# **Concordia Theological Monthly**

Volume 4 Article 75

7-1-1933

# Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

F. E. Mayer Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

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#### **Recommended Citation**

Mayer, F. E. (1933) "Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," Concordia Theological Monthly. Vol. 4, Article 75.

Available at: https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol4/iss1/75

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# Theological Observer. — Rirchlich-Beitgeschichtliches.

#### I. Amerika.

Mus ber Sunobe. Die Berichte aus ben verschiebenen Diftriften ber Shnobe zeigen, daß die Arbeit des SErrn trot ber "bofen Beiten" vorwartsgeht. Rur in einem Diftrift hat man die jährliche Synodalversammlung ausfallen laffen; im übrigen ift bas Bedürfnis für ben Gegen biefer Busammenkunfte so groß, daß man sie in gewohnter Weise balt, wenn man sich babei auch ber größten Sparfamteit befleißigt. Aus vielen Gegenden tommen Rachrichten, bag bie Miffionsgelegenheiten gerade jest fehr gunftig find, fo bag, wie g. B. in Sowa und in Minnesota, neue Stationen eröffnet In Minnesota haben fich feit Anfang bes Jahres zwölf worden find. Barodien felbitandig erffart, was unter ben Umftanben fehr anertennenss wert ift. Auch ift zu erwähnen, bag die meiften Miffionare auf dem Gebiet ber Inneren Miffion trot ber ftart reduzierten Wehalter treulich weiterarbeiten und mit Gottes Silfe burchzukommen gebenken. Auch bom fernen Beften, bon ber Rufte bes Stillen Dzeans, tommen erfreuliche Berichte. So hat fürglich eine Gemeinde in Dakland ihre neue Rirche einweihen burfen, und im füdlichen Teile des Staates bemuht fich eine Gemeinde nach ber andern, ohne Silfe aus ber Diffionstaffe fertig gu werben. - Die Radrichten aus den canadifchen Diftriften lauten zum Teil febr erfreulich, da die Predigt des Wortes viel Frucht schafft, zum Teil aber auch sehr betrübend, da manche der neuen Ansiedler durch die schweren Zeiten sehr hart betroffen worden find. Bir lefen: "You will readily understand the plight of those who went on the homestead without any capital just before the present period of depression set in. They have never been able to take a crop off their land, nor have they the necessary seed to sow in at least a sufficient acreage for feed this spring. They have no potatoes, many have very little clothing, yes, many have not even bread to eat. They cannot in many instances apply to the Government for relief, since they would immediately become subject to deportation." - Aus Michigan tommt bie Nachricht, daß ber Frauenhilfsberein, ber fich ber Stadtmiffion in Detroit gewidmet bat, in loblider und energifder Beife Diefes Miffionswert fordert. Ohne Gelbständigkeit zu beanspruchen, nimmt fich diefer Berein unter ber Leitung ber Gemeinden biefer Liebesarbeit an, fo daß berartige Berbindungen andern zum Borbild dienen können. — Einige Diftrifte haben die Beife, daß fie regelmäßig über die Befchichte ber gu ihnen gehörenben Gemeinden berichten. Dies wird in fpateren Jahren In Gubamerita wibmen bem Gefchichtsforicher fehr guftatten fommen. bie Diftriffisblatter fonberlich ber Schulfrage viel Raum, und die Arbeit geht stetig vorwärts. Der "Kirchenbote" sowohl wie bas "Kirchenblatt" bringt seinen Lesern gediegene Artikel, und man sieht, daß die kirchliche Arbeit in energischer, zielbewußter und tonservatiber Beise geführt wird. SP.

Unionism. — The Lutheran Church Quarterly, in its issue of January, 1933, carries an article by Dr. N. R. Mehlhorn of the U. L. C. on this important topic. We quote some of the praragraphs which we consider of

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special importance. Speaking of the situation in his church-body, he says: —

"On the subject of pulpit-fellowship, in the main, Lutheran pulpits are occupied by Lutheran preachers. There are occasions in the United Lutheran Church when a speaker from some other communion is heard by a congregation. We have a few clergymen whose interdenominational relationships or community ties lead to exchanges with other preachers. But when our people have been habitually instructed prior to confirmation and after it from the pulpit, they are not misled by a sermon nor beguiled from their church thereby any more than through a book, a magazine, or a radio address. The fact is that all our pulpits are maintained to serve Lutheran congregations and for the extension of our Lutheran influence and membership.

"Our altars are for Lutheran communicants. Any Lutheran is eligible to receive the body and blood of Christ under the form of bread and wine administered as our Lord prescribed and as the Lutheran Church has practised, provided he comes properly prepared to receive it. And his preparation for this individualization of our Lord's grace of forgiveness and strengthening of faith is not conditioned by any other requirements than those set forth in the gospels and in the epistles of St. Paul. The attitude of the United Lutheran Church on the whole subject of organic union of Protestant churches was declared at the second convention of the United Lutheran Church at Washington, D. C., in 1920. It will be remembered that the Interchurch World Movement had at that time a great reputation in this country. Strong pressure was brought to bear upon all divisions of Protestantism in the direction of combination. If a group had any tendencies toward unionism worthy of an indictment for that fallacy, these would have made themselves apparent at that time."

Then follows the 1920 declaration of the U. L. C. on the subject of unionism, which we need not reprint here. With sadness we notice that Dr. Mehlhorn has no word of criticism, but rather a word of excuse, for those pastors of his Church "whose interdenominational relationships or community ties lead to exchanges with other preachers." That such a course helps to increase the popularity of these pastors in the community at large we do not doubt. Altogether different is the question whether their course is pleasing to God and in keeping with the principles laid down in His Word. It is our conviction that what they do betrays a culpable indifference toward the warning "A little leaven leaventh the whole lump."

After having quoted the declaration mentioned above, Dr. Mehlhorn continues: —

"As a part of the same declaration the United Lutheran Church went on record 'concerning cooperative movements among the Protestant churches.' After stating that 'it is our earnest desire to cooperate with other church-bodies in all such works as can be regarded as works of serving love, through which the faith of Christians finds expression,' the condition was laid down that such cooperation should not involve 'the surrender of our interpretation of the Gospel, the denial of conviction, or the suppression of our testimony to what we hold to be the truth.' The

General Body cited its constitution, in which the principle is laid down that no synod, conference, or board, or any official representative thereof shall have the power of independent affiliation with general organizations and movements.

"It would seem conclusively indicated by the policies and declarations of the United Lutheran Church that whatever bases there might have been in past decades on which to rest a fear of unionism, these have disappeared."

We wish we could share this optimism. Again and again the daily press reports unionistic services in which U. L. C. pastors and congregations participate, at times services featuring addresses or sermons by men who antagonize the very heart of the Gospel, the teaching of redemption through the blood of Christ. If they are taken to task for this fraternizing, we do not become aware of it. As long as such practises continue, we cannot absolve the U. L. C. of the charge of unionism.

A.

Oxford Movement and Socialism. — The following references to the Oxford Group Movement are taken from the World To-morrow, a socialist paper, of which Reinhold Niebuhr, H. N. Brailsford, and Norman Thomas are editors or contributing editors. The issue of May contains an article by Irene Gates on "The Oxford Group and Social Results." Excerpts might interest the readers.

"Are we to get down to the causes of poverty and economic disaster and cooperatively build together a family society based on the mind of Jesus?" "Many of us have discovered in the Oxford Group a personal experience of Christ (especially His call to repentance), which has given us a new and deeper sense of individual and social sin and the realization of new direction and power for the accomplishment of his social objectives." Reference is made to the "sharing," which strikes at the injustice and short-sightedness of the economic situation. The sharing is said to involve the upbuilding of characters of down-and-outers, of finding work or feeding them, etc. The movement is expected to remove racial differences and prejudices. "As more of us of all races come into a similar experience of Christ, we are confidently expecting the same transformations of racial attitudes in this country. . . . We are hoping that by the multiplication of people in groups everywhere with a vital experience of Christ there will be produced a nation of peace-minded men and women." The experience of the reconciliation or extinction of war hatred of a German and an English woman are related and then: "Only the flood-tide of the Spirit of God can wash away such deeply rooted sins of national hatred and resentment." "Like all people who listen for the voice of God, we are discovering that He does speak to us about "little details' as well as great decisions, that frequently fresh insight and action grow from guidance in 'small' matters. . . . Gradually we come to see the world as Jesus must have seen it - a world where God is kind and where we are His stewards. All things that men call our possessions are really His - our money, time, friends, home, work. Shortly, if we continue in His companionship, our relation to our fellows as well as to God is changed."

Irene Gates is a physician on the staff of the Cornell-New York Hospital Clinic. F. E. MAYER.

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More Light on Buchmanism. — The Moody Bible Institute Monthly for March, 1933, has the following editorial on the Oxford Group: —

"Here is part of a conversation which I had with one of these special missionaries (one of the men). 'For what reason did Christ die?' 'To tell you the truth, I don't know myself.' 'Has the Group any list of sins?' 'No, we have no list of sins.' 'Would you call adultery and murder sins?' 'Only if God told you they were.' 'What would you do if you had a strong desire to commit adultery with another man's wife or to murder some one?' I would go to God and get guidance about it.' 'You mean that you would pray to God and ask Him to show you whether it was right or wrong?' 'No, I should not pray about it. I should just wait for God to give me guidance about it.' 'And how would God give you this guidance?' 'I should get a strong impression what I should do.' 'And if this strong impression were that you should murder that man, would you do it?' 'I should!' How true are Christ's words spoken when on earth: 'If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!' Matt. 6, 23."

"The Oxford Group Movement (Buchmanism), Is It of God or of Satan? by J. C. Brown, Pickering and Inglis, London, England. This 'ism,' sometimes called the Oxford Group Movement, reminds one of Christian Science in two marked particulars. One is its attraction for 'society' people, the well-dressed and well-to-do, and the other is its aversion to the blood atonement. These two things, if there were no others, were sufficient to show how far it is removed from 'First-century Christian Fellowship,' as a Presbyterian divine designated it at the last quadrennial of the Federal Council.

"That stalwart defender of the faith Dr. A. C. Gaebelein writes us that he is making a careful study of the movement in order to expose it in Our Hope. But meanwhile we would recommend the book of J. C. Brown, Head Master at Oxford University, who is quoted in Cut from the Loaf in this issue. It is a paper-covered volume, quite inexpensive, and obtainable for twenty-five cents from the Bible Institute Colportage Association, 843 North Wells Street, Chicago. We would also advise our readers to send one cent to Rev. Harold T. Commons, 17 South Marion Avenue, Ventnor, Atlantic City, N. J., for a copy of his four-page leaflet entitled Buchmanism. This is 'a frank statement by a former adherent, who gives full first-hand information as to the character of the movement.'

"We cannot bring this editorial note to a better conclusion, however, than by quoting the following paragraph from a personal letter of Colonel E. N. Sanctuary, New York:—

"'For some months I have been acquiring data on this cult, with the result that I am now speaking against it. They have four tenets of faith—guidance, loyalty, sharing, and Christology. They claim their guidance is that of the Holy Spirit; but it is significant that unbelievers are welcomed to their fellowship. Loyalty is to Buchman or to the Group. But "sharing" is sin-sharing, and many writers speak of this as a "sex-obsession"; for it deals with this subject in mixed groups. Brown asks this question: "Is it to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10, 31) that a married man with a family should publicly confess to a mixed audience that, without

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his wife's knowledge, he had been unfaithful to her?" Brown knows whereof he writes, for it was he who sponsored Buchman when he first introduced his work in England."

Baptists and Readjustment. — One of our exchanges submits these thoughts on what the Baptists may be expected to do in view of the increasing embarrassment of their exchanges:—

"Under the stress of the financial depression Baptists of the North are passing through a period of self-scrutiny and -criticism that is likely to result in important changes in both organization and outlook. The young president of the Northern convention, C. Oscar Johnson, as a result of his contact with the churches in repeated tours across the continent during his term in offce, has definitely recommended the amalgamation of the two denominational Foreign Mission societies, the general and the women's, and of the two similar societies working in the Home Mission field. This is in the interest of both economy and efficiency. A committee on denominational objectives, under the leadership of Dr. A. W. Beaven, has been engaged during the year in a constructive bit of work, attempting to view the denominational task as a whole and to formulate its aims so definitely that waste motion and the duplication of effort may be eliminated. This committee suggests that all organizations doing Home Mission work be coordinated in a single agency. It recommends also that the denomination seriously commit itself to cooperation with other denominations in small urban and rural areas. 'The rural church,' the committee says, 'faces either cooperation or extinction. Thirty thousand rural churches have disappeared in the last thirty years. Must we not have a cooperative program with others which will provide a constructive service to these churches rather than continue our present competitive program, which leads to waste, irritation, and ultimate extinction?' This is rather a novel note in official Baptist circles, where the prevailing idea has been that the best interests of the kingdom of God demand 'a Baptist church in every community.' Whether these drastic suggestions are to be taken seriously will appear at the convention in Washington week after next. In any case they are indications of the working of a yeasty ferment in the Baptist bread-mixer. Tradition has credited conservation to angels and a love of change to fools, but it is certain that in church circles it is commonly the Christian statesmen who rush in where ecclesiastical politicians fear to tread." - The writer evidently hopes that the depression will aid the cause of unionism. God forbid!

The Physical Factors Operating in the Flood. — An article in the April, 1933, number of the *Theological Forum* contains this paragraph, a welcome addition to a pastor's files: —

"Just how the waters were brought upon the lands we are not told. Numerous ways have been suggested. It has been proposed by Flood geologists that a sudden shifting of the earth's axis began the catastrophe and that it was continued by constant repetitions of this operation. God kept halting the speed of the earth's rotation, putting the breaks on suddenly and sending the oceans through the wind-shield, so to speak. Some have suggested that the ocean bottoms were raised and lowered and raised and lowered. In the simplest and gentlest fashion that the waters of the ocean

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could have been brought upon the land, that is, by a slow and gradual raising of the bottom, it is impossible but that there were immense streams and currents sweeping over the earth, unless we assume for no apparent reason that the sun and the moon did not at that time exert the same gravitational effects upon the waters of the ocean which they do now. Those of us who live beside the sea know how the tides, driven by the gravitational power of the sun and moon, come into the bays and river mouths like immense floods and flow out again twice a day, and know it would be impossible for the ocean to encroach upon the land till all was drowned without far more immense currents sweeping back and forth up its valleys and over its hills."

The Presbyterian Mission Board and Modern Unbelief. — Protestant circles are deeply stirred by the discussion of Christian missions among the Presbyterians (Northern). We present the story as told by the Christian Century: —

"The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. is deeply involved in Modernist and antichristian propaganda, and its appeal to Bible-believing Christians is a misleading appeal," according to Dr. J. Gresham Machen, professor of New Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. In fact, he has printed his charges against the board: 1) that the board, in officially commenting on the report of the appraisal commission of the laymen's inquiry utterly failed to condemn in any definite way the attack upon "the very heart of the Christian religion, which was the chief substance of the report"; 2) that Mrs. Pearl S. Buck, who has appeared in Harper's Magazine and in the Christian Century with articles expressing warm agreement with the report and thoroughgoing opposition to "the historic Christian faith," is a missionary of the Presbyterian Church, and that the board, in retaining her on the roll of missionaries, is seeking in quite unjustifiable fashion to obtain funds both from those who agree with her and from those who hold to "the historic faith"; 3) that the candidate secretary of the board is a signer of the Auburn affirmation; 4) that the candidate department of the board has carried on antievangelical propaganda through the books that it has recommended as devotional reading to a thousand young men and women considering missionary service; 5) that the staff of the board in an offcial communication has commended, as though it were Christian evangelism, the religious propaganda of the radicals Dr. Sherwood Eddy and Toyohiko Kagawa; 6) that the board is cooperating with union enterprises in China which have been implicated in antichristian activities of the most thoroughgoing kind.

At the January 24 meeting of the presbytery of New Brunswick, at Dutch Neck, N. J., Dr. Machen presented an overture, asking the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church "to take care to elect to positions on the Board of Foreign Missions only persons who are fully aware of the danger in which the Church stands and who are determined to insist upon such verities as the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth of our Lord, His substitutionary death to satisfy divine justice, His bodily resurrection, and His miracles as being necessary to the message which every missionary under our Church shall proclaim," and also asking the general assembly to give certain instructions to the board.

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The proposed overture was considered at the April 11 meeting of the presbytery in the Fourth Presbyterian Church, Trenton, N. J. By invitation, Dr. Robert E. Speer, senior secretary of the board, was present, whom Dr. Machen regards as "the most eloquent of that optimistic view regarding the present state of the Presbyterian Church." Dr. Machen pointed out that Dr. Speer had signed, as reported in the report of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, January, 1932, a report of the committee on cooperation in Latin America which mentioned among "the outstanding accomplishments of the book department" the securing of the publication in Spanish of "several books by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick and other American authors." Dr. Speer made no answer to this latter representation and practically no answer to any of the other specific charges against the board, but stated that he did not desire to engage in controversy. Very soon after the initial speeches of Dr. Machen and Dr. Speer the previous question was moved and debate shut off, from which procedure Professor Machen dissented. Dr. Machen's overture was then defeated by a viva-voce vote, and another motion expressing confidence in the Board of Foreign Missions was passed.

Dr. Machen insists that, "if the board tolerates the point of view of the appraisal commission, of Mrs. Buck, and of its own candidate department, then it cannot honestly appeal for support to Bible-believing Christians. If, on the other hand, it is really true to the Bible, as the constitution of the Presbyterian Church requires it to be, then it cannot honestly appeal for a single dollar by way of contribution from sympathizers with the appraisal commission. It cannot honestly seek to avoid the reproach of "intolerance," which dismissal of Mrs. Buck and a vigorous repudiation of the report of the appraisal commission would bring.

"Mere dismissal of Mrs. Buck now by the board would not, however, change the situation in the slightest," according to Dr. Machen. The case of Mrs. Buck occupies only six of the 110 pages in his brief. Compared with his other charges, this has been given an undue importance in the newspapers. However, Dr. Machen does regard it as significant that Dr. George T. Scott, board secretary for China, is reported to have said concerning Mrs. Buck that "her doctrine is so fine and sound that we think people have misinterpreted her articles and doctrinal position" and that one of the senior secretaries, Dr. Cleland B. McAfee, is reported to have said, "I don't foresee any action of the board against her," and to have called her "a very fine Christian worker." But to Dr. Machen a man may agree with Mrs. Buck or with "the historic Christian faith," but to represent himself as agreeing with both, he said, is absurd.

To Dr. Machen Rethinking Missions is a "thoroughly antichristian book" and "constitutes from beginning to end an attack upon the historic Christian faith. It presents as the aim of missions that of seeking truth together with adherents of other religions rather than that of presenting the truth which God has supernaturally recorded in the Bible." In a footnote on Modernism in missions Dr. Machen states that "religious pacifists who desire peace at any price and have surrendered to Modernist leadership are to all intents and purposes not only Modernists, but the worst kind of Modernists."

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A later issue of the Christian Century reported: -

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"Mrs. Pearl S. Buck has resigned from the missionary body of the Presbyterian Church, thus ending the possibility that her Church might be troubled by action directed against her own orthodoxy or the orthodoxy of the mission board that supported her. Both Mrs. Buck and the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions probably feel that embarrassment has been avoided by her resignation. It is likely that the value of her life as an American Christian resident in China will be increased by her separation from all denominational control. But while we thus acquiesce in Mrs. Buck's decision, we trust that the incident will be given more than cursory attention within the churches. The issue from which Mrs. Buck stepped aside has not been faced, let alone solved. It remains to plague the churches at some future time, perhaps more severely than would have been the case had Dr. Machen's charges against Mrs. Buck and the Presbyterian board been presented to the coming general assembly. The fundamental cause of this trouble lies in the assumption that there is some authoritative, unchangeable, and exactly phrased body of doctrine which constitutes the Christian Gospel and the passing on of which constitutes the Christian missionary enterprise. Once that assumption is granted, a Dr. Machen is quite within his rights in calling on a mission board to give proof as to the fidelity with which its workers employ that authoritative, unchangeable, and exactly phrased body of doctrine. And there is no way of meeting the Machen challenge - except by resorting to the silencer of a majority vote - short of proving that the Machen definition of the authoritative doctrine is wrong, but that there is another definition of authoritative doctrine that is right and to which the missionaries do adhere. Just so long as that basic premise of a rigid standard of orthodoxy is granted, just so long will there be tension between any mission board and its workers of independent and adventurous spirit."

The writer in the Christian Century is at least candid. He admits that, if there is a rigid standard of orthodoxy, in other words, if the Scriptures are infallible, then Dr. Machen is right. If all people realized that the views of Dr. Fosdick and Mrs. Buck are by their own friends admitted to violate Scripture teaching, much would be gained. The pamphlet of Dr. Machen, by the way, in which he assails the Presbyterian board and which has the title Modernism and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. A., is an admirably clear and fearless document, which it is worth anybody's while to peruse with care.

Dr. McGiffert's Jesus. — Under this head, Professor Stonehouse of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, reviews Dr. McGiffert's History of Christian Thought and some of his other outstanding works (The Apostolic Age, The God of the Early Christians) with a view to ascertain just what this noted American scholar, who as president of Union Theological Seminary has strongly influenced theological opinion in this country, has to say on the person and work of our divine Savior. In view of the fact that Dr. McGiffert's death occurred recently the subject is of no little importance. His theological position Dr. Stonehouse defines as that of a "radical agnostic" who, however, could not "break with the liberal tradition." The extreme liberalism of McGiffert is summed up in the following paragraph: "This unmessianic Jesus of Dr. McGiffert never tran-

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scends the purely human. He was merely a devout Jew whose message was for the Jews only. Consequently, to suppose that He contemplated a break with His own people and a Gentile Christianity divorced from Judaism is, according to Dr. McGiffert, simply preposterous. There was nothing supernatural about His life. The resurrection of Jesus, as we have seen, was a mere 'conviction,' and the Virgin Birth is a 'theory' of the Incarnation. With respect to the origin of the tradition of the Virgin Birth, Dr. McGiffert is uncertain, but he thinks that the tradition 'was evidently due to the desire to account for Jesus' extraordinary personality by ascribing a divine origin to Him.'"

On Christ's teaching about righteousness Dr. Stonehouse quotes McGiffert as teaching: "He had an uncommonly high estimate of man's moral powers. In spite of all the wickedness He saw about Him and the disobedience to the divine will He could summon His hearers to be perfect as their Father in heaven was perfect without ever suggesting that divine aid was needed or that they would have to be made over by divine power if they were to measure up to such a standard. [Italies our own.] Of the pessimism so widely prevalent in the Hellenistic world, the pessimism that counted man wholly incapable of good without the influx of the divine, there is no trace in the Jesus of the synoptic gospels as in Paul and John and other Christians both early and late."

In popular language, then, McGiffert asserted nothing more than the trite and blatant modernistic error that Jesus was a mere man who taught the people of His time to be good. Even in so highly gifted a man as Dr. McGiffert was reason could discern nothing more about the divine Savior of the world. The incurable blindness of perverted reason is remarkably manifest in his case.

In concluding his discussion, Dr. Stonehouse comments: "Ultimately, of course, hostility to what are frequently spoken of as 'outworn dogmas' and recently as 'superstitious creeds' goes back to a hostility to the New Testament itself, and both hostilities rest upon a hostility to the Christ of the whole New Testament, the Lord's Anointed. The formation of the New Testament canon was, according to Dr. McGiffert, very unfortunate, since in its formation, and as a result of it, men ceased to count upon new revelations, 'fresh disclosures of God's will and truth,' and, instead, rather put the present under bondage to the past by an appeal to a 'revelation given once for all in days long gone and never to be added to or altered. Indeed, this bondage to the past is characterized by Dr. McGiffert as a bondage to the apostles (not to Christ), and we are ready to admit that the apostles can have no unique authority for us unless their authority is derived from Christ. If Dr. McGiffert's contentions about Jesus are correct, it follows that the apostles, the New Testament, and the creeds are a stultification of the purposes of Jesus. With the recognition of Jesus' Messiahship, on the other hand, are bound up our whole conceptions of the character of Christianity as the religion of consummation and finality, of a revelation and redemption in Jesus Christ, given once for all, and of Christ as our crucified and risen Lord, who came in the fulness of time and in whom the ends of the ages have come upon us and who will come again in glory to subject all things unto Himself. The decisive and divisive question is still: 'What shall we think of Jesus Christ?'" J. T. M.

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### II. Ausland.

Ein Wort über die Enabenwahl. In der "A. E. A. K. bom 10. März dieses Jahres veröffentlicht Prof. D. Karl Stange in Göttingen einen Artikel unter der überschrift "Glaube und Erwählung", der es wert ist, daß wir ihn hier abdruden:

"Paulus spricht gelegentlich in seinen Briefen von der Erwählung der Gläubigen durch Gott. Daß sie an Christus glauben, ist kein zufälliges Ereignis ihres Lebens, sondern Gottes ewiger Wille sindet darin seine Erfüllung. Gott hat nicht bloß die Welten entstehen lassen und auf der Erde das Leben ausgebreitet, er hat von Ansang an auch an die Menschen gedacht und seinen Willen darauf gerichtet, sie für sich zu gewinnen. Bon Ansang an steht vor ihm der Augenblick, in dem seine Stimme mein Ohr tressen und seine Hand meine Hand ergreisen sollte. In der Grenzenslosseit der Schöpfung erscheint uns allerdings das Leben des einzelnen Nein und bedeutungslos, so daß wir es uns nicht denken können, daß Gott nach dem einzelnen Menschen frage; aber vor dem ewigen Gott schrumpft die irdische Welt zusammen, und es bleibt nichts weiter übrig als sein von Ewigseit her tönender Ruf und der Mensch, dem dieser Ruf gilt. über die Abgründe der Zeiten hintveg weht sein ewiger Lebensodem mich an.

"Diefer Zusammenhang meines Glaubens mit der ewigen Erwählung Gottes brangt fich mir auf, wenn ich mir vergegenwartige, welche Bebeutung mein Glaube für mein Leben hat. Denn bag es fich beim Glaus ben um eine unmittelbare Gintvirfung Gottes auf mein Leben handelt, das merte ich daran, daß fich mit der Entstehung meines Glaubens eine Bandlung meines Schidfals verbindet. Wenn ber Glaube in mir lebendig wird, dann erlebe ich den übergang aus dem Auftand bes Berlorenfeins in den Zustand des Gerettetseins. Mein bisheriges Leben und damit alles Leben in ber Belt erscheint mir nun als bas Berberben, und bie Sand, die mich aus bem Berberben berausreißt, tann nur Gottes Sand fein. Es ift für unfern Glauben wefentlich, daß fich mit ihm die Gewigheit bes Beils verbindet. Ghe ich jum Glauben fam, war mein Leben leer und eitel; aber burch ben Glauben an Gott hat es einen Inhalt und einen Che ich gum Glauben fam, lebte ich in Zweifeln und Bert befommen. Angft, Ungewißheit und Furcht; aber burch ben Glauben an Gott bin ich innerlich frei und glüdlich geworden. Aus der Belt tann biefe Bandlung meines Lebens nicht frammen; benn ber Buftanb bes Berberbens, aus bem ich errettet bin, ist allem Leben in der Welt eigen; es muß vielmehr Gottes ewiger Bille an mir wirkfam geworden fein; benn bas neue Leben, bas mir geschenkt worden ist, ist so voll von Glud und Freude, daß nicht die Belt, fonbern nur Gott es zu fchenken vermag.

"Daß diese Wandlung meines Schickals Gottes Tat ist, erkenne ich daran, daß das neue Leben in mir dem Leben Gottes gleichartig ist; es ist ebenso wie das Leben Gottes ein Leben im Geist und in der Wahrheit.

"Gott hat mich erwählt in der Heiligung des Geistes; wie Gottes Leben Heiliger Geist ist, so schafft er auch in mir den Glauben im Heis ligen Geist.

"Gottes Leben ift Heiliger Geist; das bedeutet, daß sein Geist, sein innerstes Wesen, heilig ist, daß er nicht sein Herz hinter einem außeren Schein verdirgt, sondern in seinem Herzen von Gute und Liebe erfüllt ist. Menschlich ist es, nach außen hin gut zu scheinen, auch wenn das herz bose

ist; aber Gottes Art ist es, daß sein Herz gut ist, auch dann, wenn sein Tun Berderben zu bringen scheint.

"Deshalb können wir Menschen die Heiligung des Geistes nur in der Erkenntnis unserer Sünde erleben. Denn in der Erkenntnis unserer Sünde geben wir jede Hoffnung auf, daß unser Leben im Zusammenhang der Welt je gut sein könne, und begehren nach der Erneurung des Herzens, die nur Gott geben kann. So spiegelt sich in der Erkenntnis unserer Sünde Gottes Heiliger Geist.

"Und Gott hat mich erwählt im Glauben der Wahrheit. Wenn wir den der Wahrheit reden, so denken wir dabei nicht an die Ordnung unserer Gedanken, sondern daran, daß unsere Gedanken der Wirklichkeit entsprechen und unsern Gedanken die Triebkräfte unsers Lebens. Wenn wir an die Wahrheit denken, dann ist das ein Wort, das zugleich Licht und Leben ist, ein Licht, das alles durchleuchtet, so daß nichts derborgen bleibt, und ein Leben, das zur Quelle und zum Sammelort alles übrigen Lebens wird.

"In diesem Sinne ist für unsern Glauben Christus die Wahrheit. Durch ihn wird uns der Sinn der Welt verständlich; denn die Erkenntnis Christi ist die Erkenntnis des Höchsten, was es in der Welt gibt. Und durch ihn wird in uns das Leben aus Gott geboren; denn unser Glaube an ihn stellt uns in den Lebenszusammenhang, der von dem etwigen Gott

ausgeht und uns zum Leben in der Bollendung führt.

"Boher wissen wir, daß uns Gott erwählt hat? Wie können wir überhaupt daran benken, über den Natschluß des ewigen Gottes eine Ausslage zu tun? Wir wissen es daher, daß er unser Leben verwandelt hat, indem er unser Herz sebendig werden und uns Christus sinden ließ. Das sind die beiden Dinge, von denen unser Heil abhängt: daß unser Hebendig wird und daß wir Christus sinden. Wir wissen allerdings, daß sich niemand von uns selbst das Leben des Geistes und der Wahrheit geben kann; aber wir stehen anbetend vor dem ewigen Gott und lauschen aufseinen vom Ansang der Welt her tönenden Rus. In dem unaushörlichen Wechsel der irdischen Bergänglichseit ist dies unsere Verbindung mit der Ewigkeit Gottes, daß er sich in persönlicher Hingabe uns zuneigt und uns zu seinen geliebten Kindern haben will."

Es ift allerdings wahr, daß einige Aussprüche in diesem Artifel uns bedenklich erscheinen und die Frage veranlassen, ob der Berfasser genau dieselben Gedanken vorträgt, die sich in Artikel II und XI ber Konfordienformel finden. Das fräftige Zeugnis jedoch dafür, daß die Wahl Gottes über die Gläubigen geht, das vollständige Beiseitelassen ber "andern", das Betennen bes menschlichen Unbermögens, die Schilberung ber Entstehung bes Glaubens als einer Tat Gottes, die Kare Erkenntnis, daß das uns hier widerfahrene heil zurudzuführen ift auf den etwigen Ratschlug Gottes, die rechte Darftellung bon bem Berhaltnis gwischen Bahl und Glauben, daß nämlich Wahl die Urfache und Glaube die Wirkung ift, mit einem Bort, das Bekenninis zum Monergismus der Gnade, das wenigstens in bielen Gaben biefes Artifels jum Ausbrud tommt: bies alles hat uns mit heller Freude erfüllt, besonders angesichts der Tatsache, daß hier nicht etwa ein Glied der Synodalfonfereng oder ein anderer Glaubensbruder bie Feber führt, sondern ein in vieler Sinficht Irrwege wandelnder beutscher Theolog. M.

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Die neue Oxforbbewegung. Die "A. E. L. R." bom 17. Rebruar beurteilt die Orfordbewegung fo: "Das Bort Gottes fpielt in ihr eine auffallend geringe Rolle. Wenn Leute fich befehren, bat es nicht bas Wort getan, fondern die Erzählung Befehrter. Durch alle Berichte follaat immer das Wort Beugniffe' hindurch. . . Diefer Rult mit Menschenzeugniffen, wie ihn die Orforder treiben, ift bibelfremb. Dem Bindifden wird Tur und Tor geöffnet, auch ber menschlichen Gitelfeit. Man bort so viel bon "Geist", viel zu wenig vom Wort. Sogar im Gebetsleben hat der "Geist" den Borrang vor dem Wort; Gott spricht mit der Seele durch die ,innere Stimme' und aud' burch bie Beilige Schrift, fagt Laun (ein Oxforber Führer). Man beachte dies ,auch', die Schrift ift nur fefundares Mittel für Die Erfenntnis des Willens Gottes. Ob mit Diefer Aurudftellung des Bortes auch die Abneigung gegen bas "Dogma" und gegen die Theologie zusammen» Bo man bas Bort nicht mehr allein reben lägt, ift es ba banat? . . . möglich, auf bem rechten Beg zu bleiben? Der rechte Beg icheint uns Bufe. Gunben. bei ben Orforbern ichon in ben Anfangen berlaffen. betenninis feben fie an ben Anfang. Das tut auch bie Schrift, nur In ber Schrift ,fchamen' fich bie Denichen ihrer tut fie es ganz anders. Errivege. . . Bei ben Orfordern icomt man fich nicht; man bekennt nicht nur unter bier Mugen bor bem Geelforger, fonbern öffentlich in ber Bers fammlung, läßt es fogar bruden. Das natürliche Schamgefühl wird ebenfo ertotet wie bas geiftliche. Dan bente fich ben berlornen Cohn, wie er am Tifch bes Baters fist und etwa fein fchlechtes Leben vor ben Tifchgaften Das hat er nicht getan, und fein Apostel hat es getan, feine Magdalena, fein Matthäus. Es ift franthafte ober unechte Buge, bie bas unreine Rleid bor alle Belt binlegt, ftatt mit bem Bollner in ben Bintel gu gehen: "Gott, fei mir Gunder gnadig!" ... Unbiblifc wie diefes "Bes fennen' ift auch bas , Beugnisablegen'. "Ein Erlebnis, bas nicht mitgeteilt wird, ftirbt ober wird vergerrt ober unnormal', fagt Laun. Das Gegenteil ift die Bahrheit. Göttliche Erlebniffe fterben an gu früher Dits Go viel ift flar, die Frommen ber Bibel find augerft gurud. teilung. . . . haltend mit dem Beugnisablegen'. Diefes Beugnisablegen' wird aber gum biretten Wegensat gegen die Schrift, wenn auch Frauen bagu beranlagt werben. ,Das Beib fdweige in ber Gemeinde', fagt Baulus. Die rebenben Fraden in Rorinth waren ein Unfug, ben Baulus abstellte. Sonft ift die gange Reihe ber biblifden Frauen eine fdweigende Reihe, bon ber Mutter JEfu an bis zu Phobe und Lybia. Bon feiner einzigen haben wir ein Beugnis'. Wenn bie Orforder gur Urgemeinde gurudtehren wollen, an biefem Buntte find fie bon ihr gründlich abgefallen. Dit bem Beugnis hangt aufs engite ber fruhzeitige Evangelifationstrieb gufams men. Junge, unfertige Leute gieben als Kreugesritter hinaus, brangen fich jum Evangelifieren, während SEfus die Junger brei Jahre gurudhalt und Paulus jahrelang, nachbem er befehrt war, in ber Stille bleiben mußte. Man tann von der Jugend ja auch nicht erwarten, daß fie icon Mannes. reife hat. Warum nötigt man fie zu einem Wert, bem fie folechthin nicht gewachsen ift, ja halt das für ein Beiden bon besonderem Geiftesleben? Bon folden "Siegeszügen" weiß die Schrift nichts; nicht einmal die Apostel erlebten Derartiges. . . Das Kreuz Chrifti, fooft es erwähnt wird, ftebt nicht im Mittelpuntt, ber ,Chriftus für uns' tritt gurud hinter einem fchoars merifchen ,Chriftus in uns'. Unfere Bater bilbeten ben fcmalen und ben

breiten Weg ab; auf dem schmalen Weg wenige schlichte, ernste Menschen, das Kreuz tragend, den dornigen Pfad hinaussteigend; auf dem breiten eine muntere Gesellschaft Lachender. Die Oxforder wollen gewiß den schmasten Weg; aber wo sind ihre Kreuzträger? Wo ist die "stille Schar, dein schwer Gang", von der das Lied der Kirche sagt? Mehr ecclesia crucis, mehr ecclesia Verbi divini! So, wie die Oxforder sich heute darstellen, würde Luther zu ihnen sagen: Ihr habt einen andern Geist."

Bally Nagel, Schriftstellerin und Graphologin in Breslau-Deutsch-Lissa, erhebt Brotest gegen obige Darftellung. Die "A. E. L. R." bom 17. Mars brudt ihre Mageldrift ab und gibt folgendermaken Antwort: "1. "Bibel und Bort Gottes fpielen feine Rebenrolle', fagt B. Ragel. . . Benn wirklich echte Bibelfreise aus der Bewegung hervorwüchsen, konnte fie ein großer Segen werben. Urfprünglich war fie nicht fo, barüber find alle Beugniffe eins, fowohl die der Oxforder Freunde felbft als die anderer Befucher, die über die Burudstellung der Bibel in diefen Berfammlungen er-Freilich, wenn die Bibel jest mit Ernft getrieben wird, muß fie auch recht ausgelegt werden, und man muß sich nach ihr richten. gibt B. Ragel feinen Beweis; im Gegenteil. 2. Die Denfchengeug = niffe werben von ihr festgehalten und aufs fraftigfte verteibigt. . . Die Schrift tennt nur bas Beugnis von Chrifto; bamit hat Betrus gu Bfingften dreitausend gewonnen; bon sich fagt er tein Wort, ebensowenig Philippus bei bem Rämmerer aus Mohrenland, und fo alle andern Apostel. Benn ber einzige Baulus bon feiner Belehrung ergablt (nur giveimal), tut er bas nicht als Seelforger, fondern als Angeflagter in öffentlicher Gerichtsverhandlung. Das ift etwas total anderes als die Beugniffe' ber Orforder. . . . 3. Wenn fie feine öffentlichen Gunbenbetennt= niffe in den Oxforder Berfammlungen erlebt hat, so bezeugen andere Orforder bas Gegenteil. . . . Es icheint B. Ragel unbefannt zu fein, tvas Laun fchreibt: ,3d behaupte, daß fein Menfch zu echtem, innerem Leben boll erwachen tann, ber nicht einem andern feine Gunben befannt hat. Das ift echter Oxforder Geift, und hier geht die Schrift nicht mit. 4. . . . Die Art ber Oxforder, die die Frauen in bas öffentliche Bekennen und Zeugen hineinftögt, ift bibelfremb. Die bon B. Ragel angeführten Beifpiele treffen nicht zu. . . . Maria Magdalena bekommt wohl einen einzigartigen Auftrag für die Apostel, aber teinen Auftrag für alle Belt'; es ift ein singularer Borgang, ber fich nicht wiederholte. Wenn man aus diefen Beifpielen bas Recht gum öffentlichen Frauenzeugnis nehmen will und die fonft ludenlose Reihe der ,schweigenden' Frauen ignoriert, ebenso das Pauluswort: "Das Beib fdweige in der Gemeinde", fo ift man nicht bei der Schrift geblieben. ,Benn ihr wolltet fchweigen, fo wurden die Steine fchreien', meint Wir antworten: Ach, wenn ihr boch wolltet schweigen! B. Nagel. würdet ihr mehr in der heiligen Bahn der Schrift bleiben als mit dem doch sehr modernen Ausruf: "Rein, das können wir nicht, und dürfen wir 5. Die ,muntere Gefellichaft Lachenber' follte man angefichts ber vielen, vielen Beugen nicht leugnen. . . . Faft alle fonftigen Berichte reben von ,ftrahlenden Gesichtern' bis zu lautem Gelächter und feben gerade barin eine Anziehungstraft für ben modernen Beltmenichen. . . 6. Die ,Rirchenfreundlichteit' ber Ogforder, und bag fie teine Gette bilben wollen, fei gern weitergegeben; wir haben übrigens das Gegenteil nicht behauptet. Eine andere Frage ift, ob die Kirche von

ihnen Gelvinn hätte. Die Hauptbebenken, die wir erwähnten, hat die Schreisberin nicht einmal gestreift, so das Lauschen auf die innere Stimme' auf angebliche Offenbarungen Gottes in der Schweigestunde, die man gleich mit dem Bleistift notiert, die schwarmgeistigen "Hührungen", die Oberstächslichkeit in der Auffassung der Sünde, das daraus folgende geringe Bersständnis für das Opfer Christi, das Zurücktreten des Christus für uns hinter dem Christus in uns, wenn nicht gar hinter dem "Wir für Christus".... Eben lesen wir einen Aufsah von August Dallmeher in "Auf der Warte". Dallmeher kommt bekanntlich von der "Pfingstbewegung" her, die er am eigenen Leib erfahren, und ist seitdem ein scharfer, ausmerksamer Wächter, ob falsche Geister sich in der Gemeinde melden. Manches am Ozsford (3. B. die "innere Stimme") erinnert ihn an die Pfingstbewegung..."

In der Nummer vom 7. April heißt es: "Ein Freund in Schlesien schreibt uns: ,... Die Tagung in Deutsch-Lisse, an der mehrere Freunde von mir, klarschende Männer, teilgenommen haben, war doch nicht so in jeder Beziehung ohne Bedenken, wie Fräulein Ragel schilbert. Das Wort Cottes trat, trot einer Bibelstunde an jedem Tag, stark zurück. Buchman machte auf viele in der Art seines Redens einen negativen Eindruck."..."

Günstige Nachrichten von Madagastar. Dem "Lutherischen Herolden entnehmen wir den folgenden kurzen Bericht: "Die norwegische Missions, gesellschaft hat nach ihrem Jahresbericht auf den verschiedenen Missions, seldern fast zehntausend Personen tausen dürsen. Sie arbeitet in Mittelschina, West-Madagastar und Südafrika im Sulusand. Die Anzahl der gesanten Gemeindeglieder beträgt fast 140,000. Die Erweckungsbewegung in Madagaskar, die vor einiger Zeit dort anhub, ist nicht zum Stillstand gekommen. Die Einnahmen in der Heimat sind durch den schlechten Stand der Baluta erheblich zurückgegangen."

Gin Musfpruch eines Dohammebaners über bie Bibel. Berold" berichtet: "Anläglich der Berausgabe der Bibel für Blinde in ber arabifden Sprache durch die Britifde und Ausländifde Bibelgefellichaft äußert fich ber Berausgeber einer mosleminifchen Beitschrift in Labore, Indien, wie folgt: ,Bir muffen ben Gifer bewundern, mit welchem bie Chriften ihre Beilige Schrift in allen lebendigen Sprachen und Dialetten ber Belt berbreiten. Gin Jahrhundert folgt dem andern, und die Bibel bleibt fich gleich. Ronigreiche entstehen und fallen, werfen ihren Schatten auf ben großen Sorizont ber islamifchen Belt und werben bann bergeffen, aber die Bibel bleibt. Gine Dynaftie folgt auf die andere, aber die Bibel beherricht fort und fort ber Menfchen Bergen. Könige werben getront und werden ihrer Gronen beraubt, aber Chriftus verliert nie feine Krone." Es lieft fich dies wie ein Widerhall der Worte JEsu: "Und es wird geprediget werden bas Evangelium bom Reich in ber gangen Belt zu einem Beugnis über alle Bölfer; und bann wird bas Ende fommen", Matth. 3. T. M. 24, 14,