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## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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**Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches**


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**I. Amerika**

**Is Pure Doctrine a Relative Concept?** — *Evangelisk Luthersk Tidende* (March, 1937, Nos. 5 and 7), under the headings "Ren Laere et relativ Begreb?" ("Is Pure Doctrine a Relative Concept?") and "Lutheraneren og Folkebladet om 'Verbalinspirationen'" ("Lutheraneren and Folkebladet on 'Verbal Inspiration'"), points out very strikingly how also within the "American Lutheran Conference" the doctrine of verbal inspiration is being assailed and discredited. The controversy began when *Folkebladet*, representing the enthusiastic, sectarian elements of the Norwegian Lutheran Free Church (Jan. 20, 1937), wrote the following modernistic nonsense: "Clear lines are not necessarily the same as pure doctrine; for this [pure doctrine] is a relative concept (*relativt begreb*); it is conditioned by the individual person's view and opinion (*syn og mening*). That which is pure doctrine in one place is not necessarily pure doctrine in another. No one had the truth revealed to him in such a way that, when he speaks, he speaks the truth itself. There is only One who could have said that, and He was more than a man. This concerns secondary things, even important secondary things. With regard to fundamental matters there must and will be unity, namely, in things on which life itself rests, both spiritual and bodily." — For this pernicious bit of perversion *Lutheraneren* (Feb. 3, 1937) took *Folkebladet* to task, though somewhat mildly, stating in substance that "it can hardly be possible that *Folkebladet* really believes anything like that." — Rev. J. E. Thoen, editor of the *Tidende*, thereupon pointed out (March 3, 1937) that the modernistic doctrine set forth in *Folkebladet* is precisely the same view on "pure doctrine" and "inspiration" which this periodical has always held and defended, a fact well known to *Lutheraneren*. In spite of this the United Norwegian Lutheran Church joined hands with the Norwegian Lutheran Free Church and declared that they were united in faith and doctrine, so that they recognized each other as brethren in faith. Both synods were along with others in founding a federation of synods under the name The American Lutheran Conference. Yet *Folkebladet* has not at all changed its position in doctrine and practise, but teaches now as before that "Christianity must progress to clear knowledge of truth by reason, step by step, according as it finds the truth revealed in the course of history." Next Editor Thoen shows that *Lutheraneren*, too, has not always stood to its post in defending the principle of the absolute truth of the inspired Bible. This widely read paper has not only been indifferentistic with regard to the question of true unity, but has also set aside the Holy Scriptures as the only source and standard of faith and life by tolerating error and erroneous practise in the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (the United Norwegian Lutheran Church), for example, by allowing women to speak and vote in the congregation. Much worse is the fact that in the United Norwegian Lutheran Church some ministers favor *theistic evolution*, and yet *Lutheraneren* has not properly supported

those defenders of the Biblical truth who wrote against the evolutionary teachings of these outspoken Liberalists. So far Rev. J. E. Thoen's criticism in *Tidende* of March 3.

In the mean while *Folkebladet* (Feb. 17), reacting upon *Lutheraneren's* criticism, explained and defended its statement that "*ren laere er et relativt begreb.*" It wrote: "Yes, we do think that pure doctrine is very often a relative concept." The periodical thus remained impenitent, though it added: "But a distinction should be made between *original* and *derived* doctrine." (Italics our own; "*oprindelig og avledet laere.*") With this strange explanation *Lutheraneren* declared itself satisfied, though it stipulated that it would not use the word *relative* in such a connection. Since it was thus made to appear that the disagreement consisted merely in a *misunderstanding* ("*misforstaaelse*"), Pastor Thoen (*Tidende*, March 21) makes the further charge that both periodicals in the final analysis reject verbal inspiration. This charge is based upon the words which *Folkebladet* uses in further development of its defense. *Folkebladet* said (and let us note the full implication of its words): "But that was not what we were thinking of (namely, that we acknowledge only part of God's Word) when we in this paper for January 20 wrote of pure doctrine as a relative concept. We were thinking of the human interpretations of the sacred truths. We were thinking of many points in that which is called *theology*. For the sake of clarity let us mention a few. We can take, for example, the doctrine that the Bible is God's Word, because *Lutheraneren* mentions that and the Church teaches it. It should be clear that the Church must hold fast to that truth; for if she gives it up, then her whole foundation is torn away; she annihilates herself. To be sure, the Catholic Church has almost given up this dogma, because it has subordinated the Holy Scriptures to 'tradition,' which it places above the Bible. It teaches indeed that the Bible is God's Word, but that tradition is more God's Word than the Bible. Sometimes we have wondered whether the German theologians, the most prominent of whom are the *Missourians*, do not place their propositions or interpretations ("*sine satser eller utlaeggelser*") higher than the Bible. [What propositions or interpretations, please? And why this dig at Missouri in this uncalled-for manner?] But the Church, or the theologians, was not satisfied with the simple truth that the Bible is God's Word [a very unfair misrepresentation]. They began to ask *how* the Bible was God's Word [just that, too, the Bible teaches in clear words, which are quoted afterwards], and to this question came many answers. It concerns the question of inspiration. Questions can go out from such words ("*Spoergerne kan gaa ud fra ord som dette*"): 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' Or this: 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God' ("*Den hellige skrift er indblaest af Gud*"). These are the principal proof-texts for the doctrine of inspiration. There are many other passages in Scripture that speak of the same matter. But all expositors start out from the same words of Scripture. They are all believing Christian men. Some come to the conclusion that the Scriptures are a *dictation* of the Holy Ghost, and in explanation they form an answer that says: 'God's

Spirit put into their minds [of the sacred penmen] *what and with which words* they should speak and write.' Thus teach the Missourians. [We indeed teach verbal inspiration in the fullest sense of the term, but avoid the word *dictation*, since we do not teach that *mechanical* inspiration with which that term is commonly associated.] Thus teaches the Norwegian Synod [our brethren in the faith]. And thus also teaches *Lutheraneren*. But H. U. Sverdrup, who wrote the explanation most used in the Norwegian Church [of the old country] and also over here, struck out the words '*and with which words*,' letting only '*what*' stand. That is to say: The German theologians teach the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, but H. U. Sverdrup does not. But he isn't alone in this. He has a large following. Mission Secretary Lars Dahle is agreed with H. U. Sverdrup. Dr. Sigurd Odland is also agreed with him. Likewise also, in the main point, are the teachers at the *Menighedsfakultetet* and all the Norwegian bishops. A great number of other outstanding Lutheran theologians could be mentioned who do not favor the doctrine of inspiration that *Lutheraneren* favors. *Lutheraneren* and the Missourians think that the theory of verbal inspiration is 'pure doctrine.' And the others hold that it is *not* 'pure doctrine.' Therefore the doctrine of verbal inspiration is a relative concept; but not that the Bible is God's Word [sc., is a relative concept]. In that they are agreed." So far *Folkebladet*.

Rev. J. E. Thoen comments on this subtle piece of sophism thus: "From this and other things that *Folkebladet* mentions, we cannot understand anything else than that, because there are many different interpretations with regard to the inspiration of the Scriptures within the Church, we cannot be sure which is the correct or pure doctrine in the matter. Thus also with other doctrines, such as the doctrine of the Sacraments. It is not God's Word, or the Word of the Bible, that must decide what is correct or pure doctrine. It is not the Bible's clear, straightforward words and sentences which are the sure test for doctrine. It is only *human interpretation* to teach that the word and sentences of Scripture are inspired. The revelation of truth occurs in another way than by the Word of Scripture, *Folkebladet* thinks. It says: 'We come nearest to the truth of a doctrine when we try it out in our lives and see what fruit it bears. That is the only certain test! Not in conferences and learned discussions, not in propositions, but in practise, the truth of a doctrine will be shown. *Life is the test of doctrine.*' [Italics our own.] With that *Lutheraneren* lets the matter rest. It is therefore agreed with *Folkebladet*. Certainty of the truth is found not by searching the Scriptures; it must be found in the experiences of life. It is not certain whether the Bible's Word is the correct and unmistakable rule for true doctrine and life. The truth is revealed not by the Word, but by works. That is the doctrine of *Folkebladet*. And it satisfied *Lutheraneren*! How this can be Lutheran doctrine we do not understand. God's Word and Luther's doctrine is exactly the opposite." So far Editor Thoen.

This controversy, we believe, is of tremendous importance, since it clearly shows the following facts: 1. The Lutheran synods making up

the American Lutheran Conference are certainly not agreed on the doctrine of verbal inspiration. 2. Within the American Lutheran Conference there are men who boastingly defend the same un-Lutheran, unbiblical, modernistic views against the true doctrine of Biblical inspiration which Kantonen and others in the United Lutheran Church have held forth so persistently these last years. *Folkebladet* stands side by side with *The Lutheran* in repudiating the Biblical doctrine of verbal and plenary inspiration. 3. There are within the American Lutheran Conference voices that still champion the Lutheran doctrine of inspiration, but they are not as vigorous and insistent as they should be. 4. The sorry fate of those confessional elements that blindly walked into the disunion of the sham merger shows us what we must expect if we enter into a union with Lutheran synods which do not agree with us in doctrine.

J. T. M.

**The New Strong Voice of Fundamentalism.**—When from October 4 to 11, 1936, the San Gabriel Union Church of San Gabriel, Cal., dedicated its new church-building, its varied program of dedicatory services sounded a new, strong confessional note, such as has been heard but seldom during the last decade. The name Union Church is explained by the origin of the new congregation which had its inception in Sunday-school meetings of various fundamentalistic groups. The originally small band of confessional Christians, however, increased and expanded so rapidly that early in 1935 it decided to organize itself as a church and to erect its own church edifice. "The present new building is the result of vision, prayer, sacrifice, persistence, and indefatigable labor," writes the pastor of the church, the Rev. Roy L. Laurin. (Cf. *Sunday-school Times*, Feb. 13, 1937.) In the "responsive reading" of the "inaugural ceremony" the church-members pledged themselves as follows: "We dedicate ourselves to loyalty to the revealed Word of Holy Scripture, which is our only infallible rule of faith and practise, that it may be our sole guide in matters of faith and our instructor in matters of conduct." But its main confessional declaration was set forth in its church bulletin, in a statement reading as follows: "This church has definite principles in regard to faith and practise. It desires itself to be known as a church that is *upholding a standard and is not catering to favor* [original italics]. This church is definitely fundamental and evangelical in its faith. It is led by an evangelistic, missionary, Bible-teaching ministry. It is definitely committed to 'the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.' It believes in the Bible, in a day of varying shades of unbelief. It is not catering to public favor in order to secure a large membership. Its membership is secondary to its testimony and service. Its financial policy is the free-will offerings of its people, based upon 'proportionate' giving. It does not resort to questionable methods of church finance by church suppers and similar things. It has proved the wisdom of this policy through five years of depression without the need of reducing its budget and with the steady increase of its missionary giving. All these policies of faith and practise are to be carefully and jealously maintained when it moves into its new building." This certainly is most refreshing contrasted with the distressing dust-storm plague of Modernism.

J. T. M.

**Modernism Must Not Seek Finalities.** — That is a fundamental modernistic principle, laid down by Shirley Jackson Case, dean of the divinity school of the University of Chicago, in his recent book *Highways of Christian Doctrine*, according to a review by John Horsch in the *Gospel Herald*. Mr. Horsch writes: "Professor Case freely acknowledges the fact that the Liberals do not have positive doctrinal truth to offer. And not only does he make this admission, but he says it is a mistake even to seek finalities. Seeking finalities, he thinks, will only lead to the final acknowledgment of error. He is aware that eventually it will be realized that Modernists, denying the authority of Scripture, have no valid ground for any doctrinal teaching. Professor Case contends that the remedy for the errors, the bankruptcy, of Modernism is *more Modernism*. In other words, he thinks that the Modernists should cease giving their message the appearance of divinely revealed truth; they should freely and openly admit that they have *no finalities to offer*. Let us hope that this advice may be heeded. This book of Professor Case offers convincing proof that the radical religious Liberalism, as represented by himself and many other professors in the theological seminaries, is simply religious agnosticism, the denial of the knowableness of things divine. But is not the admission that the message of liberalism is one of religious agnosticism in itself a striking proof of bankruptcy? Or could any religious value be ascribed to a message of agnosticism? Robert G. Ingersoll, the eloquent agnostic, in passing, never made any claim of religious value of his message. On the contrary, he held that religious agnosticism means the bankruptcy of religion, including liberal religion. Pity the pretended Christian worker whose message is that of Robert Ingersoll! Pity the portion of the Church of America falling under the influence of religious Liberalism!"

J. T. M.

**Dr. Klotsche Called Home.** — It was with a pang of deep sorrow that we received the news of the death, at the age of sixty-one, of Prof. E. H. Klotsche, which occurred February 11 of this year. Having been educated in the Foreign Missions Seminary in Leipzig, he entered the Leipzig mission-field in India and labored there till 1903. When he in that year came to America, it was his desire to join the Missouri Synod, with which he had become acquainted through reading *Lehre und Wehre* and through contact with our missionaries in India. His plan was frustrated, and he took over a pastorate in the General Synod. Later on he served as professor of theology in the seminaries at Lincoln, Fremont, and, finally, at Maywood. He has become well known through several important publications. A good musician himself, he wrote *Luther's Influence in Song and Church Music*. His chief work is *Christian Symbolics*, issued 1929, which excellently describes the various Christian church-bodies. In 1927 a valuable little work entitled *Outline of History of Doctrine* appeared from his pen, which he intended to supplement by another volume, *The History of Christian Thought*. The manuscript of this volume was almost finished when he was summoned hence, and his family hopes that it can be published. Those that knew him were aware of his love of the truth as taught in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. Owing to his orthodoxy he was attacked now and then in his own church-body, the U. L. C., where he earnestly opposed doctrinal indifference and Modernism.

A.

**Dr. C. C. Hein Deceased.**—When Dr. Hein (1868—1937) on April 30 departed this life, conservative Lutheranism suffered a severe loss. Since the chief facts pertaining to his life and activity have been reported in *Der Lutheraner* and the *Lutheran Witness*, we shall here merely gratefully recall his soundness in the great fundamentals of our faith. Perhaps nowhere did this become more manifest than in the splendid testimony which he gave at the Lutheran World Convention in Copenhagen in 1929. In his address he pointed out that whoever wants to be a faithful Lutheran must accept the Scriptures as inspired in their totality. Some of his words deserve being quoted again. "Warum diese Stellung zur Schrift? Weil dem Luthertum die Heilige Schrift in ihrem ganzen Umfang wie auch in allen ihren Teilen das vom Heiligen Geist inspirierte und darum lautere und untrügliche Gotteswort ist. Schrift und Gottes Wort sind ihm identisch. Der Heilige Geist ist ihm der Urheber der Schrift. Die Propheten, Evangelisten und Apostel sind ihm die Werkzeuge, deren der Heilige Geist sich bei der Abfassung der Schrift bediente. Nach Inhalt und Form hat der Heilige Geist den heiligen Schreibern eingegeben, was sie geschrieben haben. Und ist ihm auch der *modus* der Inspiration ein von der Schrift nicht geoffenbartes und darum fuer die Vernunft und die theologische Wissenschaft unloesbares Geheimnis, so glaubt es doch das in der Schrift bezeugte Wunder der Inspiration, und alles, was die Schrift sagt, sowohl in Sachen des Heils wie in sogenannten Nebensachen, ist ihm untrügliches Gotteswort." With the same clarity he treated the doctrine known as *sola gratia*. "Das 'allein aus Gnaden' bezieht sich auf alles, was der Menschen Heil betrifft: die Erwerbung und Darbietung sowie die Annahme, Schenkung und Vollendung des Heils. Wie es dem Luthertum auf der einen Seite gewiss ist, dass Unglaube, Nichtbekehrung und endliche Verdammung in jedem Sinn einzig und allein des Menschen Schuld, so auf der andern, dass Bekehrung, Glaube und Seligkeit in jedem Sinn Gnadenwerk und Gnadengabe Gottes ist. Hier stehen wir vor einem Geheimnis. 'Der Selige,' sagt H. E. F. Guericke in seiner 'Symbolik' (3. Aufl., S. 425), 'wird selig allein durch Gottes Gnade in Christo, ohne alles eigene Verdienst, der Unselige unselig durch eigene Schuld, weil er der goettlichen Gnade fortwachrend widersteht. Warum der Widerstand des ersteren gegen die goettliche Gnade endlich gebrochen wird, der des letzteren aber nicht, ist nicht des ersteren Verdienst, wohl aber des letzteren Schuld. Der Mensch jedoch' (auch der Theolog) 'mit seinem bloeden, durch die Suende getruebten Verstande vermag diese Tiefe der goettlichen Werkstatt nicht zu erforschen, und es ist groessere Weisheit, das goettliche Geheimnis anzuerkennen, als es gotteslaesterlich zu loesen.'" In reprinting and commenting on this address of Dr. Hein, Dr. Pieper said: "Auf dem Lutherischen Weltkonvent, der voriges Jahr in Kopenhagen versammelt war, ist das, was die Missourisynode von der Heiligen Schrift und von der Bekehrung lehrt, vorgetragen worden, und zwar *in rebus* und zum Teil auch *in phrasibus*, wenn auch der Name 'Missouri' nicht erwaeht wurde. Es geschah dies in einem Vortrage, der vom Praeses der Allgemeinen Synode von Ohio, Dr. C. C. Hein, vor dem Konvent in Kopenhagen gehalten wurde. . . . Moechte dieser Vortrag in der amerikanisch-lutherischen Kirche und bei den Lutheranern der ganzen Welt volle Beach-

tung finden!" (Cf. CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, I [1930], p. 338.) Dr. Hein had a prominent part in the drawing up of the Chicago, or Intersynodical, Theses. The fact that he was taken from us at a time when again important intersynodical discussions are in progress and he was serving as a member of the committee of his Synod for such discussions with other Lutherans, made us think of the words Dr. Walther wrote when the news of the death of Dr. Charles Porterfield Krauth reached him: "In Demut verehren wir Gottes unerforschliche Regierung bei diesem Todesfall. Meinten wir doch, dass der Herr unsere amerikanisch-lutherische Kirche nun erst recht durch dieses hochbegabte Werkzeug segnen werde." (*Lehre und Wehre*, XXIX, p. 32.) May the years to come show that Dr. Hein's arduous labors in behalf of conservative Lutheranism were not in vain! A.

**Deaths.**— In Leipzig, Prof. Hans Achelis, known as a church historian, died February 23, 71 years old. His chief work is said to be the book entitled *Das Christentum in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*.— On March 6 Dr. Rudolf Otto of Marburg died. He had been the successor of the well-known scholar Wilhelm Herrmann. Otto is best known through his very popular work *Das Heilige*, which first appeared in 1917.— The director of the seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Altpreußen (Breslau), Pastor Lic. Friedrich Priegel, was taken out of this life March 1.— On March 17 Leipzig lost another well-known theologian, Dr. Franz Rendtorff, 76 years old. He had retired from active service at the university. His field was practical theology. He became well known as a leader in the *Gustav-Adolf-Verein*.— On March 9 the well-known philosopher and critic Paul Elmer More, professor in Princeton University, departed this life. He was classed as a humanist. As editor of the *Nation* he became widely known in our country. A report says that he was a regular attendant at Protestant Episcopal services in Princeton and that, although he was not confirmed, he died in the full communion of the Church.— From Germany comes the news of the death of Dr. Adolf Deissmann. He stood in the very first ranks of New Testament scholars and helped immensely toward a correct understanding of the *Koine*, the Greek of the time of Jesus and the apostles. His *Licht vom Osten* is just as authoritative as fascinating.— Mgr. Francis Kenninck, archbishop of Utrecht and primate of the Old Catholic communion in Holland, departed this life. He was much interested in World Conferences.— Dr. Caspar Wistar Hodge, Charles Hodge professor of systematic theology in Princeton Theological Seminary since 1921, died on February 26 in the Princeton hospital of pneumonia. He was sixty-six years old. Dr. Hodge belonged to a famous family, which has been connected with Princeton Seminary more than one hundred years. His grandfather, Dr. Charles Hodge, his father, Dr. Caspar Wistar Hodge, his great-uncle, Dr. Archibald Alexander Hodge, like himself, were members of the seminary faculty. (*The Presbyterian*.)

**Movie Supervision.**— Representative Francis D. Cushman of New York has presented to Congress a bill to establish a commission with power to regulate phases of the motion-picture industry. The bill states:—



"The selection and treatment of subject-material for motion-pictures, silent or talking, shall be in accord with public welfare, and no license shall be granted to motion-pictures —

"First, which emphasize and exaggerate sex appeal or depict scenes therein exploiting interest in sex in an improper or suggestive form or manner."

The bill goes on to forbid the issuance of license for pictures "based upon white slavery or commercialized vice"; those which thematically make "prominent an illicit love affair which tends to make virtue odious and vice attractive"; those "which exhibit nakedness or persons scantily dressed, particularly suggestive bedroom and bathroom scenes and scenes of inciting dances"; and those with scenes which "unnecessarily prolong expressions or demonstrations of passionate love."

Stories with undue emphasis on the underworld, vice, gambling, or drunkenness, and those which might instruct the feeble-minded in the ways of crime are to come under the ban also.

Furthermore, if the bill is enacted, no licenses will be issued for movies with stories or scenes ridiculing the army, navy, officers of the law, public officials, etc., or those which offend the religious beliefs of any recognized sect or are "disrespectful to objects or symbols used in connection with any religion."

Finally, "salacious titles and subtitles . . . and the use of salacious advertising matter, photographs, and lithographs" are basis enough for refusal to grant a license.

(*Living Church*)

Conditions in the Protestant Episcopal Church.—In a trenchant analysis Canon Bernard Iddings Bell, writing in the *Living Church*, portrays conditions as they exist at present in the Protestant Episcopal Church of our country. He tells his fellow-Episcopalians that church services are attended much less than used to be the case, that boys and girls from Episcopal homes often manifest lack of loyalty, that the intellect and dynamic quality of the clergy has deteriorated, that in spite of much talk about money, giving for the Church is decreasing, that the Low-churchmen, the so-called Evangelicals, have practically disappeared, that Broad-churchmen, formerly represented by leaders of the sort of Phillips Brooks, taken as a class, today do not possess religious power, that owing to a number of causes the prevailing mood in the Episcopal Church is one of respectable ostentation, and finally, that even the Anglo-Catholics are not exerting much influence. We have to quote a paragraph.

"What the last quarter century's history of the Episcopal Church seems to show is, 1. that the Church has been on a worldly spree and is now very ill indeed; 2. that today, when the Church needs treatment tending toward spiritual recovery, it finds that old Doctor Evangelical seems to have died and that young Doctor Broad has hardly bothered to learn his trade. There is available only that funny chap whom people used to laugh at and finally permitted to settle in the neighborhood (provided he kept from bothering the neighbors), good Brother Anglo-Catholic; but he may have gotten so used to looking after his private practise as to have lost interest in the public health of the

communion. If so, both he and the communion must share the blame. The Church's extremity, if only he sees it, is the Anglo-Catholic's opportunity. God knows we Anglo-Catholics are not alert to the importance of our job. We had better be. We can give the Episcopal Church that spiritual vitality necessary for its rejuvenation; but that only if we are *truly* Anglo-Catholics, willing to pay the price of self-oblation for the purchase of sufficiency."

Continuing, he speaks of the danger of a schism. In an interesting way he describes how one hundred fifty years ago a schism rent the Anglican Church when Wesley and his followers, owing to "the incredible stupidity of the Anglican bishops and other clergy," became the founders of Methodism. The writer does not hold, however, that a schism will take place. Anglo-Catholics, he says, are not disposed to leave the old home. We quote once more:—

"No, we Anglo-Catholics must and shall stay in, making ever more a bit of a nuisance of ourselves to all complacent people, everlastingly crying out for more religion; more sinners washed clean by the absolution of Christ; more people on their knees before a crucified King, present with them in the Sacrament; more devotion of beauty to His glistening loveliness; more adoration of Jesus Christ on His throne in heaven and in His most holy Sacrament; more reliance on the Holy Spirit and less on machinery; more fasting and discipline; more retreats and quiet days; more bishops who daily offer the Holy Sacrifice and say their offices and guard the faith; more priests who are poor men gladly; more spiritual comradeship and fellowship among the laity and less respect of persons; more of God and less of man's whimsies; more regard for the holy saints than for the leaders of contemporary 'society'; more chrism and less starch."

This is a good portrayal of the ideals which the Anglo-Catholics cherish. How truth and error are here mingled the Lutheran theologian will readily see. We have quoted so extensively because in more than one respect what Canon Bell says contains lessons for us. A.

**Catholicism Bestirring Itself.**—Most of us have read that Catholics in America are becoming alarmed about the future of their Church and have started what is called "Catholic Action"—a series of activities which are intended to check the tremendous losses which the Church is suffering. The first thing on the program of the people who are responsible for this movement is to teach the Roman Catholic Catechism more effectively. The Baltimore Catechism has been revised in its language and form so that now it is more usable. In the next place, Bible-study is to be sponsored among Catholics. To what extent they are playing with fire in contemplating to make their people more acquainted with Holy Scripture these protagonists do not seem to realize. Furthermore, there is to be more social study and activity in the various parishes; there are to be discussions and lectures, the youth are to be given recreation, and in this way greater interest in, and loyalty toward, the Church are to be fostered. Again, there are to be held "soap-box meetings" on the streets of New York, trained speakers addressing the passers-by on the merits of the Catholic religion. And, finally, the priests are to be trained

more effectively and more in keeping with the many problems which the modern age presents. There is to be more insistence on independent thinking of the priests, and the suppression of initiative which is so characteristic of the education of the Roman Catholic clergy is to be warned against.

That, however, superstition will still be permitted to reign freely is shown by a newspaper dispatch from a Franciscan monastery in Paterson, N. J. We are told that there, with official Vatican seals, a repository for relics was discovered containing "the wood of the true cross of Jesus Christ, particles of wood from the table of the Last Supper, a particle from the tomb of the Virgin Mary, a particle from the cloak of St. Joseph, wood from the sign placed by the executioners over the head of Christ on the cross, wood from the pillar at which Christ was scourged, a fragment of the purple cloak thrown about Christ in mockery of His divine kingship, stone from the sacred sepulcher, a fragment of the tunic of Christ, wood from the crib of the nativity; first-class relics (particles of the body) of John the Baptist, Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of our Lord, of the apostles, St. Augustine, and many other saints and martyrs." The above information we obtained from an instructive article in the *Christian Century* on January 27, having the caption, "American Catholicism à la Mode." A.

"Needed — a Disturbing Ministry." — In the *Watchman-Examiner* the Rev. Dr. R. K. Maiden of Kansas City, Mo., offers under this heading a most severe indictment of the present-day sectarian ministry of modernistic hue. Beginning with the quotation "What damns the Church of our generation more than any other defect in its life is its inability or unwillingness to preach an adequate gospel [?] of repentance," he remarks (we are quoting outstanding statements only): "A severe indictment, but who will dispute the justice of it? It is not in evidence that there is any serious purpose, any vigorous and sustained effort, on the part of the ministry to call the present generation to repentance and convict it of sin. While some — the wonder is that there are not more — are heavy-heartedly lamenting the fading 'sense of sin,' others are frankly expressing hope for the day to come when man will be fully and forever delivered from all sense of sin. One need not be cynical to discern the moral and religious down-grade drift wide over the world. No special gift of foresight or forethought is needed to make us aware of what confronts us. A subtle, sinister, paganistic philosophy is adroitly and in various disguises seeking to naturalize religion, seeking to detach it from its divine origin and empty it of its supernatural content. Succeeding in this, the next step proposed is the religionizing of Christianity, leaving us only a humanistic religion. Unless the signs of the times are misleading, we are living in a day of well-nigh universal moral apostasy. Never perhaps has moral delinquency among Christian people been so manifest and so general. We have religious organization and activity, but seemingly no connection with the current of divine power. We have 'revivals' that do not revive. In the world's cold atmosphere churches are being chilled into impotency and 'frozen assets' by worldly-minded, world-serving members; waterlogged by sheer *nonchalant* worldliness

and complacent indifference. Church attendance by members is decreasing. Family and church discipline is disappearing. Family altars are the exception. Sabbath desecration is the rule. Suicides and divorces are multiplying. The crime wave rises higher and higher. Socialism and Communism eat their way into the very vitals of our national life. Atheism is organized and exerts a vigorous propaganda. The land is flooded with liquor. The nation is on a drunken debauch, with millions of church-members *participes criminis*. How far are the preachers responsible for the spiritual impotence, the low moral and spiritual level to which so many churches haven fallen? Are they calling men to repentance? Are they crusaders and torch-bearers in the army of the Lord? Is there fire enough in the pulpit to create warmth in the pew? There is no proper place in the ministry for weaklings, doubters, straddlers, soft-pedalers, slackers. There is so much preaching that does not get below the surface. It will be both the purpose and the effect of a disturbing ministry to unmask sin, strip it of all disguises, and expose it in its naked reality. The disturbing preacher will smite hypocrisy. He will not fail to declare to lukewarm Christians Christ's estimate of them. He will not flinch from preaching eternal torment for the finally impenitent. It has been my honest endeavor to show that we are confronted by a moral and spiritual slump, tragic in its proportions, that the pale, despiritualized type of Christianity of our day is failing to arrest this paganistic drift, and that our spiritual leaders, the preachers, are falling in the task of turning the devastating tide." It will be well also for us to study this terrifying, but, alas! true picture of our present-day church conditions in order that we may do all we can that the Word of God, which alone is the panacea of the present atheistic pest, may exert its healing influences to the salvation of those who still care to listen to Christ's Gospel.

J. T. M.

**The Enemy's Tribute.** — Under this heading the *Sunday-school Times* (March 6) reports the following obituary tribute of Pearl S. Buck to the late Dr. Machen. We read: "Unrighteousness sometimes pays a high tribute to righteousness. Pearl S. Buck's remarkable tribute to the late Dr. Machen, in her article in the *New Republic*, was recently quoted here; but also another statement in her article is worthy of special note. This ex-missionary, while she was still a missionary of an evangelical board, publicly trampled under foot the most precious truths of Christ and the Gospel; yet she sees in Dr. Machen's uncompromising testimony something of priceless value. She says: 'We have lost a man whom our times can ill spare, a man who had convictions which were real to him and who fought for those convictions and held to them through every change in time and human thought. He was worth a hundred of his fellows who, as princes of the Church, occupy easy places and play their church politics and trim their sails to every wind, who in their smug observance of the conventions of life and religion offend all honest and searching spirits. No forthright mind can live among them, neither the honest skeptic nor the honest dogmatist. I wish Dr. Machen had lived to go on fighting them.' It would be interesting to know what effect this discerning evaluation of one of the great Christian leaders of our generation

will have upon the many Modernists and middle-of-the-road leaders who are blind to the evils which Dr. Machen so wholesomely exposed and who are truly characterized by the caustic words of a notorious foe of the Gospel." We regard Mrs. Buck's tribute to Dr. Machen as one of the finest that have been paid by friend and foe alike to the memory of the great Westminster leader. Certainly even unbelieving men and women despise the modernistic hypocrites, whose pragmatical *sic-et-non* position on religious questions must needs offend the common decency of all who still have left in themselves a modicum of ordinary honesty. It always pays to fight for the truth.

J. T. M.

**Brief Items.**—The Presbyterian Church of America has been struck by another storm, owing to the unionism which has entered into the make-up of the organization. Prof. Allen A. McRae, teacher of the Old Testament, has resigned from the faculty, and three members of the board of trustees of the seminary have likewise handed in their resignations. The trouble that Professor McRae complains of is that the other members of the faculty did not share, but opposed, his views on pre-millennialism, of which he is a sponsor. It seems the chiliasts will have to be eliminated before there will be peace. Another point of controversy pertained to the question whether Christians must altogether abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors. Professor McRae answered this question in the affirmative, and the other members of the faculty did not agree with him. This young denomination certainly is harassed by many storms. It has to learn that a compromising position will lead to disaster.

The editor of the *Christian Century* complains of three red herrings drawn across the path of the unification of Christianity. They are the three slogans: "I believe in unity but not in union"; "I believe in unity but not in uniformity"; "I believe in cooperation but not in organic union." One justly asks whether these "red herrings" are perhaps not, after all, more real and important than that *Fata Morgana* unification which the *Christian Century* seeks to reach.

It seems that the Federal Council Preaching Mission will have a second year. We read of a team in New York consisting of Dr. George A. Buttrick, Dr. George A. Truett, and Dr. Adolph Keller, whose efforts will be seconded by those of Mrs. E. Stanley Jones, Mrs. Harper Sibley, and Muriel Lester. Instead of growing in strength, the venture increases in weakness.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America has a League of Faith, which recently met in Columbus, O. It was organized to give "strong testimony to the doctrines and the polity of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. within the Church itself." One of its aims is "to work within the Church for the eradication of those tendencies which are destructive of her life and witness, such as anti-supernaturalism, destructive higher criticism, latitudinarian indifference to creedal standards, worldliness and materialism, bureaucracy and tyranny."

The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. of America (Northern Presbyterians) carries on extensive mission-work among the Indians of our

country. A recent report shows that this endeavor comprises 130 churches with 39 preaching-stations, with a total membership of approximately 7,000 Indians, who represent more than forty different tribes. There are 83 full-time missionaries, of whom 53 are native ministers and lay workers and 28 ordained white ministers.

In his inaugural address the new president of Princeton Seminary, Dr. John A. Mackay, spoke of the attempts made by thinkers to find some basis for a satisfactory *Weltanschauung*. He thinks that since the war three prominent tendencies can be distinguished. "Albert Schweitzer proposes a metaphysical world view, inspired by the rationalism of the enlightenment, which shall have at the heart of it the ethical principle of reverence for life. Jacques Maritain and his friends, following in the steps of the great Cardinal Mercier and thinking from within the Roman Catholic tradition, propose a return to the Christian philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. The third representative figure is Karl Barth. Agonizing amid the silence of the Swiss mountains, not far from the thunder of the guns on three frontiers of his native land, and deeply concerned about the source of an authoritative word for his simple parishioners, Barth went back to the Reformation and to Holy Scripture, very especially to St. Paul." He should have added that Barth, in proclaiming the message of Paul, makes considerable subtractions and alterations. Dr. Mackay finds the solution of the problems confronting society in theology, "great theology, theology that brings to a focus the rays of light that stream from above in Jesus Christ along the line of the vertical and continue to come to us through Him, and that transmits these rays, as undimmed as possible, to every sphere of life and thought across the wide plain of the horizontal,"—a statement which cannot be accused of suffering from too much clarity.

The *Watchman-Examiner* reports: The campaign for a one-million-dollar memorial fund for the late Dr. J. Gresham Machen has been launched. Sponsored by the Presbyterian Church of America, the fund will be devoted to Westminster Theological Seminary, providing the chapel, dormitory, classrooms, a library, and the five-hundred-thousand-dollar endowment required by the State of Pennsylvania of an educational institution before it can grant degrees.

The *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, discussing Italy's course in Africa, says: "It is Mussolini's policy to proclaim himself the Defender of Islam." He is quoted to have said: 'Italy wishes to show her sympathy to Islam and to the Moslems of the whole world.' The Moslems are said to have been promised special privileges, while the Coptic clergy has been told: 'If these embarrassments [lack of support] are not stopped by you at once, the Italian government will have to annihilate you all.' To show that they are not trifling, the Italians are said to have executed Bishop Petrus early this year.

The *Allgemeine Missionsnachrichten* state that in Abyssinia missionaries will be permitted to return to their stations if in former years they did not carry on propaganda against Italy and did not prove through their attitude that they are "unfit for the work of Christian missionaries." We are told that this in principle permits the Hermannsburger

Mission to continue its work. As to the correctness of this report we do not presume to judge.

Palestine, according to one of our exchanges, now has 1,263,136 inhabitants, of whom 778,615 are Mohammedans, 336,176 Jews, 107,242 Christians, and about 11,000 adherents of other religions. Formerly the Christians were second in strength. Now, however, through the rapid increase of the Jewish population, Christians constitute a poor third.

A.

## II. Ausland

Geist und Denkart der Thüringer Deutschen Christen. Unter dieser Überschrift berichtet die „N. C. Z. N.“ eine Reihe von Aussprüchen, womit sich die sogenannten Deutschen Christen, zumeist Pfarrer, in letzter Zeit vor aller Welt lächerlich gemacht haben. Zur Kennzeichnung der Deutschen-Christen-Bewegung zitieren wir einige, die sich auf Fragen beziehen, die uns lutherischen Christen hierzulande von besonderem Interesse sind. Wir lesen u. a.: „Es wird noch einmal zu einer ganz schweren Auseinandersetzung kommen mit der katholischen Kirche. Sie ist der größte Feind des Nationalsozialismus. Denn die Katholiken haben eine ganz andere Weltanschauung. Sie nehmen den ganzen Menschen total in Beschlag, und das darf nur der Staat. Stellen Sie sich vor, es gibt heute, heute, noch eine katholische Kultur, katholische Musik, katholische Schulen! Das muß fallen. Luthers große reformatorische Tat bestand darin, daß er uns freigemacht hat von der katholischen Weltanschauung, daß er gesagt hat: ‚Der Mensch gehört total dem Staat. Nur er hat über ihn zu bestimmen.‘ Darum hat auch Luther das gesamte Kirchenwesen dem Staat übergeben. Das ist echt lutherische Lehre! Luther würde sich heute dreimal, nein, zehnmal im Grab herumdrehen, wenn er erleben würde, was die Bekenntnisfront aus ihm gemacht hat.“ Hier wird alles Geschichtliche auf den Kopf gestellt und auch nicht der geringste Beweis zur Erhärtung der fast wahnsinnigen Behauptungen gebracht. Nicht darüber, was die Bekenntnisfront über Luther lehrt, sondern darüber, was solche Deutschen Christen, wie sie hier zu Wort kommen, in die Welt hineinsüßen, muß sich (wenn es wirklich so etwas gäbe) Luther dreimal oder auch zehnmal im Grab herumdrehen. Was hier über Luther ausgesagt wird, ist ihm natürlich auch nie im Traum eingefallen. Noch schlimmer ist freilich, was „Pfarrer“ Schilling am 11. März 1937 in der Schloßkirche in Stuttgart sagte, nämlich: „Der Sieg wird unser, und die Reformation wird verbleichen gegen das Werk der D.-C.-Bewegung. Das Anliegen Luthers ‚Gerechtigkeit aus dem Glauben‘ liegt uns heute fern, weil wir nicht durch die Anglisthule des Katholizismus gegangen sind. Es ist deshalb eine Verfälschung der Reformation, wenn die Kirche heute fordert, daß man an den Veröhnungstod Christi glauben müsse, um selig zu werden (unterstrichen am Fundort). Neben der Autorität der Schrift steht schon bei Luther die von Vernunft und Gewissen. Wir wollen keine Organisation, sondern Gemeinschaft vor Gott. Man spürt, daß Gott selbst im deutschen Volk die Glaubensgemeinschaft baut.“ Noch schlimmer ist das Nächste: „Paulus hat allerdings den ewigen Christus durch die jüdische Weltanschauung gesehen. Wir können Christus heute nicht anders sehen als durch die nationalsozialistische Weltanschauung. Die Bekenntnisfront hat auch den ewigen Christus, aber sie sieht ihn durch die jüdisch-paulinische romanische und

spießbürgerliche Weltanschauung und will ihn nicht sehen lernen durch die nationalsozialistische Weltanschauung. Das ist ihr Fehler." Geradezu gotteslästerlich ist endlich das Folgende: „Das große, heilige deutsche Mahl . . . In den nächsten Monaten soll an bestimmten Sonntagen in jeder Familie ein Eintopfgericht gekocht werden, schlicht um schlicht durch alle Stände hindurch. Wäre ein solch heiliges Mahl nicht viel wunderbarer als das, was wir durch Schuld einer Fehlentwicklung der christlichen Kirche heute als ein hintertweltsches Mirakel haben?“ Gemeint ist hier natürlich das heilige Abendmahl, so daß hier dies große Heiligtum der christlichen Kirche schmählich zum Gegenstand des Spottes gemacht wird. Mit dergleichen Schmähungen aber werden die Deutschen Christen der Sache ihres Vaterlands nicht nützen. Die römische Kirche wird solche Ausdrücke nur dazu gebrauchen, um aus dem „heidnischen Greuel des protestantischen Christenvolks“ Nutzen für sich zu ziehen. Schon jetzt ist die Völkersympathie zum großen Teil auf Seiten des Papstes; und wird es wieder zum Weltkrieg kommen, so wird erst recht das wahnsinnige Zeug, das die Deutschen Christen jetzt in die Welt hinausschreien, dem deutschen Volk zum Schaden gereichen. Die eigentlichen Feinde Deutschlands sind jetzt die Deutschen Christen; sie sind es ebenso sehr wie die russischen Sowjets, mit denen sie im Grund denselben Atheismus gemein haben.

J. T. M.

**Cheweibe in der Schloßkirche zu Stuttgart.** Am 6. März, nachmittags 4 Uhr, fand die Trauung der Jungmädels-Untergangsführerin des Untergau 119, Stuttgart S. B., in der Schloßkirche statt. Jungmädels bildeten dichtes Spalier von der Sakristei bis hinaus auf die Straße. Die Teilnahme war dienstlich befohlen worden. Nachdem das Brautpaar in die Sakristei gekommen war, rückte der eine Teil Jungmädels ab; der andere, in die Kirche beordert, suchte dort seinen Platz auf. Eine VdM.-Führerin ging zum Altar, der reich und schön geschmückt war und über dem das Zeichen der Volkskirchenbewegung D. C. hing, und nahm das Kreuz vom Altar, um es hinter den Altar auf den Boden zu stellen. Hierbei löste sich der Sodel des Kreuzifixes, das auch noch an einer andern Stelle eine kleine Beschädigung aufweist. Die „Cheweibe“ war in einen musikalischen Rahmen eingebaut. Den Eingang bildeten die Hochzeitskantate von Spitta mit dem Lied „Wo immer das Leben erglommen, Da soll es als Flamme stehen; Wir wissen, woher wir kommen; Wir wissen, wohin wir gehen“ und etliche Feiersprüche. Dann kam die Rede des HJ.-Führers M. (ehemaliger Stifter und Student der Theologie, jetzt aus der Kirche ausgetreten) in Uniform, der vor dem Altar stand und die Weihe vornahm. Er führte, nachdem er seiner Freude und Genugtuung darüber Ausdruck gegeben hatte, daß man nun einen Raum für kultische Feiern der Bewegung habe, ungefähr folgendes aus: Zwei Menschen haben sich das Jawort gegeben, nicht zu ihrem Vergnügen, sondern im Gedanken an Volk und Land und Führer. Sie haben damit eine ganz neue, große und heilige Aufgabe bekommen, dem Volk zu neuem Leben zu verhelfen. Zwei Menschen, die sich bis jetzt ganz ihrem Dienst geopfert haben, müssen sich noch mehr als vorher selbst aufgeben und zusammenwachsen in dem heiligsten Dienst für das Volk. Sie werden ein Fleisch sein. Und wenn einmal die Tage kommen, die Not und Verzweiflung bringen, dann soll sie die Fahne mit dem Sonnensymbol, dem Zeichen des Kampfes und Sieges, mit neuem Mut befeelen. Der Gedanke an den Führer, der nie



den Glauben verlor und in den trübsten Tagen mit Zähigkeit ausgehalten hat, soll von neuem die Kraft geben, den Kampf zu bestehen. Wenn zwei Menschen sich das Jawort gegeben haben, sind sie bereit, sich ganz dem Dienst unsers Volkes hinzugeben und ihm nach den heiligsten Wachstumsgesetzen zu neuem Leben zu verhelfen. Es gibt keinen schöneren Gottesdienst als die ganze heilige Hingabe im ehelichen Leben. Das Brautpaar wechselt die Ringe, während des die Orgel das HZ.-Lied spielt „Wo wir stehen, steht die Treue“. Mit dem Schluß der Hochzeitskantate war die Feier beendet. Nachher wurde das Kreuz wieder auf den Altar gestellt.\*

(Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchztg.)

**Interessante Funde.** Von größter Wichtigkeit scheinen die Funde zu sein, die man neuerdings in der alten Euphratfestung Dura-Europos gemacht hat. Ausgegrabene heidnische Tempel werfen wichtiges Licht auf die babylonisch-macedonischen Kultusformen, die hier zur einzigartigen Entwidlung gelangten. Eine noch sehr gut erhaltene Synagoge mit zahlreichen Bildern aus dem Alten Testament, letztere mit besonderen, der jüdischen Tradition entlehnten Zügen, wird zu manchem bis jetzt in der hebräischen Geschichte noch reichlich Unaufgeklärten eine wichtige Exegese liefern, während namentlich eine altchristliche Taufkapelle unter den Altertumsforschern allgemeines Interesse erweckt. Die Taufkapelle, die nun ganz freigelegt ist, bildete offenbar einen Teil eines größeren Privathauses, das augenscheinlich regelmäßig für gottesdienstliche Zwecke Verwendung fand. Auch in andern Teilen des römischen Reichs versammelten sich ja die Christen jener Tage in den Häusern reicher, vornehmer Bürger. Auf einem Wandbild ist das Datum 232 A. D. verzeichnet. Das Bild der drei Marien, die zum Grabe Christi eilen, unterstützt dies Datum; denn ihre Haartracht entspricht derjenigen, die von Julia Mamaea, der Mutter des Severus Alexander, der A. D. 222—235 regierte, eingeführt wurde. Am Ende der Kapelle befindet sich ein besonderer Raum, der nach dem Charakter der Bilder als Taufsaal diente. Der Taufstein ist 1.16 Meter lang, .95 Meter breit und .96 Meter tief. Wichtig an dem Taufstein ist dies, daß er ein volles Untertauchen unmöglich machte; hierzu war er für Erwachsene nicht groß genug. Das Taufen geschah daher hier wie in Rom durch Besprengen und Übergießen, nicht durch Untertauchen, für welche fast ganz allgemeine Taufsitte die Abbildungen in den Katakomben der Reichshauptstadt bedeutende Beweise bringen, vor allem die frühchristlichen Wandbilder in den Katakomben des Caligula. Die gut erhaltenen Wandmalereien aus der Dura-Europoschen Kapelle befinden sich jetzt in der Galerie für schöne Künste in der Universität Yale in New Haven, Conn., wo auch noch andere wichtige Funde aufbewahrt werden. In Dura-Europos hat man auch das altchristliche „Quadrat“ vorgefunden, das aus den folgenden untereinander geschriebenen Worten besteht: „Rotas, Opera, Tenet, Arepo, Sator.“ Was die Worte bedeuten, ist bis jetzt noch nicht ermittelt worden. Es handelte sich um ein Kryptogramm der frühen Christen, das von den Uneingeweihten nicht verstanden wurde, den Christen aber selbst, an den Häusern angebracht, als Erkennungszeichen diente. Felix Großer will jetzt in den Buchstaben des Quadrats zweimal die Worte Pater Noster gefunden haben. Wie dem aber auch sein mag, auf alle Fälle ist dieses

\* HZ = Hlterjugend. DC = Deutsche Christen. BbM = Bund deutscher Mädel.

Kryptogramm für uns wichtig, weil es uns beweist, daß schon um das Jahr 225 p. C. n. sich in dem entfernten Dura-Europos eine größere Christengemeinde befand. Aber nicht nur in Dura-Europos, sondern auch selbst in Pompeji, wo man dies Kryptogramm an zwei verschiedenen Stellen gefunden hat, obwohl ja diese Stadt schon 79 n. Chr. durch die Lavamassen des Vesuvs verschüttet wurde, war das Christentum bekannt. Es gab schon vor dem Jahre 79, wie der italienische Archäolog Roffi bereits im Jahre 1862 urteilte, in Pompeji „Christenhäuser“. Was uns dies Kryptogramm als ein spezifisch christliches zu erkennen gibt, ist die Tatsache, daß es stets von den Buchstaben Alpha und Omega umkränzt ist, und diese beiden griechischen Buchstaben designieren ja den ewigen Christus. Über das Kryptogramm selbst schreibt „Das Evangelische Deutschland“: „überall in der christlichen Welt, von England bis Kleinasien und Ägypten, finden wir jenes magische Quadrat aus lateinischen Wörtern. Bis jetzt konnte man die Inschrift zurückverfolgen bis in den Anfang des dritten christlichen Jahrhunderts. Man fand die Inschrift nämlich in einer altchristlichen Taufkapelle in Dura-Europos am Euphrat, am Nordrand von Syrien. Die Ausgrabungen von Pompeji lassen jetzt die Inschrift wesentlich weiter zurückverfolgen. Die Inschrift bezeugt, daß schon ein halbes Menschenalter nach Christi Tod Christen in Pompeji gelebt haben. Der Leiter der Ausgrabungen in Pompeji, der berühmte Archäolog Della Corte, hat zu dem Fund in Pompeji die Erklärung abgegeben: „Wir loben mit gutem Grund den *cursus publicus* der Römer, auf dem Gesetz, Ideen, Gewohnheiten, Moden und alle Güter des zivilisatorischen Fortschritts mit solcher Geschwindigkeit vom Zentrum zu den entferntesten Punkten dieses gewaltigen Reichs sich zu verbreiten vermochten. Aber eine derartige Begeisterung blieb ohne Inhalt, wenn wir zögerten, das anzuerkennen, was ein Faktum ist: die wunderbare, schnelle und universale Ausbreitung des christlichen Glaubens.“ — Weil das Quadrat gegenwärtig viel studiert wird, so möchten wir eine einfache Lösung deselben vorschlagen. Schreibt man die genannten Wörter untereinander, so hat man die folgende Zusammenstellung:

A  
 roTas  
 opEra  
 Ω TENET Ω  
 arEpo  
 saTor

A

Das Wort **TENET**, „er erhält“, „er regiert“, bildet somit ein Kreuz, wozu die Buchstaben Alpha und Omega die Erklärung bilden. Das Thema des Quadrats ist daher „der gekreuzigte Christus“. Nun liest man immer im Kreise herum, und zwar doppelt: Rotas, sator, rotas, sator, opera (um tenet herum), opera, was so im Deutschen wiedergegeben werden könnte: Du schwingst im Kreise, o Säer, du schwingst im Kreise, o Säer, Werke, Werke: Christus regiert, Christus regiert (oder bewahrt). J. L. M.