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The Means of Grace.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, Part IV.

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“Although the work of redemption was accomplished on the cross and forgiveness of sin acquired, yet it cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word. For what would we otherwise know about it that such a thing was accomplished or was to be given us if it were not presented by preaching, or the oral Word? . . . Or how can they apprehend and appropriate to themselves the forgiveness except they lay hold of, and believe, the Scriptures and the Gospel?” (Large Catechism. *Triglotta*, 759.) Therefore Paul calls the preached Word the means of salvation. 1 Cor. 15, 1. 2. But if it brings us salvation, it also brings us forgiveness; for salvation and forgiveness are the same thing. Yes, the Lord directly regards His Word as the bearer of His all-sufficient merits. For instead of saying: “Ye are clean through the obedience by which I made satisfaction to the Father,” He says: “Ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you.” John 15, 3.

But where there is forgiveness through the merits of Christ, there is life. Titus 3, 7; Rom. 6, 20. [*Note.* — “For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.” Small Catechism. *Triglotta*, 557.] Therefore the Lord also calls His Word the bearer of life. John 5, 24: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life.” And John 8, 51: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death.” Yes, John 6, 63 He declares: “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” And John 12, 50: The Word of My Father “is life everlasting. Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.” [*Note.* — *Ἡ ἐντολή τοῦ πατρὸς ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐστιν* does not mean: “He that keepeth the Law of the Father hath life everlasting,” but according to

The Historical Significance of the Formula of Concord.

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(Continued.)

To know and to appreciate the reconciliation of God to man means to know and to appreciate the person and the work of Jesus Christ, the God-man. Luther was filled with that conviction, and so the study of the person and of the work of our Savior was of the utmost importance to him. His Christology was definite and in every phase based upon his Bible study. He recognized the value of the ubiquity and the communication of attributes also for the defense of the Biblical teaching on the Lord's Supper. However, his faith about this Supper was not deduced from Christology, but was based directly on the Biblical relation of its institution.¹⁾ The real presence, the communion of Christ's body and blood with the elements, the oral eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood by all communicants: all these things were essential to him and were predicated by direct words of God.

Zwingli emptied the Supper of its sacramental character and reduced it to a memorial ceremony. But Calvin, in the southwestern part of Switzerland, had initiated a middle-of-the-road movement. Since his stay at Strassburg, after the Wittenberg Concordia, he took a vivid interest in the union of the two churches. His *De Coena Domini*, 1540, small, but significant, evidently approached the Lutheran view in the matter itself, while its method of argumentation rather follows that of Zwingli (*panis non modo repraesentat, sed etiam offert; . . . signa veritati et substantiae suae coniuncta*). This little book traveled through many districts, also in Germany, and made silent propaganda. In Switzerland Calvin succeeded, in the *Consensus Tigurinus* of 1549, to modify the Zwinglians' position very much. The *Consensus* contained the phraseology of the Augustana of 1540, the Variata. In Strassburg and especially in Wittenberg, Calvin's hopes for unification were shared.

1) Paul Tschackert, in his *Entstehung der luth. u. d. ref. Kirchenlehre*, 1910, p. 177, makes the loose statement: "Zu ihrer Begründung nahm Luther jetzt konsequenterweise die Christologie zu Hilfe; die Ubiquitätslehre erhielt die Stellung eines theoretischen Hilfssatzes fuer die Abendmahlslehre." If "Begründung" includes the refutation of objections, the sentence may stand; if, however, "Begründung" means the reason for the positive statement, the sentence is not true.

Melanchthon had vacillated almost from the beginning. In 1529 he said: "Only with the greatest reluctance (*maximo certamine*) I have been brought to the thesis: *corpus Domini vere praesens in coena esse.*"²⁾ At Marburg he had agreed with Luther in the real presence, but not in the *oralis manducatio*.³⁾ In 1537 he wrote that "for a decade" he had been "brooding day and night on this matter."⁴⁾ Since 1538 he gave up using the words of institution (*ἔστί*) as basis and turned to 1 Cor. 10. To him the mystery of the Supper was the substance contact of the God-man with the soul of man, which contact is more than a mere effect of the Spirit because it is effected through the communication of the Lord's body and thus is a supersensual contact of man's soul with the transfigured and yet corporeal Savior. That agrees with Calvin's "*Dico igitur in coenae mysterio per symbola panis et vini Christi vere nobis exhiberi, quo scilicet primum in unum corpus cum ipso coalescamus, deinde, participes facti substantiae eius, in bonorum omnium communicatione virtutem quoque sentiamus.*"⁵⁾ And, according to Dr. Peucer's, Melanchthon's son-in-law's, narrative, the *Magister Germaniae* gave as his last definition: "*In distributione panis et vini testatur Filius Dei se vere praesentem esse et distribuere credentibus suis suum corpus et sanguinem, ID EST* [emphasis mine], *universa beneficia sua, quae fide necesse est accipi.*"⁶⁾ Was Melanchthon influenced merely by his desire not to hurt the admired, scholarly Calvin? Or did Calvin's content of the Supper, still possessing "mystery," but relieving such as accepted his view of the necessity of insisting on a literal *ἔστί*, "appeal more" to his individual make-up?

Melanchthon did not lecture on theology only; he was a much-sought professor of the *humaniora*. And the party of Philippists had a large number of graduates of Wittenberg who had studied history, medicine, and philology there, but were religiously attracted more by Calvinism on account of its "rational, logical compactness." Loescher writes: "*Man sahe haufenweise Politicos, Medicos, Poeten und Philologos, welche doch die Sache theologisch zu untersuchen weder Lust noch Vermoegen [ability] hatten, gleichwohl aus ganzem Herzen zu dem Calvinismo incli-*

2) *C. R.*, I, 1106.

3) Minutes of the disputation, in Bullinger, *Ref.-Gesch.*, II, 275 sq.

4) *C. R.*, III, 537.

5) *Instit.*, IV, 17. 11; likewise: *Fasti*, IV, 17, 32.

6) *C. R.*, IX, 1089. Whether Peucer is an authentic witness is discussed by Herrlinger, *Die Theologie Mel.*, 1879, p. 152 f.

nieren. Peucer war der vornehmste von dieser Cabale." 7) And Hubert Languet, a decided Calvinist, wrote to Calvin: "There is a healthy growth of those at this school who favor the truth [Calvinism]." 8) Also among the clergy, ministers and professors, there were large numbers who spun out Melanchthonian teaching in the direction toward Calvinism or continued Melanchthon's spinning. The Electorate Saxony was filled with them; but they partly used veiled, ambiguous phrases, partly were not recognized on account of the sleepy trust of Elector August 9) and others. Hidden Calvinism, Crypto-Calvinism, was *the* tragedy of the third quarter of the century.

Before we view this tragedy, we shall have to try to get a view of the general situation in regard to the Lord's Supper. In the southwest of Germany, Calvin traveled along an easy road, prepared by Butzer. In England John Laski published the *Consensus Tigurinus* in 1552, under Edward VI. Originally a Roman Catholic clergyman, he had become a Protestant in East Frisia, where he introduced a sort of presbyterian constitution. The Augsburg Interim drove him, together with a number of Frisians, to England, where he became a full-fledged Calvinist. The government of Bloody Mary expelled him, and having been refused an asylum in Denmark, he hoped to find refuge in Hamburg or Bremen. The Lutheran pastor Westphal (Hamburg), a shrewd observer of events and movements, had opened polemics against the Swiss, calling attention to the variety of opinions and conceptions on their side. 10) It was meant as a warning to his fellow-Lutherans, clearly showing up the internal differences between Calvinism and Lutheranism. 11) This book was followed by another, in the succeeding year, which contained the New Testament arguments for the Lord's Supper and called upon all true disciples of Luther to defend the doctrine against the onrushing Reformed errors. In this year Laski had at last found refuge in Frankfort on the Main, while another Cal-

7) *Hist. Motuum*, II, 183.

8) *Epistolae*, IX, 486.

9) Caspar Peucer was professor of medicine, but also court physician to the Elector August. The value of the position for keeping the elector in the dark is easily seen.

10) *Farrago Confusarum et inter se Dissidentium Opinionum de Coena Sacra*. Magdeburg, 1552, 5 vols.

11) He winds up with: "The blasphemies of the Sacramentarians should rather be refuted by the civic powers (*sceptro magistratus*) than with the pen."

vinistic refugee, Micronius, owing to the influence of Westphal, was refused a refuge at Hamburg. Because of such treatment of his fellow-churchmen Calvin felt impelled to write against Westphal his *Defensio Sanae et Orthodoxae Doctrinae de Sacramentis*, etc.¹²⁾ This work contained hot, biting invectives and evidenced a most insulting contempt for the theological abilities of the opponents. In very short order a double formidable phalanx was arrayed against him, and publishers reaped a harvest. Several of the publications were rather fat tomes (Timann's *Farrago Sententiarum in Vera . . . Doctrina de Coena Domini*, 1555, has 605 pages). Calvin's *Secunda Defensio*, etc, 1556,¹³⁾ attempted to draw the Saxon Philippists openly to his side. Westphal distributed questionnaires among the "spirited magistrates" of many cities and among many theologians of Lower Saxony and received satisfactory replies from Magdeburg, Mansfeld, Bremen, Hildesheim, Hamburg, Luebeck, Brunswick, Hanover, and many other cities, some of which wrote very extensive declarations of the Lutheran doctrine on the Sacrament. These he collected and published. When, in Frankfort, the accusers of Laski were requested to prove that he differed from the Augustana, Westphal advised the Frankfort magistrate most vehemently to expel Laski. At last Calvin ceased his efforts, having in vain tried to induce Melancthon to give him a clean bill on the Augustana. The bitterness with which the controversy was carried on on both sides did much to incense the German Lutherans against the Calvinists all the more, for they held their attitude responsible for the whole affair.

At Bremen, too, waves rose high. Timann requested each one of the Bremen clergymen to subscribe to his *Farrago's* 605 pages, which Dr. Hardenberg declined to do, thus bringing about his exile. (He died as a Reformed minister.) Yet, through the mayor's influence gradually all Bremen was made Calvinistic.

In the Palatinate tenacious Hesshusius was expelled because he worked against all Calvinists in his territory. Of course, in the Palatinate, the native country of Melancthon, there were many adherents of Magister Philip. Elector Frederick III, wishing to form his own judgment, read much of the literature written during the controversy. Unfortunately, he sought explanations from Thomas Erast, a medical scholar, who at heart was a Calvinist. Erast's information and book *Gruendlicher Bericht* succeeded in

12) *C. R.*, op. Calv., XXXVII, 1 sqq.

13) *C. R.*, Calvin., XXXVII, 41 sqq.

persuading Frederick completely to accept the Reformed views. Heidelberg University already had several Philippists and Calvinists. To them Frederick added two decided friends of Calvinism, Olevianus and Ursinus, of Zurich, and the Italian Tremellius. The cult was ruthlessly changed. From that time on the churches no longer had pictures, baptismal fonts, altars, and organs; biscuits (*Semmeln*) replaced wafers; many festivals were stricken off the calendar. Such pastors as would not submit to the new order of things were deposed and replaced by Reformed clergymen, mostly from the Netherlands.

The Elector had Olevianus and Ursinus formulate a catechism. At Heidelberg it was submitted to the inspectors and the clergy, was translated into Latin, and, in 1563, published in Latin and German. —

We are now ready to return to Saxony. Here the *Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum* (also *Misnicum*, Meissen) had been introduced into the churches. Elector August had witnessed all those Hamburg, Bremen, Frankfort, Wurttemberg, Palatinate discussions and events. He wanted to be, and to be looked upon as, a genuine Lutheran, and he thought that in his realm, both in cities and villages, the clergy continued to preach and teach, that everybody believed and lived, along truly Biblical lines, and that "his" university, his Wittenberg, where the Reformation had been born, still was the faithful nursery of the true doctrine. When, therefore, the theologians of Jena in the Duchy, at Altenburg, joining in a conference with those of the Electorate, charged the Wittenberg men with adulterating the pure doctrine, he was incensed. He was going to make sure about that; but when his clergymen expressly reiterated their adherence to the *Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum*, he was satisfied.

In 1571 the Wittenberg theological faculty issued a new catechism. This catechism decidedly rejected ubiquity and taught a Christology and a doctrine of the Lord's Supper in harmony with Calvin's teachings.¹⁴⁾ The title is: *Catechesis Continens Explicationem simplicem et brevem Decalogi, Symboli Apost., Orationis Dominicae*, etc. It was published anonymously, though the faculty had signed the preface. This preface declares that Luther's Enchiridion is meant for young children and that those who have progressed in doctrine need more explicit and detailed instruction, reinforced by more proofs.

14) pp. 77. 123.

Jena at once criticized the catechism; Wittenberg defended it in the *Grundfeste*, the full title of which was: *Von der Person und Menschwerdung unsers Herrn Jesu Christi, der wahren christlichen Kirche Grundfeste wider die neuen Marcioniten, Samosatener, Sabellianer, Arianer, Nestorianer, Eutylianer und Monotheliten unter dem flacianischen Haufen, durch die Theologen zu Wittenberg, 1571*. There is a peculiar shifting of points in its discussion: it pretends that its *raison d'être* is not so much the necessity of declarations on the Holy Supper as the necessity of rejecting Brenz's and Chemnitz's Christology, particularly the *ubiquitas* "theory." The book clearly shows their agreement with Calvin, but the authors claim that they agree with the old Church, which, in this matter, Calvin happens to do also.

Elector August was deeply imbued with a sense of personal responsibility; a most sincere purpose moved him to uphold the genuine Lutheran Church and doctrine. Twice at Torgau he had instituted conferences of civic officials, noblemen, town representatives, and professors of Wittenberg and Leipzig for the discussion of religious and ecclesiastic matters. They had met for months, but parted without definite decisions. Now again he had several prominent leaders formulate a definite declaration on the Lord's Supper, at Dresden, 1571, the *Consensus Dresdensis*. This document follows the lines of the Wittenberg catechism; and the paragraph on the Holy Supper states that Christ's real body has been sacrificed on the cross and is given us with bread in the Sacrament, the Lord thereby testifying that He adopts us, makes us members of His body, cleanses us with His blood, grants us forgiveness of sins, and wishes truly to live and be efficacious in us.¹⁵⁾ The elector hoped that all Lutherans would subscribe to this *Consensus*. But the assent did not come; on the contrary, from many sides there came protests, a collection of which was published at Jena in 1572. The elector had implicit confidence in Wittenberg and Leipzig; so Jena must be wrong, and its refusal to sign the *Consensus Dresdensis* must be sinful. Two years later he became administrator of the Saxon Duchy in which Jena was situated. When, upon his renewed request that the clergy sign the *Consensus*, they again refused to do so, he expelled them, so that Philippian Calvinism threatened to spread from the Electorate to the Duchy.¹⁶⁾ The Jesuits rejoiced, and the Palatinate

15) Gieseler, *Kirchengesch.*, III, 2, pp. 264—267.

16) At Weimar four superintendents and ten pastors were removed, and Philippists put in their places. Grulich, *Denkwuerdigkeiten von Torgau*, 1855, p. 91.

offered thanksgivings because Saxony had gone over to the Reformed Church. But August was the Thomas unwilling to believe.

Suddenly one day in 1574 light dawned upon the elector. The appearance of the anonymous¹⁷⁾ *Exegesis Perspicua . . . de Sacra Coena* indicated that the Crypto-Calvinists believed the time ripe for coming out into the open. The *Exegesis* expressly rejected sacramental union, manducation with the mouth, manducation by unbelievers, things which formerly had been passed over in silence. Praise of the Calvinists and depreciation of Luther were followed by the advice to agree on the formula: "Bread is the communion of the body" and to stop thinking about ubiquity and the use of the Holy Supper. Of course, this was Melancthonism, but as congruous to Calvinism as one triangle to another according to any geometrical theorem.

August was dumbfounded when at last he saw how he had been deceived — dumbfounded and indignant. Dr. Peucer and three other leaders were arrested and brought before a heresy court, which had been arranged for in the Second Torgau Article, 1571. Besides, the legislature was called together at Torgau, which subpenaed theological professors of Wittenberg and Leipzig. The town's dwellings were filled with scholars, so that two had to lodge in one room.¹⁸⁾ A confession on the Lord's Supper, German and Latin, had been worked out by a commission and was presented to all present, even to the Fellows¹⁹⁾ of both universities, for signature. This confession²⁰⁾ is still unsatisfactory, but its articles on the Supper "contain all elements of Lutheran theology" and reject *nominatim* Calvin, Beza, Bullinger, and the Heidelberg theologians.

Several members of the cabal remained obdurate and were deposed and exiled, others imprisoned. The catastrophe of the tragedy shows a sort of reinstatement of the genuinely Lutheran Church and Chemnitz, Andreae, and Selnecker as the right hands of the Elector.

Luther was dead, Melancthon was dead, Calvin was dead. A circumspect plan had been on the way to plant a Calvinistic

17) On the probability of authorship see Tschackert, p. 547. The book was not on the market, but was distributed privately.

18) Grulich, p. 91, note.

19) Grulich, p. 92.

20) *Kurz Bekenntnis u. Artikel v. h. Abendmahl, . . . uebergeben und gehandelt im juengsten Landtag zu Torgau*. Tschackert gives a short summary, p. 548.

Church in Germany. This Church was determined to prevent a lucid, definite, complete declaration on Christology and the Sacrament. When the Formula of Concord was being prepared, Calvinists and Crypto-Calvinists, and even Queen Elizabeth from across the Channel shouted: "Don't!— or we shall and will withdraw from the Augsburg Confession." These people avowed their desire for unity; but "the nearer Philippists came to Calvinism, the less unity was to be thought of" (Schmauck). Calvinism is closer to natural man than the Book of Concord. Union between the two strengthens natural man. This attempted union in our period was about to perpetuate internal, ecclesiastical strife. For even the *Kurz Bekenntnis* could never be the last word. Genuine and consistent Lutheran faith has great inner strength. Union with Calvin does not allow the full evangelical faith to exert itself. The Tory *Realpolitik* of Calvinism had begun to exert its tendency to overshadow the status of the Church of the Reformation, in which freedom is gained by yielding, loving adherence to the Word of God.

(To be concluded.)
