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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

J. T. Mueller

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Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches.

I. Amerika.

The Infallibility of the Bible as Taught within the U. L. C. — The review of a certain book (*The Evidences for Immortality*), printed in the *Lutheran* of March 5, contains this paragraph: "But two arguments [for immortality] are advanced. 1) Reason demands it. 2) The Bible teaches it. The weight of the argument thus hangs on what to many would be the slender thread of a faith in the inerrancy of human reasoning and the brittle cords of a biased interpretation of an '*infallible* Book.'" [Italics our own.] Only a little matter of punctuation, — quotation-marks affixed to the *infallible*, — but it reveals a terrible condition. There are men in the United Lutheran Church who cannot pronounce, clearly and distinctly, the sentence: The Holy Bible is infallible. They do not believe in verbal inspiration. They do not believe that all of the Bible is God's Word. (Dr. Paul E. Scherer over the radio: "The genealogies [of Jesus] are not to be regarded as inspired documents; they are included as 'honest attempts to ascertain the truth.'" — *The Lutheran*, Feb. 20.) And they are making incessant efforts to cast the article of the absolute infallibility of the Bible out of the Church.

An article that appeared in the *Lutheran* of October 29, 1931, stated: "Whatever the differences may be that keep Lutherans apart, that they are not insuperable is apparent from the very fact that we are all Lutherans. On essentials we are agreed. Why, then, can we not agree on, or forget, non-essentials? . . . When Lutherans get rid of their inferiority complex and develop such an appreciation of their Church as it merits, and when they forget their silly differences, then the Lutheran Church in America will grow as it never grew before," etc., etc. The difference obtaining in the Lutheran Church of America on the vitally important matter of the infallibility of the Bible is "*a silly difference*"? If the writer of this article has taken note of what influential men of the U. L. C. have lately been doing in this matter, denouncing the doctrine of the verbal inspiration and infallibility of the Bible in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* and in the *Lutheran*, and heard others protest against this teaching as undermining the Christian faith, he certainly cannot keep on saying: "Forget your silly differences." E.

Dr. Kantonen's "Canned Theology." — The liberal views of Dr. T. A. Kantonen (see p. 223 of this magazine) are not shared by all members of the U. L. C. In an open letter, published in the *Lutheran* of February 13, Pastor John C. Mattes, D. D., thus takes Dr. Kantonen to task: "Is there a real need for better Lutheran scholarship in this country? Under any circumstances we would feel sympathetic towards any one who asserts that there is a crying need for a development of English Lutheran scholarship; but when we are told that it is necessary because of the boast that our Church was 'born in a university,' we are no longer sympathetic, but absolutely convinced of the overwhelming need of real scholarship. . . . Sound scholarship cannot be gained by decrying the past or

sneering at what it has produced; it does not consist in discovering something new each decade. . . . No science, not even theology, has progressed by simply discarding the past as outmoded. It has gone forward by a careful use of all that the past has attained. In theology especially there is a certain static quality in truth. As Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, so the revelation made by Him is unalterable. . . . It is undoubtedly unfortunate if some persist in subsisting only on 'the canned goods of past theology'; but we have often observed that even 'canned theology' is not as harmful on occasion as some that is perfectly new, but only half baked. The latter seems to mold and spoil and produce more theological indigestion than some that has been effectively preserved from a former age. . . . How dangerous this disparaging attitude can become is evident when we are told about the 'narrowness of Luther's horizon' because of his contemptuous references to 'the heathen' and the Turks. We only wonder that the famous line '*Und steur des Papats und Tuerken Mord*' was not included. Was it narrowness that saw in every other religion an enemy of the true faith and a fearful danger to men's souls? Then it was nothing but the narrowness of the New Testament and our Lord Himself. 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me' is certainly an exceeding 'narrow' statement, and it is certainly not as broad in its outlook as that very unapostolic discipline known as 'the study of comparative religion.' . . . The writer must confess that he felt a peculiar resentment at certain specific statements, particularly those that refer to Charles P. Krauth and Henry E. Jacobs as teachers whose 'theology was either that of scholastic orthodoxy or of "restitutionation."' The latter term is of course a favorite and, we might add, a somewhat shelf-worn term of reproach that is hurled at every scholar who seeks to preserve intact 'the faith once delivered to the saints' and who does not conform to each new fad of changing theological fashions. Furthermore, the charge is not true. . . . Yes, let us have more sound scholarship in the Lutheran Church in America; but let it be a true scholarship, that does not attempt to launch out into new courses before it has learned to understand and appreciate those that have been charted by the past."

These are strong words — and fitting ones. We hope that the protest will be seconded by many in the U. L. C. And we further hope that the Lutheran teaching of men like Dr. E. H. Klotsche ("The Scriptures are the sole rule and standard of Christian truth because they *are the Word of God*. . . . Luther says [Smale, Art., 497] that the Old Testament prophets were holy 'since the Holy Ghost spake through them.' The Apology [p. 101] denominates the Bible as 'the manifest Scripture of the Holy Ghost.' The F. C. [p. 1057] says that 'the Holy Ghost through the mouth of the holy apostle earnestly charged His Church to preserve' the article concerning Christian liberty" — *Christian Symbolics*, p. 149) and Dr. C. H. Little ("The popular view now seems to be that not the Scriptures themselves are inspired, but only their thoughts and concepts. . . . According to such views it cannot be said that the Bible is the Word of God, but only that it contains it. The authority of the Scriptures is thus set aside, and the consequence is that, faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures being lost, faith in Christ, of whom the Scriptures testify, will also be

lost. . . . Inspiration is the activity of the Holy Spirit by which He put into the hearts and minds of chosen men the impulse to write and so controlled and directed them that they produced in a real and verbal sense a correct and inerrant record of God's revelation to men. . . . Since it is said here [2 Tim. 3, 16] without qualification that all Scripture is inspired of God, literally 'God-breathed,' we are justified in drawing the conclusion that the words must be inspired, since Scripture would not be Scripture without words, and it is the Scripture that is inspired."—*Disputed Doctrines*, pp. 19, 26) will not be silenced, but will spread and prevail. E.

Confessionalism and Loyalty.—Some remarkable statements are being made in the papers of other denominations with respect to confessionalism and loyalty. It is quite astonishing to read some of these statements in view of the fact that Calvinism, or the Reformed churches, by permitting the Scriptures to be variously interpreted, have been breeders of spiritual indifferentism. In his book *The Fundamental Principle of Calvinism* Prof. H. Henry Meeter boasts of the "flexibility" of Calvinism, its "potentialities for an endless variation in the development of the system," and therefore of its "multitude of confessions." Professor Meeter makes this boast over against the Lutheran Church with its "single confession," (pp. 99—101).

The Calvinistic, or Reformed, churches, however, have not fared well with their flexibility of doctrine and the resultant doctrinal indifferentism. Some are now admitting that. In the January issue of the *Evangelical Quarterly* an article appeared on "The Revival of Calvinism" in which, among other things, we find the following statements:—

"A third type of the renewal of Calvinism is to be seen in those who had lost, long ago perhaps, any serious contact with the heritage of the sixteenth century and have made their journey through all the varied fields of so-called modern theology. Now they are coming home again. They may be grateful for all they have learned and gained in the course of their wanderings, but they have come to recognize that, after all, the structure in which their sires had lived is their home. And they are even able, so it seems, to bring along some of their fellow-travelers hailing from other homes, to visit the old place and to enjoy whatever it may offer to them. . . .

"Theology cannot afford to be conditioned by external forces. Instead of being led hither and thither by other powers, it is her queenly prerogative to sound forth a leading voice, as interpreting the ultimate truth, the Word of God. The Church cannot survive very long if her teachers resemble a debating society, even if every participant in it stands for some very precious partial truth. A clear and definite message is needed, in which the rank and file of the believers may recognize the truth vouchsafed of God and by which the outside world may be challenged in the name of God. The times were thus ripening for a type of theology which could lean with a good conscience, or rather which would be under constraint to lean, on the authority of God's own Word, liberating thereby the Church from a confusion of competing human opinions. . . .

"So we see the Reformation becoming an up-to-date matter. The Reformers are being invited to descend from the pillars on which they stood as silent figures, objects of grateful memory. They are being asked

to resume their teaching activities. And many of us are learning again from them what it means to listen in absolute obedience to the Word of God, to cast away all 'reasoning with flesh and blood,' when He Himself deigns to open His heart and mind to us. At the same time not only this 'formal principle' of the Reformation, this exclusive and sufficient authority of the revelation given us in the Bible, but the 'material principle' of the Reformation, too, shines forth with new light. The justification of the sinner by faith, of which many felt it rather awkward not so long ago that it could have been regarded in Reformation days as the article by which the Church stands or falls, is being understood again as the key to all our hopes in this world and the one to come."

In the *Watchman-Examiner*, a Baptist paper, an article appeared in the issue of October 24, 1935, on the question "Does Baptist Loyalty Mean Narrowness?" In that article we read such statements as these: "Among Baptists there is a tendency to put an inadequate emphasis on our distinctive principles. There is danger that the members of our churches may lose a sense of the importance of the truths for which our Baptist fathers bore persecution and calumny and suffered stripes and imprisonment. Part of the responsibility for this state of affairs rests upon the pulpit. We do not often hear a sermon on Baptist principles; and yet, if it is worth while to maintain separate church organizations, it is worth while to have our principles enforced by our ministry. It is difficult to see how any Baptist minister can justify his retention of a Baptist pulpit if he does not consider it his duty to inculcate the distinctive views of our denomination as to New Testament teaching. Any body of Christians incurs a tremendous responsibility in separating itself from the rest of Christendom by maintaining a separate church organization if its views diverge from those of its brethren only on some trivial points of order and practise concerning which it is just as well to be silent. If the existence of the Baptist denomination can be justified, the zealous advocacy of our views of New Testament teaching is imperative."

In the *Watchman-Examiner* issue of March 19 two more articles appeared along the lines indicated. In these articles we read such statements as the following: "Have the evangelical Protestant denominations gained in strength or influence by the apologetic preaching of their own denominational doctrines and their emphasis on cooperation with other denominations? On the contrary, it has resulted in a marked indifference to all religious and church activities. . . . The crude fact confronts us that for several decades we have been preaching a vapid Protestantism, until adherents of evangelical bodies have lost all vital interest; as one denomination is as good as another, they have relinquished any interest that they may have had in the Church of their earlier years. . . . Protestantism has no one to blame but itself for its present paralysis. To much of it the Bible is no longer a finality, the cross is labeled a fancy, sin is considered a fantasy, heaven a fiction, hell a figure, the Holy Spirit a fable, orthodoxy a fallacy, the resurrection fictitious, the second coming of Christ a folly; and the sum total of all this is that the Church is a failure. Is it any wonder that we are not able to rally our people to an evangelistic program or to missionary endeavor? Our theological seminaries have produced a line of graduates with a social and ethical message, but

utterly lacking in Scriptural authority and an evangelical emphasis. . . . The growth of Southern Baptists can only be accounted for by their loyalty to distinctive Baptist doctrines, and the failure of many of our Northern churches can only be charged to insidious inroads that are being made upon them by the undermining of the faith of our fathers. . . . Men who enter Baptist pulpits which have been fostered by the tears, devotion, and sacrifices of devoted founders have only two honorable missions: either to be true to the teachings and background of the constituency which they represent or to leave the field. . . . Our forefathers' loyalty to God's Word did not retard progress in their churches. . . . Our forefathers, to be sure, called a spade a spade. They fought sin in high and low places and in their own breasts. They exercised rigid church discipline. They split on the lodge question. They wrestled in prayer and controversy over the doctrine of grace and the doctrine of the Church. They fought the king and the king's men in behalf of a Church untrammelled by worldly authorities. They even wounded and broke each other's hearts at times because 'necessity was laid on them.' But withal they were dead in earnest and zealous for the Lord's honor, and with Paul they cried: 'Woe unto us if we preach not the Gospel!' So their Gospel was not bound. Souls were won, backsliders wooed back into the fold, and the Kingdom advanced mightily. We owe it to the world, to ourselves, and to our Lord ever to be 'sound in doctrine' regardless of consequences. The world is badly in need. The Church of God is in a sorrowful plight. And Jesus weeps. He sees the world's and our need."

Does all this need any comment? It ought to suffice to say that we Lutherans ought to be loyal to the Word of God and should therefore in accordance with our Confessions preserve the *confessional character* of our preaching, our church-papers, our books and other literature, our church-work, and our attitude toward those who do not in all things teach the doctrines of Scripture. Only in this way shall we for ourselves preserve the blessings which God graciously has given us, and only so shall we be able to let others share them with us.

J. H. C. FRITZ.

Freethinker's Protest Rejected. — "Justice Wm. T. Collins of the New York State Supreme Court rejected, October 30, an application by Joseph Lewis, president of the Freethinkers of America, to strike out the answers of the Board of Education upholding the use of the Bible in the public schools and defending both hymn-singing and the use of public-school buildings by religious and racial organizations. For some years Mr. Lewis has been engaged in litigation to enjoin [stop?] all these activities on the ground that they are not only a waste of public funds, but are in violation of Federal and State constitutions. He holds that a section of the city charter, drawn in 1851, permitting the use of Bibles in public schools is unconstitutional. Justice Collins asserted that the use of the Bible in no way affects the belief of Freethinkers."

To this report of the *Living Church* we may add another news item from the same paper to the effect that in New York a society has been formed for the purpose of combating "the rapidly growing menace of atheism." The group is but a little one, consisting of a Baptist minister (Dr. T. Darley Allen), a non-denominational woman evangelist (Mrs. E. S. Aboud), and a Roman Catholic professor of Fordham University (Dr.

George G. Sullivan). A number of Jews are said to be interested. This seems to be an attempt of fighting the fire of atheism with the fire of unionism. Dr. Allen is a strong believer in the power of propaganda. He is quoted as saying: "Many years ago I was connected with a Boston religious publishing house that sent out tons of literature on the subjects of atheism, Bible defense, etc., and as a result organized infidelity decreased greatly in membership and influence. In Great Britain, where lectures upon the Bible and infidelity were delivered in several large cities and six hundred thousand copies of antiinfidel pamphlets were scattered within a year, a number of infidel halls were closed, and ten years later the accessions to the leading 'freethought' organizations fell off from 1,883 to 433 members. A lecture entitled 'Will the Old Book Stand?' is known to have resulted in the conversion of four men who later became Christian ministers." That a movement, in spite of being afflicted with many reprehensible features, may in the wise economy of God accomplish some good objectives which it strives for, we do not wish to deny. A.

Going Beyond Modernism. — On account of the publicity which a sermon of Dr. H. E. Fosdick has received we ought to place before our readers some of its salient statements so they may have the *ipsissima verba* on their shelves: —

"Fifty years ago the intellectual portion of Western civilization had turned one of the most significant mental corners in history and was looking out on a new view of the world. The Church, however, was utterly unfitted for the appreciation of that view. Protestant Christianity had been officially formulated in prescientific days. The Augsburg Confession was a notable statement, but the men who drew it up, including Luther himself, did not even believe that the earth went round the sun. The Westminster Confession, for the rigorous acceptance of which the Protestant rear guard still contends, was a memorable document, but it was written forty years before Newton published his work on the law of gravitation. Moreover, not only were the mental patterns of Protestant Christianity officially formulated in prescientific days, but, as is always true of religion, those patterns seemed sacred to their believers and the changes forced by the new science seemed impious and sacrilegious. Youths like myself, therefore, a half century ago, faced an appalling lag between our generation's intellect on one side and its religion on the other, with religion asking us to believe incredible things. . . . Modernism therefore came as a deeply needed way of thinking. It insisted that the deep and vital experiences of the Christian soul, with itself, with its fellows, with its God, could be carried over into this new world and understood in the light of the new knowledge. We refused to live bifurcated lives, our intellect in the late nineteenth and our religion in the early sixteenth century. God, we said, is a living God, who has never uttered His final word on any subject; why, therefore, should prescientific frameworks of thought be so sacred that forever through them man must seek the Eternal and the Eternal seek men? . . . The Church thus had to go as far as Modernism. But now the Church must go beyond it; for even this brief rehearsal of its history reveals Modernism's essential note; it is primarily an adaptation, an adjustment, an accommodation of Christian faith to contemporary scientific thinking. It started by taking the intellectual culture

of a particular period as its criterion and then adjusted Christian teaching to that standard. Herein lies Modernism's shallowness and transiency: it rose out of a temporary intellectual crisis; it took a special type of scientific thinking as standard; it became an adaptation to, a harmonization with, the intellectual culture of a particular generation. That, however, is no adequate religion to represent the Eternal and claim the allegiance of the soul. Let it be a Modernist who says that to you! Unless the Church can go deeper and reach higher than that it will fail indeed."

Launching into the body of his sermon Dr. Fosdick divides his material into four parts. He first states that Modernism "has been excessively preoccupied with intellectualism, . . . whereas the deepest experiences of man's soul, whether in religion or out of it, cannot be approached head first. . . . A man is vastly greater than his logic, and the sweep and ambit of his spiritual experience and need are incalculably wider than his rational processes. So Modernism as such governs only a segment of the spiritual field and does not nearly compass the range of religion's meaning. . . . Our modern world, as a whole, cries out not so much for souls intellectually adjusted to it as for souls morally maladjusted to it, not most of all for accommodators and adjusters, but for intellectual and ethical challengers."

Next the sermon states that Modernism has "been dangerously sentimental." It is pointed out that in modernistic Christianity "lush optimism was a powerful factor," and people were led to believe "that all was right with the world." It is now evident that "sin is real." If a man is to have "real character, he must achieve it against the terrific down-drag of an antagonistic world; and if he is to have a real church, it must be not harmonized with the world, but standing out from the world and challenging it."

In the third place, "the intellectual culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to which Modernism adjusted itself, was predominantly man-centered. . . . You young people who were not here then can hardly imagine with what cheerful and confident trust we confided to man the saving of the world. So the temptation was to relegate God to an advisory capacity, a kind of chairman of the board of sponsors of our highly successful human enterprise." "We have at times gotten so low down that we talked as though the highest compliment we could pay to Almighty God was that a few scientists believed in Him. . . . The Eternal really is the spiritual. The highest in us comes from the deepest in the universe. Goodness and truth and beauty are not accidents, but revelations of creative reality. God is! On that point come out from among them, and be ye separate." "Finally, Modernism has too commonly lost its ethical standing-ground and its power of moral attack. It is a dangerous thing for a great religion to begin adjusting itself to the culture of a special generation. Harmonizing slips easily into compromising. . . . It is not in Germany alone that the Church stands in danger of being enslaved by society. . . . We Modernists had better talk to ourselves like this. . . . Fundamentalism is still with us, but mostly in the backwaters. The future of the churches, if we will have it so, is in the hands of Modernism. Therefore let all Modernists lift a new battle-cry: We must go beyond Modernism! . . . We cannot harmonize

Christ Himself with modern culture. What Christ does to modern culture is to challenge it."

It will be seen from this that Dr. Fosdick by no means intends to renounce Modernism, but merely declares that he feels the need of advancing and that especially the reality of sin and the greatness and supremacy of God must be stressed. In addition he wishes to see more of the social gospel preached. Thus his stand is as unevangelical as ever. It is very evident that Modernism has no Gospel for sin-distressed souls. A.

Mr. Rockefeller's Policy for Giving.— In discussing the widely disseminated statement of Mr. Rockefeller as to the policy which he will pursue in the future in making gifts in the interest of religion, the *Watchman-Examiner*, a paper which, being Baptist, represents the same denomination as Mr. Rockefeller, presents facts which should not be overlooked. As early as 1917, so we are informed, Mr. Rockefeller made the statement that "inarticulate Christianity" (that is, as the *Watchman-Examiner* explains the term, a Christianity in no sense connected with organized churches) "had become a great force in the world." Speaking of his conception of the Church of the future, he said in effect (as quoted by our authority): "I fancy it will be called the Church of God. The sole door of entrance will be the love of God and the desire to serve God and humanity. It will be without creed or ritual and without emphasis on ordinances. Its object will be to promote applied religion. It will be democratic in its organization. Its ministers will be trained less in the seminary and more in the vocations of life. In it all denominational barriers will be obliterated."

When the Interechurch World Movement was launched, Mr. Rockefeller was one of its prominent supporters. This venture, being founded on sand, of course soon collapsed. The Laymen's Foreign Mission Inquiry was another endeavor of this nature, and it was financed very largely by Mr. Rockefeller. Most of our readers will readily recall the book *Rethinking Missions*, in which the unionistic and modernistic views of the sponsors of the so-called Laymen's Inquiry were placed before the world. It represents the tendencies of the Modern Missions Movement, which has its headquarters in Chicago and which proposes "to seek out, endorse, and encourage cooperation with concrete enterprises on the field which, under whatever auspices, are undertaken and prosecuted in harmony with the principles and recommendations of the Report of the Laymen's Inquiry." While Mr. Rockefeller is not a member of the executive committee of this movement, his friends, according to the *Watchman-Examiner*, hold such membership. It is true that as a Baptist Mr. Rockefeller held doctrines that are unscriptural, but as a Modernist he rejects the Scriptures themselves. A.

Alarming Figures.— The *Living Church*, in an editorial giving statistics on the Protestant Episcopal Church, points out not only that there are fewer "postulants and candidates for holy orders, fewer lay readers, fewer parishes and missions," but also that the number of baptisms and confirmations has decreased very perceptibly. "The total number of baptisms reported in 1935 was only 63,056, a decrease of 3,099 over 1934. There was an even greater decrease in the number of confirmations,

which was only 67,096 in 1935, being 5,466 less than those reported in 1934." The editor in reflecting on these figures says quite correctly: "These figures are a more accurate index to the state of the Church than the numbers of baptized persons (which has decreased 1,425) and of communicants (which has increased 26,178), because the figures for baptized persons and communicants are approximations at best and vary from year to year in proportion to the diligence of rectors in pruning their parish lists. The figures for baptisms and confirmations, however, should be accurate, as they are taken from the official records of the various bishops and so are based upon an actual count."—On the schools of his Church the editor has this to say: "The statistics of our church-schools also reveal a serious condition. In 1934 there were reported 510,309 scholars and 61,502 teachers. In 1935 the number of scholars reported showed a decrease of nearly 4,000, being 506,400, and there were 550 less teachers, or a total of 60,952."

A.

The Need of Continued Christian Mission-Work.—Under the heading "Results of One Hundred Years of Missions" the *Evangelical Messenger*, quoted in *Christianity To-day* (Feb., 1936), gives the following alinement of the membership of Christian churches: The estimated population of the world is approximately 2,000,000,000. The estimated number of Christians (nominal included) is ca. 600,000,000, of whom 200,000,000 are Protestants, the remainder being Greek and Roman Catholics. China, with 425,000,000 inhabitants, has 3,000,000 Christians. Eighty-eight per cent. of China's entire population live in the rural sections; yet forty per cent. of all its missionary forces reside in twenty cities. Japan, with 60,000,000, has 300,000 Christians. Eighty per cent. of Japan's population are farmers, who are almost entirely unevangelized. India, with 350,000,000 people, has 5,000,000 Christians. Of 710,000 villages in India only 39,727 have Christians living in them. Africa, with a population of 155,000,000 persons, has 3,000,000 Christians. "This means," as the periodical says, "that in these four major areas of missionary activity having a total population of one billion the Gospel-message has gained approximately eleven million Christians, Protestant and Catholic, or about one per cent." But how about conditions in our so-called Christian countries? The same periodical reports that out of 40,000,000 inhabitants of France, only 9,500,000 are professed Christians, 8,000,000 Roman Catholics and 1,500,000 Protestants. The majority of the population is either wholly indifferent or atheistic. Is the world becoming Christian or heathen?

J. T. M.

Mount Airy Seminary Receives Large Gifts.—The *Philadelphia Seminary Bulletin*, the publication of the U. L. C. seminary located at Mount Airy, Philadelphia, announces that in December, 1935, it received a bequest from Mrs. Ada Martin Jamieson to the amount of forty thousand dollars. "This is the largest single gift that the seminary has received in the past five years. Mrs. Jamieson was the granddaughter of the founder of the Norton Professorship, and her bequest is designated as an addition to the original gift of thirty thousand dollars by which that professorship was endowed." Several other bequests were received by this U. L. C. seminary during 1935, the total being quite impressive—\$60,756.32.

A.

Present-Day Religious Thought.— Writing in the *Christian Century*, Prof. H. N. Wieman, professor of the Philosophy of Religion in the University of Chicago, gives a survey of Protestant religious thought in our country to-day. He writes: "The forms of Protestant religious thought in our country reveal four divisions. They might be called the supernaturalists, the idealists, the intuitionists, and the naturalists. The supernaturalists are of two kinds, the traditionalists, including the Fundamentalists, and the neo-supernaturalists with such representatives as the Niebuhr brothers, G. W. Richards, Wilhelm Pauck, and others. The idealists include absolutists like W. E. Hocking and personalists like E. S. Brightman. The intuitionists have such men as W. A. Brown, D. C. Macintosh, H. P. Van Dusen, Walter Horton, and Eugene Lyman. The naturalists are of several sorts, ranging from A. N. Whitehead and H. A. Overstreet to E. S. Ames and John Dewey." He correctly observes that, strictly speaking, there are merely two tendencies, that of the supernaturalists and that of the naturalists; the intuitionists and idealists hold mediating positions, which will become weaker and weaker. Christians may observe all these movements and tendencies with equanimity; for they know that whatever changes may take place, *Verbum Dei manet in aeternum*. A.

Brief Items.— Episcopalians and Russian Orthodox Church people held a joint service in New York, at which the Rt. Rev. Adam, Archbishop of Philadelphia, a leader in the Russian Orthodox Church, was the celebrant of the "mass." The gathering was under the auspices of the Orthodox and Anglican Fellowship. It seems that these people consider themselves to be in full fellowship with each other.—In England, at a meeting of the Church Assembly which was presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the question of disestablishment was given a thorough airing. The strong proponent of disestablishment is the Bishop of Durham, who holds that freedom of the Church is impossible as long as the present union of Church and State continues. The Archbishop of Canterbury had appointed a commission which was instructed to investigate the question, and its report formed the basis of the debate. Apparently no decision was reached, for the subject was put on the calendar for the summer session. The Archbishop of York, a member of the commission, is said to hold that disestablishment would be a lesser evil than the present situation. It will be recalled that, when the Anglican Church, about seven years ago, tried to revise the *Book of Common Prayer*, this undertaking was thwarted by the action of Parliament.—The *Living Church*, from which we have taken the above matters, informs us, too, that the Church Unity Octave of Prayer for Catholic Reunion this winter was given much prominence in England. "The central observance was a High Mass at the Church of St. Magnus the Martyr. . . . The Russian Archbishop Seraphim had promised to attend, bringing the venerated Ikon of Our Lady of Kurak, and to celebrate before it a *Molieben* of intercession for unity." Owing to special circumstances the Archbishop Seraphim could not attend; in his absence "the Archpriest N. Behr and Archdeacon B. Theokritoff sang the *Molieben* in honor of Our Lady after the High Mass." No wonder that there are people in England who fear disestablishment, holding that the removal of what remains of government control

would mean the introduction of Popery by the High Church clergy.— How variously people are constituted! The *Living Church* tells of a great English scholar who attends services in St. Paul's Cathedral just because there people will not speak to him. So here there is a man who is attracted by what most people bitterly criticize—an attitude of aloofness on the part of one's fellow-worshippers. Is he a lone exception?—"The Metropolitan Lutheran Student Council of Chicagoland, which includes more than two thousand Lutheran students in various institutions of this area, held its annual conference at Northwestern University on February 23. The problems of war and nationalism, the press and propaganda, and the ethics of capitalism were discussed during the sessions." So reports the *Christian Century*. One really does not see why this was called a Lutheran meeting.—The Methodist Laymen's Committee of Chicago, which wishes to uphold conservative Christianity, and has attacked Liberalism sponsored by Methodist ministers, is being opposed by a newly formed organization called "The Laymen's Religious Movement," which likewise consists of Methodists. These latter put on their flag an expression of full confidence in the leadership of their liberal pastors. It seems that we here are viewing a house that is divided against itself.—The *Christian Century* in an editorial voices the opinion that a new Modernism is due to arrive. In it, as the writer pictures it to himself, the tyranny of science will be restrained, and it will be told that it must give attention not only to the world of "facts," but likewise to the world of "values"; otherwise it will have to be satisfied with a subordinate role. The "blight of subjectivity" will be gotten rid of; we shall once more have objectivity in our world view; values like goodness, truth, beauty, will be regarded as being a part of what is called nature. It will stand for a religion which is not metaphysical, but ethical. All of this is still sufficiently vague to render it almost innocuous, unless somebody should actually mistake it for Christianity.—Secretary of Schools A. C. Stellhorn, in the bulletin which he edits in the interest of our Christian day-schools, submits the following interesting items: "On December 31, 1935, a jury found that Dr. Richard Spencer, Chicago Heights, Ill., was within his right to withhold his daughter, age sixteen, from the public school, for the purpose of educating her at home. The verdict made plain, in fact, that the compulsory school law, in existence thirty-five years, could not supersede primary parental rights. Dr. Spencer is also keeping another daughter, age fourteen, out of school. Before a justice of the peace he had been fined five dollars for his apparent infraction of the law. One of our pastors in Texas who could not induce his congregation to open a school kept his children out of the public school and taught them at home, one of them at least up to the sixth grade. A Norwegian Lutheran of Evanston, Ill., having no easy access to a Lutheran school, a few years ago made arrangements with the public-school authorities to teach his child at home."—The population of South America which uses the Spanish language has been given its first cardinal in the appointment of the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Santiago Luis Copello, to that position. The people of South America who speak Portuguese have a representative in the college of cardinals also.—Reports from Chicago state that Rev. James Oliver Buswell, Jr., president of Wheaton College, a Presbyterian,

was tried by a special judicial commission of the presbytery of Chicago and was found guilty of violating the laws of the Church. He has been a supporter of the Independent Board of Foreign Missions, which was established in protest against the attitude of the official Board of the Presbyterian Church for Foreign Missions because the latter, it is alleged, tolerates indifference in doctrine and Modernism. President Buswell was not given a severe penalty. The tribunal held that he should be "admonished." It seems that proceedings have been instituted against other members of this Independent Board, too.—From Pittsburgh a correspondent of the *Christian Century* sends the disconcerting news that evening services are very poorly attended and that the question is asked whether they will have to be abandoned. "One of our largest churches, possessing a magnificent choir and a beautiful building, had only twenty people at a recent evening service. Most of these were older people, who came from a sense of duty. . . . Only a handful of our Pittsburgh churches are making any success at all of the evening hour." The correspondent asks, "Is this merely a local problem, or is it representative of the entire United States?"

A.

II. Ausland.

Serferhte Urteile über Schrift und Bekenntnis. In der „N. C. Z. N.“ verbreitet sich in einer Serie von symbolgeschichtlichen und symboldogmatischen Artikeln Lic. Dr. F. Böhlmann-Erlangen über das Thema „Bekenntnis, Bekenntnisstand, Bekenntnen“, in der dritten Lieferung insbesondere über die Frage „Wie verhalten sich die geschichtlich gewordenen Symbole der Kirche zu ihrem Ursymbol, zur Heiligen Schrift?“ Wir freuen uns, daß solche Themata wie die hier behandelten wieder zur Sprache kommen; waren sie doch lange genug unter der Lawine von historisch-kritischen Problemen so gut wie ganz begraben. Man hatte schließlich nur noch ein mitleidiges Lächeln für den, der sich die Symbole noch wichtig sein ließ. Leider sagt aber nun auch Dr. Böhlmann in seinem Aufsatz nicht das Richtige in der Beantwortung der von ihm gestellten Frage. Er warnt zunächst sowohl vor einem unberechtigten „Biblizismus“ wie vor einem unberechtigten „Spiritualismus“. Ersteres ist, daß man Gottes Wort (Biblia) auf Satz und Vers glaubt und zur Geltung kommen lassen will. „Ein theologischer Biblizismus ist ebenso unberechtigt wie unmöglich“, schreibt Böhlmann. Der Biblizismus vergißt nach Böhlmann die achtzehnhundert Jahre seit Abschluß des Kanons und übersieht, daß in dieser langen Zeit „Gott auch mit uns gewesen ist und mit uns und durch uns geredet hat“. So muß es notwendigerweise einen berechtigten „Traditionalismus“ gegenüber einem übertriebenen Biblizismus geben. Mit „Spiritualismus“ meint Böhlmann jene individuelle oder subjektive Schwarmgeisterei, die sich weder an Schrift noch an Bekenntnis lehrt, also in Lehre und Praxis eigene Wege geht. Gegenüber diesen beiden Richtungen, dem Biblizismus und dem Spiritualismus, muß am Traditionalismus festgehalten werden, das heißt, die Kirche hat sich die Traditionen zwischen der Jetztzeit und der Urzeit zu wahren, Traditionen, die, wie in einem Extrakt konzentriert, in ihren Symbolen vorliegen. Diese Symbole sind so zustande gekommen, daß es Gott gefallen hat, in den Not- und Sturmzeiten der Kirche seinen Geist in besonderem Maße walten zu lassen. Das erklärt Böhlmann weiter so: „Gott hat

nicht nur vor Christus, sondern auch nach Christus manchmal und auf mancherlei Weise geredet zu unsern Vätern durch seine von ihm gesandten, bevollmächtigten und erleuchteten Boten und Knechte und hat so seiner Kirche einen reichen Schatz von Traditionen, von Überlieferungen, vermittelt." Hier stellt sich Böhlmann wesentlich auf den Standpunkt des Papismus, nur daß er von vielen bevollmächtigten und erleuchteten Boten und Knechten redet, während sich der Romanismus die Sache leichter macht und alle iura in serinio pectoris papae sein läßt. Böhlmann glaubt gewissermaßen an eine *Inspiration* der Traditionen und läßt dann diese inspirierten Traditionen zu Symbolen werden, während unsere Symbole doch nie etwas anderes haben sein wollen als Zeugen und Darlegungen der Schriftwahrheit (man vergleiche nur z. B. die Einleitung zur Skofordienformel). Traditionalismus ist dem Autor gleich „Symbolismus“: in Symbolen vorliegende Tradition. Gewiß, eine grundföhllich unbiblische und unlutherische Verwirrung! Aber das schlimme Ende kommt nun erst nach. Auf die Frage „Wie verhalten sich Heilige Schrift und Symbole zueinander?“ antwortet er: „Auch die Schrift trögt symbolhaften Charakter und kann darum mit den übrigen Symbolen der Kirche zusammengestellt werden.“ (Sie!) Nur rückt die Schrift in der Reihe der Symbole „an die erste Stelle und nimmt den Rang und die Würde eines Ursymbols an“. Damit ist die Schrift aber zum „maßgebenden Symbol für die übrigen Symbole geworden, das schlechthin kanonische Symbol“. Das hört sich ja ganz schön, ja beinahe orthodox an! Böhlmann argumentiert nun weiter: „Daß die Schrift Ursymbol ist, gibt ihr eine ganz hervorragende Stellung, einen überragenden Primat.“ (Sie!) „Aber“, so fährt er fort, „gilt nicht auch von diesem Primat das *primus inter pares*? Erstrangiges Symbol gewiß, aber eben auch Symbol, und damit erster unter einer Reihe von Gleichen, Erstgeborener unter vielen oder manchen nachgeborenen Brüdern!“ Dieses „Gleich“ erklärt er dann näher so: „Ist denn nicht die Schrift, so gewiß sie Gottes Wort in sich trögt und Gottes Geist in ihr weht, eben als Schrift Menschenwort und Menschenwerk [!]; und redet und waltet nicht andererseits in den Symbolen, so gewiß sie Menschenwort und Menschenwerk sind, wiederum auch Gottes Wort und Gottes Geist?“ Hieraus aber folgt nach Böhlmann, daß man bei der Behandlung des Verhältnisses von Schrift und Symbol über ein dialektisches Verhältnis nicht hinauskommt. Auf der einen Seite nämlich ist das Symbol der Schrift wesensgleich (?) und dann wieder: die Schrift ist wesensverschieden vom Symbol, übersymbolisch, Schrift von einziger Art, *scriptura sacra*, „heilige“ Schrift. Und was will das schließlich alles heißen? Dies, daß Böhlmann die Grunddifferenz zwischen Schrift und Bekenntnis nicht anerkennt. Die Schrift ist ihm nicht das wörtlich eingegebene, einzigartige Wort Gottes, sondern Menschenwort und Menschenwerk, obwohl sie Gottes Wort „in sich trögt“ und Gottes Geist „in ihr weht“. Böhlmann verwirft die Lehre von der Verbalinspiration; so kann er schließlich auch keinen rechten Unterschied finden zwischen Schrift und Bekenntnis und muß sich in die Ausflucht eines „dialektischen Verhältnisses“ flüchten. Auf der andern Seite aber erhöht er nach römischer Weise die Symbole auf das Niveau der Schrift; denn auch sie tragen ihm, wie die Schrift, Gottes Wort in sich und in ihnen weht Gottes Geist. Eine Annäherung an die Lehre der Reformation findet sich daher bei Böhlmann nicht. Sein Barthianismus, sein rationalistischer Modernismus, läßt es

nicht zu, daß er zur Lehre der Konfessionsformel zurückkehrt. Diese aber lehrt über das Verhältnis von Schrift und Bekenntnis ganz anders als Pöhlmann: ihr ist das Symbol der Schrift nie wesensgleich; ihr ist das Symbol nur kirchliche Darlegung der aus der Schrift geschöpften göttlichen Lehre; ihr ist die Schrift allein norma normans; sie will nur norma normata sein. Aber das erniedrigt das Symbol nicht; das macht das Symbol nicht ungewiß. Nein; eben weil es nach der Heiligen Schrift normiert ist, ist es ein gewisses Zeugnis der göttlichen Wahrheit, norma atque regula, n a ch, aber doch auch wieder m i t und i n der Schrift. Umgekehrt aber hat das Symbol überall da keinen wirklichen Wert, wo man die lutherische Lehre von der Inspiration der Schrift verwirft und man dann das Symbol nicht als aus der Schrift geschöpft anerkennt, sondern es als ein durch das Wesen des Heiligen Geistes in von Christo erleuchteten Männern zustandekommenes Traditionsbuch betrachtet (nebenbei bemerkt, sind nach des Schreibers Darstellung Schrift sowohl als Symbol eigentlich durch Illumination, das moderne Surrogat für Inspiration, entstanden). Denn seit der Apostelzeit (vgl. Eph. 2, 20; Joh. 17, 20; Hebr. 1, 1. 2 usw.) hat Christus außerhalb der Schrift nun einmal n i c h t mehr zu und durch uns geredet. Behauptet man, Gott rede noch jetzt zu und durch uns außerhalb der Schrift, so ist das nichts anderes als der von dem Schreiber selbst als unberechtigt verworfene Spiritualismus, das heißt, die in der Kirche unberechtigte S c h w a r m g e i s t e r e i. Auch in bezug auf die Doktrin von dem Verhältnis zwischen Schrift und Bekenntnis bringt die dialektische Theologie die Kirche nicht zum Standpunkt der Reformation zurück; denn was die dialektische Theologie einerseits so kräftig bejaht, verneint sie partout andererseits. Und gerade darin liegt überhaupt der große Schade dieser gnostisch-philosophischen Richtung, dieses rationalistischen Modernismus im Gewand der Reformation.

J. L. M.

Die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis unter den Heiden. Einen interessanten und wichtigen Beitrag zu Röm. 1, 19. 20 und 2, 14. 15 liefert Missionar J. Zittmann aus dem Kamerun, Westafrika, unter der Überschrift „Urtümliche Bindungen und Volksordnungen im vorderen Kamerun“ in dem „Evang. Missions-Magazin“ (Heft 1, Jahrg. 80). Da auch wir uns immer wieder mit der Frage beschäftigen müssen: Wie denkt sich der Heide Gott? so dürften einige Sätze aus dem sehr lehrreichen Referat für uns von Interesse sein. Missionar Zittmann schreibt: „Wohin man im Waldgebiet kommt, wissen die Leute von Gott. Und er ist nicht gedacht als irgendein Göze oder auch sonst mit etwas Dinglichem vermischt, sondern er ist der überweltliche Schöpfer von Erde und Himmel und der Erschaffer des Kindes im Mutterleib. Die Duala haben als Beinamen Gottes das Wort Muwepiki, 'Schöpfer', und die Wiederholung des Wortstamms drückt schon aus, daß das Erschaffen nicht nur ein einmaliger Akt ist. Die Bantou nennen ihn Mfega-bod, 'Menschenereschaffer'. Andere bilden andere Namen von dem alten Kameruner Zeitwort peka, 'schöpfen', 'erschöpfen'. Der Heide verbindet mit seiner Gottesvorstellung nicht alles, was wir im ersten Artikel über das höchste Wesen ausfagen, aber Namen und Vorstellungen sind durchaus für den christlichen Unterricht brauchbar. Die große Aufgabe in Predigt und Unterricht ist die, die Menschen zu lebendigem Glauben an und herzlichem Vertrauen zu diesem

bekanntem Gott zu führen. — Daß dieser Gott auch Anteil nimmt am menschlichen Ergehen, daß er den Frommen Zuerbietet, ihr Trost in Not, ihre Leuchte im Tode ist, . . . wird nur von einzelnen Heiden geahnt. Wenn man hört, welche Beinamen z. B. die Bakwiri am Kamerunberge ihrem Gottesnamen Owase hinzufügen: Lowa, ‚der Himmelsherr‘, Lowa Peyoyo, ‚der unbefleckte Himmelsherr‘, Monge oder Mongonge, ‚der Allherr‘, Ndando, ‚Abgrenzung‘, das heißt, der von seinen Geschöpfen zu unterscheiden ist, der aber auch den Stämmen und Völkern Grenzen und Unterscheidungen gesetzt hat; wenn man ihre Anrede im heidnischen Gebet hört: A Owas' a Loba la Monge mo Ndando, ‚du großer, allmächtiger Himmelsgott der Ordnung‘: so muß man sich nur wundern, daß sie, statt zu lebendigerer Gotteserkenntnis und wahrem Gottesglauben durchzudringen, Gott zum Spott gemacht haben: Er hat sich zurückgezogen in unermessene Fernen, unerreichbar; und weil er gut ist, muß man ihm nicht dienen noch ihn fürchten. (Dies erklärt sich aus dem Schuldbewußtsein der Heiden: man flieht Gott.) Aus der Finsternis ihres unverständigen Herzens wächst bei ihnen wie bei andern Heiden die Aferreligion: die Totengeister treten an Stelle des himmlischen Vaters, Machtglaube, Wutkult und Amulettenwesen verdrängen den Allmächtigen; Gott wird zum Schatten (ähnlich wie beim Papismus). Trotz Gottesahnung sind sie abgeglitten zu Geisterdienst, zu Hexen- und Totenfurcht; Zauber, Orakel, Amulettenwesen spielen sie in die Hände betrügerischer Menschen; Naturverbundenheit wird Naturgebundenheit. Aber durch all diesen Wust und Dunst hindurch lernen die Heiden auf Grund ihrer Gottesahnung doch immer wieder, die Hände auszustrecken nach dem ewigen Gut, heraus aus Knechtung, Verzweiflung und Not. Es ist die Schuld der Heiden, von dem herrlichen Schöpfergott zu wissen und sich doch dem Geschöpf hinzugeben in heißem Bemühen. Darum ist diese Anknüpfung auch verbunden mit der Predigt zur Buße. Die Vasa am Sanaga haben eine Sündenfall-überlieferung, die sich wie eine ins Afrikanische übertragene Parallele des biblischen Verichts anhört. Der große Gegensatz ruht in der Fortsetzung dieses Verichts. In der Schrift hören wir vom bloßen, hauenden Schwert des Cherub. Zugleich aber läßt die lange Kette der Offenbarung vom Protevangelium bis zum eingebornen Sohn, der in des Vaters Schoß ist, die gegenseitigen Beziehungen in Suchen und Sichfindenlassen nimmer abreißen. Von all dem haben die Vasa nichts. Das einzige, was ihnen blieb, ist die Kunde von einem großen Stein am Fluß mit eigentümlicher Vertiefung, ‚die letzte Fußspur Gottes auf Erden‘. — Besser als der aufrechte Gang unterscheidet das Gewissen den Menschen vom Tier. Auch die Heiden unterscheiden zwischen gut und böse bei sich und andern. Unsere Leute haben keinen besonderen Namen für das Gewissen des ‚Herzens‘; denn das Gewissen äußert sich bei ihnen wie in einer Stimme. Das Gewissen stellt den Menschen in die Verantwortung vor den Höchsten, verbindet aber auch zugleich mit den Menschen, zunächst den Nächsten dem Nächsten, aber auch den Menschen dem Mitmenschen. Denn Gott steht hinter dem Gewissen; Gott und Gewissen gehören zusammen, auch wo beides verdunkelt ist. ‚Gott ist gut und haßt das Böse; Gott haßt ungerechtes Gericht.‘“

Fürwahr, eine feine Illustration und Bestätigung dessen, was uns Paulus im Römerbrief Kap. 1 und 2 sagt. Zugleich ist dies aber auch doch wieder eine ernste Mahnung an uns Christen, daß wir auch diesen armen, in Blindheit dahingehenden Menschen die seligmachende Gotteserkenntnis voll und ganz bringen sollten.

J. L. W.

A Confession. — *America* (Roman Catholic) of March 7 contains a sketch of the present political situation in Spain under the title "The Spanish Elections," by Owen B. McGuire. After describing the seven parties, five Catholic and two anti-Catholic, he cites with approval the Bishop of Barcelona, who says: (In the present elections) "we have reached a crisis in our history whose outcome will decide the very existence of Catholic Spain." Then he makes a confession, rather surprising in a Catholic journal: "We have had in this country no adequate idea of the extent to which Spain has been dechristianized within the last 150 years. . . . The masses of the working class have been lost to the Church. . . . It is due to two causes, both equally deplorable: the neglect, material and spiritual, of the toiling masses. Spain was politically the worst-governed and most boss-ridden country in Europe. . . . The neglect of the working class by their spiritual guides was no less deplorable and is incomprehensible when one considers the many warnings they had in the insurrections of the past hundred years. The poor people were neither instructed in their religion nor kept to its practise." A similar confession regarding Mexico would be good for the Catholic soul. For centuries the "Church" has neglected, enslaved, and muled the people of Mexico. No Christian will attempt to justify the antireligious activity of government officials; but Rome, in Mexico and in Spain, is reaping the harvest of its own seeding.

T. H.

The Catholic Youth Movement in the Church of England. — In the Anglican Church, at the centenary of the Oxford Movement in 1933, an Anglo-Catholic youth movement was begun, which calls itself "The Seven Years' Association" because the movement as first conceived is a temporary one intended to last till 1940, when an international congress is to be held. One of the chief spokesmen of the movement is a young man of twenty-six years, Peter Winkworth by name, who, when the Dean of St. Paul's in London advocated Pan-Protestant services "to attract youth," made the famous reply, "You do not understand youth, sir. Youth is won not by stunts, but by discipline." Writing in the *Living Church*, this young lawyer reports as the rule of life of his association the following six points: "1) To be present at Mass on Sundays and the greater holidays and to keep Sunday as a day of worship, rest, and recreation. 2) To receive Holy Communion at least three times a year, of which Eastertide shall be one. 3) To go to confession at least once a year. 4) To fast in Lent and to eat no meat on Fridays. 5) To uphold the Church's marriage law. 6) To give regularly to the support of the Church and ministry."

While one admires the stamina which these young people manifest, endeavoring to stem the tide of unionistic indifference, one has to feel sorry for them, beholding the salad which they have prepared for themselves, mixing into it in such large proportion popish and legalistic ingredients.

A.