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THE MOVEMENT FOR REFORM IN THE  
TEACHING OF RELIGION IN THE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF  
SAXONY

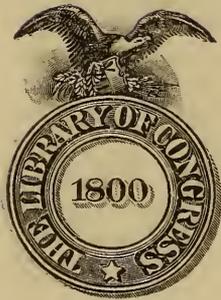
By ARLEY BARTHLOW SHOW  
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LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY



WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
1910



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## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION,  
*Washington, April 7, 1910.*

SIR: The historical relations of public education to the institutions of religion have been variously significant. While governmental affairs and ecclesiastical affairs have been set apart from each other in this country, and the teaching of sectarian doctrines is generally excluded from the schools of the several States, an understanding of the relations actually subsisting between the schools and the organized religion of other lands is greatly to be desired. It can help in many ways to a clearer insight into discussions which occasionally arise in this country and to a better appreciation of the import of changes which are proposed from time to time.

In those countries in which a close connection is still maintained between public education and a state religion, important changes are now in progress. In some instances these changes have as yet gone no further than an active controversy, which represents the rise of new sentiments and the shifting of public interest. In other lands a reorganization has been effected through processes of law and public administration.

Attention was called in the first number of the bulletin of this office to discussions in the House of Commons which turned in part on questions relating to religious instruction (*The education bill of 1906 for England and Wales as it passed the House of Commons*, by Anna Tolman Smith, bulletin, 1906, no. 1). Accounts of other controversies and changes in this field, with particular reference to European lands, have appeared from time to time in the annual reports of the Commissioner of Education.

In the monograph which is submitted herewith, Prof. Arley B. Show, of the Leland Stanford Junior University, has presented a careful study of the recent agitation in favor of a change in the teaching of religion in the public schools of the kingdom of Saxony, one

of the States of the German Empire. Such a study is illuminating for the reason that it affords an opportunity for a vivid setting forth of a single concrete situation, which at the same time may be regarded as typical of the opposition of ideas in other European countries.

While it would be difficult, if not impossible, for one on the outside to present such an account in perfect perspective, Professor Show has taken great care to be objective and impartial in his statements, giving the views of all of the leading parties concerned, and, as far as possible, setting forth the argument of each in the words of some of its most eminent spokesmen.

I would accordingly recommend the publication of this account as one of the numbers of the bulletin of the Bureau of Education.

Very respectfully,

ELMER ELLSWORTH BROWN,  
*Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

## PREFATORY NOTE.

This report does not pretend to be more than a partial and cursory survey of a bit of history in the making. The writer got his first impressions of the controversy in Saxony on the spot, and gathered there the materials on which the study is based. But in a matter so intimately related to the inner life of a great people, only a minute and prolonged acquaintance with their ideals and institutions could fully qualify one to write of them in due measure and proportion. The writer can only claim that he has studied and written without conscious bias, and has sought to make faithful use of such data as were available to him. The investigation impresses one afresh with the moral and spiritual earnestness of the German people and their splendid devotion to the progress of popular education. In this time when our own educational thought is beginning to take more serious concern for the demands of moral training in the schools, we have much to learn from the comprehensive and well-grounded ideals of our German neighbors.

No attempt has been made to include in the bibliography references to the very voluminous general literature on the subject of religious instruction. Good discussions, with lists of recent literature, may be found in such works as Loos, *Enzyklopädisches Handbuch der Erziehungskunde*, 1908, and Rein, *Encyklopädisches Handbuch der Pädagogik*, 1908.

I am indebted to my colleague, Prof. Karl G. Rendtorff of Stanford University, for reading the proofs and for various helpful suggestions.

LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA,  
*February 26, 1910.*



# THE MOVEMENT FOR REFORM IN THE TEACHING OF RELIGION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF SAXONY.

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## I.—RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE CONTROVERSY.

### GROWTH OF THE REFORM SPIRIT.

No question occupies the educational thought of Germany more deeply at the present moment than the problem of religious instruction in the public schools. The existing system, inherited from the days of the Lutheran reformation and consecrated by these centuries of almost undisputed supremacy, has at length come under a censorship that is persistent and unsparing, and in consequence there is a general disturbance of old conditions. The scope and character of the discussion now in progress show the widest interest and the deepest concern among the leaders and workers, who have most serious regard to the national welfare. The question has ceased to be purely academic or pedagogical and has become an issue of the largest moment in the public mind of Germany.

At the present time the Kingdom of Saxony is the storm center of the controversy concerning Religionsunterricht, and it is the specific purpose of this report to outline the situation in that State of the Empire. It will readily appear, however, that the Saxon conditions are not unique, but that they are rather typical of the general state of the problem in Germany. Only a detailed inquiry could trace the present debate in Saxony to its ultimate origins. It must suffice here merely to point out some of the influences which have given shape to the struggle.

For at least the last decade an increasing attention on the part of educational workers has been turned to the matter of religious instruction as it exists in the public schools, and the demand for reform has steadily grown more definite and urgent. Significant evidence of the reform spirit may be seen in the brochure of Professor Rein, of Jena, published in 1904 and 1906.<sup>a</sup> In these pamphlets are

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<sup>a</sup> *Stimmen zur Reform des Religionsunterrichts*. Langensalza. Heft I, 1904; Heft II, 1906.

brought together the opinions of some twenty-five representative scholars and teachers, all of them in substantial agreement as to the necessity for reform. Among them are found the names of such leaders as Professors Paulsen and Pfeleiderer of Berlin, Natorp of Marburg, Bassermann of Heidelberg, and the editor, Rein of Jena. The utterances of these men, and of the others associated with them in the book, put it beyond question that the demand for reform is deep and radical. It comes on the one hand from the practical schoolmen, and on the other from the exponents of progressive theological thought, the two finding common ground in the need of an instruction adapted to present-day conditions.

A work of some consequence as showing the steady rise of the reform spirit is the small monograph of J. Tews, published in 1906.<sup>a</sup> The author is a teacher of wide view and of strong popular instincts. His plea is for a Volksschule free from all external control, a school of the people based wholly on the demands of national life and culture. Consequently he would exclude all confessional influences from the schools. Beyond any doubt the author speaks for a wide circle of the German teachers.

#### THE BREMEN AGITATION FOR EXCLUSION OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

These are merely significant voices raised here and there. The first serious organized effort for reform, so far as the writer is aware, arose in the Freistadt of Bremen, in the year 1905.<sup>b</sup> In May of that year the teachers of Bremen gave formal indorsement to the proposal to abolish the religious instruction in the schools and appointed a committee to put its conclusions into a memorial for presentation to the authorities of the city. In September, 1905, the committee's report was indorsed by a large majority of the teachers and was officially laid before the municipal senate.<sup>c</sup>

The somewhat extended memorial of the Bremen teachers covers practically all the large questions involved in the issue. Starting from the postulate that the modern state rests on the principle of liberty of conscience, that religion is a matter of private belief, the memorial argues that the state can not legitimately allow its schools to be used to impose any particular confession on the people, cites the progress of the movement in other countries for the separation of religion and the state, and urges that the confessional instruction

<sup>a</sup> *Schulkämpfe der Gegenwart*. Leipzig, 1906. See also his recent article in *Leipziger Lehrerzeitung*, 17 Jahrg. 335-337.

<sup>b</sup> For a good brief account of the Bremen movement and its influence see *Pädagogische Jahresschau* I. (1906) 397-399.

<sup>c</sup> The Denkschrift of the Bremen teachers is printed in Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht? Achtzig Gutachten*. Leipzig, 1906. 182-202.

given in the schools of Germany is out of harmony with the science and philosophy of the modern world. In place of the existing system the Bremen teachers would substitute a course of moral instruction based on modern experience and drawing its materials chiefly from modern literature. They would separate the moral instruction wholly from its religious connections and would bring it into relation with the regular studies of the course rather than deal with it as itself an independent branch of instruction. The memorial closes with the general outline of a plan for moral instruction in the schools of the city.

Meanwhile a more limited movement in the same city was pointing the way to a like demand for the exclusion of religious teaching from the schools. In February, 1905, a group of Bremen teachers organized the "Vereinigung für Schulreform" and immediately devoted their thought to this problem. They sent out a letter of inquiry to many educational workers throughout Germany, asking for opinions as to the abolition of religious instruction. Some eighty replies were received; and these documents, together with the letter of inquiry and the Denkschrift of the Bremen teachers, are printed in the volume *Religionsunterricht? Achtzig Gutachten* (Leipzig, 1906), edited by Fritz Gansberg, one of the Bremen teachers. Among the testimonies are many from men and women prominent in the educational work and intellectual life of Germany—the late Theodor Barth of Berlin, Wilhelm Bode, Professor Ernst Haeckel, Eduard von Hartmann, Paul Heyse, and others almost equally prominent. Nearly all who contribute to the volume favor the dropping of religion from the schools, and bear witness to the strength of this radical wing of the reform party.

The Senate of Bremen did not give its approval to the radical proposals of the teachers, though the Denkschrift moved that body to undertake the more necessary measures of reform.<sup>a</sup> But the Bremen manifesto became at once widely influential in other parts of the land, and has served as the point of departure for much subsequent discussion and agitation. In some states and cities, as in Bremerhaven, Hamburg, and Leipzig, its programme for the total abolition of Religionsunterricht has met with considerable favor; but it has served quite as largely to stimulate opposition to all change or to give the impulse to more temperate reforms.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 397.

<sup>b</sup> Immediate discussion of the Bremen plan concerned itself largely with the substitution of moral instruction for religious instruction in the schools. As the organ of the Bremen teachers, the journal *Roland* has served to disseminate their ideas. For the polemical literature called out by the Bremen proposals, see *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 397-401.

## THE HAMBURG TEACHERS' PROPOSALS FOR REFORM.

The most noteworthy manifestation of the reform spirit definitely influenced by the Bremen agitation showed itself in the neighboring free city of Hamburg. For some years the "Lehrergruppe im Hamburger Protestantenverein" had been studying the problem. In May, 1907, on the occasion of a general revision of the course of study, the teachers in sympathy with the Bremen plan laid before the Hamburger Schulsynode—the general assembly of the teachers—the proposal to give their support to the abolition of religious instruction. The proposal was defeated by a vote of 199 to 149, thus placing the Hamburg teachers in opposition to the more radical policies of Bremen.<sup>a</sup> Thereupon the Lehrergruppe im Hamburger Protestantenverein came back to the problem, and later in 1907 published its proposals for the reform of the religious instruction.<sup>b</sup> The fundamental principle of the proposed reform was stated in these words: "The point of departure for religious instruction is formed on the one hand by the position and needs of the child's mind and on the other by the demands of developing science and culture." The purpose of religious teaching is defined as "the awakening and encouragement of the religious-ethical life of the pupil on the basis of the gospel, with collateral reference to the Old Testament and to the historical development of Christianity."

On this basis the Entwurf outlined a course of study for the eight years of the Volksschule—one hour a week for the first three years (Unterstufe), two hours a week for the fourth and fifth years (Mittelstufe), and two hours a week for the last two years (Oberstufe). The Lehrplan is conservative in character, its materials being drawn chiefly from the Bible, with considerable use of legends, tales, and poems from other sources. The course is worked out on the "concentric circle" theory so prevalent in German pedagogy. In the fifth school year there is given a "simple life picture of Jesus;" and in the seventh year the life of Christ is traversed more in detail, constituting the entire subject-matter of the year's work. In the eighth year the apostolic period is studied, and a few characters from later church history are brought into the course—Boniface, St. Francis, Luther, and other reformers. The Hamburg plan was thus at once broadly Christian and Protestant.

The publication of the Lehrplan at once called out opposition of two sorts in the city. A group of Hamburg pastors published a pro-

<sup>a</sup> *Päd. Jahresschau* II. 209; *Sorgen, Bedenken, Wünsche*, 9. As early as 1888 a considerable element among the Hamburg teachers favored the abolition of RÜ. Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht? Achtzig Gutachten*, 23.

<sup>b</sup> *Entwurf eines Lehrplans für den RÜ. in der 8klass. Volksschule*. Hamb. 1907. For good summary, see *Päd. Jahresschau* II. 219-220.

test<sup>a</sup> against the proposed changes in the course of study, charging the innovators with the attempt to destroy the evangelical Lutheran character of the system, and with opening the door to all kinds of dangerous doctrines. The pastors protested in particular against the entire omission of the Shorter Catechism of Luther from the course. "For the sake of our schools and of our people, the Bible and the catechism must remain the source and norm of religious-ethical instruction in the Volksschule. Because the people themselves are predominantly Lutheran, the instruction must remain Lutheran, and not merely Christian or religious." The pastors object strongly to the introduction of modern theology into the instruction, and illustrate their objection by a detailed critique of the proposed plan. They insist that the primary purpose of religious teaching shall continue to be the preparation of the child for membership in the church, and hence the thorough grounding of the child's faith in the "saving truths" of the gospel. The contention of the Hamburg pastors was, therefore, for the retention of the present confessional instruction in all its essential features.

In reply to this challenge, the Hamburg teachers issued a second pamphlet, *Freiheit und Recht*,<sup>b</sup> in which they defended themselves against the charge of irreligion and tried to make their position plainer.

The opposition to the Entwurf of the Hamburg teachers found expression in another way. A group of the more evangelical teachers, organized under the name of the "Lehrer-Union," put forth a critique of the proposed course of study, accompanying their critique with a plan of their own.<sup>c</sup> Their position is of the most conservative nature. They condemn the proposals of the majority for reducing the number of hours of religious instruction, for dropping the catechism, and, above all, for bringing the religious instruction under the influence of modern theology. They object to the contemplated plan as not calculated to promote the religious growth of the child and as therefore bad pedagogically. And in conclusion this conservative wing of the Hamburg teachers brings forward a course of study of its own, laid down mostly on usual lines, but with a serious attempt to meet the current criticisms as to the amount, arrangement, and handling of the materials of instruction. The materials are drawn entirely from the Bible, the Shorter Catechism, and church history and song.

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<sup>a</sup> Behrmann et al., *Sorgen, Bedenken, Wünsche, in Bezug auf den RU. in den öffentl. Schulen Hamburgs*. 2te. Aufl. Hamb. 1907.

<sup>b</sup> Hamburg, 1907. The contents of this treatise are briefly summarized in *Päd. Jahreschau* II. 220.

<sup>c</sup> *Denkschrift nebst Lehrplan-Entwurf für den RU. in den Hamburgischen Volksschulen*. Herausgegeben von der Hamburger Lehrer-Union. Hamburg, 1907.

As contrasted with the earlier movement in Bremen, it is obvious that the Hamburg propaganda worked on conservative lines, seeking not the abolition of religious teaching but such a reform of it as would bring it into harmony with modern thought and modern pedagogical standards. Like the Bremen plan, the movement in Hamburg did not get beyond the stage of discussion, since the school authorities of the city did not choose to put the recommendations of the teachers into effect. The Hamburg proposals have, however, attracted much attention and have contributed largely to the progress of general debate in Germany.<sup>a</sup> The Hamburg teachers also have not given over their labors for reform, and during the past year have brought forward a new outline of a course of study embodying their maturer ideals.<sup>b</sup> The materials of the new Lehrplan are drawn from the Bible, church history, and German poetry, art, and music, with a marked increase in the amount of the nonbiblical elements. In the eighth year the course offers systematic instruction in practical ethics.

#### THE ZWICKAU THESES OF THE SAXON TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

Without attempting here to trace the progress of the reform ideas in Prussia, Bavaria, Württemberg, and the lesser States of the Empire, it may be said that in one form or another all parts of the land have felt the new impulses and have responded to them, each in its own way.<sup>c</sup> In no other States, however, has the reform programme taken such definite and positive form as in the cities of Bremen and Hamburg and in the Kingdom of Saxony.

The Lehrerverein of the Kingdom of Saxony comprises about 14,000 members, divided into 77 district unions (Bezirksvereine), these again being subdivided into about 240 local branches (Zweigvereine). The national Lehrerverein of the Empire meets every two years, and is generally attended, although its voting membership is limited to the elected representatives of the district unions, comprising only 310 members.<sup>d</sup> By far the strongest district union in the Verein is that of Leipzig, embracing about 2,800 members.<sup>e</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> The journal *Der Säemann*, Hamburg, is the organ through which the teachers have presented their ideas.

<sup>b</sup> The proposed course of study as prepared by a committee of the Hamburg Schulsynode is printed in *Leipziger Lehrerzeitung*, 16 Jahrg. 873-874, and discussed in *do.* 17 Jahrg. 178-179.

<sup>c</sup> The most general issue has been the abolition of clerical supervision. This question and the other problems involved will be considered in the latter part of this report.

<sup>d</sup> Rietschel, *Zur Reform*, 3. *The Sächsische Schulzeitung* is the organ of the national organization.

<sup>e</sup> The Leipziger Lehrerverein has its own organ in the *Leipziger Lehrerzeitung*, which has had a leading part in the present debate. The writer is much indebted to the files of this journal for material used in the report.

While for a long time the question of religious instruction has received attention from individuals and groups of individuals in Saxony,<sup>a</sup> the beginnings of the present more active agitation date back to the annual meeting of the Lehrerverein at Dresden in 1905. At that meeting, after debating the problems of reform, the Verein appointed a committee of two to report a programme of reform measures, to be presented at the meeting of 1908.<sup>b</sup> During the next three years the members of the committee, consisting of School Director Arnold, of Chemnitz, and Lehrer Arnold, of Pirna, worked out their proposals, having the assistance of their local unions in this task, and they presented a united report at the meeting in 1908.

The annual meeting of 1908 was held at Zwickau, on September 28 and 29, and was attended by upward of 4,000 teachers.<sup>c</sup> The report of the committee was discussed, amended, and adopted, the vote being almost unanimous.<sup>d</sup>

The nine resolutions thus indorsed by the teachers of Saxony, since generally known as "die Zwickauer Thesen," have furnished the basis of all subsequent discussion.

They are as follows:<sup>e</sup>

1. Religion is an essential subject of instruction and religious instruction an independent department (Veranstaltung) of the Volksschule.

2. Its task is to make the mind (Gesinnung) of Jesus live in the child.

3. The course of study and method of instruction must conform to the nature of the child mind, and the determination of these is exclusively the business of the school. The churchly oversight of religious instruction is to be abolished.

4. Only such subject-matter of instruction is to be considered as presents religious and ethical life clearly to the child. Religious instruction is essentially historical instruction. At the center is to stand the person of Jesus. Besides the appropriate Biblical materials, especial attention should be given to life pictures of the promoters of religious and ethical culture among our people, with particular reference to modern times. The experiences of the child are to be utilized in a profitable way.

5. The Volksschule must exclude systematic and dogmatic instruction. In the upper grades the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Lord's Prayer can be prescribed as an appropriate basis for a summary of the ethical ideas contained in the Christian religion. Luther's Catechism can not be the basis and point of departure for the religious instruction of the young. As an historical religious document and as the Evangelical-Lutheran creed, it is to be esteemed.

6. The religious matter to be learned should be remodeled and materially reduced in accordance with psychological-pedagogical principles, and the amount required should be lessened.

<sup>a</sup> Schulrat Bang, some of whose writings are cited below, has been particularly active for years in urging reform on conservative lines.

<sup>b</sup> Rietschel, *Zur Reform*, 4; Sächs. Lehrerver., *Die Umgestaltung des RU*. 1.

<sup>c</sup> *Päd. Jahresschau* III. 171; Sulze, *Das rechte Verhältnis*, 12.

<sup>d</sup> There were only twelve negative votes. The entire proceedings of the meeting were reported stenographically and are printed in *Die Umgestaltung des RU. in den sächs. Volksschulen*. Leipz. [1908].

<sup>e</sup> For the text of the theses, with comment, see *Die Umgestaltung*, 30-43; for text alone, see Christiani, *Die Zwick. Thesen*, 5; Rietschel, *Zur Reform*, 4-5; Sulze, *Das rechte Verhältnis*, 12-13.

7. Religious instruction as an independent subject of instruction should not come in before the third school year. In order that the interest of the child may not suffer, the number of hours should be lessened in all grades. The customary division of religious instruction into biblical history (explanation of the Bible) and teaching of the catechism is to be abolished. Likewise examinations and censorships in religion are to be abandoned.

8. The entire instruction in religion must stand in harmony with the established results of scientific research and with the enlightened moral sentiment of our times.

9. Along with the reform of religious instruction in the Volksschule there is needed a corresponding transformation of religious instruction in the Seminar [normal school].

In the debates at Zwickau the merits of the case were very fully discussed. The reports of the committee men, preceding the presentation of the resolutions, made plain the general principles at issue and explained the specific provisions of the theses;<sup>a</sup> and the subsequent debate by the members gave a hearing for all essential points of view. The exchange of opinion was free and unhampered, and the vote must be taken as recording the serious conviction of the teachers present.

The publication of the Zwickau theses at once precipitated a discussion which has continued with great intensity and often with acrimony during the year. On both sides many meetings have been held, many addresses made, many pamphlets printed,<sup>b</sup> with the result that every vital feature of the proposed reform has had a thorough hearing, and every objection has been made manifest. The present report can indicate only in the most general way the lines the agitation has followed.

#### OPPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH—THE MEISSEN COUNTER RESOLUTIONS.

The Zwickau theses naturally aroused an immediate and vigorous remonstrance in church circles. While a considerable element among the clergy have from the first given their support to the reform, the majority have seen in the movement danger for the church and for the religious welfare of the people and have opposed it. Immediately after the Zwickau meeting protests began to pour in upon the Kultusminister of Saxony.<sup>c</sup> In various quarters of the Kingdom

<sup>a</sup> The detailed explanation of the several theses by Lehrer Arnold of Pirna is especially helpful. For good summaries of the addresses at Zwickau, see Brück, *Zur Umgestaltung des RU. in der Volksschule*. They are dealt with, one by one, controversially by Rietschel, *Zur Reform des RU.*, and by Katzer in *Neues Sächsisches Kirchenblatt*, 1908, Ns. 20, 34, and 35.

<sup>b</sup> The more important of these publications will be included in the bibliography at the end of this report.

<sup>c</sup> It is said that 800 such protests reached the Kultusminister in Dresden. For an example of such protest, see Sulze, *Das rechte Verhältnis*, 13.

organized action against the teachers' movement was begun. On February 10, 1909, the Landessynode of Saxony, the highest organ of the national church, met in extraordinary session in Meissen and put itself on record concerning the Zwickau proposals. With only one dissenting voice the clergy present adopted the following counter-resolutions:<sup>a</sup>

The Landessynode resolves that it regards a transformation of the religious instruction in the Volksschule, in relation to matter and method, as necessary from religious and pedagogical standpoints, and for that reason takes the following fundamental position:

1. In the first place it believes that for the future as for the past a harmonious cooperation of church and school, born of mutual trust, is necessary for a praiseworthy education of the young, and is of the highest value for our people.

2. Now as always, it does not oppose the establishment of a purely professional oversight of the state over the schools.

But it maintains the duty and right of the church to have oversight over the religious teaching of its adolescent members.

3. It agrees that the religious instruction should be essentially instruction in biblical history, as well as in the history of the Christian church, and that the person of Jesus should stand at the center of instruction.

But it regards as indispensable that in the Biblical instruction the saving truths of Christianity and the power of Jesus Christ should be brought so close to the souls of the children that they shall learn to recognize Him not only as a religio-ethical example, but also as their Savior and Redeemer.

4. It advises a new selection of religious material for learning as well as a moderation of the amount required, where it is necessary.

But it regards as important and beneficial that hereafter as before the youth shall be given for life the richest possible treasure of scripture and song.

5. In catechism instruction it regards a change in the method of treatment and in the amount to be memorized as necessary.

But it wishes to know that the teaching of youth is well grounded in the spirit and confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and maintains that for this purpose the popular Evangelical Lutheran confession, the Shorter Catechism of Luther, can not be replaced.

6. It does not desire such a confessional religious instruction as will sharpen the contrast with the communicants of other confessions.

But it does desire that the children shall be educated to be fully conscious living members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and precisely by that means be educated to a true tolerance for other believers.

These resolutions have an irenic tone and show the disposition of the clergy to cooperate in the work of reform. But their pronouncements do not depart from the churchly point of view as to confessional instruction, clerical supervision, and the other questions in issue, and hence do not provide any adequate basis for agreement between the parties to the controversy.

<sup>a</sup> The text of the Meissen resolutions with the synodal debates are printed in *Leipziger Lehrerzeitung*, 16 Jahrg. 422-424; the text alone in Christiani, *Die Zwickauer Thesen*, 6; Rietschel, *Zur Reform des RU.* 5-6; Sulze, *Das rechte Verhältnis*, 14.

## THE LEIPZIG MANIFESTO AND PUBLIC CONFERENCE.

Since the Meissen resolutions public discussion has been busy throughout Saxony. In the main the secular press<sup>a</sup> and the general public have given their support to the teachers. In the realm of politics the Social Democratic and Liberal parties have expressed approval of the Zwickau programme,<sup>b</sup> the Conservatives have taken ground against it, and the National Liberals have been somewhat divided.<sup>c</sup> On some occasions pastors and teachers have got together for conference,<sup>d</sup> but most of the debate has been on partisan lines. The controversy has developed its acutest forms in the city of Leipzig, naturally the educational center of the Kingdom. Early in the year the following manifesto was circulated, signed, and published:

To the public-school teachers of Saxony, who with unusual unanimity stood at Zwickau for a reform of the religious instruction, we hereby openly offer our warm sympathy.

We, too, desire that the Christian religion should remain an essential subject of instruction in the Volksschule and see the highest aim of religious instruction to make the mind of Jesus live in the children. We, too, in part the parents of evangelical school-children, desire that in the provisions of the law the right of our teachers to fit the content and method of instruction to this aim be more clearly defined.

In particular, we urge, in the interest of an unified mind and character building among our youth, that the teacher of religion be allowed, without molestation, to follow his pedagogical conscience in the consideration of the scientific inquiry within the established course of study, and we find it to be adapted to the nature of the child mind that religious instruction be based entirely on those materials in which perceptibly religious and moral life is presented to the child, and that it lay chief emphasis on this religious and moral life and not on dogmatic formulas.

Furthermore, we desire that the public-school teacher be free to withdraw from the giving of religious instruction.

Finally, we understand the endeavors of the teachers to gain freedom from the supervision of religious instruction by the clergy, and we trust our teachers to give worthy religious instruction without such supervision.

LEIPZIG, *January 27, 1909.*

This manifesto was signed by nearly 300 representative men and women of Leipzig, Dresden, Chemnitz, and other towns, among the signers being 36 professors in the University of Leipzig, 17 pastors, and divers other notable persons. Noting the fact that over 100 of the signers are men of university education, the *Leipziger Lehrerzeitung* claims for the reform movement the special sympathy of the educated classes.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The leading daily papers of Leipzig, the *Tageblatt* and the *Neueste Nachrichten*, have taken an active part in the campaign. See *Leipz. Tageblatt*, May 19, 1909.

<sup>b</sup> *Leipz. Neueste Nachr.*, May 14, 1909.

<sup>c</sup> For the attitude of the several parties in the fall elections and in the Landtag now sitting at Dresden, see *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 35-37, 47, 88-89, 108-110, 129, 238-240, 253, 302, 372-378.

<sup>d</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeitung*, 16 Jahrg. 285.

<sup>e</sup> The manifesto with the signatures is printed in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 510-515. The total number of signatures to May, 1909, was 1,710. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 661.

In other ways the teachers kept their interests before the public. On March 16, 1909, the Leipziger Lehrerverein convened a great open conference in the city for the consideration of the Zwickau Theses; at which about 3,000 persons are said to have been present. After free debate the conference, with little dissent, adopted the following resolution:<sup>a</sup>

The public assembly of about 3,000 persons to-day convened in the Alberthalle of the Krystallpalast offers its support to the efforts of the teachers for the reform of the religious instruction in the Volksschule, as it is defined in the Zwickau Theses.

## LATER ACTIVITIES OF THE OPPOSITION.

The controversy got a new intensity from the annual meeting of the Meissener Kirchen- und Pastoral-Konferenz. This body is a free association of pastors and laymen for religious purposes, and met in Meissen May 11, 1909. The chief address before the conference was given by Professor Rietschel, of the theological faculty of the University of Leipzig, and was in its nature a somewhat severe and polemical detailed criticism of the Zwickau Theses. As the basis of his address Professor Rietschel presented certain theses of his own in attack on the fundamental positions of the Zwickau programme. By vote of the conference the address was printed and distributed among the schools of Saxony, and obviously served to give a fresh impetus to the debate.<sup>b</sup> The Meissener Konferenz also adopted resolutions of its own, giving substantial sympathy to the position of Professor Rietschel, but also making a plea for peace and cooperation between church and school.<sup>c</sup>

Throughout the year the various forces opposed to the Zwickau movement have been active and influential. The Evangelisch-lutherische Schulverein, an organization of pastors, teachers, and others in the conservative interest, has carried on a vigorous propaganda against the Zwickau plan.<sup>d</sup> In general the strength of the national church has been used in support of the existing system.<sup>e</sup> In the smaller cities and towns and in the country districts the conservatism

<sup>a</sup> Leipz. Lehrerverein, *Die Zwickauer Thesen*, etc. 6. The proceedings in full in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 527-529, 536-544.

<sup>b</sup> The address of Professor Rietschel, printed under the title: *Zur Reform des Religionsunterrichts in der Volksschule*, Leipz. 1909, has already been frequently cited. It is perhaps the most important "Streitschrift" produced by the debate and served to make its author the leader of the conservative element. The reply of the Lehrerverein is contained in the pamphlet: *Die Zwickauer Thesen und Geheimer Kirchenrat D. Rietschels*. Leipz. 1909.

<sup>c</sup> *Leipz. Tageblatt*, May 13, 1909.

<sup>d</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 960-962; 17 Jahrg., *Beilage zu Nr. 15*, 8. The *Sächsische Kirchen- und Schulblatt* is the principal organ of this conservative group. The writer regrets his inability to use the files of this journal.

<sup>e</sup> The Reformed Church in Saxony has taken a more friendly position toward the movement. See *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 382-385, for the meeting of the Protestantenverein in Dresden, February 4, 1909, which indorsed the Zwickau Theses.

of the people and their attachment to the church have occasioned much reaction against the position of the radical reformers.<sup>a</sup>

CONSTRUCTIVE REFORM MEASURES—"IM STROME DES LEBENS."

During the year the teachers have devoted their energies more to constructive plans of reform than to popular agitation. In one degree or another almost every Bezirksverein in the land has busied itself with the problem of religious instruction. It is essential here to note the more significant features of this activity.

At about the date of the Zwickau meeting, in the autumn of 1908, the "Religionskommission" of the Leipziger Lehrerverein had published a reading book, *Im Strome des Lebens* (Leipzig, 1909), for use in the religious instruction in the schools. The book met with immediate favor, a second edition being necessary in a few months.

This volume reveals in concrete and specific form the ideals for which the teachers are working. In the "Vorwort," it says:

Among teachers the conviction is steadily gaining ground that the religious and moral life of our children is not promoted by lectures and the learned exposition of dogmas and of Biblical materials of remote significance, but only through the presentation of religious life.

Proceeding on those lines, the book endeavors through narrative and verse to bring before the child the best products of religious experience within the range of his comprehension. Its contents are grouped under nine general divisions, as follows:

- I. Childhood and Home.
- II. Home and Fatherland.
- III. In God's Beautiful World.
- IV. Holidays and Festivals.
- V. Duty to Men.
- VI. Diligence and Joy in Labor.
- VII. Seedtime and Harvest.
- VIII. Life and Death.
- IX. Upward to God.

The selections are borrowed mostly from modern German literature, with the obvious purpose of exemplifying and enforcing the common duties of life. The biblical materials in the volume, drawn chiefly from the psalms and the gospels, emphasize the general truths of religion more than the distinctive tenets of Christianity.<sup>b</sup> This volume has done much to make known and popularize the ideas of reform.

<sup>a</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 108-109. The Staatsminister Dr. Beck claims that the Lutheran Church in Saxony is steadily growing stronger. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 375-376.

<sup>b</sup> Professor Rietschel, *Zur Reform des RU.* 37-40, criticises the book as taking all distinctively Christian meaning from the religious instruction.

## PROPOSALS OF NEW SCHOOL LAWS.

Most of all, the Saxon teachers have labored through the year for the enactment of new legislation based on the Zwickau doctrines. Early in 1909 a committee of the Lower Chamber in the Saxon Landtag reported a comprehensive plan for the revision of the school laws in which the subject of religious instruction received special consideration, and the proposals were substantially approved by the Chamber.<sup>a</sup> The recommended laws maintain the confessional character of the school and the clerical oversight, but provide for a reduction of the memory work, urge less dependence on the letter of scripture and of the catechism, and advise the preparation of a special bible reading book for the Volksschule. These proposals of the Landtag therefore show a disposition to accept the minor features of the Zwickau programme, but not to concur in the main questions involved.

Final action on these proposals was postponed to the next Landtag in order to give time for public discussion. This movement for a revised school law has thus given the teachers a chance to get a hearing for the reform principles, and they have made diligent use of it. During the summer of 1909 the board of directors (Vorstand) of the national Lehrerverein submitted to the several Bezirksvereine the proposed legislation, asking them to consider it and report. This work has been done, and all phases of the contemplated laws have been maturely debated, especially the provisions concerning Religionsunterricht.<sup>b</sup> Underlying this activity has been the purpose to bring the new law as fully as possible into conformity with the principles of the Zwickau Theses.

Four problems have received chief consideration:

1. The selection of Lernstoff or Memorierstoff to be required;
2. The outline of a Lehrplan or course of study;
3. The preparation of a Biblisches Lesebuch or book of Bible readings;
4. The shaping of a new system of Schulaufsicht or school supervision.

## THE SELECTION OF MATERIALS FOR MEMORIZING.

Among the distinctively pedagogical problems involved, the selection of the materials for memorizing has perhaps caused most debate among the teachers. As must be shown later, the excessive amount of memory work required is one of the crying defects of the old system of religious instruction and the reformers are resolute

<sup>a</sup> The draft of laws is printed in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 300-313.

<sup>b</sup> The new law will be in the nature of a general revision covering many other matters. The present school law has been in force since 1873, although amended in parts from time to time.

both to diminish the amount and to improve the quality of it. The discussions in Saxony in the last months have centered about the "Chemnitzer Vorschläge," a comprehensive outline of materials for memorizing compiled by the Bezirksverein of Chemnitz.<sup>a</sup> The Chemnitz outline comprises 137 Bible verses and 95 stanzas of church hymns. In general the other Bezirksvereine have found the Chemnitz plan too full and have proposed considerable reductions.<sup>b</sup> The draft finally agreed upon comprises a memory requirement of 80 Bible verses, 41 stanzas of church hymns, and a few secular poems.<sup>c</sup> At its annual meeting January 3 and 4, 1910, the Representative Assembly (Vertreterversammlung) of the Saxon Lehrerverein approved this plan.<sup>d</sup> If these proposals of the teachers are enacted into law they will greatly reduce the quantity and improve the quality of the Lernstoff.<sup>e</sup>

#### OUTLINE OF NEW COURSE OF STUDY.

Through a similar process of debate in the district unions, the teachers have worked out a course of study in religion for the eight years of the Volksschule. In this matter the original Vorschläge came from the Bezirksverein of Pirna.<sup>f</sup> The Pirna Vorschläge would keep Religionsunterricht evangelical but not narrowly confessional, laying emphasis on the life and teaching of Christ. Systematic religious instruction is to comprise two hours a week in the third and fourth years, three hours a week in the last four years. The course of study is to include, in the third year, simple stories from the life of Christ; in the fourth year, Old Testament narratives and the Ten Commandments; in the fifth and sixth years, an intensive study of the life and teaching of Christ; in the seventh and eighth years, the prophets and Psalms, the history of the apostles, select character-studies from church history, with special reference to the leaders and benefactors of Germany. The Catechism and the leading church hymns are to be introduced in their proper settings as parts of the history. Throughout the last years the main endeavor is to be to secure a deeper comprehension of the life and teachings of Jesus.

<sup>a</sup> Text in full in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 19-22. For a careful criticism, see the article by K. Wehner, *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 124-128. He condemns the Chemnitz selections as too numerous, too theological, and as lacking in practical precepts.

<sup>b</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 137, 217.

<sup>c</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 185, 242. The latter reference contains the outline in full. See also *do.* 271-273, 276-277.

<sup>d</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 313-314. The assembly, however, adopted resolutions urging the district unions to prepare much fuller collections from which the teachers might choose the materials best adapted to their pupils, and also recommending more selections from secular literature.

<sup>e</sup> The church party naturally opposes the changes. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 305, 327. The old law required a much larger amount of Lernstoff. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 398.

<sup>f</sup> Text in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 22. The dependence of these proposals on the Zwickau Theses is obvious throughout.

In the ensuing discussions the Pirna plan was subjected to a severe examination. It was criticised for upholding the confessional school, taking too much time, requiring too much memorizing, and keeping the Catechism.<sup>a</sup> The Leipzig teachers' union indorsed resolutions of a much more radical nature, restricting systematic religious instruction to two hours a week for the last four years, laying more stress on modern, nonbiblical literature, omitting the Catechism, and greatly reducing the memory work.<sup>b</sup> The Pirna plan and the Leipzig plan thus represent divergent ideals among the teachers. At their meeting November 16 and 17, 1909, the board of directors of the national union gave their sanction to a mediating plan<sup>c</sup> which restricts the instruction to two hours weekly for the last four years, but carefully safeguards the biblical character of the instruction. It is thus an endeavor to reconcile the conflicting views.<sup>d</sup> The debate reached its conclusion in the Vertreterversammlung of the national union at Dresden, January 3 and 4, 1910, when resolutions were adopted in substantial agreement with the Leipzig programme. The resolutions are as follows:<sup>e</sup>

1. Religious instruction has the task of making the mind of Jesus to live in the children.

2. Systematic religious instruction is to be given two hours a week from the fifth to the eighth school year. In the first four years only occasional moral and religious teachings are to find place.

3. As the subject-matter in systematic Religionsunterricht are to be used pictures from the religious and moral life of pre-Christian times, the life of Jesus, the life and work of the apostles, and pictures from the religious and moral life of our people, with special reference to modern times. As equally justified subject-matter for all the school years may be used the experiences of the children and suitable productions of literature and art. The imparting of this subject-matter is to be governed by the moral-religious ideas and the learning capacity of the several grades. Religious instruction must take account of the main results of biblical research and biblical history, must not come into conflict with our knowledge of the world from other sources, and must stand in harmony with the enlightened moral sentiment of our times.

4. A limited number of religious passages and songs are to be impressed on the memory. Compulsory memorizing is to be handled in a considerate manner.

In this outline of a course of study the teachers of Saxony have given practical expression to the ideals embodied in the Zwickau Theses. If this plan is enacted into law it will be possible for the teacher to make his instruction closely evangelical and confessional,

<sup>a</sup> A. Billhardt in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 103-105.

<sup>b</sup> Text in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 137-138.

<sup>c</sup> Text in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 185.

<sup>d</sup> For the attitude of other district unions see *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 217, 303. Some plans proposed were even more conservative than that of Pirna.

<sup>e</sup> Text in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 313. See *do.*, 313, and *Beilage* zu Nr. 16. 19-20 for debates. Resolutions 1 and 3 and were adopted unanimously. A few objected to No. 2, as not beginning soon enough, and a few others to No. 4.

or to make it more general and liberal in scope.<sup>a</sup> But in any event it must be kept within the terms of a broadly Christian body of truth.

BIBLICAL READING BOOK—CLERICAL SUPERVISION.

The third line of activity indicated above, the preparation of a "Biblisches Lesebuch" or "Schulbibel" has not gone so far. Such books of scripture selections are already in use in some of the schools, apparently with satisfactory results.<sup>b</sup> As already indicated, the proposals of law in the Landtag of 1908-9 recommended the preparation of such a volume for the use of the Volksschulen. The recommendation was approved by the Vorstand of the national teachers' union and was included in the Pirna Vorschläge.<sup>c</sup> While the subject has been taken up by various district unions, the information at hand does not indicate that anything decisive has yet been accomplished. At any rate the Leipziger Lehrerverein has seriously set its hand to the task.<sup>d</sup>

As viewed by both parties to the debate, possibly the most vital issue involved in the present controversy is the matter of Schulaufsicht or school supervision. The teachers are directing their agitation not merely against the clerical supervision of the Religionsunterricht, but against the entire system which excludes them from what they regard as a due share in the oversight of the schools. With increasing earnestness, as the controversy has progressed, they have moved for larger control and more self-direction in their work.<sup>e</sup> Their urgent appeal for the abolition of clerical oversight in religious instruction must consequently be viewed as the specific application of the general demand at the point in school management where the pressure is most keenly felt. In consequence of these conditions the subject of clerical supervision has not in the Saxon debate assumed quite the prominence and particular importance which might be expected. The discussions among the teachers show a marked tendency to approach the matter through its larger relations.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup> This liberty of choice is clearly indicated in No. 4 of the above articles.

<sup>b</sup> For an appraisal of their value in the schools of Leipzig, see *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 388.

<sup>c</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 22, 363.

<sup>d</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 137, 363.

<sup>e</sup> The present system is a combination of district inspection and local supervision. The propaganda of the reforming teachers has brought them into sharp collision with the Schuldirektoren, the chief organs of local inspection. For the general question see *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 57-59, 411-416, 435-438, 575-579, 650-652, 702-703, 843-849, 877-878, 985-986; *do.* 17 Jahrg. 10-11, 111-113, 131-132, 138-140, 184-185, 215-217, 291-296, 314-315, 337-339.

<sup>f</sup> It is difficult to say whether the campaign against clerical supervision gains or loses by this policy. While the emancipation of Religionsunterricht from church control is, from the standpoint of the teachers, the greatest desideratum in relation to that subject, yet clearly they are more concerned to get a better system of general school supervision.

Nevertheless the reform movement stands positively for the abolition of clerical supervision in any part of school work. The Zwickau Theses spoke clearly on the matter, and through that utterance perhaps more than any other directed church opposition against them. For reasons not wholly obvious, the proposals of law approved by the Landtag of 1908-9<sup>a</sup> indorsed this item in the Zwickau programme, and this sanction of the measure on the part of the national legislature so early in the conflict undoubtedly accounts for the small amount of public discussion during the year. The new school law will probably abolish the clerical supervision,<sup>b</sup> but will retain the church oversight in some more limited form.<sup>c</sup>

## ATTITUDE OF THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES.

Throughout Saxony the teachers took a very active interest in the fall elections of members of the Landtag now sitting in Dresden, the body which is to have the decisive rôle in shaping the new school law. In the campaign the question of revision became a leading issue, the subject of Religionsunterricht being especially to the front.<sup>d</sup> A number of teachers stood as candidates for the Landtag, but nearly all were defeated.<sup>e</sup>

In the way of official action nothing final and decisive has yet been done with reference to the questions at issue. The attitude of the Kultusminister toward the reform measures is cautious and conservative.<sup>f</sup> As noted above, the outlook for the new proposals of the teachers depends chiefly on the position of the lower chamber of the present legislature. In a membership of 91, the Conservatives count but 29 votes, while the Social Democrats and Freisinnigen together number 33.<sup>g</sup> The balance of power lies with the National Liberal group, numbering about 30 votes, and its policy is uncertain.<sup>h</sup> In all probability the new school law will incorporate most of the pedagogical reforms for which the teachers ask and will at least lessen the clerical supervision, but it is not likely to change the essentially con-

<sup>a</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 301-307, 370.

<sup>b</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 649, 702. But the issue can not be regarded as yet settled. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 945; *do.* 17 Jahrg. 89. The subject is further discussed in Part II. See p. 26.

<sup>c</sup> For example, the clergy may be excluded from the class room in any official capacity, but keep the right to examine the children in religion. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 301, 303.

<sup>d</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 35-37. The elections were held October 21.

<sup>e</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 88, 129, 163-164. The opposition attributes the defeat to too much "free thinking" among the teachers.

<sup>f</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 238-239; Sulze, *Das rechte Verhältnis*, 13.

<sup>g</sup> *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 129.

<sup>h</sup> The debates to date (end of January, 1910) show a conservative disposition on the school question. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 238-240, 372-378.

fessional character of the instruction in religion.<sup>a</sup> In Saxony, as probably throughout Germany, official action does not follow closely upon the desires of the teachers.

#### SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION IN SAXONY.

Summing up the situation in Saxony a year and a half since the Zwickau meeting, there has been a thorough arousal of public interest in the problem, a broad and penetrating discussion of the great questions at stake, and the gradual shaping of a public sentiment which must result sooner or later in positive and helpful reforms. Men of all parties are agreed that reform is necessary; they differ only as to the method and direction of reform. The earnest contests of the year have cleared the atmosphere and narrowed the struggle down to the larger essentials, and in the last months the center of contest has shifted from the public arena to the legislative forum, where the issue must at length be fought out. It remains for the second part of this report to define more particularly what these larger problems are, as they have emerged in the course of the debate.

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## II.—THE QUESTIONS AT ISSUE.

### GENERAL DEMAND FOR REVISION—PROBLEMS INVOLVED.

As noted above, the progress of the debate has revealed a general demand for the revision of religious instruction in the public schools. Very few would advocate the retention of the present system without modification. In that degree there is a positive consensus of opinion which must ultimately manifest itself in practical results.<sup>b</sup>

Among men of larger outlook in Germany there is also a growing sense of the need of cooperation among all the interests concerned in the work of reform. While rivalries and jealousies make more clamor, the deeper feeling of common interest and mutual dependence more truly represents the conditions. The serious, capable leaders on both sides are seeking common ground. Material changes will

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<sup>a</sup> The question of the confessional versus the nonconfessional school occupies a very large place in the public debates of the Landtag. See references above. The resolutions adopted by the Representative Assembly of the Sächsischer Lehrerverein at Dresden, January 3, 1910, indicate that while the nonconfessional school is the ideal of the teachers, they realize that the time is hardly ripe for it. On the question of pressing at once for the nonconfessional school, the vote stood 184 to 149 against. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 312-313. See the same journal, *Beilage* to No. 16, 9-18, for the debate in full and the resolutions adopted. Obviously Saxony, with its enormous predominance of the Lutheran population, is not ready to break with the confessional school. But the movement is rapid in that direction.

<sup>b</sup> In Germany at the present moment there is a very pronounced impulse toward school reform all along the line. *Päd. Jahresschau* I. xiii.

not come without discord and strife, but in the main the advance will be toward a solution which unites more than it divides.<sup>a</sup>

The greater problems involved in the present situation may be considered as—

- A. Pedagogical and administrative.
- B. Fundamental and ultimate.

#### A.—PEDAGOGICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS.

##### ADAPTATION OF THE INSTRUCTION TO THE CAPACITY OF CHILDREN.

At all stages of the discussion both sides have appealed freely to "pedagogical principles" in support of their respective positions. There has been much talk of Herbart, of pedagogical psychology, and the like. The teachers have urgently kept at the front the demand that in religious instruction, as in other studies, the subject-matter and the method be adapted to the capacity of the child, in accordance with modern pedagogical ideas.<sup>b</sup> They and their supporters have worked out numerous Lehrpläne, or courses of study, in the endeavor to reconstruct the religious curriculum on pedagogical lines. The extremists among them, taking the position that religion is wholly a matter for adults, would deny the subject any place in the school programme; but these are a relatively small group. Most teachers and educational workers urge only that the teaching of religion be fitted to the receptive capacity of the child and work for the reconstruction of the curriculum on those lines.<sup>c</sup> They criticize the current courses and methods in religious instruction as presenting to the child subjects far beyond his comprehension, and in such a manner as to arouse no response of his own nature. They contend that the responsiveness of the child is the touchstone of success in teaching, and that this truth is peculiarly pertinent when the subject of instruction is so vital and so personal.

The conservative churchly party, on the other hand, maintains that in religious teaching as in all else the child must, in the nature of the case, learn many things which only the future can make fully plain and comprehensible to him. They argue that to withdraw from the educational system all elements which are thus essentially investments in future good would be to render it poor and barren. The vital concern of the school, as they see it, is to fill the mind and heart of the

<sup>a</sup> The irenic, open-minded tone of many of the clergy, even when earnestly opposed to radical reform, is a hopeful sign.

<sup>b</sup> Zwickau Theses, No. 3: "The course of study and the method of instruction must conform to the nature of the child-mind"; No. 6: "The religious matter to be learned should be remodeled and materially reduced in accordance with psychological-pedagogical principles". For a sober discussion of the principles involved see Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU*. 72-96 (*Kind und Religion*). See also Eberhard, *Die wicht. Reformbestreb.* 31-36.

<sup>c</sup> The statement of Professor Friedr. Paulsen is fairly representative: "The general exclusion of Religionsunterricht from the school is impossible; on the contrary its reconstruction is imperative." Rein, *Stimmen* II. 33.

child with great truths which his own growing experience may interpret and illuminate. And they find in this method no breach with sound pedagogical principles.

The effect of the debate, as thus wrought out, has been to deepen in all minds the already profound interest in the laws of sound teaching, and good must come of it as applied to religious teaching and to the other branches of the modern curriculum.<sup>a</sup>

SELECTION OF SUBJECT-MATTER—THE SECTARIAN QUESTION.

The current discussions give large place to the selection and arrangement of the *Lehrstoff*—the subject-matter of instruction. Leaving to one side the radicals who would exclude all religious considerations from the schoolroom, there are endless divergences of opinion as to the materials to be used.<sup>b</sup> Only the more essential aspects can be considered here.

The materials of religious instruction as at present constituted are drawn from five sources: The Bible, the catechism, church history,<sup>c</sup> hymnology, and general literature. The liberalizing tendency has shown itself in the gradual growth of the last-named element, but it still constitutes an altogether minor factor in the average school curriculum. The Bible and the catechism continue to furnish the greater part.

In the distinctive field of Bible study many problems are in debate—the right proportions of Old Testament and New Testament, the relative emphasis on historical and devotional, the question of the “*Schulbibel*,”<sup>d</sup> and so on. But the more vital issues here relate to the interpretation of the Bible, rather than to selection and arrangement.

Of most concern is the question whether the Bible shall supply the chief materials or not. In that matter there is evident a tendency to reduce the amount of biblical *Lehrstoff*, but to improve the quality by more judicious selection. Beyond a certain point the churchly party resists such reduction, since its interest calls for a broad knowledge of the Bible on the part of the child, as preparation for confirmation and for membership in the church. At this point the contestants take sharpest issue. The selection of materials depends on the ultimate aim of instruction.<sup>e</sup> The extreme radicals aim only

<sup>a</sup> In many ways it is manifest that this controversy as to the place and method of religious instruction has served as a powerful stimulus to general pedagogical science.

<sup>b</sup> For the place this matter occupies in the current debate in Saxony, see p. 18 above.

<sup>c</sup> An excellent manual for the work in church history is Reiniger, *Präparationen*. The series of Reukauf and Heyn also provides a *Kirchengeschichte*.

<sup>d</sup> Whether to use in the schools a book of selections instead of the whole Bible. Numerous *Schulbibel* have been prepared, but the use of them has hardly become general. See list in Meltzer, *Verzeichnis*, 52–53. Among the best known are the “*Biblische Lesebücher*” of Reukauf and Heyn. For comments on the *Schulbibel* question see Eberhard, *Die wicht. Bestreb.* 28; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 86; Scherer, *Führer* II. 66–69. See also the discussion of the question on p. 24 of this report.

<sup>e</sup> For discussion of aims, see B, page 35.

at moral character, and would exclude nearly or quite all biblical literature as too much implicated in dogmatic issues; the liberal revisionists aim at the general development of religious life and character, and would use such biblical selections as contribute effectively to that end; the conservatives aim at thorough grounding in the confessional standards and preparation for membership in the church, and would hold fast to the Bible as necessary to that result.<sup>a</sup>

The teachers of Saxony, as they have defined themselves in the Zwickau articles and in their proposed Lehrplan, wish to keep instruction distinctively Christian but not confessional or ecclesiastical, and in consequence assume toward the Bible a respectful but hardly conventional attitude.<sup>b</sup> The theses nowhere advocate the predominant use of biblical materials. There is in them no thought of a systematic training in the Bible, nor does any such ideal underlie the more recent plans of courses of study advocated by the teachers of Saxony.

There is thus a distinct line of cleavage between those who seek to produce in the child a general awakening of the religious instincts and those who, through the use of the Bible, seek to direct the religious instincts into Christian and confessional lines. As vary these divergent aims, so vary the selection and use of matter from the sacred scriptures.

In the present controversy, however, the problem of the Bible is quite overshadowed by the problem of the catechism.<sup>c</sup> The Shorter Catechism of Luther,<sup>d</sup> dating from 1529, consists of five parts, comprising in order the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the "Sacrament of Holy Baptism," and the "Sacrament of the Altar" (the Communion). Luther's explanations, arranged in the form of question and answer, form far the larger part of the catechism, and were definitely designed for memorizing. The

<sup>a</sup> Intermediate between the several groups there are of course countless diversities of opinion.

<sup>b</sup> Zwickau Theses, No. 4: "Only such subject-matter of instruction is to be considered as presents religious and ethical life clearly to the child. Religious instruction is essentially historical instruction. At the center is to stand the person of Jesus." These sentences imply the free use of the Bible but do not prescribe it. Reference may be made once more to the volume *Im Strome des Lebens* and its use of Bible passages. See page 20. See also the comment on p. 23 above.

<sup>c</sup> For a concise account of the debate on the Catechism question see *Päd. Jahresschau* II. 216-219; III. 173, 176-177. The current literature is very large. Among noteworthy treatments are: (1) Against the Catechism: most of the papers in Rein, *Stimmen*; Arzt, *Welche Mängel*, 15-38; Lentz, *Der mod. RU.* 27-32, 75-82; Reukauf, *Didaktik des ev. RU.* 187-229; Scherer, *Führer* II. 69-83. (2) For the Catechism: Bang, *Zur Ref. des RU.* 23-27; do., *Grundlinien*, 29-36; Braasch, *Stoffe und Probl.* 167-221; Dietherle, *Die Ref. des RU.* 60-64; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 87-92; Rietschel, *Zur Ref. des RU.* 22-46; Trarbach, *Ref. des RU.* 26-28, 39-98; Wilcke, *Der kleine Katech. Luthers*; Leipz. *Lehrzeit*, 17 Jahrg. 14-15. For the Catechism problem in the Catholic schools of Germany see *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 170-177; II. 233-241.

<sup>d</sup> For English translation see Schaff, *Creeeds of Christendom* I. 74-92.

learning of the document in all its parts is generally required of the children in the Volksschule.<sup>a</sup>

The opposition to catechism instruction attacks it at three points: First, that its subject-matter is not adapted to the needs of children; second, that it gives support to an outworn system of doctrine; third, that the memory work is an excessive burden. The catechism question thus lies at the heart of the reform movement and is a cardinal issue.<sup>b</sup> Aside from the pronounced conservatives, practically all parties are united in the endeavor to exclude the catechism from the schools. That demand was included in the programme of the Hamburger Protestantentverein.<sup>c</sup> The pronouncements of the Zwickau Theses on the subject are clear and definite.<sup>d</sup> Even those who would retain the catechism call for a radical reduction in the amount of memory work and a thorough reform in the methods of instruction.<sup>e</sup> The required memory work is the bugbear of both teachers and pupils, and is clearly responsible for much of the dislike of the subject on the part of both.<sup>f</sup> The memory work includes Bible passages, hymns, etc., as well as catechism, but the latter undoubtedly lays the heaviest burdens borne by the schools.<sup>g</sup>

<sup>a</sup> As examples of the relative proportions of text and comment may be cited the following typical passages:

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT: *Thou shall not kill.*—What does this mean? Answer: We should so fear and love God as not to do our neighbor any injury or harm in his body, but help and befriend him in all bodily troubles. Schaff, *Creeds*, I. 75.

THE SECOND PETITION: *Thy kingdom come.*—What does this mean? Answer: The kingdom of God comes indeed of itself, without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may come also to us. How can this be done? Answer: When our heavenly Father gives us his Holy Spirit, so that by his grace we believe his holy Word, and live a godly life here in time, and hereafter in eternity. Schaff, *Creeds*, I. 81.

The child is required to learn thoroughly both the texts and the answers to the questions. Class-room work consists mainly of memory drill on these passages.

<sup>b</sup> Professor Rein, of Jena, in summing up the "Stimmen" he has collected, lays down as his first principle the statement: "Instruction in the Catechism does not belong in the school curriculum either in the lower or the higher grades. It is wholly the affair of the church." Rein, *Stimmen* II. 51.

<sup>c</sup> The Hamburg teachers would keep the Shorter Catechism as an historical document, but not otherwise. *Entwurf eines Lehrplans*, 2. The more conservative Lehrer-Union retains the catechism in its Lehrplan. See also *Sorgen*, etc., for defensive argument. The latest Lehrplanentwurf of the Hamburg teachers excludes the catechism. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 179.

<sup>d</sup> Zwickau Theses, No. 5: "Luther's Catechism can not be the basis and point of departure for the religious instruction of the young. As an historical religious document and as the Evangelical Lutheran creed, it is to be esteemed." For trenchant criticism of the fifth thesis see Rietschel, *Zur Reform des RU.* 22-46. As noted in Part I., the Lehrplan indorsed by the Saxon reform excludes the catechism.

<sup>e</sup> Resolutions of the Meissner Landessynode, No. 5: "In Catechism instruction it regards a change in the method of treatment and in the amount to be memorized as necessary. But it wishes to know that the teaching of youth is well grounded in the spirit and confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and maintains that for this purpose the popular Evangelical Lutheran confession, the Shorter Catechism of Luther, cannot be replaced."

<sup>f</sup> The literature of the subject is saturated with protests against the excessive memorizing. Various writers quote the words of Peter Rosegger: "It seems as if the present instruction in the Catechism were designed to make a man hate the religious world from his youth up." Arzt, *Welche Mängel.* See also *Päd. Jahresschau* III. 172; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 85.

Funke, *Vorschläge*, proposes a plan for reducing the memory work in the Saxon course of study.

<sup>g</sup> For the place of this subject in the Saxon debate, see p. 18 above.

## THE CENTRAL CONTENTION: ABOLITION OF CLERICAL SUPERVISION.

Passing by the relatively secondary debates on the arrangement of courses, the amount of time devoted to Religionsunterricht, its place in the eight-year course,<sup>a</sup> and so on, attention may be directed to the central contention of the reformers—the abolition of clerical supervision.<sup>b</sup>

Historically, the supervision of the teaching of religion by the clergy is a survival from the days when all education was under the church. It is therefore an integral part of the system. But little by little, in consequence of the gradual trend toward secularization, the visitorial rights of the clergy in the several German states have been modified or wholly abolished.<sup>c</sup> And the present conflict in Saxony focuses particular attention on the matter. Early in 1908, the National Liberal and Freisinnige parties advocated in the Landtag the abolition of clerical supervision, but the Kultusminister did not favor the proposal. The most significant feature of the debate was the evidence it gave that apparently a majority of the Saxon clergy themselves would prefer to be relieved of supervisory duties, partly because of their ill-defined position under the law, and partly because of the opposition of the educational press.<sup>d</sup>

Over against these facts must be set the official action of the Saxon Church. As already noted, early in the autumn of 1908 the teachers of Saxony, in the Zwickau meeting, declared definitely for the abolition of the clerical oversight.<sup>e</sup> In response to this challenge, the Landessynode at Meissen, some months later, took an equally definite position for the retention of the clerical powers.<sup>f</sup> The contention of

<sup>a</sup> Much of the literature cited in this report deals with these topics in their proper connections.

<sup>b</sup> For summaries of recent discussions see *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 53–54, 63–67; II. 49. See also Christiani, *Die Zwick. Thesen*, etc., *passim*; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 25–30. As typical of the reform position may be cited the words of Reukauf (Rein, *Stimmen* I. 13) and of Rein (*do.* II. 55–56). The latter says: "The supervision of the religious instruction in the schools by the Church is an unevangelical arrangement that is full of menace for the religious education of our youth." The whole relation of Church and school is discussed thoughtfully by Tews, *Schulkämpfe*, chaps. II, IV, V.

<sup>c</sup> In general the smaller states have gone farther in restricting clerical oversight than the larger ones. In some form it still remains in the four great kingdoms of Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria, and Württemberg. Tews, *Schulkämpfe*, 81. In Prussia, however, the clerical right is limited. Tews, *Schulkämpfe*, 79–81; *Päd. Jahresschau* II. 54–55; III. 49–51. For recent discussions in Württemberg, see *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 280–282.

<sup>d</sup> *Päd. Jahresschau* III. 53–54. For the testimony of pastors who favor the change see Rein, *Stimmen* II. 20–21; Sulze, *Das rechte Verhältnis*, 23–28; *do.*, *Staat und Schule*, 12–16.

<sup>e</sup> Zwickau Theses, No. 3: "The course of study and method of instruction must conform to the nature of the child-mind, and the determination of these is exclusively the business of the school. The churchly oversight of religious instruction is to be abolished."

<sup>f</sup> Meissner Resolutions, No. 2: "Now as always, it does not oppose the establishment of a purely professional oversight of the State over the schools. But it maintains the duty and right of the Church to have oversight over the religious teaching of its adolescent members." See also the debate in the Sächsische Kirchliche Konferenz at Chemnitz, *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 632–633.

the church, as thus set forth, is to the effect that, while the control of the teacher in the methods of instruction is to be respected, his right can not be allowed to cover the selection of teaching materials and can not exempt his instruction from necessary tests as to its conformity with church standards. The church looks upon the clerical supervision as the recognition of its historic and constitutional rights in the schools and as the guarantee for the legitimate exercise of those rights. The church rests its claim to supervision on the duty it has assumed, through contract with the state, to fit the youth of the land for good citizenship, so far as training in religion can accomplish that result.<sup>a</sup>

For the teachers, on the other hand, clerical supervision operates as a peculiarly heavy burden, because they see in it primarily an agency for testing their own conformity to orthodox standards. It becomes thus a matter of the creed and passes out of the sphere of legitimate pedagogy. The literature of the debate abounds in appeals from the teachers for the liberty of teaching, for the rights of conscience, and the like.<sup>b</sup> As judged by their personal and collective utterances, this is the sorest grievance of the teachers of Germany in the matter of religious instruction. They feel they are set to do a task which calls for the highest exercise of discretion and conscience, but that they are not trusted to carry discretion and conscience into their work. They feel that with their responsibility they are not accorded the liberty which makes responsibility effective. Their demand for the abolition of clerical oversight rests on the conviction that thus alone can they come into the position of independence and freedom which of right belongs to them.

The tendency of events in Saxony and throughout Germany is toward a positive limitation of the clerical rights in the schools; but it may be questioned whether either logically or practically these powers can be wholly extinguished so long as the present close alliance between the nation and the national church continues in force.<sup>c</sup>

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS—FREEDOM OF TEACHING.

Closely connected with the problem of supervision are certain questions relating to the intellectual, moral, and spiritual qualifications of teachers, the nature and method of the teacher's preparation, and the actual quality of the religious instruction now given in the German schools.

<sup>a</sup> Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU*. 30-37; Rietschel, *Zur Reform des RU*. 11-16.

<sup>b</sup> For utterances of this type, see the current files of educational journals, and such representative collections as the debates at Zwickau (*Die Umgestaltung des RU*, etc.), Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht?* and Rein, *Stimmen*. The question how far the protests of the teachers are due to a lack of harmony with the doctrinal standards of the Church will be considered later.

<sup>c</sup> Some comment on this aspect of things will be found in B, page 35.

Men of all opinions, excepting perhaps the outright dissenters from religion of every type, agree that the qualifications of the teacher must pass beyond the purely intellectual. Over and above the requirement of sound moral character and healthy moral ideals, there must be in him such personal religious life as will enable him to deal understandingly and sympathetically with the religious instincts of the children under his instruction. It is felt very generally that, more than anywhere else in the school, the personal touch is here decisive.<sup>a</sup>

As a corollary to this position, it follows that the teacher must have freedom to give his instruction in his own way, by the most effective use of his own personality. "The teacher is the method."<sup>b</sup> The exponents of the teachers' rights urge this consideration with great earnestness.<sup>c</sup> As a further corollary to the situation, both reformers and conservatives agree that teachers who find themselves out of sympathy with the prevalent Religionsunterricht ought not to be allowed or required to teach the subject.<sup>d</sup> In this conviction all parties are at one, although differing in wide degree as to the proper application of remedies.<sup>e</sup>

The discussions also give considerable place to the need of better training for the teachers of religion, in the men's and the women's normal schools and through other agencies.<sup>f</sup> The desirability of opening university courses more freely to the teachers in this field is also drawing attention.<sup>g</sup> It is thus evident that with the demand for

<sup>a</sup> The literature of the subject is full of utterances to this effect. As typical may be cited: Rein, *Stimmen*, 3, 19, 24, 50; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 75-76.

<sup>b</sup> Bang, *Zur Ref. des RU.* 3.

<sup>c</sup> Arzt, *Welche Mängel*, 51-52; Rein, *Stimmen II*, 20, and often.

<sup>d</sup> Hamb. Lehrer-Union, *Denkschrift*, 5-6; *Sorgen*, etc., 12; Bang, *Zur Ref. des RU.* 29; Lederer, *Zur Ref. des RU.* 45-47; Rietschel, *Zur Ref. des RU.* 58. In many instances teachers must teach what they do not believe or must relinquish their places. For the ecclesiastical and legal obligations of teachers as to Religionsunterricht see Mulert, *Die Lehrverpflichtung*.

<sup>e</sup> The churchly party would keep the system intact and exclude the dissenting teacher from the class room or from the school; the reformers would modify the system to meet the religious ideas and convictions of the teachers. For the controversy between the Leipziger Lehrerverein and Professor Rietschel concerning the toleration of "atheists" in religious instruction, see *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. *passim*; Rietschel, *Zur Ref. des RU.*, *passim*; Leipz. Lehrerverein, *Die Zwickau Thesen*, etc., *passim*; Christiani, *Die Zwick. Thesen*, etc., 9-10.

<sup>f</sup> Thrändorf, in Rein, *Stimmen II*, 37-44; Arzt, *Welche Mängel*, 51; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 76-80; *Päd. Jahresschau III.* 108-128, 173-174; *Denkschrift über die IV. Konf. von Religionslehrerinnen zu Cassel, 1908*, 55-70; Reukauf, *Didaktik des ev. RU.* 24-38. The Zwickau Theses called attention to this subject. No. 9: "Along with the reform of religious instruction in the Volksschule there is needed a corresponding transformation of religious instruction in the Seminar." See also *Die Umgestaltung des RU.* 39-42. The reformers complain that the *RU.* in normal schools is almost wholly on antiquated lines. *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 3-5, 182.

<sup>g</sup> The address of Professor Adolf Harnack on this subject at the "Versammlung deutscher Philologen und Schulmänner" at Basel, September 25, 1907, has been particularly influential in this direction. See the volume *Universität und Schule* containing the papers read at this congress; also *Päd. Jahresschau II.* 133-135; *III.* 169-170. The University of Leipzig has for some years offered vacation courses for teachers of religion.

a higher type of teaching in religious truth there is a growing impulse to equip the teacher for his work, in order that in scholarship and intellectual outlook he may be in adequate touch with modern biblical science and theological thought.<sup>a</sup>

In the background of these divers proposals stands the present system of religious training, with its strength and its weakness. On all sides it seems to be agreed that the instruction as now conducted is highly unsatisfactory, that it does not produce the desired results. In part the failure is attributed to the faulty selection and arrangement of materials, in part to the heavy load of memory work, but by common consent the cardinal fault is placed in the lack of a true relation between the teacher and the subject. Grounding one's judgment on the expressions of conviction by men of all parties, it must be concluded that the teaching of religion in the public schools of Germany at the present time is so pedantic, unsympathetic, and unspiritual as to constitute a serious condemnation of the system. The system seems to produce fruits diametrically opposed to its intent and purpose. Where it was designed to beget faith and vital religious purpose, it seems to produce unfaith or religious indifference. It is the general recognition of these conditions which has aroused the widespread demand for reform.<sup>b</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> In so far as it affects the teaching in the schools, the tendency of current theology will be touched upon later.

<sup>b</sup> The following personal narrative is fairly representative: "When I was a boy twelve years old I had an older friend. One time I talked with him about religion. Then he said to me: 'How is it possible for you to believe in God?' I tried to 'prove' it to him from the Bible, as I had learned to do in school. Then he smote me with my own weapon. God created the world. Adam and Eve were the first human beings. They had two children. Cain killed Abel. Then Cain married. Where did he get his wife?"

"I was dumfounded. I could not answer. So what was in the Bible was not true, and the whole religious structure which the school had built collapsed, because it was built on supports which criticism showed to be rotten. And my teacher? He could not be so narrow that he did not discover what had occurred to a boy. Only one explanation was possible: he lied deliberately. From that time it was 'out with religion,' and I would probably still be an outsider, had not a later, better teacher restored that which the first had injured through his lack of criticism and of courage." Arzt, *Welche Mängel*, 6-7. The story at least makes it evident that there are teachers of the better sort.

After speaking of the typical class-room exercise, the same author says: "I am convinced that a recitation of that sort is a sin against the holy spirit of the child." For the lack of vitality and spirituality in Religionsunterricht see Rein, *Stimmen* I. 37-38. The *Päd. Jahresschau* III. 75, reports an investigation in Kiel where, out of 500 children (250 boys, 250 girls) between the ages of nine and fourteen, only twelve named "religion" as the favorite study, while with the large majority it stood far down the list of preferences; also a like investigation in Breslau where among 2,556 children about two and one-half per cent of the boys liked "religion" best, a very large majority expressing positive dislike of the subject, while among the girls likes and dislikes pretty nearly balanced one another. One writer in Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht?*, while expressing great love and reverence for the Bible says: "The heartlessness of the customary religious instruction was a terror to me from childhood: from one day to the next, thirty to forty disconnected Bible passages and in addition a lot of trivial chorals to learn thoroughly was to me, in spite of my good memory, a horror." Fitger, in Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht?* 27. For general criticism of school training from the standpoint of results in character, see *Päd. Jahresschau* II, 30-33. See also *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 234-236.

It seems evident that the fault lies not in any incapacity on the part of the teachers, but in the conditions which impose on them a kind of instruction contrary to their inclinations and their consciences. At the same time it must be recognized that many teachers in Saxony and the other German States do not find the existing system irksome and are able to use it for excellent results.<sup>a</sup>

#### B.—FUNDAMENTAL AND ULTIMATE PROBLEMS.

Thus far this report has confined itself to issues distinctively within the school. But, as implied at the beginning, the present controversy long since ceased to be merely a school question, and passed out into the larger field of general public interest. With some consideration of this aspect of the situation the report may close.

#### ATTITUDE OF VARIOUS RELIGIOUS GROUPS.

In general it may be said that, while the debate takes its form from the school, it gets its substance and its spirit from these wider relationships. In the last analysis the attitude of individual leaders and of coherent groups toward the specific question of religious instruction rests back on their attitude toward religion itself. Analyzing the field from this point of view, one may distinguish four groups as follows:

1. The orthodox confessional group;
2. The liberal Christian group;
3. The agnostic-positivist group;
4. The Romanist group.

In the mutual attractions and repulsions of these divers parties is to be found the key to the situation; and without some knowledge of their relationships the seriousness and intensity of the school question can not be understood.

*The orthodox confessional group.*—The orthodox confessional party finds its strength in the powerful position of the Lutheran Church in nearly all German States.<sup>b</sup> While not formally an "established" church, it enjoys so many privileges and prerogatives under the law as to be in a peculiarly strong and favored situation. In various German States there exists a real or implied contract between the state and the church by virtue of which the church assumes responsibility for the religious training of the young, thus giving the

<sup>a</sup> This appears in the debates at Zwickau and is evident in many ways. Numerous teachers' organizations in Germany are primarily devoted to upholding the present system of religious teaching. See the *Handbuch des Verbandes deutscher evangelischer Schul- und Lehrervereine*. Berlin, 1903. This volume affords impressive evidence as to the strength of the evangelical confession among the teachers of Germany and as to their activity for preserving its place in the schools. See also *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 164; II. 174-176; III. 150-151.

<sup>b</sup> While the ruling house in Saxony adheres to the Roman Church, the people are almost wholly Lutheran. See Sulze, *Das rechte Verhältn.* 6.

Lutheran confession practical control of the religious education in the school.<sup>a</sup> In the present struggle the policy and endeavor of the churchly party is to preserve these prerogatives, thus insuring to the Lutheran Church a type of religious instruction in the schools in harmony with its confessional standards. While recognizing the need of reform in many particulars, and standing ready to concede minor points, the conservative party holds steadily to its traditional rights and vested interests.<sup>b</sup>

By reason of the confessional character of the Volksschule, there has in the last years grown up a strong and significant movement toward the introduction of "Simultanschulen"—interconfessional schools where children of different communions are taught, each by an instructor of his own faith. The Simultanschule has come forward as the rival and substitute of the confessional school. Wherever it has found footing it has in some degree broken the monopoly of the confessional school. And the sponsors of the interconfessional school look for nothing less than the supplanting of confessionalism in public education all along the line. This movement must therefore be regarded as one of the chief lines of attack on the confessional school.<sup>c</sup> In the nature of the case both Protestant and Catholic confessional interests are arrayed against it.<sup>d</sup> The Lutheran conservatives also profess to fear the interconfessional school as affording an open door to ultramontane influences.<sup>e</sup> While many powerful voices have been raised against it, the Simultanschule seems to be gaining ground.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup> With the result of course that parents of other confessions must put their children under Lutheran instruction or must provide another type of teaching at their own cost.

<sup>b</sup> It must, however, always be remembered that many devoted adherents of the national church, both clergy and laity, advocate one or another of the more fundamental reform measures; and some are to be reckoned among the thoroughgoing reformers. It would therefore be an error to identify too closely the loyal Lutherans with the conservative interest in the school question. For a good statement of the case from the temperate conservative side see Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 42-48. For examples of pastors who support the reform movement see Dietterle, *Die Ref. des RU.*; Gebhardt, *Mod. Relig.- und Konf.-Unterr.*; Kautzsch, *Die kirchl. Lehre.* The last-named writer is pastor of the Reformed Church in Dresden. This communion seems to be favorable to the reform movement in Saxony. Kautzsch, *Die kirchl. Lehre* 3, 38.

<sup>c</sup> For the progress of the Simultanschule propaganda in the last years see *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 66-67, 100-101; II. 71-72; Reukauf, *Didaktik des ev. RU.* 17-18; *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 231-234, 301. Its most notable victory was to secure the endorsement of the "Deutsche Lehrerversammlung," the national teachers' organization, at München in 1906. For the address of Oberlehrer Gärtner and the action of the assembly see *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 67, 100, 160. He said in his address: "the confessional school is to be regarded as the exponent of reactionary tendencies and the Simultanschule as the symbol of progressive tendencies." *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 67.

<sup>d</sup> *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 67. It is, however, affirmed by the same authority that a majority of evangelical teachers favor the interconfessional school. For Romanist opposition see *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 65-66, 67, 101; II. 180.

<sup>e</sup> *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 101-102; II. 49-50.

<sup>f</sup> Many argue that since Christianity is organized into confessions Religionsunterricht must necessarily take the confessional form. Holtzmann, *Ein Buechlein*, 12-14. The difficulties confronting the Simultanschule are manifestly great. The Zwickau Theses do not mention the Simultanschule, but the general trend of the Saxon movement is favorable to it. The question seems to have been less debated in Saxony than in Prussia and some other parts of the land.

But it has not met with favor in Saxony, the teachers there seeking nonconfessional rather than interconfessional school.<sup>a</sup> It is at the present moment the most promising attempt to find a substitute for the confessional school.

As already stated, the Lutheran Church rests its case on its historic rights and its traditional alliance with the State.<sup>b</sup> From the political point of view as well as from the churchly, any divorce of the two institutions would involve serious disturbance of conditions, creating many problems of public policy; <sup>c</sup> and these facts give powerful support to the party opposed to change.

Even more seriously, the churchly party directs its endeavors first of all to the maintenance of the purity of the faith as it conceives of the purity of the faith. The fight for the retention of the catechism is the heart of the battle. The Shorter Catechism is the symbol and exponent of Lutheran orthodoxy. It embodies the doctrines of the creed as given by the great reformer to the nation, the "Heilstatsachen" or "saving truths" as conceived of in the teaching of the church.<sup>d</sup> The thorough grounding of the youth in the articles of this creed appears to the church its most imperative duty; and in the Volksschule it recognizes the readiest and most effective instrument for its uses. It makes much also of its historic relations with the schools and of the rights thus acquired.<sup>e</sup> In a word, the attitude of the church is that which naturally characterizes an institution strongly entrenched in power, conscious of its service to the past, and confident of its capacity to render like service in the future, and in consequence reluctant to let go any of the elements of its strength.

*The liberal Christian group.*—The liberal Christian group comprises all those elements in the nation that adhere to the great fundamentals of Christian truth as they understand them, but seek to

<sup>a</sup> The Zwickau theses do not mention the Simultanschule. For the position of the Saxon teachers, see *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 17 Jahrg. 316–318. The Saxon movement stands for an instruction that is Christian without being ecclesiastical. Many contend that such an instruction is impossible. This point of view appears frequently in the debates in the Landtag. But, as already noted, the Saxon teachers do not find the time yet ripe for the nonconfessional school. The small percentage of non-Lutherans in Saxony makes any recourse to the Simultanschule improbable.

<sup>b</sup> The church recognizes also, of course, its responsibility on its own account for the training of the young, that they may be fitted for loyal membership in its communion. Many leaders in the church, dissatisfied with the results accruing from the present system, favor the full assumption of Religionsunterricht on the part of the church, thus putting themselves into the party that stands for the exclusion of religion from the public schools. It seems to be widely felt that the exclusion of religious instruction from the schools would greatly increase the legitimate power of the church. Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 44.

<sup>c</sup> Among others, the financial problem is of great moment. The economic resources of the church make it a strong antagonist. It is seen on all sides that the exclusion of the church from the schools must ultimately lead to complete disestablishment and that would involve an economic crisis of great magnitude.

<sup>d</sup> Kautzsch, *Die kirchl. Lehre*, discusses the "Heilstatsachen" from the Reformed point of view, and Schneider, *Wittenberg und Zwickau*, and Thieme, *Die Theologie der Heilstatsachen*, reply for the Lutherans. These debates throw little light on the school question.

<sup>e</sup> These several considerations are emphasized repeatedly in the current discussions.

emancipate Christian thought from what they regard as antiquated dogmas. It is the party of the "new theology" and has behind it much of the scholarship and intellectual strength of the nation.<sup>a</sup> Nearly all the conspicuous leaders of the reform movement adhere to this position.<sup>b</sup> They contend that, to keep its place in modern life, Christianity must be restated in terms of modern thought. It must stand in touch with the assured results of modern science and learning.<sup>c</sup> It must see life through the eyes of the men of to-day. It must not seek so much a confessional as a broadly Christian type of character.<sup>d</sup> The liberal Christian leaders advocate the retention of the Bible as the basis of instruction, and some of them would retain the catechism; but they would deal with these literary documents in the historical spirit and method, and not treat them as absolute standards of the faith.<sup>e</sup> The ideals of this group would not preclude the introduction of helpful materials from the sacred books of other religions or from any other source, the purpose being always to lay broad foundations for the growth of a normal religious life.<sup>f</sup>

At this point arises the most serious divergence between the party of conservative orthodoxy and the progressive liberal Christian group.

<sup>a</sup> The strength of the university faculties, including theology, belongs in this group. See above (p. 18) for the support of the Zwickau reform by the faculty of the University of Leipzig. Their attitude is thoroughly typical. The proportion of liberals among teachers in the middle and lower schools is probably as great.

<sup>b</sup> As was pointed out above (p. 13), the reception given by the nation to the radical Bremen-Hamburg proposals showed that the people were not ready for their extreme position. The Saxon reform distinctly represents the more temperate liberal Christian sentiment.

<sup>c</sup> Zwickau Theses, No. 8: "The entire instruction in religion must stand in harmony with the established results of scientific research and with the enlightened moral sentiment of our times." For the debates at Zwickau bearing on this point see *Die Umgestalt. des RU.*, especially the address of Direktor Arnold, 3-27. For comments on the thesis, see Rietschel, *Zur Ref. des RU.* 46-53, and especially Lederer, *Zur Ref. des RU.* The whole pamphlet of the last-named writer is devoted to the topic. The "Evangel. Luther. Schulverein für das Königreich Sachsen" has recently issued a pamphlet in the conservative interest entitled *Der Religionsunterricht und die gesicherten Ergebnisse der Wissenschaft*. It is reviewed from the liberal standpoint in *Leipz. Lehrerzeit.* 16 Jahrg. 941-943. See also in this connection the debate concerning the "Kausalgesetz" in *Die Zwick. Thesen und Geh. Kirchenrat Dr. Rietschel*, 53-71. See also Tews, *Die Schulkämpfe*, 23-26.

<sup>d</sup> The words of Professor Pfeleiderer are representative: "The training of youth in the dogmatic confession of a given church is not the mission of the school, which has the immediate duty, not of educating for membership in any individual church, but of laying the general religious foundations of a Christian life, for which purpose the instruction in biblical and church history fully suffices." Rein, *Stimmen* I. 5. See also the words of Blok: "Where confessional narrowness begins, there religion ends." Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht?* 10.

<sup>e</sup> Zwickau Theses, No. 5: "As an historical religious document and as the Evangelical Lutheran creed, it [the Catechism] is to be esteemed." The same article says: "Religious instruction is essentially historical instruction." That is to say, religious truth is to be taught in its historical settings, and not as absolute dogma.

<sup>f</sup> The following literature represents the ideals and purposes of the liberal Christian reform element: Arzt, *Welche Mängel*; Leipz. Lehrerver., *Im Strome des Lebens*; Lentz, *Der mod. RU.*; Meltzer, *Verzeichnis*; Meltzer, *Neue Bahnen*; Reukauf, *Didaktik des evang. RU.*; Scherer, *Führer* I. (Religionswiss.), II. (Relig.- u. Moralunterricht); Tews, *Schulkämpfe*; Thrändorf, *Allgem. Methodik des RU.* The body of the literature is already very large. One is impressed with the spirit of fairness and moderation which characterizes the representative leaders of the party.

What theological doctrines shall be taught in the schools? What "Weltanschauung" or conception of the universe?<sup>a</sup> How shall the teaching of the Bible be interpreted in relation to modern science and thought? Obviously these great questions are fundamental, running back into the ground principles of science, philosophy, and theology. Obviously, too, the school is not the place for the settlement of such problems.<sup>b</sup> At the same time no teacher of religious truth, especially in the upper grades of the Volksschule, can avoid these fundamental questions. Hence the pressure of rival theological standards to secure in the schools the interpretation of things which is in harmony with their respective points of view. The liberal wing pushes vigorously for a modernized instruction in religion; the conservative wing resists the modern tendency. And as yet the atmosphere of the struggle has not cleared sufficiently to show the outcome of it.<sup>c</sup>

*The agnostic-positivist group.*—The entrance of the third group, the "agnostic-positivist" party,<sup>d</sup> renders the situation yet more complex. This group comprises the very considerable number of leaders and adherents who have broken with Christian traditions and seek complete independence of ecclesiastical control and influence.<sup>e</sup> They advocate the entire separation of church and state,<sup>f</sup> the full exclusion of religious instruction from the school, and the substitution of a

<sup>a</sup> See Bang, *Zur Ref. des RU.* 5-11; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 49-72; *Päd. Jahresschau* II. 201-208. A noteworthy recent attempt to vindicate the christian Weltanschauung against rationalistic philosophy is Huntziger, *Das Christentum im Weltanschauungskampf der Gegenwart.* Leipz. 1909. Conservative opinion defends itself on the ground that the schools can not teach a doctrine contrary to the faith of the parents whose children are taught. The progressives reply that the schools must teach the truth without regard to other considerations.

<sup>b</sup> The duty of protecting the schools from theological controversy or other divisive matters is generally recognized. But practically the Volksschule has become the central arena of the combat. For the difficulty of the situation see the statement of Natorp, in Rein, *Stimmen* II. 3-4.

<sup>c</sup> The yet unsettled state of philosophical and theological thought insures a prolonged debate of the practical school interest.

<sup>d</sup> Many teachers who do not go to the extreme of the monistic philosophy advocate the substitution of moral instruction for the religious studies in the public schools. In that degree the designation used above is inaccurate and unfair.

<sup>e</sup> More nearly than any other, Professor Ernst Haeckel of Jena is the recognized exponent of this view. He says: "Since I have for forty years fought for the end for which you are striving, I need not say that your endeavors to do away with religious instruction in the schools has my full support. It must be replaced on the one hand by an ethics according to nature, and on the other by comparative religious history, the doctrine of evolution, and monistic philosophy." Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht?* 44. The monistic materialism of Haeckel has great influence among the teachers of Germany and makes itself felt in the present controversy. See the evidences in the volume by Gansberg cited above.

<sup>f</sup> Public opinion has hardly become outspoken on the subject, but many leaders are looking in that direction. See *Päd. Jahresschau* II. 210. The Bremer Denkschrift says: "The enforcement of separation between church and state even in the sphere of the school is grounded in the progressive spirit of the age." Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht?* 184. This volume contains many expressions of adherence to the general principle. But advocacy of the separation of church and state is not confined to the radical party. For conservative comments see Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 42-48. The work of Troeltsch, *Trennung von Staat und Kirche*, is often cited, but the writer has not seen it.

comprehensive system of moral education.<sup>a</sup> Among the intellectual leaders of the nation and among the teachers it is a formidable group, while with the masses its stronghold is the Social Democratic party.<sup>b</sup>

*The Roman Catholic group.*—The Roman Catholic party has much strength in Germany as a whole,<sup>c</sup> but its direct participation in the Saxon debate is not great. The chief effect of this stream of influence upon the situation in Saxony has probably been more negative than positive.<sup>d</sup>

#### ACTIVITIES AND IDEALS OF THE DIFFERENT PARTIES.

All of these groups and coteries are active in their respective interests in relation to the schools. Through their periodicals and *Flugschriften*, through the publication of aids for teachers and model courses of study,<sup>e</sup> they are seeking a hearing for their ideas. So far as concerns Saxony, the reform movement gets its impulse primarily from the practical needs of the teachers; but behind them is the powerful support of the progressive school of theology. The alliance is spontaneous and natural, since the greater number of the teachers are to be reckoned among the adherents of this religious point of view. For the rest, the conservative orthodox and the agnostic-positivist

<sup>a</sup> As the constructive feature of the reform program of the radicals the subject can be studied in such works as Gansberg, *Religionsunterricht?*; Lentz, *Der mod. RU.* 37–59; Pauli, *Kirche und Schule im Kampfe um Gott*; Altschul, *Zum Moral-Unterricht*. The last-named work provides a seven-year Lehrplan for the schools. Mention may be made again of the book *Im Strome des Lebens*, which lays stress on the moral elements in school training. For a defense of religious instruction as against moral see Voigt, *Religionsunterricht oder Moralunterricht?* Scherer, *Führer* II. 88–116, discusses the question comprehensively.

<sup>b</sup> Tews, *Die Schulkämpfe der Gegenw.* 33–46, 60–64, 119–120, discusses the principles involved in relation to the schools. See also *Päd. Jahresschau* I. xvi. The hostility of the Social Democrats to religion and religious instruction is shown in Arzt, *Welche Mängel*, 11, 26–27; Brück, *Zur Umgest. des RU.* 29; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 14–15; *Päd. Jahresschau* I. xvi. The motto of the party is “Religion ist Privatsache.” Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU.* 14. For the activity of the Social Democrats in propaganda see *Päd. Jahresschau* I. xviii–xix (Sozialdemocrat. Schule in Berlin), 288–299 (*Jugend-schriften*). The antagonism of the party to religion rests on its distrust of the church as a “capitalistic” institution. Arzt, *Welche Mängel*, 11. The Social Democratic influence is a momentous factor in the present situation. The writer has not seen the recently published *Kirche und Sozialdemokratie* by Pastor Georg Liebster.

<sup>c</sup> About 36 per cent of the people of Germany are Roman Catholics. Tews, *Die Schulkämpfe der Gegenw.* 40. The activity of the Roman Church in the matter of Religionsunterricht is indicated in *Päd. Jahresschau* I. 167–177; II. 227–241; III. 179–194; Tews, *Die Schulkämpfe der Gegenw.* 47–64. The Catholic teachers’ organizations are active in the work. See the reform program of a Catholic teacher in Rein, *Stimmen* I. 15–25.

<sup>d</sup> The fear of ultramontane influences makes many German leaders timid as to school reform. The attempt to put Lutheranism out of the schools seems to them equivalent to putting Romanism in. In Saxony at least the fear seems quite unwarranted.

<sup>e</sup> For examples of this literature see: (1) *Conservative*: Arendt, *Ein Beitrag zur Ref. des RU.*; Braasch, *Stoff und Probleme des RU.* (2) *Liberal*: Gebhardt, *Mod. Relig.- und Konf.-Unterr.*; Leipz. Lehrerver., *Im Strome des Lebens*; Reukauf und Heyn, *Evang. RU.* (a very important series); Schmitt, *Religionslehre für die Jugend*; Thrändorf und Meltzer, *Der RU.* (also a very useful series); Voigt, *Evang. Religionsbuch*. See also the lists in Meltzer, *Verzeichnis* (now somewhat out of date), and in Scherer, *Führer* II. 125–141. (3) *Radical*: Altschul, *Zum Moral-Unterricht*.

parties probably have about equal strength among the teachers, with the balance in favor of the conservatives.<sup>a</sup>

Behind the various parties and their conflicting tendencies lie, of course, divergent ideals as to the aim and purpose of religious instruction,<sup>b</sup> or indeed of school training in general. As already observed, each group sees the ideal end differently. All alike emphasize the training in character as fundamental, but one sees the expression of character more in loyalty to the church, another in social service, another in personal ideals, another in the faithful discharge of the duties of citizenship. It is largely a question of emphasis.

#### FORECAST OF THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION.

Because of its entanglement in the deeper issues of modern philosophy and theology, it is not easy to forecast the immediate solution of the school question, at least along the line of present tendencies. So long as religion remains a subject of instruction in the schools, the vital problems of religious thought must awaken echoes in the schoolroom. The interconfessional system, the "konfessionslose" instruction in general religious truth, and all such attempts at solution may be ideal in principle, but they are difficult in practice.<sup>c</sup> Whatever the final settlement of the question, it will probably come as one phase of the more profound adjustments of church and state in their mutual relations. Meanwhile it is evident that the present agitation will accomplish much for the betterment of the existing system and for the lightening of the burdens of both teachers and pupils in the matter of religious instruction.

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<sup>a</sup> These statements rest on general impressions and can not count for more than opinions. The majority strength of the liberal group, however, seems beyond question.

<sup>b</sup> See the following references: Arzt, *Welche Mängel*, 2-5; Franke, *Der Kampf um den RU*. 18-20; Lentz, *Der mod. RU*. 13-23, 32-34; *Päd. Jahresschau* II. 18-19, 212-213; III. 180-182; Reukauf, *Didaktik des ev. RU*. 114-128; Tews, *Die Schulkämpfe der Gegenwart*. 18-20.

<sup>c</sup> The book of Guettler, *Die relig. Erziehung im deutschen Reiche*, while affording little direct material for this report, shows the legal complications arising from the present confessional system.

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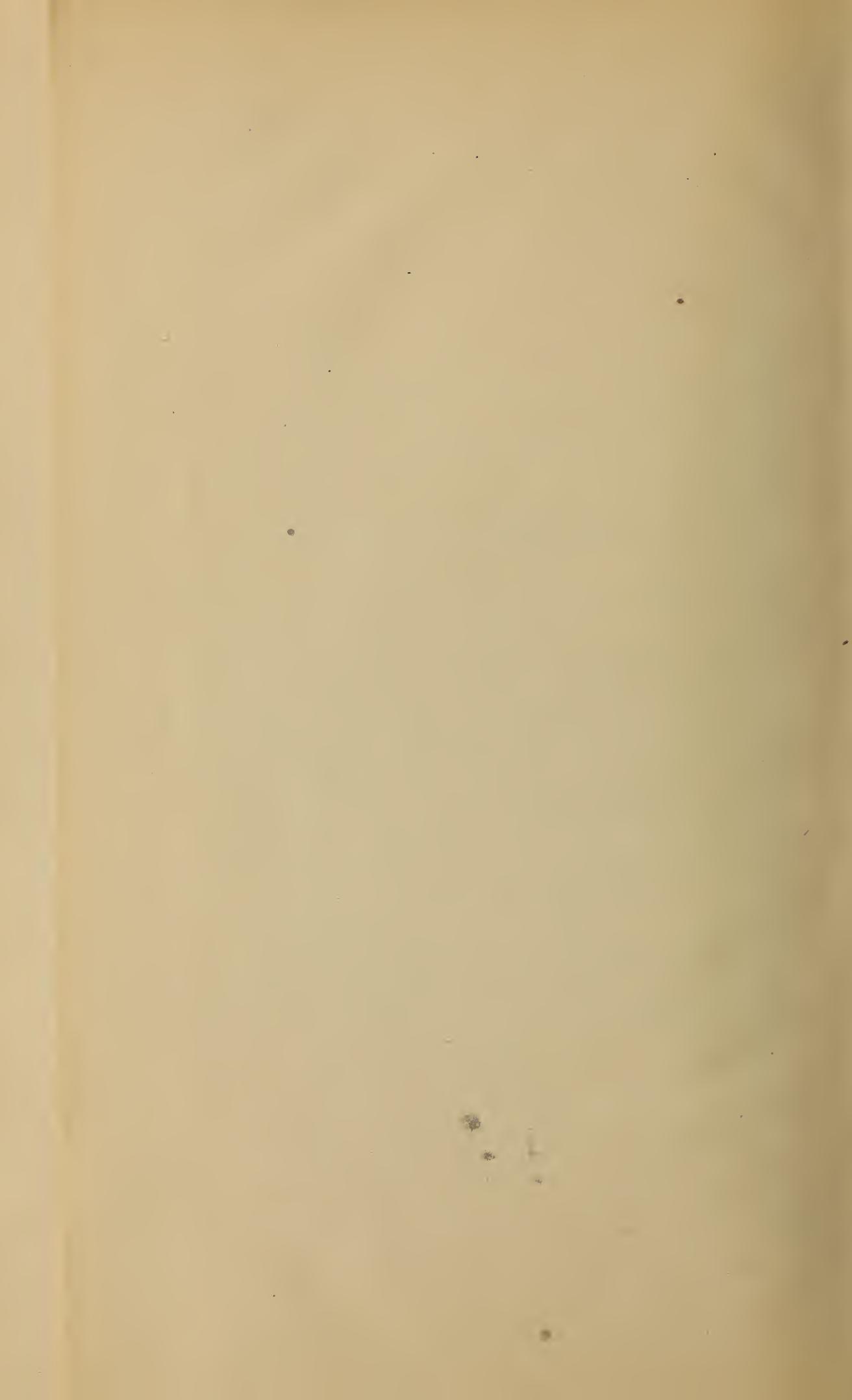
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