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CONTRIBUTIONS OF EARLY EUROPEAN PIETISM  
TO SOCIAL REFORM

by  
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A THESIS

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## INTRODUCTION

Scholars of church history have offered many opinions as to the permanent effects of early European Pietism. Most will say that its greatest contribution to the Church is the impulse it gave to the establishment of Protestant missions. K. S. Pinson finds in it a psychological force which brought<sup>1</sup> the rise of German nationalism. R. A. Knox considers it as simply another manifestation of the phenomenon in Christianity which he calls "enthusiasm."<sup>2</sup> He notes "enthusiasm's" incidence through the history of the church beginning with Corinth in the first century and continuing to the present day. However he designates the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as periods of its widest influence. According to Mr. Knox, while "enthusiasm" may contribute to revival in

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<sup>1</sup>  
This the thesis of Mr. Pinson's book, Pietism as a Factor in the Rise of German Nationalism (Studies in History, Economics and Public Law; New York: Columbia University Press, 1934).

<sup>2</sup>  
In his book, Enthusiasm, a Chapter in the History of Religion (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 1-3, Mr. Knox characterizes the "enthusiastic" society as follows: (1) the group claims to be preserving or restoring the primitive discipline of the church, (2) invariably the group is schismatic, (3) the members should live a life of angelic purity and apostolic simplicity, (4) the new birth of its members is not a mere reformation of manners, but involves a new approach to religion, making Christianity an affair of the heart, (5) the emphasis of their teaching is on the direct personal access to Christ with secondary place given to sacraments and liturgy, and (6) the members experience inward peace, joy, and assurance.

religion beyond that there are no lasting effects.

The purpose of this thesis is to show that Pietism did have effects beyond that of revivalism, and indeed made contributions to social reform. With its emphasis upon experiential religion, Pietism has been a subjective type of Christianity with no social outworkings save certain prohibitions against participation in worldly amusements. In this light it is viewed as another form of "quietism", and has been called the "Protestant monasticism." A church which withdraws from the world becomes irrelevant to the world. We must admit that this weakness is incipient in the very nature of Pietism. Yet withdrawal is the opposite of what full-fledged Pietism ought to be. Inherent in this "heart religion" is a deep concern and love for those outside the church. Because of this, we shall see that Pietism had some vital outworkings in the area of social reform.

Pietism's social concerns have a real application today. The emphasis of Pietism; namely regeneration and conversion, the importance of the laity, the religion of the heart, world missions, the centrality of Christ, have become part and parcel of the churches in the main stream of Protestantism today. To say that Pietism was irrelevant on the social scene is to say that a large sector of Protestantism is irrelevant there. The truth is that if our churches are irrelevant in the major social movements today, it is because they have not taken the social outworkings of Pietism seriously.

While our churches hold to Pietist teachings, perhaps the members stand in the same place that many members of the Lutheran State Church did in Spener's time.

In this study, "early European Pietism" will mean Pietism as it originated with Philip J. Spener, as it was furthered and shaped by August H. Francke and Nicholas L. von Zinzendorf, and as it bore fruit in John H. Wichern and the "Inner Mission." The period of time involved is approximately from 1690 to 1850.

The word "European" means that Pietism which developed in the Lutheran Church of Germany and spread into other countries by the migration of Germans such as George Muller.

"Social reform" means the changes which Pietism brought into society. Today we would call this aspect the prophetic ministry of the church. Only as Pietism goes beyond the door of the church does it become real force for the Kingdom of God in history. Education, care of the orphaned and destitute, equality of man, adequate housing are some of the social concerns of the Germany of 1690-1850, as they are in our country today. Were you to hear some of John H. Wichern's speeches of 1848, you would see the parallel to the pronouncements of the councils of churches today.

The contributions of Pietism through the Moravians to the Evangelical Awakening in England are well known. How-

ever, no reference will be made as to the effect of Methodism on social reform, as this subject has been adequately dealt with before.

The interest of the writer is that of a minister of the Moravian Church. Through Zinzendorf, Pietism played an important part in the renewal of that church in Herrnhut, Germany, in 1727. As the Moravian Church completes the 509th year of her existence, the question must be asked as to whether the Pietist heritage has been lost, or does it speak meaningfully to the church today. Further, with the influence of Pietism so widespread in the Protestant Church, does it speak to us regarding the vital social issues which face us today?



I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PIETISM

## CHAPTER I

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF PIETISM

#### The Religious Climate of the Seventeenth Century

Germany had been devastated by the Thirty Years' War. The spiritual state of the people was at a low ebb, evident in the coarsening and lowering of morals. True to the principles of Luther, the church was subordinate to the state. While many of the princes had been Christians in Luther's time, by 1650, many were members of the church only in a nominal sense. Often these and even the sincere princes meddled in the affairs of the church with detrimental effects.<sup>1</sup> Class distinctions were rigidly observed, with definite divisions ranging from the nobility at the top, followed by the professional people including lawyers, clergy men, and rich burghers, to the workers and peasants at the bottom.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the people were regular in attendance at Sunday service. They were required to be so by law. Attendance and participation in the Lord's Supper were thought of as good works, giving credit to the believer in God's sight.

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<sup>1</sup>Philip Jacob Spener, Pia Desideria, trans. Theodore G. Tappert, (Seminar Editions; Philadelphia; Fortress Press, 1964), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

Sermons were long and boring, centering in disputations and polemics. Pinson cites the outline of a sermon on Matthew 10:30: "But even the hairs of your head are all numbered," as follows:

(1) the origin, style, form and natural position of our hair; (2) the correct care of man's hair; (3) the reminiscences, reminder, warning, and comfort to be derived from the hair; (4) how to take care of the hair in a good Christian fashion and how to make use of it.<sup>1</sup>

That people were not always attentive is suggested by the regulations which prohibited walking to and fro and gossiping during prayers and hymns. Sleeping during sermons was so common that the theologian John Gerhard was expressly praised<sup>2</sup> at his funeral for never having slept in church.

Seventeenth century "orthodoxy" arose in a logical manner. After Luther's reformation, which had arisen out of a vital relationship between the believer and his God, the problem of defining this experience and organizing a church arose. Instead of this vital relationship, the scholastics had substituted a faith which consisted of assent to the definitions of the church. With faith so defined, the Christian life meant little more than pure doctrine and participation in the sacraments. The laity had little to do in the church but accept what the clergy gave them in terms of sermons, sacraments, and services.

The personal lives of the clergy were not blameless.

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<sup>1</sup> Pinson, p. 37, quoting A. Tholuck, Vorgeschichte des Rationalismus, 2 vols. (Halle, 1853-62), vol. II, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> Spener, p. 7

They were accused of being too servile and fawning before princes and noblemen and of lording it over the common people. They shared the current belief in witchcraft and succumbed to the current vices of the people, including excesses in food and drink.<sup>1</sup> It can be seen that Germany needed a revival. That revival began under the leadership of Philip Jacob Spener.

#### Philip Jacob Spener

Spener was born in Rappoltsweiler, near Strasburg, in 1635. His mother and grandmother were deeply religious, and he was indebted to them for his early religious impulses. Another influence was his pastor, Joachim Stoll, who later became his brother-in-law and wrote the second appendix to his Pia Desideria. The books which Spener found and read in his father's library were a third influence. Some of the titles were: True Christianity, by John Arndt; Golden Treasure of the Children of God, by Emanuel Sontham; The Practice of Piety, by Lewis Bayly; Self Deceit, by Daniel Dyke; and The Necessary Teaching of the Denial of Self, by Richard Baxter. All of these call for holiness of life, emphasizing a rigorous religious and moral life as against a dogmatic intellectualism.

At 16, Spener attended the university at Strasburg, and at 18, he received his master's degree. There he met John Conrad Dannhauer, who induced him to read Luther's works,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

to think of salvation as a present and not merely future gift of God, and to see the place of the laity in the church. After traveling through France, Switzerland, and Germany, he returned to Strasburg to write a dissertation for the degree doctor of theology. In 1666,<sup>1</sup> he became senior pastor of the clergy in Frankfurt am Main.

One day in 1670, he preached a sermon on Matthew 5: 20-26, insisting on the necessity of a complete conversion and a living faith. So great was the response that Spener began to hold meetings for study and prayer twice a week in his house. These meetings were called the "collegia pietatis,"<sup>2</sup> from which the Pietist movement received its name. Spener tried to bring revival to his people by preaching, using ecclesiastical discipline, and by improving and animating the instruction classes held each Sunday.<sup>3</sup>

Then in 1674, Spener was invited by a Frankfurt publisher to write an introduction to a collection of Arndt's sermons. This introduction created such a sensation that it was soon published separately and given the name Pia Desideria or Pious Desires. The content of this book will be discussed on pages 18-31

While many accepted Spener's ideas, others leveled

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 10-11

<sup>2</sup> John T. McNeill, Modern Christian Movements (Philadelphia; The Westminster Press, 1954), pp. 55-56.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Grünberg, "Pietism," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson, Vol. IX (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1953), p. 54.

accusations against him, primarily because of the collegia pietatis, on the grounds that these conventicles fostered division. In 1686, he became preacher at Dresden for five years. When he reproached the Elector for drunkenness, and the professors at Leipzig and Wittenberg for university conditions and defective ministerial training, he fell into disfavor. He accepted the invitation to become pastor of the St. Nicholas Church in Berlin in 1691, where he remained for the rest of his life. It is estimated that by 1700, there were thirty two cities in which the Pietists had gained considerable influence.<sup>1</sup>

#### August Hermann Francke

While the initial impetus to Pietism was given by Spener, it was furthered and reached its climax as a movement under August Hermann Francke (1663-1727). Francke came from a well-to-do family and was born in Lubeck. He came under the influence of Pietism through Christian Korthold, an admirer of Spener.<sup>2</sup> After a long and deep spiritual struggle in 1687 did Francke experience his conversion. Shortly afterwards he visited Spener at Dresden. Returning to Leipzig he established a collegium philobiblicum for the study of Scripture, on the order of the collegia pietatis of Spener. For this he was expelled from the University of Leipzig. He went to Erfurt, and thence in 1691, to the Uni-

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<sup>1</sup>Pinson, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>McNeill, p. 59.

versity at Halle. There he remained until his death and exerted his greatest influence. Francke's ministry is thus described:

Francke's parochial activity and pastoral care exercised the deepest and most far-reaching influences. His sermons centered on the great theme of Pietistic theology, sin and grace. They were spontaneous utterances of his innermost being and testimonies from his own experience. His practical activity enlivened his lectures and made his study of the Bible more fruitful for the calling of his students, and his scientific work in its turn had a wholesome effect upon his sermons and religious instruction. . . . But his chief activity belonged from the beginning to his congregation. His eminent gifts showed themselves not only in his pastoral care but also in the field of pedagogy. In both spheres he developed the most strenuous activity, taxing his powers to the utmost. He preached twice on Sunday, conducted daily prayer-meetings and daily catechization of children and paid regular visits to members of his congregation.<sup>1</sup>

At Halle, Francke established his philanthropic institutions of which more will be said later (pp. 44-46). During his tenure at the university many students were educated in the Pietist tradition. Wherever they went, they took Pietism with them.

By the time of Francke's death, Pietism had reached its high-water mark.<sup>2</sup> In the middle of the eighteenth century, the Enlightenment began to make inroads at Halle. When Schleiermacher attended the university in 1787, the faculty was completely under the influence of Rationalism.

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<sup>1</sup> T. Forster, "August Hermann Francke," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson, Vol. IV, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1953), pp. 367-368.

<sup>2</sup> Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (1st ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918), p. 500

### Württemberg

Pietism grew in other places. The movement came to Württemberg with Spener in his visit of 1662. It attracted many adherents and acquired a distinct character which was independent of Spener. It received direct encouragement from the authorities of the church. The result was that by 1694, the standards of theological education had been raised considerably.<sup>1</sup> Because of the positive attitude of the clergy, Pietism was much better contained within the church at Württemberg. Further, because of its intimate sympathy with scientific theology, as seen in the scholar, John Albrecht Bengel, Pietism was on much better terms with orthodox theologians.

### Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf

The third person who plays a significant part in the growth and influence of Pietism was Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, who was born in 1700. Spener was his godfather, and Francke supervised his education at Halle for six years. His father, mother, and maternal grandmother were influenced by Spener's Pietism.

The picture we have of the count is that of a delicate, precocious boy, either surrounded with pious adults or alone with his imagination. . . . At the age of four he had a remarkable grasp of Christian teaching. Very early also he came to treasure Luther's Smaller Catechism second only to the Bible itself. . . . He not only loved to hear of the Saviour but also to speak of him. Failing an audience he would speak alone to an im-

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<sup>1</sup>Carl Mirbt, "Pietism," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson, Vol. IX (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1953), p. 59.



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aginary one.

At Halle he formed prayer groups, numbering seven when he left the school. Because he dined at Francke's table daily, he came to know the various missionaries who visited there. With five other schoolboys he formed the Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed, whose purpose was to be a leaven among all Christians, to labor for the salvation and fellowship of all men, to succor all those who are persecuted for their faith, and to carry the gospel to the heathen beyond the seas.

While Zinzendorf trained for diplomatic service at the University of Wittenberg, yet his mind was always set on matters of his Saviour.

As his acquaintance with the Wittenberg divines developed, Zinzendorf discovered that the Pietists and the orthodox Lutherans shared a common ground. It was the common ground he was to discover in all denominations, and he called it the Christianity of the heart. This became a fundamental conception in Zinzendorf's world-view of religion; it was to possess him all his life and drive him on to his life's task of 'reuniting the Christianities.' He discovered that this Christianity of the heart--this heart-to-heart or personal and intimate devotion to Jesus Christ and to all who acknowledged him as Saviour--rose above all barriers of creed, forms of worship and ecclesiastical organization; it was instantly recognized by all men in every place who shared in it; and it was the meeting-ground of all Christians and of all the churches.<sup>2</sup>

His grand tour of Europe in 1719 further widened his ecumen-

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<sup>1</sup> John R. Weinlick, Count Zinzendorf (New York-Nashville: The Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 18-20.

<sup>2</sup> A. J. Lewis, Zinzendorf the Ecumenical Pioneer, A Study in the Moravian Contribution to Christian Mission and Unity (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), p. 27.

ical acquaintance. At the art gallery at Dusseldorf, as he viewed the Ecce Homo by Domenico Feti, he determined to open his life to the service of his Lord. The question was, how?

That answer came, when in 1722, a group of Moravian refugees, members of the Unity of Brethren Church founded from among the followers of John Hus, sought permission to live on his estate. These represented the Hidden Seed, the church driven underground during the Thirty Years War. On the top of a hill on the Count's newly purchased estate of Berthelsdorf, on June 8, these refugees began building the town that was to become Herrnhut (The Watch of the Lord.) In 1727, the village had grown both in number and in unity of spirit, so that they were able to begin fulfillment of the life-long aims of Zinzendorf. He considered the Moravians (as they were later nicknamed) to be an ecclesiola in Ecclesia (little churches within the Church) or a conventicle within the Lutheran State Church. He sent Moravians all over Europe in what was called the Diaspora, to form conventicles in state churches, so that the whole of Christianity might be revived by their leaven.<sup>1</sup> With his desire for world missions originally conceived at Francke's table in Halle, Zinzendorf sent Moravians in 1732 to St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands to preach to the slaves there. In 1741, he labored in Pennsylvania to bring together the various denominations

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<sup>1</sup> For an adequate treatment of the Diaspora, see John R. Weinlick, The Moravian Diaspora, a Study of the Societies of the Moravian Church within the Protestant State Churches of Europe (Nazareth, Pa.: Moravian Historical Society, 1959).

which had settled there by means of the Pennsylvania Synods, but he failed.

Zinzendorf revised the Halle Pietism to his own ideas, and for that, received the censure from both Halle and Württemberg. However, through his efforts, the influence of Pietism became world-wide.

The count, with his native gifts, winsome personality, and driving energy, brought to Pietism a vigor unmatched by that of any of its other leaders. Also, the organization of the Moravian Church, the only denomination growing out of the movement, gave a direction, a permanence, and an international spread to Herrnhut Pietism not possible in the case of that Pietism which lacked such an organization.<sup>1</sup>

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Weinlick, Count Zinzendorf, p. 12

II. THE TEACHINGS OF PIETISM

## CHAPTER II

### THE TEACHINGS OF PIETISM

Theologically, Spener had never meant to be anything but an orthodox Lutheran. What he meant to do was to bring life to what has been called "dead orthodoxy."

He meant to be simply an orthodox Lutheran, and persistently dwelt on his harmony with the doctrinal standards of the Lutheran Church. At the same time, he shifted the center of interest from the maintenance of orthodox doctrine to conduct and practical piety, and from the objective validity of the verities of salvation and means of grace to the subjective conditions connected with them, their ethical accountability then following as a necessary corollary. Spener was concerned, above all, with the true personal faith of the heart, which, he maintained, might coexist with serious doctrinal errors. At bottom, however, this meant a far graver revolution in existing dogmatic and theological tenets than Spener himself had surmised, and led, in practice, to connivance at all sorts of erroneous teachers, sectarians, and fanatics.<sup>1</sup>

All this began with the publication of the Pia Desideria. That book is divided into three parts, with the first dealing with corrupt conditions existing in all classes of people. He accuses the civil authorities of drunkenness, prodigality, and concern with furthering their own political ends. He chastises the clergy for living with a worldly spirit marked by carnal pleasure, of scandalous misconduct, and neglect of their pastoral duties. If the leaders of the

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<sup>1</sup> Grünberg, "Pietism", p. 56.

nation are so blameworthy, what can be expected of the common people? In the third estate "it is evident on every hand that none of the precepts of Christ is openly observed."

The idea of faith being merely intellectual assent, and the illusion of opus operatum regarding the Word and the sacraments cannot escape condemnation. The result is that those who would come to the Lutheran Church for salvation, whether pagan, Roman, or Jew, are repelled by the behaviour of its members.<sup>1</sup>

The second section of the Pia Desideria deals with the possibility of better conditions in the church, based on the promises of God, the prophecies of Paul, and an unexpected great fall of papal Rome.<sup>2</sup>

The third section deals with proposed reforms in the church. From these come the basic teachings of Pietism.

#### The Spiritual Priesthood

Spener unceasingly preached the necessity of conscious personal, vital, active, and practical Christianity. To accomplish this end, he urged household devotions, extemporary prayer and Bible readings. He promoted lay religion, emphasizing the spiritual priesthood of all believers, which he defined as:

The right which our Saviour, Jesus Christ has won for all men and by which he saves his believing ones through his Holy Spirit, to pray for themselves and for others, and each one may, and ought to, edify himself

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<sup>1</sup>Spener, pp. 43-75.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 76-86.

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and his neighbor.

The universal priesthood must be an active, and not a passive virtue.

It is certain, in any case that we preachers cannot instruct the people from our pulpits as much as is needful unless other persons in the congregation, who by God's grace have a superior knowledge of Christianity take the pains, by virtue of their universal Christian priesthood, to work with and under us to correct and reform as much in their neighbors as they are able according to the measure of their gifts and their simplicity.<sup>2</sup>

The spiritual priesthood of all believers emphasized the individual relationship to God. All Christians, regardless of age, sex, position in society, were spiritual priests.<sup>3</sup>

Spener spoke of the responsibilities of the spiritual priesthood in this way:

Our frequently mentioned Dr. Luther would suggest another means, which is altogether compatible with the first. This second proposal is the establishment and diligent exercise of the spiritual priesthood. . . . Every Christian is bound not only to offer himself and what he has, his prayer, thanksgiving, good works, alms, etc., but also industriously to study in the Word of the Lord, with the grace that is given him to teach others, especially those under his own roof, to chastise, to exhort, convert, and edify them, to observe their life, pray for all, and insofar as possible, be concerned about their salvation.<sup>4</sup>

The emphasis on the spiritual priesthood led to the formation of the collegia pietatis, or small group meetings for prayer and instruction. These groups fulfilled another

<sup>1</sup>McNeill, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>As quoted by Theodore G. Tappert in his introduction to Spener's Pia Desideria, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup>Pinson, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup>Spener, pp. 92-94.

proposal for reform found in the Pia Desideria, that is, that the Word of God must be better known by private reading in the homes, by public reading, with brief summaries, discussion, and interpretation of the Scripture, with free interchange<sup>1</sup> of opinions by the laity.

Spener hoped that these "prayer meetings" would serve as the spiritual leaven for the larger body, the church.

The collegia was not a new idea, but rather

the revival of a fundamental idea of the Reformation when Pietistic conventicles procured for every Christian the right and opportunity of testifying to his experience in free address and free prayer.<sup>2</sup>

These conventicles reached into every stratum of German life. The nobility, the middle class, and the peasants participated. Regularly they met to study the Bible, share their experience, and seek a corporate growth in grace. The ideal was a "band of men, whose hearts God had touched."<sup>3</sup>

When Francke joined the Pietist movement, he too began to organize conventicles. In 1689, he and Paul Anton organized the collegia biblica for the purposes of edification among the students at the university at Leipzig.

By his lectures--which were chiefly exegetical, and attended by so many that the largest auditorium could hardly hold all his hearers--as well as by his sermons and his personal intercourse with the students, he was the originator of a movement which struck deep roots in the minds of his hearers, and was destined to effect a deepening of piety by a conscious devotion to Christ in

<sup>1</sup>

Spener, pp. 87-92

<sup>2</sup>

Mirbt, "Pietism," p. 63.

<sup>3</sup>

Luther Andrew Landale Drummond, German Protestantism since Luther (London: The Epworth Press, 1951), p. 58.



a living personal faith.<sup>1</sup>

As we noted before, opposition from the faculty arose which soon prohibited his lecturing on anything but philosophy. In 1690, he accepted a call to the Church of the Augustinians at Erfurt, where he again organized conventicles. Again he was investigated by his opponents and dismissed from office in 1691. At that time Spener secured a position for him at Halle.

Zinzendorf took the concept of ecclesiola in Ecclesia, another name for the conventicles, and gave it his peculiar stamp. His idea was that the ecclesiola represented a means to Christian unity. He took the position that the union of Christians already existed, because that which unites is the "heart-religion", which transcends differing church confessions. The aim of the Moravian conventicles in the Diaspora was to "gather" the awakened Christians.<sup>2</sup> At a conference of workers in 1745, Zinzendorf said:

I have the irenian idea that all Children of God in all confessions are one and work for the same end. For over thirty years my aim has been that all may be one in the Lord. I regard no Christianity well substantiated without oneness of spirit.<sup>3</sup>

The Diaspora grew so rapidly that in 1746, more than 500 places had connection with this work of the Moravians.<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of these conventicles was the nurture of intra-

<sup>1</sup>Forster, "Francke," p. 367.

<sup>2</sup>Weinlick, Moravian Diaspora, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>As quoted by Weinlick, Moravian Diaspora, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup>Weinlick, Moravian Diaspora, p. 27.

church piety. Zinzendorf did not permit the preaching of original sermons for fear of divisiveness.

The people should only sing, pray, and talk with one another. What goes beyond the discussion of Christian experience is offensive. For with religious addresses without pastors, the people bring much poorer goods to market than in the church, and therewith comes pride.<sup>1</sup>

As in the case of other conventicle movements, the Diaspora was received with suspicion in many quarters. However, the Moravians always urged greater faithfulness to the state church. O. Steinecke, a pastor in the Lutheran State Church in Germany defended the Moravians against the charge of incipient sectarianism:

The Diaspora members always have had the reputation of the most faithful churchliness. Innumerable are the testimonies of the clergy who see in them the kernel and the star of their congregations. . . . In the course of official visits church administrators could report that the friends of the Brethren's Church are to be counted among the best members of the church.<sup>2</sup>

This conventicle movement spread all over Europe, with the Moravians as the catalysts. In some cases it gave vitality to the free church movements. In others, it did the same for the state churches.

A great problem of the ecclesiola is the danger of separatism. Any small group of Christians can become snobbish, and insist that they, the converted, are the only church. If every individual is allowed to define of what the church consists, there could be many individual churches.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>Weinlick, Moravian Diaspora quoting O. Steinecke, Die Diaspora der Bruedergemeine in Deutschland, Vol. I, (Halle: Miehlmann, 1905), p. 86

In actual practice, however, the ecclesiola often became the rival of the Ecclesia. Zeal often degenerated into fanaticism. A rigid distinction was apt to be drawn between the 'once born and the twice-born,' 'the regenerated and the worldly.' Leaders of the Pietist circles even kept weekly registers of the sequence of emotions experienced by the devout; they made strict inquiries as to whether the weaker brethren had been guilty of dancing, attending the playhouse, or playing cards.<sup>1</sup>

Spener and Francke would not have agreed with the above mentioned activities. But lesser men who followed them, and who were not inspired by the love of Christ as they should have been, did agree and brought much criticism and opposition to the Pietist movement.

### The Religion of the Heart

A second teaching of Pietism was that Christianity must be a religion of the heart, and not simply of assent to correct doctrinal formulas. Drummond says that Pietism preaches a "simple religion of the heart, the expression of immediate feeling, rather than the result of study and reflection."<sup>2</sup> Spener taught that Christianity is "heart religion," and gave recognition to its emotion. He turned the believer inward to his feelings. M. C. Duttenhofer negatively characterized Pietism as

that kind or sort of subjective Christianity which places on devout, pious feeling and on external devout forms and customs much more emphasis than they intrinsically merit.<sup>3</sup>

Weinlick gives a positive definition of Pietism as

<sup>1</sup>Drummond, p. 66

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 56

<sup>3</sup>Pinson, p. 42, quoting M. C. Duttenhofer, Frey-müthige Untersuchungen über Pietismus und Orthodixie (Halle: 1787), p. vi.

a Christianity of experience as opposed to emphasis upon creed and outer conformity. Another name for it is "enthusiasm." . . . There was a mystical element in it with its emphasis upon emotional experience. People turned to a simpler and more heartfelt expression of religion, not dependent upon intellectual formulation.<sup>1</sup>

An anonymous Pietist writes:

They must have the fire of the Holy Spirit within them. Their heart must burn and live so that they pursue their study of theology with the power of the Holy Spirit and build the walls of Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup>

Without this feeling of the heart that Christ is there, a man can hardly consider himself a Christian. R. A. Knox, a critic of Pietism says that

Jansenism, Moravianism, Methodism (not all alike, but all equally) are obsessed with soteriology. . . . The figure of a Divine-human Saviour will so fill the canvass that Zinzendorf and Howell Harris can find no real place in their system for the Eternal Father.<sup>3</sup>

The Wiedergeburt or regeneration is experienced as the beginning of salvation and "heart religion" in the life of the individual.

This Wiedergeburt became the most dominant motif in the life of the individual. It was called "the basis upon which all Christianity stood. If one is without it, he can no longer be called a Christian." It was an experience that changed and completely recreated the individual, influenced the whole subsequent course of his life and became the point of reference for all of his future activities.<sup>4</sup>

Some differences of opinion occurred among the leaders of Pietist movement regarding the conversion or regeneration

<sup>1</sup>Weinlick, Count Zinzendorf, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Pinson, pp. 43-44, quoting Sammlung auserlesener Materien zum Bau des Reichs Gottes (Frankfurt: 1734), p. 921.

<sup>3</sup>Knox, pp. 579-580

<sup>4</sup>Pinson, pp. 45-46

experience. Spener insisted on the necessity of conversion, but he did not ask a person, to name the time or place.

Francke had two years of deep anxiety and doubt before he<sup>1</sup> experienced peace in his life. He viewed his own experience of conversion as the normal way to salvation, regardless of how other Christians through the ages viewed theirs. Following Francke's teaching, the Halle Pietists said that a real conversion must include a deep conviction of sin and the experience of a sudden conversion at a precise moment. Francke's ideas on this subject caused him to place undue<sup>2</sup> restrictions upon the harmless amusements of children. His son and successor at Halle reckoned Zinzendorf as an unconverted man, because the Count took a more liberal view on the subject.<sup>3</sup>

Zinzendorf developed the "heart religion" of Pietism in a more positive manner. Because he had been nothing other than a pious Christian since the age of four, he could not be a morbid about the conviction of sin as the Hallensians were. As if in answer to his critics, he wrote:

Some time before I entered the ministry something special occurred in my inner life. They (the Pietists) had said that I had never been really converted. . . . As I came to look closely at my own conversion, I noted that in the necessity of the death of Jesus, and in the word "ransom money" (lytron) there was a special secret and a great depth, where, though the philosopher trips, revelation stands immovable. That gave me an insight into the whole teaching of salvation. . . . Since that year 1734, the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus became our special and only testimony, our universal remedy

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<sup>1</sup> Drummond, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Mirbt, "Pietism," p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> McNeill, p. 66.

against all evil in teaching and practice, and remains so to eternity.<sup>1</sup>

He called the Christianity which is in the hearts of all believers and which binds them together in the church the Herzens-Religion or "heart religion."

The unity of the true children of God, says Zinzendorf, is not a matter of intellect, of creed, of ritual, or order, nor indeed of serving in the first place, but of the heart. The soul's union or fellowship with the Lamb is "such a profession as cannot be taken up any more by education, but must be grounded on the testimony and sense of one's own heart, that he has sprung out of the pierced heart of Jesus, been hewn out of His side, and that the mouth of the Lamb has kissed him, and hallowed with an indelible mark."<sup>2</sup>

In a speech at Marienborn, in 1747, Zinzendorf said that the Herzens-Religion provides instant recognition and fellowship to all the children of God:

When some thousands of men in different parts of the earth, of different languages, and who have never seen one another's faces, having yet one language in respect of the heart, and can listen to what is said even by a child if it but touch their favorite string; this convinces thinking people, that there is a Religion of the Heart where men's spirits harmonize together through His operations who can speak without outward sounds. . . . Of such a Religion or Confession (never to be learned but through experience) we grant our Saviour to have been the Founder.<sup>3</sup>

In another place he said:

Our Saviour has declared that the small, the children, believe in Him (Matthew 18:6): From which we can well see that faith has its seat not in speculation,

<sup>1</sup>Weinlick, Count Zinzendorf, p. 115, quoting Jacob Wilhelm Verbeek, Des Grafen von Zinzendorf, Leben und Charakter, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup>Lewis, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup>Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, Maxims, Theological Ideas, and Sentences, ed. John Gambold (London: 1751), pp. 224-225.

not in thought but in the heart; it is a light in the heart.<sup>1</sup>

By emphasizing the Herzens-Religion or "heart religion", the Pietists restored the subjective aspect to Christianity, something that had been forgotten in Lutheran orthodoxy.

### Christian Love

A direct result of this "heart religion" is the practice of the Christian faith, the evidence of which is love. In his Pia Desideria, Spener lists as his third proposal for religious reform the following:

It is by no means enough to have knowledge of the Christian faith, for Christianity consists rather of practice. Our dear Saviour repeatedly enjoined love as the real mark of his disciples. . . . If we can therefore awaken a fervent love among our Christians, first toward one another and then toward all men (for these two, brotherly affection and general love, must supplement each other according to II Peter 1:7), and put this love into practice, practically all that we desire will be accomplished.<sup>2</sup>

Spener suggested that Christians should have confessors, not necessarily clergymen, to report in confidence on how they live, what opportunities they had to practice Christian love, and whether they have done so, or neglected them.<sup>3</sup> Here lay the difference between Spener, Francke, and Zinzendorf on the one hand, and Schleiermacher on the other, who said that

"the essence of religion is neither thought nor action, but rather intuition and feeling."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Pinson, p. 53, quoting Zinzendorf ueber Glauben und Leben, ed. Otto Herpel, Vol. VII, (Berlin: 1925) p. 34

<sup>2</sup>Spener, pp. 95-96

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>4</sup>Schleiermacher, Friedrich D. E., On Religion, tr. John Oman (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co., Ltd., 1893), p. 34.

Eighteenth century Pietists insisted on the practical aspect of religion. Perhaps this teaching of love is best seen in the pastoral ministries of Spener and Francke. Good works and faith, far from being separate, were as closely related as the rays of the sun. An anonymous Pietist said:

My Christian love extends to all people in general, especially to those who pursue diligently the virtues and command of God and Christ, be they called heathens, Turks, Jews, or Christians.<sup>1</sup>

Gottfried Arnold, a Pietist with heretical leanings, declared:

Just as our heavenly Father is benevolent to the wicked as well as to the pious, so are we, too, obliged, . . . to exhibit Christian love not only to the pious, to our friends and fellow religionists but also to the godless and to those that are our enemies.<sup>2</sup>

This love is to be demonstrated in the pious life, in relations to others. Spener calls for one result of the Christian life in his proposals for reform in the Pia Desideria: that of gentleness toward unbelievers and heretics.

We must beware how we conduct ourselves in religious controversies with unbelievers and heretics. . . . We owe it to the erring, first of all, to pray earnestly that the good God may enlighten them with the same light with which he blessed us, may lead them to the truth, may prepare their hearts for it. . . . We must give them a good example and take the greatest pains not to offend them in any way. . . . We should be glad to do what we can to point out, with a modest but firm presentation of the truth we profess, how this is based on the simplicity of Christ's teaching. . . . To this should be added a practice of heartfelt love toward

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<sup>1</sup>Pinson, p. 82, quoting Gottfried Arnold, Unparthey-  
ische kirchen- und ketzer Historie, new ed., Vol. III,  
(Schaffenhhausen: 1740-1742), p. 953.

<sup>2</sup>Pinson, pp. 82-83, quoting Gottfried Arnold, Das  
Leben der Glaubigen, 2nd ed., (Halle: 1732), p. 1015.



all unbelievers and heretics.<sup>1</sup>

A second result of this heartfelt love must be better understanding between Christians.

If there is any prospect of a union of most of the confessions among Christians, the primary way of achieving it, and the one that God would bless most, would perhaps be this, that we do not stake everything on argumentation, for the present disposition of men's minds, which are filled by as much fleshly as spiritual zeal, makes disputation fruitless.<sup>2</sup>

As Spener came into contact with some ministers of the Reformed Church who did not accept the extreme view of predestination, he saw no reason for the current hostility between the two Protestant communions, but rather pleaded for their cooperation against their common opponent, Rome.<sup>3</sup> He became acquainted with the Scot, John Dury, who spent fifty years trying to reconcile the Reformed and the Lutherans. Spener declared that he saw more evidences of true Christian Discipleship in Dury than in many of his own Lutheran brethren. He also knew Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz, who was also concerned with church union. He became involved in the proposal for church union which had been advanced by the theologian, George Calixtus.<sup>4</sup> Zinzendorf tried to put this theory of church union into action. A full discussion of this will be made in chapter IV.

Another result of Christian love as understood by the Pietists is Francke's presentation of missions to the Protestant Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Spener. pp. 97-99.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 12-13

From his "lighthouse" (as he called the University of Halle) he looked to the ends of the earth and considered the opportunities that had been seized by the Roman Catholics, but neglected by the Protestants. The official Lutheran Churches were not merely apathetic but hostile to Foreign Missions. Their scholastic leaders argued that the command to "preach the gospel to the whole world" applied exclusively to the Apostles, for only they were qualified by Vocatio Immediata; then there was Luther's doctrine De Vocatione for the ordinary man: "Let the cobbler stick to his last." . . .<sup>1</sup>

When Leibnitz's missionary treatise, Novissima Linica, fell into his hands, Francke was stirred to a sense of the Church's prime responsibility of carrying the gospel across the seas. When Frederick IV of Denmark asked him to support a mission in India, he sent three students of Halle-- Ziegenbalg, Plütschau, and Gründler--to establish a station at Tranquebar in 1706. From the letters circulated to Zinzendorf's grandmother, telling of the mission work, and from the conversations with the missionaries at Francke's dining table, Zinzendorf's missionary impulse arose.

Zinzendorf made to flower Francke's missionary ideas.

"To spread this unifying and reconciling conception of fellowship in Christ became increasingly Zinzendorf's consuming desire, and he lost no time in beginning his apostleship of unity. With five other schoolboys he now formed the Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed. It was a kind of spiritual knighthood in which the flower of chivalry bound themselves to confess their Saviour in word and deed. . . . and to carry the Gospel to the heathen beyond the seas."<sup>2</sup>

Zinzendorf and the Moravians threw down a challenge of missions which was not taken up until sixty years later, William Carey launched Protestant missions in earnest.

<sup>1</sup>Drummond, pp. 61-62.

<sup>2</sup>Lewis, pp. 25-26.

The Ministry

A final proposal for reform which Spener set forth in the Pia Desideria was the reform in the ministry. He felt that only such should be chosen as ministers who are called of God, and properly trained. Colleges and universities must become workshops of the Holy Spirit. Professors must become Christian examples, and exercise good discipline among the students. Proper books citing Christian example should be studied.<sup>1</sup>

He further felt that preaching should be reformed as to be edifying, to awaken faith in the hearers, and exhort believers to better life, rather than being devoted to "vain disputations."<sup>2</sup>

In the above two chapters, we have seen the development and teachings of Pietism. We shall now turn to see Pietism's theory of social responsibility.

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<sup>1</sup>Spener, pp. 103-115

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 115-122

III. PIETISM'S THEORY OF SOCIAL OUTREACH

### CHAPTER III

#### PIETISM'S THEORY OF SOCIAL OUTREACH

The goal of the men who lead Pietism was not to institute a reform of social conditions so as to uplift the life of the down-trodden. Rather, Pietism sought to instill experiential religion into the German state churches, and to combat "dead orthodoxy." Spener's proposals (1) to emphasize the Bible study, (2) to give the laity more to do in the church, (3) to insist on works as the fruit of faith, (4) to stay away from religious controversies, (5) to revamp the theological education of ministers, and (6) to direct the sermon toward the simple proclamation of the gospel were directed to the church, not society.<sup>1</sup> The social impulses of Pietism are the result of the practice of Christian love in the life of the individual believer. Good works are the result of the Christian who is saved by faith in Christ and who is trying to practice love. Pietism illustrates the well known fact that Christianity is not merely knowledge of Christ, but rather reaches into all parts of one's life and affects one's way of living. Thus the contributions of Pietism to social reform are derivative but are no less real.

The leaders of Pietism did not make a concerted ef-

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<sup>1</sup>Spener, pp. 87-122.

fort toward social reform. Each leader whom we shall study in Chapter IV was moved by the conditions of his time and did something as an individual. When a summation is made of all these efforts, a pattern does evolve which can be traced to Pietism.

In the age surveyed in this thesis (1690-1850) many movements swept through Germany, Pietism being one. They too made their contribution to social reform. The influence of the Enlightenment, romanticism, nationalism, etc. cannot be diminished. Pietism was one of the forces which contributed to Germany's development. Rudolph Sohm, at one time professor of German and canon law at the University of Leipzig, described Pietism as "the last great surge of the waves of the ecclesiastical movement begun by the Reformation." When an examination is made of Spener's proposals for reform in his Pia Desideria, it is apparent that he is re-emphasizing some of the great doctrines of the Reformation: (1) the universal priesthood, (2) good works as the fruit of faith, and (3) preaching of the gospel so that the common people can understand it. Spener regarded his proposals as the way to fulfill the Reformation.

The genius of Pietism is its emphasis on the worth and importance of the individual, especially the common man, in the Christian church.

#### Conversion of the Individual

As has been noted, (pp. 18-24) Pietism brought a return of the importance of the individual's relationship to

God. A Christian life began with the individual's conversion (Wiedergeburt). The roots of this idea go back to Martin Luther, who has been characterized as the "very type of modern individualism."<sup>1</sup> His great thesis, based on his own personal experience, that a man is justified by his personal faith in God, not merely by meeting the requirements of the group, the Church, is the basis for the Reformation. Luther said of the individual's experience:

Who can receive and procure for another that divine promise which requires the faith of every specific individual?<sup>2</sup>

Christianity is at base a personal experience. In the seventeenth century a hostility developed to all expressions of individuality and freedom. Anybody who dared to deviate from the formal orthodoxy was branded a heretic.

This imposition of authority crushing all attempts at individual expression was accompanied by rigid mechanization of education and of life in general, and an intensification of rigid class divisions and distinctions with strict uniformity within each class.<sup>3</sup>

Commenting on religion in Germany of the seventeenth century, Drummond says:

The reader will find himself wandering in an arid theological wilderness, his nostrils assailed by the acrid smoke of harsh polemics; no unifying pillar of fire directs his steps with radiant glow; discordant guides speaking unintelligible jargon compete in offering their services. It would almost seem as if Luther's promised land were a mirage.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Jacques Maritain, Three Reformers (London: 1928), p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>Pinson, p. 64, quoting E. Cassirer, Freiheit und Form, 2nd ed., (Berlin: 1918), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup>Pinson, p. 65

<sup>4</sup>Drummond, p. 11

Pietism brought a change in this, restoring personal experience to its rightful place in Christianity.

Pietism liberated the individual from the dogmatic burden and turned him towards his inner self. The basic Protestant tendency that the individual, released from all external means of salvation and from being bound by a firm church organization, should find his personal relationship to God in his own self, achieved in Pietism its most characteristic expression and its highest development.<sup>1</sup>

In emphasizing the personal conversion Pietism was not attacking any doctrines of the church, but was reacting against Lutheran absolutism of the time. Spener, Francke, and Zinzendorf all referred to the conversion of the individual, not society, although each may have viewed the circumstances surrounding conversion differently.

Spener rated the various doctrines of the church in accordance with their proximity to the central fact of salvation. Most important were those grounded in experience: new birth, justification, and sanctification.<sup>2</sup> Schleiermacher, one hundred years later, in his Christian Faith made redemption as the center of his doctrinal system.

Zinzendorf considered religion a matter for each individual heart. His great contribution was the "heart religion," with the idea of personal communion with our Saviour.

"The difference between the Herrnhutter and all other sects was, according to its founder, precisely this principle: "that every individual experiences the Saviour himself and does not merely repeat what he has

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<sup>1</sup>Pinson, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup>Arthur Wilfred Nagler, Pietism and Methodism (Nashville, Tenn.: Publishing House, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1918), pp. 31-34



heard<sup>1</sup> from his neighbors or from a few important individuals.

Zinzendorf recorded many instances of this personal communion. On the journey from America to England, his ship encountered a storm. After some time, Zinzendorf told the captain that it would let up in two hours, which it did. Later the captain asked him how he could have known. The Count replied:

For more than twenty years I have had a trusting relationship with my dear Saviour. Therefore, when I find myself in an unusual or dangerous situation, the first thing I do is to analyze carefully whether I am to blame. If I find something with which he is dissatisfied, I fall at his feet to ask forgiveness. Thereupon my Saviour forgives me and generally at the same time lets me know how the affair will end. But if he does not choose to reveal the outcome to me, I remain silent and conclude that it is better for me that I do not know. This time, however, he assured me that the storm would last only two hours more.<sup>2</sup>

With this emphasis on personal experience of, and communion with Christ, there is a danger that those who had them were a kind of spiritual elite, and looked down on those who did not. A kind of spiritual pride would develop, the results of which are well known from the time of the scribes and Pharisees. Pietists were early reproached for this spiritual self complacency.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps the extreme of this emphasis upon personal communion with Christ is found in the Moravians during the

<sup>1</sup>Pinson, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup>August Gottlieb Spangenberg, The Life of Nicholas Lewis Count Zinzendorf, tr. Samuel Jackson, (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1838), p. 316.

<sup>3</sup>Mirbt, "Pietism," p. 61.

"Sifting Period," which occurred from 1743 to 1750, and centered at Herrnhag, in Wetteravia. There the child-like-ness of the Moravians became childish-ness. The sentimental excesses of dwelling on the Saviour's blood and wounds, the nail prints, and the wound in the side brought great, well-deserved criticism. When Zinzendorf came to his senses in the matter, he ordered the community of Herrnhag completely abandoned. "The evacuation of Herrnhag was major surgery. . . . The operation restored the Brotherhood to health."<sup>1</sup>

### The Individual's Priesthood

Any religious group that stresses the necessity of the individual personal experience of Christ can become a separatist faction by dividing the church of which they are a part into saved and unsaved. This danger always exists. Yet Pietism did not bring this in Germany, unless the revival of the Unity of Brethren's Church, which began in Bohemia in 1457, can be counted as a sect group. Pietism affirmed that a Christian, that is, one who has this conversion experience, has a place in the church. He is part of the universal priesthood of all Christians. The Roman Catholic Church does not emphasize this. Spener comments:

It was by a special trick of the cursed devil that things were brought to such a pass in the papacy that these spiritual functions were assigned solely to the clergy. . . . and the rest of the Christians excluded from them.<sup>2</sup>

The spiritual priesthood means that every Christian is made

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<sup>1</sup>Weinlick, Count Zinzendorf, p. 206. <sup>2</sup>Spener, p. 93.

a priest by his Saviour, anointed by the Holy Spirit, and dedicated to perform spiritual priestly acts, such as to study the Bible, to instruct, admonish, chastise, and comfort neighbors, to do privately what pertains to the ministry publicly.<sup>1</sup> The spiritual priesthood had been advocated by Luther, but had never been practised until Spener's time.

The outgrowth of the spiritual priesthood was the collegia pietatis, where every Christian, regardless of his age or station, could have a part in the meeting. The laity had the opportunity to witness to their experiences and to play a vital part in the working of the church. While Pietism stressed individualism, it was individualism within a community, the church. Zinzendorf laid great emphasis on the community which was held together by a feeling of sympathy. Further, he said: "God has created us for Gemeinschaft, and without Gemeinschaft there is no Christianity."<sup>2</sup>

The idea of the spiritual priesthood had great consequences in society.

Many measures subsequently undertaken by the German Protestant laity to relieve social distress owed their initial impulse to the pietists' strong emphasis upon this cardinal element of Lutheran-Protestant theology. From their emphasis the idea of the priesthood of all believers entered into the program of social action envisaged by the nineteenth century German Protestants.<sup>3</sup>

In this community every person's religious experience

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<sup>1</sup>Spener, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>Pinson, p. 68.

William O. Shanahan, German Protestants Face the Social Question, Volume I, the Conservative Phase, 1815-1871 (Notre Dame, Ind.; University of Notre Dame Press, 1954), p. 31.

was important. Pinson and Drummond call attention to the publication of the biographies and autobiographies not only of men and women of noble birth and of genius, but also of peasants, soldiers, merchants, housewives and servant girls.<sup>1</sup> Their religious experiences were compiled and published. One such anthology was compiled by J. J. Moser.<sup>2</sup>

### The Individual's Worth

Pietism did not begin with the idea of the worth of the individual as its basis for social reform. Pietism rather emphasized the reality of sin in all individuals before conversion, and their worthlessness in that state. The individual becomes important because the practical expression of the Christians' faith is in good works. Christians have worth in God's sight because of what He has done for them. Other individuals have worth because of what God can do with them potentially. Individuals outside the church become the object of the Christian's works, as all are worth redemption.

Just as Luther had taught that good works must necessarily proceed from living faith, so the intense religious life of Pietism inspired its followers to share the blessings of their salvation with others, to testify to their faith, and to give proof of it by upright life and brotherly love. In harmony with this attitude they naturally sought out the wretched and the needy as proper objects of beneficence.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Pinson, p. 70, and Drummond, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup>J. J. Moser, Altes und Neues aus dem Reich Gottes, (Frankfurt: 1733-1735).

<sup>3</sup>Mirbt, "Pietism," p. 64.

The individual becomes important because of the Scriptural exhortations to love one another. Spener taught his people that love for our neighbors is part of practical Christianity. "Love is the whole life of the man ~~who~~ has faith and who through his faith is saved, and his fulfillment of the laws of God consists of love."<sup>1</sup>

A corollary to the idea of the value of the individual was the realization by the Pietists that the establishment of one's uniqueness and individuality involved the recognition of the individuality of others.<sup>2</sup> This principle brought on the growth of religious toleration, broke down the castes in society, and gave the common man a dignity and self-esteem which he did not have before. The idea that man is created in God's image and is created equal before God became a principle in the social and religious life of the Pietist community.

We have seen how Pietism emphasized the idea of personal religion and its outworking in Christian love. In turn, this idea made the individual in the Christian community important, and the individual outside the community recipients of the Christians' love. As Pietists looked around them, they saw many people on whom they could have compassion. Because of their sensitivity to the needs of others, and their willingness to minister to them, Pietism made a real contribution to social reform. Specifically what it did will be seen in the next chapter.

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<sup>1</sup>Spener, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>Pinson, p. 97.

IV. SPECIFIC AREAS OF PIETISM'S INFLUENCE

## Chapter IV

### SPECIFIC AREAS OF PIETISM'S SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Many currents swept across Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, bringing social changes to the world. Pietism was not, nor never intended to be the sole cause of the reform. With its emphasis on "heart religion," and the insistence that the Christian faith is witnessed in good works, Pietism did make contributions to certain reform movements in Germany.

In the eighteenth century Pietism as a movement, stood opposed to orthodoxy on the one hand and the Enlightenment on the other. Sometimes it sided with the Enlightenment on issues such as public education and the dignity of the common man. By 1760, Pietism was completely overtaken by the Enlightenment, and its influence in Germany dwindled. The only group to carry its ideals through the period to the new awakening was the Moravian Church.

Pietism revived at the beginning of the nineteenth century in a slightly different form. There was a great reaction against rationalism in the church. The force which the Moravians had carried into England in 1735 to begin the Evangelical Awakening with John Wesley, now returned to Germany, through the Diaspora.<sup>1</sup> This revival in German Lutheranism,

with its return to piety based on a simple faith, the Bible, and Christian fellowship, was called the Awakening. This time Pietism was gradually absorbed by the Church, and became the leaven which led Lutherans into many enterprises for social reform. The union of orthodox and Pietist also had its negative aspect, that of being tied to political conservatism. Perhaps the goals in social reform set by the church were not high enough because of this alliance.<sup>1</sup>

#### Popular Education

The attitude of the orthodox clergy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and in some groups of the "enlightened" was that schooling for children of the lower classes did not help them practically, and generally hindered their exercise of Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Martin Luther exhibited a great interest in education and urged the princes to make education compulsory. The primary reason was that the layman, who was to be armed with Scripture, must be able to read first. Lutheran orthodoxy, with few exceptions, had no interest in the common people and did not feel compelled to educate them.

The impetus for the development of national education came primarily from the Pietist movement. The Pietists came to the masses because of a genuine sympathy for them. Motivated by the idea of the worth of the individual and the desire to show Christian love, the Pietists opened

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<sup>1</sup>Shanahan, pp. 99-155.

<sup>2</sup>Pinson, p. 123.



schools to better the lot of the peasants and to present the gospel to their children.

Spener advanced the task begun by Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Gotha by holding weekly catechetical examinations for children and adults. He probably inspired the edict of 1692 requiring Sunday catechization in the rural congregations. His purpose was the inward assimilation of religious truth, rather than the mere impartation of knowledge. His efforts were to advance the practical piety of the masses.<sup>1</sup>

Francke, the first of the Pietists to organize schools, was educated in the court of Duke Ernest, and received many of his educational ideas there. Spener opened no formal schools. Francke planned twenty-one different schools. He recorded his first inspiration for his orphanage and schools:

When I discovered the excessive ignorance of these poor people and found it hard to get an entering wedge to their minds for the principles of Christianity, I was for a long time troubled to know how I could make any impression upon them. . . . I felt deeply the need of these poor creatures who came every week to my house to get their alms.<sup>2</sup>

In 1695 he opened the orphans' schools and laid the basis for all his institutions. The following year the Pädagogium was established, followed by a Latin school in 1697, and a school for girls in 1701. Funds for Francke's institutions were provided in large measure by the German aristocrats, with the

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<sup>1</sup>Mirbt, "Pietism," p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>August Herman Francke, Faith's Work Perfected, or Francke's Orphan House at Halle, tr. William L. Gage, (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph, 1857), p. 19.

favor of Frederick William I of Prussia. As a result of Francke's influence,

Wealthy citizens and reigning princes became interested in the establishment of public schools. The most notable instance is that of Frederick William I of Prussia, who has been called the "father of the Prussian public school system."<sup>1</sup>

Compulsory education was decreed for children between the ages of five and twelve in 1717.

Zinzendorf and three other men, who together had entered into an association called the "Covenant of Four Brethren," began establishing schools in 1723. The first was a charity school, established with money from a relative of the Count's. This was followed by a girls' school at Berthelsdorf.<sup>2</sup> But the sphere of educational activity did not extend far beyond the Moravian Church.

Disciples of the Enlightenment also were interested in public education, though from different motives than the Pietists. However, most of the advance of the eighteenth century was due to the influence of Pietism. Frederick the Great was strongly influenced by J. J. Hecker, a disciple of Francke. All over Germany, public education was encouraged and advocated by Pietists.<sup>3</sup> The methods of Pestalozzi in education were introduced into the schools of Württemberg and East Prussia by Karl August Zeller, a Pietist.<sup>4</sup> The Pietists supported schooling for the lower classes because of their belief in the dignity of the common man, and their

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<sup>1</sup>Pinson, p. 137. <sup>2</sup>Weinlick, Count Zinzendorf, p. 66.

Pinson, pp. 142-144

<sup>4</sup>Shanahan, p. 67.

hope, that if the Bible could be read by the people, salvation would follow into their lives.

### Orphanages and Asylums

As was noted before (p. 40), Pietism inspired its followers to share the blessings of their salvation with others, and give proof of their brotherly love by their works of beneficence. In a country where nobody seemed to have pity on the children, orphaned by war and pestilence, the Pietists ministered to them. Spener took an active part in the building of a combination poorhouse, orphan asylum, and workhouse at Frankfurt in 1679. This was overshadowed by Francke's orphanage established at Halle in 1694.

The new element in this event was the fact that one man alone, relying on divine help, should undertake to found such an institution on broad lines and that it should be maintained by voluntary contributions of a circle bound by mutual sympathy,<sup>1</sup>

This tradition of aid to the impoverished continued from Spener and Francke through the years to be most effective in John Henry Wichern's Inner Mission. Pietists took their ideas with them when they went to other countries. One of these is George Mueller, of Bristol, England. He, a Prussian, was sent to Halle to be a divinity student, although, as he said in his autobiography that he was not as yet converted.<sup>2</sup> The turning point in Mueller's life came when he attended a Moravian Diaspora meeting at the home of J. V.

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<sup>1</sup>Mirbt, "Pietism," p. 64.

<sup>2</sup>A Narrative of Some of the Lord's Dealings with George Mueller, (London: J. Nisbet, 1840).

Wagner in Halle. Mueller records the experience in his autobiography.<sup>1</sup>

In his discussion of the Moravian Diaspora, Weinlick shows that the meeting Mueller attended was one of the many held all over Germany during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The conventicles are the certain mark of Pietism on the Moravian Church and the Lutheran Church, although the great leaders of Pietism had been dead for nearly one hundred years at that time.

Another influence upon Mueller was his reading of the life of August Hermann Francke, while he was lodging at the Orphan House at Halle.<sup>3</sup> Pierson, in a biography of Mueller, compares Francke's work with Mueller's:

It is needful only to look at these facts and compare with Francke's work in Halle, George Mueller's monuments to a prayer-hearing God on Ashley Down, to see that in the main, the latter work so far resembles the former as to be in not a few respects its counterpart. . . . It need not be added that, beginning his enterprise like Francke in dependence on God alone the founder of the Bristol Orphan Houses trusted from first to last only in Him.<sup>4</sup>

Mueller was following the Pietist teaching with its emphasis on the individual, its concern for the religion of the common man, giving expression in good works, when on June 12, 1833, he writes:

<sup>1</sup>Narrative, pp. 11-12. Also: Arthur T. Pierson, George Mueller of Bristol (New York: The Baker and Taylor Company, 1899), pp. 28-34.

<sup>2</sup>Weinlick, Moravian Diaspora, pp. 48-50.

<sup>3</sup>Narrative, pp. 23, 102. Pierson, p. 46.

<sup>4</sup>Pierson, p. 104.

I felt, this morning, that we might do something for the souls of those poor boys and girls, and grown-up or aged people, to whom we have daily given bread for some time past, in establishing a school for them, and reading the Scriptures to them, and speaking to them about the Lord. . . . O Lord, if this matter is of thee, then prosper it!<sup>1</sup>

Another person led to ministering to the needs of the poverty-stricken by his religious conviction was John Falk of Weimar. His mother was a Moravian. His first impulse to do something for the children of Weimar was in 1807, when he saw the orphaned children, products of the Napoleonic wars, and remembered the words of an aged aunt; when he was rescued from the ice as a young boy:

"John, God has been with thee again; He will not leave thee nor forsake thee; for I know and am assured in my spirit that the Lord hath chosen thee for his service." and he thought of his own children in God's acre; and he opened his door and gave the orphans to eat and to drink, and clothed them, and went out and wept bitterly.<sup>2</sup>

He founded the Society of Friends in Need, which is regarded as the beginning of the Inner Mission. He also built a Reformatory for children who were beggars, or because of their poverty, had become thieves.

It was the principle of Falk's that the root of evil had its chief source not in ignorance but in sin; that it was not enough therefore, to teach writing and arithmetic; that that was the least part of education; that it was more important to impart the secret of a righteous life.<sup>3</sup>

The place of Pietism in the German Awakening of the

<sup>1</sup>Narrative, pp. 104-105.

<sup>2</sup>William Fleming Stevenson, Praying and Working (New York, Robert Carter and Brothers, 1863), p. 36.

<sup>3</sup>Stevenson, p. 38.

nineteenth century cannot be denied. Shanahan tells of Pietism's influence:

Through the Pietists' insistence on practical Christianity, German Protestantism was being drawn nearer to the kind of social work that transcends personal and local limits and embrace change and reform. Since the movement was at first carried on apart from the established church, and without a sanction of the Protestant hierarchy, the example and inspiration of the English sects and dissenters were readily admitted. . . . German Protestants first hearkened to the plight of the world because of adversities afflicted upon children.<sup>1</sup>

John Henry Wichern, the founder of the Inner Mission, was one of the few to grasp the Gospel's meaning of Christian responsibility. He came from Pietist Lutheran traditions, and associated with many Pietists in his youth, including: Baron von Kottwitz, converted at a Moravian meeting; Schleiermacher, educated by the Moravians; and Neander. Wichern was led by his Pietist convictions to minister to the poverty-stricken children of his time. His first enterprise was a home for destitute boys called the Rauhe Haus (rough house), so named for the section of Hamburg in which it was found.

Aided by his mother and sister, Wichern gathered vagabond boys--most of them illegitimate and with a record of conflict with the police. Holding them, not by compulsion but by love and tact, he knit them into a Christian community in which many were transformed and became useful members of the Church and society. He wished to make the Rauhe Haus a miniature Kingdom of God.<sup>2</sup>

Much more will be said about Wichern later.

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<sup>1</sup>Shanahan, pp. 66-67.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth Scott Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, Volume II, The Nineteenth Century in Europe (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 104.

Religious Toleration and Equality

Pietism made a great contribution to religious toleration and equality. This stemmed directly from the idea of the "heart-religion." Pietism emphasized the necessity of conversion as the beginning of the Christian life and good works as the witness to faith. If an individual showed both of these, he was a Christian regardless of his doctrinal beliefs. This lack of concern for dogma was a source of criticism by the orthodox clergy. Since dogma was not as important as experience and good works, then the differences which separated the Lutheran and Reformed since the Reformation began to evaporate in Pietist circles. Spener and Zinzendorf made trips through Europe before beginning their work. Both were impressed by the devotion of Christians from other churches. It became obvious to them, and later to those who followed them, that personal Christianity was not confined to the Lutheran Church. If this is so, other denominations become fundamentally equal to the Lutherans. As noted before, (p. 29) Spener became involved in a plan of church union with George Calixtus. However, Spener did not concede of any good being in the Roman Catholic Church. He considered the pope as the antichrist, and the Roman Church as an abomination before God. Rome is the spiritual Babel. His idea of toleration involved only Protestants. It was left to Zinzendorf to become the "ecumenical pioneer."<sup>1</sup>

In his tour through Europe, Zinzendorf met Cardinal

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<sup>1</sup>A. J. Lewis's description of the Count.

Noailles, a Jansenist, in Paris, and struck a lifelong friendship with him. The Count became convinced that Christians could be in the Roman Church. He was one of the first to suggest this in his writings:

I have, in my own way, cherished and greatly esteemed all those of the Catholic religion who love Jesus. . . . and I would deem myself more unfortunate if any honest Catholic and lover of Jesus considered me a stranger because of the difference between our principles.<sup>1</sup>

Zinzendorf wrote a Latin treatise setting forth the chief points of his faith, and sent it to the Cardinal. He concludes it by saying:

When God enters into judgment with a sinner, then nothing avails but the righteousness of Jesus, through faith in his blood; and our salvation does not depend upon the pope or any other man, but merely and alone on the merits of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Zinzendorf did not rely on theory. He organized the Diaspora, which included small groups of Christians from Lutheran and Calvinist churches all over Europe. These people were bound together by the deep emotional and personal relationship of each individual to the person of Christ. The Count's doctrinal unity was based on the passion of Christ as a universal theology. To Zinzendorf, the center of religion is:

to view that transaction and posture of our God, when He bled to death for our sins upon the Cross. When our hearts are struck by this, 'tis the beginning of a universal kind of Religion, disengaged from all debates,

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<sup>1</sup>Pinson, quoting Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, Theologische und dahin einschlagende Bedencken (Budingem; 1742), pp. 105-106.

<sup>2</sup>Weinlick, Count Zinzendorf, p. 46.



and where a child soon becomes a Divine. The tenderest connection with our Redeemer, burying our corruption and misery in His death, is the great affair, and other things are regarded only for, and according to, the habitude they bear to this.<sup>1</sup>

The Count believed that all denominations were divine, rather than human inventions, and they gave various nations opportunities to make their unique contributions in religion to the world. Zinzendorf longed to see the invisible or true Church of Christ made visible on earth. His concept of this unity he called a "Congregation of God in the Spirit." He placed each denomination in a "tropus," a "school of wisdom," with its own particular jewel of truth, ritual or order, to contribute to the whole Body of Christ in setting forth the full glory and mission of the Lamb.<sup>2</sup> The people who came to the Brethren's Church belonged to a tropus, depending on which denomination they came from. At one time the tropus leaders were: Zinzendorf for the Lutherans; Polycarp Müller for the Moravians, and Frederick von Watteville for the Reformed. Zinzendorf asked Archbishop Potter of Canterbury to head the Anglican tropus in England, but the Archbishop declined. The tropus scheme was the way the Count pictured the unity of all Christians.

His greatest experiment was made in America at the Pennsylvania Synods. in 1742. In the eastern part of that state, Germans of all religious persuasions had settled. Until that time the home churches in Europe had done nothing toward their pastoral care. The Count wrote to the leaders

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<sup>1</sup>Zinzendorf, pp. 256-257.

<sup>2</sup>Lewis, p. 139.

of all the denominations, inviting them to a series of meetings;

not to wrangle or dispute, but converse in love on the essential articles of faith in order to discover how nearly all true Christians approximate in the fundamentals of religion; to come to a mutual agreement respecting all such opinions as do not affect the ground of salvation, and to bear with each other in love, that thus all uncharitable judging might be lessened and moved out of the way.<sup>1</sup>

Eight meetings were held, attended by Lutherans, Reformed, Mennonites, Schwenkfelder, Baptists, Dunkers, Separatists, Hermits from the Ephrata Cloisters, Moravians, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Quakers. The meetings did not achieve their aim. Sessler gives the following reasons: (1) the sects did not understand what Zinzendorf meant by the "Congregation of God in the Spirit," (2) Zinzendorf's idea of establishing the "Congregation of God in the Spirit" through the agency of the Moravians, (3) the wide-spread opposition to the Moravians and to the Count, and (4) the Count's own domineering personality stood in the way.<sup>2</sup>

Zinzendorf is noted for another attempt at unity. For thirty years a theological dispute raged between the universities at Halle and Wittenberg. While still a student at Wittenberg, Zinzendorf offered himself as the peace maker between the two faculties. He arranged a meeting be-

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<sup>1</sup>John Holmes, History of the Protestant Church of the United Brethren (London: 1825), Vol. I, p. 371.

<sup>2</sup>Jacob John Sessler, Communal Pietism among the Early American Moravians (Studies in Religion and Culture: American Religion Series, VIII; New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1933), pp. 61-71.

tween Drs. Wernsdorf of Wittenberg and Francke of Halle. Zinzendorf's mother intervened, and the affair went no further. However, it was his first attempt at settling religious disputes.<sup>1</sup>

In religious history, Zinzendorf will be noted for ecumenical ideas two hundred years before his time; ideas which have not been implemented yet.

The Pietist not only fostered religious toleration, but also the equality of man. Troeltsch says that the primary effect of Pietism was that "life became more personal and inward, social distinctions faded into insignificance, and social existence became more humane."<sup>2</sup> At the conventicles, the nobility, the merchants, and the peasants came together. All stood on equal footing before the Lord. Pinson says:

Pietism stressed the importance of participation of the lay class in religious life, broke down the pompous wall that the orthodox clergy had built around themselves and developed a sense of self-dignity and self-esteem in the laity. It accepted and stressed more forcefully the idea of equality before God and made this principle a factor in the social and religious life of the Pietist communities.<sup>3</sup>

Pietism exhibited great interest in the lower classes and incorporated them into their church organization. While they never openly declared themselves in favor of doing away with

<sup>1</sup>Felix Bovet, A Pioneer of Social Christianity, Count Zinzendorf, tr. T. Alexander Seed (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1896), pp. 40-41.

<sup>2</sup>Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, tr. Olive Wyon (Halley Stewart Publications I; London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1931), Vol. II, pp. 718-719.

<sup>3</sup>Pinson, p. 107.

class distinctions, yet they made a contribution toward that end. The Moravians at Herrnhut elected men of all classes to office: carpenters, weavers, cutters, shoemakers, and potters. In the meetings of the collegia pietatis

people of all professions, regardless of rank or trade, were brought together: students, jurists, doctors, merchants, artisans, and women as well as men. Master and servant knelt together in prayer.<sup>1</sup>

All this laid the groundwork in Germany for the recognition of the fact that "all men are created equal"

### The Inner Mission

The most important organization which the Protestant Church in Germany used to deal with the social issues of the nineteenth century was the Inner Mission. At that time, events conspired to make the life of the common man desperate. Famines brought poverty to the peasants on the farms. The movement of the population to the cities as the Industrial Revolution began to take hold brought with it all the social problems of the urban society. The Prussian government was conservatively oriented and paid little attention to the needs of the common man. The Protestant Church argued that social reform was really an activity of the state, and that the resources of the church were not great enough to meet the demands of the people.

Forerunners of the Inner Mission were organizations like Falk's Society for the Friends in Need, Wichern's Rauhe Haus, and Theodor Fleidner's Rheinisch-Westfalische Diakon-

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<sup>1</sup>Pinson, p. 113.

issen Verein in Kaiserwerth. The chief concerns of these groups were the problems which arose from the mounting social and economic changes of the times. The program of the Inner Mission, officially organized in 1848, was an attempt to answer in a Christian manner the Communist Manifesto published that year.<sup>1</sup> Although Wichern did not win all Protestants to his way of thinking, he did have support of the government, with all the advantages and disadvantages attached to it.<sup>2</sup>

Among the many activities of the Inner Mission and its associated agencies are:

the circulation of the Bible, efforts at better observance of Sunday, the spiritual care of labourers on the expanding railways, the multiplication of itinerant preachers, . . . the sponsoring of movements against the excessive use of alcoholic beverages, campaigns against gambling, lotteries, and prostitution, rescue homes for prostitutes and unmarried mothers, the care of prisoners and discharged convicts, the organizing of Christian youth groups, providing havens for German sailors, . . . and attempts to reach the educated on the one hand and the labourers in many new factories on the other.<sup>3</sup>

### Better Housing

John Henry Wichern was a man who devoted himself to working with the masses. However, he was not interested in

<sup>1</sup>Latourette, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup>A discussion of how well the Protestants did meet the challenge of social problems of the masses in the nineteenth century Germany is discussed from the Roman Catholic viewpoint in Shanahan's book. A discussion of the Inner Mission is found on pp. 208-238. A full treatment of the Inner Mission from the Lutheran view is found in Jeremiah Franklin Ohl, The Inner Mission, (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1911).

<sup>3</sup>Latourette, p. 107.

social reform as a planned improvement of society, nor did he think that the church should be.<sup>1</sup> His programs may have been more far-reaching had he been convinced of the church's social responsibility. But he was dominated by the conservative theology and government of the times.

Soon after the founding of the Rauhe Haus, Wichern became acquainted with Victor Aime Huber, a Roman Catholic who left his church, but never became Protestant. Huber felt that factory conditions could be improved, if the owners would limit profits and devote some of those monies to the workers. He became a tireless champion of the cooperative movement. He felt that cooperatives were Christian, in that they strengthened the family, widened the scope of property ownership, and enabled the aristocracy to fulfill their moral obligation toward the less fortunate. He established housing projects, public baths, reading rooms, beer and wine gardens, nursery schools, dancing societies, and apothecary shops as cooperatives.<sup>2</sup> These two men, Wichern and Huber, of all who sought to influence German Protestantism, were alone in trying to fathom the religious significance of the popular discontent.<sup>3</sup> Together they advocated the need of cooperative housing to relieve the poverty of the masses. Wichern entertained grandiose plans for a cooperative involving three hundred dwellings, with schools, a library, and a savings bank. Nothing came of these plans.<sup>4</sup> The important point is that individuals,

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<sup>1</sup>Shanahan, p. 152

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

fired by the Christian faith, recognizing the needs of the poverty-stricken, could advocate such measures in 1842.

### Prison Reform

Another activity in which Wichern was involved was that of the reform of prisons. In 1857, he was appointed to the superior consistorial council of the superior ecclesiastical council with special responsibility for prisons and the poor. In this work he was aided by Christian Freiherr von Bunsen, a diplomat and scholar, who influenced Frederick William IV to endorse voluntary religious charity.<sup>1</sup>

### Pietism and Politics

For better or for worse, the Lutheran Church was tied closely to conservative politics in Germany in the nineteenth century. Prussia, and later, the German Empire, was considered by her nobility and middle class to be a Christian state. The idea of the "crown and the altar" was prevalent.

That special brand of Lutheranism which we call Pietism did have an influence on many of the leaders in the Empire, such as Otto von Bismark, Adolf Stoecker, and Friedrich Naumann. Bismark believed in God, in revealed religion, and in immortality. He saw a close connection between revealed religion and morality. He prayed, partly through using the Lord's Prayer, declared that God ruled, submitted himself to God's will, and, while he did not hold to the verbal inerrancy of the Scriptures, read the Bible faithfully.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Latourette, p. 106

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

He used the Moravian Losungen, a book of daily devotions, and annotated it with his own thoughts. His conversion took place at a Pietist meeting, and his wife came from a Pietist background. Bismark had many shortcomings. However, Latour-ette contrasts the countries with Protestant statesmen (Germany and Great Britain) with those with Roman Catholic statesmen, and concludes:

In prevailing Roman Catholic countries in the latter part of the century, the rising tension between the Church and state and the anti-clerical trend brought to power men who either were only nominal Roman Catholics or were outspokenly hostile to the Church.<sup>1</sup>

It would be presumptuous to conclude that purely Christian motives guided Bismark in his life. Nevertheless, it did play some part, as Bismark testifies. His Lutheranism was of the Pietist variety.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 122.



V. SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION

The purpose of this study has been to show that Pietism made some vital contributions to social reform in Germany. Its influence was noted in religious toleration, the dignity and equality of man, the development of public education, various works of charity among the poverty-stricken and the children, the Inner Mission, better housing, prison reform, and in politics. Whenever Christians, full of the "heart religion," and eager to express their faith in good works, saw a need, they tried to meet it. Pietism was not the only force at work in Germany, and it must be said that in many fields groups with goals not necessarily Christian, offered more in social progress than the Christians. It should also be noted that throughout the period studied, the only continuous group of Pietists were the Moravians, and their greatest effectiveness came through the Diaspora.

Pietism was not an organized movement. Its contributions to social reform came into being through the individuals who had responded to its warm, enthusiastic type of Christianity.

The negative qualities of Pietism cannot be denied. The original leaders were not guilty of separatism, religious snobbishness, and extreme subjectivism, which would lead to

a monastic withdrawal from the world. But these qualities became manifest in the movement as time passed. When individuals not wholly converted, use the ideas of Pietism, its common perversions come to the front.

Pietism has a message for today. Those who understand social problems least today come from the conservative denominations where individualism is emphasized to the extreme. Pietism teaches that Christians must participate in meeting the problems of social change, or become irrelevant in the world. A review of the apathy for the proletariat in the nineteenth century and the growth of communism emphasizes how the middle class use Protestant individualism as a defense for a "do nothing" attitude in the realm of reform. The question must be asked whether Protestantism is making the same mistake in America that it made in nineteenth century Germany.

The Moravian Church played a vital role in the growth of Pietism. This study reveals some of the contributions that the Moravians made to the religious life of Germany. As long as that church was willing to make contributions to the church of Christ beyond its denominational bounds, the Brethren's Church grew. That same message applies today.

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