

## Editorial/ Review

### A Pain in the Belly

It was said many years ago by a leader in the Church: “We shall gobble the pietists [Hauge Synod] in a tremendous outward organization”. “Yes, it was answered, “such an attempt can surely be made; but then the Church must be prepared to take the consequences. If the attempt is made to gobble the pietists for the purpose of getting rid of them, then it is to be feared they will cause tremendous pains in the belly of the Church”

-THEODORE GRAEBNER, "THE GHOST OF PIETISM," CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, APRIL 1932.

This is quoted at the opening of a book published this year that bears the same name. It is a book that takes a thorough look at the history of Haugeanism in America from the days it was first brought to America by the followers of Hans Neilsen Hauge. The Book was written by Thomas E. Jacobson, and was birthed out of his Doctoral thesis in 2018 for Luther Seminary.

As the quote from Graeber says, one of the things the sacramentalists and Missourians hoped to achieve with the 1917 merger was to swallow up and once and for all be done with those pesky Haugeans. There was a warning given about not being too quick to exclude them from the table so to speak. “If the attempt is made to gobble the pietists for the purpose of getting rid of them, (Editor addition: too quickly) Then it is to be feared they will cause a pain in the belly of the church.” They meant to get rid of us, that was their intention, but they knew they had to be patient.

The Scandinavian Lutherans fought back. It was right after that 1917 merger, where they hoped to get rid of us, that several Ministries were started. The Lutheran Bible School movement and the Hauge Innermission both started in 1920, the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement in 1937, the World Mission Prayer League in 1945, and Lutheran Youth Alive in the late 60s. I’m sure they had hoped to be rid of us by now.

As I read “A Pain in the Belly”, the history I saw was the continuous attempt by the High Church Sacramentalists to rid itself once and for all of those pesky Pietists.

Now being a Haugean, growing up in what would be called a Haugean church, and then going to CLBS, what would be called a Haugean Bible school, my take on what he wrote would be different from probably most people’s. Although my pastor never called his theology Haugean, and I never heard anyone call the LBI movement Haugean until I read this book, I always thought that what I grew up with was normal Christianity.

He criticized the Hauge Innermission for some things that I thought were unfair. He seemed critical of our views on baptism and conversion, ordination of women, dancing, young earth theology and thought we leaned towards legalism, which he called the dark side of pietism. I

think our views are pretty easy to defend scripturally, and with Pontoppidan's catechism. I will deal with some of these issues one by one in future issues of the Morning Glory.

Although I disagreed on Dr. Jacobson's take on many of His critiques of Haugeanism, I do want to thank him for this historical account, the most detailed one I've ever seen or heard about on the history Of Haugeanism. If you are a history buff, maybe teach church history in a church, Bible School or seminary setting, this is a book you will want to get. It is available on Amazon, also Kindle and now I see it on most of the online book sellers. Again the title is A Pain in the Belly.

To My Haugean friends, something I learned from this book, the high church sacramentalists don't like us. They tried to silence and kill Hans Neilsen Hauge in Norway. Partially succeeded, definitely shortened his life by jailing him over and over and then finally a 10 year unjust imprisonment that broke his health and led to an early death. Then his followers came to America, and it is said that pre-civil war, the Lutheran Church was predominantly German pietists. After the Civil War, the sacramentalists came and took over and mostly eliminated that pietistic wing of the church. Then the Scandinavian Haugeans came, and they tried to eliminate them with the 1917 merger, but much to their dismay they weren't so easy to get rid of. One Hundred years later we are still here. But the effort is still out there to be rid of us once and for all. We must resist, we must be determined to remain a "Pain in the Belly" calling the church to Experienced Salvation, Christian Fellowship, and Simplicity in worship.