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## The Common Denominator of Calvinism and Liberalism.

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That modern rationalism can be opposed only from the viewpoint of the Reformed theology is a statement which has been repeatedly made in the course of the present struggle between the Fundamentalists and the Modernists. Prof. C. W. Hodge endeavors to prove this assertion in three popular essays on "The Significance of the Reformed Theology To-day," which appeared in the *Presbyterian* during the spring of this year. The doctrinal position of the Hodges is too well known to require elucidation. Their testimonies in behalf of the fundamental truths of Scripture, especially their dauntless stand against rationalism, constitute a gratifying chapter in the history of the American Protestant Church, which, particularly during the past decades, has fallen so lamentably from Christian truth. To all conservative Bible-students, the attitude of the Hodges towards the Word of God and the essential doctrines of the Christian faith has been both an inspiration and a power. Princeton theology has stood out predominantly as a shining light in the ever-thickening darkness of doctrinal disintegration, and even its opponents must concede that its advocates have been sincere Christian men who love the truth, as truth is given them, and are not afraid to confess and defend it. This is the impression which the reader of Professor Hodge's essays on "The Significance of the Reformed Theology" receives.

The impression is wonderfully favorable. The essays are written with much conviction. What Professor Hodge says is manifestly the message of his heart, from the superabundance of which the mouth speaks. Moreover, his statements are characterized by a sound objectivity. The writer appeals to men beyond the confines of his own pale with that larger aim in view to discover something

## A Bit of Recent Swedish Church History.

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### 33. THE DIRECTORS' REPLY TO THE MINORITY.

On October 28 the committee appointed by the minority to address the directors of *Stiftelsen* received the latter's answer to the letter which had been sent to them from the mission-chapel at Kungsholmen. This answer, on which great hopes had been staked on many sides, was a curt refusal of the minority's overtures. The directors declared that they had at all times done their duty and would continue to do it. If Pastor Wadstroem desired to reenter the directorate, he was free to retract his declaration of withdrawal. Regarding the confessional question, the directors declared themselves a unit in the belief that the entire Bible is the Word of God, *if* this confessional statement be understood "as declaring that God has given us the Holy Scripture through inspired holy men of God, so that, viewed as a whole, they constitute *a book* different from all other books, God's Word to a fallen world." Everybody saw at once that this answer gave no clearness whatsoever on the point at issue; for if the confessional statement, "The entire Bible is God's Word," is not taken literally, there is little gained by it. The fact that God gave us the Holy Scriptures through inspired holy men of God does not tell us at all whether everything in the writings of these men is inspired or not. No divided opinions had ever prevailed in *Stiftelsen* on the question whether the Biblical authors were inspired or not, but there had been a controversy concerning their writings: Professor Kolmodin had maintained that these writings are not in every part inspired by God; the minority believed the contrary. In their answer the directors were dodging this very question and began talking about the authors of the Bible.

### 34. PROFESSOR KOLMODIN QUILTS THE DIRECTORATE.

If the directors had hoped that their answer would restore unity in *Stiftelsen*, they were thoroughly deceived. It was probably not until after their answer had been read by the mission-friends in the rural places that the contributions for mission-work began to fall off. Especially the haughty language in which the answer spoke of Pastor Wadstroem proved distasteful to the readers, and many who formerly had cherished the hope that the critical complication would be successfully solved now lost heart.

Pessimism reigned even within the directorate. The year was drawing to its close, and the financial reports showed that the

expenses exceeded the income by about 50,000 Kroner. The conviction was gaining ground that mere words and assertions were not sufficient.

Professor Kolmodin had let it be understood already before the conference in 1909 that he intended to retire as soon as possible, because his professorship demanded his undivided strength. He now believed that the hour had arrived for his withdrawal from the directorate. But before he withdrew, he had made sure that his partisan, Pastor J. Lindgren, would take his place as director of the foreign mission of E. F. S. His departure from the directorate was not an unmixed delight, for when the directors called the professor to become district representative, he returned the call with a negative answer. Thus it was Professor Kolmodin who separated from E. F. S. Notwithstanding this fact, many of the members of *Stiftelsen* have been so impudent as to represent Professor Kolmodin's withdrawal from the directorate as an action for which the directors deserved praise. They interpreted this action as signifying that the directors had thereby separated from the professor. Accordingly, they observed a discreet silence about the fact that they had called the professor to become a district representative, which office gave the professor the right to take part at all times in the meetings of the directors and in the conferences.

### 35. WADSTROEM REENTERS THE DIRECTORATE.

After Kolmodin's departure an effort was made to find a way for regaining for the directors a part of the confidence which they had forfeited and at the same time forcing the minority out of the conference. It was Professor Rosenberg's privilege to find the way. He induced a number of the directors to write private letters to Pastor B. Wadstroem and ask him to retract his resignation as a member of the directorate.

Pastor Wadstroem took counsel orally and by writing with a few of the leading men of the minority. They advised him unanimously against accepting the overture of Rosenberg. The situation throughout the country was such that it could not take a long time until the directors would be compelled to ask Pastor Wadstroem officially to come back. For this reason Wadstroem's advisers took the view that he ought to decline Rosenberg's overture, since his reentering the directorate would make it appear as if he had surrendered his own position. On the other hand, if the directors were forced to request his return officially, a judgment would thereby be rendered on the entire Kolmodin movement.

Pastor Wadstroem certainly understood these view-points, but he had given a promise to one of the three members of the directorate on account of a friendly service which he had received of him, and considered himself in duty bound to make good his promise. Accordingly, he announced to the directors that he retracted his resignation.

The effect of this action was great. The money now began to flow into *Stiftelsen's* treasury, and many members of the minority heaved a sigh of relief, for Wadstroem's return to the directorate could not be interpreted in any other way than that a change for the better had taken place. For had not Wadstroem announced his resignation when Kolmodin's position was approved? Surely, he would not go back if the situation had not improved.

To Pastor Wadstroem himself his return must from the start have seemed a misstep; for at the first meeting which he attended he was forced to be witness when the directors passed a resolution to prohibit the sale of his book, *Some Leaves from the History of E. F. S.*, by the publication concern of *Stiftelsen*. Besides, the managers of *Stiftelsen* hastened to insert in *Budbaeraren* a communication regarding the change in the *personnel* of the directorate. This communication was plainly calculated to inform the Kolmodin faction, which may possibly have been disturbed over the professor's departure and Wadstroem's return, that the change in the *personnel* of the directorate must not be regarded in any way as including a change of the directors' policy. This was shown later to be correct.

Thus, while Bible criticism in *Stiftelsen* had lost nothing by Kolmodin's withdrawal, it gained in several ways through Pastor Wadstroem's premature retraction of his resignation, because through this action the minority was actually divided. For it did not take long before it became evident that several minority men intended to follow Wadstroem's example, and quietly made ready for their retreat. It seemed as if the Kolmodin spirit, which still animated the majority of the directors, would succeed in conquering and winning over the minority within a year after its birth.

Furthermore, the doctrinal trend of the Kolmodin faction had a great advantage because the majority of the directors of E. F. S. had embraced this trend and in consequence of this also made *Stiftelsen's* organ serve their cause in outside circles. On the other hand, the minority had no organization and no official organ. True, *Facklan* and *Nya Vacketaren* had always championed the cause of the minority, but these publications were private enter-

prises. If the minority was not to see its cause buried in oblivion and Bible criticism gain a firm and uncontested foothold for all time to come in E. F. S., they must endeavor to unite in order to be able to present a solid and strong front to their opponents. This had gradually become clear to several members of the minority, and it did not take long until this conviction bore practical fruit.

### 36. MARCH 8, 1910.

The issue of *Nya Vaektaren* for April, 1910, came as a glad surprise to many, but it was felt like an explosion with destructive effect by the Kolmodin men in the directorate of *Stiftelsen*. For this periodical contained a report to the effect that on March 8 a society *within Stiftelsen* had been organized in the capital by "the minority members at the E. F. S. conference on June 10, 1909, who were living at Stockholm." This society, according to its principles published in the same issue, had originated for the purpose of "gaining unity of counsel in the fight against the Bible criticism of modern theology and, in general, against its rationalistic tendencies." Its originators had given the society the name of "*E. F. S.'s Bibeltrogna Vaenner*" ("Bible-believing Friends of E. F. S."). At the meeting on March 8 a provisional working committee had been appointed, consisting of wholesale merchant Lambert Jepsson, Director G. L. Lagergrehn, and Editor Axel B. Svensson. Before this matter was given publicity, the chairman of the Mission Society of West Skaane, Anders Aaberg, had been given an opportunity to express his view of the undertaking. He endorsed it, on condition that one item in the declaration of principles be eliminated. His advice was followed in every part.

The first action of the provisional working committee was to issue a circular letter to all the Lutheran mission-friends in Sweden, in which they were invited to join the society. This called forth a circular from the directors of E. F. S., dated April 7, in which the directors really took a position against Bible criticism. But from the tone of this letter it could be gathered quite plainly that it had been wrung from the directors because of the forming of the new society.

### 37. THE MEETING AT BREWERS ST., No. 5.

Meanwhile the annual convention of *Stiftelsen* was drawing near. On the day preceding it the minority at the conference in 1909 had arranged for a meeting at Bryggaregatan 5. The principal issue to be discussed at this meeting was the organization of

the society of *E. F. S.'s Bibeltrogna Vaenner*, which was by some regarded as unnecessary, by others as directly harmful. However, it became evident that by far the greatest number of the minority men approved the undertaking; only 15 out of 86 members voted against it. But among those who voted against the forming of the society was the chairman of the meeting at Kungsholmen, Pastor D. A. Aernstroem, who now revealed himself as siding completely with the directors of *Stiftelsen* and with the greatest severity attacked those of his parishioners who helped organize *E. F. S.'s Bibeltrogna Vaenner*.

(To be continued.)

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