

11-1-1938

Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Recommended Citation

Mueller, J. T. (1938) "Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 9 , Article 81.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol9/iss1/81>

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Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

I. Amerika

The Lutheran World Convention and World-Wide Lutheran Cooperation.— Something of the unique and important function of the Lutheran World Convention is indicated in the following excerpts from the official report of the latest meeting of the executive committee, prepared by Dr. Hans Lilje, general secretary:

"Among the topics for discussion three had particular prominence this year. The first question is related to the reorganization of the World Convention. It has become apparent in the course of the now nearly twenty years' history of the World Convention that a more solid constitutional basis is needed for the fulfilment of its extensive task than has hitherto been the case. But for a union of such varied church structures, from all parts of the world, to build up a common constitution is no light task. . . . Two difficulties in particular have come to the fore in the course of negotiations. The first is of an exterior and legal nature. The proceedings which could bring about a union of the Lutheran churches are extraordinarily varied. Some involve a parliamentary decree, while others may only require the decision of the directing group and others again merely the consent of the leading pastoral authorities. Still more important is the difference in the conception of the fellowship of the churches, which presents a much greater difficulty than an outsider would think. For over against the large-mindedness and breadth of the Swedish and of some other Nordic churches, which have official intercommunion with the Church of England, there is at the other extreme the determination to refuse intercommunion with those Lutheran churches which admit non-Lutherans to Communion. And finally there is yet another exterior difficulty. Informal union has been fully adequate for relief work hitherto and has avoided a number of fundamental difficulties. But it has become very clear that the Lutheran World Convention needs a more solid constitutional foundation if it is to do its future work with the broad-mindedness and authority that is required. The realization of this fact led to the discussion of a new-draft constitution, which is to be submitted to the next meeting of the World Convention in 1940.

"This fourth convention will be the greatest and most important assembly in the history of Lutheranism.

"The second main topic for discussion was the relief work of the World's Convention on behalf of those Lutheran churches which are in need of it, such as those in the Ukraine or on the mission-field. The third topic was the preparation of the coming World Convention, which is to meet in Philadelphia in May, 1940. (The first was held at Eisenach in 1923, the second in Copenhagen in 1929, and the third in Paris in 1935.) The agenda include, under the general theme of 'The Lutheran Church Today,' the discussion of the following subjects: 'The Church and the Churches,' 'Church, Word, and Sacrament,' 'The Church in the World.' The program also provides for special meetings for Lutheran youth, on

the work of foreign missions, on the diaconate, on home missions, press, statistics, church instruction of the people's mission."

The above is taken from the *News Bulletin* of the National Lutheran Council. God grant that, when this Lutheran World Convention will be held in Philadelphia in 1940, the aim of those who attend will not be the creation of a large Lutheran body of world-wide dimensions but the fostering of loyalty to the old truths revealed in the Scriptures and confessed in the Lutheran symbols and the promulgation of these truths to a distracted and bewildered world. A.

The Tragedy of New Sweden.—Speaking of the defection of the Lutheran Church on the Delaware founded by the Swedes in the colony which was established three hundred years ago, President Bersell of the Augustana Synod is quoted in the *Lutheran Companion* of June 30 to have spoken as follows:

"The tragedy of the Delaware churches, from a Lutheran point of view, was caused by a spirit of unionism and a weakening of confessional loyalty, which led to a 'foreign entanglement' with Anglicanism, that eventually swallowed these churches. When the Delaware churches passed under Episcopal jurisdiction, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania had been in existence for many years. If the Swedish Lutherans had made common cause with their German Lutheran brethren, . . . the story of these Lutheran churches would have been gloriously different.

"The important thing today, however, is that we may have learned the lesson. Neither isolation as a synod nor unionism with other groups will help us. Either will destroy us eventually. The best way for the Lutheran and Reformed church-bodies to promote true ecumenicity is for the church groups who possess a common faith to get together and settle whatever differences they may have. Denominational, not sectarian, loyalty must be a living reality, a foundation for the larger contacts." A.

Wartburg Theological Seminary Mourns.—This seminary of the American Lutheran Church suffered the loss of its president, the Rev. Dr. Emil H. Rausch, who departed this life August 19, sixty-three years old. He was a graduate of Wartburg Seminary and had later studied at the University of Michigan. He had served as pastor in Peoria, Ill., Marine City, Mich., and Waverly, Iowa. From 1909 to 1910 he was the associate editor of the *Lutheran Herald* and from 1910 to 1926 its editor-in-chief. A.

Rev. J. E. Thoen Resigns the Editorship of the "Sentinel" and "Tidende." In Vol. 21, No. 15 (Aug. 12, 1938) of the *Lutheran Sentinel* the announcement is made that Rev. J. E. Thoen, after almost eight years of faithful service, feels obliged to resign from the editorship of the two official organs of the *Norwegian Synod*. In commendation of his work the periodical says among other things: "The effects of his editorial pen have been far-reaching. Law and Gospel have been presented plainly and clearly to the encouragement of sound Lutheranism and to the discouragement of all such as would depart from pure teaching and holy living. As a fearless warrior J. E. Thoen has held fast to an editorial policy which claimed respect for *Sentinel* and *Tidende* far beyond the

boundaries of our own Synod. As a kindly seeker of souls he has not only written and selected articles which told about the general state of the Church, but he has seen to it that there has been a consistent presentation of salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus."

Aged Pastor J. E. Thoen fully deserves this praise, and we are glad that he has promised his cheerful cooperation with the new editor, Rev. A. M. Harstad, in the department of Christian doctrine and polemics. In No. 16 of the *Lutheran Sentinel* (Aug. 27) we find a splendid article from his facile pen on *Woman's Suffrage and the Lutheran Church*, showing that the Lutheran Church in Norway is now being urged to grant permission to women to study theology and enter the ministry. Till now the *Storting* (Norwegian Congress) as well as the College of Bishops, the Congregational Council, and the Bishopric Councils have stood firm, and Dr. O. Hallesby, known in wide circles also in this country, has threatened to resign his position if the seminary will be forced to admit women as students of theology to be prepared to enter the ministry of the Church. Pastor Thoen adds to this the warning that such American Lutheran bodies as the United Lutheran Church and the Norwegian Lutheran Church, which permit women to vote and hold important office, may be up against the same question as the State Church in Norway. He writes in conclusion: "Let us not imagine that we shall be spared the need of defending ourselves against pressure from without regarding this question."

In Vol. 15 of the *Lutheran Sentinel* Rev. H. M. Tjernagel offers a timely and important article on "Our Pioneer Church Fathers," who, as he points out, were H. A. Preus, Jakob Aal Ottesen and, above all, Ulrik Vilhelm Koren. Of the latter he writes: "In the student-body at the University of Christiania he was known as 'loeven'—the 'lion.' To his intimates he was the gifted earnest seeker after Christian faith and knowledge. His slogan became 'Grace alone!' As those words are engraved on the obelisk which marks his resting-place in the Washington Prairie Cemetery, so was the truth expressed by these words the background to every sermon he preached, every article he wrote,—and there were many,—and every battle he waged against false doctrine through a long militant life. Lutheranism has had few spokesmen in this or any other land that have excelled Koren in wielding the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Though in form, features, and bearing he was the very incarnation of the Viking chieftain and was often misjudged because of his commanding presence, yet he was in reality a mellowed, humble Christian, a mendicant at the cross of Jesus Christ."

Dr. Koren, by the way, was pastor at Washington Prairie, Iowa, from 1853 to 1910, fifty-seven years. He was the first Norwegian pastor to settle west of the Mississippi River. He procured the campus for Decorah Luther College, was President of the Norwegian Synod, professor at Luther College in 1874 and 1875, the author of poems, articles, and books, and throughout the predestination controversy, as long as he lived, the chief champion among the Norwegians of the Lutheran doctrine of conversion and election. Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, conferred upon him the title of Doctor of Divinity in 1903. It is well also for us to remember

such men as Koren and Herman Amberg Preus and many others who built up true Lutheranism in our country. By the way, H. A. Preus was one of the organizers of the Norwegian Synod and its second President, coeditor of *Maanedstidende*, 1859—1868, author of many articles and pamphlets, and President of the Synodical Conference, in which he proposed the establishment of our Negro Missions in 1877. J. T. M.

Γέγραπται.—The *Lutheran* of August 3 reprints from the *Lutheran Herald* of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America the editorial contributed by the editor, Dr. G. T. Lee, at the twenty-fifth anniversary of his assumption of the editorship. This editorial was the *Introductory* printed July 10, 1913. Here it is: "*Introductory*. It is customary for a new editor to outline his program. But in our case we consider the program already outlined in all essentials. The synod meeting at Minneapolis decided that the *Lutheran Herald* should be the English organ of the synod. Accordingly it will be our duty to voice the sentiments and proclaim the principles for which the synod stands. The motto of the synod is the Greek word *γέγραπται*, which means 'It is written.' The Word of God is the only infallible source and norm of doctrine and rule of life. The *Lutheran Herald* is not to be our personal organ for voicing our views or opinions, but in all matters of faith and Christian life the *Herald* must speak as the Word of God. On all matters necessary to salvation the Word of God speaks with a perspicuity and directness which no man can improve upon. The Word of God shall be our only light, guide, and source of authority, not as interpreter but as it reads. Our interpretation of a plain Bible statement will be a repetition of the Bible words. Furthermore, the Scriptures furnish their own interpretation. In our days we are asked to seek the truth in the so-called Sacred Books of the East, to abide by the 'results of science,' to accept 'new revelations,' and to be guided by 'Christian consciousness.' But we shall not substitute the glow-worm of human sagacity and wisdom for the light shining from heaven in the Word of God. The sword of the spirit, the Word of God, shall be the weapon used to combat error and meet the temptations of Satan.

"A paper bearing the title 'Lutheran' must also necessarily give prominence to the second great truth which the Lutheran Church has always proclaimed: Salvation by grace alone, through faith in Jesus Christ. Persistently and consistently we shall emphasize these two fundamental principles of Lutheranism and apply them to present-day problems in our political, social, moral, and religious life." E.

Intersynodical Negotiations in Australia.—The *Australian Lutheran*, the paper of our brethren in Australia (the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Australia), in its number of July 22, 1938, carried the following article:

"Intersynodical negotiations, which have the purpose of removing doctrinal differences and establishing unity, have again become possible since the chief obstacle, which for years prevented such negotiations, has been removed by the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia. When, prior to his departure for the Brisbane General Convention of the U. E. L. C. A. in September, 1937, I personally approached the President of the U. E. L. C. A. with the request to work towards the re-

removal of the Walla Walla resolution of the U. E. L. C. A., which, some eight or nine years ago, stopped intersynodical discussions, I found him very willing to do his best in this matter. After his return from that convention he informed me that his synod had declared the Walla Walla resolution 'inoperative' and had thus cleared the way for the resumption of intersynodical negotiations. In a letter dated February 8, 1938, President Stolz confirmed this information, supplying me with a copy of the official report of the U. E. L. C. A. According to this information their Committee for Intersynodical Negotiations had received free hand as to the time and the manner of the reopening of the discussions. He also stated that such discussions could only take place after the printed reply to our pamphlet, *The Differences*, had been placed on the market and that, when the time came, discussions by correspondence would most likely be preferred.

"Hence we may look forward with anticipation to the resumption of these negotiations which we on our part have never ceased to desire and to urge. We also believe, and always have advocated, that discussions of this nature would be most profitable if they were held in public, in the presence of lay members of our respective churches.

"In this connection we feel in duty bound to make reference to a laymen's movement which was inaugurated in February last by a circular issued by one of our South Australian laymen, in which he endeavored to interest laymen of both synods in favor of such intersynodical discussions. Subsequently a notice calling a laymen's meeting, to be held at a convenient time, for the purpose of furthering intersynodical negotiations and bringing about a union of the churches of the Lutheran persuasion in our land, was published and broadcast. We have studied the circular and notice and have also interviewed the writer. The result of our investigation is as follows:

"Much as we welcome the keen interest of our laymen in this important matter and recognize their, no doubt, good intentions, we cannot countenance, endorse, or support this movement. We are guided in our decision by the following considerations:

"1. In view of the information supplied in the first portion of this article the laymen's meeting to urge the resumption of intersynodical negotiations in the manner contemplated is not necessary.

"2. The circular sent out in February contains many statements which are directly contrary to fact and also passes judgments which are manifestly unjust. The blessings of God cannot rest on a foundation of that nature.

"3. The aims and objects of this laymen's movement are not clearly defined and, judging from our discussions, may be contrary to our doctrinal position and therefore fraught with danger to our Church and its individual members.

"4. The organization contemplated is to consist of laymen only and makes no provision for full cooperation with, and supervision by, the divinely called teachers of the Word and servants of the Church, and that in matters of the gravest import to the Church. This procedure we regard as being in disharmony with the universal practise of our Church,

1 Cor. 14:10; but, what is more, we fear that the plan underlying the movement is in conflict with the spirit of the Gospel, which describes the pastors as overseers, watchmen, stewards, etc., and makes it their duty to teach the truth and warn against error, etc. (Compare 1 Cor. 4:1; 14:10; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:9; Heb. 13:17; Jas. 3:1; Mal. 2:7.)

"We have always urged the participation of the laymen of both church-bodies in the intersynodical discussions; but we cannot see our way clear to give our support or endorsement to this movement, nor can we advise our congregations and church-members to do so.

"WM. JANZOW, *General President*"

When the Reformation Was in Flower.—Under this heading the (Roman Catholic) *Extension Magazine* (May, 1938) published an illustrated article on Luther's work, altogether unfair and derogatory to the great Reformer's glorious task. The article of course says no more than what Romanistic traducers long ago have said about Luther's reformation of the Church. The writer closes his remarks by saying: "My present purpose is more modest, namely, to show 1. that the Reformation failed of its chief aim, to destroy the Catholic religion and abolish the Church and Papacy; 2. that the Reformation divided Christendom and retarded the religious progress of mankind by setting the people not only of Germany but also the nations of the earth warring among themselves on account of religion; 3. that the Reformation fomented quarrels and engendered hatreds and bitterness, which are rampant throughout the world this very hour; 4. that the Reformation set in motion far-reaching forces of evil, which are today threatening to destroy what is still left of our so-called Christian civilization. When the Peasants' War was raging, Erasmus said to Luther, 'We are now reaping the fruits of the seed you have sown.' And so it may be said that the world is reaping the fruits of the seed which Luther sowed four hundred years ago. He sowed the wind; we reap the whirlwind."

What the writer here says, is of course downright slander and, historically considered, utterly ridiculous. Yet it is no more than what other and more notorious Romanistic historians have said of Luther and his work. Two things perhaps may be important enough to note in this connection, namely, 1. that we cannot afford to ignore what the Romanists even today publish about Luther and his great work in their papers and pamphlets; 2. that we ourselves may assist our Catholic neighbors in finding out the truth by passing on to them some of our own church-papers after we are through with them. Luther's Reformation is still the focal point in modern church history and deserves the most careful study by all who call themselves Protestants. It is here where confessional Protestantism and blind Romanism diverge, and no one dare remain neutral; for here truth stands in opposition to falsehood.

J. T. M.

Charles C. Marshall.—The press reports the death of Charles C. Marshall, recognized as an authority in ecclesiastical as well as civil law, who in 1928 challenged Alfred E. Smith when he was the presidential candidate of the Democratic party to show how he could be a faithful Roman Catholic and at the same time loyal to his oath of office if he

should be elected. He quoted from papal encyclicals and Roman church authorities to show that the two are incompatible. He perpetuated his conclusions in a book on the relation of the Roman Church to the Presidency under the title *The Roman Catholic Church in the Modern State*.

H.

Friendly Advice to the Jews.—Under this heading the Baptist *Watchman-Examiner* writes: "It is of little use for Jews in this country to cry out for tolerance and then for them to practise intolerance among themselves. No Jew ought to be persecuted by fellow-Jews because God has come into his life through faith in Jesus Christ."

H.

A Significant Item.—The *Catholic America* reports, July 30, 1938: "A recent Congressional amendment, signed by President Roosevelt, permits the American consulate in Rome to act as the authenticating agent for documents of record in Vatican City in order that the documents may be used as evidence in United States courts. The amendment commences with the words: 'Until the United States shall have a consular representative resident in the State of Vatican City.' The last American Minister to the Vatican was Rufus King of Wisconsin, appointed by Abraham Lincoln in 1863."

H.

One Way of Cleaning House.—A correspondent of the *Open Forum* in the Baptist *Watchman-Examiner* calls on the laymen of the Church to emulate the example of the Thessalonian Christians, who checked up on Paul's preaching to see if what he said was the truth. He says: "It is quite the thing to blame the colleges and seminaries for unsound preachers and teachers; but I maintain that three fourths of the blame should be placed on the members of the churches. Suppose at the close of a service a dozen of my members should come to me with their Bibles open and should say, 'Pastor, we have checked on what you said, and we find that you are wrong. The Word of God says thus and so.' One of two things would result: I would either get straightened out in my theology, or else I would resign and go where nobody would search the Scripture to see if what I said was the truth." It is often said when the heterodox views of certain preachers (including some Lutherans) become evident: Their people do not hold those views; they are more orthodox.—Well, this points the way which they should go and deal with their pastors. Only this in addition: If their pastor is not honest enough to adopt one of the two things proposed by the writer, his parishioners should give him an energetic push or leave his company. And others who hold the same conviction might help the process along; thus the writer might start a movement by which the Baptists could rid their Church of preachers like Harry Emerson Fosdick.

H.

Strong Protest against Membership in the Federal Council of Churches.—We are glad to reprint what Dr. Mark A. Matthews of Seattle, Wash., one of the prominent Presbyterian ministers of today, writes under the caption "The Fire Hazard Is Too Great." Unfortunately we cannot insert his article in its entirety. His vigorous statements furnish evidence that not all knees have bowed to Baal in those denominations that are connected with the Federal Council. His article appeared in the *Presbyterian* of August 4, 1938.

"Much of the world is now burning. The Church cannot afford to play with the fires of heresy, Modernism, rationalism, Communism, atheism, Fascism, Naziism, or anarchy. Their fires are far more ominous and far more foreboding than the picture above described of the burning forests. We ought not to be connected with anything that has in it the dangers, the fire hazards, the combustible matter, contained in the false religions and heresies of today. One of the greatest heresies is the denial of the infallibility of the Scriptures.

"We have no right to be connected with the so-called Federal Council of Churches in America. The *exposé* of the Council has been very carefully and cautiously made, and unrefutable facts have been presented. Read *The Red Network*. Read Mr. Sanctuary's marvelous and convincing *exposé* of the facts. Read the articles and books convicting the Federal Council of Churches in America and exposing the Communists in the organization and the communistic trends of the organization. We cannot afford to be connected with such an institution or an institution that has men in it of such radical, rationalistic views. The fire hazards are too great.

"There is not any value in playing with fire. Too much property is being destroyed; too many lives are being jeopardized; too many interests are being injured, and too many principles are being singed.

"Up to the present minute the Presbyterian Church has stood aloof from these nefarious, hellish religions — Socialism, Communism, Fascism, atheism, Naziism, and anarchy. Some of the great denominations have been wrecked, and others are being wrecked, by contact with such. Our denomination has stood aloof from these evil influences, and that aloofness has in the past gained us respect and confidence. But every time our name is connected with the socialistic or communistic trends of the Federal Council, we suffer. The fire hazards are too great. The Presbyterian Church stands on the great fundamental principles of God's infallible Word and the matchless Constitution and principles of our American representative government. Such views, doctrines, and creeds are essential to America; therefore we cannot afford to make any compromises."

A.

Important Factors in Denominational Union. — Speaking of the latter subject, of growing importance also to the various Baptist groups, the *Watchman-Examiner* (Sept. 8, 1938) says among other things: "At the recent meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke of London declared that the Edinburgh Conference had done positive harm, the pressure for mechanical union having widened the cleavages which divide Christians. By such pressure the origin of Protestantism was hastened in Europe and many of the numerous denominations in America are the result of the same pressure in Puritan New England. Careful reflection will disclose other effects of the persistent campaign against religious denominations. As these bodies were originated to give expression to deep convictions which would not down and to which their adherents vowed their loyalty at any cost, the effect of this campaign has been to smother such convictions and tamper with the supreme loyalties of the soul. Colleges founded by denominational gifts compromise themselves by announcing themselves undenominational, and

their religious responsibility and influence have become a decreasing variable, approaching irreligion as its limit. In an age when fundamental loyalties to duty, to right, to family and society, are lightly held, encouragement to further disloyalty serves to weaken all moral and religious obligations, threatens society with disruption, and is a positive blight upon the character of the individual. Preachers of undenominationalism reduce the Gospel-message to a neutral tone and offer an evanescent religion like the patriotism of the man without a country. The truth is soft-pedaled or submerged. Their appeal may contain an element of truth but for that reason is more subtle and deceptive. Their position is so plausible that they who resist its deductions are open to the charge of being antiquated or conservative. As a result the nominal, inactive membership of a church is increased at the expense of its vital strength. Members lose interest in a particular church, with the explanation that they attend all the churches. At length they divest themselves of all church responsibility. The denominational paper becomes too narrow and is displaced with some semireligious publication. The missionary nerve is severed, the denominational outpost is called in, and a missionary church surrenders its great commission. How much of the recent decline in support of the local church and missionary giving is due to the prolonged attack upon denominational loyalty may never be known, and because it is known, the decline continues in spite of organized resistance."

This certainly most just and objective declaration of vital truths was suggested to Rev. C. T. Brownell, D. D., the author of the article, by a number of facts, which in an introductory paragraph he states as follows: "The advantages of denominational and interdenominational union in varying degrees have been demonstrated so often by well-meaning advocates that the public has accepted its desirability as an established fact and looks askance upon those who are not completely sold to the magical formula of its promoters. The words *denomination* and *sectarian* are anathematized by such persons as signs of archaic prejudice, which should be eliminated from the mental furnishings of modern thinkers and dropped from Christian vocabularies."

Sometimes, standing solitarily in the turbulent maelstrom of modern unionistic inundation, we, who endeavor to maintain confessional Christianity, are made to feel as if we were voices in the wilderness crying out in vain to a hardened and indifferent generation that simply cannot understand the vital issues for which we as loyal Bible Christians are contending. But articles like Dr. Brownell's convince us that also in outside circles the beauty and glory of honest, fearless confessionalism are still being recognized, and this encourages us to go on in the ancient fight of faith which the Lord has made both our duty and our privilege.

J. T. M.

On the Fifth Petition. — The following paragraphs from an article by Muriel Lester in the *Christian Century* furnishes food for thought. Kingsley Hall, mentioned by her, is a London social settlement. Recently the author toured Japan and China. While we cannot share her position, her words may engender some self-examination.

"I am afraid of the Lord's Prayer. For a number of years we

made a point of omitting it from our service at Kingsley Hall. The tremendous implication of each phrase may make it a means of danger as well as of blessing. To say, 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,' is to make our own blessed release from guilt dependent upon our own ability to forgive. It is to say, 'Grant me that degree of forgiveness that I am willing to extend to my personal enemy.'

"A superrespectable neighbor in Bow refused to let me bring into her house a wretched woman who the previous week had been dragged out of a canal into which she had jumped as a refuge from anxiety and shame. I stared, amazed, at the householder. I knew she was one who said the Lord's Prayer regularly, yet here she was, hardening heart, mouth, and voice as she doggedly persisted in her refusal.

"Don't you really fear the prospect of losing God's forgiveness yourself?" I inquired with real concern. 'Honestly, doesn't the thought perturb you at all?' She looked at me wonderingly, as though the idea was a new one."

A.

"The Revolt Against Religion."—This was the topic of the speech delivered by Roger Babson when he retired from the position of moderator of the Council of Congregational and Christian Churches. As reported in the *Christian Century*, Mr. Babson dwelt on a number of revolts which can be perceived in the ranks of church people and enumerated the following:

"1. A revolt against the present method of recording church-membership by the theory 'Once a member, always a member.' There is a demand for an annual reaffirmation.

"2. A revolt against hypocrisy among church-members. There is a demand that the standards for church-membership shall be raised, in order that it may mean more to be a church-member.

"3. A revolt against present inefficient Sunday-schools. There is a demand that the teaching be more serious and more applicable to the daily needs of the scholars.

"4. A revolt against ministers 'hogging' the middle of the week-end by saying, 'Go to church between 11 and 12 on Sunday morning or not at all.' There is a demand for multiple services—more services and shorter services.

"5. A revolt against 'intellectual religion.' There is a growing belief that one cannot save his soul without being 'born again.' There is demand for more sane return of evangelist revivals.

"6. A revolt against the prevalent custom of church committees' calling on their neighbors only when the church is raising money. There is a demand for the spirit of real stewardship within the church.

"7. A revolt against a few socialistic or capitalistic delegates at national church conclaves passing resolutions pretending to bind the entire membership.

"8. A revolt against the Church's being in business—through operating investment trusts, publishing concerns, and other financial activities.

"9. A revolt against the present wasteful competition between different Protestant denominations. Youth is demanding more rational

creeds and church consolidations. Youth is against denominationalism which is the support of paid officials and secretaries.

"10. A revolt against the Church's apparent lack of interest in the people's welfare. There is a demand that the Church at least do more to see that their own church families obtain employment."

Some of the revolts which Mr. Babson reports clearly are not justified; others, however, pertain to serious weaknesses and errors and should be given the most serious attention. A.

The Question Regarding the "Schwagerehe."—The Scripture—passages Lev. 18:16: "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife; it is thy brother's nakedness," and Lev. 20:21: "If a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing; he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness: they shall be childless," have commonly been interpreted as prohibiting the so-called *Schwagerehe*; for since they do not impose the penalty of death, the prescribed penalty for adultery, the presumption is that the brother in the two cases is dead, so that the passages deal with what theological parlance has called *Schwagerehe*. Now, it has been contended that Jewish tradition did not so interpret the two passages; yet a pamphlet entitled *Judaism and Marriage* by Rabbi Felix A. Levy, Ph. D., Emanuel Congregation, Chicago (The Tract Commission, Merchants Building, Cincinnati), shows that Jewish interpretation in this case is in agreement with the old Lutheran exposition. The author writes: "The general practise of Reform Jews (following their interpretation of an old rabbinic adage that 'the law of the land is law') is to observe the prohibited degrees of the state. Where, however, the state permits and the Jewish law prohibits, as in the case of a woman wanting to marry her deceased husband's brother (except in cases of levirate marriage), Reform joins with Orthodoxy in condemning such unions and in instructing Rabbis not to solemnize them on the score of loyalty to the Jewish group and tradition. (*Year-Book*, C. C. A. R. XXXV, pp. 364 ff.)" *

Another paragraph in this pamphlet may be of interest to our pastors. We quote: "Mixed marriages, or unions between Jews and non-Jews, are discouraged by Judaism, the chief reasons being that differing religious views in the household are not conducive to the peace and harmony, love and understanding, that an intimate relationship such as marriage must foster. It has been the experience of the Jewish people that, when partners are of different faiths, the home will not be conducted Jewishly, and, in addition to other disadvantages, the children will not be reared as Jews. Judaism is the religion of a small minority, which can ill afford to weaken itself by loss of any of its members. Religions, like nations, have a natural anxiety to guard their hearths against loss by defection or desertion. If, however, the stranger embraces Judaism whole-heartedly and willingly joins the Jewish people, he or she is made welcome, and intermarriage may take place." (Pp. 11, 12.) Here we have the same problem facing our own denomination and the same motives that prompt us to warn against mixed marriages. To the writer it seems as if the case has been presented very convincingly. Only there must be added the question of salvation. J. T. M.

* Italics our own.

Two-by-Twos.—Reports from Canada and from Illinois indicate that a new sect, known as Servants of God, Followers of Jesus, and Two-by-Twos, is causing disturbance in our congregations. The group has no official publication nor an official name. One of our pastors, Rev. Th. Dautenhahn, attended several meetings and discussed their religious program with the leaders. He submits the following: On the basis of Luke 10:1 their workers must go out by twos. In their literalism they forbid the building of churches. On the basis of Luke 10:7 they teach that the members should buy food and clothing for their ministers, who are to receive no salary. They condemn other denominations on no other ground than that they are named after some Christian leader.

Apparently the group is to be classified with some of the extreme Perfectionists. Some of them claim attainability of entire perfection. They reject infant-baptism. In their propaganda and proselyting they do not hesitate to slander other denominations, particularly the Lutherans. The ever-recurring refrain of their preaching centers is the theme: Surrender, submit, and yield to God. Enthusiasm, literalism, legalism, in short, a hopeless confusion of Law and Gospel, characterize this sect.

F. E. M.

The I AMs.—Los Angeles has become the hothouse of another weird cult. Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Ballard and son Donald claim to be the "accredited messengers" of a group of spirits whom they call the "ascended masters." These include Christ, Moses, and especially Saint-Germain, who appeared to Mr. Ballard on Mount Shasta, gave him a drink of "creamy liquid," and imparted to him the main doctrines concerning the "Mighty I AM Presence."

The Ballards claim 500,000 followers, hold meetings in California, Florida, Seattle, Chicago, St. Louis, etc., maintain the *Saint-Germain Press* (P. O. Box 1133, Chicago), and use the radio freely. The official magazine, *Voice of the I AM*, is published at 2600 South Hoover Street, Los Angeles.

The I AM is a conglomeration of Hinduism, Mazdaism, theosophy, and other Oriental philosophies. Every individual is said to have an I AM controlling influence. Light descends upon the individual from the great I AM above. When he realizes the presence of the great I AM, a purple flame enters him, and he is cleansed of his former embodiments (transmigration?). When perfection has been reached in man's self-improvement, ascension will follow. The perfect cleansing can be attained by mysticism and union with the deity. If, however, the purple flame is extinguished, death and further migrations will follow (karma, theosophy).

Saint-Germain is said to exert a beneficial influence on politics and economics. Social catastrophes are due to the rejection of Saint-Germain's instructions.

An eye-witness of a meeting of the "I AMs" at Los Angeles, reporting in the *Christian Century*, August 31, 1938, writes as follows:

"The Ballards assert that this movement is purely a patriotic, 'Save America' movement, as expressed on their bulletins: 'America needs your help as never before. The Ascended Masters offer their help and

full power of the Cosmic Lights as of a thousand suns for the protection of America and her people now. Individuals must wake up and make the call to the "Mighty I AM Presence," which enables the Ascended Masters to give this needed assistance.' At every meeting a so-called 'Decree' was shouted against the five most destructive agencies at work in America. These were named as spy activity, communist activity, labor agitation, dope activity, and war.

"The Leader says: 'Saint-Germain and Jesus have told us that in the silence the Great Power is generated, and the Spoken Word is the release of that power. So let us with all the earnestness at our command send out the Decrees which our beloved Masters have suggested.' Then follow such phrases as: 'Mighty Cosmic Light, come forth and do your perfect work; now the Forces of Light move into action with full power and are victorious; now the Light of God never fails, and the 'Mighty I AM Presence' is that Light; the limitless Legions of Light now sweep across the face of the earth, and all human darkness disappears,' etc."

F. E. M.

Brunner in Princeton. — Dr. Emil Brunner, professor at the University of Zurich, Switzerland, is teaching systematic theology (lectures on Christian doctrine) at Princeton Theological Seminary this year as "acting professor during the school-year, leaving open the permanent incumbency of the historic chair of the Hodges." This announcement is offered in the *Religious Digest* (September, 1938) in connection with an article on Brunner by John A. Mackay, president of Princeton Seminary (condensed from an article in the *Presbyterian Tribune*, May 26, 1938). In the article Dr. Mackay speaks of Brunner as "an outstanding religious thinker, who has played a major part in directing the thought of a generation steeped in historicism and subjectivism (rationalism and higher criticism) toward the eternal realities of the Christian faith." He comes to America as "a Bible theologian," "to whom the Bible has spoken as it did to Karl Barth, leading the two young friends and theologians into a new understanding of God and life." "His presence in America at the present time will be a mighty buttress to the efforts of the Supernaturalists of the Old School and the New to rehabilitate the Bible and Biblical thought into the place which they once occupied in the high places of American theology." "To say that Brunner is a Bible theologian means that the Bible is for him the record of the unique and absolute revelation of God and His redemptive purpose of mankind." "He believes in a God who has spoken in a final way to man and yet speaks to us still." "For Brunner the Bible is neither an oracle nor a divine thing in itself. The Bible is not to be worshiped in place of the God who speaks in and through the Book. The Bible may be treated idolatrously. It is paradoxically possible to be a 'Bible-believer' without being a 'Christian-believer' through a subtle substitution of a dogma about the Bible towards which one takes up an attitude of idolatrous devotion for loyal obedience to the living God who reveals Himself in the Bible." "As a Bible theologian Brunner welcomes the light of historical and scientific research upon all questions relating to the Biblical records and the interpretation of sections in the records where reverent objective research may help the Bible student."

These excerpts from Dr. Mackay's recommendation of Professor Brunner suffice to show that the latter is not a truly *Reformed* theologian in the sense of Calvin, the Hodges, Warfield, and other teachers at Princeton. To Brunner the Bible is not the Word of God as traditional Christian theology understands it, given by divine inspiration of the Holy Ghost and therefore inerrant in all its teachings from cover to cover. Brunner does not identify the Bible with the Word of God; the two are to him entirely different things. He therefore is an enthusiast of the same kind as those condemned in the Formula of Concord in the words: "Moreover, both the ancient and modern enthusiasts have taught that God converts men and leads them to the saving knowledge of Christ through His Spirit without any created means and instrument, that is, without the external preaching and hearing of God's Word." (Art. II, § 4. Trigl., p. 881.) For this reason also Brunner does not deserve the epithet "Bible theologian"; for a true Bible theologian is a believing Christian who accepts the Bible as the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God and therefore as the only source, norm, and rule of faith and life. Princeton Seminary is no longer that of the Hodges and Warfield, nor will the systematic theology of Brunner be that of these great defenders of verbal and plenary inspiration.

J. T. M.

"Why I Am Not a Barthian." — Next to Dr. Mackay's cordial recommendation of Dr. Emil Brunner the *Religious Digest* offers to the reader an article with the heading just given, by Rev. L. De Moor, pastor of the North Blendon Reformed Church, Michigan. Dr. De Moor studied at Western Theological Seminary (Reformed), at Harvard, Hartford, and, 1930–1931, as a German exchange student, at the University of Marburg, Hesse, where he worked under Prof. Rudolph Bultmann, outstanding exponent of Barthianism, after which he spent a week in Bonn University, where he had an hour's conference with Dr. Barth himself. He heard Dr. Brunner some time ago in Harvard Divinity School, where the latter gave two lectures: "The Quest of Truth: Revelation," and "The Quest of Life: Salvation." In view of these facts his judgment is certainly of some weight, and his judgment of Brunner as a Christian theologian is entirely negative. Referring to Brunner's published lectures, entitled *The Theology of Crisis* (Scribner's, 1939), he says: "There I found Brunner using a two-edged sword with which he not only pursued Modernism but hacked away at 'orthodoxy' (to use his own word) as well. He sought to justify the latter attack on the ground that orthodoxy had made three mistakes: (1) It had 'tried to prove by historical arguments that Jesus was the God-man'; (2) In the theory of the verbal inspiration of the Bible it holds to a hopelessly uncritical and untenable position; (3) orthodoxy is wrong in claiming that in conversion 'a sinful man is actually transformed into a Christian man,' whereas 'the true Christian does not really exist; for while he is a Christian, he is and remains always a sinner, as the others who are not Christians.'" (De Moor's own italics.) Dr. De Moor continues as follows: "My main difficulties with Barthianism have been with its rejection of orthodoxy on the scores cited by Brunner immediately above. For me Barthianism means an untenable view of the Scriptures, an inadequate

doctrine of Christ, an impossible doctrine of salvation, and an invalid ethics. This is the same as saying that I find its doctrine of revelation unacceptable. . . . It is a fundamental tenet of Barthianism that the Bible contains the Word of God but that it is not the Word of God. Bible and Word of God are for them not synonymous. To use Barth's own words: 'God's Word happens (*geschieht*) also today in the Bible, but separated from this happening it is not the Word of God but a book like other books.' (*Dogmatik*, I, p. 63.) So that 'the sentence *The Bible is the Word of God* is an article of faith. The Bible is God's Word in as far as God allows it to be His Word, in as far as God speaks through it.' (*Dogmatik*, I, p. 63.) . . . Also, Brunner leaves us in no uncertainty that the *Crisis Theology* rejects any form of the verbal theory of inspiration when he writes that 'he who identifies the letters and the words of the Scriptures with the Word of God has never truly understood the Word of God. He who would know what constitutes the Word of God in the Bible must devote himself to Biblical criticism' and, let it be understood, to searching, fearless, radical criticism. For it is really the will of God that we shall hear His Word and not mistake ancient cosmology and Israelitish chronology for the Word of God! (*Theology of Crisis*, pp. 19, 20.) In view of such a conception of the Scriptures we ought not to be surprised, as some in orthodox circles appear to be, that Prof. Rudolph Bultmann of Marburg, one of the most radical Bible critics of our day, finds himself perfectly at home in Barthian circles and is, in fact, one of the leading exponents of the *Crisis Theology*. When, in conversation, I suggested to Barth that in orthodox circles there undoubtedly would be a readier acceptance of his theology if he would not give such free leash to extreme Biblical criticism, his rather impatient reply was, 'Aber das ist nun einmal so,' by which I understood him to mean that that was an inevitable eventuality to which all Christians must of necessity submit at the cost of being counted obscurantists."

The article is too long to be quoted in full at this place. Nowhere in its dogmatics is Barthianism orthodox Christianity, as this is declared in the ecumenical creeds of the Church. And yet Barthianism is trying to make people believe that it is trying to direct modern religious thought toward the eternal realities of the Christian faith; and even in liberal Lutheran circles this myth is being believed, as recent publications in the United Lutheran Church denying verbal inspiration and insisting upon radical criticism prove.

J. T. M.

A Vagary of Dr. Barnhouse. — An article in the *Presbyterian* written by Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney presents some criticisms of a book by Dr. Barnhouse having the title *His Own Received Him Not, But*. As we see from the remarks of the critic, the author divides the years of the ministry of Jesus into two distinct parts. "In the first part He was approaching His own, the Jews. This period came to an abrupt conclusion, and after a definite break, when His own received Him not, He began offering the Gospel of grace to the whole world." The point where the cleavage comes is given Matt. 11:20, where Jesus pronounces the woes upon the cities that had received His message but had not repented. What Dr. Barnhouse wishes to bring out is that the Sermon

on the Mount belongs to the first period of the teaching of Christ and that hence it is addressed to the Jews and does not apply to the believers of today. "If we find things there which appear altogether inapplicable to our present life, such as complete non-resistance or a prayer for a forgiveness on the part of God measured by our forgiveness of one another, we are not to be troubled by them; for they are a part of the teaching of Jesus which was never intended for men today."

Dr. Barnhouse is a Dispensationalist, and we see from the view here alluded to what follies people who follow his system of Bible interpretation fall into. Criticizing the position of Dr. Barnhouse, Dr. Macartney says: "My first reaction is that this solution of admitted difficulties in the Sermon on the Mount is too easy and too artificial. If it is the true solution, then I wonder why Christ Himself or those appointed to teach in His name did not make this a little clearer for us. Is it possible that the Dispensationalists have been too eager to discover a solution of some of the New Testament problems?" In the remarks which follow we are struck especially by the cogency of the critic's reference to John 3:16, which great passage Jesus spoke in His early ministry and which certainly proclaims that His message was intended for the whole world. It is exegesis of Dr. Barnhouse's type which brings discredit upon theology.

A.

The Archbishop of York Argues for Close Communion.—Writing an article on the subject "Schism and the Sacraments," the editor of *Christendom*, Charles Clayton Morrison, discusses the argument for close Communion which is presented by the Archbishop of York. We quote Dr. Morrison: "The arguments against inter-Communion and close Communion have been drawn chiefly from the doctrine of the Church, the doctrine of a valid ministry, and the doctrine of the Lord's Supper itself. Stated very roughly, a Church which refuses Communion to any but its own members intends by so doing to assert one or more of three special claims: a special claim for itself as the true Church; or a special claim for its ministry as a true and valid ministry, competent to celebrate Communion with the efficaciousness which does not inhere in its celebration by other ministries; or a special claim for its conception of the meaning of the Lord's Supper (for example, transubstantiation, the presence, the sacrificial theory, and the like), which it holds to be so integral to the Eucharist that a Church would practise deception if it invited those to communicate who did not hold the particular conception held by the administering Church."

"These have been the main lines of argument adopted by those who oppose inter-Communion, whether in the form of open Communion or of intercelebration. A new approach has now been made by the Archbishop of York, who brings forward the argument, which, so far as I am aware, has not found expression in any of the classic discussions of the Lord's Supper. Writing in the winter, 1938, number of *Christendom*, he passes by every one of the arguments mentioned above and opposes inter-Communion on the ground that as a Sacrament of the Church the Lord's Supper is an act of such a nature that it is meaningless to celebrate it in disunion—it can only be celebrated by a united body; it is the corporate act of such a body, and where there is no corporate body, there is

no Sacrament. According to the archbishop a service of inter-Communion is thus an attempt of disunited persons to perform an act which, in virtue of their disunion, they are incapable of performing. Such disunited persons, even though assembled in one place, are merely so many individuals. But the Lord's Supper is not an individual, personal act nor the act of a mere group of individuals but a corporate act of the Church, in which the corporate body offers itself to God and receives afresh in the bread and wine the body and blood of the Lord. The individual as a member of the Church participates in the corporate act of his Church and shares in the grace received; but the act is not his act but that of the Church, that is, the body of Christ. Both open Communion and inter-Communion thus, in effect, stultify the Sacrament. . . . Supported by the archbishop's argument, a Church may say: We do not practise inter-Communion; but that is not because our Church or our ministry or our doctrine is more true and valid than yours, but because we are all in disunion; when we are united in one body, we shall then, but not till then, be able to practise full Communion."

While one cannot agree with all the details here presented constituting the position of the Archbishop of York, Dr. Temple, there is no doubt that he is right when he holds that Holy Communion is intended to reflect the unity of those who commune. Cf. 1 Cor. 10:17. A.

Brief Items.—If anybody wishes to know what social gospel preachers with a world outlook dwell on, let him look at this set of themes on which Dr. Merton S. Rice of Detroit preached Sunday evenings during the past summer: China—the Human Potential; Japan—the Rampant Hermit; Russia—the Red Flag; Germany—the Racial Egotist; Italy—the Awakened Dream; Spain—Don against Don; Britain—the Lion's Share; France—the National Volcano; America—the Human Puzzle; God—the Hope of the Nations.

In Australia a movement is on foot to unite Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists. The United Church of Canada evidently is serving as a model.

Rome is steadily increasing its influence in parts of our country where several decades ago it was hardly known. While around 1900, as one of our exchanges points out, the southern part of our country saw but little of Catholicism, a Roman priest being a rare spectacle, and while those Catholics who had taken up their abode in Tennessee, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Georgia often had to travel many miles to attend one of their services, now the city of Memphis, to mention but one locality, has fourteen white and two colored Catholic parishes. The Paulist Fathers are said to be chiefly responsible for this advance, knowing how to adapt themselves to the ways and ideals of the Southern people, stressing what Roman Catholics and Protestants have in common and at times even using Protestant preachers to introduce them to a community. One accusation which cannot be fairly aimed at Roman Catholicism is that it lacks shrewdness.

A remark of Hitler's made in one of his speeches at Nuremberg in September has an ominous sound but perhaps should charitably be interpreted as expressing a refusal to mix Church and State. He is reported

to have said, "We [the Nazis] are not performing cultic rites, but organizing popular demonstrations. Men who would reveal to us the mysticism of the life beyond are not tolerated in our midst." We are willing to interpret this to mean that Hitler and his associates as Nazis sternly refuse to teach a religion.

According to the *News Bulletin* of the National Lutheran Council the per-capita contributions for benevolence during 1937 were: in the United Lutheran Church, \$2.32; in the American Lutheran Conference, \$2.62; in the Synodical Conference, \$2.65; in all other Lutheran bodies, \$1.49. The per-capita contributions, when all purposes are considered, amounted to: in the United Lutheran Church, \$14.59; in American Lutheran Conference, \$13.93; in the Synodical Conference, \$13.46; in all other Lutheran bodies, \$9.07. Before stating that Lutherans are worthy of high commendation as givers, one ought to read, as the *News Bulletin* correctly points out, what figures some other bodies can submit. The per-capita contributions for all purposes in the United Presbyterian Church were \$22.38; in the Southern Presbyterian Church, \$20.16; in the Church of the Nazarene, \$28.02; in the Moravian Church (North), \$20.33; in the Reformed Church in America, \$22.25; in the Northern Presbyterian Church, \$20.00. While we thank God for the moneys received in the Lutheran Church, the situation evidently is still far from ideal.

The Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., suffered the loss of one of its professors when Dr. Michael Hadwin Fischer died on August 7. He had been connected with the seminary since 1925, occupying the chair of Religious Education.

Two well-known German theologians died recently, Dr. Alfred Schmöller, known for his *Concordance of the Greek New Testament*, and Dr. Adolf Juelicher, whose *Introduction to the New Testament* has made his name familiar throughout the world. The latter was a modern theologian of the type of Harnack.

The following paragraph makes the rounds of the religious press: "Fifteen German Calvinists recently banished from Russia, when asked about religious conditions in Russia, reported: 'The Baptists are very strong in the villages, and the village believers have great influence and do great work among the Ukrainian people in the U.S.S.R. They go from house to house and often from village to village and persuade people to accept Christ as their personal Savior. In spite of all the persecution and the depression they remain strong and faithful to the Savior.'"

From England it was reported that Dr. Claude G. Montefiore, a Jewish scholar who devoted himself to the expounding of the New Testament, has died. Modernists considered his contributions very valuable. There is no doubt that his scholarship was profound. Unfortunately it did not lead him into the arms of Christ.

Do we fully visualize the poverty of some of our fellow-citizens? Of certain migrants in Texas moving about almost like fugitives and vagabonds, a reporter writes: "In one Texas county some six thousand of these migrants have just finished the gathering of onions, a two weeks' job. They lived in shabby tents, with no planned sanitation, receiving an average of 12 cents an hour for work in the fields—hard work,

bending over to the earth, filling and carrying sacks of the vegetable. At the end of the two weeks they moved on, carrying their families with them in the wheezing old auto or behind the poor old horses with which they once farmed until crop curtailment or foreclosure turned them off the land. In one town their camp was forcibly moved out into the country to prevent epidemic; in another several dozen families lived in a quarter block with neither water nor toilets. They went to the tomato fields of East Central Texas after the onions were picked and will next move on to berry patches or to the spinach gardens of the Rio Grande Valley, then into the cotton fields, which they will follow from South Texas through Oklahoma into Arkansas."

The following poem, printed in the *Presbyterian*, about a symbolical Dr. Learned Aloof may not contain the portrait of any reader of these lines, but the warning it echoes may well be heeded by every one of us.

A parish-priest of austerity
Climbed up in a high church-steeple
To be nearer God that he might hand
His Word down to the people.

And in sermon script he daily wrote
What he thought was sent from heaven,
And he dropped it down on the people's heads
Two times one day in seven.

In his age God said, "Come down and die,"
And he cried out from his steeple,
"Where art Thou, Lord?" and the Lord replied,
"Down here, among My people!"

Union Sunday evening services in Pittsburgh have not proved a success. Twenty-three Protestant churches agreed to unite their efforts Sunday evenings and hold one service in Carnegie Hall. While the hall seats 2,200 people, the audiences did not number more than one thousand, a report says.

Sir Arthur Eddington, Plumer Professor of Astronomy, Cambridge University, England, recently was honored by the King, who conferred the Order of Merit on him. Sir Arthur is favorably known as an opponent of the mechanical view of the universe sponsored by Herbert Spencer and other thoroughgoing evolutionists.

Was Babson right in his criticism of American church-life? The *Christian Century*, reporting on the completion of his term as moderator of the General Council of the Congregational and Christian Churches, says, "He was trying to formulate a feeling which is widespread throughout American Protestantism. This is the feeling that church-life is suffering from the multiplication of denominational machinery, that religious vitality is lost amid the grinding of an Ezekiel-like phantasmagoria of wheels within wheels, that the resources of the Church are being exhausted in an effort to support a constantly proliferating denominational overhead. In so far as Mr. Babson's crusade represented a protest against this tendency, it voiced a genuine and pervasive Protestant misgiving." Naturally, we protest against such a reference to the grand vision of Ezek. 1; but apart from this, let everybody ask himself whether the attitude ascribed here to Babson is not founded on facts.

A.

II. Ausland

„Die biblische Grundlage der Prädestinationslehre bei Calvin.“ So lautet das Thema eines Vortrags, den Peter Barth am 15. Juni 1936 auf dem dritten Kongreß für calvinistische Theologie in Genf gehalten und in der Zeitschrift „Evangelische Theologie“ (Juli 1938, S. 159 ff.) veröffentlicht hat. Zunächst wird die Lehre Calvins dargestellt. „Der Text [der *Institutio*] von 1539 bringt die genaue Definition, wie Calvin die Prädestination verstanden wissen will. Prädestination nennen wir das ewige Dekret Gottes, nach dem er bei sich beschlossen hat, was mit einem jeden einzelnen Menschen geschehen sollte. Denn nicht alle werden mit der gleichen Bestimmung (*pari conditione*) geschaffen, sondern den einen wird das ewige Leben, den andern die ewige Verdammnis vorausverordnet. Daher sagen wir, je nach dem einen oder andern Ziel, auf das hin ein Mensch geschaffen ist, er sei zum Leben oder zum Tode prädestiniert.“ (Kap. 21, 5.) . . . Nach diesem Exkurs der Schlußredaktion (von 1559) fährt der alte Text von 1539 wieder fort mit seinen harten, unerbittlichen Feststellungen: „Wir sagen also, was die Schrift klar zeigt, daß Gott nach ewigem und unveränderlichem Ratsschluß ein für allemal festgesetzt hat, welche er einst einmal zum Heile annehmen, welche er dem Verderben weihen wolle. Wir sagen, daß dieser Ratsschluß in bezug auf die Erwählten in seinem unverdienten Erbarmen begründet sei, ohne Rücksicht auf menschliche Würdigkeit. Welchen aber die Verdammung verordnet wird, denen werde durch sein zwar gerechtes und unwiderrufliches, aber auch unbegreifliches Urteil der Weg zum Leben verschlossen.“ (Kap. 21, 7.) . . . In der Schlußredaktion geht Calvin auf den Einwand ein, die Schrift sage dies nirgendwo ausdrücklich, daß Adam auf Gottes Dekret hin gefallen sei. Er hält dem entgegen, Gott, der nach Ps. 115, 3 „machen kann, was er will“, könne sein vornehmstes Geschöpf doch nicht mit ungewissem Lebensziel geschaffen haben. Wo bliebe Gottes Allmacht, wenn Gott nichts anderes bestimmt habe, als den mit freiem Willen ausgerüsteten Menschen je nach Verdienst zu behandeln? Die Schrift bezeuge jedenfalls laut, daß in der Person des einen Menschen alle Sterblichen dem ewigen Tode verhaftet worden seien, 1 Kor. 15, 21. Da dies nicht der Natur zugeschrieben werden könne, sei es offenkundig, daß dies durch Gottes wunderbaren Ratsschluß geschehen sei. Dann müsse aber auch der Fall Adams selber durch Gottes Ratsschluß erfolgt sein. „Wieso ist es geschehen“, fragt Calvin, „daß der Fall Adams so viele Völkerschaften zusammen mit ihren Kindern rettungslos in den ewigen Tod verstricke, wenn nicht, weil es Gott so gefallen hat? Hier müssen die sonst so geschwägigen Zungen schweigen.“ Calvin bekennet an dieser Stelle selbst: „*Decretum quidem horrible, fateor*; ich bekenne, ein schauerliches Dekret!“ (Kap. 23, 7.) . . . Noch einmal kommt die Verstoßung und Verwerfung der andern in erneuter unerbittlicher Härte zur Sprache, Kap. 24, 12—17. Hart zu schaffen geben ihm die von seinen katholischen und evangelischen Gesprächspartnern zäh ins Feld geführten Schriftstellen: „Gott will nicht den Tod des Sünders, sondern daß er sich bekehre und lebe“, Hesek. 33, 11. 1 Tim. 2, 4; Sach. 1, 3; Röm. 11, 32. Calvin bleibt aber mit seinem Bundesgenossen Augustin allen Einsprüchen gegenüber bei seinem „*ceterum censeo*“: „O Mensch, wer bist du, daß du mit Gott rechten willst?!“ . . .

„Wir treten nun an die schwere und ernste Aufgabe, Calvins Lehre von der Prädestination auf ihre Übereinstimmung mit der Schrift hin zu prüfen. Wir wären schlechte Calvinisten, wir würden das Bekenntnis unserer reformierten Väter zur alleinigen Autorität der Schrift verleugnen, wollten wir es nun einfach bei der ehrfürchtigen Beugung unter die Autorität des Reformators belovenden lassen. Wir sind uns darüber einig, daß Calvin unter den Lehrern der Kirche an hervorragendster Stelle steht. . . . Wir sind nun auch verpflichtet, in aller Freiheit auch einem Calvin gegenüber, in der Schrift zu forschen, ob es sich also verhielte', Apost. 17, 11. . . . Wie kommt Calvin zu dieser Feststellung? Er gibt zwei Quellen dafür an: die Schrift und die Erfahrung. Wir fragen zu der zweiten Erkenntnisquelle: Ist unsere menschliche Erfahrung kompetent, hier irgendeine Aussage zu machen, und lassen sich aus ihren Aussagen irgendwelche Schlußfolgerungen ziehen? Wir lassen uns von der ersten *Institutio* belehren, daß wir uns in concreto niemals die Feststellung einer endgültigen Verworfenheit anmaßen sollten, was Calvin auch in seiner Lehre von der Kirche dauernd festgehalten hat. Was vermag uns also unsere Erfahrung, und wäre es Menschheitserfahrung in der Richtung der doppelten Prädestination zu sagen?“ (Vgl. F. Pieper, *Chr. Dog.*, III, S. 564.) „Wie steht es aber mit der ersten Erkenntnisquelle für die Feststellung der doppelten Prädestination, mit der Heiligen Schrift? Sagt die Heilige Schrift wirklich das aus, was Calvin als unbestreitbare Schriftwahrheit verfißt: die vor Schöpfung der Welt dekretierte und unveränderliche Prädestination der einen zum Leben, der andern zum Tod? Calvin ist sich bewußt — das läßt sich aus dem Text der *Institutio* belegen —, daß er zu dem einen Dekret, dem *decretum horribile* der Verwerfung, durch keine direkte Schriftausage gelangt, sondern durch eine Schlußfolgerung, Kap. 23, 3. Gibt es Erwählung — in dem von ihm genau definierten prädestinationistischen Sinn —, so muß es auch Verwerfung, vor Schöpfung der Welt erfolgte Prädestination zum ewigen Verderben, geben. (Cf. Kap. 23, 1.) Wir lassen es dahinstehen, ob es menschlichem Denken — denn das ist diese Schlußfolgerung auf alle Fälle — zusteht, von einer auch noch so sicheren Prämisse aus zur Behauptung eines solchen göttlichen Dekretes, dieses Dekretes, überzugehen.“ (Vgl. Pieper, *op. cit.*, S. 559.)

Unervarteterweise aber heißt es nun in unserm Artikel weiter: „Wir konzentrieren uns auf die Frage: Wie verhält sich das Zeugnis der Schrift zu der Prämisse? Bezeugt uns die Heilige Schrift das Warten und das Werk des göttlichen Erbarmens an unserer dem Tod verfallenen Welt im Sinne einer vor Erschaffung der Welt festgelegten Vorausbestimmung einer scharf umgrenzten Auswahl bestimmter Menschen zum ewigen Heil (bei ebenso strikter Vorausbestimmung der andern zum Untergang)?“ Die Prädestination zur Verdammnis wird hier mit Recht verworfen. Will der Verfasser aber den Satz stehenlassen, daß es eine Gnadenwahl gibt, daß Gott „uns“, bestimmte Menschen, aus Gnaden erwählt, „außerwählt“, hat zum ewigen Leben und daß diese Wahl nicht fehlen kann? Es scheint, daß er sich in der Ausführung nicht so recht entschieden dazu bekennen will. E.