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EDITORIAL

Apart from the normal range of articles, this journal number inaugurates our new 'Texts and Documents' section, which hopefully will become a regular and important feature. 'Texts and Documents' can include a multitude of things—and intentionally so, in order to attract as wide a range as possible of contributions in due course. It just happens that the first offering in this section is an analytical bibliographical collation accompanied by a methodological justification, both conceived and impressively presented by Andrew Sulavik. This 'Annotated Bibliography' pertains to literature in Protestant circles on angels from the time of the late or second Reformation up to the early eighteenth century. What is offered here is not comprehensive, rather a selection of material emanating in this case largely from Germany, England, and The Netherlands. Within these limitations, it is of note that writings on such a topic do not come chiefly from this or that religious confession or tradition, but from across the broad Reformation spectrum. Angels, like veneration of the saints, fasting, and penance are not a subject that one would usually consider as part of the positive Reformation agenda. Indeed, a wide assumption is that such issues were deleted or scorned as part of dispensable Catholic Tradition. However, as Sulavik points out: 'Early Protestant theologians may have debated the extent to which angels influenced human activity, but they seldom denied it and never questioned their existence' (pp. 224-25). While the early Reformers may not have produced dedicated writings on the topic, they did deal with it in the framework of writings such as biblical commentaries and general dogmatic surveys. The issue was inescapable, partly because the Church Fathers devoted attention to it, and partly because it was very much part of biblical testimony. This bibliography illustrates how in the post-Reformation era, the subject was dealt with in an increasingly autonomous manner, in sermons, or in the methodological context of *loci communes* theology, or in dedicated tracts. The matter is explained more fully in Sulavik's companion piece in the Articles section. This elucidates the increasing rather than diminishing importance of angelology among mainstream theological authors and preachers up to the Enlightenment when it receded significantly. Thereby Sulavik enhances the profile of an emerging research field in not only

the history of ideas and doctrine, but also broad, popular Protestant piety and religiosity in the context of Church, society, and culture.

The other four articles embrace a wide range of topics such as this journal welcomes and encourages. Jack Cunningham's informative piece on the major Irish churchman and theologian, James Ussher, reminds us that the relationship between presbyterianism and episcopalianism in the seventeenth century British Isles was not just one of unremitting conflict and incompatibility—to be decided simply by a power struggle. Inspired by developments on the ground in Scotland and Ulster, and by the prospect of ecclesiastical disorder in England, Ussher argued for a theoretical via media position as a means of overcoming the impasse. That this did not meet with wide acclaim shows how far the respective concepts of church polity had developed as nonnegotiable, divinely sanctioned ideologies that helped stoke the civil wars.

Russell Dawn's discriminating study on the Jacobean Church of England clergyman and theologian, Richard Field, deals with another area of inner-Protestant division, the theology of the eucharistic presence of Christ. The author aims to rectify some misunderstandings of Field in the literature. Field, too, gropes for a middle way or synthesis between Reformed and Lutheran positions—this was well known. However, less appreciated has been Field's appropriation of creedal, late Lutheran ubiquitarian and Christological ideas as part of his irenical concept of union, and that he was not without supporters in the English Church.

Warren Dym's comprehensive article leads us into the challenging, grimy world of the Reformation and the mining industry in the Ore Mountains on the borders of Saxony and Bohemia. The sermons of a Lutheran preacher, Johann Mathesius, are mined to reveal a thesaurus of information on theology, popular piety, superstition or folk traditions, vocational mining, metallurgy and a very distinctive community identity. Dym shows how Mathesius's ministry accommodated to this pre-modern industrial society in the mountains, and how the mentality of the mining community achieved authentic expression in the sources. This eye opening micro-study exemplifies a multi-disciplinary approach to a Reformation process in its full social, economic, technological, religious and cultural contexts. Next, Diane Johnson's illuminating article appropriately recalls that the distinguishing marks of the higher educated, Protestant classes, lay and clerical, in Reformation Europe became immersion not just in Scripture, but also in Classical learning, Greek and Latin. She focuses on the neglected contribution to this evolution of a Greek scholar and pedagogue, Johannes Posselius the Elder, Professor of

Greek at Rostock and a former pupil of Melanchthon. Examined are his textbooks and proposals for acquiring Greek language competence, oral and literary. In this way, the marriage between Reformation theology and classical, Humanist culture was projected as constituting what it was to be an educated Christian gentleman and thus 'civilized'.

Finally, it has been mooted that occasionally this journal could do well to include in each or some of its numbers at least one contribution written in French or German—since very large tranches of serious and innovative research in the field are written in those languages. It is felt that this might both broaden our appeal and enhance our standing. Any feedback from readers on the idea would be most welcome.

—W. Ian P. Hazlett (Editor).