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## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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**Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches.**


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**I. Amerika.**

**An Exegetical Curiosity.** — An article appearing in a recent issue of a Lutheran theological magazine, published in America, constitutes the latest attempt to dispel the obscurity surrounding 1 Cor. 15, 29. We submit its essential statements: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead if the dead rise not at all? Why are they, then, baptized for the dead?" Dr. Robertson, in his great *Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, p. 630, says: "This obscure passage still remains a puzzle to the interpreter." It is a well-known fact that a large number of interpretations have been attempted, and it is just as certain that the Scriptural, satisfactory, convincing interpretation has never yet been given to the Church. In the present article we propose to show what the Bible itself teaches on the subject. . . . In his *Biblia Illustrata* Calovius enumerates twenty-three different interpretations, including the one put forth by Luther. Luther translates 'ueber den Toten,' and his view was that new converts were baptized over or upon the graves of departed Christians. While it is perfectly true that the fundamental significance of *ἐπί* is 'over,' we know of no instance in the Greek New Testament where this preposition with the genitive case can mean 'over' in a local sense, and no one can prove from history that such a practise was in vogue in the apostolic congregations." (Winer, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Sprachgebrauchs* 6, p. 342, submits: "The fact that *ἐπί* would be used but once in its simplest, the local, significance constitutes no argument against its bearing that sense here." And if Luther's interpretation is correct, this solitary statement of the apostle is sufficient, in a historic way, to establish the existence of the custom in question.) ". . . Meyer's explanation is that Christians, who, of course, had been baptized once, were baptized the second time instead of and in behalf of people that had died without having received the Sacrament of Baptism. But . . . the Apostle Paul, who wrote our epistle in order to correct a number of abuses in the Corinthian congregation, would certainly have had a word or two to say in condemnation of such a practise, had it actually been in vogue." (See also Luther, VIII, 1196: "*Das ist nichts*. For there is Acts 2, 38, where Peter says: 'Be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ,' etc. It will never do that one should be baptized for another, even as every one must personally repent, believe, and confess his faith, etc.") ". . . It will not be necessary to go through the whole long list of suggested interpretations. They all have this one thing in common: they utterly ignore the principle that Scripture must be interpreted by Scripture. Consequently they are mere guesses, without any Scripture foundation whatever. . . . If, therefore, we desire to arrive at the precise truth concerning the question under consideration, there is positively nothing else to be done than to find and examine the passage upon which our verse is based; and when this task shall have been accomplished, all uncertainty will have vanished like mist before the meridian sun, and we shall be rejoicing in the possession of the truth. . . . The first five verses of the third chap-

ter of Malachi constitute the passage upon which Matt. 3, 11 is based. In the Malachi passage we read: 'He shall *purify* the sons of Levi and *purge* them as gold and silver.' This is explained in the Matthew passage as follows: 'He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.' According to John 3, 22 sqq. both Jesus and John the Baptist were baptizing, Jesus not doing it personally, but through His disciples. The fact that Jesus was thus making disciples gave rise to jealousy on the part of the disciples of John. The dispute which arose was therefore about *baptizing*; but in John 3, 25 we are told that it was about *purifying*. Heb. 9, 10 speaks of 'divers washings,' literally, 'various *baptisms*.' The various Old Testament ceremonial lustrations are meant, and in v. 13 we are told that such lustrations sanctified to the *purifying* of the flesh. . . . In Eph. 5, 26 we read: 'that He might sanctify and *cleanse* it with *the washing of water by the word*.' These examples may suffice to prove that the true meaning of 'baptize' is 'purify.' These two words may therefore be used interchangeably, and the following rendering of our text is unimpeachable: 'Else what shall they do that are being purified for the benefit of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why, then, are they being purified for their benefit?'"

"We are now ready to examine the Old Testament basic passage. In the light of the preceding elucidation the basic passage will not be difficult to find; it is, of course, Lev. 12, 6: 'And when the days of her *purifying* are fulfilled *for a son or for a daughter*.' The entire chapter constitutes 'the law for her that hath born a male or a female,' v. 7. The law was this: When a Jewish woman had given birth to a boy, she was Levitically unclean for seven days; when she had given birth to a girl, her time of uncleanness was twice as long. . . . This was her own personal uncleanness. Upon the expiration of these seven or fourteen days she should continue in the blood of her purifying thirty-three days, or sixty-six days, respectively. Why that? Our basic passage answers: 'For a son or for a daughter.' . . . The preceding elaboration shows how the little children were received into the Old Testament kingdom of God. A vague notion seems to be abroad that the little girls became members of that kingdom in some unaccountable manner, nobody knows how, and that they were permitted to grow up without any purification whatever. . . . Lev. 12, however, sets forth the true state of affairs. A little Jewish boy was purified in the following manner: more directly by the rite of circumcision on the eighth day and also, more indirectly, through thirty-three days of purification on the part of his mother. A little Jewish girl was purified, more indirectly, through sixty-six days of purification on the part of her mother. . . . Let us suppose a case like the following: A Jewish mother gives birth to a girl. For two weeks the mother is unclean on her own account. On the fifteenth day she begins to undergo purification in behalf of her little baby girl. On the twentieth day the girl dies. For sixty days more the mother must now continue to be purified in behalf of the child that has already died, in other words, continue to be BAPTIZED FOR THE DEAD. But why? If the dead rise not, why were some mothers in Israel then purified in behalf of the dead? . . . If people who have received what we ordinarily call Baptism, namely, the New Testament Sacrament, Christian Baptism, — if such people, following their own foolish

notions, should submit to Baptism the second time in behalf of those that had died unbaptized, or if candidates for Baptism should choose to be baptized upon a Christian's grave, such practises could prove nothing concerning the resurrection, and Paul would never have adduced them as proofs. But when mothers in Israel, *in obedience to God's command*, underwent purification in behalf of their little children that had already died, the case is different. If death is the end of all, if there is no bodily resurrection and no eternal salvation, then this divine command would be meaningless. The words of our passage, though apparently so plain and simple, are filled with the glorious Gospel of the Son of God; the blessed doctrine of the resurrection from the dead can be proved from them, and the great Apostle Paul, with his wonderful insight into the divinely inspired Scriptures, was able to furnish the proof."

This solution of the difficulties found in 1 Cor. 15, 29 offers puzzles rather more perplexing than the original one. The new difficulties are: Why does St. Paul not give his readers some hint that he is not speaking of Baptism, but of the Levitical purification? And if he is speaking of that, why does he not make an attempt to show that the new interpretation of Lev. 12 is the correct one? . . . Zahn's commentary offers this translation and interpretation: "What will they who receive Baptism thereby accomplish for the dead (that is, for themselves as the dead of the future)? If the dead rise not at all, why do they receive Baptism for them?" "All in all, Luther's interpretation, which has also been adopted by modern exegetes (Vilmar, Ewald), seems to present less difficulties than the others." (Lehre und Wehre, 30, p. 414.)

E.

**German War Guilt and Missions.** — Says the *Foreign Mission Conference Bulletin* of June 1, 1932, with respect to this subject: "In recent weeks a communication was received from the German Evangelical Mission Council expressing the great sense of burden under which German Christians are laboring because of the statement included in the Treaty of Versailles that Germany alone was to blame for the World War. Similar communications have been sent to the National Christian Councils and missionary bodies of different countries. The Committee on Missions and Governments gave careful study to the nature of the reply which should be made to this communication and corresponded with the members of the Committee of Reference and Counsel. As a result of the information received the Executive Committee at its meeting on May 19 agreed upon the following statement, which it has requested the secretaries to communicate to the Mission Council of the German Evangelical Churches: "Voted that the members of the Committee of Reference and Counsel of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America acknowledge with Christian understanding and sympathy the February 4, 1931, letter of the German Evangelical Mission Council addressed to the National Christian Councils, testifying to the unbearable burden under which the German Christians feel themselves to labor because the Treaty of Versailles forced the representative of their nation to sign the declaration that Germany alone was to blame for the World War. While conscious of incompetency to deal with any of the political implications of the question, which we approach only by reason of common spiritual concern with our German brethren, the members of the Committee of Reference and Counsel take

this opportunity of expressing the judgment that the World War was the inevitable outcome of historical national rivalries, which found expression in competitive military and naval armaments, and state their conviction that for the existence of these rivalries and their inevitable result in the World War no single nation can justly be declared solely responsible."

FREDERICK BRAND.

**Not too Many Pastors in Presbyterian Church.**—In one of our exchanges we read the following interesting statement:—

"In his annual report Dr. W. C. Covert, general secretary of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., denies that this Church is oversupplied with ministers. He gives statistics listing the net increase in the number of Presbyterian ministers in 1931 as 27; during the period from 1925 to 1930 there was a decrease of 30. While in 1930 but 264 students for the ministry entered Presbyterian seminaries, last year 451 enrolled, and there was an increase of students for all kinds of full-time Christian service from 330 to 596. Dr. Covert holds that this increase is due to passing conditions in the economic realm and to a return on the part of the generation to a more serious mood. A.

**Methodists Insist on Ministers' Becoming Naturalized.**—Of the undue emphasis which in many Methodist circles is placed on external matters we have an instance in a resolution of the Northern New York Methodist Conference, which, when it was in session recently at Watertown, New York, resolved that hereafter no clergyman will be received as a member of this conference and be permitted to serve a pastorate within its confines unless he is applying for citizenship. The *Christian Century*, from which we take over this information, comments:—

"This is new doctrine for Methodists. They are a wide-ranging folk — 'the world is our parish' — and have established themselves under every flag that flies. For any of them to say, as one did at Watertown, 'I do not see how a man can preach under the flag of the United States if he is an alien,' is to repudiate their own history. Methodist missionaries by the hundred have preached for years under other flags without dreaming that they ought to strip themselves of their American citizenship. Bishop Leonard, who presided at Watertown, was himself once a preacher in Rome, and though his term of office was not prolonged, he was in no sense a visiting clergyman. But he did not seek Italian citizenship. Bishop Nuelsen is in charge of Methodist work in Europe, and for many years he has been an influential figure in the Protestant circles of the continent. No responsible church-body has made the point against him that he is an alien. Stanley Jones is more at home in Indian Methodism than in American, but he is not disturbed in his civil allegiance either by Church or State. If this new policy is now to be applied, perhaps the Methodists will accept its logic and add a question to those asked of candidates for oversea service: 'Will you take immediate steps to become a citizen of the country to which you are sent?' We can think of no other question which would so surely quench a candidate's enthusiasm or dry up the springs of his lay support. London has had our Fort Newton, and New York has had England's Jowett; these are merely conspicuous illustrations of a thoroughly wholesome internationalism. That the Methodists, of all

people, should begin to oppose it is a most curious example of ingrowing nationalism in a historically cosmopolitan Church."

This rebuke is well deserved. People of superficial thinking will probably be impressed by this action of the Northern New York Methodist Conference; but those who look at all sides of the question will wish that these people had pondered 1 Cor. 9, 19—23 a little more. A.

**Unionism in the U. L. C.** — To show the extent to which certain sections of the U. L. C. are followshipping with the sects, we take over the following item from the Philadelphia Correspondence of the *Christian Century*: —

"A study of ten years reveals to what extent the several denominations have practised comity: Baptists 100 per cent., Evangelicals 66 per cent., Lutherans (Eastern Pennsylvania Synod—the only Lutheran group that has practised comity) 100 per cent., Methodists 86 per cent., Presbyterians 84 per cent., Reformed 100 per cent., United Presbyterians 100 per cent. We are making very splendid progress in this matter.' So declared Dr. E. A. E. Palmquist, executive secretary of the Philadelphia Federation of Churches, in his eleventh annual report at the annual dinner. 'In the area between Girard and Vine and east of Broad,' he continued, 'where there are about 52,000 people, the Protestant churches of this city are spending \$106,000 a year. They have slightly over 3,000 in membership and over 3,000 Sunday-school scholars, but they are spending enough money to give each man, woman, and child in that area more than \$2 apiece each year. A subcommittee of the Committee of Comity is now working over these data to see whether we are expending too much money in this blighted area.

"After two years of faithful leadership, Dr. J. Henry Harms of the Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion retired as president of the federation. His successor is Dr. Charles E. Schaeffer, president of the general synod and secretary of the board of home missions of the Reformed Church. Dr. Palmquist was reelected executive secretary and Miss Mabel Butterworth assistant.'"

Here is evidence for one of the serious indictments that members of the Synodical Conference direct against the U. L. C. A.

"The Christian Unity League of North America is meeting in this city on May 4 and 5. All ministers and laymen who are interested in bringing about a closer relationship between the various denominations of this country are especially invited to attend this conference. A leading feature of these meetings will be a Communion service in which representatives of many denominations will participate." (*The Church at Work*, St. Louis, April 29, 1932.) The leading feature was enacted, according to the program — Episcopalians, Campbellites, Presbyterians, etc., met at the Lord's Table — and left it as Episcopalians, Campbellites, Presbyterians, etc. If these men are justified in joining in the intimate and sacred communion of the Lord's Supper, they are committing a crime in remaining separate in opposing organizations. If they are bound in conscience to maintain separate denominations, they are committing a crime to fellowship and commune with errorists.

This is the reaction of the *Living Church*, of May 14, 1932: "The Christian Unity League is up to its tricks again. This organization seems

to have an inordinate desire to hold celebrations of the Holy Communion in Anglican churches, in direct defiance of the canon law of the Church. Last time the prompt action of the Bishop of New York headed it off. This year the celebration was held in Christ Church Cathedral, St. Louis. The celebrant, we understand, was a Methodist minister, assisted by clergymen of various denominations, including the bishop and the bishop coadjutor of the diocese as well as the dean of the cathedral. The rector and vestry of at least one parish in St. Louis had the courage to protest against this service, and we honor them for it. . . . The Church is not going to collapse because of this action, which is wholly contrary to the spirit of the Church's laws, though it may be technically legal since the service was not performed in a 'congregation' of this Church. . . . But what amazes us and causes us sorrow is that Christian men should be so misguided as to think they can build such a sacred thing as Christian unity upon a foundation of evasion of the law and order of the Church, of trampling upon principles that she holds most dear, and of defiance of her constituted authority. Such steps lead not to unity, but to anarchy." We condemn the tactics of the unionists because of their disregard of the divine law, Rom. 16, 17. But aside from that the point the *Living Church* makes is well taken. It shows up the unionists in their true color.

The Christian Unity League, headed by Dr. Peter Ainslee (Campbellite) of Baltimore, aims at the establishment of "The United Church of the United States." Its "Reconciliation Pact" signed by more than 2,000 ministers of various faiths, declares: "We will strive to bring the laws and practises of our several communions into conformity with this principle (the equality of all Christians before God), so that no Christian shall be denied membership in any of our churches nor the privilege of participation in the observance of the Lord's Supper and that no Christian minister shall be denied the freedom of our pulpits by reason of differences in forms of ordination." That does not touch the point. The point is the difference in faith. And Rom. 16, 17 gives point to that. E.

**Church Union via Foreign Mission.** — The unionists imagine that a union of the various denominations planted in the Foreign Mission field can be more easily effected than a union here at home and hope that the union effected there will react favorably upon the Church in the West. Dr. W. Luetgert some years ago expressed this idea in *Reich Gottes und Weltgeschichte* thus: "As Paul had no desire to obliterate the difference between the Gentile convert and the Jewish convert, so we do not endeavor to make of the heathen either Calvinists or Lutherans. We want to make Christians of them and nothing else. We hope that mission will hasten the time when there will be *one* fold and *one* Shepherd. This condition will not be brought about through the conversion of one denomination to the other one. It will come to pass only in this way, that all are converted to Christianity. . . . An independent Asiatic or African Christian Church will certainly react on the European Christian Church and free it from the hampering weight which the trend of European history has placed upon it." The World's Committee of the Y. M. C. A. gives vent to similar ideas in its *Information Services*, which the *Lutheran Companion* of May 7 quotes with approval. "Among the facts the 'International Review of Missions'

reports few are more encouraging than the general movement which brings the churches closer together in Japan, Korea, China, Philippine Islands, and India, and even to unite. A conference having in view ecclesiastical unity took place for the whole of India from November 7—9, 1931, under the chairmanship of Bishop Azariah. We give an extract from the resolutions of this conference, published in the *National Christian Council Review*: . . . "That, since the barriers that keep the members of the various churches from a fuller and more effective realization of their essential unity are the result of the conflicting types of church policy that have grown up in the West, it is imperative that these differences should not be perpetuated in India." We do not see how these men are going to prevent the differences which separate the church, those touching doctrine as well as polity, from being perpetuated in the foreign field. The heresies which have caused the division in the Church are not the product of the European and American racial character, but of the flesh, which presents the same characteristics throughout the world. The flesh of the Indian Christian is identical with the flesh of the English Christian. The carnal mind is essentially Pelagian. It developed, in Europe, the Catholic doctrine of work-righteousness. It will develop the same heresy in India, even though men succeed in placing an embargo on all Catholic literature. You need not tell the Chinamen anything of Zwingli and Calvin, but when he begins to study the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, his flesh is going to produce Zwinglian thoughts. When Paul warned the elders of Ephesus that "grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock," he did not look for these false teachers to come from Europe or America, but informed them that "of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20, 30. Even if these men had not *already* perpetuated the differences by establishing sectarian churches in India and China, the self-righteous, rationalistic, hierarchical flesh of the Indian would inevitably produce the same errors and seek to perpetuate them.

And the unionists will be lending their aid to that end. For the resolutions continue: "That, in order to promote the cause of union, the conference urges that definite steps be taken to associate members of the various churches in united evangelistic efforts and other forms of Christian service; that, since such cooperation will reveal the need for closer association in worship, the churches should give opportunity for, and make endeavor to promote, common acts of worship, including the partaking together of the Sacrament of Holy Communion; that definite opportunities be provided for the interchange of ministries in the preaching of the Word and other forms of service." That is certainly a heroic method of treating the malady. In order to remove the differences, ignore them! And that is criminal advice. That missionary is committing a crime against the native Christians who asks and instructs them *not* to mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which they have learned from Scripture, but to receive them and fellowship them. See Rom. 16, 17. Happily these instructions of the unionist missionary will not be followed by all. The new man of the native Christian is of the same nature as that of the European Christian and will urge him to follow Paul rather than the unionist. We may add that the unionists are not



true to their own principle. Their principle is that the Christianity to be planted in the foreign field must be the original, apostolic Christianity, trimmed of the excrescences that developed in the course of the Western history. That is well, but here they are busy engrafting on the young Church the same malignant excrescence that has been so assiduously nurtured by, and that has so grievously sapped the strength of, the older Church — unionism. E.

**Why Not Be Consistent?** — We read in an exchange that Rev. G. Shubert Frye, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Youngstown, New York, several weeks ago, when Colonel Morrow of Fort Niagara in his church had delivered a lecture which is characterized as "decidedly militaristic and in the mind of the pastor somewhat pagan and antichristian in its philosophy," instead of waiting for the singing of taps and "America," as provided in the program, went to the platform and said: . . . "I am asked to pronounce the benediction. In the course of this evening's remarks we have heard some of the basic principles of Christ challenged and defied. I am not going to speak; my time for that is Sunday mornings. But as a minister of Christ I cannot and will not pronounce the benediction. The meeting is dismissed." We are told the people left the church slowly and silently. We say, Why not be consistent? Why does this minister remain in communion with a Church where by certain members some of the basic principles of Christianity are denied, a body which belongs to the Federal Council of Churches and thus fellowships theological leaders who have little left of Christianity except the name? If insistence on principle and truth is proper on the one hand, why not on the other? A.

**Why Were the Early Colonies Anti-Catholic in Sentiment?** — The book of Michael Williams, entitled *The Shadow of the Pope*, is causing a good deal of discussion in the religious press. It is granted that what he says about intolerance manifested toward Roman Catholics in the American colonies is true; but Protestant reviewers point out that he is not telling the whole story. W. E. Garrison, in the *Christian Century*, submits some very illuminating remarks as he evaluates Mr. Williams's book. He says: "A completely fair version of that story must include some adequate description of that Roman Catholicism toward which these early Protestant Americans were so regrettably intolerant. It was a religion which throughout the world, wherever it had power to do so, was doing its utmost by force and violence to stamp out every other form of faith. Plenty of lies had been told about it, and the truth had been embellished by a copious growth of legend; but the truth itself was plenty. The plain fact is that Roman Catholics in countries predominantly Protestant were not looked upon as merely the harmless holders of certain peculiar theological doctrines, but as the local representatives of a world-power which granted no liberty where it had power to deny it. When, for example, Maryland, after some years of anti-Catholic violence, established the Church of England in 1694, it was not without knowing that the Roman Catholic clergy had induced Louis XIV to repeal the Edict of Nantes nine years before and that French Protestants were even then fleeing to escape intolerable conditions. When the first anti-Catholic organizations began to be formed in the 1830's and '40's, the excited citizens could remind their

critics that the Pope who had died in 1829 had condemned the whole idea of religious liberty in unmeasured terms. When the 'great wave of religious strife began its course' in 1887 with the organization of the American Patriotic Association, which became the A. P. A., it did not require a very long memory to recall that Leo XIII's encyclical in 1885 had complained that the 'lamentable rage for innovation' which led to popular government brings it about that 'the Catholic religion is allowed a standing in civil society equal only to societies alien to it'; and when the 'bigots' were protesting against the nomination of a Catholic in 1924 and the election of one in 1928, the ink was scarcely dry on the books of Father Ryan in which he was hooting at 'the theory of indiscriminate and universal toleration' as absurd." It will be well to have facts like those here presented always at hand in order to give the Roman Catholic complaint of persecution its true setting.

A.

**Romanes and Christianity.** — In an article, published in the *Living Church*, on the recently deceased Bishop Gore we find the following interesting paragraph (the writer speaks of the time when he was a guest of Gore's in 1894): —

"A recent dramatic experience of his created in us a keen interest in him. We were inquirers into the mutual relations of science and religion. We looked at Gore as one who had experience in this with a very notable 'case,' of which we hoped he would talk. He could not be drawn to say a word about it. Gore was then forty-one. Eighteen years before, the eminent biologist and friend of Darwin, George J. Romanes, had said: 'When at times I think of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of the Creed which once was mine and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. There is a terrible truth in those words of Hamilton, — philosophy having become a meditation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, — the precept "Know thyself" has become transformed into the terrific oracle to Oedipus, "Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art?"'"

The writer informs us that Romanes wrote these words in an anonymous work called *A Candid Examination of Theism*, arriving at altogether negative, that is, agnostic, conclusions. But the sequel of the story makes one rejoice. Gore, so we are told, worked on this unbeliever, with the result that, when Romanes died, he had been received back into the Church.

A.

## II. Ausland.

**über Versicherung.** Im „Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirchenblatt für Südamerika“ veröffentlicht einer der Redakteure, Prof. Paul Schelp, einen Artikel über „Versicherung“, der nach unserer Meinung den rechten Kurs steuert und die Klippen rechts und links vermeidet. Nach einem Paragraphen über die verschiedenen Arten der Versicherung behandelt Professor Schelp die Frage, ob Versicherung ein Glücksspiel, eine Lotterie sei. Er schreibt: „So ist es oft hingestellt worden. Derjenige, welcher versichern läßt, versichert, wenn das Haus nicht abbrennt. Brennt es ab, so hat die Gesellschaft verloren. Bei Lebensversicherung zahlt die Person jedes Jahr ihren Einsatz. Stirbt sie dies Jahr nicht, so hat sie verloren und die Ge-

fellshaft gewonnen. Niemand weiß, wie die Sache ablaufen wird. Der Tod entscheidet. Ist das nicht ein Spielen mit der Gnadenzeit? Trotzdem es dies zu sein scheint, ist dennoch ein großer Unterschied vorhanden. Bei der Lotterie in Rio Grande do Sul entscheidet die Maschine mit den vielen Kugeln an der Rua dos Andradas in Porto Alegre, bei Versicherungen läßt man den Kontrakt ablaufen. Bei der Versicherung wird von vornherein festgelegt, daß man willig ist, auch die ganze Summe der Versicherung einzuzahlen. Die Willigkeit, die Summe, welche man als Versicherungssumme erhält, vollständig einzuzahlen, ist da oder kann wenigstens da sein. Bei der Lotterie besteht nicht eine solche Verpflichtung. Bei der Lotterie kann einer immer spielen und bekommt nie einen Preis; bei der Lebensversicherung z. B. ist von vornherein die Summe festgesetzt, die ausbezahlt wird. Bei der Lotterie kann man wiederholt gewinnen, bei der Lebensversicherung nicht.“

Das Argument derer, die links in den Graben fallen, Versicherung sei ein Werk der Liebe, weist er energisch ab. Versicherung „ist ein Geschäft, das kalt berechnet worden ist und rücksichtslos durchgeführt wird“. Den Satz „An und für sich sind Lebensversicherungen nicht sündlich“ führt er so aus: „Es läßt sich nicht sagen, daß derjenige Unrecht tut, der sein Haus vor Feuer versichern läßt. Natürlich ist dabei vorausgesetzt, daß sein Eigentum nicht zu hoch eingeschätzt wird. Die Versicherungssumme darf den Wert des Eigentums nicht übersteigen. Auch eine Lebensversicherung ist nicht zu verwerfen, wenn die betreffende Person wirklich willens ist, die Versicherungssumme nach und nach voll einzuzahlen.“

Es schärft der Artikel nun aber weiter ein, daß Versicherungen sehr gefährlich sind. „Wie nahe liegt z. B. bei einer Lebensversicherung der Gedanke, daß man für wenig einbezahltes Geld viel zurückerhalten möchte. Dann ist es ein Glücksspiel und gegen das neunte Gebot. . . . Wer aber nur wenig zahlen, aber viel empfangen möchte, begehrt seines Nächsten Hab und Gut. Das ist Sünde.“

Es wird dann darauf hingewiesen, daß Lebensversicherung leicht den Kleinglauben nährt und ferner auch eine Versuchung zu Mammonsdiens ist. Es bemerkt der Artikel noch, daß Versicherung oft zu Rord und Brandstiftung verleitet. Zum Schluß sagt Professor Schelp: „Wenn wir deshalb auch sagen müssen, daß alle Arten von Versicherungen nicht an und für sich Sünde sind, ein Christ sie auch wohl mit gutem Gewissen mitmachen könnte, so dürfen wir es doch nicht unterlassen, auf die vielen Umstände hinzuweisen, die leicht damit verbunden werden können und Sünde zur Folge haben. Mit Freuden machen wir alle darauf aufmerksam, daß die beste Versicherungsanstalt noch immer bei Gott ist, in der wir alle versichert sind. Diese wird nie bankrott und nimmt sich aller an.“ U.

**Lutherans Still Persecuted in Russia.** — In spite of denials which one occasionally sees in the press definite reports state that the cross of persecution is still resting on Lutherans in Russia. The *National Lutheran Council Bulletin* takes over this item from the *New York Herald-Tribune* of April 8, 1932: —

“Details of persecution, revealing how one of thirty German Protestant clergymen confined in Soviet prison camps had been forced to stand for seven days and seven nights in his cell without sleep to extort a confession that would justify his banishment to Siberia, were reported to-day by the

Lutheran Church Press Bureau. This man was lashed into consciousness every time he collapsed from exhaustion, the church report said. The story of these unfortunates, housed in cold and dirty wooden barracks in Russia or sentenced to compulsory labor in the forests of Siberia, is characterized by the church authorities as 'belonging to the most fearful chapters of religious persecution in Russia.' One of these ministers, named Erbes, who belonged to a German settlement on the Volga River, was said to have died from disease caused by harsh treatment and lack of nourishment in his place of exile. In Siberia, the report says, the exiles are forced to fall at least thirty trees a day, standing in deep snow. Even bread has been excluded from their daily ration." A.

**The Theological Situation in Scandinavia.** — Writing from Geneva, W. A. Visser 'T Hooft, correspondent of the *Christian Century*, relates the impressions he received when he toured the Scandinavian countries. His description throws some light on the situation.

"Having just returned from a trip to Scandinavia, I find myself asking the question, 'Does Scandinavia exist?' The better one comes to know Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, the more different they seem. In the Christian realm, for instance, one finds marked dissimilarities. The Danish situation is still largely characterized by the emergence of a special Danish edition of Barthianism, which exerts a great influence among the younger pastors and which is on the war-path against the older Danish pietism of the Inner Mission, once all-powerful in Danish church-life. In Norway, however, it is precisely pietism, with a strongly confessional Lutheran emphasis, which is transforming the religious life of the country under the leadership of its aggressive leader, Professor Hallesby of Oslo. And in the Swedish Church, the 'highest' of all Protestant churches, one finds again a very different orientation; more appreciation of modern culture and less religious individualism. A similar observation can be made in the life of the universities. At Oslo there is a strong and aggressive communist movement among the students. Its leaders are of the best intellectual classes of the country. In fact, the two outstanding personalities among them are the sons of a professor of theology. In Sweden and Denmark, however, communism plays only a negligible rôle among students." A.

**A New Union Church on the Philippine Islands.** — A correspondent of the *Christian Century*, writing from Manila, thus reports the formation of the Evangelical United Church of the Philippine Islands: —

"On the first Sunday in January, in the presence of more than two thousand people assembled in the Manila opera house, representatives of thirteen independent Filipino denominations formally launched *La Iglesia Evangelica Unida*. The Church of God, the National Church, the Trinitarian Church, the Christian Filipino Church, the Reformed Evangelical Church, six different denominations bearing the name Evangelical Church, and two others form the union. All these bodies are subsplits of two groups which separated from the Methodist Episcopal and Presbyterian missions about fifteen years ago. They have always been on their own both governmentally and financially. Several of them have grown rapidly, and while four or five, recently organized, numbered less than 300 members each, the united group has a total of nearly 12,500 communicants." A.