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## Theological Observer. – Kirchlch Zeitgeschichtliches

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**Theological Observer — Kirchl. Zeitgeschichtliches**


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**I. Amerika**

**How Much of the Bible is True? —** That is the question the Modernist who rejects the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures has to answer. The professor of the University of Chicago Dr. H. L. Willett, who conducts the Question Box in the *Christian Century*, was confronted with this problem when a reader asked, "How much of the Bible is to be taken as factual and trustworthy, and how is one to make sure of the portions that are to be believed?" Certainly an unavoidable question for all who refuse to believe what the Bible says about itself. The answer of Professor Willett will hardly be found satisfactory by his correspondent. He says of the Old Testament Scriptures: "They embody tradition, folk-lore, and imaginative material as well as authentic recitals of actual incidents. They even include works of fiction, such as the books of Ruth, Jonah, and Esther, as well as fables and parables, such as those spoken by Jesus. A whole world of mythology lies back of the literature of the Old Testament, and to this frequent reference is made in the poetry and preaching of the Scriptures. One is not likely to be misled in discriminating between statements of fact and the obvious fiction of illustrative references." This is a polite way of saying that there is no criterion which can be employed with the assurance that one is differentiating between truth and fiction. The concluding paragraph of Professor Willett's statement reads: "It is evident that it is not only the privilege but the duty of the student of Scripture to exercise his right of judgment regarding the statements of the Bible, remembering the origin and character of the record and the fact that the freedom to estimate the historical and moral value of all parts of the book, the right of private judgment, is the foundation-stone of Protestantism. Beyond this the introductions and commentaries offer useful suggestions." There you are in a bog, bewildered and wondering who had the audacity to offer you light and instead of it gave you darkness. A.

**Is Jesus Christ the God-Man or the Divine Man? —** In his book *Jesus Christ Our Lord* (published by the Abingdon Press, 1937) Dr. Otto Justice Baab of the faculty of Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill., applies a long series of honorific epithets to Jesus. He calls Jesus "the Son of God," "the veritable Son of God," "the very Son of God." He speaks of "Jesus' kinship with God," of "Christ's divine nature," "the very divinity of Christ," abhors "the denial of the divinity of Christ," and insists that "it is the high and holy purpose of the Church to demonstrate without equivocation the divinity of Christ, its Lord." But he will not call Jesus God. He declares on page 41: "It is historically possible and reasonable to believe that Jesus regarded Himself as a divine being. . . . But this is quite different from ascribing deity to Jesus. . . . It is hard to imagine His acceptance of the Johannine idea of a metaphysical oneness between Himself and Deity." So all that the high-sounding titles which the Modernist confers upon Jesus import is that Jesus "is the embodiment of the greatest power in the universe,"



"the most significant embodiment of the divine power of integrating understanding in all of history," "the divinity that was in His soul expressed itself essentially in an attitude of understanding, all-embracing love." We had read the book thus far for the purpose of review, but at page 57 we stalled. "We mean, then, that Jesus is so uniquely and concretely related to the power we call God that His divinity is beyond dispute. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. In Him the power of mutual and sacrificial love which is God has come to men. After all the ages when various levels of existence in the evolutionary process were struggling to incarnate the principle of mutual helpfulness, blindly at first and then in the dim beginnings of conscious life, there finally came to earth a human personality in whom this power had full sway and effectiveness. No one save the Son of God could so sublimely and completely surrender Himself as an instrument of this divine power." We are stalled here for the present. We shall not write the review till several points that here perplex us are settled. First, have these wonderful powers of the evolutionary process come to a standstill? Could they not produce a second Jesus? And with the power of Jesus' influence working for nineteen hundred years, why are not beings produced that excel Jesus? Has the evolutionary force exhausted itself centuries ago? Again, what a wicked force must inhere in the evolutionary process to produce a being like Jesus, the acme of humanity, who "regarded Himself as a divine being"! Evolution, producing the noblest creature, has produced the most wicked creature! Then, too, we cannot understand why Dr. Baab should use the phrase "there finally came to earth." It has sense when we speak of the incarnation of the Son of God. It has sense, in what is called on this same page the "Jewish" conception, that "the Son of God was a heavenly creature set aside for a special mission to men." But one who looks upon Jesus as a mere man might say that He "appeared on earth" but should not say He "came to earth." One who does not accept the Biblical account should refrain from using Biblical phrases. E.

**A Warning Concerning Unionism.**—When in New Haven, Conn., Episcopalians met representatives of eleven other Protestant bodies, a joint Communion was held, which was justly criticized by the *Living Church*. The editor of that paper writes: "We must take this opportunity to state as emphatically and unequivocally as possible our conviction that 'joint Communion services' in which priests of the Episcopal Church participate together with ministers of Protestant denominations are a wrong approach to the subject of Christian unity. We felt that the united Communion service at Oxford was a mistake, even though it had such high authority for it as the Archbishop of Canterbury. We feel equally that the joint Communion service in Connecticut was a mistake so far as the participation of Anglicans is concerned, and we hope that it will not be allowed to stand as a precedent. Intercommunion is the goal of the unity movement, not simply a step along the way. The Episcopal Church is a part of Catholic Christendom. Catholics have a very definite concept of the Holy Communion, a concept that we believe in all sincerity to be the only true interpretation of our Lord's own teaching. We believe in the real, objective presence of our Lord



in the blessed Sacrament of the Altar when the Holy Communion is properly celebrated by a properly ordained priest of the Catholic Church. We believe that our Lord is present in the blessed Sacrament, not in some vague, subjective sense, but actually and objectively, quite as truly as He was present in the manger in Bethlehem or on the cross of Calvary. He is to be worshiped on His altar-throne just as the shepherds and the Wise Men worshiped Him in Palestine and as the angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven worship Him there. Protestants do not hold this belief. Not only do they not believe in the necessity of a sacrificing priesthood for the celebration of the Holy Communion, but most of them do not mean the same thing that we do by this Sacrament. In Baptist theology, for example, the Lord's Supper is not even described as a Sacrament, but simply as an ordinance. Certain Liberals see in it nothing but a memorial of a historic event. Some even go so far as to share the Unitarian denial that Christ is God and so cannot believe that He is present in the blessed Sacrament. When we join with our Protestant brethren in the celebration of what purports to be a united Communion service, when actually it means one thing to us, another thing to orthodox Protestants, still another to liberal Protestants, and something still different to Unitarians, we are not promoting Christian unity but simply muddying the waters and confusing the issue. Moreover, if we persist in united Communion services with Protestants, we shall endanger our relationships with the Eastern Orthodox and Old Catholics, thus disrupting the measure of unity that we have already been able to obtain with our brethren with whom we share the full Catholic faith. We wish to be as kindly and charitable in this matter as we can, but we feel that we must speak out frankly and plainly. We hope that our Protestant brethren will recognize that it is not lack of Christian charity but devotion to one of the most fundamental doctrines of our faith that animates us in so doing."

Naturally, much is to be subtracted from the above before we can subscribe to it. One wishes very much that the writer would have presented more fully his teaching on the Lord's Supper. It is evident that he believes in the real presence; but whether it is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the real presence which he accepts or that of the Lutheran Church is not quite clear. When he speaks of worshiping Jesus on His altar-throne, the fear inevitably rises in one that he holds Roman Catholic notions concerning the Sacrament. But what is commendatory in the editorial is the definiteness with which the author speaks against the joint Communion services of people who are not agreed in doctrine, not even with respect to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. How people whose teachings on the Sacrament of the Altar are conflicting can go to the Lord's Table together is indeed an enigma for all who hold that in the Church, if anywhere, the principles of honesty and sincerity should obtain.

A.

**Unionistic Make-Belief.**—The unionists try hard to minimize the differences in the way of church union. They like to play up the points of agreement. And they are satisfied with a great minimum. In an article, "The Outlook for Church Union," discussing the results of Oxford



and Edinburgh, the *Christian Century* of September 22, 1937, states: "Edinburgh asked: Are our differences on this point and that insurmountable barriers to union? Here was realism. And it was the kind of realism which was so honest and candid that even where the differences were insurmountable, the discussion resulted in increased mutual respect, coupled with hope that further fellowship and discussion would lead to a common understanding." However: "But this realism also led to the discovery of unsuspected margins of agreement. The discussion of the number of Sacraments is a good illustration. It was pointed out that Protestantism generally holds to two, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Eastern orthodoxy holds, with Roman Catholicism, to seven; Anglicanism has left the number indeterminate, but generally agrees with the Protestant bodies in giving special place to two. However, it emerged in the discussions that we all have the equivalent of seven sacraments, and perhaps more! Certainly the Orthodox and Roman churches are not peculiar in holding marriage to be a 'divine ordinance.' Also, every clergyman of the now liturgical churches performs some act of grace for the dying, which is the equivalent of 'extreme unction.' Moreover, all churches 'ordain' their ministers. There is also in the discipline of all churches at least a suggestion of 'penance.' Confirmation is a universal practise in churches which practise infant baptism. And as for those churches which practise only adult baptism a new 'sacrament' is coming into wide use, namely, the dedication of infants and their recognition as members of the Christian community for whose care the church has peculiar responsibility." This is pathetic. E.

"Papam esse verum antichristum."—A paragraph from Dr. J. A. Dell's review of Lenski's *Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon*, published in the *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*, October, 1937, p. 73, reads: "Perhaps you are interested in 'the man of sin' in 2 Thess. 2. 'This is an apostasy (v. 3),' says Lenski. 'It is therefore to be sought in the Church visible, not outside of the Church,—not in the pagan world, in the general pagan moral decline, in Mohammedanism, in the French Revolution, in the rise and spread of Masonry, in Soviet Russia, or in lesser phenomena. We must not confuse the little antichrists with the great antichrists, the antichrists outside of the visible Church with the great Antichrist inside of it. . . . The secret beginnings were actively stirring in Paul's own time, v. 7. We may debate as to what or who still held these beginnings down at that time (τὸ κατέχον—ὁ κατέχων). In the writer's opinion the best view is that this was the Roman imperium, a force (neuter), and this force represented in the person (masculine) of the pagan emperors. This got out of the way, v. 7, when Constantine, the first Christian emperor, came to the throne. Only then did the Papacy become possible. The great apostasy is Romanism.'" Instead of quoting this paragraph from Lenski's commentary directly, we have preferred to call attention to its incorporation into the *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*.

We cannot refrain, however, from quoting another paragraph from the commentary, on page 444 f.: "What obstructs the vision of so many



and leads them to deny that the Pope is the Antichrist is a failure to appreciate in their person the fact that justification by faith alone is the soul and center of all that is true Christianity. All other doctrines have their roots in this one. We quote Franz Pieper: 'It is true, the open unbelievers are raging enemies of the Church. But what Christians are to think of pronounced unbelievers they know. By this they are not deceived. How does it, then, come about that men are today disinclined to recognize the Pope as the Antichrist? Whence this strange and deplorable fact that nearly all late "believing" theologians hunt about for the Antichrist while he does his great and mighty work in the Church right before their eyes? They are not established in the living knowledge of the doctrine of justification and in the importance of this doctrine for the Church. From my own experience I must confess that in my own conscience I was not vitally convinced that the Pope is the Antichrist until, on the one hand, I realized what the doctrine of justification is and what its significance is for the Church, and, on the other hand, that the Papacy has its real essence in denying and cursing the doctrine of justification and by its show of piety and its claim to be the only saving Church binds to itself men's consciences.' (*Christliche Dogmatik*, II, 669 f.) Beyond the curse pronounced by the Council of Trent, sessio 6, canon 11, nothing can go in the way of antichristianity in the official Church: *Si quis dixerit, homines iustificari vel sola imputatione iustitiae Christi*, etc. . . . The confessional statement of the Smalcald Articles, II, Art. IV, (*Trigl.*, 475), is true: 'This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist,' etc.

By the way, while we are studying Lenski's commentary on 2 Thess. 2, we shall glance at the exposition of vv. 13 and 14: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto He called you by our Gospel." "Chose; only the middle of *αἰρέω* is used in the New Testament and only the simplex. The sense is much the same as though Paul had used *ἐκλέγεσθαι* or *προορίζειν*, although each verb has its own connotation. Here *εἰλατο* means no more than that God 'took you for Himself,' took you for His own, and in that sense 'chose you.' 'From the beginning.' . . . The sense is thus the same as 'before the foundation of the world' (Eph. 1, 4), in eternity. . . . There is no other choice, or election, save this one for salvation in connection with sanctification and faith. Some think only of final salvation (heaven), i. e., of the 'glory' mentioned in v. 14; but sanctification and faith point to 'salvation' both here and hereafter. . . . 'Εν (ἐν ἁγίασμῳ) does not mean 'in view of' or 'in the foreknowledge of.' . . . None were chosen by God without this connection. F. Pieper well says that sanctification and faith belong to the act of choosing and not merely to the execution of the act, as Calvinists teach. (*Christliche Dogmatik*, III, 538.) . . . What God did for the Thessalonians in time rests on His timeless act: if no choice, then no call, etc." There are statements in Lenski's commentary regarding election which are not so clear, some that are not acceptable, but here all is clear: We owe our salvation, our faith included, to the eternal election of grace. "If no choice, then no call, etc." E.



"All Scripture is Given by Inspiration of God."—We have not yet tired of transcribing portions from Lenski's commentary. It is a labor of love. From the comment on 2 Tim. 3, 16 we select the following statements: "Paul's passive *θεόπνευστος* must in some way be ruled out. Many follow the bold method: They let Paul say what he pleases; they do not believe what he says. Many that are not so bold tone down the idea of inspiration until nothing but the decorative word is left. Somehow they at least do not like to give up the word. They generally, however, speak with contempt of what they denominate 'the verbal theory of inspiration.' They propose a 'theory' of a totally different kind, certainly one that allows for more or less error in Holy Writ. . . . All of it presents and reveals the fact of inspiration, only the fact. There is no theory about it, can be none. A fact is simply to be seen as a fact, then treated as a fact, not to be dissolved into a theory. He who does the latter may lose the fact; many already have lost it.—'All Scripture' is 'writing,' *γραφή*. The pen traces words and combines these into sentences and paragraphs. These words convey the thought. Erase the words, and the thought disappears. These are not *Woerter*, vocables, but *Worte*, words expressing thoughts. This is *verbal inspiration*. It is before us on every written page of the Book. *There is no other divine inspiration*. The thoughts cannot be separated from the words, which are its vehicles. To speak of an inspiration of thought that is *not* an inspiration of the words is to disregard what the Scriptures show us as a fact. *Τὸ ὁηθέν ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου*, 'the thing that was uttered or spoken by the Lord' (Matt. 1, 22), was uttered in words, Yahveh uttered them, Were these utterances fallible, errant in any way, in any word or expression? Does Yahveh ever err? 'Thy Word is truth,' *ἀλήθεια*, John 17, 17. 'Which things also we speak, not in words (*λόγοι*) taught of human wisdom, but taught of the Spirit,' 1 Cor. 2, 13. The very *λόγοι* were taught by the Spirit by verbal inspiration, they are inerrant in every word, unless we intend to charge the Lord and His Spirit with errancy, fallibility."

E.

**The Harassed Presbyterian Church of America.**—The troubles of this new organization, led by Dr. Machen till his lamented death, January 1, are not few. A group has left it to organize a new body to be called the "Bible Presbyterian Synod." This synod, as the *Presbyterian Tribune* states, is intending to stand by the Independent Board, while the year-old Presbyterian Church of America has abandoned the Independent Board and taken steps to form its own committee on foreign missions. One cause of the dissension undoubtedly is that the men who are at the head of the Bible Presbyterian Synod movement are premillenarians, who, while they accept the Westminster Confession of Faith and the catechisms, intend "to amend these standards in any particular in which the premillennial teaching of the Scripture may be held to be obscured." Another reason why the Presbyterian Church of America severed its relations with the Independent Board is said to have been the fact that some of the leaders of the Independent Board had not become members of the Presbyterian Church of America. We have here a plain demonstration of what unhealthy enthusiasm (*Schwaermerei*) will lead to.

A.



**Developments at Princeton Seminary.**— Under this heading *Christianity Today* (November, 1937) reports with undisguised fear two recent developments at Princeton Seminary which show that the liberal elements in control of the seminary are trying to keep Presbyterian conservatism out of both the management and the teaching force of Princeton. In the first place, Dr. Robert E. Speer has been elected to succeed Dr. W. L. McEwan as president of the Board of Trustees, and this must be taken as a step favoring the Auburn Affirmation group. Dr. Speer is the first layman to be made president of the Board of Control of the educational activities of the seminary. But what is even worse is the fact that on October 12 the Board elected the Rev. Dr. E. G. Homrighausen to succeed the late Harold L. Donnelly as professor of Christian Education. Dr. Homrighausen is at present pastor of the Carrollton Avenue Church (Evangelical and Reformed) in Indianapolis and lecturer on Church History in the College of Religion of Butler University. The liberal stand of this minister is proved by *Christianity Today* from his recent book *Christianity in America*, from which it quotes the following modernistic statements with reference to the inspiration of the Bible: "The old idea of an infallible Bible, inspired in every jot and tittle, which is often associated with preaching, has run its course." (P. 105.) "While in many respects that scholarship [critical] has been destructive, in a much larger sense it has liberated us from all these notions of an infallible book." (P. 118.) "Few intelligent Protestants can still hold to the idea that the Bible is an infallible book; that it contains no linguistic errors, no historical discrepancies, no antiquated scientific assumptions, not even bad ethical standards. Some might still claim for the 'original copies' of the Bible an infallible character, but this only begs the question and makes such Christian apologetics more ridiculous in the eyes of sincere men." (P. 121.) "The Bible is not the actual Word of God, but merely a human witness to what the Word of God did in and with men and history. The words of the Bible are not to be believed because they are in the Bible. In reading the Bible, there comes to me a strange language, there confronts me a real God, and there emerges before me something about life that I do not discover anywhere else. It is because the Scriptures do this that they are 'sacred.' Not all the Bible does this for me. There is much in the Bible like chaff, or rather like the seemingly insignificant parts of a watch. There is a residue in the Bible that remains intact in spite of all its inaccuracies, its antedated cosmology and science." (P. 136.) In closing the report, *Christianity Today* remarks rather mildly: "With these statements before us, it seems difficult, if not impossible, to suppose that Dr. Homrighausen holds that view of Holy Scripture to which each and every member of the Board of Trustees and faculty of Princeton Seminary is required to subscribe." Dr. Homrighausen, by the way, is a member of the critical wing of Barthian rationalism. J. T. M.

**Triennial Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church.**— This convention, which met in Cincinnati in October, 1937, has attracted a good deal of attention. Some of the chief news items reported in the religious press concerning it are the following. The former presiding bishop, Rev. James De Wolf Perry, was not reelected. The new pre-



siding bishop is Bishop Tucker of Virginia, a man sixty-three years old, who served prominently as missionary and Christian leader in Japan. His election is held as indicating that a new era of missionary advance will be inaugurated by his Church. "Under the new plan of organization the presiding bishop will have a new place of leadership in the formulation of the policies of the Church, for he will be president of the National Council and will also be more directly in charge of the Forward Movement. It is likely also that he will head the new commission on strategy and policy." (*The Living Church*.)

The proposed World Council, which is to continue the work of the Oxford and Edinburgh conferences, was enthusiastically endorsed, and provision was made for the sending of one clerical and one lay delegate to the preliminary conference to be held in Holland in May, 1938. With respect to the office of the presiding bishop it was decided that he should be elected for life, that is, till he reaches the retiring age of sixty-eight. The presiding bishop was instructed to turn over the supervision of his particular diocese as much as possible to his coadjutor, that is, the assistant bishop, in order that he might give all of his time to the work of the Church at large. With respect to marriage and divorce several attempts were made to alter the present canon of the Church, "which permits remarriage by the Church only in the case of the innocent party in a divorce granted on grounds of adultery." One group tried to put the decision of the question whether a divorced person seeking another marriage might be granted this request into the hands of the diocesan bishop, who after consultation with the parochial minister would have to say whether the marriage could be authorized. Another group likewise sought to invest the bishop with the authority of decision in such cases, limiting them, however, to divorce obtained on the ground of adultery. Both proposed alterations were defeated. While one must applaud the action of the convention inasmuch as it refused to yield to Liberalism, it is regrettable that the Protestant Episcopal Church is not adhering to the full teachings of the Scriptures on this point, recognizing that not only adultery, but likewise malicious desertion constitutes a valid reason for obtaining a divorce. It must have been very impressive when it was announced that the special collection of the woman's auxiliary, gathered at a service in connection with the convention, amounted to \$861,000. The report of the Joint Commission on Approaches to Unity says that a conference was held with representatives of the Augustana Synod, at which "a surprising unanimity on the subjects of the Holy Scriptures, the historic creeds, and the Sacraments" was revealed. The report continues: "Difference on the matter of holy orders was frankly confessed and the way left open for further discussions. Numerous suspicions were allayed, and many misconceptions were cleared away. Progress will be necessarily slow in this direction, but the prospect is encouraging." The Commission found itself largely in agreement with the Commission on Unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church and will continue its discussions with it. It strongly recommends reunion with the "separated brethren," the Reformed Episcopal Church. As to its discussions with the Northern Presbyterians, the commission proposed that both churches, the Protestant Episcopal and the Presbyterian Church



in the United States of America, should accept the following declaration: "The two churches, one in the faith of the Lord Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, recognizing the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith, accepting the two Sacraments ordained by Christ, and believing that the visible unity of Christian churches is the will of God, hereby firmly declare their purpose to achieve organic union between the respective churches. Upon the basis of this agreement the two churches agree to take immediate steps toward the framing of plans whereby this may be achieved." This proposal was accepted and will be communicated to the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. by the presiding bishop.

A.

**"A Significant Statement by a Liberal Editor."**—As a "significant statement by a liberal editor" *Christianity Today* (October, 1937) quotes the following editorial comment by Dr. Charles C. Morrison of the *Christian Century*: "For more than a hundred years the Church has been engaged in the solemn business of forgetting its Gospel. It has not repudiated or denied it but has allowed it to be so mixed and adulterated with the wisdom of this world that its own unique testimony has been blurred with ambiguity. The fundamentals of the Christian faith have been covered over with secularism, and our churchmanship has proceeded upon the assumption that the Church's contribution to human life must be made in terms of prevalent philosophies which have no relation to the Christian faith." This brief description of the insidious work of Modernism is so well founded that it merits careful consideration. What Dr. Morrison here so nicely declares in his excellent analysis of the case is precisely the course which the high dignitaries of modern rationalism, such as Schleiermacher and Ritschl, as well as their many imitators have followed: *they have mixed and adulterated the Gospel with the wisdom of this world!* Not so adequate is what Dr. Morrison writes next: "The rise of totalitarian states and the manifest inability of secular society to get itself together, especially since the World War, have set Christian men to the task of digging down to the foundations of their faith, with the result that a conception of the Church and of the Gospel is emerging which transcends the categories of social reform in the secular sense and exhibits Christianity as the only savior of the world." While it is true that the World War and its aftermath are partly responsible for the bankruptcy of extreme rationalism, the real "digging down to the foundations of faith" is, properly speaking, the good fruit of the testimony of scores of faithful witnesses throughout the world, of *Bekenntnisfronten* which took their task seriously. Incidentally, the "new conception of the Church and of the Gospel, transcending the categories of social reform in the secular sense" is largely only a "new rationalism," not essentially different from its unlamented predecessor, just a new way of "covering fundamentals with secularism."

J. T. M.

**When Patriotism Becomes Worship.**—The *Sunday-school Times* (September 4, 1937) under this heading calls attention to the seriousness of the problem arising from the fact that the Japanese government insists upon the participation of Christians, especially in Korea and Man-



churia, in the Shinto festivities. The *Times* has discussed the problem before and in the issue mentioned restates and reaffirms its position that under no condition must Christians join in these rites of pagan worship. Because of his uncompromising stand in the matter Dr. George McCune was forced from the presidency of the Union Christian College and the principalship of the Presbyterian Boys Academy at Pyeng Yang and obliged to leave Korea. So far only one church-body has definitely taken a stand on the question whether Christians in Japan, Korea, and Manchuria, and especially the teachers and pupils in the Christian mission-schools and colleges there, may bow at the shrines, namely, the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Southern Presbyterian Church. Regarding the claim that such Shinto obeisance is merely political in nature and not in any way religious the *Sunday-school Times* writes: "The Japanese government regards the Shinto shrines as the very foundation of its policy of national patriotic education. Around the shrines has been gathered all the folklore and tradition of Japanese nationalism. They are regarded as the shades of the spirits of the emperors, the mythological ancestors of the country, and the heroes of the empire. To do obeisance at the shrine is therefore, according to the government, but the normal and rightful duty of every Japanese subject, and shrine attendance is to be required of all pupils in schools as a part of the necessary training in loyalty and patriotism. It is natural that such policies should receive special emphasis at a time when extreme nationalism is epidemic around the world, and it is evident that no let-up is contemplated. Of course, the government takes the position that there is nothing in all this that should prove in any way embarrassing to the Christian schools, as, according to its claim, the shrines are purely patriotic in nature and have no religious significance. It is at this point that the difficulties begin, for our missionaries are unable so to regard Shinto shrines." Among the objections of the missionaries the following are the most convincing: 1. There is a great volume of Japanese opinion and scholarship supporting the view that Shinto is a religion. 2. Government spokesmen apply all the terms of religion to the cult. 3. The objects of veneration have ascribed to them the attributes of deity. 4. Shinto has always been classified as a religion. 5. There are distinctly religious elements in the ritual. 6. Terms of religion are regularly employed. The matter certainly is a most serious one, and one can readily understand the appeal of the *Times*: "Surely Christian people everywhere should unite in prayer for the missionaries and for their boards at home that all may be true to the will and Word of God in this crisis time."

J. T. M.

**Heathen Thefts from the Bible.**—Under this heading the *Sunday-school Times* (Nov. 20, 1937) argues a most important apologetic fact which the Christian minister or teacher may occasionally use in his defense of the Bible. The article is too long to be quoted here in full, but even a few excerpts will suffice to acquaint the reader with the weighty matter. We read: "Parallels to Scripture in Asiatic literature have been diligently sought out in an attempt to disprove the uniqueness of Christian ethics and of Scripture revelation and even in order to trace a Buddhist or other origin of our Lord's words and miracles. The error



in these calculations is that they often reverse history. What is brought forward as a heathen parallel or lofty teaching is quite often of Christian origin, modified and reduced. Here, as so often, critics fail to take into account the fluidity of the ancient world. Christian missions entered India at a very early date. The tradition that Thomas went to India and preached Christ in the kingdom of Gundophares was treated as legendary until, in the last century, it was discovered that a monarch of that name ruled in the Punjab at that very time. In A.D. 68 a colony of ten thousand Jews emigrated *en masse* from Palestine to the Malabar coast, and in A.D. 190 Pantaenus, who was sent to India to teach the Brahmans, found a Christian church already established there. These and other historical indications have their fatal correspondences in Buddhist literature. The Jakata stories of a disciple walking on the water and of Buddha making one loaf feed more than five hundred people are of post-Christian date and obviously a theft from the gospel narrative. The fact that Buddha as well as Christ preached on mountain tops appears from the *Lalita Vistara*; but this writing, according to Rhys Davids, is not earlier than the sixth century A.D. The Yale Sanscritist, the late Prof. E. W. Hopkins, with the best of will could find only five cogent parallels between Buddha and Christ, of the fifty collected. And even these five are either not close parallels or are post-Christian in date, such as that our Lord saw Nathanael under a fig-tree and that Buddha also attained enlightenment under a fig-tree, or that, when Buddha was a babe, the old Yogi Asita flew down from the Himalayas to prophesy the child's further greatness, as Simeon prophesied in the Temple. Dr. Fosdick has ignorantly tried to parallel the miraculous births of Buddha and of Christ. But pre-Christian Buddhists never affirmed that Buddha was born of a virgin; and to compare the story of the white elephant entering the body of Buddha's mother, later to pass out of her side in the shape of Buddha, with the lovely and convincing story of the first chapter of Luke, is an affront both to reason and to good taste. The *Bhagavad Gita* ("The Lord's Recitation") is unquestionably the best that heathenism has to offer in the way of literature. The *Gita* is the story of Krishna, and in its original form it somewhat antedates the Christian era. It was, however, *remodeled and rewritten in post-Christian times*, and in meter and language was made wholly different from the ancient Upanishads. The character of Krishna, too, is entirely altered, and Christian elements are introduced. He is thus represented as sin-forgiving, a conception wholly alien to Asian religion. This process of stealing from the New Testament is obvious in other Hindu literature, where Krishna is described as the guardian of the flock, the sinless God, the Lord of the world who consented to die that he might fulfil the word of seers; also in the story of the Stake Saint, unjustly impaled with thieves. In the later *Puranas* (all post-Christian) Krishna is man-God, born in a stable, one who later restored a widow's son to life, healed a cripple, was anointed with a box of ointment, and so on. The *Bhagavad Gita* parallels many Scripture-passages so closely as to make the source of its quotations unquestionable."

The *Times* then quotes a large number of passages in parallel and concludes: "Here is an extensive and convincing plagiarism of the ideas



and expressions found in John's gospel. But how flat and colorless they have become in the transition! Our Lord spake as one having authority; but there is no accent of authority in these stolen heathen maxims, although they come in the last analysis from the King Himself. His words were gracious; these are insipid. The wisdom of the East, in this instance, is neither wise nor Eastern. To sentimentalize over it is to leave the living waters for broken cisterns. Dr. Hu Shih, the 'father of the Renaissance movement in China,' who is said to have the finest mind in China today, says: 'China has nothing [in her civilization and religion] worth preserving. You foreigners who tell China that she has, are doing her disservice. You but add to her false pride.' This is equally true of India."

J. T. M.

**Deaths.**—On September 30, 1937, the United Lutheran Church of America lost one of its prominent members through the death of Rev. Dr. Augustus Steimle, pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Advent, New York City. He had been a representative of the U. L. C. at the recent World Conference on Faith and Order in Edinburgh.—Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, suffered the loss of Carl Doving, a prominent hymnologist, who died October 2, 1937.

**Brief Items.**—How the Edinburgh Conference disposed for itself of the differences in the doctrine held by its members touching the Lord's Supper is shown by this paragraph of the official report: "We all believe that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist, though as to how that presence is manifested and realized we may differ. Every precise definition of the presence is found to be a limiting thing, and the attempt to formulate such definitions and to impose them on the Church has itself been the cause of disunity in the past. . . . We are throughout in the realm of spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that the blessing and the gift are given. The presence, which we do not try to define, is a spiritual presence." The conference here was frankly unionistic. With respect to Baptism, after using the ambiguous language "Baptism is a sign and seal of Christian discipleship in obedience to our Lord's command," the report says: "Since the time available precluded the extended discussion of such points as baptismal regeneration, the admission of unbaptized persons to Holy Communion, and the relation of confirmation to Baptism, we are unable to express an opinion how far they would constitute obstacles to proposals for a united Church."

The Episcopal convention held in Cincinnati in October occupied itself with some political matters. It advocated liberalization of the Japanese Exclusion Act and passed resolutions opposing Communism and the Totalitarian State. Almost 450 separate resolutions are said to have been considered during the twelve legislative days of the convention. The Federal war on syphilis was sanctioned; but the convention did not endorse the view that both parties requesting a church marriage should be required to present a medical certificate showing that they are free from venereal diseases. It did not endorse intinction with respect to Holy Communion. It advocated that candidates for the ministry should be given "medical, physical, and nervous examinations."



When the Disciples of Christ, the followers of Alexander Campbell, recently held their international convention in Columbus, O., 2,500 delegates were in attendance. When a resolution was submitted which stated that labor has the right to organize and to bargain collectively concerning hours, wages, and conditions of work, opposition to it was voiced by some of the members, who declared that it was divisive, that it too specifically tied the Church to a certain course, and that it would not be of any value. Nevertheless it was adopted.

"Unitarians were scored by their new president (Rev. Frederick M. Eliot) for having spent entirely too much time in talking about social action. Passing resolutions at conferences too often was a salve to the conscience and a substitute for doing something. Also, Unitarian social pronouncements were too much an imitation of the statements of other bodies. The liberal Church should work out its own methods in accordance with its own peculiar genius." — *Christian Century*.

On account of its gripping language a paragraph from a speech delivered by Dean Umphrey Lee of the Vanderbilt School of Religion in view of the coming bicentennial of the Methodist Church is here quoted: "Anniversaries are dangerous, and Methodism must decide whether it is a movement or a monument. We are talking of unification; but if there is nothing to unite, there is no need for uniting. As another once said: 'There is no point in changing the labels of empty bottles.'"

As the *Christian Century* reports, Lord Camrose of London and the paper of which he is the editor-in-chief, the *Daily Telegraph*, sued a Fascist paper called the *Action* for libel. Lord Camrose had been attacked on the ground that he was of Jewish origin and a conspirator in international Jewish intrigues. With respect to the first charge the evidence submitted consisted in the marriage of Lord Camrose's nephew to a Rothschild. For the second no support could be adduced. The jury decided that the *Action* should pay Lord Camrose 12,500 pounds and the *Daily Telegraph* 7,500 pounds.

When the Unitarians met in Niagara Falls for their Sixth General Conference, they were addressed by Rabbi Hillel Silver of Cleveland, who spoke to them on Kant's "Categorical Imperative." And then some people are surprised that the Unitarian denomination does not grow more rapidly.

Glasgow, Scotland, in September entertained the Sixth International Spiritualist Congress. Seventeen countries were represented, among them India. One group of the members, it is reported, listened to papers on the scientific aspect of Spiritualism, while the other took up matters pertaining to the religious side. This great delusion evidently still has much vitality.

A.

## II. Ausland

Der Unionismus der Lutherischen Landeskirchen. Die „Ev.-Luth. Freikirche“ vom 19. September 1937 schreibt: „In den Hallenser Beschlüssen von diesem Jahre hat die calvinistische Richtung in der Bekennenden Kirche, die Richtung der Bruderräte, den Lutherischen in Deutschland das Recht zu einer selbständigen Lutherischen Kirche rund weg abgesprochen. Die Bruderräte



haben das Barth'sche 'Barmer Bekenntnis' für die entscheidende Norm erklärt, nach der auch die lutherischen Bekenntnisse auszulegen sind. Sie haben jeder Kirche die Geltung als Kirche und jedem Pfarrer die Geltung als evangelischer Pfarrer abgesprochen, wenn sie sich nicht in diesem Sinne auf das Barmer Bekenntnis verpflichten lassen. Darauf hat nun der 'Nat der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands', der innerhalb der Bekenennenden Kirche die sogenannten lutherischen Kirchen Deutschlands (Bayern, Sachsen, Württemberg, Hannover usw.) zusammenfassen will, erklärt, daß er die Hallenser Beschlüsse der Bruderräte nicht billige, daß er besonders auch die Lehrverpflichtung auf das Barmer Bekenntnis für die Pfarrer der sogenannten lutherischen Kirche ablehne. . . . So müßten diese beiden Kirchen [die Bruderratskirche und die lutherischen Kirchen] sich denn doch eigentlich, wenn sie aufrichtig und wahrhaftig sein wollten, voneinander trennen. Aber siehe da, die sogenannten lutherischen Landeskirchen des Lutherischen Rats bleiben trotz alledem in der 'deutschen Evangelischen Kirche' mit den Bruderräten zusammen. . . . So haben sich denn auch kürzlich, wie das Blatt 'Lutherische Kirche' meldet (S. 138), der Lutherische Rat und die Bruderräte in Kassel zu 'gemeinsamem Handeln' zusammengefunden'. Man kann also die jetzt häufige Kritik landeskirchlicher Führer an den Bruderräten und an Prof. Barth's Theologie gar nicht ernst nehmen. Im Grunde sind sie doch wieder darin eins, unter allen Umständen 'die Volkskirche zu erhalten', und bleiben zu diesem Zweck unter der Führung der Bruderräte doch wieder einmütig zusammen. Wo aber bleibt da die Wahrheit?"

In dem Artikel „Zum Verständnis von Halle“\*) geht Herbert Golzen auf die in der „A. E. L. N.“ und sonst erscheinende Kritik der Hallenser Beschlüsse ein und schreibt unter anderm: „Es gibt noch keine Lutherische Kirche Deutscher Nation. Es ist unsachlich, so zu tun, als ob es schon eine Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands in einigermaßen sichtbaren Umrissen gäbe, die schon über einen übereinstimmenden Bekenntnisstand und entsprechend allgemein anerkannte Kirchenordnungen und Leitungen verfügte und an die sich die altpreussische Kirche nur angliedern müßte, um den Anforderungen an eine Lutherische Kirche zu entsprechen. . . . Wir haben an die Kritiker der altpreussischen Union aus angeblich konfessionell einheitlich gelagerten Landeskirchen zu viel Gegenfragen nach der Bekenntnisbestimmtheit ihrer landeskirchlichen Ordnungen und Entscheidungen zu richten. . . . Man lege nicht der Hallenser Behandlung der Konfessionsfrage zur Last, daß es nun verschiedene Arten von Lutheranern gibt. Die gibt es auch außerhalb Preußens. . . . Allen Ernstes vertritt keine Lutherische Landeskirche die Kirchentrennenden Aussagen etwa der F. C. so, wie sie von den Unterzeichnern der F. C. vertreten worden sind. . . . Wo in Deutschland wird Abendmahlstrennung heute nicht bloß idealiter behauptet, sondern tatsächlich aufrechterhalten? Wo wird das Abendmahlsverständnis der Abendmahlsgäste geprüft und danach eine Entscheidung über die Möglichkeit der Gemeinschaft getroffen? Wo unterscheidet sich in diesem Punkte die Praxis der Abendmahlsgelassung irgend einer deutschen Landeskirche von der in Altpreußen üblichen? . . . Es war schon gewissensschärfend, als einer, der das Recht dazu hatte, uns fragte, wie

\*) „Evangelische Theologie“, Heft 10, Oktober 1937, S. 357—378. (Verlag von Chr. Kaiser, München.)



viele Theologen denn in der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche auch nur wüßten um die theologische und soteriologische Bedeutung der christologischen Differenzpunkte, die für die Kontroverse über die leibliche Realpräsenz bedeutsam sind, wie viele die Lehre von der *manducatio impiorum* schriftgemäß zu erweisen vermöchten, die rechte Beziehung von Geseß und Evangelium in der Verkündigunq von der Schrift aus herzustellen wüßten usw.? . . . Diejenigen Konfessionsverwandten, die von außerhalb der altpreussischen Kirche mit guten Ratsschlügen oder vereinfachender Kritik zusehen, möchten sich doch durch die Beschlüsse von Halle fragen lassen, ob das in den Landeskirchen gesformte Lutherthum der Buße und Erneuerung weniger bedarf als die Weskende Kirche in Altpreußen.“

Das *sola fide* in Luthers Schmalkaldischen Artikeln. Unter der Überschrift „Luthers reformatorisches Bekenntnis in den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln“ behandelt Prof. D. Dörne-Leipzig in der „N. C. Z. N.“ nebst andern auch die hohe Bedeutung des *sola fide* in den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln, dieses eminenten Vorzugartikels in der christlichen Lehre, worauf „steht alles, was wir wider den Papst, Teufel und Welt lehren und leben“. In seiner Darlegung betont D. Dörne etwas, was auch wir uns immer wieder aus Schrift und Bekenntnis klarmachen müssen, damit nicht etwa in unsern Gedanken und Predigten trotz allen theoretischen Festhaltens an dem *sola gratia* doch Ungereimtes und Falsches unterlaufen möge. Wir lesen da (verkürzt): „Der Glaube ist der einzige Weg, auf dem wir zu Gott kommen können. . . Glaube, das heißt vor allem hier die *Bankrotterklärung* aller menschlichen Werke [von uns hervorgehoben]. Dieser Glaube aber — ist er nicht selber ein Werk des Menschen? Gewiß, ich muß glauben; ich muß ja sagen zu dem, was Gott getan hat. Aber das ist für Luther keine Leistung. Für Luther ist der Glaube nicht eine fromme oder eine heroische Haltung, zu der wir uns aufschwingen. Es besteht die Gefahr, daß wir, wo von Glauben und Gläubigkeit die Rede ist, uns darunter einen solchen edlen Aufschwung der Seele vorstellen. Aber Luther versteht den Glauben nicht von seinem Subjekt, sondern ganz und gar von seinem Objekt, seinem Gegenstand, her. Was Glaube ist, das bestimmt sich ausschließlich von dem her, woran ich glaube. Es bestimmt sich hier also von Gott, von Gottes erlösender Tat in Christus, her. Der christliche Glaube schwebt und schwingt nicht frei in der Unendlichkeit seiner seelischen Bewegung, sondern er klammert sich fest, er ‚hangt‘, wie Luther sagt, an Gottes Wort und Gottes Tat. So bindet Luthers Hauptartikel meisterhaft und mit einer kaum wieder erreichten Klarheit beides zusammen: das ganze ‚objektive‘ Werk der Erlösung und das ganz persönliche Ja, das der Glaube zu diesem Werk sprechen muß, damit die Erlösung ihm gelte. Dieser Glaube ist der große, der allein probehaltige Trost der Menschen. . . Der römisch-katholische Heilsweg läßt den Menschen ewig in peinvoller Ungewißheit über sein Heil, eben deshalb, weil hier alles auf der Tat, auf der Kraft, des Menschen steht. Trost und Gewißheit haben wir nur dann, wenn wir die Sache unserer Seligkeit ganz Gott, ganz Christus, befehlen. Das ist das eine, was Luther vom Glauben zu sagen hat. Noch stärker ist in unsern Artikeln aber das andere betont: Allein dieser Glaube gibt Gott und seinem Christus die Ehre, die ihm gebührt. Indem er dem Glauben Bahn macht wider alle menschliche und



kirchliche Werkerei, streitet Luther — keine Spur weniger unerbittlich als Calvin — für Gottes und Christi Ehre. Entweder wir lassen Christus unsern alleinigen Heiland und Retter sein, oder wir haben Christus schon gelästert und verleugnet, selbst wenn wir ihm dem Namen nach alle seine Ehrentitel lassen und vielleicht gar selber betuernd geben. Das ist die erschreckende Möglichkeit, die Luther gerade hier in den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln schonungslos aufdeckt als die ärgste Sünde des Menschen, als die auf den Gipfel getriebene Gottlosigkeit der Kirche: daß man scheinbar Gott ehrt und Christus anbetet und in Wirklichkeit Gott und Christus verachtet und vom Thron stürzt, indem man seine Werke, seine Buße, seinen guten Willen an die Stelle setzt, die ihm gehört. So wird aus dem Lebendigen Herrn der Bibel ein harmloser Ehrenpräsident, der schließlich zu allem ja sagt, was wir tun, was uns gefällt. Auch diese Möglichkeit ist nicht nur in der römischen Welt wirklich geworden. Auch mit dieser Wahrheit spricht Luther mitten hinein in unsere Welt und in unser Gewissen."

In einem vorigen Passus schreibt D. Dörne: „Das alles [besonders, daß „der Weg der guten Werke hoffnungslos verbaut ist“] sagt Luther zunächst gegen Rom. Aber er hat es wahrlich nicht nur gegen Rom sagen wollen. Wir sind an die reformatorische Ablehnung der römischen „Wertheiligkeit“ fast allzusehr gewöhnt. Wir hören unwillkürlich Luthers Sätze als nur gegen die Torheit und den Aberglauben des damaligen römischen Weich- und Ablasswesens gerichtet, und wir vergessen darüber ganz zu fragen, inwiefern sein Vannwort wider die guten Werk auch uns treffen könnte. Gegenwärtigkeit bekommt Luthers Lehre erst dann, wenn wir anfangen zu merken, daß dieser Glaube an die Selbstrechtfertigungskraft, an die natürliche Güte und Vollendungsfähigkeit des Menschen, gegen den Luther hier sein Schwert schwingt, derselbe Glaube ist, der auch einem jeden von uns im Blut liegt. . . . Wir müßten aufhören, unsere Frömmigkeit und Rechtsschaffenheit zum Schlupfwinkel unserer heimlichen Selbstsicherheit zu machen, und müßten scharfe Augen haben, diese hartnäckige Selbstsicherheit des Menschen zu entdecken und aufzustöbern in allem, wessen Menschen sich rühmen und trösten. Erst dann hätten wir Luther verstanden. Erst dann wäre sein schmalkaldisches Bekenntnis unser Bekenntnis."

Da wir Menschen von Natur alle Pelagianer sind und unser verderbtes Fleisch bis zum Tod synergistisch eingestellt bleibt, so ist die von D. Dörne gegebene Warnung allerdings auch uns ins Gewissen gerufen. Der seine Artikel zeigt klar, wie sehr es gedruckt hat, daß man sich in diesem Jubiläumsjahr die Schmalkaldischen Artikel drüben wieder neu angesehen hat. Leider hat man im allgemeinen hierzulande dem Jubiläum weniger Interesse entgegengebracht als in Deutschland. Zur Ehre dient uns dies durchaus nicht.

J. L. M.

Union als Gewissenslast. Wie es in Streifen aussieht, wo Union herrscht, zeigt ein geradezu herzzerreißender Appell in der „A. C. L. N.“ (17. Sept. 1937), dem wir einige Sätze, Klagerufe aus der tiefsten Seele, entnehmen. Da schreibt ein Pastor: „Daß wir kein Bekenntnis haben, das ist unsere Not. Daß bei uns jeder Professor lehren und jeder Pastor predigen kann, was er will, das ist unsere Not. Daß es dem einzelnen Pastor überlassen ist, ob er seine Gemeinde unmerklich lutherisch, uniert oder reformiert macht, das ist unsere Not. Wie weit hin ist unsere Theologie tatsächlich uniert ge-



worden! . . . Wo bleibt da die Frage nach der Wahrheit? Uns Heutigen brennt die Not unserer Kirche auf den Fingern und im Herzen; wir sind noch nicht zur Ruhe gesetzt, sondern stehen im Kampf — und wie viele von uns schauen sehnsüchtig aus nach den Kirchen, die auf das Bekenntnis hören dürfen! Wieviel Pfarrer der Preussischen Union suchen Anschluß an den Lutherischen Rat — und dürfen ihn nicht finden. Wissen Sie, wie viele Pastoren der Union um der Kirchen- und Bekenntnisnot willen zu Bischöfen Lutherischer Kirche gingen, damit diese ihre Seelsorger seien? Wir bitten euch alle: seht doch die Not auch unserer Gewissen! Weist nicht auf die brüderliche Liebe hin! Wir sind es nicht, die diese verletzen. Es ist noch immer so: wo Lutheraner und Reformierte zum Gespräch kommen mit dem Willen, die Überzeugung des andern wie die Grenzen zwischen beiden zu achten [?], da kommt es noch immer zum fruchtbaren Gespräch über die Grenzen hinweg [?]. Wo aber der Unterte dazwischentritt und die Grenzen verwischen will, da gibt es Kampf und Streit. Wir für unser Teil halten die brüderliche Liebe gewiß fest, aber ebenso wollen wir auch die Wahrhaftigkeit festhalten! *Alaetheuein en agapae!* Das soll unser Wort sein; aber eben darum bitten wir: Befreit uns von der Gewissenslast der Union, denn in ihr können wir nicht beides festhalten, sondern müssen entweder die *alaetheia* oder die *agapae* verletzen.“ Wir in unserm freien Land mit unsern freien Kirchen können uns wohl kaum einen rechten Begriff von der Herzensqual machen, aus der heraus diese Worte geflossen sind. Aber wichtig ist es doch, daß wir darauf achten, was dieser Angstschrei auch uns lehren darf.

J. L. M.

**What Oxford and Edinburgh Stood For.**—Writing in the *Living Church*, Bishop G. C. Stewart of Chicago (Episcopalian) thinks that six great agreements were reached in the field of life and work: 1. The repudiation of the doctrine of the supremacy of the State over the Church; 2. the opposition to racial barriers (Jewish or otherwise) in church and society; 3. the responsibility of Christians to test economic and social institutions in the light of the will of God; 4. freedom of education and equal educational opportunities; 5. the condemnation of war as a world policy; 6. the will to present a united Christian front to the world.

With respect to Edinburgh and its deliberations on Faith and Order he holds that the conference resulted 1. in the increasing sense of present unity; 2. the consideration of doctrinal differences in an atmosphere of hope for solving all the difficulties that stand in the way of union; 3. the willingness “to realize the ideal of the Church as the living body, worshipping and serving God and Christ.”

Time will tell whether the optimists who hold that these conferences brought a deepening of the understanding of the Gospel and other real spiritual benefits are right or not. A.

„Geistliche Psychotherapie“ in England. Unter der Führung des Erzbischofs von York hat sich in England ein Komitee von Ärzten gebildet, das eine Versuchsklinik in Hadden Wid errichten will, in der eine psychologische Heilung erprobt wird. Die Behandlung liegt ganz in den Händen von Ärzten, aber die zugrunde liegende Idee ist das Zusammenarbeiten des Arztes mit dem Geistlichen, das in England immer mehr Fortschritte macht.



Es gibt schon eine Reihe Institute, in denen das wachsende Interesse zum Ausdruck kommt, das viele englische Ärzte an diesem Grenzgebiet zwischen der Religion und der medizinischen Wissenschaft nehmen. So wurde kürzlich eine „Gilde für geistliche Psychotherapie“ gegründet, die ein Zusammenarbeiten zwischen Dienern der Religion und Ärzten bei der Behandlung der Kranken herbeiführen will; dem Komitee gehören zwei Ärztinnen an. Vor einem Jahr wurde von Rev. John Maillard das erste Haus für geistliche Heilung in Milton Abbey in Dorset gegründet, worin drei Ärzte regelmäßig Besuche machen. Der Gründer erklärte jetzt einem Berichterstatter: „Wir haben seit zwölf Monaten hier gearbeitet, und die Ergebnisse haben unsere Hoffnungen überboten, die freilich nie ganz frei waren von der Schwäche menschlicher Begrenztheit.“ In Wales gibt es viele Leute, die erklären, von ihren Krankheiten von dem Pastor George Jeffrey geheilt worden zu sein, der in London eine Schule errichtet hat, worin Lehrer und Pastoren in dieser neuen Form der Heilkunst unterrichtet werden. (Christliche Welt, Nr. 15.)  
(M. E. L. N.)

**Aus Korea.** Die japanische Regierung hat angeordnet, daß in allen Schulen, die eine Regierungsunterstützung erhalten, Schintoschreine aufgestellt werden sollen. Die Regierung bezeichnet den Akt der Verneigung vor diesem Schrein des Kaisers als eine patriotische, nicht religiöse Handlung, durch die die Liebe zur Nation gestärkt werde. Aber von vielen eingebornen Christen wird der Akt doch als religiöse, dem ersten Gebot widersprechende Tat aufgefaßt. Daraufhin haben die großen Missionsgesellschaften sich entschlossen, ihr Schulwesen allmählich abzubauen. Das bedeutet die Schließung von Schulen, die jetzt 25,000 Kinder besuchen. Die evangelische Kirche in Korea zeigt neuerdings wieder ein erfreuliches Wachstum; in den letzten Jahren betrug es 75.5 Prozent. Sie zählt jetzt 520,000 Christen, 15,000 freiwillige Evangelisten und 35,000 Sonntagschüler. Von besonderer Bedeutung für das Leben der Gemeinden sind die Bibelfurse, die zu verschiedenen Zeiten abgehalten werden. Eine oder gar sechs Wochen lang kommt man zusammen zum Studium, Gebet, zur Vorbereitung auf die Predigt und Zurechtung auf andere christliche Arbeit. Im letzten Jahr wurden 182,000 Besucher solcher Bibelfurse gezählt. Welche Kirche in der Welt bringt wohl so viele ihrer Anhänger so gründlich unter den Schall des Wortes Gottes?  
(M. E. L. N.)

**Interessanter Fund in Ägypten.** In dem bisher bekannten reichhaltigen ägyptischen Schrifttum fehlte es an Andeutungen über die in der Bibel überlieferten sieben „mageren“ Jahre. Der Ägyptologe Selim Hassan glaubt jetzt am Fuße der Sphinx bei den großen Pyramiden von Giseh (Kairo) ein Schriftdenkmal gefunden zu haben, das die biblische Überlieferung von den Hungerjahren bestätigt. Unter einem Pharao, dessen Name nicht genannt ist, sind, wie es in dem gefundenen Dokument heißt, sieben Jahre hintereinander die sonst regelmäßig einsetzenden Überschwemmungen des Nils ausgeblieben, was Hungersnot und Epidemien zur Folge hatte. Selim Hassan glaubt diese Naturereignisse auf die Jahre vor 1700 vor Christo ansehen zu können. Die Schriftdenkmäler dieser Zeit seien durch die Pharaonen der 18. und 19. Dynastie gründlich vernichtet worden. So erkläre es sich, daß bisher Urkunden gefehlt hätten.  
(M. E. L. N.)