

9-1-1944

Miscellanea

Walter E. Buszin

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Buszin, Walter E. (1944) "Miscellanea," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 15 , Article 51.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol15/iss1/51>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

Miscellanea

The Missouri Synod's Attitude Towards the Doctrine of Election "Intuitu Fidei"

By THEODORE GRAEBNER

Our reason for returning to this subject is the discussion which has arisen concerning a statement in the treatise *Toward Lutheran Union* (1943). The case may best be stated by reprinting a few paragraphs from the April (1944) issue of *Theologische Quartalschrift* (p.141 f.):

"A rather significant reaction to a recent book, *Toward Lutheran Union*, written jointly by Dr. Theodore Graebner and Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann, both of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, appears in an editorial in the *Lutheran Herald* (Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, member of the American Lutheran Conference). After agreeing with the authors on many points, the editor continues:

"The co-authors refer directly to our Church in illustrating their point, taking the doctrine of election as their illustration. As our readers presumably know, there are two statements of this doctrine in the Lutheran Church. Those holding each believe that their statement is based on the Word of God. The co-authors admit that "there was a time when the Missouri Synod could teach the doctrine of election in view of faith, as it did in Dietrich's Catechism. . . . But this does not mean that after the Church has had the full benefit of years of discussion, it may still regard the *intuitu fidei* as a mode of presenting the doctrine of election which should have equal standing with the presentation of the Formula of Concord (as is done in the Madison Agreement of 1912)."

"After explaining that 'the Madison Agreement is the document drawn up by the Union Committee representing the Norwegian Synod and United Norwegian Lutheran Church out of which came the union agreement upon which the N. L. C. A. was founded,' the editor proceeds to analyze the quoted statement:

"Now notice what the co-authors are saying. Admittedly the doctrine of election is so great a mystery of God that *there was a time* when Missouri Synod theologians recognized two statements of the doctrine as being correct interpretations of Scripture. Later, however, having had "the full benefit of years of discussion," other theologians of the Missouri Synod concluded that only the one form of statement of the doctrine is Biblical. Therefore, as a result of these "years of discussion," everyone must now accept that one form of stating the doctrine and none other!"

"Unless we misunderstand the co-authors completely (and we do not think that we do), it would be necessary for the N. L. C. A., if we desired union with Missouri, to throw overboard the Madison Agreement and accept an interpretation of Scripture which it took "years of discussion" for Missouri to arrive at! That, we contend, is not insisting upon adherence to the clear teaching of Scripture (upon which we

insist as vehemently as they); it is insisting upon our accepting a certain statement of a Scriptural doctrine which a certain group of theologians have agreed is the *only possible statement* of that doctrine; and it took them "years of discussion" to arrive at this conclusion."

The Norwegian editor here certainly raises an interesting dilemma. The editorial writer in the *Quartalschrift* meets it by throwing the authors of *Toward Lutheran Union* to the wolves. It is done without any asperity or animus, but that is what happens. Statements are quoted from the *Protokoll* of the Chicago Pastoral Conference (1881) and from Dietrich's *Catechism* to show that we made an unnecessary concession in our reference to "a time when the Missouri Synod could teach the doctrine of election *in view of faith*." The matter is one which can fortunately be settled by a re-examination of the historical record. While not able to examine every reference to the *intuitu fidei* in our literature previous to 1880, we intend to check a sufficient number of data to answer the question raised by the Norwegian editor and the Wisconsin Synod commentator.

Certainly, when we discuss the doctrine of a church body, there is a strict and a loose sense in quoting any positions as "the doctrine of" the church body. And the distinction is not the same as that between correct and incorrect or between appropriate and inappropriate use of terms. Both the strict and the loose employment of the term are in common usage. Dr. C. F. W. Walther has been quoted, as reported in the Report of "Allgemeine Pastoral Konferenz," Chicago, p. 88 f., as making forthright and absolute denial of any toleration shown the Second (*intuitu fidei*) Form of the doctrine of election by the Missouri Synod in the past. In spite of the fact that articles by Dr. Sihler and by Pastor Fuerbringer were quoted from the first and second volumes of *Lehre und Wehre*, Dr. Walther contended: "That was not in the strict sense ('eigentlich') the view of our Synod but the private views of Dr. Sihler and Pastor Fuerbringer." He continued: "It was not my voice, who am editor appointed by Synod as such and besides that, teacher of dogmatics." And yet, a dozen lines previously, after the quotations from *Lehre und Wehre* had been read, Walther's comment was: "There you see that at that time we still tolerated among us the Second Form of the doctrine." Dr. Walther's distinction between himself as editor of *Lehre und Wehre* and the contributors to that magazine casts an interesting sidelight on the editorial policy which during the first half century of our history was acceptable to our people. Not everything that appeared even in *Lehre und Wehre* was considered *eo ipso* the doctrine of our Synod. When Pastor Fuerbringer wrote in that magazine (1856, p. 324): "The believers as such are chosen from everlasting and in view of their foreseen persevering faith have been predestinated (in Betracht ihres zuvor erkannten bestaendigen Glaubens erwaeht sind) not because they believe but *in view of* it and *on account of* the divine mercy and Christ's merit," he was not, said the editor, strictly speaking for the Missouri Synod.*

* For a similar disassociation of Dr. Walther from responsibility for the articles of contributors, see also his footnote to the article on slavery, with which he voiced his dissent, *Lehre und Wehre*, 1856, p. 225.

Long before the matter had become controversial, Dr. Walther had consistently refrained from using the Second Form. He always held that "strictly speaking" the terminology of the dogmaticians contained something false (etwas Falsches). *Lehre und Wehre*, 1872, 130 ff. In his *Evangelien-Postille*, on p. 94, we read, "Gott hat die Auserwaelhten nicht darum erwaelht, weil er wuszte, dasz sie im Glauben verharren wuerden, sondern dasz sie erwaelht sind, das ist die Ursache, dasz sie beharrlich glauben. Gott hat sie nicht darum erwaelht, weil er wuszte, dasz sie selig wuerden, sondern weil sie erwaelht sind, darum werden sie selig." Dr. Walther's *Evangelien-Postille* was published in 1870; the sermon from which the quotation is taken was preached no later, perhaps much earlier. Professor Craemer met Walther for the first time in 1846. He wrote, "Natuerlich kam da auch die Lehre von der Gnadenwahl zur Sprache, und ich danke Gott, hier eine Gelegenheit zu haben, bezeugen zu koennen, dasz der teure Gottesmann schon damals die biblisch-lutherische Lehre von der Gnadenwahl, wie er sie in dem neuerlich ausgebrochenen Streit ueber dieselbe so siegreich verfocht, entschieden als seines Glaubens Ueberzeugung aussprach." (*Guenther's Life of Walther*, p. 73.) Dr. Walther's essay, read to the Synodical Conference at Cleveland in 1884, while bearing a more general title—it was announced as an argument against founding our doctrine on the works of the fathers—treated the use which the opponents had made of the phrase "in view of faith." Although pressed very sharply by the opposition, Dr. Walther was not once led into any statement condemning as heretical the seventeenth and eighteenth century dogmaticians for the formulation which they had given the doctrine of election. He pointed out that the Second Form was first used as a means of combating the doctrine of Samuel Huber, who taught that all men are elect. "To meet this error, our Lutheran fathers said: 'No, not all men are elect, but only those whom God has foreseen that they believe in Christ, that is, in view of this their faith.'" (*Proceedings*, p. 37.) A little farther down (p. 50), concerning the doctrine of the Sabbath, the authority of secular government in church affairs, Walther says that "almost every dogmatician *teaches falsely*." We fail to find any such expression in his judgment of their use of the Second Form. Moreover, he insists that the opponents "misuse the *intuitu fidei* of the dogmaticians when they teach that God has elected us in view of our conduct." His consistent refrain was that the fathers never used the "in view of faith" phraseology in a synergistic sense. He asserts on the one hand that the St. Louis theologians have always avoided this tropus as "a mistaken one" (als einen verfehltten) and have "announced our opposition to it because it is taken neither from the Scriptures nor from our Confessions and because it may easily be misunderstood and may lead to all kinds of error, as if some merit attached to human faith as man's one work and performance." But he continues: "As definitely as we have avoided the expression 'we are elected in view of faith' and have rejected it, we have never termed it heretical and have always tolerated it when used by men whose orthodoxy was beyond suspicion. Had our opponents done nothing more than use this phrase, we would never have attacked them as errorists. For most certainly the expression may be

used in such a sense that no article of Christian faith is thereby subverted." (*Beleuchtung, etc.*, 1881, p. 14 f.)

Now as for the quotation from Dietrich's Catechism. There Question 321 reads thus: "What then is the divine election of grace?" Ans.: "It is that act of God by which He, according to the purpose of His will, alone out of His grace and mercy in Christ, has resolved to save all those who shall steadfastly believe in Christ, to the praise of His glorious grace."

Concerning Dietrich's Catechism, the *Concordia Cyclopaedia* correctly says that the smaller exposition, "translated and edited by authority of the Missouri Synod, has been in use in that Synod for many years." The present writer received his post-confirmation instruction on the basis of Dietrich when attending college at New Ulm, Minn., in 1893. This certainly states the *intuitu* in its least objectionable form, although also this wording required a special caution on the part of the instructor not to make foreseen faith *the reason why* God elected such persons to eternal life. Dr. Walther never denied the adherence of Dietrich to the Second Form of the doctrine, but he denied that the relative clause has a causal implication. He said long before the controversy concerning Predestination disturbed our Church: "Es ist ein groszer Unterschied, ob man sagt: Gott hat diejenigen erwählt, *von denen* er voraussah, dasz sie glauben und im Glauben bleiben wuerden, oder ob man sagt: Gott hat einige erwählt, *weil* er voraussah, dasz sie glauben und im Glauben bleiben wuerden, oder um ihres Glaubens *willen*. (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1863, p. 300; 1872, p. 132.)

That we misunderstand neither Dietrich nor Dr. Walther on this point can be illustrated by many examples. As far as the dogmaticians are concerned, Walther himself republished the works of two seventeenth century authors for the benefit of his students and the Lutheran clergy. The *Dogmatik* of Dr. Christian Loeber, first published in 1711, was republished in St. Louis in 1872 with a foreword by Dr. Walther. Now, Loeber certainly taught no synergism; yet he distinguished a chief cause of election (*causa impulsiva externa principalis sive meritoria*), the atoning merit of Jesus Christ, while "our faith persevering unto death" is the requisite minor cause (*causa impulsiva externa minus principalis*). He calls faith "die dazu erforderte untere Ursache." On another page: "Faith in Christ is the ground on which eternal election rests" (*der Grund, worauf sich die ewige Gnadenwahl gruendet*). Anyone who is acquainted with the scholastic terminology of the later dogmaticians will not misunderstand this use of "causa," but the thought that in some way God was induced by the faith foreseen in the believer to include him in the number of the elect, is almost unescapable unless one's reading of the dogmaticians has led one into a comprehension of the various "causes" taken over from the Aristotelian system.

In 1879 Dr. Walther republished the *Compendium* of J. W. Baier. We would suggest that the reader consult in Part III the sections dealing with predestination, especially paragraphs 7 to 13. Again, the First Form, that of the Formula of Concord, the election unto grace, must yield the place of honor to the Second Form in the definition—"agnoscendum est, quod Deus ab aeterno decreverit, omnibus, qui in

Christium credituri essent, in tempore gratiam justificationis et renovationis conferre" etc. With greater fullness: "Quia Deus ab aeterno praevidit (vi omniscientiae suae, qua omnia, etiam contingenter futura, immediate in se ipsis cognoscit), quinam homines finaliter credituri sint, atque hos, ut tales, salvare constituit, sic decretum aeternum de imper-tienda finaliter credituris salute aeterna, intuitu meriti Christi et prae-visae fidei in Christum, factum ac praecise spectatum praedestinationis aut electionis nomine speciatim appellatur." Once more he distinguishes the various *causae* which entered into the eternal decree. There is the *causa efficiens*, quae est Deus trinus. Then there is the *causa impulsiva interna*, which is the goodness, mercy, and friendly grace of God. Next there is the *causa impulsiva externa, eaque principalis*, which is the merit of Christ. But there is finally the *causa impulsiva externa minus principalis decreti electionis*, which is faith in Christ enduring to the end. The notes which follow under this (15th) paragraph explain on the one hand the good intentions behind this most unfortunate use of "*causa*," but also reveal the difficulties into which this phrasing brought the dogmatists who rejected all synergism. Balthasar Meisner is quoted as urging that faith viewed as a cause of election should not be regarded as "giving the impulse" or as "anything meritorious" and not indeed as "the cause of the entire decree," but as "instrumental only in that one part of the decree, the merit of Christ which is apprehended by faith."

The simple fact is that for a considerable time the seventeenth century tropus of the doctrine of election was in vogue in the literature of the Missouri Synod. It was found in what we today would call unquestionably official publications of our Church. It was, however, held with utter consistency in a non-synergistic sense. The record of Dr. Walther is clear and consistent without a break. He never taught the doctrine of election *intuitu fidei*. Even before the doctrine had become controversial, he had disavowed the Second Form as misleading and subject to abuse by errorists. He, of course, never denied that God certainly foresaw the faith of all those whom He has predestinated to eternal life. The Formula of Concord states this truth in its celebrated declaration: "The eternal election of God, however, not only foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect." "*Not only*"; hence, also "*foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect.*" Yet the Formula of Concord adds an all-important "*but also*"; for it immediately goes on to say, "*but is also, from the gracious will and pleasure of God in Christ Jesus, a cause which procures, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what pertains thereto.*" (*Triglotta*, p.1065.) Dietrich states a truth, but not the whole truth: he omits the Formula of Concord's "*but also.*" Yet Dr. Walther never charged him with teaching the *intuitu fidei* doctrine with synergistic implications.

When Professor H. G. Stub of the Norwegian Synod gave a lecture for laymen on predestination, a translation into German was called for, which was published in *Lehre und Wehre* of 1881. Dr. Stub (p.518 f.) admits on the one hand that the Second Form "cannot be supported by a single clear passage of Scripture," that on the contrary "many passages definitely appear to speak against it," but he adds: "Yet we are

far from making of it a false doctrine. The charge of false doctrine could be raised only if by means of this form faith is made a reason for our election and salvation. Only then this form could be termed false doctrine if those using it condemn as Calvinistic those who teach the First Form." Dr. Stub cites some of the theological gymnastics by which Hunnius and Quenstedt, much as Meisner in the reference which we have quoted, try to escape the implication of synergism. As when Hunnius says: "Faith is not here involved as something in man, but as something outside of man" (1). Dr. Stub continues (p. 521): "If we are agreed (with those using the Second Form) regarding the universality of grace, regarding an election unto salvation and regarding conversion and salvation as a work of God from beginning to end, then in my opinion there can be no real essential difference between us in spite of the different manner of presenting the doctrine."

Dr. Walther (Synodical Conference, 1884, p. 18 f.) subsumed the entire matter under the aspect of certain errors of the fathers in fundamentals "involved in controversies not fully developed, the ice not having been broken." These, he says, we call "not heresies but spots." But he adds: "When they have been fully discussed, however, they cannot be ignored or denied without affecting salvation." It is under this aspect of doctrinal statements not yet fully developed by controversy that we quoted a number of strong statements of the "early" Walther in *Toward Lutheran Union* (p. 76 and elsewhere). At the same time we stressed that theologians may definitely "become entangled in error through the use of terminology. In such a case," we concluded, "the Church will avoid even terms that have been used without heretical implications by entire generations of theologians—like the term 'in view of faith' (*intuitu fidei*) in the doctrine of predestination."

Why Can't Fundamental Preachers Win Souls?

(Reprinted from *Sunday School Promoter*, 800 North Clark St., Chicago 10, Illinois, April, 1944)

It all grew out of a comment made by my friend, Harry Saulnier, Superintendent of Chicago's world-famous Pacific Garden Mission. We were standing together in his soldier center talking of the marvelous way God had blessed the work. Seven thousand saved in a year's time, and all that.

"We have one trouble, though," said Harry. "It's terribly hard to get good personal workers who can lead the fellows to Christ. I don't know what's the matter with these fundamentalist preachers . . . they can't win souls."

At first I thought that the comment was chargeable to the fact that Harry's ulcers were bothering him, or that the day had been "one of those days." But after we had left, I kept hearing that wistful comment again and again. It bothered me. It made me mad. It got under my skin. It drove me to my knees. It sent me out to ask questions of others. . . . And now this article.

It is a matter of cold, merciless fact that there are few ministers of the Gospel actively engaged in winning souls.

Before you boil me in oil for that statement, test its truth. Take paper and pencil and write quickly the names of all the preachers you know who can sit down with anyone, anywhere, take their Bibles, and point that person to Christ.

Write down all who can, and DO.

When you have finished your list, you will have made the same shameful discovery that I did: *There are multitudes of us who are continually talking soul winning, but you can count on the fingers of two hands the number who are doing anything about it.*

And I had to admit that I was in the same boat with the rest. Viewing with alarm . . . telling what would happen if we only would . . . preaching sermons on evangelism to my bewildered and timid congregation . . . giving out the Gospel as hard as ever I could — *but actually winning comparatively few to the Lord.*

Meanwhile, the church tramps are still tramping, the church grouches are still grumping, and people of the community still pass the church with no trace of emotion other than mild scorn.

It would be bad enough were we limited to an isolated case. But when you take these somber facts and multiply them by thousands of ministerial case histories, you become sick and faint at heart, and you begin to understand why America is not having revival—she can't, until her ministers begin to seek for souls . . . and win them!

The question that titles this piece was asked of a number of earnest and successful Christian workers. Without any exception, they agreed that there is a tragic lack of personal soul winning in the ministry. And it is not surprising that their answers when fitted together make a good deal of sense. Here are some of them:

Ministers do not take their calling seriously. They do not mean business with God.

Human nature being what it is, we can make a game out of anything. In far too many cases we have made a pastime of our preaching, a mere occupation of our orthodoxy, and what should have been Scriptural soul winning has become shallow sentimentalism.

Here is a case in point: A friend of mine calls up a minister to tell him that one of his church-member boys has been taken to the police station on a minor charge. His reverence, quite concerned, says, "Oh, how terrible! I'll pray for him."

Next morning the preacher is present when the boy is brought in, dirty, disheveled, embarrassed.

The pastor puts out his hand: "Joe, I'm sorry to see you here. I prayed for your soul last night."

The young heathen spurns the gesture, snarls: "To hell with you and your prayers! Last night, while you were prayin', this guy (pointing to his high school teacher) batted around and seen the judge. Got all wet in the rain doin' it, too. I always thought you didn't like me — now I know it!"

Sheer laziness and smug unconcern come beautifully dressed in the garments of prayer and piety, when ministers don't really mean business with God.

When will we learn, do you suppose, that our reason for existence as ministers of the Gospel is that millions of people *need* someone to minister the Gospel to them—the job we aren't doing!

I don't mean that we don't take our churches seriously.

We do!

Our church programs, our personnel, our ministerial reputations that are hourly at stake, and the thousand grievances to which a clergyman's flesh is heir—all this bothers us no end.

But the fact that people are lost and going to hell doesn't bother us enough!

It is possible so to shield one's self mentally that a discovery like this one comes with a terrific shock. I think this is what many of us in the ministry must have been doing. We have built a comfortable wall of duty around ourselves: sermon preparation, visitation of the sick, praying for the needy, officiating at the regular services of the church. In our minds we have let these duties become synonymous with *the real thing*—which it isn't.

You might just as well say that a comfortable house, with beautiful furnishings and pleasant surroundings, makes a happy home. If love isn't there, it isn't a home. And in the ministry, if soul winning isn't there, it isn't a ministry—it's a fraud!

One comment that I received deserves to be quoted verbatim:

"Fundamental preachers *do* win folks for Christ. But they trot around, bringing into the granary little fistfuls of gleanings from the harvest, scarcely enough to make flour for their own biscuits. They ought to, in view of their opportunities, be 'mowing 'em down' and hauling in not mere sheaves but whole truckloads of the harvest."

Because we have majored in these non-essentials, we have become psychologically conditioned to the pulpit approach, and can make no other.

We have in this country many good and honorable men who are conservative, evangelical, orthodox as the multiplication tables. But ask these men, as I have asked during the past two or three years, "Brother, is the Lord blessing your work with conversions?" Almost invariably there is a sigh and, "Well, we are having a good time all right. Of course, we don't see many saved, but these are hard days."

Hard days! Lord, help us to see that these are the greatest days in a century of Christian work . . . that people by the millions have aching, broken, hungry hearts. Help us to hear across two millenniums the words that first fell like a great sob across the lunch table of Thy disciples—men more interested in food than in the souls of men: "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. . . . The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few."

Follow the brother of whom we spoke, and you will hear him preach the Gospel earnestly, beautifully, even persuasively, to a group of . . . saints! Yet neither he nor they contacted an unsaved person before the service. Why, oh why, does it have to be a matter of record

that the most pious people in the church—including the preacher—never bring any strangers with them to the services? Too busy with church work, did you say? Then we had better leave some of that work undone while we go after the man who is “condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.”

A top-flight salesman once told me this: If a man knows *one* thing about his product—really knows it—he can sell it. He need not know everything, but he must know something before he can overcome sales resistance. Bear this remark in mind while we mention another of the answers that came in response to our question.

Ministers don't know the Word of God.

Now take it easy.

This is not to say that all preachers are ignorant of the truth contained in the Word—although many seem to be. Nor do I claim that we don't know *about* the Word—we may have our dispensational fences in good order today. Certainly I do not suggest that we are unable to find various portions in the Bible. Many of us have literally worn out Bibles with reading and study.

The fact remains, however, that when faced with the challenge of winning one particular individual to Christ—NOW, while opportunity offers—we fumble, we hesitate, and that person slips on down the stream of life, while we are left to mourn our indecision. However impressive our background, we really didn't *know* what to give from the Word.

Only recently has this matter been brought into sharp focus in my own life.

For years I had felt that there were too many times when I failed in attempts at personal soul winning. Then, through the work of a young man who specializes in winning young people to Christ—he calls them “th' kee-uds”—I was deeply impressed with the need of hiding the Word away in my heart . . . putting it to work in my own life. Not just another memory system (I had several already), this new work thrilled my heart. I began to prove the truth of the salesman's comment that if you really *know* a few things, you can sell. I learned a simple Gospel sequence of verses, like this:

The fact of sin	Rom. 3:23
The penalty for sin	Rom. 6:23
The penalty must be paid	Heb. 9:27
Christ paid the penalty	Rom. 5:8
Salvation a free gift	Eph. 2:8,9
Gift must be received	John 1:12

“Sequence” is important, I discovered.

I had known all these verses before, but now with the emphasis on absolute accuracy and the importance of their relationship, I learned them so thoroughly that they became a part of my life. Whenever the word “Gospel” was mentioned, my subconscious mind immediately offered a platter of the above verses.

Constant memorization led to meditation, with the result that I un-

derstand the Gospel better today than ever before in thirteen years of preaching it.

And, thank God, I have seen again and again the miracle of regeneration happening before my very eyes—through no fancy methods of my own, but due entirely to the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word—those very verses.

Take it from Him: "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ . . . being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Surprisingly enough, there were those who replied in answer to the title question,

Preachers today are not trained to win souls.

That is a terrible accusation—if it is true. Look at the facts. Making due allowance for those who slide through school with the minimum of mental exertion, there are multitudes left who do their best in school, but come from Bible institutes and seminaries with only a theoretical and bungling knowledge of soul winning. You might just as well tell a medical student to read Gray's *Anatomy*, and then send him out to do an emergency appendectomy! I know the Holy Spirit blesses even the bungling, but He should not have to put up with so much of it from people who are supposed to be trained!

Today Christian leaders are increasingly cognizant of the latent opportunity for soul winning that is resident in our army of lay folk—almost totally inactive when viewed as a whole.

Yet we can't enlist the layman, nor make him work.

Soul winning is contagious. It cannot be taught—it must be caught. Its basis is the miracle of regeneration in the heart. Its dynamic is the continuing miracle of the Spirit's fullness in the life. And the spark that sets the power going in any layman, young or old, usually is . . . a preacher, on fire, armed with the Word, making soul winning his main business in life.

How about it?

Luther as a Creative Musician

While scholars have seldom repudiated the claim that Martin Luther possessed genuine poetic ability and wrote some of the grandest hymns of the Christian Church, not a few have questioned his creative musical ability, maintaining that many of the hymn tunes ascribed to Luther had been written not by the great Reformer, but by Johann Walther and other musicians of the first half of the 16th century. In 1883 W. Baeumker, otherwise a fairly trustworthy scholar in the field of music history, went so far as to claim that Luther had written not a single original hymn tune. (*Das katholische Kirchenlied*, I, p. 22 f.) Unfortunately many historians of the last quarter of the 19th and of the first quarter of the 20th centuries have accepted the dicta of Baeumker and others before him and have insisted that Luther was nothing more than a musical dilettante.

No reputable musicologist of our day would dare to deny that Luther possessed genuine creative musical ability. After pointing out

the fallacies of Baeumker's argumentation, Hans Preuss, in his highly interesting book *Martin Luther der Kuenstler* (1931, p. 104), adds the remark that the attempts of Baeumker, a Roman Catholic, illustrate how hatred can stultify people ("zeigt doch, wie Hasz dumm macht"). While others before Baeumker had already claimed that Luther's *Ein' feste Burg* was merely a patching together of various phrases from liturgical music of the Roman Catholic Church, it was Baeumker who claimed that *Ein' feste Burg* is nothing more than a mosaic, consisting of various phrases taken from the *Missa de Angelis*. Salomo Kuemmerle, in his *Enzyklopaedie der evangelischen Kirchenmusik*, lists the phrases of *Ein' feste Burg* in one column and the corresponding phrases from the *Missa de Angelis* in the adjoining column (cf. Band I, *Ein' feste Burg*); only a cursory glance at the musical phrases here compared with one another will soon fill the uninformed admirer of Martin Luther with dismay. Owing to lack of available proof, Lutheran musicologists of the 19th century (e. g., Carl von Winterfeld in his *Der evangelische Kirchengesang*) found it impossible to refute the arguments of those who claimed that the battle hymn of the Lutheran Church was mere patchwork and tried to excuse Luther by saying that he had likely welded together his most famous hymn tune subconsciously, without being fully aware of using musical phrases already familiar to him; after all, other composers, even a musical giant like Johannes Brahms, have been found guilty of plagiarizing in this manner. Winterfeld and others went so far as to say that anyone who could patch together seven hitherto unjoined musical phrases and thus create a great hymn was indeed a genius. It remained for A. Thuerlings (*Beilage zur Muenchener Allgemeinen Zeitung*, 1887, No. 6, p. 74 f.) to prove that Luther's *Ein' feste Burg* existed before the *Missa de Angelis* and hence could not have been excised from it. Thuerlings' words were: "Diese *missa de angelis*, aus der Luther nach Baeumker seine Feste Burg geformt haben soll, ist nachlutherish." Incidentally, Baeumker has been scored severely for not consulting the original version of the Mass of the Angels, but the Luettich edition of 1854.

The careful and unbiased research work and publications of Hermann Abert have convinced even the most skeptical historians and musicologists that practically all hymn tunes ascribed to Martin Luther have actually been written by him. No one has as yet been able to prove definitely that Johann Walther, to whom have been credited some of Luther's original tunes, wrote as much as a single hymn tune. Hans Preuss (*op. cit.*, p. 104), Hans Joachim Moser (*Geschichte der deutschen Musik*, 1920, vol. I), and others point out repeatedly that not only among the Meistersinger, but also otherwise music and poetry went hand in hand in Germany in the 16th century. At that time it was regarded as self-evident that poets were able to set their poetry to music. H. J. Moser says: "Die Einheit vom Liederdichter und Melodienerfinder war fuer die Zeitgenossen der Meistersinger noch etwas Selbstverstaendliches, und nur deshalb hat Luther von dieser seiner doppelten Gabe so wenig Aufhebens gemacht. . . . So steht Luther hoechstwahrscheinlich aehnlich wie Walther von der Vogelweide nicht

nur als Dichter, sondern auch als Komponist herrlicher deutscher Lieder als einer unsrer groezten Melodiker vor uns, und erst ein musikfeindlich gewordenes Geschlecht hat ihm die Musikereigenschaften absprechen oder verkleinern wollen" (*op. cit.*, pp. 390, 395). We quote also Hans Preuss concerning this matter: "Wenn es jetzt zur Bildung gehoert, dasz einer einen Brief oder einen deutschen Aufsatz schreiben kann, so damals, dasz einer eine Melodie erfinden und harmonisieren konnte. Die peinliche Trennung von Laie und Kuenstler gab es damals nicht in dem Masze wie heute. . . . Kunst war noch Handwerk und nicht 'Kunst.' Auch Volksmusik und Kunstmusik klappte noch nicht so heillos auseinander wie heute. Musik war eine 'lebendige Volksangelegenheit,' nicht Komponistensache. Ob Luther ein Dilettant war oder wirklicher 'Musiker,' diese Frage ist nach Abert ueberhaupt von vornherein falsch gestellt" (*op. cit.*, p. 104). Preuss also points to the fact that Zwingli is known to have written the four-part harmonization of two of his hymns and that Luther had indicated expressly according to which melody his *Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar* was to be sung.

For the sake of those who desire authentic and reliable first-hand information concerning Luther's creative musical ability, we quote Johann Walther, Luther's personal friend and musical counselor, who said in part: "*Hat auch die Noten ueber die Episteln, Evangelien und ueber die Worte der Einsetzung des wahren Leibes und Blutes Christi selbst gemacht, mir vorgesungen, und meine Bedenken darueber hoeren wollen. . . . Da musste ich zu hoeren und solcher ersten deutschen Messe Abschrift mit mir gen Torgau nehmen. . . . Und siehet, hoeret und greifet man augenscheinlich, wie der heilige Geist sowohl in denen Auctoribus, welche die lateinischen, also auch in Herrn Luthero, welcher jetzo die deutschen Choralgesaenge meistenteils gedichtet und zur Melodie bracht, selbst mitgewirket; wie denn unter andern aus dem deutschen Sanctus (Jesaia, dem Propheten, das geschah, usw.) zu ersehen, wie er alle Noten auf den Text nach dem rechten Accent und Concant so meisterlich und wohl gerichtet hat.*" (Quotation in *Syntagma Musicum*, Michael Praetorius, I, Wittenberg, 1615, p. 451 f.)

Paul Henry Láng says concerning Luther: "Nothing is more unjust than to consider him a sort of enthusiastic and good-natured dilettante. The ultimate fate of German Protestant music depended on this man, who, as a student in Eisenach singing all sorts of merry student songs and as a celebrant priest familiar with the gradual and the polyphonic Masses and motets, lived with music ringing in his ears" (*Music in Western Civilization*, W. W. Norton, 1941, p. 207). We agree fully with Preuss, Moser, Láng, and others and reject the claims of those who seek to belittle the work and ability of Luther, just as we reject the claims of those who falsely point to Bach as a sottish inebriate rather than as an exemplary child of God.

WALTER E. BUSZIN