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Jesus:

I. The Light of the World.

JOHN 8, 12.

Less than a hundred years ago one of the world's greatest thinkers is reported to have exclaimed upon his deathbed: More Light. He had lived in a so-called Christian country, had been reared in the Christian religion, and had made the customary professions of the Christian faith in his early youth. In the battle of life, however, with its passions and its emotions he had lost most of his Christian character, had delved deep into the Pyrean spring of human learning, and though admittedly one of the colossal minds of all ages, with a knowledge of earthly wisdom, of the ways, the feelings, and the experiences of men such as few men ever had, on his deathbed the great Goethe had to cry out for more light. In the presence of death he was enshrouded in darkness.

About four thousand years ago there lived in a far eastern country, among Gentile peoples, a man who is described in Sacred Writ as perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil. He had been blessed by God in family, in riches, in friends. But under a permissive providence of God all was taken from him, and with his own body wasting away with putrefying sores, and his own wife tilting him with the advice to "bless God and die," old Job is portrayed as lifting up his voice, and with a vision that transported his believing soul, is recorded to have exclaimed: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Nearly two thousand years ago there lived in Jerusalem, the

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Deaconess Association.

In its first annual report (September 1, 1920) the "Lutheran Deaconess Association within the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America" (Office: 2307 Broadway, Fort Wayne, Ind.) reports a membership of 635 individuals and 72 congregations. These contributed \$5,671.51 (plus over \$1,400 not yet returned to the treasurer); the disbursements were \$1,051.47. The report embodies a statement of Rev. J. R. Graebner in the *Lutheran Witness*, on the origin and aim of the Association:—

"In the New Testament we read of deacons. They were church officers appointed to relieve the apostles by caring for the poor and otherwise assisting in church-work. A woman appointed for such work is called a deaconess. Phoebe was one of those. We read of her Rom. 16, 1, 2: 'I commend unto you Phoebe, our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea, that ye receive her in the Lord as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also.' This woman cared for the sick, the poor, the strangers, in the congregation at Cenchrea.

"Church history tells us what noble, self-sacrificing service such women workers performed during the first centuries of the Christian Church.

"When by and by false doctrine and idolatrous practises crept into the Church, and popery became more and more established, the female diaconate gradually changed into nunnery.

"As a fruit of the Reformation, the office of deaconess was again established, especially through the labors of Fliedner at Kaiserswerth and Loche at Neuendettelsau, Germany, about eighty years ago.

"At present there are about 20,000 deaconesses. The Episcopal, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and other churches have such trained female workers. Among Lutheran synods the General Council, the General Synod, and the Augustana Synod have the help of deaconesses in their own charitable institutions and in their mission-work.

"Why not our Synodical Conference? If other church-bodies have deaconess schools in which they train women for assisting pastors and missionaries in their work among the poor, the sick, the needy, the forsaken, the outcasts, both in institutions and in private homes, why should not we have the same?

"There is, and has been for years, a crying need of women workers, in our city missions, our charitable institutions, and in our foreign mission-fields. After having had the matter under consideration for years, the Charities Association of the Synodical Conference at its convention at Fort Wayne last summer resolved to organize a Deaconess Association. This resolution was carried into effect when on August 17, 1919, a number of our Fort Wayne Lutherans organized the Lutheran Deaconess Association of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America. The purpose of the Associa-

tion, as stated in its constitution, is, 'a) to educate and train Lutheran deaconesses for the care of the sick and the poor in the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference and for the ministry of mercy in the charitable institutions and in the Home and Foreign Mission work of said Synodical Conference; b) to erect and maintain Lutheran deaconess schools, mother houses, and other institutions likely to promote the purposes of the association.' One of the first things to be done is to provide for a mother house, that is, a suitable building for the deaconess school and home." D.

Why Not Parochial Schools?

The *Lutheran* (December 9, 1920) writes editorially on "The Pagan Menace" in our American system of education:—

"At a recent convention of the Philadelphia Sunday-school Association, expression was given to a general and growing conviction among Christians that we are face to face with the menace of paganism in our American system of education. One of the speakers advocated week-day religious instruction as a means of counteracting the menace. He said in part:

"In the last quarter of a century we have educated the child away from the Church—and the biggest offender has been the public school. The school says to the child five days a week: "The most important thing in your life is the school," and the child has believed it. For, opposed to those thirty hours a week, there has been up to the present time only one hour a week of religious training. It is our task to see that the child is brought to a realization that religion is just as much a part of the business of life as schooling."

"He called attention to a plan that has been tried in ten States, where cards are signed by the children's parents, entitling them to be excused from school during a certain period so as to attend a school of religious training conducted elsewhere. Such schools are being conducted in Toledo, O.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Rochester, N. Y.; Hartford, Conn.; and Batavia, N. Y. We are not familiar with the plan or program as carried out in these cities, and hence cannot pass upon their merits. The question, however, arises as to whether these schools are as effective a solution of the problem as is called for, whether they go far enough.

"In the first place, the matter is of such supreme importance that the organized Church, rather than a society or association, should take hold of this matter and outline a plan or program that will be adequate and will be adopted generally. The Church as a whole must be impressed with the seriousness of the situation and with its own responsibility. It must function as a teaching agency itself, and not be satisfied to turn so important a work over to volunteer associations. The primal unit, which is the congregation, must be impressed with its responsibility and prepare itself to be a teaching as well as a preaching force. This idea lies back of the movement in New York City, which is about to be inaugurated; for there the religious school will be conducted in the various churches and not in some place away from them. The Roman Catholic Church will be sure to have its

congregational schools and may be counted upon to do things with a thoroughness and efficiency in its own way and along its own lines which is not characteristic of Protestants. This movement must be lodged in the congregation if it is to prove effective and lasting.

"In the next place, the Church must take this matter in hand seriously, and not resort to pageants and moving-picture methods to teach religion, as was advocated by one of the speakers. These may answer a useful purpose at long intervals; but teaching religion is serious business and should be so treated. The children must be taught and trained, and not simply be entertained. Our public school teachers do not resort to pageants and moving pictures to teach mathematics or grammar or history or geography. They assign lessons and expect the pupil to study and to get down to something definite. Is the study of these branches of more consequence, and do they deserve more earnest thought and attention than the great facts and truths of our Christianity? Do we mean to play with these truths and cheapen them in the eyes of the children by making them subjects for entertainment? That is one of the weaknesses of our Protestant Christianity, and is the reason why so many of the parents and the children refuse to take their religion seriously enough to know what they ought to believe and how they ought to live. The time has come to take hold of this whole question in a way that comports with its seriousness and importance."

D.

The Language Question.

At its recent convention in Washington, D. C., the U. L. C. (United Lutheran Church) passed a series of fourteen resolutions outlining its linguistic policy in polyglot Lutheran America. Four of these resolutions state the principles, and ten the methods to be adopted. The gist of the whole matter is, that, the Gospel being cosmopolitan in scope, the ministry of the Gospel must be adapted linguistically to existing needs, and linguistic frictions must be avoided. The *Lutheran* (December 9, 1920) reprints these resolutions, and remarks editorially:—

"The Lutheran Church in this country has the unique distinction of being the only Church capable of preaching the Gospel in more than a dozen tongues. It is therefore in a position to do more effective Home Mission work among the fifteen different nationalities that have migrated from various parts of Europe where the Lutheran Church is strongly represented than any other American church-body. It has the ministers, it has the literature, it knows the habits and spirit and customs of this polyglot immigrant population. This population has been an inviting mission-field for the English-speaking denominations of other faiths, and not a few of them have schools preparing young men to minister in as high as five different tongues. They are most successful, however, in gathering the children and young people of these Lutheran immigrants into their folds.

"It is well to bear this in mind, since the cry for 'Americanization' has created a prejudice against the use of a foreign tongue in the teaching and preaching of religion. Many of the very best and most

loyal citizens in this country have suffered much because of this prejudice. This has been especially the case in those bodies where the German language is still in use. The zeal to decry a very natural and normal use of a foreign tongue has been not only un-American, but it has also been unchristian. There is no possible danger that any foreign tongue will ever become a rival to the adopted speech of the country, and there is no need of interfering with the personal liberty of any American citizen who wants the Gospel preached to him in any other language than English. A man's mother-tongue is the speech of his heart, and no law on earth can compel him to cease to love it, even though he may be able to speak a dozen other languages. It is his birthright to love the speech of his youth.

"An incident will show how vital is the principle that a man shall have the right to worship God in the language that appeals most to his heart. A Lutheran of foreign birth lay on his death-bed and desired the ministrations of a pastor. He understood English; but it was not the language of his heart. An English pastor ministered to him as best he could, but seemed to make little impression and got no satisfactory response. Later a pastor who was familiar with the dying man's native speech was summoned, and when he addressed him in his mother-tongue, his face lighted up, his eyes glistened with tears, and the response was most hearty. The pastor had quoted the Scriptures and the hymn, and had offered the prayer, in the language of his heart. Such incidents have by no means been rare, as many an English-speaking pastor capable of using another language can testify."

D.

"Choosing a Pastor."

Writing on this subject in the *Intelligencer* (November 24, 1920) Rev. W. D. Brown discounts the methods of "trial sermons" and of the "prospecting committee," which have no warrant in Scripture nor in the pure practise of the Church, and to which no self-respecting minister will submit. As a substitute the writer proposes the following plan, which embodies not a few features of the method followed among us:—

"In going about the selection of a new pastor, why not pursue some such method as the Board of Foreign Missions use in accepting candidates for the foreign field? How would it be to consult the man's record a little more and place less reliance on his facility in preaching his best sermon, when he comes as a candidate? How would it be to find out how he has done his work in college and seminary, and what was his rating there? In other words, is there not some merit in a plan like this:— Let a committee of the Consistory find out the facts of a man's early life, date and place of birth, parents' name and occupation, health of the candidate, and his tendencies to disease, if any. Where did he obtain and what was the character of his education? What was his rating in college and seminary? Get a confidential letter on these subjects from the president of the institution where he studied or from one or two of the professors with whom he took work.

"Then go into his record as a pastor. With what churches has

he served since his ordination? What degree of success did he have in his charges? Did the churches under his care experience any unusual feature in the material or spiritual aspect of their life? Was there harmony or discord? If the latter, before dismissing the consideration of the man, try to discover if it was not due to disturbing elements which sometimes find their way into a congregation for no fault of the pastor. If the work on these fields is only ordinary, again before dismissing the consideration of him, try to discover if the apparent lack of results may not be due to the difficult conditions under which he labored.

"Get an estimate of him from at least two or three persons in the locality in which he has lived. Be satisfied that he is a man demanded by the times in which we live.

"In saying all this, the writer is assuming that the candidate has been found to be a man of God, true to the Scriptures, abiding in faith, strong in prayer, and a Christian optimist.

"And then, be assured that this is a very much better basis for estimating a man than you ever could have by hearing him preach once or twice, or even three times."

Some of these suggestions, like that relating to the candidate's pedigree, seem unessential and irrelevant. The results of most of the inquiries suggested can be misconstrued. But a good suggestion is that the advice of competent judges should be sought, and the candidate's quality of workmanship considered. Any candidate that meets the requirements mentioned in the second-last paragraph is eligible for 90 per cent. of the positions that may have to be filled within the Church.

D.

American Legion and Red Cross.

On these two organizations the *Nation* (December 8, 1920) expresses an opinion that would have been contraband not so very long ago. The Knights of Columbus are contemplating donating the unexpanded balance of their war moneys, some \$5,000,000, to the American Legion for a costly home in Washington, D. C. Deprecating this, the *Nation* says editorially:—

"The American Legion itself is still a questionable thing. It is by no means clear whether it will become a menace to the country or a source of pride and an organization of great usefulness. Again, it is a rapidly shrinking body; at its last convention in Cleveland the press reports gave it only about 800,000 paid-up members, as against the original 3,000,000. To beseech an organization which has up to this time proved prejudiced, opinionated, and reactionary, whose future is not even certain, to overcome its great reluctance to accept this great sum is surely folly. Far better use for it would be the starting of a new Red Cross, a White Cross, or a Green Cross, to assume the neutral, international position Clara Barton planned for the now Government-prostituted Red Cross."

If the Legion should accept the Knights' donation, it will become still more firmly chained to the Roman chariot than by the election of its first national chaplain.

D.

Tests of Americanism.

Says the *Nation* (December 8, 1920): "There have been many acid tests of American purpose in the War, but none more clearly such than our treatment of the handful of Americans who were not too proud, but were too brave to fight, who unflinchingly faced and suffered hatred, ostracism, imprisonment, physical torture, and death for their faith. These four thousand, out of the four million called to arms, who resisted every form of pressure to make them fight were possessed of a courage beyond the understanding of the mob. The coward would have backed down. The slacker would have done what indeed thousands of his brand, like the notorious Bergdolls, did—evaded registration or even more safely joined in the scramble for places in non-combatant services within the army itself. No, the true conscientious objectors to whom we refer were not dodgers. They were above all things facers. And as time goes on, and the already receding tide of hysteria and hate ebbs, there will come, along with the realization of the ghastly futility and madness of war, a clearer recognition of the pioneer courage and heroic martyrdom of these men. And while they suffered greatly, their sacrifice is not in vain.

"To those familiar with war psychology it is not surprising that the least belligerent, the least endangered, and the supposedly freest country involved should have traveled the furthest in the severity of its punishment of all forms of dissent. In other countries conscientious objectors were imprisoned, but their terms were short and obviously intended for restraint only during the period of hostilities. They were released soon after the armistice. But in free America not only was the imprisonment needlessly prolonged for over two years, — longer than the terms given the few notorious enemy conspirators found guilty of plotting murder against our civilian population, — but the incarceration was accompanied by unspeakable atrocities. A number died in prison, victims of beating and deliberate starvation. Others were tied up by the hands for days at a time, drenched in icy water, and compelled to remain in cells at freezing temperatures. A number of these died from pneumonia. Nor did the indignities cease with death. The wife of one religious objector, member of a sect professedly opposed to all forms of violence, coming to claim his body, found it clad in the uniform which he had given his life to avoid donning. Instances of that kind were innumerable. The iron cage of Alcatraz, especially constructed for the torture of the conscientious objectors, an instrument recalling the medieval Iron Maiden, is the symbol of America's treatment of them and entitled as such to a place in our historical museum as a warning to coming generations. It is important that they should have this warning. The Civil Liberties Union which has done such splendid work in agitating for the mitigation of the suffering and the ultimate release of the objectors would be eminently fitted to assume this responsibility. . . . Other groups of men are still behind prison bars, victims of our ruthlessness. There are the soldiers, many of them boys, many of them volunteers, who, thrust from the unrestraint of American farm or city life into the rigid discipline of army and navy, were guilty of various infractions

of discipline. Courtmartialled for 'disrespect' to a minor commissioned officer often totally unworthy to command, some are still serving the ferocious sentences imposed to convince the world that we were at war. . . . And there is Debs and a few others like him who would not be stampeded, who refused to hate, who obeyed the Biblical injunction to 'resist not evil,' who, like Martin Luther, stood by their principles and 'could do no other.'

"Well, the War has been over for two years and more. Who now dares assert that it was not the greatest failure in history? Who will deny that by it civilization is immeasurably set back? And who can assert that those who, before the shattering and revealing experiences of the last five years, saw clearly and so did move, were not at least as true patriots and humanitarians as the other millions, and better prophets?"

D.

Reverend Promoters of Peace and War.

A curious phenomenon witnessed in our country is thus analyzed by the *Nation* (December 8, 1920):

"Any one returning to the United States after a long absence might be much impressed by the enthusiasm of clergymen and social uplifters for the League of Nations. Surely, he would argue, there is a genuine moral issue involved when such men and women declare themselves so vigorously for a League of Peace. Whether on further consideration he would share the enthusiasm which at first so impressed him is open to doubt; he certainly would not if his attention were called to a circumstance that has had too little attention. It is this: The clergymen and other moral leaders who have diligently exhorted their fellow-countrymen on the subject of the League of Nations as the way to righteousness and peace, have been for the most part silent on the obvious and indisputable moral issues of our time. They have said nothing about our ruthless imperialism in Haiti, nothing about the administration's private wars in Russia, its aid to Poland, its part in the blockade of Russia, which still is costing the lives of unnumbered thousands of men and women and little children. They have been dumb before the sacking of Irish towns, pogroms in Belfast, and the death of hunger-strikers; yet these things imperil the peace of the whole world. They have seen civil liberties ridden over rough shod by Secretaries Bursleson and Palmer, and they have held their peace. They have not denounced the continued imprisonment of conscientious objectors and political heretics. They have been silent in face of the institution of the Czaristic system of espionage and repression by Federal, State, and municipal officials. These facts are indisputable. They are matters of record. Why should our clergymen show so profound a concern for the League of Nations, which at best is a debatable issue, when they make no public or concerted efforts to right open and palpable wrongs?

"One ventures to guess that the answer lies in the realm of psychology. Those who now valiantly support the League of Nations are the same protagonists of the War on moral grounds. In season and out of season they proclaim a holy war to end war, to save the

soul of America, make the world safe for democracy, and establish the rights of the weak and oppressed. They, following the lead of that greatest preacher of them all, Woodrow Wilson, sought to make the World War, which was essentially a contest between rival imperialisms, a crusade greater than Peter the Hermit ever preached. Behold the result: Misery, hunger, unrest, hate, disillusionment. Never was nationalist, race, or class feeling higher. Armaments increase. New economic rivalries already divide the Allies. No sane man dreams that any one of the fundamental "moral" aims of the war has already been achieved. Literally the only vestige of justification for the protagonists of the holy war is the League of Nations. Few men are clear-sighted enough or possess the moral courage requisite for the admission that all their hopes were vain, and that we must take a new start to build a lasting peace. It is not merely the opinion of others that preachers and moral leaders have to fear, but the loss of their own self-confidence. To admit the falsity of their hopes or the failure of their methods would be a crushing blow to the inner citadel of their being. The League of Nations must be the ark of their salvation else they are utterly shipwrecked in stormy seas. They believe because every instinct of their being demands that they believe — and without question.

"One thing that makes this process easier for churchmen is that they are trained in accepting verbal solutions without too nice regard for realities. The whole process of theological readjustment which has enabled modern men to adapt themselves more or less comfortably to medieval creeds — valuable as in many ways it has been — has its obverse side. It makes for a clever casuistry rather than for downright mental integrity. It has trained men in the art of seeing how much one can say without saying too much. On the ethical side the fault of theological education is even more pronounced. Preachers are trained to speak phrases with regard to righteousness and justice which they do not interpret in concrete terms. No man can make these theological and ethical compromises in the pulpit without in time becoming himself far more expert in handling phrases than realities. He solves the old difficulty of putting new wine in old bottles by using not wine at all, but only grape juice. And he himself doesn't know the difference.

"But back of this faulty education lies something deeper. The main business of the liberal is to find an easy way to solve problems. He will do anything for peace except remove the economic causes of war. No one who studies the way economic interest, playing upon mob psychology, produces war, can believe in any cure for war that does not involve spiritual and economic revolution, the abolition of privilege, and the end of the whole psychology of domination. War is a cancer in the body politic. The League of Nations is a mere poultice for it. This fact your liberal finds it hard to face. For much is at stake. It is comfortable, safe, and morally edifying for the preacher to support the League of Nations. But to denounce economic imperialism, to champion Haiti and Russia, to defend the prisoner of conscience, and the right of free speech — that's another matter. It

is not very comfortable and in many cases far from safe. Of course, all this is not explicit in the minds of the excellent people who champion the League. Nevertheless, it remains true that the explanation of the concern of ministers, ecclesiastical bodies, and miscellaneous liberals for the League of Nations and their indifference to far more obvious moral issues can only be found in an analysis of the motives and interests which far more than reason sway the acts of men." D.

Germans That Deserve No Pity.

The *Koelnische Zeitung* (weekly edition, December 8, 1920) calls attention to a danger created by Germans for the charities that are enlisted in behalf of starving Germany. Statistics recently published show that the consumption of costly wines, especially champagne, has enormously increased among a certain class of Germans. At the late races at Hamburg this element was greatly in evidence by their prodigality, high betting, and sumptuous living. British papers like the *London Globe* (intensely hostile to Germany) and the *Manchester Guardian* (more sane and reasonable) canvass these reports, and the effect can easily be foreseen: the innocent will be made to suffer. The Germans in question are people who have become suddenly rich through the war, not infrequently by illicit practises. The *Koelnische Zeitung* speaks of "Schleicher und Schieber," men who have smuggled and peddled goods, and have exploited the national misery of Germany by raising the prices for necessaries enormously. The revolution has made some of them socially and politically prominent. They are no representatives of the Germany that is silently suffering, or appealing to the active sympathy of the charitable part of mankind. They are a public nuisance, a moral plague, and should be sternly dealt with by the German government. Meanwhile the charitable activities that have been started to help a crushed people that is struggling to get on its feet should be continued. The truly needy Germans are no myth; and these will be reached. D.

The "Variorum" Bible.

A plea is being made—rightfully, we think!—to reviewers of the life-work of the late Canon Sanday not to forget "the great service which he rendered to Bible students of a generation ago. In collaboration with Professors Cheyne and Driver, and other scholars, he produced what afterwards came to be known as the *Variorum Bible*—an edition of the Authorized Version, with notes supplying various renderings and readings from the best authorities. Brought out by the King's Printers, this Bible proved of immense service to careful students of Holy Scripture, and to this day it embodies the devoted labor of men who were content to elucidate the text rather than, as afterwards proved to be the case, qualifying its authority by the application of critical theories of a destructive order." D.