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Boehm and Pietas Hallensis

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The Children, I bless God, are all in a good state of health, very dutiful, and improve well in their studies[;] they take the air with me in the Coach as often as my Affairs will permit, and want for no encouragement to engage them to their duty.[75]

He also took an interest in English schools and proposed to the SPCK new methods for training schoolmasters,[76] probably a training college after Halle's model similar to the one suggested by Bridges. Like his good friend Slare, Philipps was an admirer, supporter, and correspondent of Francke. At his death the mantle of leadership in Wales fell to his disciple, Griffith Jones,[77] another person firmly committed to Francke's methods.[78]

Bridges, Mitchell, Nelson, Lee, Hoare, Slare, and Philipps were major figures during the early formative years of the charity school movement in England and Wales. Apart from Nelson, each one stood in a significant relationship with Francke or one of his representatives in London. During this early period Francke's main propagandists were Ludolf, Wigers, and Mehder; but the awareness of Francke's work was to soon take a large leap forward with the arrival of A.W. Boehm.

2. *Pietas Hallensis*

Boehm and Pietas Hallensis

When Boehm arrived in London in 1701 he established a school for a few German children, but he could neither help Wigers and Mehder nor work with students at Oxford[79] because of his unfamiliarity with English. Wigers thought Boehm too fragile to work in England since his frail constitution allowed him to teach only a few hours a day.[80] The meagre income from his school meant that Boehm lived in poverty, though he turned down frequent invitations from Bridges to work in his school.[81] It would seem that Francke had things other than teaching in mind for Boehm from the beginning. Wigers hints at this in a letter expressing his concern at Francke's choice of Boehm for England; in addition to Boehm's physical limitations Wigers was worried that Boehm had been imprisoned in Waldeck by the Orthodox Lutheran authorities for his Pietist views and confessional "indifference":[82] "if such [informa-

75 Sir John Philipps to Lady Philipps, London, 21 Sept. 1717 (Picton, No.1467).

76 SPCK *Minutes*, 18 Nov. 1708 (ii-iv.129).

77 See Sir John Philipps to Lady Philipps, London, 3 May 1715 (Picton, No.1464).

78 See pp. 188–90 below.

79 These were probably the Greek students at Benjamin Woodroffe's Greek Orthodox college at Gloucester Hall. See pp. 156f below.

80 Wigers to Francke, London, 6 Nov. 1701 and 8 Apr. 1702 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.447,450f).

81 Boehm to Francke, London, 26 Apr. 1703 (ArFrSt C 229:81); 19 Apr. 1704 (MArFrSt I C 1:9).

82 On this period in Boehm's life, see Sames, pp. 58-106; W. Irmer, *Geschichte des Pietismus in der Grafschaft Waldeck* (Greifswald, 1912), pp. 26-41.

tion] should come to light here, we will be declared heretics by the divines, and there will be that much less hope of his preaching here."[83] If indeed Boehm had been sent to preach, his early years of want in London as a teacher gave no indication of a breakthrough to another calling.

In the midst of these low times Dr. Slare, whom Boehm had met just after his arrival in London,[84] took him out of the miserable air of London and into the country, to his home in Greenwich. This marked the beginning of a life-long friendship; it was in Slare's home eighteen years later that Boehm died. Slare took Boehm on a 250-mile tour around the English country, visiting pastors and charity schools, during which, according to the latter, Slare "diligently related the example of Halle to others for imitation, so that it is becoming somewhat well-known in the country".[85] One of the places they visited was Kidderminster, where Slare and Bishop Lloyd of Worcester helped raise a charity school.[86] It was this journey which persuaded Boehm of the importance of translating into English Francke's own account of his *Waisenhaus*. The need for an account in England of Francke's institutions had often been expressed; six years earlier Bray had suggested to Wigers that an account of the *Waisenhaus* be translated into Latin and published in England.[87] With the help of Lee and Roach from the Philadelphian Society[88] and in the quiet of Slare's country home, Boehm brought *Pietas Hallensis* to the English public in the middle of 1705, for which the publisher, Joseph Downing, paid him one pound.[89]

According to his Preface, Boehm chose the title, *Pietas Hallensis*, in order to counter the Roman Catholic reputation for charitable activity found in the works entitled *Pietas Romana* and *Pietas Parisiensis*,[90] which had been translated, combined, abridged, and republished in Oxford in 1687.[91] *Pietas Hallensis*, however, was by no means an anti-Catholic tract; Boehm admitted that some

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83 "... wo solches allhie außkommen solte, wir alß Ketzer von den geistl. werden declariret werden, und desto weniger Hoffnung zum predigen für ihn allhie sein wird." (Wigers to Francke, 6 Nov. 1701 [*Nachlaß* 30.XI.447])

84 Boehm to Francke, London, 15 Nov. 1701, printed in: Sames, pp. 176f; Slare to Francke, [Bath], [1722] (*Nachlaß* 30.VIII.319).

85 "... hat er das Hallische Exempel andern zur Nachfolge fleißig erzehlet, also, daß es auch im Lande etwas bekand wird." (Boehm to Francke, London, 24 Sept. 1704, printed in: Sames, p. 180)

86 SPCK *Minutes*, 16 Nov. 1704 (i.307); A.W. Boehm, "Send-Schreiben an einen Freund in Deutschland", 14 Nov. 1717, printed in: *ErSchrift*, ii.410.

87 Wigers to Francke, 30 Aug. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.420).

88 Boehm to G.H. Neubauer, Windsor, 20 June 1705, printed in: Sames, pp. 180f. Boehm expressed the hope that Francke would send a letter of thanks in Latin to Lee and Roach.

89 Boehm to Francke, 19 Apr. 1704 (MArFrSt I C 1:9); to Neubauer, 20 June 1705, printed in: Sames, pp. 180f; to G.K., London, 14 July 1710, printed in: *ErBrief*, pp. 150f.

90 Boehm, Preface to *Pietas Hallensis* (1705), p. i.

91 *Pietas Romana et Parisiensis*, [trans. and abridged Abraham Woodhead] (Oxford, 1687); cf. [James Harrington,] *Some Reflexions Upon a Treatise Call'd Pietas Romana & Parisiensis* (Oxford, 1688).

Roman Catholics "have acted purely on Principles of Genuine Christianity". "Let Virtue and Piety where ever they are found, have their due value," he said, for God "accepts every one, that is Devout according to his present Light and Knowledge". Since Protestants had greater light they ought to bring forth even greater works: "Yea verily they [Roman Catholics] shall rise up in Judgment against us in that Day, if we walk not worthy of that Vocation, unto which we are called in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."[92] A second purpose of Boehm's was to show that in Halle one indeed saw the uncommon Providence of God at work in ways unseen in any other charity. This led him, rather triumphantly, to describe the book as an account of

> ... one of the greatest Transactions at this day in the World; which if it proceeds as it has hitherto done, will in a very few Years come to have a much greater Influence on the Publick Affairs of Europe, than all the Battles and Sieges with which our Gazettes, Mercuries and Registers are filled.[93]

Pietas Hallensis was a translation of Francke's own account of the rise and progress of the orphanage and other institutions at Halle.[94] It contained a narrative of the origins and growth of the undertaking from its rudimentary beginnings and stressed Francke's dependence on the special Providence of God, which was detailed in a long list of miraculous particulars focusing on the private donations of individuals. He testified that "the *main scope* of the whole Undertaking ... is nothing else but the Salvation of Souls and their Conversion to life everlasting". The means to reaching this objective were simply described:

> *The Word of God* is instilled into the Children from their Youth up ... .Unfeigned *Faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ, is laid for a Foundation, and a real sense of *Godliness* attended with a conscientious behaviour, are the most material points.[95]

Godly teachers to model these aims were central to Francke's pedagogical methodology. In closing his account and updating the size and growth of the hospital, charity schools, and other institutions, Francke again stressed that trust in the Providence of God was the foundation of his whole work.

Boehm was uncertain when he published *Pietas Hallensis* what its result would be: "Time will now tell what kind of an effect this work will have in England."[96] However, a few months later Boehm reported that he had heard many favourable judgments, including one from Archbishop Tenison who "highly approved" of the work despite a few "small superstitions" here and

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92 Boehm, Preface to *Pietas Hallensis* (1705), pp. xii-xv.

93 *Ibid.*, p. ii.

94 *Die Fußstapfen des noch lebenden und waltenden liebreichen und getreuen Gottes* (Halle, 1701). Later editions were titled: *Segens-volle Fußstapfen des noch lebenden...*

95 Francke, *Pietas Hallensis* (1705), pp. 96-97.

96 "Die Zeit wird nun lehren, was für Effect diese Schrifft in Engelland haben werde." (Boehm to Neubauer, 20 June 1705, printed in: Sames, pp. 180f)

there,[97] perhaps a reference to some of the more extraordinary examples of special Providence in *Pietas Hallensis*. Josiah Woodward, author of the account of the religious societies, advised the SPCK to distribute *Pietas Hallensis* under its own auspices, but the Society voted against reprinting the whole book.[98] Instead, Boehm was asked by the Society to abridge the book; when *An Abstract of the Marvellous Footsteps of Divine Providence* was finished and published early in 1706 the SPCK bought 500 copies and put three in every packet sent to its correspondents.[99] This abstract was enlarged and reprinted in 1707, though Boehm attached to it the original title, *Pietas Hallensis*. In 1710 Part II of the abstract appeared, followed in 1716 by Part III; in every new edition the progress of the Halle institutions was updated. Included in Part III was Boehm's English translation of a Latin letter from Francke to Cotton Mather in Boston.[100] That Boehm mediated this letter from a German Pietist to a New England Puritan, including it in an English publication, and that the SPCK purchased 500 copies of this edition to distribute to correspondents,[101] provide further evidence of the interrelatedness and comradeship among the reform movements in Europe and America.

The first abstract was published with a Preface by Woodward, a recommendation by "another Eminent Divine of the Church of England," probably Dr. Thomas Manningham,[102] and an appendix "Giving an Account of some Persons who have been Instrumental in promoting the Truth of Religion, and the Power of Godliness in some Parts of Germany".[103] The inclusion of this appendix, a shortened version of the history of Pietism in the Preface to *Pietas Hallensis* (1705), meant that with this abstract the first history of Lutheran Pietism in the English-speaking world received a wide propagation.

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97 "... welcher [Tenison] es höchlich adprobiret, ohne daß hin u. wieder kleine superstitiones wie ers nennet, mit einlieffen, die aber der Sache selbst nicht schadeten." (Boehm to Francke, London, 24 Sept. 1705, printed in: Sames, pp. 183f)

98 Boehm to Francke, London, 13 Dec. 1705 (ArFrSt C 229:73).

99 SPCK *Minutes*, 29 Nov. 1705 and 10 Jan. 1706 (i.357,362). Boehm told Francke that he thought 4000 extracts would be printed, but the SPCK records give no evidence that that many were actually published. (Boehm to Francke, 24 Sept. 1705, printed in: Sames, pp. 183f)

100 See K. Francke, "Further Documents concerning Cotton Mather and August Hermann Francke", *Americana Germanica* i/4 (1897), p. 31.

101 SPCK *Minutes*, 23 Aug. 1716 (vii.185f).

102 Boehm told Francke that the person was a Doctor of Theology and a court preacher that year to the Queen. (Boehm to Francke, 13 Dec. 1705 [ArFrSt C 229:73]) The SPCK *Minutes*, 10 Jan. 1706 (i.362), say that Slare, Woodward, and Manningham had all read and approved the abridgement. From 1689-1692 Manningham was headmaster of Westerham grammar school in Kent. (*DNB* [xii.960])

103 Francke, *Abstract of the Marvellous Footsteps*, pp. 46-64. This appendix was expanded in the 1707 edition and given its own title page with the title, "A Short Account of Some Persons who have been Instrumental in promoting the most Substantial Points of Religion In some Parts of Germany. Whose Proceedings some have endeavoured of late to render Odious by the new-invented Name of Pietism." Whether it was published separately is unknown.

The support by Woodward and Manningham for Francke and his Halle work in the "Preface" and "Recommendation" deserves attention. Woodward begins, "The Assurance of God's *special Providence* continually engaged in Favour of his *Faithful People* is one of their greatest Comforts upon Earth." If trust in God should waver one finds in the narrative "such a Glorious *Train* of surprizing *Providences* in the behalf of a Pious and Charitable Undertaking, as is enough to *strengthen* a very weak Faith, and to *enliven* a Heart almost *dead* in Despondency". However, Woodward, no doubt concerned lest he be seen as arousing "enthusiasm" by encouraging a naive providentialism, warned against abusing this work "by *unwarranted applications* of it: Where neither the *Call* of God is so *manifest*, nor the *Matter* so important, nor the *Qualifications* for the Undertaking so suitable, as in the Case hereafter related." He stressed the way in which the work would further orthodoxy, by promoting the religious societies and societies for the reformation of manners, the instruction of youth and families, and the propagation of Christianity among infidels.[104] Manningham hoped that reading the account "may warm your Heart and strengthen your Faith in God". He also recommended Boehm and Francke as persons who "are of unquestionable sincerity, and have distinguished themselves in the World by their Piety and good learning".[105]

That Boehm highly prized this official support from English divines in his efforts to make the Halle institutions better known is apparent in his Preface to the 1716 edition of *Pietas Hallensis*. Here, he states that Woodward was "so fully convinced of the good Tendency of those charitable Constitutions" that he publicly mentioned Francke's work in a sermon at the 1700 opening of a London charity school[106] and that he would recommend Francke's establishments "on any Occasion"; the "Eminent Divine" in London who had recommended the book was "since raised to the Episcopal Dignity in the Church";[107] and White Kennett had praised the Halle orphanage in a 1706 charity school sermon.[108] These "impartial Attestations" by "learned Divines" had helped to remove prejudices and to win over some who thought the book "a Piece of a Romance".[109] Boehm was especially pleased with Kennett's unsolicited recommendation, "by which," he told Francke, "the book ought in time to be made further known".[110] He knew full well that favourable testimony from "learned divines" was unusual; he explained that *Pietas Hallensis* would probably have its greatest influence not on the *literati* but on popular piety: it would

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104 Preface to *Abstract of Marvellous Footsteps*, n.p.

105 Recommendation to *Abstract of Marvellous Footsteps*, n.p.

106 *The Great Charity of Instructing Poor Children. A Sermon Preached ... Mar. 24. 1700*, 3rd edn. (London, 1703 [1700]), p. 18.

107 Manningham became Bishop of Chichester in 1709.

108 *Charity of Schools*, pp. 31f.

109 Boehm, Preface to *Pietas Hallensis* ... Part III, pp. iii-viii.

110 "Wodurch denn mit der Zeit das Buch dörffte weiter bekand gemacht werden." (Boehm to Francke, London, 22 May 1706 [ArFrSt C 229:72])

... mostly come into prominence among the common people; whereas the learned, because they lead everything to the point of an external morality and experience little of the effects and outpourings of the power of Christ, read the same narrations like a new newspaper, whereby for a short while they satisfy the natural desires of excessive reason and then put it aside again.[111]

There is some evidence, however, that the "learned divines" who welcomed *Pietas Hallensis* did so partly because they were encouraged, rather than repelled, by its providentialism. Kennett confessed of Francke's work that "nothing in the World seems more Providential, or rather more miraculous".[112] The threat of Deism and the growth of more mechanistic perceptions of the natural order, propagated by natural science, had rendered many divines somewhat uneasy about the future of religious supernaturalism. The role of God's immediate governorship of his universe seemed at some risk in a world explicable more and more in terms of impersonal mechanical laws. *Pietas Hallensis* attracted many readers by providing respectable evidence not only for the idea of God's active government of his people, but for his approval of the kinds of charitable and educational work into which the English voluntary societies had poured so much effort.

Whatever the reaction of learned divines, *Pietas Hallensis* seems to have met with a favourable response. To the original full account was added the abstract, printed in three parts and three editions.[113] Sir John Philipps suggested to the SPCK that the abstract "does very well deserve to be translated into other Languages".[114] *Pietas Hallensis* was also well-received in America,[115] but its strongest impact was felt within the charity school movement in Britain.

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111 "... wiewohl solcher [Einfluß] meist unter den gemeinen Leute sich hervorthut; die Gelehrten aber weil sie alles zu der Spitze einer äußeren Moralität führen, u. von denen Wirckungen, und Außflüßen der Krafft Christi wenig erfahren, lesen sie dergleichen Erzehlungen als eine Neue Zeitung womit sie auff eine kurtze Zeit die natürliche begierde der außschweiffenden Vernunfft sättigen und denn wieder weglegen." (Boehm to Francke, 13 Dec. 1705 [ArFrSt C 229:73])

112 *Charity of Schools*, p. 32; cf. Ludolf to Francke, London, 23 Jan. 1705 (ArFrSt D 71:136c-d), in which similar sentiments from friends of Woodward are reported.

113 In 1729 a motion was made in a SPCK meeting to reprint *Pietas Hallensis* at large; it was referred to Committee and no further action was taken. (SPCK *Minutes*, 28 Nov. 1729 [xiii.77])

114 SPCK *Minutes*, 3 Oct. 1706 (i.409).

115 Boehm to Francke, London, 3 Mar. 1713, printed in: ErBrief, p. 239. Cf. Boehm to Francke, London, 14 June 1715, printed in: *ErBrief*, pp. 425ff, in which he reports on Moses Bartlet, an Anabaptist from Rhode Island, who after reading *Pietas Hallensis* journeyed to London in a effort to secure two of Francke's students to go to Rhode Island, open schools, and proclaim the gospel. According to Newman, Boehm himself considered going to Rhode Island to work with Bartlett. (Newman to Mather, 31 Aug. 1722, printed in: Allen and McClure, *Two Hundred Years*, pp. 232f)