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This number of the EXILE HERALD contains one of the addresses delivered at the spring meeting of the Society at Perkiomen Seminary, May 11, 1924. Members who could not be present will be interested in this paper by Dr. Brecht.

The list of members printed in this number is for the information of all. Corrections in names or addresses will be gladly received by the secretary.

Any member is privileged to nominate others for membership. The basis of membership is descent from one of the exiles. The dues are only \$3 a year. This includes payment of subscription to the EXILE HERALD.

The Heritage of the Schwenkfeldian Exiles

By SAMUEL K. BRECHT, Litt.D.

"If a man says that he does not care to know where his grandfather lived, what he did, and what were that grandfather's politics and religious creed, it can merely mean that he is incapable of taking interest in one of the most interesting forms of human knowledge—the knowledge of the details of the Past."—*London Spectator*.

The Descendants of the Schwenkfeldian Exiles have a heritage superior to that of the descendants of any other group of immigrants who came to the shores of Pennsylvania to secure religious toleration, in that they have a more complete knowledge of the history of their "grandfathers who migrated to this country," than has any other group.

If it be true as stated by historians that wherever the Pennsylvania German settled the story of his piety, honesty, industry, and success in life has been repeated, it is doubly true of our immigrant ancestors. These exiles did not leave their Fatherland to seek power and glory in the wilderness to which they migrated, but they forsook their native land and braved the perils of the deep many times, enduring starvation and death on their long voyages, in search of a land where they might enjoy liberty of conscience and where their children might grow up and have religious freedom.

Of all the groups of religious refugees who came to America none has a more interesting and unique history than have the ancestors of this group gathered here today. Whereas we are told regarding the Pilgrims, who landed at Plymouth Rock in the Mayflower in 1620 that King James was "jolly well pleased to be rid of them, since they were persons of such habits of obstinacy and ill-tempered resistance to authority that there was no getting along with them," hence we find no royal invitation for them to return to the Kingdom.

Contrast with this the history of our ancestors, who, having left all their worldly possessions that they could not carry with them in their native land, and in many cases these possessions were no small amount,—separated from their loved ones, parents from children, husbands from wives, and came to this country to seek a refuge. As soon as they had established themselves here, they were honored as were no other exiles by the royal invitation of Frederick the Great in 1742, in which our Fathers were asked to return to their native land, promising them restoration of their homes that they had left, and guaranteeing them employment so that they might support their families and live in peace and happiness. A copy of this Royal Invitation copied from the original in the Archives in Berlin through the efforts of a former German Ambassador at the

instigation of the late Judge Christopher Heydrick, of Franklin, Pennsylvania, hangs on the walls of this building on the floor above.

The finest tribute that can be paid to a group of people is that which shows appreciation of their attributes while they are still in the flesh, not waiting for eulogies of their virtues after they have departed from this life. That a small group of two hundred souls should leave such a void in their Fatherland and should be so much missed that the Emperor should take sufficient cognizance to issue a decree begging them to return, even offering to erect linen factories in order to provide employment, is no small honor, and when we realize that not a single exile accepted this invitation to return and retrieve his lost property, we have a heritage that we cannot cherish too highly. And yet, we descendants of these worthy exiles, must admit that although Plymouth Rock marks the spot where the Mayflower landed, we have no monument to mark the site where the St. Andrew anchored to unload her worthy passengers. No artist has depicted this scene upon the canvas, nor have the poets sung the song of the journey and the landing of these Exiles. Yet amongst the descendants of these pioneers we have poets and artists competent to immortalize these events. There are also business men amongst these also whose wealth runs into the seven-figure column, who can finance the erection of monuments worthy of any heroes.

Although monuments of wood and stone are lacking to immortalize the deeds of these heroic fathers, and whereas canvases do not adorn our galleries depicting Schwenkfeldian scenes, the Schwenkfelder people have built monuments upon the hearts of men that will last as long as time exists.

Being followers of the doctrine promulgated by the founder of the Middle Way, Caspar von Schwenckfeld, one of the most learned and broad-minded of the leaders of the Reformation,—a man, according to the late Dr. Chester David Hartmanft, who had more influence in the formation of the German language than had Luther,—a man who had the courage of his convictions, and a man who practiced throughout his life the doctrine of humility and peace as did no other reformer; a most voluminous writer, because he was forbidden to preach in public; a man of the very highest ideals, who believed in toleration not only for himself, but also for others, so much so that he planned a great cosmopolitan university under the protection of the Duke of Liegnitz, to be known as the University of Liegnitz, on whose staff were to be found professors of all religious beliefs,—these ancestors had a leader of high ideals who inspired these high ideals in his followers.

Is it strange then to note that these ancestors of ours who migrated to this country more than 150 years after the death of their leader should still have such high ideals and should

be a superior group of people? The late Gov. Samuel W. Pennypacker, although not related in any way to this group of people, repeatedly stated in speech and print that the immigrant Schwenkfelders were the most intelligent group of religious refugees that came to this country, and he verified his statement by pointing to the large number of manuscripts and printed books penned by the Schwenkfelders that were always found in the homes of these people. He frequently stated that whereas he found pewter plate and other material, valuables in the estates of the deceased early settlers, he was always sure to find literary treasures of a high order in the estates of the Schwenkfelders.

I must pause to state that the late Gov. Pennypacker was one of the warmest friends of the Schwenkfelders, and the fact that he resided at Schwenksville led many people to believe that he, too, was a descendant of the Schwenkfelders, since he never failed to laud them and their efforts whenever opportunity presented. It was Gov. Pennypacker who reached the ear of Andrew Carnegie when this benefactor for the first and only time departed from his fixed rule of donating libraries to collegiate institutions only, and gave us \$20,000 to erect this beautiful building in which you are now meeting. Needless to state, the Schwenkfelders matched this sum with a \$20,000 endowment fund, and it was the magnificent donation of \$9,000 made by the late Judge Christopher Heydrick, of Franklin, Pennsylvania, whose portrait hangs above yonder door that made this endowment possible within the time specified by Mr. Carnegie.

You must have noticed the large "Pennypacker Collection" of rare Schwenckfeld and Mennonite prints on the floor above, which were purchased from the Pennypacker estate at a cost of more than \$4,000. Our library is honored to possess this valuable collection and it is one way of showing our gratitude for what Gov. Pennypacker did for our cause.

Soon after arriving in this country we find our forefathers continuing their literary activity, begun before their migration. Even at this early date they prepared a list of the writings of Schwenckfeld and the Schwenkfelders, said to have been the first attempt to make a bibliography in this country.

This week the Friends are celebrating the 300th anniversary of the birth of their founder, George Fox, by enumerating his virtues, and you will have noticed that Dr. Elbert Russell, director of the Woolman School, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, discussed, "George Fox's Contribution to Modern Religious Life and Thought." How many are aware that George Fox obtained his religious ideas from the writings of Caspar Schwenckfeld? Robert Barclay, in his "History of the Inner Religious Life of the Commonwealth," definitely states that Schwenckfeld preached the identical doctrines advocated by

George Fox, more than one hundred years before, and he also states that he had access to Fox's papers and other documents to verify this statement. Barclay therefore says that the Quakers are descended from the Schwenkfelders, and as a matter of fact, we sometimes find them referred to as the "German Quakers." Surely a wonderful heritage to cherish.

Two years hence, in 1926, will mark the 200th anniversary of the flight of our ancestors from Silesia to Saxony, and in ten years we shall celebrate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the St. Andrew in Pennsylvania. Is it not time now to begin to plan for the proper celebration of these events? This gives us sufficient time to locate the spot in Philadelphia where the St. Andrew landed and to erect a suitable marker thereon, and it seems to me that this Society should take the initiative in taking proper steps to celebrate these anniversaries with exercises suitable for the occasions.

Our good friend, Dr. Robert Ellis Thompson, wrote a book entitled, "The Hand of God in American History," in which he shows that Providence had a guiding hand in shaping the events that are connected with the early settlement of this country. Surely Providence had a guiding hand in shaping the destinies of our early ancestors. Not one was obliged to come to Pennsylvania as a redemptioner, because God led the Von Buyuschance brothers, of Holland, to pay the passage way of those of our immigrant ancestors who were too poor to pay their passage way. This unique generous act of these Mennonite brethren prevented any of them from suffering the hardships so common to many other early German settlers, and it also enabled them to get an early start to build their own homes and till their farms. Providence again intervened and led them to refuse to settle in the Province of Brandenburg, Germany, at the suggestion of the Emperor, when he offered to erect linen factories in order to give them employment. Again, when Count Zinzendorf, their protector and benefactor in Saxony, made arrangements for our fathers to go with him and found a colony in Georgia, he was unable to carry out his project as planned, and, as a result, our ancestors settled in Pennsylvania instead of Georgia.

I fear that we do not always realize the significance of the failure of our forefathers to accept the offers of the Emperor of Germany and of Count Zinzendorf. In the Civil War, our people would have been enrolled in the ranks of the Confederate Army, and in the late World War we and our boys would have been drafted on the side of the Kaiser. Can we not see how Providence guided and directed the movements of our persecuted ancestors, and evidently for some purpose? A heritage has been left us that we cannot refuse to cherish to the end of our days.

That our immigrant forefathers as a group had a marked influence in the community in which they lived is due to their intense zeal for right living and their diligence in teaching their children the value of honesty and integrity in their mode of living. More than fifty years after their arrival in this country we find one of the finest encomiums that one could wish to be spoken of any people.

In 1764 the Schwenkfelders initiated their unique school system, which reached its highest efficiency in 1790 to 1792, when George Carl Stocks, said to have been a graduate of the University of Halle, Germany, was the efficient principal of the Hosensack Academy, one of the schools maintained by the Schwenkfelders. When Mr. Stocks left in 1792 to enter the ministry of the Lutheran Church, he traveled to Philadelphia in company with Balzer Schultz, during which journey Stocks expressed his opinion of the Schwenkfelders with whom he had been associated during the past two years. This trip was taken on June 15, 1792, and the conversation was recorded in German by Mr. Schultz, the original copy of which is preserved in the archives in the room above.

The following is a free translation of this conversation, which evidently gives a fair picture of the life led by this group of people at that period and the impression it made upon this German scholar:

"I may travel about the world wherever I please, and may live to a good, old age, nevertheless, I must bear testimony to you people, that I have mingled with all kinds of sects and religious bodies, because I have traveled about the world so much, and have met all sorts of people, I have not met any people with whom I am so well contented as with you. I have lived so long amongst you and have observed your conduct of life, I must say that I have never heard any profanity amongst you people; I have never heard any blaspheming; I have never seen a drunkard in your midst, and, although I have heard of some, I have never seen any. You are charitable and well-disposed towards everybody, especially towards the poor. You are diligent and orderly in your dealings, but not prodigal. You do not waste so much on pride and extravagance in clothing as is commonly done in this world. You keep yourselves aloof from the world and worldly affairs.

"You try to keep your children from the world and worldly affairs also, because you do not permit them to attend public playhouses during the week, much less on Sunday, but instead you instruct them in the Holy Scriptures, which is a very noble thing to do. And I must say that you try to mould yourselves to your own standard of Christian life."

One could hardly wish for a more praiseworthy heritage than this. Indeed, our forefathers set a high standard for us to follow.

Great giants, they are forefathers,
Endowed with wisdom, tact, and diligence.
Forth they went from their Silesian homes,
Not for worldly gain, nor filthy lucre;
But, led by that "Inner Light," called Conscience,
They traveled the billowy deep in shaky crafts.
Not in grand processions did they leave their homes,
With flare of trumpet, beat of drum;
They could not even ride their steeds,
Nor take their cattle, grain nor garments,
But, driven forth from house and home,
And kindred, by the ever-watchful priests,
Who proselyting with vengeance,
Tried to force their doctrines on our fathers.
But, being repulsed by steadfastness in the Faith,
They forded, by legal enactment, a church upon them,
Where forms and formalism prevailed.

The Jesuit Fathers, armed with Imperial power,
Many questions did propound,
Being deluded by superior egoistic kant.
But, written answers silenced these,
For long meditation, and deep study of Caspar's cult,
Fortified our kindred with Holy Writ.

As repeated failure impatience brings,
So here. Milahn raved and stormed,
Tore at his vestments, vowed a vow,
"These souls must be saved, such minds
We cannot deign to lose, some souls may be damned,
The loss will not be great.
But these! Where in all history dwelt such souls as these?
The Church must perform her duty.
A mighty power these, when once within the pale,
The Holy Father wills it, onward is the cry.
The means will justify the end,
Love first, then threat, punishment in truth to bring them in."

You know the rest. As ever
Force and might dispel submission in Christian hearts.
Adult minds proved adamant.
Submit to proselyting offspring? Never!
Rather leave worldly goods behind
Than stay and bear enforcements.

As reward follows steadfastness, so here,
New friends arose, escape assisted,
God's guiding hand still leads.
The good St. Andrew moored in view
And brought them to this land.
Penn's country welcomed them,
And we, today, sing praises to their names.

A List of the Members

of the

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