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## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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


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**I. Amerika.**

**The Machen Trial.**—Our readers undoubtedly would like to be informed on the developments in the ecclesiastical trial to which Dr. J. G. Machen, favorably known for his opposition to Modernism, is subjected. A correspondent of the *Christian Century* sends the following report from Philadelphia:—

"Other than Presbyterian eyes are focused at Trenton, N. J., upon the trial of Dr. J. Gresham Machen, professor of New Testament in Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia, and president of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. To Dr. Machen and his independents the issue is twofold: freedom from official Presbyterian agencies and a doctrinal attack upon the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. But, unlike the Briggs and Smith trials, his case is regarded not as an accusation of heresy, but a violation of discipline. Both liberals and conservatives in this prosecution are united; the charge is of secession from one of the official agencies of the Presbyterian Church.

"Contrary to previous intimation by the commission clerk, the commission at the first meeting, February 14, announced that all hearings would be public. Dr. Machen had protested against the practise of secret courts. The defense then presented challenges against every member of the commission. All except one of these challenges at the second meeting, February 26, were disallowed.

"*Four Rulings Made by Church Court.* Four rulings were made by the commission at the third meeting, March 7, as follows:—

"1) That it cannot accept and hear any further arguments or inferences based on the Auburn Affirmation or on its signing by certain members of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

"2) That it cannot accept and hear any further arguments or inferences against the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

"3) That it cannot accept and hear any further arguments or inferences based on the Princeton-Westminster Seminary controversy. We cannot entertain any arguments directed against any individuals, boards, agencies, institutions, judicatories, against which no charges have been presented in the Presbytery of New Brunswick and which are not on trial before this judicial commission.

"4) That it cannot accept or regard any arguments questioning the legality or validity of the mandate of the General Assembly in reference to the "Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions." It is one of the well-established and fundamental principles of the Presbyterian system that a subordinate judicatory cannot sit in judgment upon the acts or deliverances of a superior judicatory, whether or not we think those acts or deliverances have been wise, equitable, and for the edification of the Church. So long as such acts and deliverances stand, this commission has no power but to obey."

**"Dr. Machen Protests Against Rulings.** Against these rulings Dr. Machen protests that the commission 'exhibits a blatancy of unfairness beyond what might have been expected from so partisan a court,' and, says he, 'that prejudices my whole case without even allowing me a hearing. I am to be condemned on the ground that I have disobeyed a lawful order, but not allowed to be heard when I offer to prove that the order is unlawful; condemned for making false assertions against the Board of Foreign Missions, but not allowed to be heard when I offer to prove that those assertions are true. It is difficult to see how ruthless unfairness could go much further than that.'

"I cannot be a party to any such concealment,' says Dr. Machen. 'I must, in fulfilment of my ordination pledge, do all I can to let light into this dark place. I shall be condemned by this commission for doing so. But I cannot regard it as any great disgrace to be condemned by a commission that has unanimously confirmed as its presiding officer a signer of a document, the Auburn Affirmation, that casts despite upon the holiest things of the Christian religion. This commission has dishonored Christ before it dishonors me.'

In explanation of the above we may say that the Auburn Affirmation is a Modernistic document which declares that "the doctrines of the inspiration of the Scriptures, the virgin birth, the vicarious atonement, the bodily resurrection of Christ, and the performance of real miracles by Christ belong to the unessential elements of Christian thought and belief and that a person's status as a Christian is not affected by either acceptance or rejection of these doctrines." More complete comments will be made when the trial is terminated. A.

**The National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church on the Situation in Mexico.** — When several dioceses asked the National Council of the Episcopalians regarding affairs in Mexico, the reply given was a very guarded statement, designed not to take sides either with the Roman Catholic Church or the Mexican Government. From the statement we take over those sections which appear to throw light on the general situation in that country.

**"No Property Confiscated.** From authoritative reports which are available to us we may say to the Church that no property of the Episcopal Church has been confiscated during the episcopate of Bishop Creighton or that of Bishop Salinas y Velasco.

"Our church-buildings and rectories, *i. e.*, buildings for worship and the teaching of Christian principles as maintained by our Church, have been 'manifested' to the civil authorities to comply with the law. This law goes back to the constitution of 1857. All religious bodies which erected church-buildings, parish-houses, rectories, theological schools, or other buildings for worship and the teaching of religious doctrines after that date had full knowledge of the law and its implications. Church property is considered as belonging to the nation, but the religious corporation which built it is entitled to use it for the purpose intended.

"Under the personal restrictions imposed by the constitution, our bishop and his clergy are performing their pastoral duties and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They are registered for the localities in which

they are officiating and are complying with the regulations which require all acts of public worship to be performed inside the church-buildings.

"Schools in Mexico are regarded as centers for secular education only. Religious education must be confined to teaching in the family and in the church-building. As long as we do not perform religious ceremonies within the school-buildings, we are permitted to carry on secular educational work.

*Hooker School Work.* In the case of Hooker School, Casa Hooker, a home for girls, where they are kept under Christian influence and from which they are taken to church-school and to services in one of our duly registered churches, is separated from the school proper by a wall. This home is supported by the Church. The conduct of the school has been placed in the hands of a group of the Hooker School graduates who are also graduates of government normal schools and so fulfil government requirements. They are all members of our Church, experienced teachers who have worked for many years in government schools. This arrangement has proved entirely satisfactory and meets the moral, practical, administrative, and legal problems raised by the new regulations on educational matters. The school is entirely self-supporting. The salaries of the teachers and all other expenses come from the fees paid by the pupils. Casa Hooker is, however, supported by an appropriation from the National Council.

*Deplore Some Local Action.* We have not joined in any protest. We deem it wise to study the situation more thoroughly, being not yet convinced that there is an actual persecution by the government on religious grounds. We deplore, however, the action of certain local authorities, for instance, in the state of Tabasco, which seems to us to be violative of the principle of religious freedom and of the individual rights secured to the citizens of Mexico by their constitution.

"Article 130 of the constitution as generally interpreted, gives each state the right to designate the number of clergymen to officiate within its borders. This has been used by certain local governors as an excuse for making the free exercise of religion almost prohibitory in their states. Yet the fact remains that there is no record of an appeal to a federal court having been made by those affected.

"In the face of a trying situation Bishop Salinas y Velasco has given wise and courageous leadership to the members of our Church in Mexico. Our work has not stood still, but has gone steadily forward. With full confidence in him and his ability to handle the affairs of our Church we ask the prayers of our people in the United States for him and his clergy, for our Mexican church-members, and for all the people of Mexico."

A.

**Difficulties for Baptists in Mexico.**—Secretary C. E. Maddry of the Foreign Mission Board, returning from a meeting of the Texas Baptist Convention at San Antonio, was in the office last week. For several months serious trouble has been brewing in Mexico, and for weeks we have been expecting our foreign missionaries to be expelled from that country. All of the Mexican missionaries met the secretary at San Antonio for a conference as to what was best to be done with respect to the continuing of our foreign mission-work in Mexico.

The government of Mexico has put on an extensive socialistic program

of education throughout the republic. They have placed a ban on the teaching of all religions. The Bible is excluded from all schools, and they have now closed our Baptist Theological Seminary at Saltillo. All church properties being "federalized," they have passed into the hands of the government. Some of our Baptist churches have already been taken over as offices for school superintendents, mayors, and other public officials, and the Mexican flag is now flying from the steeples of Baptist churches.

The Mexican missionaries reported to the secretary in San Antonio that in all probability all of our seminary and school property, together with church-building and pastors' homes, will be "federalized" within a few weeks. The seminary at Saltillo has enrolled sixteen students this year and will be moved to Laredo, on the Texas side of the River, where Missionaries Branch and Neal will try to complete the year's work.

Secretary Maddy has arranged with the Texas State Board for the transfer of several of our Mexican missionaries to the State Board of Texas for work among Mexicans in South Texas, the Foreign Mission Board paying the salaries and the Texas Board paying their expenses. This is a temporary arrangement, awaiting the day when, it is hoped, our missionaries may go back into Old Mexico. Five Mexican missionaries, who have attained the age of sixty-five years, have been placed on the pension rolls.

The Mexican government is determined to exclude Catholicism in all of its phases from the republic, and in doing so, of course, they are excluding all Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists alike.

The outlook for our work in Mexico is dark indeed, and our people everywhere are urged to be much in prayer that God may overrule this turn of events in our neighbor republic to the glory of His name.

*Christian Index* (Southern Baptist).

**The Social Gospel in Baptist Churches.** — If the present trend continues, it may soon be difficult to find Christian denominations in our country which are not expending their energy chiefly on the discussion of social and economic problems. One of our exchanges reports that a committee of nine which represents the Northern Baptist Convention is sponsoring what is called "frank discussion of burning issues." The various large cities are visited, conferences are held, and these issues are threshed out. What are they? Here is the list as given by the exchange:—

"What attitude should the Christian take toward birth control? Can the splendid aims of the Baptist Convention regarding industrial relations be effected without basic change in the present economic structure? How effect the subordination of the profit to the service motive? Is assumption of racial superiority supported by science? Is it justified by Christian ethics? Is total abstinence or temperance the goal? Should a prohibition amendment be restored? Should government systems, such as representative democracy, socialism, fascism, and communism, be supported or opposed? In view of the rapid extension of governmental aid to the hungry, should Baptists maintain unaltered their historic position regarding the complete separation of Church and State? Should they be isolationists or internationalists?"

This is symptomatic. Other denominations are navigating on the same ocean of social ethics. Will it be long before the Rock of Ages will entirely be lost to view?

A.

**Politics in the Pulpit.** — Cardinal O'Connell will have none of it. "I do not sit in judgment upon Father Coughlin," he says, "but experience has taught me that in general clergymen, no matter of what creed, are treading on hazardous ground when they try directly to solve political or economic problems. There is a difference between a priest preaching the principles of social justice and his attempts to apply the principles of social justice through political or other means. . . . No priest has a right to speak for the entire Church nor commit the Church to his policies. . . . It must never be forgotten that there are always two sides to every problem. And we are all privileged to question interpretations of principles of social justice which one individual may make. . . . Priests should hold themselves to the high principles of the Church and the teachings of the great doctors of the Church." (Associated Press, *Globe-Democrat*, December 7, 1934.) Catholic theology is not in accord with Lutheran theology on the fundamentals, but in the matter of the preacher-politician and preacher-sociologist Cardinal O'Connell's statement voices (with the exception of the second half of the last sentence) the teachings of the Lutheran Confessions. The principles on which O'Connell bases his utterance (but which in other respects the Catholic Church does not apply) are thus stated by the *Augsburg Confession*: "Let it [the Church] not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the commonwealth" (XXVIII, 13). And the *Apolo-gy* states (XVI, 59): ". . . that they might know they ought to teach concerning the spiritual kingdom that it does not change the civil state" ("ut scirent se de regno spirituali docere oportere, non mutare civilem statum" — "dass sie wussten, dass ihr Amt waere, zu predigen vom geistlichen Reich, nicht einiges Weltregiment zu veraendern"). The Church and the Christian ministry has no call to regulate the political and economic matters. And the Christian minister is not equipped for this business. The Bible, his sole equipment as a Christian minister, is not a handbook of political and social science. Besides, if he is going to equip himself for the rôle of political or sociological leader, if he aims to acquire more than a smattering of these sciences, he will have to neglect his own proper study. And thus he turns into a theological smatterer and, as a rule, bungles the political and economical matter too. He is a wise preacher who knows when to keep his mouth shut. Cardinal O'Connell might well have set up Luther as an example to Father Coughlin and his Protestant *confrères* in pulpit and press. Luther willingly discussed the first three articles of the demands of the peasants. There he was on safe ground. There the Bible spoke. But he refused to give his opinion on the eight other demands. That he left to the experts. "*Die andern Artikel, von Freiheit des Wildprets, Vogel, Fisch, Holz, Waelder, von Diensten, Zinsen, Aufsuetzen, Zeisen*" (accise, vectigal, tributum), "*Todfall usw., befehle ich den Rechtsverstaeendigen. Denn mir, als einem Evangelisten, nicht gebuehrt, hierinnen [zu] urteilen und richten. Ich soll die Gewissen unterrichten und lehren, was goettliche und christliche Sachen betrifft; man hat Bucher genug hiervon in kaiserlichen Rechten*" (XVI, p. 67). Werner Betcke, who quotes this, shows "*dass Luther im eigentlichen Sinn weder Theoretiker noch Praktiker der Staatskunst war und sein wollte.*" (Luther's *Sozialethik*, p. 78.) He is a wise preacher who knows when to let his betters speak. And it is criminal for a preacher or church-paper editor

to clothe his smatter with the authority and sanctity of Scripture. "*Sind politische Pastoren ein Unding?*" The articles bearing this heading (which means somewhat more than: "Has the preacher-politician the right of existence?"), published by Dr. Pieper in *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 42, p. 193 ff., should be studied, if not by Father Coughlin, at least by his Lutheran confrères.

E.

**The Attitude of the Lutheran Church toward Social Questions.** In the *Lutheran Companion* of February 16, 1935, an article appeared from the pen of Dr. A. D. Mattson, professor at Augustana Theological Seminary, on the subject "The Kingdom of God and Society." We consider this article an important contribution to the present discussions pertaining to the stand of the Church on great social and economic issues, and we therefore present its chief thoughts to our readers. Speaking historically, Professor Mattson says: "The emphasis in the Lutheran Church has usually been on the subjective and future aspects of the Kingdom. Calvinism has placed a greater emphasis than Lutheranism upon the social implications of Christianity or upon the idea of the Kingdom as something which is in the process of developing on earth." He next shows that critics of Luther, like Dean Inge, are not at all doing justice to Luther's position when they simply characterize it as that of a man who "individualized piety." Replying to the unfavorable judgment about Luther, he says: "Luther found himself in a world in which there was an emphasis upon the political and social aspects of Christianity. This was the background against which Luther reacted. Piety and ethics had to a large extent been secularized and socialized, and Luther needed to emphasize their individualization. The individual aspects of piety and ethics had been neglected. I am sure that it never entered Luther's mind to think of Christianity as having nothing to do with the social order. It was an axiom for him. In answer to Dean Inge's criticism of Luther I also wish to state that I can point to numerous passages in Luther's works where he does insist that Christianity be applied to the various secular relations of life. To be sure, the emphasis in Luther's works is individualistic, but we need to interpret that individualism in the light of its background. In his day Luther needed to stress the facts of the inner life because they were and had been neglected." Speaking of modern times, Professor Mattson says: "However, when Church and State came to be separated as we know that separation, the background against which Luther reacted so vigorously no longer existed or exists. In such a new environment many of Luther's followers continued to make use of Luther's individualistic emphasis and forgot what he had considered as an axiom and also what he had explicitly stated, namely, this, that Christianity does have something to do with things temporal."

He quotes Niebuhr as saying in his book *Does Civilization Need Religion?*: "Lutheranism is the Protestant way of despairing of the world and of claiming victory for the religious ideal without engaging the world in combat."

Interesting is his analysis of the situation at the Stockholm Conference: "At the Stockholm Conference in 1925 it appeared very clearly that two types of Protestantism have during the last two centuries manifested themselves. One of these types is individualistic and eschatological,

emphasizing the transcendent aspects of the Kingdom, and assumes a rather pessimistic attitude toward the world. At Stockholm we find this attitude among the German, French, and Scandinavian delegates to a large degree. The other type of piety is more universal and social, emphasizing the immanent aspects of the Kingdom and assuming a more optimistic attitude toward the world. We find the latter attitude manifested at Stockholm particularly among the Anglo-Saxons."

After these illuminating historical remarks the author places a paragraph before us where he does not tread so circumspectly and cautiously as one would desire. He says: "The heirs of Luther certainly have a contribution of permanent value to make to Christendom because of their insistence upon the fact that Christian activity must never be separated from the divine grace. Divine grace, received through faith, must ever be the root from which all Christian activity springs. On the other hand, we can never be satisfied with a mere individual type of piety. We must insist that God be allowed to rule in the public as well as in the private affairs of men. The two types of piety mentioned above need to complement and supplement each other. The kingdom of God is a transcendent kingdom, the counterpart of which in the world is a kingdom of ethical righteousness." The question obtrudes itself, Is the author here thinking of a theocracy such as Israel was in the times of the Old Covenant? In that period the Word of God, either as recorded on the sacred page or as spoken orally by the prophets, ruled the state. When Dr. Mattson speaks of a "kingdom of ethical righteousness," has he such a theocracy in mind where the Word of God is the Law of the nation? Does he mean to say, since the world needs the Gospel and God Himself has definitely said that the Gospel is to be preached to everybody, the state has to see to it that this message be proclaimed? Does he think of the state as compelling people to go to church because it evidently is the will of God that there be attendance at public worship? Calvin at Geneva, we fancy, would have said, I fully agree with the person who declares: "We must insist that God be allowed to rule in the public as well as in the private affairs of men." What the author says in the remaining part of his article makes us believe that he is not championing the mixing of Church and State which we observe in Calvin's course; but we wish his language had been more guarded.

After referring to the message of the prophets of the Old Testament with their references to matters like "treaty obligations between nations, the cruelties of war, graft in the administration of justice, slavery, oppression of the poor by the rich, adulterated wares, family relationships, child labor, and drunkenness," he says: "When we turn to the New Testament, we need not go far before we realize that the Gospel of Jesus had its social application. Jesus did not only appeal to individuals, but at times also addressed His words to cities, to professions, to parties, and to nations." Yes, Jesus at times addressed, for instance, cities. We all recall the flaming words which He spoke to Jerusalem; but we must remember that He addressed the inhabitants of that city as people who nominally were all standing on the Mosaic foundation, professing a belief in the true God and the authority of the sacred Scriptures. We fail to find in His words any direction addressed to the Roman government as to how it was to solve perplexing social problems. There were many iniqui-



tous things in the rule of Pontius Pilate, but not once do we read of the Savior's lecturing the Roman governor concerning his infringement of the divine Law. The Sermon on the Mount, with its numerous commands touching social matters, is not addressed to the government, but to the disciples of Christ.

Some of the following remarks of our author state so precisely what we believe to be the correct position that we are inclined to think that, after all, in spite of some unfortunate phraseology, his views are in harmony with Scriptural principles. We take over one more paragraph: "We need not be particularly interested in having the name of Christ written in the Constitution of the United States, nor are we interested in realizing a Church State; but the duty of the Church is to testify against sin, both individual and social, wherever it finds it. We do not wish to see the Church, as an institution, in politics; but we want Christianity in politics and in the various other social relations of life. The Church deals with the individual, who is both a member of the Church and a citizen, and the Church should so enlighten its members that, when they go out into the various social relations of life, they will apply to those relations the spirit of the Christ. The Church has a right to expect of its members that they cease being pagan in their political theories as well as in all other spheres of social activity. The Christian legislator must not forget his religion in the legislative hall, the Christian business man must not assume the attitude that 'religion is religion and business is business,' the Christian factory owner must not exploit men, women, and children in his industrial plant, and the Christian citizen must not forget that he is a Christian when he goes to the polls. It is not the business of the Church to set up programs of social reform, but it is the business of the Church to declare principles." If the last sentence means that it is the business of the Church to declare the principles laid down in the Word of God, and evidently that is what the writer has in mind, then we are in hearty accord with him. This last paragraph well presents what is the heart of the whole problem, and the truths it presents should be pondered by pastors, teachers, and congregations. A.

Die Aufgabe der Kirche. Der Synodalbericht der Synodalkonferenz enthält folgende Ireugemeinte, ernste Erinnerung: „Dieser Trost läßt es, zumal angesichts der vom Antichristen stets drohenden Gefahr, nicht zu, daß wir müßig dastehen oder unsere Zeit mit Alotria verträdeln. So stehet nun, liebe Brüder, und haltet an den Sagen, die ihr gelehret seid, es sei durch unser Wort oder Epistel.' Hier ist uns unsere Aufgabe klar vorgezeichnet: ‚Haltet an den Sagen, die ihr gelehret seid.' Das ist eine einfache, aber alles umfassende Aufgabe. . . . Das ist eine einfache, das ist eine große Aufgabe, die all unsere Kräfte in Anspruch nimmt, ja die unsere Kräfte weit übersteigt. Warum wollen wir uns nicht auf diese Aufgabe konzentrieren? Warum wollen wir, des alten Evangeliums überdrüssig, uns etwa auf social gospel, Repristinatio von gefallenem Kultusformen, Unterhaltungen aller Art und dergleichen Dinge werfen, als ob damit dem Reich Christi besser gedient werden könne? Warum wollen wir versuchen, den Papst am Stimmkasten zu bekämpfen? Der Papst, vom Satan gelehrt, versteht sich auf die schmutzige Politik viel besser als wir. Wir spielen damit den Kampf selbst auf ein Gebiet hinüber, auf dem der Papst zu Hause ist.

Gewiß werden wir als Bürger unsere Pflicht auch am Stimmkasten tun; aber unsern Kampf gegen Rom führen wir allein mit der Waffe, vor der Antichrist Respekt hat, nämlich mit dem Geiste des Mundes Christi, mit den „Sägen“ von der Rechtfertigung allein aus Gnaden, die wir gelehrt sind. Warum wollen wir versuchen, durch Propaganda unsern Namen bekannt zu machen und vor der Welt zu prangen? Der Pontifex zu Rom ist ein viel geschickterer Pompfez als wir. Warum wollen wir durch die Pflege des Vereinswesens, durch die Bildung von allerlei Zweckverbänden, die Solidarität der Gemeinde gefährden? Warum überhaupt besondere Zweckverbände, als ob die von Christo gestiftete Gemeinde ihrer Aufgabe nicht gewachsen sei, eigentlich einen Fehlschlag bedeute? „So stehet nun, liebe Brüder, und haltet an den Sägen, die ihr gelehrt seid.“ (Bericht der 34. Versammlung der Synodalkonferenz, 1934, S. 47 f.) E.

“Christians” to Observe Yom Kippur. — This is a bit of news reported by *Time*. It says: “Last week (*Time*, March 4, 1935) United States Christians were pondering a proposal that they join with 4,000,000 United States Jews in celebrating this high holy-day. The proposer was the Rev. Charles D. Brodhead of Bethlehem, Pa., who said: ‘In this period of wide-spread anti-Semitic pressure it would be a timely witness to our common religious bond with the Jews.’ The *Christian Century*, able interdenominational weekly, found the idea good, chiefly because Yom Kippur ‘emphasized the sense of individual sin, which contributed to, and merged with, the sins of the nation. The analogy with our present economic and cultural plight is thus complete. Through our sense of guilt, as individuals and as a nation, we would . . . devote a day to spiritual stock-taking.’ Furthermore, declared the *Christian Century*, ‘the day does not lend itself to commercializing, as do Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving.’” To explain to the uninitiated what Yom Kippur is, it writes: “Yom Kippur is the Jewish Day of Atonement, which culminates the ten penitential days after Rosh Hashanah (New Year). Yom Kippur falls next on October 7. A taper, tall enough to burn for twenty-four hours, flickers in memory of the dead. The pious abstain from food, drink, and all other gratifications of material desires from one sunset until three stars may be seen in the heavens the following night. God is balancing His books for the year. In the home it is well to examine one’s soul; in the synagog to chant ‘Kol Nidre,’ petitioning forgiveness for vows made and inadvertently unfulfilled.”

Well, why not? Modernists do not recognize the “high holy-day” on which Christ, who was prefigured by the sacrificial lamb slain on the Old Testament Day of Atonement, died for the sins of the world; hence their celebration of Yom Kippur witnesses indeed to their “common religious bond with the Jews” or, let us say, to the shameful denial of the holy name which they still bear though they are not worthy of it. J. T. M.

The Lutheran Church of America in 1934. — Under this heading Dr. G. L. Kieffer, in the *News Bulletin Special*, publishes the following interesting data on the Lutheran Church in the United States and Canada: —

“The Lutheran Church in the United States and Canada during 1934 showed a smaller increase in baptized membership than in previous years, this increase being less than 5 per cent. There was, however, an increase

of 1 per cent. in confirmed, or communicant, membership and of 1.5 per cent in communing membership. The statistics for 1933-34 for the United States and Canada were as follows: Pastors, 12,143; congregations, 16,576; baptized membership, 4,519,926; confirmed, or communicant, membership, 3,042,705; communing membership, 2,503,415; church-schools, 20,838; officers and teachers, 163,793; scholars, 1,880,926; value of church property, \$359,913,028; congregational expense, \$30,475,140; congregational benevolence, \$7,081,836; total expenditures, \$37,556,976. The per-capita gifts were: for congregational expense, \$10.01; for congregational benevolence, \$2.33; for congregational expenditure, \$12.34.

"In 1934, in the United States and Canada, the Lutheran Church maintained 27 seminaries, 30 colleges, and 83 junior colleges, academies, and schools, with a total enrolment of 30,307 scholars, 2,139 instructors, endowment amounting to \$16,352,586, and property value of \$44,799,294. Lutheran inner-mission institutions, such as deaconess homes, hospitals, old people's homes, orphanages, immigrants' and seamen's homes number 425, with an endowment of \$6,513,056 and a property value of \$52,239,314. During the year they sheltered, cared for, and ministered to, 9,716 children and 1,955,708 men and women at an annual expense of \$12,245,064. In addition to the institution work congregational and society inner-mission work was done at an expense of approximately \$10,000,000.

"The work of the American Lutheran churches in fields outside the United States and Canada was carried on principally in India, Africa, Japan, China, New Guinea, Argentina, Brazil, and British Guiana, in charge of 376 pastors serving 2,870 congregations and missions, with 293,489 baptized members, 140,731 confirmed members, 137,871 communing members, 3,411 schools, 1,402 officers and teachers, and 145,473 scholars. The property value was \$4,387,250; local congregational expenses, \$17,693; benevolence, \$349,906; total congregational expenditure, \$367,599. The income of the various Foreign Mission boards was \$1,348,228; the expenditures were \$1,266,935."

J. T. M.

## II. Ausland.

**Ehrlicher Kampf um die Wahrheit besser als unehrliches Vertuschen der konfessionellen Gegensätze.** Unter dieser Überschrift zitiert die „Freikirche“ einen Teil eines auf der Herbsttagung des Katholischen Akademikerverbandes (August 1934) von einem namhaften römischen Theologen gehaltenen Vortrags, der seitdem auch unter dem Titel „Das Verhältnis von Katholizismus und Protestantismus in der Gegenwart“ im Druck erschienen ist. Wir lesen da: „Es muß uns um des Ernstes der Wahrheit willen lieber sein, wenn wir Katholiken von einem Theologen wie Karl Barth schweren Herzens und unbestechlichen Sinnes als Glieder der Kirche des Antichristen klassifiziert werden. Dies, sage ich, muß uns lieber sein, als wenn Ernst Bergmann (einer der Vorkämpfer für eine heidnisch-germanische ‚Nationalkirche‘, die alle Volksgenossen umfassen will) für die nächsten fünfzig Jahre den katholischen Priester und einiges vorläufig nicht zu entbehrende oder nicht zu umgehende Drum und Dran des Katholizismus in seiner Nationalkirche dulden und duldbend domestizieren will. Wir können es ruhig und gleichmütig ertragen, ja wir sollen uns gerne wieder daran gewöhnen, wenn der Protestantismus auch unserer Kirche gegen-

über wieder seine volle Sprache findet, auch wenn nur diese Sprache das wirklich religiöse und theologische Anliegen der Reformation zum Ausdruck bringt und nicht irgendwelche 'kulturrämpferischen' Dinge meint. Der Wahrheit wird besser gedient, wenn wir uns Auge in Auge gegenübersehen. . . . Die Möglichkeit, die trennenden Distanzen irgendeinmal zu überwinden, ist größer, wenn die Distanzen klaren Geistes gemessen, das Trennende ermaßen und erwogen wird."

Die „Freikirche“ schreibt hierzu: „Das ist ganz unsere Meinung, und wir werden darum fortfahren, mit Luther und unsern Vätern das Papsttum als das Reich des Antichristen mit Waffen des Geistes zu bekämpfen, weil wir überzeugt sind, daß es einen falschen Weg zur Seligkeit lehrt. Aus demselben Grunde aber müssen wir auch alle andern Irrlehren, die den Weg zur Seligkeit verdunkeln, bekämpfen und die Christen vor ihnen warnen.“

In demselben Sinn, behufs ehrlicher Aussprache, schreibt der *Watchman-Examiner* (21. Februar 1935): „In the religious world many people regard discussion [Lehrauseinandersetzungen] as full of peril. They regard absence of discussion as a token of harmony, whereas it frequently indicates indifference to the great matters concerning which the minds of men should be aroused. *The periods of exciting religious controversy, like those in which Athanasius, Augustine, and Luther engaged, have been epochs of intense spiritual vitality.* [Kurzführschrift von uns.] In our time it is already evident that the attacks upon the Scriptures are beginning to result in a clearer and stronger conviction as to their unique authority. Discussion is one of the principal ways to arrive at truth. A belief that cannot be defended and that cannot maintain itself against all comers certainly needs reconstruction. The net result of the expression of opinion has not been to strengthen eccentric opinions, but to demonstrate that the common beliefs of our churches can be rigorously defended. *Unless we gravely mistake, debates have been a powerful force of working towards the essential harmony of our churches.*“ Es sind dies wichtige Punkte, auf die auch wir in lutherischen Kirchen uns zu besinnen haben. Bei aller Vereinigungslust muß uns doch dies Axiom in allem obenan stehen: „Christlicher Kampf um die Wahrheit ist besser als unehrliches Vertuschen der konfessionellen Gegensätze.“ Geltung hat dies schließlich aber auch im eigenen engeren Kreis, innerhalb der synodalen Verbindung. J. L. M.

**Wichtige Daten über Nigeria, Westafrika.** Jetzt, da ein von der Synodalkonferenz beauftragtes survey committee in Nigeria die dortigen Missionsfelder exploriert, dürfte eine statistische Notiz interessieren, die die „Neue Allg. Missionszeitschrift“ in ihrer „Rundschau“ bringt. Wir lesen da: „Die im Jahre 1931 von der Regierung vorgenommene Volkszählung in Nigeria gibt interessante Aufschlüsse über die Bevölkerung dieses großen Gebiets. Die drei größten Stämme in Nigeria sind die Hausa, die Ibo und die Yoruba, die je über drei Millionen Glieder zählen. Die nicht-eingeborne Bevölkerung beträgt 5,442. In der Bevölkerung wurde bei 2,055,305 keine Religionszugehörigkeit festgestellt. Die Zahl der Mohammedaner beträgt 7,709,807, die der Animisten 7,543,220. Die Protestanten zählen 710,453 Gemeindeglieder und die Römisch-Katholischen 188,507. Nigeria zählt 36,626 Schulen mit 380,305 Schülern. Unter den Leh-

renn gibt es 240 Europäer und 8,815 Afrikaner. Von den Schulen stehen 2,678 mit 135,162 Schülern unter der Verwaltung der Regierung und von Eingebornen." Der Stamm der Hausa ist stark mohammedanisch. Uns haben die Ibo nach Afrika gerufen, und unter ihnen die sogenannten Ibibios, deren Stamm etwa eine Million Glieder zählt. Bis auf etwa tausend, die sich zum Christentum bekennen und von denen der Hilferuf an uns gerichtet wurde, sind die Ibibios Animisten, obwohl auch hier sich solche finden, die sich dem Mohammedanismus zuneigen. J. T. M.

**Is This Really Lutheran?** — *The Gospel Witness*, a monthly magazine published by the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India, in its issue of December, 1934, prints a lecture delivered by the Rev. E. Wengsjoa (Waengsjoe), in which the following sections occur:—

"We have got a new view of the Scriptures. The Bible is not, like other religious books of different religions, a document of human piety and of religious personalities and religious experiences. Its own exclusive concern is to witness about God's revelation of Himself to man, a revelation which is personified in Christ. Therefore Christ is, as already Luther clearly put it, the heart of the Scriptures. About Him all the books of the Bible bear witness, and only so far as they do that, they are God's Word to us. [Italics our own.] Such a view is really a great relief, as it automatically solves all the problems of the human elements in the Bible. And it is the true Lutheran view of the Scriptures. [Italics our own.] At the same time our knowledge of the actual ways of that divine revelation has been immensely enriched and deepened through the new light thrown upon the human sides of the prophets and apostles as well as of Jesus Himself, a gain for which we should only be grateful even to the so-called liberal theology which has now gone to the grave.

"We have also got a new view of the history of religions. Religion is one thing; divine revelation is something quite different. Religion is man's seeking for God, revelation is God's answer to that seeking. In Christ, and in Him alone, God seeks us. Christianity as a religion is a human thing as all other religions and in principle on the same plane as they. Therefore there is no meaning in claiming any superiority for the Christian religion over other religions, such as, *e. g.*, Hinduism or Buddhism. To use an illustration of one of the friends of Barth, all religions, inclusive of Christianity, form a circle in their common seeking for the center of that circle, God. They can never reach it. But from that center there goes a radius to one point of the circle. That radius is Christ, in whom God meets those who seek Him, and the point where that radius touches the circle is the beginning of Christianity. It should fill us Christians with deep thankfulness that God has chosen so to reveal Himself to us, but it can never justify any claim that our religion as such is superior to any other."

Isn't it a pity that the foregoing should pass for the "true Lutheran view" in India? Surely our brethren over there have a divine call to "lift up their voice like a trumpet."

FREDERICK BRAND.