

Georg Heinrich Goetze on Persecuted Pastors (1714)

Abstract

Lutheran theologian Georg Heinrich Goetze (1667-1728) published his *Dypticha Exulum*, or *Register der Exulanten*, in 1714 to commemorate those pastors who had fled persecution in the Habsburg monarchy. The register describes the pastors' lives and their persecution, with every individual life history ending happily. The history of Adam Büthner is one such example. Goetze presents the persecuted pastors as individuals guided by God whose course led them to Lutheran countries and thus to safety. The account closes with the success story of Büthner's descendants. The ending is designed to show how advantageous the acceptance of emigrants – here, meaning those of the Lutheran confession – is for one's own country.

Source

This man [Büthner] had been a teacher in the house of God at various locations, but also had to lead the sad life of a religious refugee, by God's will. In the beginning, he was a pastor of the German and Bohemian community at Lefin [Levin] in the Duchy of Glatz [Kłodzki]. But he could not quietly teach and live in that place, as described by the son he left behind, Mr. M. Fridericus Büthnerus, a noted mathematician at the commendable Danzig Gymnasium / and headmaster of the laudable Johannis School, in the life history / that he wrote himself and that was read aloud at his funeral in 1701; the following account reports the following about it: Because the Reformation had come to these towns as well (namely Lefin and Orutsch, / where this learned man and Danzig professor was born, as I explain elsewhere) / and the danger to life and limb from the embittered Croats / Walloons / and Spaniards was growing daily/ so that almost every day my parents had to hide, as they stood and walked, in the forests / mountains, and ravines of the earth. Furthermore, a councilor in Lefin was no longer allowed to house and protect my father; they had to remove him from his pastoral office with a heart-rending testimonial. After that, he was compelled to have himself appointed a military chaplain in the Silesian regiment under Colonel von Dohna at the Siege of Glatz. Then, after the city and castle of Glatz had been conquered and reduced to ashes, he moved with his regiment to Hungary in 1624. In the long month of March, he was called to Freystadt [Kisielice] in Upper Silesia in the Duchy of Teschen [Cieszyn] for a position as pastor and superintendent, but he did not have much peace there, either, because the Imperial, Mansfeld, and Weimar peoples launched their campaigns against Bethlehem Gabor [Bethlen Gabor], Hungary, and Transylvania, so that he wished that God would just once send him to a place where he could safely get a good night's sleep. In addition, the Reformation also took hold in Austria and Silesia, so he had to leave his teaching position when his mandate ran out, and he had to move out of his residence during the day, after which the church was closed and locked. This happened in 1627, whereupon he stayed with Baron von Eygan in Dobroslawitz [Dobrosławice] and served as his court chaplain, until he went to Danzig in 1629 and was appointed pastor of the Weichelsmünde Fort. Here, God gave him peace until 1643, when he went to the eternal rest that is given to God's people. The son he left behind, the Professor Büthner / mentioned before, had already made an outstanding contribution to the young students in Danzig, had left behind various useful writings, and had reached an advanced age, when, in 1701, at the age of seventy-nine, he traded his time on earth for eternal life. The children and grandchildren must always fare well according to the motto of their honorable father, as could be read on the coat-of-arms at his funeral ceremony, which read: THE LORD TAKES CARE OF ME!

Source: Georg Heinrich Goetze, *Dyticha Exulum, oder Exulanten Register*. Altenburg, 1714, pp. 60-62. Available online at: <https://gdz.sub.uni-goettingen.de/id/PPN625018133>

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