

***PAUL
GERHARDT***

***PAUL GERHARDT'S
SPIRITUAL SONGS***

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Paul Gerhardt

Paul Gerhardt's Spiritual Songs

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PREFACE.

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This volume contains a large selection from Paul Gerhardt's "Spiritual Songs." Every piece included is given in full, and is rendered into the metre of the original. A few of the following translations have appeared at various times during the last three years in different periodicals. They have been revised for this volume. Several of the hymns have been beautifully translated by others; and had the Translator been compiling a volume composed of selections from various authors, this might have formed a strong reason for not doing them again, but to have omitted them from a volume like the present would have been to give a selection from Gerhardt without some of his most celebrated productions; besides, in the other collections where they appear they are not all given in full, nor are they always rendered into the metre of the original, save in those published with the music attached. As far as the Translator is aware, the greater number of the following songs have never appeared in an English dress before.

Every one who has reflected on the subject, or attempted metrical translation, knows that literalness is rarely attainable, that a certain measure of freedom must be used. The Translator has, however, striven to maintain fidelity to the sense of the original, and has occasionally somewhat sacrificed euphony to fidelity.

It is not to be expected that the people's poet of one nation and of a former age will become, through translation, the people's poet of another nation in a later generation.

Individual translations may win for themselves a place side by side with the favourite songs of native growth. Instances of this will occur to every one familiar with our hymnology; but this can hardly happen in many cases. The translations on the principle of this volume may neither be uninteresting nor unedifying on that account, and it may be permitted to the Translator to trust that Paul Gerhardt in his present dress may be found stimulating and refreshing to many. Gerhardt was peculiarly a son of consolation. The Translator has found him so in the hour of trial, and he will feel repaid if he should become the cup-bearer of the rich wine of consolation contained in the hymns of the staunch old German Lutheran to any English Christian readers “who may be in any wise afflicted.”

The work of translation has been a labour of love. It has been the recreation of leisure hours from graver duties, and occasionally the occupation of days of unwilling, but unavoidable, total or partial freedom from professional engagements.

The edition used in this translation was Wackernagel's “Paulus Gerhardt's Geistliche Lieder getreu nach der bei seinen Lebzeiten erschienenen Ausgabe wiederabgedruckt. Neue Auflage, in Taschenformat.”—Stuttgart, Verlag von Samuel Gottlieb Liesching, 1855. This edition has been followed in the classification and titles both of the sections and hymns.

The principal sources whence the materials for the biographical sketch have been drawn are “Paul Gerhardt's Geistliche Andachten, &c., mit Anmerkungen, einer Geschichtlichen Einleitung und Urkunden herausgegeben,

von Otto Schultze.”—Berlin, 1842. “Paul Gerhardt, nach seinem Leben und Wirken, aus zum Theile ungedrückten Nachrichten dargestellt,” von E. G. Roth, Pastor Primarius zu Luebben in der Niederlausitz.—Leipzig, 1829.

Feustking, Langbecker, Herzog, and others were also read, or more or less consulted.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

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Paul Gerhardt was born in Graefenhainichen in Electoral Saxony, where his father, Christian Gerhardt, was Burgomaster. There is some doubt as to the precise year of his birth, owing to the destruction of the church books when the place was burnt by the Swedes on the 16th of April, 1637. According to some, the event took place in the year 1606; according to others, in 1607. The probability is in favour of the former date, for General Superintendent Goltlob Stolze, of Lübben,^[1] says that he died, in the 70th year of his age, in the year 1676.

There is no information concerning his youth and education. He was still very young when the Thirty Years' War broke out, and his preparation for his profession and entrance on it took place in those troublous times, which may account for his late settlement in a ministerial sphere. In the year 1651, when in his forty-fifth year, we find him still only a candidate^[2] of theology, and resident as a tutor in the family of Andreas Bertholdt, Chancery Advocate in Berlin, whose daughter he subsequently married. In that year a vacancy occurred in the ministry at Mittenwald, by the death of Probst Caspar Göde. The magistracy of that

place applied to the clergy of Berlin to recommend a suitable man to them for the office. Paul Gerhardt was their unanimous choice. They recommended him as an honourable, estimable, and learned man, whose diligence and erudition were known, of good parts and incorrupt doctrine, of a peace-loving disposition and blameless Christian life, which qualities had procured for him the love of all classes, high and low, in Berlin. They furthermore added that he had frequently, at their friendly invitation, exercised the excellent gifts with which God had endowed him for the edification of the church, and had thereby deserved well of the people, and endeared himself to them. The clergy met together for consultation, and sent this recommendation to Mittenwald without the knowledge of Gerhardt; no higher testimony, therefore, could have been given to his character, learning, and abilities. He was accordingly appointed and set apart to his office in St. Nicholas' Church, Berlin, on the 18th of November, 1651, and entered before the close of the year on his duties. The church book which he kept from Jan. 1, 1652, till Dec. 31, 1656, bears testimony to his fidelity and conscientiousness in the discharge of this part of the duties of his office.

On February 11th, 1655, he was married to Anna Maria, daughter of the Chancery Advocate Bertholdt, in whose family he had been tutor. Before he left Mittenwald, his first child, a daughter, was born and died. There is a slab to her memory still standing in the church. Several circumstances in his position at Mittenwald conspired to make Gerhardt desire a change, and welcome a translation to Berlin when an opportunity offered. The relation between his colleague,

Deacon Allborn, and himself was not friendly: Allborn had been passed over by the magistrates in favour of Gerhardt. The want of cordiality which prevailed in consequence must have been very trying to a man of Gerhardt's disposition. The income of the office was also small, and his circumstances consequently straitened. His ties and associations in Berlin would also be strong inducements of themselves to the acceptance of an appointment there.

The welcome relief came when the magistrates appointed him to the third Diaconate of St. Nicholas' Church, vacant by the death of Probst Peter Vher, and the consequent promotion of the other ministers. The spirit in which he received and accepted the invitation is shown in his letter to the magistrates on accepting their offer. He humbly and gratefully recognized the hand of God in the matter; and, owning his own weakness, earnestly solicited the prayers of the faithful. His letter is dated June 4, 1657, and in the register of St. Nicholas there is an entry of a baptism made by him on the 22nd of July. Consequently he must have entered on his duties soon after. Gerhardt, doubtless, joyfully returned to Berlin, anticipating a happy ministry there; but it was there his greatest trials awaited him. These trials arose out of the measures taken by Frederick William,^[3] at that time Elector of Brandenburg, to allay the animosity prevailing between the adherents of the Lutheran and Reformed Confessions respectively. The feud was of long standing, and the efforts made to heal it had been hitherto in vain.

With the laudable desire of pacifying party strife, the Elector appointed a conference to be held between the

Lutheran and Reformed clergy of Berlin and Cöln-on-the-Spree, under the direction of the Lord President, Baron Otto von Schwerin, on the Reformed side, and Chancellor Lorenz Christian von Somnitz, of Pomerania, and others, on the Lutheran side. The Lutheran clergy of the three chief churches in Berlin and Cöln, and the Reformed court preachers, Bartholomew Stosch and Johann Kunschius, the rector of the Joachimsthal Gymnasium, and the philologue Joh. Vorstius, constituted the membership of the conference. Kunschius, being soon after summoned to accompany the Elector to Königsberg, took no part in the conferences, and his place was filled by Gerson Vechner, of the Joachimsthal Gymnasium.

The object of the Conference, according to the Electoral Rescript, was to consider the following points:—

I. Whether in the Reformed Confessions, particularly in those named in the last Electoral Edict (January 2nd, 1662), viz.:—The *Confessio Sigismundi*, the *Colloquium Lipsiacum*, the *Declaratio Thoruniensis*,—anything is taught or affirmed, in teaching, believing, or affirming which any one is, *judicio divino*, accursed.

II. Whether anything is denied or passed over in silence, without acknowledging or practising which no one could be saved.

The Berlin clergy were reluctant to enter on the conference. They thought that as it concerned the Church of the Mark generally it should not be limited to Berlin and Cöln, and that it was a subject requiring mature consideration. At length, however, having protested in vain,

they consented, but manifestly determined to concede nothing.

The conference met at various times during the years 1662-63. Gerhardt took no public part. The speaking devolved first on Probst Lilius, but soon afterwards, and for the remainder of the meetings, on Archdeacon Reinhardt. Gerhardt wrote a judgment unfavourable to the conferences, because he thought nothing but syncretism would come out of it—*i.e.*, the confusion of the two confessions, into which the Rinteln theologians had permitted themselves to be seduced. By his votes he evinced his interest in all its proceedings.^[4]

As might be surmised, from the state of party feeling, the conference was not only fruitless, but left matters in a worse condition than they were when it first met. Furthermore, at the last sitting but one, on the 22nd of May, 1663, the Berlin clergy incurred the high displeasure of the Elector, by defending and approving the conduct of their speaker Reinhardt on an occasion when he had given great offence to his Highness. It is thought, that at this time Gerhardt wrote his heart-stirring and beautiful hymn,—Ist Gott für mich, so trete? ([Is God for me, t'oppose me?](#)) The Elector, in consequence of the result of the conferences, issued an edict on the 16th of September, 1664, in substance the same but more stringent than the previous one. All were required to pledge themselves to obedience to this edict, whereas subscription to the former one had been required only from candidates at ordination. The edict required the clergy of both confessions, on pain of dismissal from office and other penalties, to refrain from vituperating each other,

from deducing absurd and impious doctrines from each other's dogmas, and imputing them to their opponents. The edict also commanded that the ordinance of baptism should be administered without exorcism, when the parents desired it. The edict produced the most profound consternation. It was regarded as endangering religious liberty and the freedom of conscience. The Lutheran preachers felt themselves hampered by it in the discharge of their duties. Regarding, as they did, their symbolical books and ecclesiastical customs as sacred things, using their authorized formularies in the instruction of the people, and introducing the element of controversy largely into their ministrations, they felt themselves quite crippled in the discharge of their functions. It seemed to them that if they gave up their liberty in the pulpit, they would be necessitated to give up their customs also, and so violate their solemn obligations. They thought that compliance would imperil the Lutheran Church, the welfare of their congregations, and the peace of their own souls. Such was the view taken of the matter by many strict and conscientious men. We cannot help thinking that their view was mistaken and exaggerated, that these things were not endangered, that it was perfectly possible for them to have been loyal to their church, to have instructed their people faithfully in all the peculiar doctrines of their system, and yet have rendered obedience to the Electoral edict.

Many were actually conducting themselves both according to its letter and spirit, and yet were filled with those alarms which we must call groundless, at the very thought of binding themselves by a pledge to act as they

were doing. While we hold them to have been mistaken, we cannot but respect their fidelity to their honest convictions, and their fortitude in accepting the sad consequences,—the severing of the ties that bound them to beloved flocks, the loss of office and emolument, and expatriation. The principles of toleration were not rightly understood, either by the Church or State at the time.

As we read the painful annals of the time, the thought often arises in the mind, how much better had it been if the evil which it was the laudable intention of the Elector to correct, had been permitted to work its own cure. There were doubtless many, who had given too much cause for complaint by the licence they allowed themselves in the pulpit in attacking their theological adversaries, but those who suffered most would probably be those, who, like Gerhardt, were not open to reproach, yet felt themselves constrained by conscience to refuse obedience to the Elector's command. Hundreds signed the edict. Some who had scruples yielded on account of their wives and children. There was a witticism current at the time which was put into the mouths of the pastors' wives:—

“Schreibt, Schreibt,
Lieber Herre, auf dass ihr bei der Pfarre bleibt.”
Which may be freely and roughly rendered,—
“Subscribe, subscribe, dear husband, do!
Lest you must from the parish go.”

Very many, however, were thrown into the greatest distress of mind, and could not obey and preserve a good conscience. The Berlin ministers sought the opinion of various theological faculties and churches on the crisis.

The Elector, ignorant of the trouble given to the consciences of many worthy men, viewed this conduct on their part as self-willed, and an unwarrantable opposition to what appeared to him a needful regulation. He ordered Lilius and Reinhardt to be removed from office, if they delayed to subscribe, and gave the others time for consideration. The two former, failing to obey, were deposed.

Gerhardt, with the three others who were threatened, turned to the magistracy, and solicited their good offices in intercession with the Elector. The magistrates represented to the Elector that the Berlin clergy had observed the edict, but that they objected to subscription; they begged the Elector not to enforce subscription on those already in office, as it would tend to compromise them with the people and foreign churches; they furthermore stated, that obedience rests not so much in subscription and in the letter, as in the mind and in deed. They begged him to reinstate Lilius and Reinhardt in office.

The Berlin clergy presented a petition, substantially to the same effect, at the same time. They stated, in addition, that the Reformed clergy had not been compelled to sign. The only result of this petition was, that the Reformed were forthwith commanded to subscribe the edict.

The ministers, in another document, set forth their scruples at large, but thereby only incurred the further displeasure of the Elector. The deposition of Lilius and Reinhardt, however, caused such an uproar, that the Elector issued a declaration on May 4, 1665, setting forth the seasons of his procedure. Further efforts were made, and

the result was, that time was allowed to Lilius to reconsider his refusal, and in the beginning of the following year he subscribed. On account of his compliance, he became the object of the most bitter and galling attacks, and did not long survive. The last days of the old man were embittered by the treatment he received at the hands of zealous, but uncharitable Lutherans, and death was doubtless a welcome event to him. In the case of Reinhardt, the result was only a more severe sentence. He was banished from the town, forbidden to maintain any correspondence with it, and the magistrates were ordered to fill up the vacancy caused by his removal. He removed to Leipzig, where he was chosen to the pastorate of St. Nicholas' Church, and was subsequently made Professor of Theology, which office he held till his death, in 1669.

Paul Gerhardt was the next minister who was called on to subscribe the edict. The Elector was convinced that, next to Reinhardt, he was the most vehement opponent of peace between the Lutheran and Reformed. When Reinhardt was reproached in the Consistory with inciting his colleagues to resistance, Gerhardt said, with some warmth, that it was not so, that he had encouraged Reinhardt when he showed a disposition to yield; he was older in years, and had been longer in office, and he should be sorry to follow others. It was also said, that during an illness which befell him, he sent for his colleagues, and earnestly warned them not to subscribe the bond pledging them to observance of the edict. These things were, at least, carried to the Elector, and prejudiced him against Gerhardt. On the same day that Lilius was reinstated in office, Gerhardt was cited to appear

before the Consistory (Feb. 6th, 1666), and called upon to sign. Eight days were allowed him for consideration, and in the first instance he accepted the delay, but before the rising of the same session, he declared that he had had ample time for consideration, and that he could not change his mind, whereupon he was deposed from office, in the name of the Elector.

Great as was the agitation produced in the public mind by the deposition of Lilius and Reinhardt, the sensation occasioned by Gerhardt's was much more profound. He was the most beloved, as well as most celebrated, of all the ministers. Measures were immediately taken by the community in his favour. The citizens and the guilds of the cloth-makers, bakers, butchers, tailors, and pewterers, united to petition the magistrates in favour of exemption for Gerhardt. They said that every one knew that he had never spoken against the faith and the co-religionists of the Elector, much less vituperated them, but that he had sought to lead every one to true Christianity, and had never attacked any one in word or deed.

The magistrates, on presenting this representation to the Elector, on the 13th of February, added:—"He has not thought of the Reformed, much less insulted them; he has maintained a blameless walk, giving offence to no one, so much so, that his Highness, without any suspicion, had admitted his songs into the hymn-book for the Mark, in 1658. Should a man so pious, so intellectual, so celebrated in many lands, leave the town, it was to be feared that grave thoughts would be excited in the minds of foreigners, and that God would visit them for it. If he refused

subscription, it would not be imputed to disobedience, but to scruples of conscience, seeing that before the publication of the edict he had fulfilled its object by his modest behaviour." The Prince, in reply, stated that he had sufficient grounds for enforcing the provisions of the edict, and that Gerhardt must comply with them, or bear the penalty.

A second petition was got up in his favour, in which, in addition to the above guilds, the carpenters, cutlers, armourers, and coppersmiths joined. As this petition also was unfavourably received, the States of the Mark took up the cause of the deposed. "The dismissal of Gerhardt," they informed the Elector, on the 27th of July, 1666, "excited great fear in the country for religion, for this man is recognized by the adherents of both confessions as a pious, exemplary, and, without doubt, a peace-loving theologian, against whom no charge can be brought save his refusal to subscribe the edicts."

The Elector yielded at length. After his return from Cleve, he summoned the magistrates to appear before him, on January 9th, 1667, at three o'clock in the afternoon; and through the Lord President, Otto von Schwerin, in presence of several privy councillors, made the desired, but hardly expected announcement, that as there was no complaint against Paul Gerhardt, save that he refused to subscribe the edicts, his Electoral Highness must believe that he has misunderstood the purport of them; he, therefore, restored him to his office, and absolved him from the necessity of subscription.

Immediately after the audience, the Elector sent a private secretary to Gerhardt, to convey the intelligence to him, and to say at the same time that his Highness cherished the confident expectation that he would act conformably to the edicts, without subscription, and continue to manifest his known moderation. Next day the magistrates, delighted with the grace of the Prince, hastened to inform Gerhardt of his unconditional restoration to office, and on the 12th of January, the joyous event was announced in the *Sunday Mercury*, a weekly paper very much read in Berlin at that time. But the private message from the Elector threw Gerhardt into fresh distress of mind. He felt hampered by the condition still attached to his restoration to office, and he applied to the magistrates to aid him in discovering the exact terms of his restoration. In his letter to the magistrates, he expressed his earnest desire to spend the remainder of his life among his flock, if he could do so with a good conscience, saying how wretched a thing it was to hold office with an uneasy conscience. He knew the anxieties incident to the faithful discharge of the pastoral office, and said, that he would be the most wretched man on earth if to them were added the reproaches of a guilty conscience. His desire was not in the very least to appear to depart from his previous mode of teaching, and from the customs of his church, which, as a Lutheran clergyman, he had sworn to maintain. Referring to the moderation which had been so commended in him, he said, "I have never understood it, and never can understand it otherwise, than that I shall be permitted to remain faithful to my Lutheran confessions of faith, and especially to the

'Formula Concordiae,' and that I am not required to regard any of them, or permit others to regard any one of them, as a dishonourable, injurious, or blasphemous book."

The magistrates sent him a copy of the decree reinstating him in office, hoping thereby to remove his scruples. He made a further representation to the magistrates on the 26th of January, 1667. In this he pointed out how the decree ascribed his refusal to a misunderstanding of the edicts, and that, though absolved from subscription, he was bound by them still; that he could only understand the edicts literally; that he could not re-enter his office with any other conscience than he had first entered it with; he could not inflict on himself the wound on re-entrance into office which he had, in the strength of the Holy Ghost, patiently and silently endured a year's suspension to avoid; that if his conscience permitted him to yield obedience he would subscribe the edicts, "for," said he, "what I can do with a good conscience, I can easily consent and promise to do." He begged them to intercede for him with the Prince, that he might be absolved from obedience to the edicts on resuming office. In everything else he promised all possible hearty and humble obedience. He begged that he might be permitted to adhere to his Lutheran Confessions and "Formula Concordiae;" that he might so instruct his flock, and pledge himself to no other moderation than was rooted in these confessions. Only on these terms, he said, could he consent to preach. Gerhardt also wrote to the Elector to the same effect.

The magistrates resolved once more to apply to the Elector. They briefly stated the case, and begged his

Highness to relieve Gerhardt's scruples. The Elector, on the very same day, returned their statement to the magistrates, with these words written on the margin:—"If the preacher, Paul Gerhardt, will not resume the office so graciously vouchsafed to him again, by his Serene Electoral Highness, for which he will have to answer to the Most High God, let the magistrates of Berlin, at their earliest convenience, invite some other able and peace-loving persons to preach as candidates; but let them not call any one until they have first humbly made known his qualifications to his Serene Highness.—Cöhl-on-the-Spree, Feb. 4th, 1667.—(Signed) Friederich Wilhelm."

Gerhardt resigned his office, and so ended his ministry in Berlin. So great was the love his former flock bore to him that they still continued to contribute to his support.

It is commonly believed, that after his deposition in Berlin, he was invited to Saxe-Merseberg by Duke Christian, and that, on refusing the offer, the Duke granted him a pension. Otto Schultze, one of his biographers, and seemingly the most careful and thorough of them, says that he was unable to find any certain testimony to either of these facts. It seems strange that he should refuse to go to Saxe-Merseberg, when, a short time after, he unhesitatingly accepted an invitation from the magistrates of Lübben, which was in the territories of Duke Christian; and in his correspondence with the magistrates of Lübben there is no reference to such an invitation from the Duke. The fact of his refusal, in the first instance, and his ready acceptance in the second, might be accounted for, however, by the death

of his wife, which took place in March, 1668, whereby one very strong tie that bound him to Berlin was severed.

A story is told about this period of his life, and was for a long time received as an undoubted fact, which is so romantic that we could almost wish it were true. It is said, that having no certain dwelling-place, he set out with his wife and family to return to his fatherland, Electoral Saxony; that one evening his wife was sitting in the hotel where they were staying for the night, bemoaning her hard lot. Gerhardt in vain endeavoured to console her, and quoted Psalm xxxvii. 5, to her. Touched by the words himself, he went and sat down on a garden seat and wrote the song,

“[Commit whatever grieves thee,](#)” &c.,

and came and read it to his wife, who was immediately comforted. Later in the evening the Duke of Saxe-Merseberg's messengers arrived, bearing a letter to Gerhardt, offering him a pension, till he was otherwise provided for. They were glad when they found out who Gerhardt was, and handed him the letter, which he in turn handed to his wife, saying, “Did I not tell you to commit your ways unto the Lord?” Unfortunately for this story, the hymn in question had been published in 1666, and the story is otherwise inconsistent with the known facts of his history.^[5] The story is equally groundless, that this hymn was the means of procuring him an invitation from the Elector to return to Berlin.

The magistrates of Lübben, hearing of him, invited him to preach there, as a candidate for the vacant archdiaconate. He went thither and preached before them on October 14th, 1668. The next day he was informed as to the income,

inspected the official residence, expressed his willingness to accept the appointment, and was assured that it would be offered to him. He then returned to Berlin. He did not take up his residence in Lübben until June in the following year, owing partly to domestic affliction, and partly to the vexatious delay in preparing his official house for his reception, arising from the dilatoriness and indifference of the magistrates in the matter. He had expressed hope, when he saw the house, which was unfit for any minister to live in, and not large enough for his family, that a more convenient one might be provided. He was assured that a deacon's house adjoining would be added to it. A friend visited Lübben some time after his appointment, and the work was not begun, nor even at a later period, when he himself went over. No sympathy was manifested towards him. He was asked if he wished to recede from his promise, and whether he wished a house *pro dignitate*; and was told that they did not know he had so large a household, and that what had been good enough before might be good enough still. All this must have been exceedingly annoying and humiliating to Gerhardt. Other points were raised with reference to the details of his ministerial duties; but leaving them for friendly settlement after his entrance on his office, he simply claimed that a house, not *pro dignitate*, but *pro necessitate*, should be prepared. A full statement of the case, addressed by him to the Government President, Alex. von Hoymb, at length produced the desired effect.

He took the oath of religion before the Consistory on the 6th of June, and entered on the duties of his office on the third Sunday in Trinity. Gerhardt, in these transactions,

appears to great advantage, in the reasonableness of his demands, and the manner he dealt with the ungenerous imputations made upon his motives and character. He would have removed to Lübben sooner had there been a suitable house to be got; but there was none. He laid stress, in his correspondence, on the want of a study in the Archdeacon's house, and insisted on the necessity of having a place for meditation and prayer, if he was to discharge his duties aright.

There are no written records concerning his work in Lübben. Dim tradition says, that he was often melancholy, that in these moods he would betake himself to the church, and kneeling before the crucifix, seek strength in fervent prayer. Feustking (who was almost his contemporary), General Superintendent in Anhalt-Zerbst, says, in the preface to his edition of his songs,—“Along with his piety Gerhardt had the devil, the false world, and the enemies of religion continually on his neck, with which he had to contend on the right and on the left, day and night. He also prayed very diligently, as earnestly as one pleads with his father. At the close of his life he had pious Arndt's 'Prayer and Paradise Garden' continually before him, and so highly did he esteem it, that he wrote several hymns on its contents.”

Many of Gerhardt's songs appeared in the first instance in various hymn-hooks. The first complete edition was published by J. E. Ebeling, Director of Music in the chief church in Berlin, in ten folio parts, each containing twelve songs, in 1666-67. It seems that Gerhardt never derived any pecuniary advantage from their publication. Tradition says,

that after a warm conflict with the enemy he wrote the hymn “[Wach auf mein Herz und Singe](#),” in proof of which the second verse is quoted. But he wrote no song after leaving Berlin. Schultze mentions that there is no song bearing his name that had not been printed in 1667.

His will, and the rules of life, written before his death, for his son Paul Friedrich, are worthy of quotation, revealing as they do the piety, simplicity, purity, integrity, and also the narrowness of his character.^[6] After expressing his gratitude to God for all the goodness and truth shown him from his mother's womb till that hour (he had then reached his seventieth year), his hope of speedy deliverance from this life and entrance into a better, and praying God when his time came to take his soul into His Fatherly hands and grant his body quiet rest till the last day, when he should be reunited with those gone before as well as those left behind, and behold Jesus face to face, in whom he had believed though he had not seen Him, he goes on to say:—

“To my only son I leave few earthly possessions, but an honourable name, of which he will have no special reason to be ashamed.

“My son knows, that from tender infancy I gave him to the Lord my God as His own, that he should be a servant and preacher of His Holy Word. Let it be so, and let him not turn aside because he may have few good days therein, for God knows how to compensate for outward trial by inward gladness of heart and joy in the Holy Ghost. Study sacred theology in pure schools and incorrupt universities, and beware of Syncretists, for they seek the things of time, and are faithful neither to God nor man. In thine ordinary life,

follow not bad company, but the will and commandment of thy God. In particular

“1. Do nothing evil in the hope that it will remain secret,
'For nothing can so small be spun
That it comes not to the sun.'

“2. Never grow angry out of thine office and calling.

“If thou findest that anger hath inflamed thee, be perfectly silent, and do not utter a word until thou hast first repeated to thyself the Ten Commandments and the Christian Creed.

“3. Be ashamed of sinful, fleshly lusts; and when thou comest to years that thou canst marry, do so seeking direction from God, and the good counsel of pious, faithful, and judicious persons.

“4. Do people good whether they can requite you or not, for what men cannot requite the Creator of Heaven and earth has long ago requited, in that He created thee, hath given thee His dear Son, and in holy baptism hath received and adopted thee as His son and heir.

“5. Flee covetousness like hell. Be content with what thou hast acquired with honour and a good conscience, though it may not be too much. Should God grant thee more, pray Him to preserve thee from any hurtful misuse of temporal possessions.

Summa; pray diligently, study something honourable, live peacefully, serve honestly, and remain steadfastly in thy faith and confession. So wilt thou one day die and leave this world willingly, gladly, blessedly! Amen.”

He died on the 7th of June, 1676, as the Lübben church-book testifies, after he had been seven years in Lübben and

twenty-five in the ministry.

It is said, that he died with the words of one of his own hymns on his lips. "Death can never kill us even," from verse 8th of the Christian Song of Joy.

["Why should sorrow ever grieve me?"](#)

He is buried in the chief church, probably near the altar, though the precise spot cannot be determined. A portrait in oil, hung up in the church, testifies to the estimation in which he was held by the congregation, for besides his, there are only the portraits of a few General Superintendents, and none of any of his predecessors in office.

Towards the side, at the foot of the picture are the words:

—

["Theologus in cribro Satanae versatus."](#)^[7]

And under that again, the following epigram written by J. Wernsdorf:—

*"Sculpta quidem Pauli, viva est atque imago Gerhardti,
Cujus in ore, fides, spes, amor usque fuit.
Hic docuit nostris Assaph redivivus in oris
Et cecinit laudes, Christe benigne, tuas.
Spiritus aethereis veniet tibi sedibus hospes,
Haec ubi saepe canes Carmina Sacra Deo."*^[8]

It is not known what became of his son, and nothing is known of his posterity.

The editor of the Selection of Gerhardt's Songs—Bremen, 1817—states in his preface: "There is at present living in Bremen a great-granddaughter of Gerhardt's, eighty-one years of age, a simple Christian soul. Her father was, as she