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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches.

I. Amerika.

The Inspiration of Scripture.— Under this heading Dr. Loraine Boettner, Professor of Bible, Pikeville College (Kentucky), published two articles in *Christianity Today* (July and August) in which he proves the doctrine of plenary inspiration (verbal inspiration) to be truly Biblical. In the first of the two articles he shows that, while rationalists have invariably denied the divine inspiration of the Bible, this doctrine has always been held by Christian believers with absolute unanimity. In the second article he supplies the Scripture-proof for the doctrine of plenary inspiration. His thorough, exhaustive presentation of the Scripture evidence certainly must delight every true Christian's heart. At the close of the article he writes: "It is of course impossible to explain away the innumerable texts which teach plenary inspiration, and the idea that they might be explained away is based on the odd notion that this doctrine is taught only in isolated texts here and there. It is true that some texts teach it with exceptional clearness, and these are the ones which skeptics would most like to be rid of. But these passages are simply the climax of a progressive and pervasive testimony to the divine origin and infallibility of these writings, a testimony equally strong in the two Testaments. 'The effort to explain away the Bible's witness to its plenary inspiration,' says Dr. Warfield, 'reminds one of a man standing safely in his laboratory and elaborately explaining, possibly with the aid of diagrams and mathematical formulae, how every stone in an avalanche has a defined pathway and may easily be dodged by one with some presence of mind. We may fancy such an elaborate trifler's triumph as he would analyze the avalanche into its constituent stones and demonstrate of stone after stone that its pathway is definite, limited, and may easily be avoided. But avalanches, unfortunately, do not come upon us stone by stone, one at a time, courteously leaving us opportunity to withdraw from the pathway of each in turn, but all at once, in a roaring mass of destruction. Just so we may explain away a text or two which teach plenary inspiration to our own closest satisfaction, dealing with them each without reference to its relation to the others; but these texts of ours, again, unfortunately do not come upon us in this artificial isolation; neither are they few in number. There are scores, hundreds, of them; and they come bursting upon us in one solid mass. Explain them away? We should have to explain away the whole New Testament. What a pity it is that we cannot see and feel the avalanche of texts beneath which we lie hopelessly buried as clearly as we may see and feel the avalanche of stones! Let us, however, but open our eyes to the variety and pervasiveness of the New Testament witness to its high estimate of Scripture, and we shall no longer wonder that modern scholarship finds itself compelled to allow that the Christian Church has read her records correctly and that the church doctrine of inspiration is simply a transcript of the Biblical doctrine; nor shall we any longer wonder that the Church, receiving these Scriptures as her authoritative teacher of doctrine, adopted in the very beginning of her life the doctrine of plenary

inspiration and has held it with a tenacity that knows no wavering until the present hour."

What a pity it is that to-day Lutheran theologians in our country, reared on the *sola Scriptura*, dare deny the plenary inspiration of the Bible not only in quarterlies intended for pastors, but even in popular periodicals, where the venom of unbelief must vitiate the minds of thousands of laymen, both old and young, while Fundamentalists in sectarian circles, where Modernism has long been destructively current, arise anew to proclaim and defend the Biblical doctrine of verbal and plenary inspiration! We are indeed ashamed that "Lutheran" rationalists should add their offense to that of rank Modernists, to whom the Bible is no longer a divine, but a human book, full of errors. But all the more do we welcome and appreciate articles like that of Dr. Boettner which bring out the Biblical doctrine of inspiration so clearly and emphatically. J. T. M.

Lutheran Church Unity and Its Hindrances.—In the *Lutheran* of July 23 the editor, Dr. N. R. Melhorn, discusses an article that appeared in the *Augustana Quarterly* and was written by Dr. O. A. Benson on the subject "Doctrines and Practises that Hinder Lutheran Church Unity." Dr. Melhorn does not think that our main objective in endeavoring to bring about adjustments of groups of Lutherans must be the removal of "inherited hindrances." Differences there are between the church-bodies, and they continue in the mergers that have arisen, says he; but over against them he wishes to stress that "the constituencies of the Norwegian, American, and United Lutheran churches each have the vigor of unity of purpose, the might of greater numbers, and the lessened weakening of division." He deplors that Lutherans are not a greater power in this country, and he finds the evil in "ineffective or insufficient organization." Perhaps the following paragraph will bring out well what he has in mind: "It is our personal belief that what the people who are Lutherans in America and Canada want to consider is an organization big enough to meet the nation-wide antagonisms to our Lord's teachings. For every nation-wide attack on Christianity, good protective strategy calls for 'nation-wide' church response." To do justice to him, we quote also the last paragraphs of his article:—

"Dr. Benson decries the desire for bigness. Well, bigness has its uses. You can see more from the top of a mountain than from the top of a hill, other things being equal. There are times when mass momentum is absolutely necessary. We have never seen it tried, but we suspect that a series of successive collisions between a ten-ton truck and two-ton automobiles would do most damage to the small cars. The Lutherans of America are really a forceful group. They rank fourth in numerical size, and they have the esteem of their fellow-men. Their influence is needed against the invasions of secularism, against intolerance, and against the subtle planning of hierarchy to obtain a commanding position in American life. Combined, it would amount to something. Divided, it is of little real effect.

"It is when these great calls to service are under consideration that we become impatient with those who want to back-track into unity by first considering hindrances. What we should do is to go ahead into com-

mon action against common enemies in the name of our common Word and Sacraments. Not hindrances, but objectives should be major to the consideration of union. We cannot remove differences; but grace can manage the miracle of fellowships."

We cannot refrain from saying that the writer of the above here seems to put human considerations above those given in the Scriptures. What God Himself has inculcated as the course which we are to follow is faithfulness to His revelation. Not the question, How can we best function as a church-body? should be uppermost in our minds, but, What does loyalty to the Word of God demand of us? Everything else is secondary. A.

Guarding and Preserving. — Under this heading the *Lutheran Herald* (July 21) offers its readers an editorial which, at least in its essential statements, must receive the whole-hearted support of every orthodox Lutheran. The article really is a plea for the preservation of the pure doctrine of the Lutheran Church in its opposition to Calvinistic and papistic errors. It is highly gratifying to all lovers of the divine truth to read such an editorial in a Lutheran periodical, and by excerpting it here, we purpose not only to present to our readers a few thoughts of eminent importance, but also to commend that paper for bringing these thoughts to the notice of its circle of readers. Quoting the article in part, we read: "We hear [to-day] such statements as this: 'The Lutheran Confessions are mile-stones marking how far Christian thinking had progressed at that time.' [By the way, this is the common view on creeds and confessions, held by liberal theologians, including Lutheran, in Germany and our own country. — *The Edd.*] We hear warnings against 'overindocination,' against 'ramming Lutheran doctrine down the throats of our young people.' We see that in some quarters the stressing of Lutheran doctrine and practise in contrast to un-Lutheran doctrine and practise has lost its meaning. Well, if Lutheran doctrine is of so little importance, why bother about the maintenance of a Lutheran Church? We have in this country a number of protestant church-bodies and sects. It does not look well, and much confusion in religious matters is caused thereby. Much of the declamation against the evils of 'denominationalism' is justified. If there is no vital interest involved, men have no right to split the Church and to squander its resources in men and means. When there is practically nothing in the strong box, why order out the soldiers and march with drawn sword guarding less than four cents? [The writer here refers to a very apt, illustrative story which he narrated in the preceding chapters.] It is far different if there is something of great value which deserves to be guarded and preserved. And in the case of the Lutheran Church there is a great treasure. And that treasure is the pure doctrine, the Lutheran presentation of the saving truth. The Lutheran Church stands for one great principle: 'Salvation is of God,' Rev. 19, 1. This is the red thread that runs through the whole fabric of Lutheran doctrine. Therefore the Lutheran Church has recognized 'justification by faith' to be the central Christian doctrine, and it has excluded from this doctrine all works and merits of man. 'Justification' is an act of God, who imputes to sinful and guilty man the righteousness of Christ. Therefore our Church also sees in Christ not simply the perfect man, not only the perfect teacher, but the divine Son of God,

who became man in order to save fallen man. Salvation is of God; our Savior is true God with the Father and the Holy Ghost. This salvation is appropriated by us through faith. We are saved through faith. And accordingly it is taught that faith is not man's own creation. Man believes, yes, and he believes with a faith wrought by the Holy Spirit, true God with the Father and the Son. Faith is created in the sinners' heart through an act of the Holy Spirit which we call the new birth. And since the saving faith, which is a new life of faith [this expression can be correctly construed, since what the writer means to emphasize is that saving faith is not a dead quality, but a living, active appropriating, a justifying and also sanctifying reliance upon, the merits of Christ; as a definition of saving faith, however, the statement of course is incorrect], consists in accepting the salvation wrought for us by Jesus Christ, it follows [?] that the Holy Spirit, in creating the life of faith in the hearts of men, will use as His means a presentation of Jesus Christ and His work. This presentation we have in the Word and the Sacraments. [Also this thought is correct, but, to avoid misunderstanding, it should have been differently worded: 1) For "life of faith" in the last case better *faith*; 2) for "a presentation of Jesus Christ and His work" better the Gospel, etc.; 3) for the process of ratiocination which the writer here employs, but wrongly so, since the latter really does not follow from the former, as the Holy Spirit, under given circumstances, might work saving faith even without means, it would be better to refer this truth directly to Scripture and to state the teaching of Scripture that God has actually appointed the Word and the Sacraments to be ordinarily the means of grace. That doctrine, too, is an article of *faith*, which we accept because God teaches it in His Word, and not because of a logical or rational development from any other Biblical truth.] We can now appreciate the attitude of the Lutheran Church toward the Word and the Sacraments. The Word is divine, inspired by the Holy Spirit. It does not simply tell a story of Jesus Christ and His work; but it brings Christ and the salvation wrought by Him, the fruit of His suffering and death, to the human heart. And likewise the Sacraments are not simply symbols and tokens, but they also bring Jesus Christ Himself and His salvation, and thereby the life of faith is created and nourished. [Also here we find an inaccuracy, for the "life of faith" is created and nourished by the fact that the Holy Spirit works faith in the heart through the means of grace. The "life of faith" is not the result of *personal contact* with Christ, whom the means of grace bring to the heart; this would be the error of Osiander, who taught justification by personal contact with God's essential righteousness, *i. e.*, the Son of God, and hence, in the last analysis, justification by sanctification. In other words, union with Christ is the *result* of faith; but faith is not *created* and nourished by some union with Christ. Though the latter may be asserted and defended in the article of sanctification, it is not true in that of justification.] We see that the doctrines taught and stressed by the Lutheran Church put it into opposition to other church-bodies teaching differently on some point or another. But we also see that the various doctrines taught by our Lutheran Church constitute an organic whole. The various doctrines are simply various ways of expressing the same fundamental truth: 'Salvation is of God.' . . . But granted that the Lutheran Church does not teach

false doctrine, but only what can stand the closest scrutiny [of course in the light of God's Word], is it important to guard and preserve every jot and tittle so as not to lose or to mar any part of the whole system of doctrines? We shall in answer point only to one aspect of this question. When a person has been roused from spiritual lethargy and indifference to realize his lost condition, and when he is seeking something better [the underlying thought here is incorrect, for the writer is here thinking of a person who has been terrified by the Law, as was Judas, the traitor, and who therefore is seeking a better message than the condemning Law. But such a person does not seek "something better"; on the contrary, as long as he knows only of the Law and nothing of the Gospel, he abandons all hope and despairs, as did Judas. The false, misleading premise here is that the Law already by itself guides a sinner somewhat, at least indirectly, to God. However, the Law cannot do anything of the kind; it only removes the sinner all the more from God and drives him into hell], does it matter much to him whether you leave him to his own resources or direct him to a salvation wrought by God in every respect? And if the Lutheran Church in a clear way directs the sinner to God, to His grace, and to the means of grace, as ordained by Him, is it not the duty of the Lutheran Church as a whole and of every member of the Church to guard and preserve the doctrines involved as a priceless treasure? But then we shall hear no more talk about overindoctrination, overstressing the importance of doctrine, and the like." We are glad that the *Lutheran Herald* has given new emphasis to the necessity of guarding and preserving with meticulous care the pure doctrine. Its failure to present all thoughts clearly and correctly, however, proves anew how necessary it is for us Lutherans to study the Christian doctrine on the basis of Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions with renewed interest. As Dr. Norlie recently remarked in an interview with the writer: "What all of us Lutherans today must study first of all is *Christian doctrine*." J. T. M.

The sesquicentennial of the New York Ministerium was observed at the eighth annual convention of the United Lutheran Synod of New York. The meeting was held, says the *Lutheran* of July 9, "in Albany, . . . where the New York Ministerium had been organized 150 years earlier, in 1786; in Albany, where the United Synod was formed in 1929 from the merger of the three synods formerly on this territory (the New York Ministerium, the New York Synod, and the Synod of New York and New England); in Albany, where the present synod celebrated its fifth anniversary in 1934."

In a service of thanksgiving Dr. Augustus Steimle of New York, as the festival speaker, according to the *Lutheran* paid the following tribute to the outstanding figures in the development of the Church:—

"William Christopher Berkenmeyer, who had organized his 'consistorium' in the Raritan Parish, New Jersey, in August, 1735; Joshua Kocherthal, who was the spiritual leader of a group of Palatines, which divided between the *East Camp* and the *West Camp* of the Hudson River, to settle on lands granted by Queen Anne; John Christopher Kunze, 'doubtless the most scholarly Lutheran of his day,' a D. D. from the University of Pennsylvania, professor of Oriental Languages in Kings College, New York, and

a member of the Board of Trustees of the same institution (now Columbia University); Samuel Schwerdfeger, a graduate of Erlangen; John Christopher Hartwick, 'traveling missionary of synod,' who directed in his will the founding of an institution for the training of pastors and missionaries to the Indians; Hartwick Seminary, founded 1796, now located in Brooklyn; Frederick Henry Quitman, 'whose intellectual attainments and superior culture won him a D. D. from Harvard' and whose son later became governor of Mississippi; Ernest Lewis Hazelius, another missionary leader; and Frederick Augustus Conrad Muhlenberg, pastor of Christ Church, New York City, and later politically prominent in the nation's life, serving in the Continental Congress for three terms, during two of which he was Speaker of the House. It was the latter's influence, according to Dr. Steimle, which caused the New York Ministerium to be the first church-body in America to recognize the laity in the scheme of church government. Others whom Dr. Steimle mentioned were: Dr. Frederick William Gaisenhainer; the Rev. Morris Officer and the Rev. David A. Day, both prominent in the Muhlenberg Mission, Africa; and Dr. Carl Stohlman. It was at a meeting of the old Hartwick Synod at Cobleskill, N. Y., in 1837, that a group of pastors' wives organized the 'female association of Hartwick Synod for the purpose of educating a minister for the foreign mission-field,' the first women's synodical society in the United States."

The *Lutheran* reports that at the recent convention action was taken against men who erred from the truth. Says the *Lutheran*:—

"One of the intensely solemn moments of the convention occurred when the president, with right hand upraised, 'by virtue of the authority vested in me as president of synod,' declared the deposition from the Lutheran ministry of two of the brethren of synod 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.' (The two men, Bartholomew H. Schleifer of Buffalo, where he was formerly pastor of Our Savior Church; and Karl P. Steffens of Bethlehem Church, Brooklyn, had declared themselves committed to the principles of 'anabaptism,' i. e., 'baptism again,' and had repudiated openly the doctrine and practise of the Lutheran Church in respect to infant baptism and the manner thereof, namely, sprinkling.) Technically the offense was 'preaching or teaching doctrine in conflict with the faith set forth in Article I, Section 2, of synod's constitution, which states: "This synod receives and holds the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, the only and infallible rule of faith and practise. It believes and confesses . . . that the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church are a true exposition and defense of the divine Word."'"

Such action is in accord with the words of our Savior, John 8, 31: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed"; also with St. Paul, 1 Cor. 1, 10, "that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no division among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment"; and, again, with Rom. 16, 17: "Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them."

Such action against errorists is gratifying to all that love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. The truth of God's Word is promoted when

error is condemned and the proponents of error are disciplined and expelled from membership. Courageous and determined action against persistent errorists proves that the signatures to the Lutheran Confessions are not merely a pious gesture, but given in good faith. Such disciplinary measures beget confidence and pave the way toward true unity among the Lutheran church-bodies in America.

F. H. BRUNN.

Why the Church Is Ineffective. — Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, the Harley Street (London) heart specialist, gave up his lucrative practise in order to preach the Gospel. To-day large audiences gather in the assembly halls in which he speaks. Last December, addressing a huge multitude in the Royal Albert Hall, on the occasion of a great Bible demonstration, at which he was the chief speaker, he said: "The causes usually mentioned for the Church's present ineffectiveness are merely secondary. The real cause is her departure from belief in the Bible and from evangelical doctrine. From the moment that philosophy was given the place of revelation things began to go wrong. When the Bible began to be regarded as the history of man's quest for God rather than the revelation of God to man; when the doctrines of grace were jettisoned and that of evolution taught, rot set in. We should declare the sovereignty of God and the depravity of man and his inability to save himself; the sacrificial, expiatory death of Christ and His glorious resurrection as the only hope of human salvation. We should declare the justice and wrath of God and Christ as the one and only means of salvation from that wrath and its consequences. The Bible teaches the progressive deterioration of society, and this is the very opposite of evolution. We look, not for such an evolution, but for the apocalypse of the Son of God." According to the *Sunday-school Times*, which quotes his address in part (May 31, 1936), Dr. Lloyd-Jones is of the opinion that the Christian Church is nearing the end of the spiritual winter, that many leaders are turning back to the old paths, and that a new interest in the old doctrines is evident in the minds of the people. His own ministry can be taken as such a sign; for wherever he preaches, the largest churches are crowded to capacity long before the beginning of the service. With respect to the various schools of higher criticism he thinks that it is best to leave them alone since they are bound to demolish one another. Let the Church devote her time to the preaching of God's Word, relying on the power of the Gospel for victory and success in her work.

J. T. M.

Protestantism "Running Down-Hill." — That Protestantism is "running down-hill" is the opinion of Roger Ward Babson, the well-known church statistician, whose latest reports on church statistics startled the Association of Statistics of American Religious Bodies gathered for sessions in Manhattan during the first week in May. As *Time* (May 11, 1936) reports the Babson facts in summary, the average United States Protestant minister is dreadfully dishonest; for he pads his church-membership list by about twenty-five per cent. Of the names he keeps on his lists about eight per cent. are those of dead people. On an average Sunday he preaches to a house seventy per cent. empty. On that Sunday nine out of every ten people in the United States either go to a Catholic church or to none. Since the Catholic Church claims only 20,500,000 of the United States'

127,785,000 inhabitants as members, and since Protestant attendance is estimated at less than 14,000,000, the indication is that only one citizen in four is a churchgoer. Mr. Babson's survey was based altogether on Congregational figures. It shows that the church attendance of the Protestants in the United States reached its peak in 1880 and has been "running downhill" ever since. In 1921 Protestant churches signed up 1,710,000 new members, but in 1935 only 990,000. While other church statisticians have arranged their figures to indicate that the total United States church-membership keeps abreast of the increase of the population in general, Roger Babson declares that, while twelve per cent. of the population attended Protestant churches in 1930, the rate was down to 10.8 per cent. last year. Depressed by his findings, Mr. Babson, who himself is a Congregationalist, declared: "If church attendance continues to peter out, our mission societies and all our other church organizations will go overboard. To save the Church, our laymen must go to church." J. T. M.

The Presbyterian Church of America. — "That is," writes Dr. David D. Burrell in the *Presbyterian* of June 25, "the corporate title of the new denomination just formed by the supporters of the Independent Board. According to the press the new Church begins its life with some thirty-five ministers enrolled. I am told that almost a hundred more are prepared to leave us and join them and that there is a strong probability of their receiving also the entire body of one of the smaller Presbyterian denominations.

"The new Church's doctrinal standards are those Westminster Standards which, according to Dr. Machen, we have abandoned. The first moderator is of course Dr. Machen himself; the stated clerk, the Rev. Paul Woolley, of Westminster Seminary. The new Church begins its life with two substantial assets, Westminster Seminary and the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

"The existence of this sturdy infant denomination is due solely to the conviction in the minds of its members that our Church has so far apostatized that they would not stay in it if they could and that the action of the last three assemblies shuts them off from any possible future ministry among us.

"Let no one underestimate for a moment the significance of this event. It is a genuine calamity for us.

"For one thing, our Church loses a good hundred or more of its best-trained, most intelligent, most consecrated ministers and with them a goodly number of ordained elders and devoted members. Many of them I know personally, and I honor and love them. We may feel that they have made mistakes, that they have been intolerant and brash in speech, but we cannot but admire their consistency, their devotion to Christ and the Bible, their willingness to sacrifice everything for principle. They are strong and able men, whose witness for Christ is unmistakable. Their departure is a major loss.

"This is especially true of the secession of Dr. Machen and some of his colleagues in Westminster Seminary. I believe that they were unwise in founding the Independent Board. I believe that they are grievously mistaken in calling us an apostate Church. I believe that they would do

far better for Christ if they stayed with us and fought the battles of evangelical conservatism shoulder to shoulder with the rest of us conservatives. The great majority of us are loyal to the faith and do earnestly contend for it; and we need their support. It is an immeasurable loss to our Church to be deprived of the services of some of her strongest, shrewdest, most intelligent, most faithful scholars and teachers. As a scholar and apologete, there is no man left in our denomination who can compare with Dr. Machen. Like other prophets, he is far more honored abroad than at home. I record my very deep sorrow over his departure.

"This secession is significant, again, because it compels in us a sense of shame and remorse that such a thing could have happened in our midst. Aside from the fact that many—of whom I am one—believe that the charge of Modernism in our denomination and in some of our boards is not altogether unfounded, there is our conviction that this three-year-long procedure through which we as a Church have been painfully passing need never have been entered upon. We cannot but feel that there has been pride and intolerance and unkindness on both sides of the controversy. We have a painful suspicion that we as a Church have mishandled something that should have been dealt with in an infinitely more tender and considerate fashion. . . . I love my Church, and I stand by her; but still I confess with shame that she needs more of the Spirit of Christ."

The same issue of the *Presbyterian* quotes Dr. C. E. Macartney, former moderator of the General Assembly, who in his sermon on June 21, at his church in Pittsburgh, said: "We honor those who felt in conscience bound to withdraw from the Church, and some of whom, in so doing, 'let goods and kindred go.' Such withdrawals and separations have been the glory of our Presbyterian and Reformed history and heritage.

"But no new situation has arisen within the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., of a nature to drive loyal and conservative Presbyterians out of the Church. There is no question about the invasion of Modernism in the Presbyterian Church and, indeed, all churches. Neither is there any doubt about the devastating effect spiritually of this blight or that it eats 'as doth a canker.' . . .

"Nothing would suit the Modernists better than that the Conservatives in the Church should withdraw and leave them in peace to propagate their ill-favored doctrines. There are thousands of Bible-believing Presbyterians who have no thought of such a withdrawal and who propose to remain within the Church and contend for its grand history and traditions and its noble witness to the Gospel. In so doing, they have an immense advantage in the history of the Church, in the repeated doctrinal deliverances of the General Assembly, and in the repeated doctrinal decisions of the highest judicatories of the Church. All that we need do in contending for our faith is to avail ourselves of this immense advantage. . . .

"The two watchwords for this hour are the two utterances so familiar to all Americans—one by the dying James Lawrence, 'Don't give up the ship,' and the other by John Paul Jones, 'I have just commenced to fight.'"

An outsider would hardly say that Dr. Machen and his associates "gave up the ship."—Dr. J. G. Machen, as quoted in the *Presbyterian* of June 11, says: "The decisions brought in by the Permanent Judicial Commission

and confirmed by the General Assembly decide the issue now before the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America very definitely and clearly in favor of Modernism and tyranny and against Christian liberty and the authority of the Word of God. . . . It seems now entirely inevitable that those who love God's Word and make Christ the Lord of their lives will continue the true spiritual succession of the Presbyterian Church in a body separate from the existing organization. . . . Our gaze is now turned hopefully away from the past and toward the future. We have sorrowed because of the apostasy of the organization with which we have hitherto been connected, but now we look with great joy to an untrammelled proclamation of God's Word. . . . The Church of which we will be members will not really be a new Church. It will be Presbyterian through and through." E.

Dr. Lenski Deceased. — On August 14 Prof. R. H. C. Lenski of the Lutheran Seminary at Columbus, O., laid aside his tireless pen and obeyed the last summons. He was born in Germany in 1864. His graduation from the seminary of the Ohio Synod at Columbus took place in 1887. After having served as pastor at various places, he in 1911 became professor of Languages and Theology at Capital University, Columbus, O., where in 1919 he was made dean of the seminary and in 1928 given the chair of Systematic Theology. In addition to the work referred to, his brethren at various times put arduous synodical and editorial burdens on him, of which that of editor of the *Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* deserves special mention.

It is with deep sorrow that we view the passing of this great conservative leader. It is true that years ago he opposed the teaching of our Synod, being a consistent pupil of Dr. Stellhorn; but his opposition seems to have been largely caused by misconceptions about our position. As late as 1923 he wrote articles on election, certain statements in which it would be difficult to reconcile with the teaching of the Formula of Concord. In his commentary on Romans, which appeared very recently, he still teaches the *intuitu fidei*-doctrine, but a statement of his, published in a review appearing in the *Lutheran Standard* of Aug. 10, 1935, emphatically rejects the position "that the difference in the degree or kind of resistance to the Gospel accounts for the election of some and the rejection of others." A striking feature of his theological teaching was his insistence on the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, a point on which his trumpet gave a clear sound. Similarly he was uncompromising where unionism threatened. As editor of the *Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* he uttered many a strong blast against this wide-spread evil.

The deceased will be chiefly remembered as an able and versatile exegete. Not only did he publish exegetical studies upon the Eisenach pericopes, but of late he issued commentaries with homiletical helps on the Epistle- and Gospel-lessons of the ancient Church (the latter appeared the week he died). His chief work, however, is his grand commentary on the New Testament, of which seven volumes have appeared while the rest will be published as soon as feasible. Being clear in his presentation, avoiding fantastic speculations, giving close attention to all important grammatical minutiae, unfolding in as simple a manner as possible the

thought of the sacred writer, eschewing superfluous verbiage and flowery speech, and withal remaining mindful of the truth that Christ is the center of all the Scriptures, he has given the Lutheran Church a commentary for which it cannot be too grateful. That there are passages where we have to dissent, that, for instance, the interpretation of Rom. 8, 28—30 alluded to above is unacceptable to us, does not keep us from calling this work a grand achievement. We cannot show our appreciation of the work of this great theologian in any better way than by using and studying the volumes which he has bequeathed to the Lutheran Church of America. A.

Mount Airy Seminary Loses Two Professors. — Within the short period of ten days the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia lost two of its faculty members by death. On June 23 Dr. John Conrad Seegers, professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, died; and on July 3, Dr. Charles Theodore Benze, who occupied the chair of Old Testament and Missions, received his last summons. — *Lutheran Standard*.

Divine Science. — In the *Christian Century* we find this paragraph emanating from Denver, Colo., which may be of general interest: "Denver is the mother church of Divine Science. Its pastor is Rev. Harvey Hardman. During the past year Dr. Hardman's congregations exceeded the capacity of his church, which seats a thousand. Services have been held during the year in the Aladdin Theater. Dr. Hardman is spending the summer in Europe. He will endeavor to organize an interested group in London into a Divine Science Church. Divine Science is in many ways a modernized form of Christian Science. It has the same emphasis upon healing. It places great stress upon an immanent God. Miss Brooks, its founder, is still living and propagating this group throughout the world. She studied the Bible in the Iliff School of Theology, a Methodist institution, and embodied modern Biblical scholarship in the field of the movement. Emphasis is placed on meditation and prayer in spite of its 'process' god. It is also consciously and effectively building itself up on the weakness of many Protestant churches." The antichristian character of the movement is attested sufficiently by the fact that it is a "modernized form of Christian Science." A.

Ein abschreckendes Beispiel. Unter dieser Überschrift lesen wir im „Luth. Herald“: „Ein abschreckendes Beispiel ist uns die Art und Weise, wie in Nordamerika die Reformierte und die Evangelische Kirche im Jahre 1934 unter dem Namen The Evangelical and Reformed Church vereinigt wurden. Diese beiden Kirchen arbeiten gegenwärtig an der Einführung einer neuen Verfassung. Der Entwurf enthält Anfänge zu einer kirchlichen Hierarchie und bedroht die Reformierte Kirche in ihrem Innersten. Man lasse lieber solche Einigungsbestrebungen, solange einem von Gott nicht das Fundament geschenkt ist. So schreibt die Reformierte Schweizer Zeitung. Auf lutherischer Seite denkt man nicht anders. Lieber ein ehrliches, Schiedlich-Friedlich als eine Verbindung, die nur mit Kompromissen und Verleugnung der Wahrheitserkenntnis und Glaubensüberzeugung aufrechterhalten werden kann.“ Das letzte ist natürlich Bemerkung des „Luth. Herald“. Jeder ehrliche Christ muß diesem selbstverständlich zustimmen; nur hat das „Schiedlich-Friedlich“ hier nicht rechten Sinn. Wenn es eine gegenseitige

Anerkennung trotz aller Lehrunterchiede zum Ausdruck bringen soll, ist es natürlich verkehrt. Daß die Union zwischen den Reformierten und den Evangelischen etwas Gemachtes war, wird auch von den Evangelischen jetzt ziemlich laut zugegeben. Merkwürdigerweise aber scheint dies der Kontrast zwischen den beiden Elementen zu sein: während die Reformierte Kirche noch einigermaßen konservativ ist, ist die Evangelische Kirche in ihrer Lehrstellung vollständig modernistisch eingestellt. J. T. M.

Brief Items. — One of our exchanges informs us that the *Army and Navy Register* of June 20, 1936, proposes that the War and Navy departments "terminate under proper procedure the commissions of all Methodist chaplains in regular land or naval forces to uphold 'the peace pact of Methodists.'" It is furthermore proposed that all reserve commissions held by Methodist clergy and laymen be likewise terminated and that no members of this denomination be received in citizens' military training camps or in collegiate officers' training corps units. This course is recommended on account of the attitude of the Methodists toward participation in war. — That the machine of the Northern Presbyterians will not brook opposition, but is intent on crushing those who refuse to submit to it, became apparent when three ministers who espoused the cause of Professor Machen and of the Independent Board of Foreign Missions were deposed by the West Jersey Presbytery of the Northern Presbyterian Church, another minister was suspended, and a fifth one had to see that his case was referred to the judicial committee of that presbytery. — When on July 12 Dr. S. Parkes Cadman died, seventy-one years old, a spectacular pulpit career came to its close. While the marvelous versatility and great learning of this much-admired man will not be disputed, we have to say that as a thorough-going unionist, an advocate of the social gospel, and an enemy of the teaching that the death of our Lord Jesus Christ has atoned for all our sins, he did much harm. In his early life in England he was a Methodist. In Brooklyn he served a Congregationalist church. — In connection with news on the World Convention of Quakers in Philadelphia, September 1—8, the press reports that there are 160,000 Quakers in the world. The meeting was called because secularism, nationalism, and militarism are looming large in the thinking of people nowadays and threaten to sweep everything before them. That Quakerism itself has taken the heart out of the Gospel is of course something that is not realized by these people. — When, four years ago, the Methodists of England united and their three bodies formed one, did that mean great conquests and spiritual advance? Here is what the president says in reply: "I dreamt of a mighty advance, a Church going forward, doing great things for God and humanity. Has that dream come true? Not yet. Methodist union has still to justify itself." It would be a mistake of course to hold that, if large figures of new members can be presented, there has been great progress. At the same time it should be emphasized again and again that the establishment of a large denomination does not necessarily mean great things for the kingdom of God. Otherwise the Roman Catholic Church with its large membership and well-functioning hierarchy would have to be considered as the ideal. — "The Rev. Dr. Edward T. Horn with his wife and four children will return to Japan for his fourth term of service as a missionary, sailing

from this country the latter part of August. November 3 will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of his arrival in Japan. During the third term of service Dr. Horn became president of the Lutheran seminary in Tokyo and will return to assume the administration of this work." So reports the *Lutheran*, the official paper of the U. L. C., which carries on mission-work in Japan. A.

II. Ausland.

Karl Barth und die Auferstehung Jesu. In Nr. 11 und 14 der „Freikirche“ vom Jahre 1934 war mitgeteilt worden, daß Karl Barth, damals der theologische Führer der „Bekennnisfront“, in seinem Buche „Die Auferstehung der Toten“ auf S. 76 ff. geschrieben hatte: „Die menschlichen Augen des Petrus, der Zwölf, der Fünfhundert usw. sehen eben nichts anderes als das Grab und daß der Herr nicht mehr da ist.“ Es war dagegengestellt die von Barth „ausgelegte“ Schriftstelle 1 Kor. 15, 5—7: „Und daß er gesehen worden ist von Stephas, danach von den Zwölfen; danach ist er gesehen worden von mehr denn fünfhundert Brüdern auf einmal, deren noch viel leben, etliche aber sind entschlafen; danach ist er gesehen worden von Jakobo, danach von allen Aposteln.“

Prof. Barth hat sich damals sehr beschwert, daß wir in der „Freikirche“ gefragt haben, ob er ein Christ oder nur „ein außerhalb der Christenheit stehender Christlichter“ sei. Jetzt ist sein genanntes Buch in neuer, dritter Auflage erschienen. Barth hat da auch in dem von uns auf S. 84 (1934) abgedruckten Abschnitte einige ganz belanglose Kleinigkeiten abgeändert. Aber den oben mitgeteilten Satz hat er ohne jede Änderung wieder abgedruckt. (S. 79.) Wohin gehört er nun? Zu den Christen oder zu den Christlichtern?

Zu seiner Charakterisierung sei aus einem seiner neueren Bücher, „Credo“ (= „Ich glaube“), noch mitgeteilt: „Die Bibel ist ein menschliches [von Barth gesperrt] Dokument mitten in der ganzen Religionsgeschichte.“ (S. 62.) „Wir dürfen uns nicht wundern, in der Bibel dauernd Texten zu begegnen, die dem Wahrheitsbegriff der Geschichtswissenschaft nicht standzuhalten vermögen, sondern die der Historiker eben nur als ‚Sage‘ oder ‚Legende‘ wird bezeichnen können.“ (Ev.-Luth. Freikirche.)

Und die Bekennnisfront? Diesem Leugner der Grundwahrheiten hat die „Vorläufige Leitung der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche“, die von der Dohnhaufener Bekennnissynode eingesetzt wurde, zu seinem fünfzigsten Geburtstag folgendes Schreiben zugesandt: „Die Vorläufige Leitung der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche kann Ihren fünfzigsten Geburtstag nicht vorübergehen lassen, ohne in tiefer Dankbarkeit gegen den Herrn der Kirche alles dessen zu gedenken, was Sie durch Ihre theologische Arbeit haben dazu beitragen dürfen, daß in der Zeit des Zusammenbruchs nach dem Kriege die evangelische Kirche in Deutschland zu ihrem Herrn zurückgerufen wurde und mitten in aller Anfechtung und Bedrängnis der Gegenwart auf dem Wege ist, zu ihrer Sache zurückzufinden. Es ist uns ein bleibender Schmerz, daß die bekennende Kirche angesichts der täglich neu an sie herantretenden Versuchungen und Nöte Ihren persönlichen und unmittelbaren Rat entbehren muß. Aber wir wissen auch, daß das gemeinsame Bekenntnis zu Jesus Christus als unserm alleinigen Herrn fester zusammenbindet, als Ländergrenzen zu trennen vermögen“!

(Ev.-Luth. Freikirche.)

Reformierte ahnen lutherische Bekenntnistreue. Bei der Calvinfeier in Genf im Juni dieses Jahres war auch Landesbischof D. Meiser zugegen, und indem er am Calvinismus lobte, was daran zu loben ist, betonte er doch sehr scharf das Festhalten am lutherischen Bekenntnis lutherischerseits. Dies hat ihm, wie die „A. E. L. N.“ mitteilt, die „Reformierte Kirchenzeitung“ sehr übelgenommen; wir lesen da nämlich: „Am Samstagvormittag war unter Leitung Professor Choisy in der St. Peters-Kathedrale die kirchliche Hauptfeier gewesen, bei der eine lange Reihe von Reden von Vertretern reformierter Kirchen in vielen Ländern gehalten wurde. Aus Deutschland kam dabei Landesbischof Meiser für die Lutheraner zu Wort. Er wehrte sich mit auffallendem Nachdruck gegen jede Unionsbestrebung und betonte die Notwendigkeit der Unterscheidungen zwischen Reformierten und Lutheranern so stark, daß wir schließlich nur noch von einer Verbindung zwischen Lutheranern und Reformierten hörten, bei der gleichzeitig von solcher Verbindung mit den Katholiken die Rede sein könne. Das ergab schon in Genf ein bedenkliches Fragen, und wir werden uns nun erst recht in Deutschland, wo D. Meiser vom Lutherischen Rat zur Fahrt nach Genf beauftragt war, zu fragen haben, was dieser lutherische Konfessionalismus eigentlich will. Sind für ihn Varmen und Dahlem nicht mehr vorhanden? Und sollten wirklich die Zeichen der Zeit von uns recht verstanden sein, wenn wir nun einen reformierten Sonderkonfessionalismus in der gleichen sich gegen die Brüder unter dem alleinigen Wort Gottes in Christo absperrenden Haltung dem lutherischen Konfessionalismus gegenüberstellen wollten? Das ist die Frage, die uns angesichts unserer reformierten Tagungen in der nächsten Woche mit ganzem Ernst zu beschäftigen hat.“ Dazu schreibt die „A. E. L. N.“: „Wir möchten auf diese Fragen erwidern: Der ‚Sonderkonfessionalismus‘ der Reformierten ist schon da, ist sogar sehr rege, und niemand bestreitet ihm sein Recht. Aber der Unionismus drängt sich herein, und den lehnen wir ab; und den lehnt auch D. Meiser als guter Lutheraner ab, und er lehnt ihn ab. Was Varmen betrifft, so hat ihm D. Meiser stets alle Ehre gelassen; aber die Autorität, unter der er letztlich steht, heißt nicht Varmen, sondern Confessio Augustana“ (es sollte noch hinzugefügt werden Formula Concordiae; denn hier kommt der große Gegensatz zwischen Reformierten und Lutherischen erst recht zum Ausdruck). Was die „A. E. L. N.“ hier vom Unionismus sagt, ist uns aus dem Herzen gesprochen. Nur heißt es mit dem Gesagten auch Ernst gemacht. Daß sich aber der Calvinismus erboht, wenn einmal ein Lutheraner von einem „Sonderkonfessionalismus“ redet, das heißt, wenn er auf den Gegensatz zwischen lutherisch und calvinistisch aufmerksam macht, ist als altbergebracht historisch erwiesen. Das war schon so nach Luthers Tod im großen dreißigjährigen Theologenkrieg. Das ist noch heute so, weil sich der Calvinismus wesentlich nicht geändert hat. Tatsache ist, daß die Kluft zwischen Lutherischen und Reformierten wesentlich ebenso groß ist wie die zwischen Lutherischen und Römischen. Das bedarf gerade jetzt gar sehr der Betonung.

J. T. W.

The Centenary of the Leipzig Mission in India. — Both in Europe and in India celebrations are held to commemorate the founding of the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission in 1836, and an Indian newspaper submits a sketch of the history of this mission written by its correspondent

in Tranquebar, the headquarters of the mission, from which sketch we here take over the first paragraph.

"Protestant work in India began when Ziegenbalg and Pluetschau of Halle landed at Tranquebar on July 9, 1706, as the missionaries of the Royal Danish Mission. Owing to the decline of interest in mission-work, the later missionaries of the Danish Royal Mission passed into the service of the S. P. C. K. of England. When missionary interest revived in Germany, the Basel Mission came into existence. Supporters of the Basel Mission in Germany tried to send out missionaries of the Lutheran Church, and as a result the Evangelical Lutheran Mission was founded in 1838. The first missionary of this society came to India in 1840, and beginning with the Lutheran congregations in Tranquebar and Porayar, the mission spread towards Madras, Madura, Bangalore, Coimbatore, and Ootacamund. In the early years the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission stood out as the joint enterprise of the Lutheran churches of Europe, and though both money and men came chiefly from Germany, supporters and missionaries came also from other countries, chiefly Sweden and the Baltic provinces. Though the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, which is the product of the work of the Leipzig Mission, is not numerically as strong as some of the large churches in the Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam areas, its influence has been a very important one."

It will be recalled that several honored members of our Synod of a former generation belonged to the Leipzig Mission and worked in its field in India till reasons of conscience compelled them to withdraw. A.

The World Sunday-School Convention. — This convention met on Lutheran territory this year, Oslo, Norway, being the place of the gathering. Three thousand registered delegates and many visitors were in attendance. The *Lutheran* reports as follows: "About one-third of those registering came from the United States and Canada. Norway was second. Denmark, Sweden, and Finland had large delegations. Forty-nine nations were represented. 'Only Russia was conspicuous by complete non-participation.' From our United Lutheran Church, Dr. Charles P. Wiles, editor of Sunday-school literature, wrote one of the addresses. The publication house contributed an impressive section of the 'display' of literature available for Christian training through Sunday and week-day church-schools. Dr. Wiles's address and a picture of the book display are scheduled for publication. The well-planned hospitality of the Lutheran Church of Norway was greatly appreciated by the delegates. Bishop Primate Lunde of Oslo took a constant and effective interest in each day's proceedings, His Majesty King Haakon attended the opening session, and the citizens of the capital were courteously helpful to the thousands visiting Norway on the occasion of the meeting."

The World Sunday-school Convention is of course thoroughly unionistic. That every deviation from the teachings of God's Word is a very serious matter, that false doctrine, even if it appear insignificant, is nevertheless a leaven which will sooner or later leaven the whole lump, is something these people have not learned. If the U. L. C. identifies itself with this convention, it will have a hard time convincing other Lutheran bodies in America that it is not unionistic. A.