

made clear, however, I would like to turn my attention to a few particulars.

II

If I take my notes of the last ten years and look at them, on the surface the first thing that strikes me is the fact that only in these years have I actually for the first time seen something of the world, or at least of Europe, on a somewhat larger scale. Up to 1928 my personal acquaintance was limited to Switzerland, some parts of Germany, and the Netherlands. I saw Italy for the first time in 1929 and then in the following years I visited these countries, some only once, some more often: England and Scotland, Denmark, France, Austria (at that time still free!), Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Transylvania. Today I do not know how it ever came about that I formerly considered that I had so much to learn and to do in my study and its immediate vicinity that I did not feel any impulsion toward wider frontiers. I suppose it had to be like that. In any case, today I also do not know how it ever came about that there was a time when I could exist without having been spoken to, more or less distinctly, by all those distant places, by their history and by the present state of their people.

I ask myself how I could exist without being inwardly as much concerned for France and England as I was for Switzerland and Germany, without thinking continually in my theological work of the many other churches in the one Church, of those many other churches in which I was privileged to find so much echo and cooperation and in which, consequently, I had to assume certain co-responsibilities. On my own account, I have in this way achieved my "ecumenical movement" in these last ten years, and I am glad to have done it. Now for the first time I see in others that it makes a difference in the stand taken, in the awareness, in the "venture of abandonment" one is prepared to make, whether one does this, or—hide-bound by some nationalism or provincialism—does not do it. The fact that I did it does *not* mean, however, that I found it necessary to cancel or even extenuate anything at all of that which I had come to know formerly in my study as the one all-essential. What it did mean for me was rather an experience of the sense of dedication and joy that came from finding that this one all-essential for *all* churches is also the all-essential for the *one* Church and a new determination to stand up for it, as far as this can be my task.

I am of course not blind to the fact that the radius of my personal acquaintance with the remainder of the globe is still a very modest one from a modern point of view, and especially so according to American ideas. Why have I not yet come to America in spite of kind invitations? For the present I have serious reasons which keep me back, but the space allotted to me here does not suffice for their explication. I have also not yet journeyed to Japan and New Zealand, notwithstanding the fact that I have friends there and in other places who read my books and who, by the medium of their letters and communications and sometimes by their visits as well, keep me aware of things going on there. Who knows what may be awaiting me in the future? However, up until now I have followed a rule of

traveling only when a certain necessity, clearly recognizable and obvious to me, turns up, and I intend to keep to this course. Whoever wishes to see and hear me has to be very explicit about his intentions. For the moment, I consider that it has already proved profitable for me to have come out from within the narrow confines of my earlier life, in so far as this has occurred.

III

A painful change which has come about in the last ten years has involved the loss of a host of theological neighbors, co-workers and friends whom I still possessed in 1928. It was not by death that I lost them but simply on account of this—that they and I, little by little or all at once, found ourselves unable to work together any more in the harmony of one mind and one spirit. We quite definitely got on different roads. We are still traveling those different roads today, and at best can only greet one another from afar. I cannot complain, for I was privileged to keep enough of the old friends, and at the same time to find new ones, some of them very good new friends. But in the course of the decade I was forced to see very clearly that my lifework seems to be wanting in a certain accumulative power—even more, that a certain explosive, or in any case centrifugal, effect seems to inhere in it.

In the ten years following the World War my friends and I had found each other in common thought and intentions in terms of certain oppositions we held in common and in terms of certain general positions. We believed that we might give, one to the other, mutual confidence and support. But as the sun went up—and this is what happened in the decade we are looking back on now—those of these fellowships which had not really been fellowships at all were dissolved like the morning mist. I know now that it had to be that Friedrich Gogarten should develop into a sinister-looking new German state theologian. It had to be that Georg Merz should work out his own salvation in a half-patriarchal half-pastoral combination, with a bit of Luther, a bit of Hitler and a bit of Blumhardt. It had to be that Emil Brunner should turn to a new apologetic of his own invention, and should at the same time throw himself into the arms of the Buchman Group movement.

Among my disciples I saw here one quietly remaining behind, there one rushing noisily away to I know not where. And withal it also had to come about that I on my side must hear more or less lively grievances. As though I had not remained faithful to what was in the beginning originally common to all of us and thus had not kept what I had once promised! Whereas, in truth, I am conscious of only having walked *further* on the *way* which I had begun, and by doing so of having brought the grounds, the import and the consequences of that common beginning into a clearer light.

Who is right now? There would be no point in quarrelling over this. But the actuality of the separations cannot be denied. It may be that in 1928 some could still believe that the so-called "dialectical theology" ("Barthianism"!) constituted a "school," a school toward which one could take a position summarily as opponent or disciple. Today, no one who wishes to talk responsibly about

these matters can escape from examining the various viewpoints which have arisen in this field, and consequently from letting himself be questioned by my former colleagues and by myself, man by man, for his own decision. Certainly we are all sorry that we could not make understanding and choice easier for our contemporaries, and

especially for our American contemporaries who are always anxious to get the most simple and rapid courses of instruction!

The concluding part of this article by Karl Barth will appear next week.

Kinship of the Spirit

By F. Wilhelm Sollmann

IN THE FALL of 1912 I attended the convention of the Socialist Internationale. More than thirty nations were represented. Conditions abroad were very similar to those obtaining at present. Faced by the imminent catastrophe of a world war, the socialists of all countries appealed to the world for peace. When they decided to meet in Basle, the ancient Swiss city which lies between France and Germany, something strange happened, something unheard of in the history of the Christian churches and in the tradition of socialist labor in Europe.

The board of elders of the Protestant cathedral in Basle invited us to hold our meeting against war in that church, one of the oldest and most sacred in Europe. The Socialist Internationale accepted. Socialist leaders addressed the huge audience from the pulpit. I suppose most of the speakers and listeners would have called themselves atheists. But not one of them offended the dignity of the house of God.

Red Flags About the Altar

All the delegations to the conference had carried red flags. We decided to put all these flags around the altar. Thus for the first time—and I am afraid the only time—the flags of the socialist faith stood around a Christian communion table, crowned by the cross of the great martyr for brotherhood and peace on earth. After these nearly thirty years I do not remember a single sentence from any of the addresses, although some of the greatest orators of that period—Jean Jaurès, for one—made very dramatic speeches. But I will never forget the altar and the crucifix surrounded by red flags. It was an unforgettable symbol: two spiritual world powers, international Christianity and international socialism, united in the proclamation of international peace. Both inspired by faith in the brotherhood of man. Both living in the great vision of a future which would turn swords into plowshares.

Of course, international Christianity and international socialism were not really united. What I saw at Basle was only the day-dream of a solemn hour. Then the kinship of spirit was forgotten again. We all know what followed. Two years later Christianity and socialism broke down in the same hour of severe trial. Both were defeated by militarism and imperialism in the Great War and militarism and imperialism are still triumphant. Today all groups pledged to international understanding seem to be weaker than ever.

Sometimes when I think of concentration camps and

prisons I recall the altar of Basle cathedral. It was impossible in Europe to unite Christians and socialists in one tremendous effort to save and develop our old culture by peace. Now leaders of both groups are united in jails as martyrs under the same persecution. But if the old failures are not to be repeated, we need to free ourselves from our thralldom to terminology. I find that I no longer pay much attention to such characterizations as "Christians" and "Socialists," or "Jews" and "Aryans," or absolute and non-absolute pacifists. My experience is that often there is more kinship between members of different religious or political groups than between certain members of the same group. If this is true then it is most important to find this kinship and to develop it.

Living in Armed Camps

We are living in a time bursting with dynamic activity in all fields of human endeavor, except in the religious field. We have an overproduction of fighters and a lack of wise mediators. Too many people are entrenched in armed camps—military, economic, political and philosophical. They cultivate their prejudices and their distrust instead of getting acquainted with the viewpoints of their opponents. Even in democracies more people live in a state of spiritual autarchy than practice a free exchange of spiritual goods. To break down these more or less artificial fences and to meet the kinship of spirit in other camps may be one of the most urgent tasks for us all.

Fanaticism, brutality, hatred, one-way thinking will come to a dead end sooner or later; then the humane approach and humane methods may be called upon to find a way out. A recognized kinship of spirit among men in various camps now far divided may then make possible a synthesis of thinking and cooperative action. One of the most illuminating documents revealing this hidden kinship is the book by Nora Waln, *Reaching for the Stars*. It is encouraging to find that such a book by an unprejudiced and unsensational mind ranks among the best sellers in many countries. It proves that not only rude propaganda, but sincerity and good will, have their appeal.

The World of Tomorrow

We have in New York a fair which is dedicated to the World of Tomorrow. I may be mistaken, but from articles and illustrations I have gathered the impression that this world of tomorrow is mostly a gigantic picture of future