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## Miscellanea

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### The Correspondence Courses of Concordia Seminary.

At the suggestion of several brethren we herewith print a list of all the courses which are offered in the so-called Extension Division of the Seminary. We offer a total of twenty-seven courses:—

*Introductory:* No. 1. Theological Encyclopedia and Methodology. No. 2. A Study of Luther's Works.

*Exegetical Theology:* No. 3. Biblical Hermeneutics, Textual Criticism, Higher Criticism. No. 4. Biblical Isagogics. No. 5. Greek and New Testament Exegesis. No. 6. Old Testament Exegesis. No. 7. The English Bible. No. 8. The German Bible and Other Translations.

*Historical Theology:* No. 9. A Survey of Church History. No. 10. Biblical and Christian Archeology. No. 11. The Historical Background of the Old Testament. No. 12. The Historical Background of the New Testament. No. 13. Special Periods of Church History. No. 14. Symbolics, Confessions, and History of Dogma. No. 15. Patrology and Patristics.

*Systematic Theology:* No. 16. Dogmatics and Biblical Theology. No. 17. Apologetics and Polemics. No. 18. Moral Philosophy and Christian Ethics.

*Practical Theology:* No. 19. Pastoral Theology and Church Polity. No. 20. Catechetics. No. 21. Homiletics. No. 22. Diaconics and Missions. No. 23. Liturgics, Heortology, Hymnology. No. 24. Christian Art and Architecture.

*Philosophy:* No. 25. Psychology and Logic. No. 26. History and Problems of Philosophy. No. 27. Antichristian Religions and Philosophy.

A few remarks concerning the work of the courses may serve for orientation. The work is *graduate work*; it presupposes the elementary study of the regular seminary classes. It is therefore in the nature of directed self-activity, every student furnishing the necessary energy for his task and not relying upon the impetus given by class-work. It may also be designated as supervised home study, since the notes which are submitted are read by the instructor, who adds such notes and remarks as may be called for by the situation. The work presupposes the ability to use books intelligently, although this may, in a large way, be learned in Course No. 1 if the student has never made this part of theological work a special objective. It is necessary that the student be able to work regularly and systematically, also by way of sending reports to the school. Mere sporadic efforts, which frequently lose themselves in inconsequential details, are not desirable. For the pastor who wants to do some systematic work in mastering, at least to a degree, any course or section of theological learning, we extend a cordial welcome to avail himself of the opportunity offered in our Extension Division. Scores of men who have done the work for some time assured us that it has redounded to the greatest benefit to them. For further information address Prof. P. E. Kretzmann, 801 De Mun Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

### The Significance of the "Decree of Milan."

Many text-books on church history refer to an "edict," or "decree," of Milan, issued by Constantine in 313, and make the statement that the emperor by this "decree" made the Christian religion the state religion of the Roman Empire. *Strictly speaking, neither of these statements is true.* As Ayer writes (*Source-book of Ancient Church History*, 263): "The so-called Edict of Milan, granting toleration to the Christians, is not the actual edict, but a letter addressed to a prefect and referring to the edict, which probably was much briefer."

And yet the church historians may well be excused for declaring that the letter of Constantine, whatever its form may have been, amounted to a recognition of the Christian religion, actually placed it in the forefront, emphasizing it in a manner that was bound to impress people with the emperor's intentions. This clearly appears from a few passages of the letter as given in the above-mentioned source-book. We read: "We ought, in the first place, to set in order the conditions of the reverence paid to the Divinity by giving to the Christians and all others full permission to follow whatever worship any man had chosen. . . . We should in no way refuse to any man any legal right who has given up his mind either to the observance of Christianity or to that worship which he personally feels best suited to himself. . . . It is our pleasure that all provisions whatsoever which have appeared in documents hitherto directed to your office regarding Christians and which appeared utterly improper and opposed to our clemency should be abolished and that every one of those men who have the same wish to observe Christian worship may now freely and unconditionally endeavor to observe the same without any annoyance or molestation. These things we thought it well to signify in the fullest manner to your carefulness, that you might know that we have given free and absolute permission to the said Christians to practise their worship. . . . Moreover, in regard to the Christians we have thought fit to ordain this also, that if any appear to have bought, either from our exchequer or from others, the places in which they were accustomed formerly to assemble, and concerning which definite orders have been given before now, and that by letters sent to your office, the same be restored to the Christians. . . . In all these things you must give the aforesaid Christians your most effective intervention, that our command may be fulfilled as soon as may be and that in this matter also order may be taken by our clemency for the public quiet."

It may easily be seen from these excerpts why church historians felt that the Christians were decidedly favored by the emperor. And it was very likely due to this impression that we owe the customary statements concerning the scope of the "Decree" of Milan.

P. E. K.

