

# THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

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## England's Divine Destiny.<sup>1)</sup>

### Synopsis.

The article begins by describing the conditions in England prior to the reign of Queen Elizabeth. No industry; hardly any fleet; the trade in the hands of foreigners. "A home-staying, agricultural, and pastoral people."

Then the rise of English sea-power after the decline of Spain (1588). The founding of colonies in America. The rivalry with France, which did not end till 1815. Treaty of Utrecht. Subsequent policy of England. Commercial rivalry of Spain and France. The Mediterranean. Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Pitt. American Revolution. Colonization of South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Egypt. Policy after 1870 to the present day.

Follows the translation:—

The policy of giving up, preached and practised by the liberal economists, the dissenting conservatives, and the philosophic radicals, has never been accepted by the Tories. The latter wrote in the *Times*, in reply to the articles by Smith: "They wish to state, once for all, that England has no intention whatever of giving up its possessions overseas."

In 1874 the conservative party takes the reins. It is the triumph of the imperialistic policy. It is the awakening of the

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1) The subjoined article has been contributed by Rev. H. Ruhland, of Ottawa, Can. It has been taken from an article by Jean Desy, Professor of Higher Commerce, in the *Revue Trimestrielle Canadienne*. The article is inscribed "De L'Île à L'Empire" (From Island to Empire). Rev. Ruhland gives a synopsis of the article, then translates the most remarkable portion, and, omitting a lengthy dissertation on the strengthening of the ties that bind the British Colonies to the mother country, reproduces in condensed form the Professor's concluding remarks. D.

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## A Bit of Recent Swedish Church History.

PROF. W. H. T. DAU, St. Louis, Mo.

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### 38. THE CONFERENCE IN 1910.

When *Fosterlands-Stiftelsen* met for its annual conference in 1910 in Bethlehem Church, it was so unlike the preceding conference that from the very start it was divided into two groups which stood determinedly opposed to one another. These groups

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(59) Bardoux, pp. 458. 459.

were the society of *E. F. S.'s Bibeltrogna Vaenner*, which numbered about 70 members among the voting delegates of the conference, and the determined followers of the fundamental position of Kolmodin, who were most likely somewhat more numerous. But between these two bands there stood a great undecided group, which was ready to follow the directors. Now that the directors turned against the *Bibeltrogna Vaenner*, they had on their side not only this central group, but, as a matter of course, also the decided Kolmodinians.

These latter had at some sort of a gathering in the upper story of *Stiftelsen's* publishing house entered into a formal compact, on the purpose of which it has not been possible to obtain reliable information. Only this much is known, that amongst other things they signed an address declaring their devotion to Professor Kolmodin, in which they expressed their gratitude for the past and their hope for the future. During the annual meeting this address was signed by most of *Stiftelsen's* preachers who were attending the conference. However, it is hardly likely that the aforementioned compact was limited to this one measure, for at the conference the Kolmodinians displayed an astonishing unanimity. As their leaders there now came forward Pastor K. Gustafsson and Circuit Judge A. E. Collin.

One of the reasons why the central group followed the directors to as great an extent as they actually did may have been this, that two of the better-known and more active minority men of last year had now adopted the position of the directors. These were Pastor D. A. Aernstroem and traveling representative J. Nordin. Of these two the former especially was so violent and cutting in his remarks about the B. V. that he was hissed and made to sit down by the conference.

However, another and a more likely reason may have been furnished by the fact that the B. V., who submitted a slate of their own for the election of directors, went to work with some stubbornness: they nominated only two of the outgoing members of the directorate for reelection. Of course, more than one observed that their object was to aim at everything in order to achieve a good deal. But when the time came for the B. V. to reduce their demands somewhat, the other side had to admit that the action of the B. V. was correct in principle, for it could hardly be denied that the B. V. had nominated for election into the directorate men who favored the Kolmodinian Bible criticism. And even though extremely few of the outgoing directors had been nominated, the

result plainly turned out the same in the end; for not even Pastor N. Hyllander, who was nominated both in the directors' list and in that of the B. V., failed to be elected. It was apparent that the majority was unwilling to increase the number of *Bibeltrogn*a in the directorate.

The first collision thus took place at the election of directors, but the main battle was not fought until the next session on Saturday, June 11. Almost a year had now passed since *Stiftelsen* had abandoned the first of the fundamental principles of the Reformation. Notwithstanding this, the question was up for discussion at the conference: "How can *Stiftelsen* best take part in the fight against antichristian movements of the present time?" During the discussion it was maintained by members of the B. V. that in the fight between Christ and antichrist no quarter should be asked or given, for every concession to the antichristian movements would prove fatal, inasmuch as it would, amongst other things, paralyze the combatants and cause them to discontinue the fight against unbelief, as one of whose forms also Bible criticism must be regarded. Now, *Stiftelsen*, the speakers argued, had made concessions and by the measures which it had adopted against *Facklan* and *Nya Vaektaren* had taken up the fight against the defenders of the faith. Under these conditions *Stiftelsen* could not conduct a successful warfare against unbelief, unless it would honestly confess its error, rescind its vote of confidence in the Kolmodinian Bible criticism, and go back to the first basic principle of the Reformation.

Here, now, the finger had been put on a very sensitive spot, and the respective members of the conference felt the smart keenly. There was no inclination to rescind the vote of confidence, but for practical reasons it was plainly desired that the matter for the present be consigned to oblivion. Circuit Judge A. E. Collin, who now obtained the floor, sidestepped the subject under discussion completely and raised the question what was to be done with the B. V. who dared to call themselves *Bibeltrogn Vaenner* of the *Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsen*. He offered a motion that the convention declare its protest against the name. Plainly he desired to see the society regarded as an independent body outside of *Stiftelsen*. The B. V. contended that they were members of E. F. S., and consequently had the right to call themselves its *Vaenner*. But the majority paid no attention to this argument. After a heated debate the conference adopted the motion of Collin, which contained a passage saying that *Stiftelsen* was a body of believers in

the Bible; it was only the last part of Collin's resolution that was directed against the name of the B. V. and their continuing to be members of *Stiftelsen*. Against this part of the resolution the leading men of the B. V. stated their reservation.

The session was about to adjourn when a delegate rose to put the question whether the convention was willing to defend the authority of the entire Bible and work for retaining it in use. It was certainly surprising that this question was answered by a practically unanimous "yes." To the B. V. this was, indeed, pleasing, for that was just the position to which they wished to guide *Stiftelsen*. But it was necessary now to establish the fact whether the answer to the delegate was really meant as an honest confession. Pastor Vitalis Svensson, who had evidently caught the extraordinary significance of the moment, immediately asked for the floor and declared that by the answer to the delegate the conference's vote of confidence in Professor Kolmodin's position had been rescinded. He had scarcely had time to make his statement when the church resounded with the most frenetic cries of, "No!" Perhaps a scene like this has never occurred in a house of worship. E. F. S., then, had dared to rescind the vote of confidence which at one time they had given in favor of Bible criticism.

### 39. ACTIVITY OF THE B. V.

For those who clung to *Stiftelsen's* old position and to the first fundamental principle of the Reformation the conference in 1909 had been an unhappy affair, and the conference of 1910 was little better. One gain of importance for the future, however, had accrued from the pending strife in *Stiftelsen*: these friends were now organized in *E. F. S.'s Bibeltrojna Vaenner*. This organization should have been effected already in 1909, but at that time the need of it was not yet perceived. It was a great good fortune for this entire *Richtung* that the organization was fully completed before the conference of 1910 was adjourned. If it had not been, nobody can say how the friends of the Bible could have been kept together. On June 10 statutes were adopted and a directorate elected. The latter was composed of the following persons: wholesale merchant Lambert Jepsson, president; Pastor J. Vicander, vice-president; Director G. L. Lagergrehn, treasurer; Editor Axel B. Svensson, secretary; public school teacher O. Halvarsson, traveling representative A. Lindstroem, merchant Aug. Paulsson, Pastor Vitalis Svensson, and Pastor Alb. Oestgren.

The principal aim of the society was to combat the Bible

criticism and other rationalistic tendencies of modern theology. That the directors aimed to carry this program into effect as well as they could may be gleaned from the measures which they took immediately after the close of the conference. For instance, three representatives of B. V. were found in attendance at the meeting of neotheologians which was held at Oerebro about the end of the month of June, and according to the unanimous report of the secular press they maintained from the start the old Lutheran Bible-faith.

However, a measure of B. V. which in its consequences was most important was a circular letter which during the summer of 1910 was sent to all congregations, representatives, and preachers of *Stiftelsen*. By itself the circular was nothing remarkable, but, as stated, it became the more significant by the effects it produced. In this circular, which was chiefly a vindication of the society's name, there occurred one passage in which the statement was made that within *Stiftelsen* "both the ideas of Bible criticism and views of the redemption by Christ and justification before God that differed from the Lutheran Confession were rampant." The circular was signed by all the directors of B. V.

#### 40. THE ENOK HEDBERG INCIDENT.

Plainly this circular demanded an answer from *Stiftelsen*. It would not do to let such charges go unanswered. But, on the other hand, it was not easy to answer the charge, for it could not be denied that Bible criticism "was rampant" in E. F. S., since amongst other things it had been given a vote of confidence. Likewise it was a fact that many of *Stiftelsen's* representatives and several of its preachers taught a doctrine of reconciliation and justification in which there was little of Lutheran teaching. Now a committee was appointed from the directors of *Stiftelsen* with instructions to answer the circular of the B. V., and for this committee one member of the directorate was chosen who was thought to stand close to the B. V. in his faith and religious views.

However, as stated, the task was quite difficult. It proved a life's task for the committee to find reasons for utterly refuting the charges of B. V. But this could hardly be done, since B. V. could immediately point to some of the servants of *Stiftelsen* who had publicly professed their allegiance to Bible criticism. Such persons were found both among the directors and the representatives, missionaries, and preachers. For the last two classes the directors alone were responsible.

Among these a mission-pastor by the name of Enok Hedberg had become prominent as a Kolmodinian more than others at the conference in 1909. On several occasions he had also been pointed out in *Nya Vaektaren* as an instance of Bible criticism being tolerated within the ranks of *Stiftelsen*. Now, if the directors could induce *this man* to declare that he believed the whole Bible to be God's Word, they would have proved that the existence of B. V. was entirely superfluous, and their organ would have been marked as unreliable. But what if Hedberg failed to make the desired statement? Ah, the opinions among the directors, as was made plain afterwards, were divided as to what was to be done in that event: three members, who absolutely disapproved of Bible criticism, declared that Hedberg must be removed from office, but the majority was in favor of smoothing the affair over.

At a poorly attended meeting of the directors it was resolved to summon Hedberg for a hearing before the directorate. But here a question forced itself powerfully on the attention of the directors: How could *any one* of the directors induce Hedberg, of whose thorough agreement with the position of Kolmodin there could not be the least doubt, to answer with "yes" the question put to him by the directors?

The story of how this question was answered furnishes perhaps the most melancholy chapter in the Kolmodinian controversy, and we are sure that even our readers will wish that it had never happened. According to paragraphs 6 and 7 of the protocol of *Stiftelsen's* directorate for September 14 and 15 both the secretary of *Stiftelsen*, Pastor J. Montelius, and one of the directors, Director K. J. Ahlberg, were fully convinced that there are errors in the Bible. Notwithstanding this, Pastor Montelius expressed his regret that these supposed "errors" should prevent Hedberg from answering "yes" to the question whether the whole Bible is God's Word. The pastor, then, imagined and hoped that Hedberg, spite of his belief that there are errors in the Bible, — and that, if such are found in the Bible, they cannot be of God, — should, contrary to his innermost conviction, say: Yes, I believe that the whole Bible is God's infallible Word and has unlimited authority. We shall, of course, not pass judgment on Pastor Montelius, — he stands or falls to his Master, — still it is surprising, when glancing through *Budbaeraren* for the last year, to find him representing himself and the directors of E. F. S. in well-chosen words as believers in the Bible, spite of the fact that it is known that in a protocol of E. F. S. he has given expression to his conviction that there are

errors in the Bible, and that in his Bible class in the Sunday-school of Bethlehem Church he teaches distinctly that the Prophet Isaiah did not write the entire book that bears his name and that is ascribed to him by Christ and the apostles. However, as stated, we shall not pass judgment on him, as that is not our business, but we must brand his idea that there are errors in the Bible as an erroneous notion.<sup>10)</sup>

The hearing of Hedberg took place September 13 and did not yield the result wished for, for Pastor Hedberg answered the question addressed to him with "no." In his letter to the directors he states, in the first place, that the view of the Bible which he had expressed in his answer had been inculcated upon him at *Stiftelsen's* Mission Institute; in the second place, that it seemed strange to him that he should be subjected to trial for holding a view which the conference had approved and which was shared by many members of the directorate, in the third place, he stated that Pastor Montelius had some time ago admonished him to be careful not to work for the so-called Kolmodinian *Richtung*; "for," said he, "Svensson's party is very angry at me." This remark, that Hedberg must avoid working for the Kolmodinian notions since people were angry at him, naturally leads to the question: What would happen, if men were not angry?

#### 41. THE DIVISION IN THE DIRECTORATE OF E. F. S.

It can easily be understood that the turn which the Hedberg affair had taken was a grievous blow to the directorate as a whole, no matter what and how different the motives may have been that prompted the majority of the directors to decide on examining him. If the aim had been to deal the B. V. a mortal blow, that blow now fell on *Stiftelsen* itself. It was a boomerang that recoiled on the party that had flung the weapon. There now followed long deliberations; appearances, at least, must be saved. It seemed, too, as if this effort would succeed; for Pastor Hedberg was induced to declare that he agreed with the resolution passed at the Upsala meeting — provided this were not taken to mean that he had

10) If in a copy of the Bible that should fall into the hands of Pastor Montelius one leaf were missing, the *Bible* would not on that account be defective. If in the translation which we have something should have been rendered incorrectly, the *Bible* would not on that account be faulty. If the manuscripts that have been preserved till our time should in some places be undecipherable, or some mistake of a copyist should be found in it, the *Bible* would not on that account be erroneous.

changed his standpoint. With this statement the majority of the members of the directorate declared themselves satisfied as far as the confessional issue was concerned, but it was furthermore demanded that Hedberg should ask the directors' pardon for having shown himself grouchy at his hearing. This he refused to do, for he rather considered himself the offended party, and when the directors pressed their demand and passed a resolution that he be "admonished," he submitted his request to be dismissed from the service of E. F. S. It is certainly remarkable that Hedberg was not urged to ask pardon for having spoken disrespectfully of the Bible, but only for not having been submissive enough to the directors.

While these things were happening, the contemplated answer to the circular of the B. V. had been completely forgotten, but after many difficulties the committee agreed on a draft for an answer thanks to mutual concessions which the members had made to each other. This answer contained an unconditional acknowledgment that the directors had erred when they published the book of Kolmodin. However, now it became apparent again that the majority of the directors shared the belief of Kolmodin, for the acknowledgment was eliminated and supplanted by a general phrase. Besides, the entire answer was so changed that Pastor Wadstroem absolutely refused to sign it. Thus it was shown again that it would be impossible in the future to combat the Kolmodinian Bible criticism by remaining in the directorate of *Stiftelsen*.

The effects of the hearing of Hedberg were far-reaching. Without formally resigning from the directorate three of its members, Superintendent J. G. Hellenius, Pastor W. Gustafsson, and General G. F. O. Uggla withdrew from the directorate and organized a sort of a strike. The Director of Missions, Pastor J. Lindgren, soon followed them. The reason for their action was chiefly this, that these men disapproved the resolution of the directors to try Pastor Hedberg and the reasons which the directors had given for instituting the trial. Nevertheless they shared Hedberg's views. For example, in the still unrefuted account of his trial which Pastor Hedberg published it is asserted that Pastor Lindgren at a meeting in Joenkoeping said to Hedberg, referring to the impending trial: "I know your standpoint, and I share it." Besides, Pastor Lindgren had never kept his admiration for Professor Kolmodin concealed and in the main approved the latter's attitude towards the Bible. Regarding the other two members of the direc-

torate who were ministers, Pastor B. Wadstroem said in a communication to *Svenska Morgonbladet* (*Swedish Morning Paper*) on November 14, 1910, that "these two had always zealously defended the theories of Professor Kolmodin regarding Bible criticism."

#### 42. MORE TROUBLE FOR THE DIRECTORS.

The withdrawal of the three directors aforementioned took place on November 8. On the same occasion Pastor Hedberg's request to be dismissed was laid before the meeting. But this was not yet the end of the directors' troubles: requests to be dismissed had been sent to this meeting by four workmen in the service of Inner Mission. Among these were traveling representatives Alfred Andersson and A. Linstroem, who held that they could no longer serve *Stiftelsen* after it had surrendered the first of the fundamental principles of the Reformation.

It was plain that the situation was becoming difficult, and the directors of *Stiftelsen* were greatly worried. The only one who saw a ray of light in what had happened was Pastor Wadstroem. He clearly hoped that E. F. S. was rid for all time to come of the Kolmodinian Director of Missions and the three members of the directorate who had withdrawn. Being a pronounced optimist, the mild old man saw affairs in a better light than they were, and expressed himself to that effect. Without reflecting that he was harming his own and the B. V.'s cause, he gave people to understand time and again in newspaper articles that conditions in E. F. S. had never been as good as they were now since the organization of *Stiftelsen*. This was altogether incorrect. Accordingly, the treasurer of B. V., Director G. L. Lagergrehn, entered the discussion and in a newspaper article gave a brief statement of the true state of affairs. He showed that E. F. S. had in no wise rescinded its vote of confidence in Bible criticism and had not taken any step to meet the minority. The only thing that had happened after Pastor Wadstroem had left the directorate with the words: "It is over with *Fosterlands-Stiftelsen*," was that he himself had reentered the directorate.

It was certainly a weak point in the policy of the champions of the Bible that each of them followed his own line of attack, but the article of Lagergrehn may have been necessary, nevertheless, for nothing is more fatal in a controversy than to start a jubilation prematurely and to send out victory bulletins before the enemy has been defeated.

(To be continued.)