Moses by God Himself, the drying up of the Red Sea; the standing-still of the Sun at Joshua's command; the miracles recorded in the Old Testament, the visions of the prophets; the literal ascension of Elijah; the miracles of Jesus; His virgin birth; His literal resurrection and ascension; the literal resurrection of Lazarus; Salvation by grace alone through faith in Christ's redemption; Atonement by **Blood**; a personal devil; a literal hell; and other doctrines too numerous to mention which conflict with the Higher Critic's notion of "the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man," and salvation for all through self-righteousness.

It would do this pastor good to read what a fellow Baptist, the Rev. I. M. Haldemann, D.D., has to say in "The Signs of the Times" regarding these preachers who deny the fundamental truths of Scripture, but the Bible itself gives a good portrait of them; "Clouds without Water; Dumb Dogs," etc. A. H.

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Defends "Rev. H. H. Hurley, pastor of
Denominationalism the Gibbard Avenue Church,
Columbus, Ohio, read a paper in

defense of denominationalism at a recent meeting of the Baptist ministers of that city, in which he said:

'Baptists raise no protest against Christian union, but against such use of the sentiment for it as puts Christian truth in jeopardy, obscures the real issues upon which Christian people are divided, and interferes with articles of faith which, according to their understanding and conviction, are firmly set in the scriptures, and are, therefore, unalterable terms of union. They want Christian union, but they do not want any artificial substitute for it. Sentiment is no substitute for scriptural commands and does not excuse any one from obedience to them.'

"This represents, we believe, the conviction of the very great majority of Baptists throughout the country."—The Standard.

Testimony of this kind is most refreshing in these days when many, often in the name of "patriotism," protest against denominationalism. It is a sign that

the Spirit of God is at work in all churches that still have the Gospel of Jesus Christ and is building up in them the One Holy Christian Church. We have here an answer to the tirade published in the Reconstruction by Bishop Charles D. Williams, whom the Literary Digest quotes as follows:

"The various denominations have been jealously watching each other and persistently nagging the war-departments to secure for each its proportionate quota of Army and Navy chaplains and to see to it that no one should get ahead of another. We have set up about the camps and cantonments dozens of discordant altars, a Babel with its confusion of tongues, instead of a Zion, a haven of refuge and peace. There must be a conventicle of some sort for every group of organized religion, for the 'Two-Seed in the Spirit Baptists,' for the 'Amish' who allow buttons, and for the 'Mennish' who stand stoutly for hooks and eyes, for the 'one-foot-washing' Dunkards, and the 'two-feet-washing' Dunkards.

"Would it have been a thing to be wondered at if the executives, who had large affairs to administer, should have grown utterly impatient and thrown us all out of court? And is it any wonder that the common soldier often turns away in despair or contempt from this Babel of shibboleths and abandons organized religion altogether? And what has become patent under the searching test of war-conditions is latent always and everywhere.

"This is the common attitude of mind in the average man toward our chaotic Christendom. A divided Church is sure to break down under the searching test of any great crisis. A divided Church can not speak with any authority in, or give any adequate interpretation of, any great tragedy of history such as this world-war. A divided Church, rankling with sectarian jealousies, could not concentrate on the stupendous task of ministry to the spiritual needs evoked by the war—nor can it efficiently meet the demands of the new age that comes after the war. The Church during the war practically handed over her whole ministry to the Red Cross and Y. M. C. A., which at least largely represents the spirit and mind of Christ and essential religion. They alone have stood for a united Christianity."

J. B.

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The Day of Evil That is what the present time seems to be in the estimation of many people. Not the least among the visitants whose presence brings grief and trouble is the dreaded epidemic which still is scourging the world. How wide-spread and general this dread visitation has been, and in a measure still is, has not been brought home to all of us. An Exchange, commenting on this subject, tells us:

"The influenza has not limited its work of death to the temperate zone, but it has been even more devastating in the tropics than here. The Press Des-

patches state that twenty-two per cent of the population of the Society Islands have perished. From India comes the report that it swept through the towns and villages, wiping out almost entire families."

A missionary writes from Pernambuco, Brazil:

"Our health department laughed at the idea of any peril of an epidemic. The physician who was its spokesman has just died. Yesterday the death toll in the city was said to have been one hundred and forty. Last week the governor of Bahia said there were 63,000 cases in that city alone. There are certainly not fewer here and it is a national epidemic.

"Everything in the city life is paralyzed. Many stores are closed, even drug-stores, for the lack of people to run them. All the street cars on the short lines are suspended and few run on the longer lines. Several papers have suspended temporarily for the lack of type-setters, including our own. There are houses with as high as twenty-five people sick. The mother of two of our students died and there were nine sick people in her home at the time. A blind preacher here had his wife, sister-in-law and all the children sick and he the only one to wait on them. The price of medicine and food has gone up terribly. There are days when there is no bread and little meat. Many bakeries are closed, and milk cannot be had except at an exorbitant price.

"It is distressing to go down town and see the drawn look on nearly all faces. Many are working while they are sick that public necessities may keep going. Out of six hundred workmen at the railroad shops fifteen turned up to work the other day. The depot is stacked up with freight that cannot be moved, there are almost no telegraph agents, postal service is limited, ships cannot unload, and churches have nearly quit gathering. I have never seen a city smitten with an epidemic before, and hope I never shall again."

It certainly is a picture of desolation and misery that the writer holds up for our contemplation. Sin has done that. Man with all his much-vaunted skill and research, his sanitation and protective measures seems powerless. The Lord has said that these times shall come and it is impossible to hold them back or evade them. There never was a wickeder world than the world of to-day; with all our wonderful progress of the last century we seem to have been surely and steadily progressing away from God. The lesson of these evil times is plain: "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord."

G.

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Clean Language The war brought an undeniable lowering of the standards of public decency even in our country, though it remained untouched, happily, by the immediate terrors that go with war. Laws more stringent than existing hereto-

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fore were enacted—because they became necessary to control the situation as far as it could be controlled. One phase of public decency remained unprotected: speech. Laws were passed that made it treason to utter things that might injure the policies of the government. But no laws were thought of to keep public speech free from vulgarity and obscenity. Not that laws would have done any good; but they would at least have checked those evil-minded people, who must be controlled by laws, from making a public show of their own filthiness, and thereby debauching the sense of public decency which some parents still try to inculcate in their children.

From the very beginning public speaking degenerated into a contest to see who would dare to use the most vulgar speech. Patriotic addresses were punctuated with "damns" and "hells" more liberally than with commas. It often made little difference if the speaker was a clergyman, or a dignified professor. And men, women, and children were indiscriminately exposed to this flow of vulgarity. Is it any wonder that children adopted the modes of speech that made the patriotism of their elders so "forceful"?

The man from the army camps and the trenches comes home with a stock of curses and indecencies that were bred in the man-world in which he moved. We met a sergeant who just returned from a year's stay in France. When invited to dinner at the hotel he attempted to register at the desk over which a lady presided. It took some time before he succeeded to overcome his confusion enough to put down his signature. Then he confided: "I have to take such care every time a decent woman talks to me; I have to learn to talk all over again; I don't know when I'm cursing or not. The soldier was a stranger, but speaking to an unknown he very likely spoke more truly and honestly than he could speak to one who knew him better.

Now there is another "movement" to purify the

speech of America. As usual we are beginning to bestir ourselves after the damage is done. The Clean Language League of America will be founded; there will be officers and committees. Some of the principal promoters, we are sure, will be some of those public speakers who were themselves guilty of profanity and vulgarity in their war speeches. H. K. M.

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Out-Bolsheviking the Bolshevik

It has remained for the self-appointed women's committee that is assisting the peace conference at Paris to propose the most revolutionary and radical measure ever conceived by man. The Russian Bolsheviks have horrified the more conservative democracies of the West with their sweeping program in regard to the distribution of property. But the women's committee has gone further by many degrees. They propose that the League of Nations incorporate in its articles a provision that will bring all education in all nations under international control, as otherwise provided by the League. We have had proposals of national supervision and direction of all education of children; in fact, our American states are just now in the throes of a disease that takes that form. But these women have gone to the very end—the logical end, we may concede—of all such attempts. We must thank them for giving us this additional proof of the outrage which is involved in compulsory education according to one invariable pattern; unassisted, our imagination could never have conceived such a possibility. A part of the proposal demands that women be represented on the supreme educational council which shall henceforth decree the educational development of the world. All this is done under the guise of humanitarianism. If that be humanitarianism, give us tyranny of any other type in preference. Offhand we would say that nowhere in the world, and never in its history, has there been a more outrageous program than this compulsory education of children according to international standards. Oh, humanity, what crimes are committed in thy name!

H. K. M.

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Growth The daily press recently gave us the following piece of news:

"A gain of 700 per cent in Spiritualist association membership in Wisconsin in 1918 was announced Wednesday by the association, in session in the Republican house. Statistics were furnished by Dr. F. A. Kraft, former Milwaukee health commissioner."

"We look for continued growth this year," he said. The hope is justified, we think. That is just what the people of our day want. An instance is given in the following, which is by no means an isolated case: St. Louis, Mo., March 20.—"The story told to the St. Louis police Wednesday by Weert Bauer, 78, a

wealthy retired farmer residing at 324 East Third street, Alton, Ill., that he had paid \$14,000 in the last six years to Spiritualists who had promised to locate a pot of gold containing \$70,000 on one of his farms, led to the arrest of Joseph Pelinski, 60, a former saloonkeeper, his daughter, daughter-in-law and stepson at their home in St. Louis.

They denied the story told by Bauer, but are held pending further investigation.

Twenty \$5 bills, which had been marked by the detectives and given to Bauer, were found on Pelinski.

Bauer owns several large farms near Alton, and he had an account at one of the Alton banks. In the last six years his savings had been all withdrawn and he had got several loans from the bank on his farm lands.

Bauer said that he had been informed by Pelinski that the treasure would soon be found, as they were getting "hot." He said, according to Bauer, that a red lantern would appear at a certain spot over which the money was buried."

What the Apostle once said to the Jews of their "growth" applies to-day:

"The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." G.

THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

Representatives of the bodies constituting the National Lutheran Council met at Chicago from March 11th to March 13th. Eight synods were represented: The Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Augustana Synod, the Norwegian Free Church, the United Danish Lutheran Church, the Iowa Synod, the Ohio Synod, the United Lutheran Church, and the Buffalo Synod. The Rev. B. B. Jonsson, President of the Icelandic Synod, and President Wagerlin of the Finnish Suomi Synod sent letters stating that they could not be present, but that they were in full sympathy with the work of the Council.

The National Lutheran Council was formed last year for the purpose of united action in external matters pertaining to the welfare of the Lutheran Church. The Council has since raised the sum of \$500,000 for after-war reconstruction work. Having been thrown together through the war and after-war conditions, these bodies began to feel that the continuation of a closer relation between them would be desirable and possible. Dr. Stub puts the question thus: "Would it not be possible to get a mutual declaration regarding doctrine and practice that would be satisfactory to the representatives of the Council? And if this should prove possible, could not this declaration be laid before the different church bodies, recommending,

on the basis of the mutual declaration, to these bodies to sanction the organization and the work of the Council, and even state their opinion regarding a possible coordination of home mission work wherever required by local conditions, and to some extent a certain co-operation in foreign mission work, where it would be absolutely needed?"

Several papers on the subject were read and that presented by Dr. H. G. Stub was discussed and adopted. The result of the conference is to be laid before the respective bodies for further action. No organic union or close federation is contemplated at the present time. The Synodical Conference was not represented at the meeting. Our readers will be interested in the declaration adopted by the Council:

Mutual Declaration Regarding Doctrine and Practice in our Lutheran Church with a View of Possible Coordination in Mission Work

Preamble. All Lutheran bodies represented in the National Lutheran Council, are agreed in the fundamental doctrine that the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired and inherent Word of God, and the only rule of faith, doctrine, and practice; and,

That the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism present a true exposition of doctrines contained in Holy Scripture, and therefore, without reservation, acknowledge them as their confession; but,

Because even in the Lutheran Church at large disputes and controversies about specific doctrines more or less have disturbed our Church, we regard it both as a duty and as a privilege to declare our position in regard to the following doctrines:

1. In regard to the Work of Christ, Redemption, and Reconciliation:

Jesus Christ, God and Man, has not only for the benefit of, but in the place of the human race, taken upon Himself the sins of the world with the just penalties for them. In the place of the world and for its benefit, He has by His holy life fulfilled the law, and by His suffering and death, by His blood, paid the penalty for the whole world, truly and completely satisfied the divine justice; redeemed the world from guilt and punishment of sin, and brought about the reconciliation of God, whose wrath had come upon mankind on account of sin and whose justice required satisfaction.

2. In regard to the Gospel:

The Gospel is not only a story, a narrative of what Jesus Christ has done, but at the same time it offers and gives the result of the work of Christ—above all, forgiveness of sin. Yea, it even at the same time gives the power to accept what it offers.

3. In regard to Absolution:

Absolution does not essentially differ from the forgiveness of sin offered by the Gospel. The only difference is that absolution is the direct application of forgiveness of

sin to the individual desiring the consolation of the Gospel. Absolution is not a judgment passed by the pastor on those being absolved, declaring that they now have forgiveness.

4. In regard to Holy Baptism and the Gospel:

The Holy Ghost works regeneration of the sinner both through Baptism and the Gospel. Both are therefore justly called the means of regeneration.

5. In regard to Justification:

Justification is not an act in man but an act by God in heaven, declaring the repentant and believing just, or stating that he is regarded as such on account of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ by faith.

6. In regard to Faith:

Faith is not in any measure a human effort. Faith is an act of man insofar as it is man who believes. But both the power to believe and the act of believing are God's work and gift in the human soul or heart.

7. In regard to Conversion:

Conversion as the word is commonly used in our Lutheran confession comprises contrition and faith, produced by the Law and the Gospel. If man is not converted, the responsibility and guilt fall on him because he in spite of God's all sufficient grace through the call, "would not" according to the Word of Christ, Matt. 23: 37: "How often would I have gathered thy children even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

If a man is converted the glory belongs to God alone, whose work it is throughout. Before conversion or in conversion, there is no co-operation of man, but at the very moment man is converted, co-operation begins through the new powers given in conversion; tho this co-operation is never independent of the Holy Spirit, but always "to such an extent and so long as God by His Holy Spirit rules, guides, and leads him." Form. Concord.

8. In regard to Election:

The cause of election to salvation are the mercy of God and the most holy merit of Christ; nothing in us on account of which God has elected us to eternal life.

On the one hand we reject all forms of synergism which in any way would deprive God of His glory as the only Savior. On the other hand we reject all forms of Calvinism which directly or indirectly would conflict with the order of salvation, and would not give to all a full and equally great opportunity of salvation, or which in any manner would violate the Word of God which says that God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2: 4.

b. Mutual Declaration Regarding Practice

Art. I. The Lutheran Church does not believe and claim that it is the Holy Catholic Church or that it is the only saving church. On the contrary, it believes that true Christians are found in every denomination

which has so much of divine truth revealed in Holy Scripture that children of God can be born in it. But the Lutheran Church believes that in all essentials it is the Apostolic Church, with the Word of God in its purity and the Sacraments as instituted by our Lord.

Our Church, therefore, regards it a matter of principle that its members attend services in their own churches, that their children be baptized by their own pastors, and that they partake of the Holy Supper at their own altars, and that pulpit and altar fellowship with pastors and people of other confessions are to be avoided, as contrary to a true and consistent Lutheranism.

Art. II. Any association or society which has religious exercises from which the name of the Triune God or the name of Jesus as a matter of principle is excluded or which teaches salvation through works must, according to Holy Scripture, be regarded as in its very nature incompatible with the faith and confession of the Christian Church and more especially the Lutheran Church, whether this be realized or not. We promise each other that it shall be our earnest purpose to give a fearless testimony and to do our utmost to place our respective church bodies in the right Christian position in this matter."

We are thankful for every testimony of the Truth and, consequently, do not undervalue these declarations; but it will immediately be seen that they leave open many questions on which the Lutheran Church is divided and, therefore, cannot be considered the expression of a complete unity in doctrine and practice which would warrant a closer relation between the various Lutheran bodies.

May the Lord sustain and strengthen those in these bodies who take a firm stand for His Truth and give their testimony prevailing power. J. B.

A MEMORABLE FOURTH OF JULY

The Fourth of July this year marks the quadricentennial of an event, which in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ is of no small import. It is the famous debate between Martin Luther and John Eck, which began on the 4th of July, 1519, at Leipzig, lasting through several days.

Though not so well known to the public in general as the posting of the Ninety-five Theses against Roman Indulgences, on the 31st day of October, 1517, this debate, which took place nearly two years later, is hardly of less importance than the former. While the nailing of those Theses to the door of the new castle church at Wittenberg started the movement of the Reformation of the Christian Church, this movement had become decidedly operative in the Leipzig Disputation.

This debate was a really great event. It clearly and unmistakably brought forth the real controversy at issue between Luther and the papal church, namely whether

popedom is a divine institution or not, and "it has perhaps more than anything that occurred influenced the course of subsequent events. It brought the two parties into close and sharp contact, and permits us to see what were the views of each, and by what arguments they defended them."

It was here at this debate that two champions were brought face to face in that great religious struggle which was to decide the future destiny of the Church of Christ, the one representing the papal hierarchy which had held its sway over the Church for a thousand years—Dr. John Eck, the ablest Roman theologian of the day in Germany, a man of uncommon learning and extraordinary attainments in many fields, but exceedingly vain-glorious and arrogant, with all Roman artifices at his command; the other champion representing that movement which in the counsels of God was forever to liberate Christendom from the domination of papacy—Dr. Martin Luther, a man trained in the school of God, courageous, strong, masterful, frank, sincere, with a wonderful source of theological knowledge, who like David of old, meeting the Philistine in the name of the Lord trusted in God and His Word alone, deadly in earnest to fight for the cause of Christ and His Church, now at stake.

It was a battle for the life of each of the contending parties. Eck distinctly saw that Luther must be forcibly put down or the whole papal system must fall; and Luther was made to realize that he must surrender his doctrine of salvation through faith in Christ or break with the popes and the hierarchial system.

Basing his arguments on the traditions of primitive Christianity and the papal decretals, and misquoting Scriptural passages in support of his contentions, Eck claimed that there is a monarchy and a single principality in the Church by divine right, and that that principality was vested in the Roman Pontiff, that the popes and the councils of the Church could not err, and that anyone denying their infallibility was putting himself outside of the pale of Christendom. Having driven Luther to utterance at variance with such papal doctrines, Eck claimed the victory, declaring that, from the standpoint of the hierarchy, Luther was a heretic and ought to be dealt with accordingly. On the other hand, Luther had shown that such pontifical claims were without foundation in primitive Christianity or the Holy Scriptures; that the primacy of the pope was only of human, not of divine right, and that the belief in the supremacy of the pope actually does not condition salvation; that the only Head of the universal Christian Church is Christ Himself; that the popes could err and had erred, and councils likewise, and that they could not rightfully decree contrary to the Scriptures, the only infallible Rule.

It was truly a great debate, this Leipzig Debate, and July 4, 1519, and the following days must be reckoned as a memorable day, not only in the personal story of

Luther, but also in the history of the Church at large. The debate taught Luther, as he had never been taught before, that the Church needed a reformation, and that reform meant separation from the Roman Curia as its first step; and it became clear to him with ever increasing evidence that such reform could only be effected by the Gospel of God's salvation in Christ. Thus the debate had its decisive bearing on the great work, Luther was divinely chosen for.

In commemoration of that great Leipzig Disputation there has recently been published a book, which will prove a valuable contribution to Reformation literature. It is *The Leipzig Debate in 1519*. Leaves from the story of Luther's life. By W. H. T. Dau, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

Reading the book we find it to be of valuable aid in learning to realize better the importance of that historical event. It is not a dry, but a vivid and gripping narrative of that epochal scene at Leipzig.

In choice English, and with the bulk of historical material at his command, the author, in the first place, gives a lucid account of the events leading up to the great Debate. Having in as many as fourteen chapters guided the reader like an exceedingly interested spectator thru the various stages of history up to the great event, he then depicts the whole scene in the old castle of Pleissenburg at Leipzig, where the professors at the university, Duke George of Saxony, many nobles, and a great concourse of people were assembled, giving an accurate account of the debate throughout all its sessions, according to the protocol of the secretaries, called notories because of the legal virtue of their work, being sworn testimony.

Reviewing briefly the first session of the debate on the morning of this fourth of July, Prof. Dau in his book gives the following characteristic description: "Luther had spoken in a calm and dispassionate manner, and his audience had hung upon his lips, devouring his lucid presentation of the arguments for his side. Eck had tried to outdo himself in oratorical effort; slowly, but surely, however, he had felt that the undisputed mastery which had so far belonged to him was slipping away from him. The green-eyed shavelings in his rear, of course, rolled their eyes in pious delight, and vigorously expressed their approval at the strong passage in Eck's speeches, and the overwhelming majority in the audience was still on Eck's side; but, owing to the irresistible force that lies in truth and sincerity, not a few men in the great crowd were beginning to feel the tugging at the roots of the heart which is the precursor of an inward change in sentiment and judgment. It was remarked after this first session that Brother Martin had spoken very acceptably, that he had a wonderful knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and an excellent way of making them very plain to the people, and that he had complete command of his subject. It was acknowledged likewise that he

had handled his subject, which was not only delicate, but odious, with consummate skill. And then the great flow of words that was at his command! It had been a real pleasure to listen to him. On the other hand, Eck had not been able with all his skill and special effort to avoid two faults: at least twice he had lost his temper; his first reply to Luther was but the angry retort of a combatant who has felt the power of his opponent. Did not the pious Emser shed tears at that moment? Petty resentment was also apparent throughout his review of Luther's citation from the fathers. This was a domain in which Eck believed himself master, and now there had appeared one who, while known not to bow slavishly to the fathers, showed that he understood even better than Eck. It is a queer fact, which a close study of the protocol of this debate reveals, that Eck winced more under the patristic than under the Scriptural arguments of Luther. He was noticeably weak in his Scripture-proofs, while Luther massed his striking texts for a powerful charge upon his opponent. But that he would have to consider himself defeated also by arguments from the fathers was an unbearable thought to Eck."

"Eck's second thought, however, was still more fatal. He was plainly unfair to Luther when he implied that Luther had learned his arguments by heart from the book he had published. Eck had preceded Luther; how could the latter know in advance what he would have to say in reply to him? Again, it had been Eck who had introduced the thought of the headless Church; when he saw what capital Luther could make of that thought, when Luther showed him to what that thought must lead, Eck with theatrical disgust and indignation declared the utterance of that thought an act of disrespect to such a noble audience. Last, not least, his whole interpretation of the citations from the fathers which Luther had introduced, partly in review of Eck's speech, partly to make his own point, abounds in sophisms, not only of the subtle kind, but also of the broadest and coarsest kind."

J. J.

A LENTEN PERIL

Perils always lie close to the exercises of the saintliest virtues of the Christian life. There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous. There is a shorter step from self-denial to self-deception. The Pharisee was apparently keeping a Lenten fast. He was giving tithes of all that he possessed when the law only prescribed the tithing of the fruit of the field, and product of the cattle. He was fasting twice in the week when the law only required that he should fast once in the year. He was not an extortioner, or an unjust man, or an adulterer. The difference between him and the poor publican was one of the spirit. The latter was humbled in heart. His whole spirit and soul and body were being transformed by the confession of his sin, and his life directed into the channel that was pleasing to God. He had little re-

spect for the outward posture only so the inward life was in touch with the eternal and unseen realities. For this he went down to his house justified.

"Two went to pray; or rather say,
One went to brag, the other to pray;
One stands up close, and treads on high,
Where th' other dares not send his eye.
One near to the altar trod,
The other to the altar's God."

In the strange complexity of our being there may be sorrow without repentance. The betrayer of Jesus was sorry, but not penitent. If evangelical repentance would have possessed his soul he would not have gone out and hanged himself. He would have sought to have undone as far as possible that which makes his name synonymous with all that is base and mean. It was a sorrow of the world that wrought in him and it worked death.—C. Clever.

—"It seems as though the world in its old age, its last paroxysm, was growing delirious, as sometimes happens to dying people. I ardently hope that amidst these internal dissensions of the earth, Jesus Christ will hasten the day of His coming."—Luther.

ENGLISH LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

The English Lutheran conference will meet at Watertown in the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (Rev. F. E. Stern), Monday and Tuesday, April 21 and 22. The conference service with Lord's Supper will be held Monday evening. Rev. R. Ziesemer of Appleton will preach. (Rev. R. Huth, alternate.)

H. J. DIEHL, Sec'y.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Most Beautiful Altar.

There is no altar on earth which vies in marble majesty with the altar of heaven—TienT'ian—in the south of the Chinese city of Peking, which Emperor Yung-le of the Ming dynasty reared in A. D. 1420, with its triple balustrades, stairs and platforms of pure white marble carved miraculously, its great circle covering a wide area in the midst of a vast inclosure. There the emperor knelt once a year and worshiped "the only being in the universe he could look up to"—Shangti—the emperor of the world above, whose court was in the sky and the spear tips of whose soldiers were the stars.

Messiah Still Expected by Moslem Writers

A curious legend is still current in Palestine with regard to the sea of Galilee, says the London Chronicle. According to many old Jewish and Moslem writers the Messiah—yet to come, in their belief—is first to appear, rising from the waters of the sea. The strangest thing about the tradition is that it appears to be not of local but of Persian origin, occurring in one of the hymns of the Zendavesta.