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# Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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## I. Amerika.

**Has Science Arrived at Bankruptcy?** — For those of our readers to whom the *Christian Century* is inaccessible we submit the chief thoughts of a lengthy editorial which appeared in the January 24, 1934, number of this journal under the caption "The Revolt against Science." President Hutchins of Chicago University is quoted as saying in his address at the December convocation of the University: "We do not know where we are going or why, and we have almost given up the attempt to find out. We are not disturbed because the keys which were to open the gates of heaven have led us into a larger, but more oppressive prison-house. We think those keys were science and the free intelligence of man. They have failed us. We have long since cast off God. To what can we now appeal? The answer comes in the undiluted animalism of the last works of D. H. Lawrence, in the emotionalism of demagogs, in Hitler's scream 'We think with our blood.'"

The editorial continues quoting some more statements which President Hutchins made. "Fact-gathering," says Mr. Hutchins, "has reduced scholarship to triviality. We have been diverted from the task of understanding our facts. 'Modern empirical science, which in origin was the application of mathematics to experience by means of measurement and experiment, has come in recent exposition to be considered exclusively an affair of experiment and measurement.' 'During the nineteenth century and since we have been flinging piles of green wood on the fire and have almost succeeded in putting it out. Now we can hardly see through the smoke.' Mr. Hutchins proposes what seems in effect to be a return to the deductive method. What he calls 'rational analysis' is, he insists, in defiance of Francis Bacon, logically prior to empirical operations. 'Rational thought is the only basis of education and research.' 'Our bewilderment has resulted from our notion that salvation depends on information.' 'Rational analysis finds and orders abstractions which can be organized into systems, and it is by recognition or application of these systems in concrete material that we understand things in nature.'"

In another paragraph of our editorial the following comments on President Hutchins's address are submitted: "The president of at least one great American university thus takes his stand with those critics of our 'scientific' civilization who penetrate clear through to the cause of our cultural ills. Though his emphasis is expressed with originality and courage, he is not alone. For a generation the leaven of the same protest has been working in the body of Western culture. Voices like those of Chesterton and Beloc from the Roman Catholic side, like T. S. Eliot and Lawrence Hyde in the field of criticism, like the humanistic school of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More, like Prof. A. E. Taylor and the late Bishop Gore as the finest representatives of the Anglo-Catholic movement, like Professors Whitehead and Wieman and Tilich and Reinhold Niebuhr, — such voices, despite much dissonance when they all speak at once, are nevetheless in essential unison on the major matter, namely, that the

 

method of science, as it has been standardized by the special sciences, falls tragically short of yielding results worthy of the power of human intelligence. The revolt against science has been gathering force for a long time. It is not a revolt which would destroy science, but which would put it in its true place and save both science and culture from the fallacy and tyranny of irresponsible experimentalism. There is a *given* element in human life; it is given in science no less than in other forms of experience. Science cannot get on without it, and our greatest scientists, like Eddington and Compton and Jeans, are recognizing this given element in terms of the great human presuppositions which underlie the most rigorous scientific method. . . . For a culture uncritically to relax the bonds of its own self-identity and to put itself at the mercy of the spirit of irresponsible experimentation is to vitiate experimentation and lose its own soul. It is intellectual wantonness. Yet our Western culture, in its enthusiasm for experimental science, has followed the lure of this siren. . . . We can look back to the period when science seemed about to overwhelm our culture with an avalanche of materialism. Happily that day is gone. But the false naturalism which succeeded it is still with us, a naturalism which reduces the supreme expression of nature, namely, our cultural values, to the biological factors into which scientific analysis thinks it can resolve them. Scientific sociology has been dominated by this fallacy. . . . Thousands of parents of high-school and college youth are in revolt against an educational system which robs their sons and daughters of that fine sense of devotion to the cultural values which fill life with significance. . . . The mediocrity of the mine-run of our scholars is becoming apparent. Many of them are no better oriented in the world of culture than the barber across the street from the college campus. Their lack of any high awareness of the nobility of life is beginning to be recognized. They are not to be harshly blamed. They are themselves the product of an educational system which worships at the shrine of a truncated science, and they do not know the treasures which tradition and art and religion have carried down the centuries and laid in our laps." —The editor thinks that this revolt against science will arouse resentment among scientists, and he fears, in addition, that it will give comfort to Fundamentalists. It certainly does demonstrate that anybody who considers science an infallible guide is certain to be disillusioned sooner or later.

The editorial concludes with a thought about which we should not remain silent: "The supremely important fact about all these elements of our religion is that they belong to the cultural heritage which we have received, whatever may be their source or the route by which we have received them. Our religion is what it is. We shall never deal adequately with it till we see it, not as a theology nor an ecclesiology, but as a cultus, a phase, and the most radical and creative phase, of our total culture. Our theology deals with religion on a too narrow basis. It assumes that the creeds must be *proved;* otherwise they are false." This is saying that it does not matter whether what we believe is true or not, that the only question must be whether it is satisfying and helpful. From such a view, which is really nothing but the old skepticism, hiding behind barricades of emotionalism, may God mercifully preserve us! A.

**Presbyterians Not "Extreme Fundamentalists."** — *Christianity To-day* firmly repudiates the charge that Presbyterians who are loyal to the Westminster Confession of Faith are "extreme Fundamentalists" and suggests as a more appropriate designation the term "consistent conservatives." In many respects the editorial voices our own sentiment and opinion. We quote the editorial in part: "This paper (*Christianity To-day*) is not an organ of 'Fundamentalists' unless it be understood that the word is used in its broad sense as an antonym of the word 'Modernism.' In that sense we are 'Fundamentalist' and rejoice to be classed as such. 'Modernism,' in any of its consistent forms of expression, we look upon as a form of religious thought and life that lack everything distinctive of real Christianity. This means, therefore, that, when employed in this broad sense, the word 'Fundamentalist' includes all those who hold to the Christianity of Christ and His apostles as it found expression in the Bible and as it has found more or less adequate statement in the great historic creeds. It is true of course that the word is often used in a narrower sense, as when it is used, for instance, to designate those who belong to the World's Fundamentals Association and who regard the brief creed of that or some similar organization as adequte. We have great sympathy for 'Fundamentalists' in this less inclusive sense of the word and rejoice in their testimony to the Bible and the Gospel it contains. In our judgment their testimony is not so much false as inadequate. It seems to us that we stand for all they stand for, and more. Be that as it may, what we stand for is the Reformed faith as it has found expression in the Westminster Confession of Faith. We stand not merely for the five doctrines in that confession that the Auburn Affirmationists have denied or declared unessential, but for that confession as a whole. In all heartiness and sincerity we have accepted that Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrine taught in Holy Scripture. . . . Rather it seems to us the fullest and most adequate statement that has as yet come from the hand of man of all that enters into the substance of, and gives content to, the religion we profess and which must be conserved if evangelical Christianity is not only to persist, but in some measure to conquer the world.

"It is hardly necessary to add that we regard ourselves as 'extreme conservatives' as little as we do 'extreme Fundamentalis.' We do not object to be called 'conservatives.' We admit the charge. What we deny is that the genuine 'conservative' is a reactionary standpatter. Rather we claim that 'conservatism' is a condition of true progress. The trouble with the so-called 'progressive,' as a rule, is that he does not discriminate between motion and progress. Moreover, it should be remembered that, while the 'conservative' thinks of Christianity as a 'deposit,' as a faith 'once for all delivered to the saints,' he thinks of it at the same time as a dynamic, as an energizing force, in human life. The Christ in whom he trusts is not an inert Christ, and the Christianity he professes is not a quiescent thing, but an omnipotent energy that will continue to turn and overturn until all the promises of God are fulfilled. It would be more accurate, we think, to call us consistent conservatives. That at least is what we seek to be. It is a consistent body of truth, not a hodgepodge that meets us in the Westminster standards." J. T. M.

**How the Chiliasts Interpret Scripture.** — The favorite method of chiliasts is literalism. Will the Jews as a nation be converted and be invested with the leadership of the Church of the Millennium? Surely; for it is written: "He shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth," Is. 11, 12. Occasionally, however, where the plain meaning of the text is unacceptable, a more heroic method is employed — a more fitting word is substituted. "And *so* all Israel shall be saved," Rom. 11, 26, is made to read: And *then* all Israel shall be saved. Then, again, anything is made to mean anything. That is the method used by Dr. J. H. Ford for the purpose of proving his case for the Jews. He writes: "The greatest sign of all is the Jew, who is once more in the center of the picture and who is evidently moving to his ancient homeland, Palestine. The Jew is the miracle of the ages and has been on the verge of annihilation many times; but it is God's purpose that the Jew is to become a blessing to all generations after the restitution of all things. Among the trees of the Bible *the fig-tree is the national symbol for Israel.* Jesus says: 'When his branch is tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. This generation [Greek, race] shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.'" That is worthy of Origen at his best. And the *Lutheran Companion* (Feb. 10, 1934) saw fit to publish it. — What would Dr. Ford make of Matt. 21, 19 in this connection? E.

**University Pastor Deposed for Alleged Heresy.** — The theological fitness of Rev. Donald H. Stewart to serve as student-pastor of the Presbyterian Church at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, has stirred the commonwealth of Virginia and the Southeast somewhat deeply. The West Hanover presbytery meeting in Charlottesville, December 12, 1933, served notice on Mr. Stewart and all concerned that good works and an attractive presentation of the Christian message alone were not enough. Not by a long recital of historic confessions was it enough! The presbytery voted 30 to 6 to rescind a recent action putting Mr. Stewart on probation for one year in the university pastorate and declared his theological views on such questions as the Virgin Birth, the bodily resurrection of Christ, and the inspiration of Scripture to be out of harmony with historic Presbyterian dogmas. The withdrawal of Mr. Stewart was set for January 1. He came to the university from Birmingham, Ala., where he had been reported in good standing.

"The case was brought to light for the second time since last October, and final drastic action was taken upon the insistence of the Presbyterian church of Covington, Va., that it be relieved of the responsibility of contributing to the salary of the university pastor, which the presbytery had agreed to share in raising.

"A similar case in the Southern Presbyterian Church was noted in the university town of Chapel Hill, N. C., last year." — *Christian Century.*

**The Church of Jesus Christ or "St. Blank's Club House."** — In a recent issue of the *Lutheran*, Pastor D. G. Jaxheimer of Freeport, N. Y., in an article "Happily Busy," writes, among other things: "Jesus Christ has laid upon His followers a definite type of work and witnessing, and if the Church fails to do it, no one under the sun will do it, and the light

of the Gospel is hid under a bushel, and the salt is good for nothing. Sin is committed by reason of the fact that the real work of the Church remains undone while our women stand over the boiling pots of our church kitchens or lean over a card-table for hours, and our people gather to split their sides over the vaudeville attempts of our young people. If this practise is to continue, we may as well be frank with ourselves and change the names of our churches to read 'St. Blank's Club House.' This may be putting the matter too strongly, but I feel strongly about it. The Church is due for a complete overhauling of its methods and practises and perhaps a thorough shaking up of its organizational life to conform to its God-given task. More emphasis must be put upon our teaching program, if we have one. The Century of Progress in Chicago reminds us of how far our moral and spiritual advance has lagged behind the scientific and industrial march. We will never effectively impress our people with the spiritual ideals of Christ nor permeate our communities with the spirit of Jesus nor inject noticeably into the political, economic, and social life of our times the leaven of justice, righteousness, and love by our present methods. Instead of wasting the time of our workers on trivialities and confusing the work of the Church, we ought to be training them, however small the group at first, for the spiritual job of soul-winning. If this is not the Church's business, whose is it? . . . You recall how the Augean stables, according to the legend, contained 3,000 oxen and how they had not been cleaned for thirty years. Hercules in a single day cleaned them and accomplished the seemingly impossible task by turning the river Alpheus through them. The Church of Jesus Christ in these days is due for an Augean cleansing. Right-thinking leaders in our churches will have to be Herculeses to turn the purifying and purging rivers of water through the mess of worldly and unchurchly practises that have gathered for years on the floors of our church activities. Without it the Church will not measure up adequately to its God-given task and mission to lead the world to righteousness and salvation. But it will not be done in a single day. This kind of program requires of pastors a willingness to endure persecution and unpopularity. It requires searching prayer, work, and everlasting push. We must be patient, but persistent."

J. H. C. F.

**Dr. Macartney's Tribute to Luther.** — Dr. Clarence E. Macartney, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, known to our readers as an outstanding protagonist of Fundamentalism, recently toured Germany. After his return he paid this high tribute to Luther in the *Presbyterian:* "Luther was a man sent of God, a world-shaker, such as makes his appearance only a few times in the history of the world. The two great doctrines which he rediscovered and loosed upon the world were, first of all, the Scriptures as the final authority for the Christians and, second, justification by faith alone, but not by faith which is alone. To-day the Protestant Church stands in sore need of a reemphasis and rediscovery of those two great Reformation propositions. When Luther said, 'Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. So help me God,' he was taking his stand upon the Scriptures. But where does the Protestant Church to-day stand as to the Scriptures? Does it stand anywhere? And when the authority of the Scriptures is gone, all that we have is a vague 'I think so.' Human

wisdom and speculation is a poor substitute for a 'Thus saith the Lord.' The other great doctrine of Protestantism, salvation by faith alone, that, too, seems to be in a bad way to-day. The Roman Church, by its abuse of the doctrine of repentance and penance, had established the idea that men are saved by their acts of penance, by their prayers, by the ministry of their priests, by the intervention of the Virgin, and, worst of all, by money given for papal indulgences. Theologically [?] the Roman Church has always taught salvation by the merit of Christ's death; but practically in Luther's day the above was true. Hence the mighty protest of the Reformation. Now Protestantism, born out of the doctrine of salvation by grace, by faith alone, has been turning more and more back again to the weak and beggarly elements, the ill-favored doctrine of salvation by works. This time not penance and indulgence and pilgrimages, but works of charity and philanthropy and personal character and integrity. This is just as false as the other. 'When we have done what we ought,' said Jesus, 'we are unprofitable servants.' The Luther commemoration will have done the Church good if it shall bring us back to a contemplation of that soul-stirring truth, that the sinner is saved by his trust in the infinite mercy of God, vouchsafed unto us in the death of His eternal Son."

Evidently Dr. Macartney has gained much by his trip to "Lutherland." Yet in his fine statement there is one sentence which has kept us guessing. It is said that Luther taught "justification by faith alone, *but not by faith which is alone.*" Both quotations are correct; only Dr. Luther never combined them as Dr. Macartney does. When dealing with justification, Luther taught: "We are justified by faith alone," and there he stopped. When treating of sanctification, Luther said: "Justifying faith is never alone"; that is to say, justifying faith always proves itself by fruits, or good works. But Luther always kept justification and sanctification apart. If the two clauses are combined as they are above, they may be misunderstood in the sense of the papistic *fides caritate formata*, or that faith is rendered effective by works. We doubt whether Dr. Macartney thus wished to misinterpret Luther, but the point is nevertheless worth calling attention to. J. T. M.

**Immortality Attacked and Defended.** — An exchange relates that a prominent official of Columbia University, New York, Dr. Howard Lee McBain, dean of the graduate faculties of the university, recently in an address spoke of immortality as an "unproved fact" and asserted that "the certainty of an after-life would have graver and more devastating effects upon us than the certainty of extinction." Another contention of the dean's was that through the advance of science, belief in immortality had lost much ground. Bishop Manning, the Episcopal leader in New York, took up the challenge and the Sunday following the delivery of the dean's address preached a sermon on "Immortality." We quote these paragraphs from the sermon, which was based on the words of Paul: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?": "The suggestion is sometimes made that all people of intelligence or all real scholars have given up their Christian belief; but a mere roll-call of the Christian scholars and thinkers of the world would be sufficient answer to a statement of that kind, and we must remember also that the deepest things of God and the human soul are often hidden from the wise and

prudent and revealed unto babes. It is true that we cannot prove the fact of immortality by logical demonstration; but this does not in the least detract from its credibility, as, of course, we all know. None of the great ultimate facts of life can be proved by argument; but all sane people accept them nevertheless. All material science relies ultimately on assumptions which cannot be proved. Science acts on these assumptions and accepts them as facts because they fit in with all that we know of the universe. It is so with the fact of immortality. It fits in with all that we know of God, of the world, and of ourselves. It gives us the key to our whole experience of life, its disciplines, its training and development of character, its sufferings, its joys, and its sorrows. In the light of immortality our life has purpose and meaning. There is no adequate or satisfying or reasonable philosophy of life if we limit our view to our brief existence in this world. No God and no future! Then those blessed relationships of life and fellowship which we are forming in our lives here are to end only in blank hopelessness and crushing grief. If this life is all that is given to man, who can blame him if he says, 'It is all meaningless; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die'? Then, why should life not end in a suicide pact such as we have just read of in the case of two students of this university? It is God, our Creator, who has woven this hope of immortality into our souls. And to this hope, which He has planted in us, God gives the answer, a perfect and complete answer, in Jesus Christ." A.

**A New Fundamentals Association.** — *The Sunday-school Times* reports the organization of a New Fundamentals Association in Victoria, B. C. The movement was launched in December, 1933, under the name of Victoria Evangelical Association and is strongly supported by the Rev. G. F. Cox, the "fighting Fundamentalist" of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in Vancouver. The objects of the new association are described as follows: Aggressive personal and mass evangelism, the presentation and defense of the evangelical faith, the holding of meetings in the interest of spreading the Christian truths, circulation of confessional Christian literature, and above all the securing of central halls to give prominence to the visits of outstanding Christian speakers in Western cities. — The doctrinal basis of the New Fundamentals Association embraces the following truths: The full divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Bible as the Word of God; the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, with emphasis on the personality of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the Virgin birth and deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; the fall of man; his consequent moral depravity and the necessity of regeneration for salvation; the substitutionary atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross and His physical resurrection; election by sovereign grace, justification by faith alone, redemption through faith in the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; the priesthood of all believers; the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; the resurrection of the body, of the just to eternal life and of the unjust to eternal punishment. The sharp emphasis on doctrine here voiced, is truly gratifying; yet we deplore that no word is said about the function and efficacy of the means of grace, which Holy Scripture teaches so clearly. Quite manifestly the doctrinal platform of the Victoria Evangelical Association is strictly Calvinistic.

 

"Election by sovereign grace" then means absolute election, and the "second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" is His supposed "millennial advent," which practically all Calvinistic Fundamentalists advocate. The cleavage between confessional Lutheranism and Calvinistic Fundamentalism which showed itself at Marburg continues to this day. J. T. M.

**Higher Criticism.** — The following letter appeared in the correspondence column of the *Living Church*, January 13, 1934: —

"To the Editor: Fr. Simpson has given a very interesting account of the so-called results of the so-called higher criticism [*L. C.*, November 4]. It is not too much to say that, if the view that Fr. Simpson, *speaking for the critics*, sets forth is true, the Old Testament is nothing but one gigantic lie. This is in substance admitted by our author when he says: 'The history of the nation was rewritten to enforce this lesson,' etc. And again: '. . . and the prophets [were] thus erroneously represented as alternating their oracles of doom with messages proclaiming the future glory of the nation.'

"The rock on which this whole 'critical' system shivers is archeology. Throughout its whole career this science has been constantly demonstrating the extreme accuracy of the Old Testament. Beginning with the 'critics' of seventy-five years ago, who said that Sargon, as mentioned by Isaiah, was a myth, the very first discovery of archeology was the palace of that same Sargon! . . .

"Another curious thing about the 'critics' is their exceedingly limited outlook. Beyond their main interest in the ejection of anything supernatural and their method of pulling texts to pieces they seem unable to see anything. . . .

"The Old Testament as a whole is great literature, probably [!] the world's greatest literature. According to Fr. Simpson, representing the 'critics,' the bulk of this came from some unknown men among a small body of oppressed exiles and amid a still smaller body of returned and almost equally oppressed exiles (see Nehemiah, for example 9, 36. 37) and was written with a conscious effort to deceive. It is not so that great literatures are written. They come from the living impact of genius upon the circumstances of its times. . . .

"Or, again, — that same inability to see values, — take the Ten Commandments. One has only to open any treatise of moral theology written by any Catholic theologian, and by many another moralist besides, to find that these Ten Words lie at the very basis of all moral science. Did these Ten Words, with their profound moral insight, come from a wandering shepherd of a nomad tribe, or did they come from the majestic Source from which the Catholic Church has always believed?

"And this brings us to another defect of the 'higher critics': their rejection of all divine revelation. Fr. Simpson is not quite consistent with himself in this article, but he represents the critical point of view well enough in this sentence (and other): 'There the spiritual leaders of the nation worked out a thorough and far-reaching reformation. Forced by their contact with other peoples, who made great claims for their gods, they *thought out the implications of their faith.*' (Italics ours.) Truly, a pretty poor substitute for 'Thus saith the Lord'! It is part of the Catholic faith that the Holy Ghost '. . . spake by the prophets.' And, on

the face of it, it is asking a good deal to believe that the Eternal Word could, and did, utter no word on earth until His infant cry at Bethlehem. This objection, of course would not appeal to a 'critic,' but should appeal to a Catholic. . . . (Rev.) Edwin D. Weed, Duluth, Minn."

**What the Pope Thinks of Protestantism.** — "The *New York Times*, in its issue of January 28, reported the gist of an address delivered by Pope Pius XI to a delegation of Roman Catholics in which the Pontiff pointed to the enemies of pure religion. Among them were Communism and materialism. But the worst foe, the Pope is reported to have said, is Protestant proselytism, because it misleads the people into dependence on a form of godliness of which the substance is lacking. One realizes once more that Romanism never changes, and one regrets that Pius XI . . . should not merely have linked Protestants with atheists and materialists, but should have appraised them as more harmful to the kingdom of God. The statement reaches the American people in the midst of wide-spread efforts to assuage bigotry, and almost on the day when a commission consisting of prominent Catholics, Protestants, and Jews returned to New York after a transcontinental speaking tour 'in the interest of better relations among these groups.' Neighborliness among Protestants and Catholics will not be improved when this papal statement is read in Roman Catholic parishes. And yet it should not long surprise any one who has given a little attention to the teachings of Rome concerning herself." (*The Lutheran*, Feb. 8, 1934.) What surprises one is that, when representatives of these three religions are sought to take part in a "forum" or a similar conference, prominent Catholics are always found who are ready to do their part. In view of the fact that the Papacy hates nothing so much as the chief doctrine of Protestantism, justification by faith alone (see *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Session VI, Canons IX, X, XI, XII) and in view of the fact that every intelligent Catholic must know his catechism and the mind of the Pope, it is surprising that Catholic men are always found who are ready to serve at these gatherings. And these affairs must also cause great surprise to the bishops, archbishops, and the Pope. They know that the Protestant members of the conferences are acquainted with the Canons of Trent and the pronouncements of the Popes up to 1934. It certainly must surprise the bishops to find these Protestant theologians willing to recognize the Pope as their spiritual brother. E.

**Unionistic Practises.** — In the *Minneapolis Journal* of February 12 appears the following announcement: "Preparations for the observance of Lent, which begins Wednesday, have been completed by many church groups. More than one hundred Protestant pastors of Minneapolis will assemble at 8 A. M. Wednesday for a day of spiritual fellowship in Grace Lutheran Church, Delaware and Harvard streets, S. E.

"Dr. J. A. O. Stub of Central Lutheran Church will lead an opening service of meditation and prayer, and Dr. Charles N. Pace, district superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, will present a Lenten message."

We have frequently called attention to such gross unionistic practises of pastors of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America and of pastors of other churches which are members of the American Lutheran Conference.

 

Up to this time we have not heard of any discipline or criticism of such practises, and we are obliged to believe that they are becoming a fixed policy in the American Lutheran Conference. Dr. J. A. O. Stub is a very prominent pastor in the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, being the pastor of the largest church of that denomination in Minneapolis. There should be no question as to what attitude members of the Synodical Conference ought to take toward these churches. That they are going the way of the Reformed Churches cannot be truthfully denied.

J. E. T., in *Lutheran Sentinel.*

**Nielsen to Return to China.** — Undaunted by six months as a prisoner of Chinese bandits last year, Dr. Niels Nielsen, missionary physician and graduate of the University of Minnesota, is planning to return to his station at Siu Yen, Manchukuo, this year. Dr. Nielsen was captured by bandits in April of last year and held for 196 days. A ransom of $170,000 was asked, but finally he obtained his release by the payment of about $4,000 to discontented guards. — *Christian Century.*

**Controversy on Barth.** — If the contention which is voiced at times is correct, that one of the marks of a great man is that there is a dispute about the meaning of his utterances, then Professor Barth of Germany is entitled to the appellation of a great man. Some time ago the *Christian Century* published an article by Prof. Henry Nelson Wieman, well-known religious philosopher of the University of Chicago, who somewhat critically reviewed an English translation of sermons preached by Barth and Thurneysen. This review was attacked in the February 28 issue of the *Christian Century*, the champions of Barth being William Pauck of Chicago Theological Seminary and E. G. Homrighausen of a Reformed church in Indianapolis, Indiana. Professor Wieman was shown the criticisms of his review and wrote a rejoinder, which is published in the same number. Here, then, you have a sort of symposium on Barth. The point in Professor Wieman's review which is especially objected to is the charge that Barth indulges in "day-dreams" cut off from "every test of truth" in "subjective states of feeling." The following paragraph will best bring out Professor Wieman's view: "When a man holds as true that which he believes and claims it is revealed to him by God and makes that an excuse for absolute dogmatism, repudiating every test of reason and evidence, he is opening the gates to witch-hunting, superstition, Spanish Inquisition, fanatical cruelty done in the name of God, all that bloody horror into which men have fallen when they have cast out the tests of reason and intelligence and claimed that their beliefs and impulses were beyond question because they were God's very own. That way leads back to the shambles of religious bigotry and the nightmare of torturing beliefs and practises which we have so hardly escaped." In another paragraph he says: "Certainly the Church has struggled with the problem of the right verification of its claims. In so far as we of the Church do that, our procedure is worthy of respect and honor. But my whole criticism of Barth was precisely that he does not struggle with this problem. He repudiates the problem of verification. He pours scorn and contempt on any attempt to verify. 'God reveals Himself,' says Barth, 'and our verification has nothing to do with it.'" There seems to be a good deal of truth

in what Professor Wieman says. If Barth took his stand on the inviolable Scriptures, he could repudiate what is here alleged against him — unwillingness to verify his message. But he himself disavows the infallibility of the Bible, and hence he is theologizing without a foundation. A.

## II. Ausland.

**Zustände und Vorkommnisse in der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche.** „Durch Verfügung des Bischofs von Berlin, D. Karows, vom 27. Januar 1934 wurde dem Führer des Pfarrer-Notbundes, Pfarrer Martin Niemöller, Dahlem, auf Anordnung des Reichsbischofs . . . vorläufig die Ausübung seiner Amtsgeschäfte untersagt. Der Bruderrat des Gesamt-Pfarrer-Notbundes erhob gegen diese Verfügung geschlossen Einspruch und erklärte, daß er in keiner Weise in der Lage sei, von Pfarrer Niemöller abzurücken, solange die kirchliche Obrigkeit nicht eine sachliche Begründung ihrer Verfügung gebe und klar sage, worin sie die amtswidrige Haltung Pfarrer Niemöllers sehe. Inzwischen wurde Pfarrer Niemöller auf Grund von § 3 und § 6 der reichskirchlichen Notverordnung vom 4. Januar 1934 vom Reichsbischof als preußischem Landesbischof pensioniert und mit sofortiger Wirkung beurlaubt." (Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kz., 2. März.) Hält sich die gegenwärtige kirchliche Obrigkeit verpflichtet, ihre Verfügungen in Sachen der Amtsentsetzungen sachlich zu begründen, wie es der Bruderrat fordert? Unter dem 12. Februar erließ das Landeskirchenamt von Sachsen im Einvernehmen mit der Reichskirchenregierung eine neue „Verordnung zur Herbeiführung eines kirchlichen und nationalen Berufsbeamtentums", wonach sämtliche Amtsträger der evangelisch-lutherischen Landeskirche Sachsens aus ihrem Amte entlassen werden können, auch wenn die nach dem geltenden Recht hierfür erforderlichen Voraussetzungen nicht vorliegen, sobald sie nach ihrer bisherigen Betätigung nicht die Gewähr dafür bieten, daß sie jederzeit rückhaltlos für den nationalen Staat und die Deutsche Evangelische Kirche eintreten. (Kz., 23. Februar.) Und der Reichsbischof Müller hat in seiner Eigenschaft als Landesbischof in Preußen am 3. Februar verschiedene Verordnungen erlassen, deren eine bestimmt, daß geistliche Amtsträger bis auf weiteres in den einstweiligen Ruhestand versetzt werden können und daß es hier keinen Einspruch gegen die Maßnahmen des Landesbischofs gibt. Dazu bemerkt die „Ev.-Luth. Freikirche" vom 18. Februar: „Die Augsburgische Konfession sagt am Schluß des 28. Artikels, ‚Von der Bischöfe Gewalt', das Folgende: ‚St. Petrus verbeut den Bischöfen die Herrschaft, als hätten sie Gewalt, die Kirchen, wozu sie wollten, zu zwingen.' Die Schriftstelle, auf die sich das Bekenntnis hier bezieht, ist 1 Petr. 5, 1—3."

Was hat Pfarrer Niemöller verbrochen? Ein Ding, das ihm und seinen Anhängern zur Last gelegt wird, ist die am 7. Januar geschehene Verlesung einer Kanzelabkündigung, deren Schluß lautet: „Wir stellen fest: Schrift und Bekenntnis der Kirche sind nach wie vor aufs ernsteste bedroht. Bischöfe und Träger hoher Ämter in unserer Kirche, die beim Widerstand gegen das in die Kirche eindringende Heidentum offenkundig versagt haben, Bischöfe, die von ihren Pfarrern und Kirchengliedern öffentlich der Irrlehre angeklagt worden sind, sind unverändert in ihrem Amt. Bedrohung und Bedrückung derer, die eine Befriedung der Kirche auf der Grundlage des Be-

 

kenntnisses fordern, schreiten fort und nehmen in der verlesenen Verordnung schärfste Formen an. Wir erheben vor Gott und dieser christlichen Gemeinde Klage und Anklage dahin, daß der Reichsbischof mit seiner Verordnung" (daß nämlich gegen kirchliche Amtsträger, die das Kirchenregiment durch Verbreitung von Schriften angreifen und das Gotteshaus zum Zwecke kirchenpolitischer Auseinandersetzung mißbrauchen, die sofortige vorläufige Enthebung vom Amt verhängt und das förmliche Disziplinarverfahren mit dem Ziele der Enthebung vom Amt eingeleitet wird) „ernstlich denen Gewalt androht, die um ihres Gewissens und um der Gemeinden willen zu der gegenwärtigen Not der Kirche nicht schweigen können, und zum andern bekenntniswidrige Gesetze von neuem in Kraft setzt, die er selbst um der Befriedung der Kirche willen aufgehoben hatte. Wir erklären, daß sein widerspruchsvolles Verhalten es uns unmöglich macht, ihm das Vertrauen entgegenzubringen, dessen er in seinem Amte bedarf. Wenn wir uns seiner Verordnung widersetzen, so handeln wir dem Augsburgischen Bekenntnis gemäß, welches in dem Artikel von der Bischöfe Gewalt folgendes ausspricht: ‚Wo die Bischöfe etwas dem Evangelium entgegen lehren, setzen oder aufrichten, haben wir Gottes Befehl in solchem Fall, daß wir nicht sollen gehorsam sein. Man soll auch den Bischöfen, die ordentlich gewählt sind, nicht folgen, wo sie irren.'"

Daß Bischöfe der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche, einer christlichen Kirche, unchristliche Lehre führen, ist allbekannt. Der Landesbischof von Braunschweig z. B., Bischof Beye, redete bei einem Leichenbegängnis diese „zu Herzen gehenden Worte: Wir, die wir den Verstorbenen gekannt haben, wissen als Nationalsozialisten und als ‚Deutsche Christen', es gibt eine Walhall für die Toten des Dritten Reiches, und gäbe es das nicht, dann hätte das Sterben nach den Jahren des Kampfes keinen Sinn". Diesem Bischof hatte der Pfarrer-Notbund Braunschweig — mit Recht — die weitere Anerkennung versagt. (Er hat auch seitdem sein Amt niedergelegt, natürlich nicht dem Pfarrer-Notbund zulieb. Die „Kirchenzeitung" vom 2. März, die dies berichtet, „gibt nachträglich noch aus der Tagespresse vom 20. Januar einige Amtsenthebungen bekannt, die unter Beye zum Vollzug kamen: Domprediger Propst Dr. von Schwartz, Kirchenrat Palmer, P. Lachmund, Führer des Pfarrer-Notbundes".) In der angeführten Kanzelabkündigung wird gegen die falsche Lehre mancher Bischöfe protestiert. Der Protest hätte sich gegen weitere Kreise richten sollen — gegen jeden falschen Lehrer innerhalb der unierten deutschen Kirche und somit gegen das B e s t e h e n dieser Kirche. Generalsuperintendent D. Zöllner charakterisiert die unierte Kirche Preußens — und jetzt umschließt die Union ja die ganze Reichskirche — folgendermaßen: „Hier hören wir: Die ganze Bibel, das Alte und Neue Testament, ist eine Einheit und als Einheit Gottes Wort. . . . Dort wird das Alte Testament als Volksreligion jüdischen Geistes von Jahve, dem jüdischen Nationalgott, geleitet, abgetan. . . . Hier erscheint Christus als Mittler zwischen Gott und Mensch, er selbst der Gottmensch, das fleischgewordene Wort; dort ist er je nachdem ein Lehrer, ein Erzieher, der arme Rabbi von Nazareth. Das Evangelium JEsu und das von Paulus sei etwas völlig Verschiedenes. Erst Paulus habe das hinzugetan, was heute als wesentlich in der Lehre des Christentums erscheint. . . ." — Die Kanzelabkündigung beruft sich auf die Augsburgische Konfession. Das macht wenig Eindruck auf gewisse Führer der Reichskirche. Bei einer Kund-

gebung von seiten der „Deutschen Christen" in Bremen, das eben einen Landesbischof bekommen hatte, hielt der Präsident der Bremischen Evangelischen Kirche eine Rede, in der die Augsburgische Konfession und die gesamten Bekenntnisschriften als „alte Schmöker" bezeichnet wurden, mit denen man ihm nicht kommen sollte. Der Landesbischof hatte den Vorsitz bei der Kundgebung.

Der Protest gegen die Irrlehre ist es aber nicht, was eigentlich dem Pfarrer-Notbund zur Last gelegt wird. Vielmehr gelten Pfarrer Niemöller und die es mit ihm halten, als — Verschwörer. Man darf in der Reichskirche gegen die Irrlehre sein; auch öffentlich — in geziemender Form — dagegen auftreten; aber darin haben die 7,000 Pfarrer sich vergangen, daß sie dabei Kirchenführer nennen mußten und gegen manches andere im Kirchenregiment protestierten. Das darf nicht sein. Daher wird einer nach dem andern abgesetzt. Landesbischof Coch (Sachsen) verordnet: „Machenschaften, die den Frieden stören, sind staatsgefährlich. Wo es sich um innere Glaubensfragen handelt, wird niemand in seinem Gewissen bedrückt. Die äußere Ordnung muß aber in einer Landeskirche aufrechterhalten werden. Darum muß das Kirchenregiment erwarten, daß seine Autorität anerkannt wird." Und den thüringischen Pfarrern, die jene Erklärung von ihren Kanzeln verlesen hatten und daraufhin mit Ordnungsstrafen belegt wurden, wurde das von der kirchlichen Obrigkeit so erklärt: „Es wird nicht verboten, daß der Pfarrer zu den die Kirche bewegenden Fragen persönlich eine andere Stellung einnimmt als die Kirchenbehörde. Selbst eine sachliche Kritik an kirchlichen Maßnahmen, soweit sie sich in angemessener Form hält, wird nicht ausgeschlossen. Verboten sind aber Angriffe, die geeignet sind, das Ansehen der Kirchenbehörde zu gefährden, das allgemeine Vertrauen zur Kirche oder zur Kirchenleitung zu erschüttern oder die kirchliche Ordnung zu zerstören." (Kz., 9. Februar.)

Die das getan haben, gelten als Verschwörer. Bischof Coch erzählt in einem Vortrag: Bei einer Besprechung, die im Beisein des Reichskanzlers gehalten wurde, „bat der Ministerpräsident ums Wort und sagte: ‚Mein Führer, als preußischer Ministerpräsident des größten deutschen Staates bin ich in erster Linie verantwortlich für Ruhe und Ordnung, und darum bitte ich, ein Telephongespräch verlesen zu dürfen, das vor anderthalb Stunden der Führer oder Vorsitzende des Pfarrer-Notbundes in Deutschland, der bei der Besprechung mit anwesende Pfarrer Niemöller, geführt hat. Es hat folgenden Wortlaut: „Wir haben unsere Minen gelegt, wir haben die Denkschrift [das ist die Denkschrift, die den Zweck haben sollte, den Reichsbischof zu stürzen] zum Reichspräsidenten geschickt, wir haben die Sache gut gedreht, vor der kirchenpolitischen Besprechung heute wird der Kanzler zum Vortrag beim Reichspräsidenten sein und vom Reichspräsidenten die letzte Ölung empfangen.'" . . . Es war selbstverständlich, daß der Herr Reichsbischof noch am selben Tage den Pfarrer Niemöller beurlaubt hat; das war er dem Kanzler schuldig". Aber die Anklage auf Verschwörung gründet sich nicht allein auf dieses aufgefangene Telephongespräch, sondern auf die gesamte Tätigkeit des Pfarrer-Notbundes. Das Organ der „Deutschen Christen" redet ganz allgemein: es wäre ein „Geschenk der göttlichen Fügung", wenn die Pfarrer des Notbundes ihre „Verschwörertätigkeit" einstellen und sich in die „große Arbeit am Weinberg des HErrn" einreihen wollten. (Kz., 9. und 23. Februar.)

 

Die „Ev.-Luth. Freikirche" vom 4. Februar schreibt: „Es geht in diesem Kampfe leider nicht um die Wahrheit des göttlichen Wortes, sondern um die Macht in der äußeren sichtbaren Organisation der Reichskirche. . . . Auch in den Reihen des Pfarrer-Notbundes . . . ist die Zahl derer, denen es wirklich um Schrift und Bekenntnis geht, sehr gering. . . . Eine Klärung der Wirren ist nur möglich, wenn erstlich einmal alles Politische aus dem kirchlichen Kampfe ausgeschieden wird, und wenn zum andern die, die für die Wahrheit des göttlichen Wortes eintreten wollen, erkennen, daß der Abfall, der bisher in den Volkskirchen geherrscht hat, und seine Duldung schwere S ü n d e gewesen ist. . . ." Das soll sich der Notbund gesagt sein lassen: alles Politische muß aus dem kirchlichen Kampf ausgeschieden werden! Das heißt mit andern Worten: die Kirche muß vom Staat getrennt werden. Würden die 7,000 Pfarrer mit ihren Gemeinden diesen Schritt tun und eine Freikirche bilden, und zwar eine Freikirche, die nicht frei, sondern an Gottes Wort gebunden ist, so hätten die traurigen Vorkommnisse ihren Zweck erreicht.

Ein anderes Vorkommnis berichtet und beurteilt die *Christian Century* vom 7. März folgendermaßen: "Dr. Alfred Rosenberg has been appointed as 'leader' of all cultural organizations, including churches. This despite the fact that in his sensational book *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* Rosenberg rejects Christianity as a fit religion for Germans and that he is the champion of the most brutal and unrelenting anti-Semitism. If Hitler's selection of Mueller was a way of whipping the Protestant pastors with whips, his choice of Rosenberg is to whip them with scorpions." Die Verfügung des Reichskanzlers lautet: „Auf Vorschlag des Stabsleiters der PO beauftrage ich den Parteigenossen Alfred Rosenberg mit der Überwachung der gesamten geistigen und weltanschaulichen Schulung und Erziehung der Partei- und aller gleichgeschalteten Verbände. Die Funktionen des Reichsschulungsleiters werden hierdurch nicht berührt." Das "including churches" ist also zu streichen. Das Schlußurteil der *Christian Century* gilt aber im großen und ganzen. E.

**Die „Deutschen Christen" und das Alte Testament.** Hierüber berichtet die „A. E. L. K.": „Auf der Studententagung ‚Deutsche Christen' in Berlin gab Pfarrer Hoff zu dieser Frage folgende Erklärung ab: ‚Grundsätzlich ist unsere Stellung zum Alten Testament die: Wir reißen es nicht aus der Bibel heraus, wir bespötteln und bekritteln es nicht, aber wir gehen mit der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen daran. Wir unterscheiden bei aller Ehrfurcht vor der Autorität der Heiligen Schrift als Ganzes das, was göttlich darinnen ist, von dem, was menschlich, allzu menschlich, was jüdisch ist. Das taten natürlich andere vor uns auch, aber sie hatten nicht immer den Mut, es auszusprechen. Und das unterscheidet uns Deutsche Christen von kritikwütigem Liberalismus vergangener Tage. Wir betrachten die Gottesoffenbarung des Alten Testaments zwar vom völkischen Gesichtspunkt aus, aber mit frommem Herzen. Das unterscheidet uns andererseits von der starren Orthodoxie, daß wir die sogenannte Verbalinspiration ablehnen, daß wir nicht gewaltsam Beziehungen auf Christus setzen, wo keine sind, daß wir vielmehr den Ton legen auf das „S u c h e t i n d e r S c h r i f t!" Dazu kommt, daß wir neben diesem Alten Testament auch Gottesoffenbarungen in andern völkischen Überlieferungen als in der Menschheits-

geschichte und daß wir sie im Naturgeschehen anerkennen. Freilich, alles das führt und muß führen auf Christus als vollkommene und höchste Offenbarung Gottes.'" Die „A. E. L. K." bemerkt hierzu, allerdings sehr lahm: „Die Offenbarung Gottes in der Schrift neben andere ‚Offenbarungen' zu stellen, verträgt sich nicht mit der Schrift. Das ‚Wort Gottes' im eigentlichen Sinn ist nur in der Bibel zu finden." Hätte die „A. E. L. K." den rechten lutherischen Konfessionston anstimmen wollen, so hätte sie ganz andere Saiten greifen müssen. Gottes Wort ist nicht nur in der Schrift zu finden — das sagen ja auch schließlich die Deutschen Christen —, sondern die Bibel *ist* Gottes Wort, und zwar deswegen, weil sie vom Heiligen Geist wörtlich eingegeben worden ist. Diesen Posaunenton muß jede lutherische Trompete von sich geben; etwas Geringeres genügt gegen Spötter, wie es Pfarrer Hoff ist, nicht. Es steht nicht in der „Freiheit eines Christenmenschen", aus Gottes Wort hinwegzutun, was „allzu menschlich" ist. Das ist kein „Suchen in der Schrift", wie es unser Heiland gemeint hat, sondern ist Majestätsbeleidigung gegen Gott, die ebenso „kritiktötig" ist wie der „Liberalismus vergangener Tage". Wenn Pfarrer Hoff schreibt: „Wir betrachten die Gottesoffenbarung des Alten Testaments zwar vom völkischen Gesichtspunkt, aber *mit frommem Herzen*", so ist das die purste Heuchelei. Wer frommen Herzens ist, übt in keiner Weise an der Schrift die Kritik, daß sie in manchen Punkten zu „jüdisch" sei; ja, der betrachtet die Schrift nicht vom „völkischen Gesichtspunkt" aus, sondern nur vom Gesichtspunkt eines demütigen Kindes Gottes, in dessen Herz das Samuelsgebet waltet: „Rede, HErr, dein Knecht höret." In ihrer Beurteilung des Alten Testaments sind die Deutschen Christen sicherlich nicht christlich. J. T. M.

**Satansverehrer.** Über die Jesiden oder Teufelsanbeter veröffentlicht der Jesuit G. Lehmacher in den „Katholischen Missionen" unter der Überschrift „Das Geheimnis der Teufelsanbeter" einen längeren Bericht, der sich auf seinen persönlichen Besuch bei den Jesiden stützt. Nach Lehmacher zählen die Jesiden etwa zweihunderttausend Seelen, die in Mesopotamien, Kurdistan und Russisch-Armenien ansässig sind. Ihren Kultus halten sie so geheim, daß der Besucher nur über äußerliche Dinge, die damit zusammenhängen, informiert wird. Doch verschweigen die Jesiden nicht, daß sie den Satan als „obersten Gott" verehren. Der Jesidenkult soll im zwölften Jahrhundert von einem sagenhaften Scheich Ali gegründet worden sein. Nach Lehmacher geht er aber zurück auf die schon im vierten Jahrhundert vorkommende „christliche" Sekte der Satanianer. Die Jesiden besitzen zwei „heilige" Bücher, das „Buch der Offenbarung" und das „Schwarze Buch", deren Inhalt so gut wie gar nicht in der Außenwelt bekannt ist. — So entsetzenerregend es auch ist, daß es Tausende von Menschen gibt, die ausgesprochenermaßen den Teufel als „obersten Gott" verehren, so dürfen wir doch nicht vergessen, daß der Teufel überhaupt „sein Werk hat in den Kindern des Unglaubens", Eph. 2, 2, und daß die Heiden das, was sie opfern, den Teufeln opfern, 1 Kor. 10, 20. Zu den Jesiden gehören somit in weiterer Linie alle, die nicht an JEsum Christum glauben.
J. T. M.

 