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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

Dr. Reu on Scripture and Its Divine Origin.—In *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, July number, Dr. M. Reu has published a scholarly and intensely interesting lecture on "What Is Scripture, and How can We Become Certain of Its Divine Origin?" Dr. Reu points out that Scripture is more than a code of morals or of divine teaching; that it is "the book of the history of God's dealings with men, of His revelation and of the reaction of man toward this revelation." "It is the history of salvation, the history of the preparation of salvation in the Old Testament and the history of the establishment of salvation in the New Testament."

Regarding the origin of Scripture Dr. Reu emphasizes strongly verbal inspiration, for instance, in the excellent interpretation of 2 Tim. 3:15-17, which culminates in the verdict that here "the statement is made about the written Word of the Old Testament in its whole extent that it has been produced by the breathing of the Spirit of God."

Regarding the recent attacks on verbal inspiration Dr. Reu says: "Verbal inspiration was the storm center during the last 150 years, and is so still today. It is true, there is a theory of verbal inspiration that must be refuted. It is that theory of inspiration that degrades the authors of the Biblical books to dead writing-machines, who, without any inner participation wrote down word for word what was dictated to them by the Spirit. We meet this doctrine in the Lutheran Church occasionally already during the sixteenth century, more frequently in the seventeenth century, although it can hardly be called the earmark of the presentation of all orthodox dogmaticians; later it is limited to popular writers, and today it is found only in some fundamentalist camps. This theory is in direct contradiction to everything that Scripture says elsewhere about the influence of God upon human personality, and several facts in Scripture itself speak against it. When, however, during the last years a hot pursuit was started against this theory in some quarters of our Church, this appears to me to be nothing more than a 'fight against windmills,' because there are hardly many among us who cling to this mechanical theory. Alas, not seldom this pursuit aims at the verbal inspiration in every form, and thus the combat becomes a fight against the testimony of Scripture concerning itself. We do not want to emphasize at present the fact that without verbal inspiration we lack every guarantee that the divine content is expressed in Scripture correctly and without abbreviations; we rather stress the fact that Scripture itself demands it. It is demanded by the form of the quotations: 'The Holy Spirit speaks'; 'God says'; furthermore, it follows from the fact that Jesus as well as Paul draw important conclusions from the wording of Old Testament passages, a few times even from a single word, as $\Delta\iota\eta\lambda\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ in Ps. 82:6 or $\sigma\acute{\pi}\epsilon\rho\mu\alpha$ in the story of Abraham; and in particular does it follow from 1 Cor. 2:12, 13: $\delta\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \lambda\alpha\lambda\omicron\upsilon\mu\epsilon\kappa\alpha\ \nu\omicron\kappa\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \delta\iota\delta\alpha\kappa\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\eta\varsigma\ \sigma\omicron\phi\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\iota\varsigma,\ \acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\prime\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \delta\iota\delta\alpha\kappa\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \pi\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma,\ \pi\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \pi\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\acute{\alpha}\ \sigma\omicron\upsilon\nu\kappa\rho\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon\varsigma$: 'Of these we also speak — not in words which man's wisdom teaches us, but in those which the Spirit teaches, inter-

preting spiritual (things) by spiritual (words).' Here concerning the words spoken by the apostle and his coworkers we find expressed both the operation of the Spirit and the cooperation of the apostle."

From many other interesting passages that we are tempted to quote we choose the following:

"By this unique operation of the Spirit upon the holy writers a Scripture came into existence which in all its parts is God's infallible Word for mankind for the purpose of its salvation. It is well known that not a few limit this infallibility or inerrancy of Scripture to those parts that pertain to our salvation. And, indeed, this is the chief thing; and when we remember the purpose for which according to 2 Tim. 3:16 the inspired Scripture is given, and the emphasis with which we stressed the fact that Scripture is the history of the divine revelation for the sake of our salvation, then, no doubt, the inerrancy of the parts mentioned is nearest to our heart and our first care. Scripture is no text-book on history or archeology or astronomy or psychology. But does from this follow that it must be subject to error when it occasionally speaks of matters pertaining to that field of knowledge? A certain holy awe kept me always from the assumption of errors in the original copies of the Scripture and its parts; even the mere possibility of errors seemed to me excluded by this reverential fear. However, this reverential fear alone should not hold one back from a serious reckoning with this possibility. It may be the result of training, and this training may have been wrong. Then there is the difficulty of drawing an absolutely correct line of demarcation between those parts that pertain to our salvation and those that do not. With some passages it might be drawn successfully; with others, not. Passages that today apparently do not belong to the sphere of salvation might in the course of history be experienced by the Church at large or by individual members as pertaining to that sphere. These are serious considerations, but none of them is decisive. The testimony of Scripture alone is decisive. And here 2 Tim. 3:16 and John 10:35 again stand before our eyes. If in 2 Tim. 3:16 of 'all the Scripture' is said that it is *θεόπνευστος*, brought forth by the Spirit of God, does this not exclude every error from the original copy, to which the term *θεόπνευστος* alone can refer? If in John 10:35 the general rule 'The Scripture cannot be broken' is applied to a single, one might say incidentally written, word (if in Scripture we may term anything at all as casual and incidental), which was indeed important for the understanding and time of theocracy but has nothing to do with our salvation, have we then a right to assume errancy for any part of Scripture?"

F. H. BRUNN

Die Bedeutung der altprotestantischen Dogmatik für die Mission. Unter dieser Überschrift druckt die „Kirchliche Zeitschrift“ (Aug. 1939) aus „Evangelische Theologie“ (1939, Heft 1) eine von Lic. Walter Holsten gelieferte gründliche und erfreulich objektive Untersuchung über diesen Punkt ab, die auch in unsern Kreisen vielen interessant sein dürfte. Wir können hier allerdings nur wenige Sätze daraus wiedergeben, in denen Holsten seinen Lesern gleichsam Thema und Resultate seiner Arbeit darlegt, hoffen aber, damit die Aufmerksamkeit unserer Leser auf den Artikel zu lenken und sie so zum Studium desselben zu veranlassen. Allem Gesagten wird man frei-

sich nicht zustimmen können; auch hier finden sich Gegensätze, die einem als überspannt erscheinen, und Aussagen, die zu weit gehen. Anregend, lehrreich und interessant, wesentlich auch wahr, ist aber der Artikel dennoch. Lic. Holsten schreibt: „Wer der Frage [nach dem Urteil der altprotestantischen Dogmatik über die Mission] nachgeht, muß allerdings auch eine nicht unwichtige Änderung in seinem Bild von der Missionsgeschichte vornehmen, wenn er es durch die Standardwerke der Missionswissenschaft empfangen hatte. Man bekommt fast in diesen den Eindruck, als sei die altprotestantische Dogmatik ein Stück aus einem Museumschrank, auf dessen Seltsamkeiten man sich mit Ausrufen des Staunens und Kopfschüttelns im Vorübergehen aufmerksam macht.“ Holsten beurteilt dann die oft kritisierte Stellung der Dogmatiker zur Heidenmission und zeigt, daß „gefürchtete Streittheologen“, wie Philipp Nikolai (*De regno Christi*, 1597) und nach ihm der große „Schul- und Streittheologe“ Johann Gerhard eine durchaus rechte Stellung zur Mission eingenommen haben. Er schreibt: „Nikolai ist nicht ein einsamer Stern am dunklen Himmel altprotestantischer Orthodogie. Er würde dann da, wo nach der Bedeutung der altprotestantischen Dogmatik für die Mission gefragt wird, nicht zu befragen sein. Er mag freilich in seiner umfassenden Kirchen- und Missionskenntnis einsam dastehen. Aber mit seiner Schau der Dinge, mit den Gesichtspunkten, unter denen er seinen gewaltigen Stoff sieht und darstellt, und unter denen er die Dinge beurteilt, steht er fest in der Gemeinschaft der lutherischen Dogmatiker seiner Zeit. . . . Sie sind nämlich keineswegs mit Scheuklappen durch die Welt gegangen; die theologisch repräsentierte Gestalt eines Johann Gerhard beweist, wie gern man die durch Nikolai vermittelten Kenntnisse aufnahm, berücksichtigte, verwendete. Das Auge jener Dogmatiker war durchaus nicht in ihre Folianten und in ein lebensfremdes, wohl gar dem Leben der Kirche fremdes Schema gebannt: es ging vielmehr in die ganze Weite der Welt und der Kirche.“ Sehr fein beurteilt Holsten das Nein der Dogmatiker zur Begründung der Mission mit dem Missionsbefehl Matth. 28, „die als unzulässige, häretische Vertuschung von Mission und Apostolat empfunden wurde“. Daß dieses Nein in einer nötigen Polemik ihre Wurzel hatte, zeigt Holsten sehr klar; es ist daher auch ein sehr relatives Nein, womit durchaus nicht die Mission an und für sich verneint wurde. Aber womit begründeten die Dogmatiker dann die Mission? Holsten schreibt: „Wir machen also die erstaunliche Feststellung, daß im Sinn der lutherischen Orthodogie die Mission nicht mit dem Missionsbefehl zu begründen, sondern als Tat der Liebe zu verstehen ist. Es pflegte bisher selbstverständlich zu sein, daß es dem Pietismus eigen sei, die Mission mit der Liebe zu begründen. Reformatorischer Haltung entspreche es mehr, sie als Gehorsam gegen den Missionsbefehl zu verstehen. Wir werden dieses Dogma korrigieren, ja umkehren müssen. Gerade die Sauberkeit reformatorischen Denkens, wie es von der lutherischen Orthodogie gepflegt wurde, verlangt als Begründung der Mission die Liebe. Denn die Mission gehört in das Gebiet der Ethik, und das christliche Handeln steht unter der Liebe. Dadurch kommt in den Zusammenhang von Orthodogie und Pietismus neues Licht. Sie hängen sehr eng zusammen; die Liebe als Missionsmotiv hat der Pietismus von der Orthodogie empfangen. Die Bedeutung der altprotestantischen Dogmatik für die Mission ist [daher] klar: jene Dogmatik hat über die Reinheit des Glaubens gewacht; der Glaube, über dessen Reinheit sie wachte, ist der Glaube des Pietismus.“ (Übersetzen

darf man dabei aber nicht, daß beim Pietismus gerade in bezug auf die Kernpunkte, Rechtfertigung und Heiligung, die christliche Erkenntnis sich sehr trübte.) „An Missionsfönn und Missionsgedanken hat es ihr [der altprotestantischen Dogmatik] nicht gefehlt; von ihr hat sie der Pietismus übernommen. Aber freilich: die altprotestantische Dogmatik lehrte den Glauben, im Pietismus wurde er tätig. Jene weist auf die Liebe hin, dieser übt sie.“ (Man versteht, worauf der Schreiber mit diesem Gegensatz abzielt. Als allgemein wahr aber läßt sich dieser Gegensatz nicht halten; er stimmt auch nicht mit dem, was der Autor früher gesagt hat.) „Wenn die Missionstaten der Orthodogie so kümmerlich erscheinen gegenüber dem reichen Missionsleben des Pietismus, so geht es nicht um Dogmatik, sondern um Ethik, um den Glauben, der in der Liebe tätig ist.“ (Damit aber soll nicht gesagt sein, daß bei den gläubigen Dogmatikern der Glaube nicht in der Liebe tätig war; denn an Ethik mangelte es ihnen um so weniger, gerade weil ihnen Gottes Wort ein so großer Ernst war. Ihre Liebe wirkte sich eben anders und auf anderem Gebiet aus.) „Auch wenn wir dieser Schranken um so klar bewußt sind, erweist sich die Bedeutung der altprotestantischen Dogmatik für die Mission doch als unerwartet groß und positiv. Ihr ist es zu verdanken, daß das Missionswerk des Pietismus nicht römische Werlerei, sondern Tat, Liebestat, des evangelischen Glaubens wurde.“ Voll und ganz gewürdigt ist mit dem letzten Satz das, was eine spätere abgleisende Zeit der altprotestantischen Dogmatik verdankt, durchaus nicht. Aber davon genug. Nur noch ein anderer Gedanke. Wenn wir heutzutage in unserer Mitte zum Missionswerk auf Grund von Matth. 28 und Mark. 16 ermahnen, so tun wir dies mit vollem Recht. Denn während ja die guten Missionswerke, wie alle andern guten Werke, aus Glaube und Liebe fließen, so erscheint uns doch auch in Matth. 28 und Mark. 16 Gottes klarer Wille an alle Christen. Man vergleiche 1 Petr. 2, 9. Gute Werke haben eben die Eigenart, daß sie sowohl nach der Norm des Gesetzes als auch in der Liebe geschehen. J. L. M.

Preparations for the Lutheran World Convention. — Our readers have been informed that next year, from May 24 to June 2, the Lutheran World Convention will meet in Philadelphia. The *News Bulletin* of the National Lutheran Council reports that a commission is drawing up a document which expresses Christian attitudes concerning basic social problems. This is a part of the study the commission is preparing on the topic "The Church in the World," which study is to be used as a basis of consideration at the World Convention.

To keep our readers in touch with developments, we print the following additional information from the *Bulletin*:

"According to the commission's statement the first part of the study will concern general principles 'setting forth the nature and mission of the Church in the world with special reference to the contrasts and conflicts between the ideals of the Church and those of the world. This introduction also sets forth the distinctive principles by which Christian civilization is developed.' It is the hope of the commission that this portion of the study will be of so 'timeless' a character that it will never be outdated. The body of the report, however, 'proposes to deal with social questions which characterize all generations in all countries, but with special reference to the social questions of the present.'

"The commission's statement indicates that this practical section of the

study will be divided into five parts: "The first will deal with problems of the more intimate social life, as sex, marriage, home, and such associated subjects as employment of women in industry, child welfare, divorce, etc.

"The second part will deal with problems pertaining to the State, with authority and forms of government, duties and responsibilities.

"The third part will deal with problems connected with economic relations, with reference to problems between labor and capital, between production, marketing, consumption, etc.

"The fourth part will deal with problems involved in cultural relations, ideologies, traditions, customs, race, and types of civilization.

"The fifth part will deal with Christian education in the application of Christian truth and principles to science and philosophy as they affect life in its social relationships."

"According to the Rev. Dr. Walton H. Greever, chairman of the commission, the purpose of the Lutheran World Convention and the work of this commission is 'to make the best possible contribution that the Lutheran Church can make on this subject at the present time, recognizing the world-wide interest of Christians of all denominations in these vital social problems. This report will be prepared and presented with the definite purpose that it may become the basis of definite programs by which principles and applications may be made known to the whole body of the Church, and publicized to the utmost degree. It is not the expectation of the committee that any specific program of action may come out of this, but that the whole Church may be moved to the possibility of an effective educational program. It is also expected that what is presented through the report in condensed form may stimulate production of a continuous stream of special literature on specific subjects.'

"So wide and varied is the field of study that the members of the commission during their recent meeting accepted tentative oral reports and disbanded to return to their homes to prepare their revised papers there. The completed reports will be turned over to Dr. Greever and on September 1, he and the Rev. Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, president of Augustana College and Seminary, Rock Island, Ill., will unify them. Mimeo-graphed copies will then be sent to the three foreign members of the commission for their approval.

"In addition to Dr. Greever and Dr. Bergendoff, members of the commission are: the Rev. Dr. Bernhard M. Christensen, president of Augsburg College and Seminary, Minneapolis, Minn.; the Rev. Dr. Thaddeus F. Gullixson, president of Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.; the Rev. Dr. Emil E. Fischer of the Philadelphia Lutheran Theological Seminary; and the Rev. Dr. Edward C. Fendt of Capital University, Columbus, O. The Rev. Dr. Lars W. Boe, president of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., and a member of the Lutheran World Convention executive committee, is serving the commission in an advisory capacity. The European members of the commission are the Rev. Dr. Paul Althaus of Erlangen University, Erlangen, Germany; the Rev. Dr. Alfred Jorgensen, Denmark; and Bishop J. Sandegren of Trichinopoly, India.

"Except for a single American representative on each the *personnel* of the other two commissions preparing studies for the World Convention

was chosen from the ranks of the leading European theologians. Their studies concern 'the Church, the Word, and the Sacraments,' and 'The Church and Other Churches.' Each topic relates to the general subject, 'The Lutheran Church Today.'

A later issue of the *Bulletin* contains a further sketch of the planned convention and its program.

"The group of official delegates will be comparatively small, but an effort will be made to secure the participation of the prominent leaders in all spheres of church activity. According to the decision of the executive committee there will be a total of one hundred and sixty delegates—forty to be chosen from among the Lutheran churches in America, forty from the Scandinavian countries, forty from Germany, and forty from the Lutheran churches in other nations.

"During the initial convention session, Friday morning, May 24, the delegates will be divided into three sections, each charged with the responsibility of studying, and acting on, the reports of the three Convention commissions. These working sessions will continue until Wednesday, May 29, when the first section will present its report on 'The Church, the Word, and the Sacraments' to the assembled delegates.

"On Thursday, May 30, the second section will report on 'The Church and Other Churches.' The third and final section report, on 'The Church in the World,' will be heard and acted on the following day. Ample opportunity will be given for study and discussion.

"Six American and three European Lutheran theologians are preparing the study on 'the Church in the World.' Except for a single American representative on each the *personnel* of the other two commissions has been chosen from the ranks of the leading European theologians. Each topic relates to the general convention theme, 'The Lutheran Church Today.'

"In addition to devoting many hours to the three basic studies the delegates will hear and consider reports concerning the great projects of the Lutheran World Convention which are being undertaken in many parts of the world.

"Yet this is but a fraction of the complete Convention program. Beginning on Thursday, May 30, Philadelphia will be the scene of about a dozen Lutheran conferences, all to be conducted as integral parts of the World Convention. One, an international Youth Congress, will rally Lutheran youth from Europe and America. Appropriately, the theme of this conference will be 'Tomorrow's Lutheran Church.' The Rev. Dr. N. M. Ylvisaker of Minneapolis, executive secretary of the Luther League of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, has accepted the chief responsibility for the organization and projection of this portion of the program.

"Arrangements are being made for foreign- and home-mission conferences, meetings for Lutheran editors, nurses, educators, and Sunday-school teachers. All Lutheran men's groups, women's organizations, and inner-mission agencies will also send representatives to participate in the special conferences. Organizations such as the Lutheran Inner Mission Conference, the Foreign Missions Conference, and the Educational Conference have already arranged to hold their 1940 sessions in Philadelphia as a part of the Lutheran World Convention meeting.

"On Memorial Day, May 30, all Convention visitors will take an excursion to Valley Forge, the Trappe Church, and Muhlenberg's grave. For the occasion special patriotic services are being arranged.

"Climax to this greatest of all Lutheran assemblies will be the final service and choral concert in Philadelphia's Convention Hall, Sunday afternoon, June 2.

"The American section of the Lutheran World Convention executive committee is directly in charge of all arrangements for the Convention gathering. Members of the committee are the Rev. Dr. Frederick H. Knobel, of New York City, president of the United Lutheran Church in America and vice-president of the World Convention; the Rev. Dr. Ralph H. Long, executive director of the National Lutheran Council and assistant treasurer of the World Convention; the Rev. Dr. Lars W. Boe, president of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.; and the Rev. Dr. Abdel Ross Wentz of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pa."

What the Lutheran World Convention should do is discuss seriously the defections from sound Lutheranism of which many of its members are guilty, in order that true unity in the faith may be established. A.

Why a Deacon Resigned from the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. — John A. Heckel, member of the Rutger Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Mo., and deacon in that church for many years, recently resigned from his various offices and his relationship to the denomination. In his resignation declaration, as reported by the *Christian Beacon* (Aug. 3, 1939), he stated as the first two reasons for this important step the following: "During the early months of 1939 I learned facts which are not generally known by the laity of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., but which we have every right to know. The following are some of these facts: 1. In 1923 approximately twelve hundred Presbyterian ministers signed a document called the 'Auburn Affirmation,' in which the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures is denied and the virgin birth of Christ, the blood atonement of Christ, the bodily resurrection of Christ, and the miracles of Christ are declared to be 'one of many theories.' This affirmation was blasphemy and a sin beyond description, and yet not only did these men escape discipline, but today every board of the denomination has these men on its councils. 2. While the above-mentioned apostates were not dealt with, the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., did not hesitate to unfrock men of God who chose to obey Him rather than men and who put God's Word and conscience above the dictates of human agencies; such men were Doctors Machen, Laird, McIntire, Griffiths, and others. Other ministers, whose sympathies are with these men, are not standing with them for fear of action by the powerful ecclesiastical machine. This most certainly is not the faith of our fathers."

J. T. M.

Southern Minister Attacks the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible. — Under this heading the *Christian Beacon* (Aug. 3, 1939) reports an attack upon the Biblical doctrine of Verbal Inspiration (called by the *Beacon* "the historic position of the Presbyterian Church") by Rev. P. McGeachy, Presbyterian minister in Decatur, Ga. The article appeared in the *Presbyterian of the South* (July 26, 1939), in a section entitled "Pres-

byterian Round Table." In the article Dr. McGeachy declares: "I am a believer, and a loyal Presbyterian believer, but I am frank to say that I take my stand with Barth and Brunner," viz., in regard to the doctrine of Biblical inspiration. The declaration is far too long to be quoted in full; yet the following paragraph may interest our readers since it closely resembles the standpoint taken by many writers in the United Lutheran Church in recent years.

Dr. McGeachy says: "It is not in my mind to deny Verbal Inspiration. There must be some sense in which the words which convey an idea are inspired if the idea itself is inspired. Undoubtedly there are actual and definite words in the Bible which we would not lose for anything. There are words that are music and light in their very syllables. . . . What I do object to, however, and what is turning a great and helpful fact into a hurtful lie [Hear! Hear!] is the idea that the Bible is to be taken in a hard and fast sense, just as, for example, we must take the multiplication table. I insist that such an idea is contrary to Presbyterianism and contrary to all that the Bible itself has in mind. And yet this idea is rampant among us at this moment, and it is causing schism and turmoil and is all unintentionally holding back the coming of the King and His kingdom. I say that this holding back of the kingdom is unintentional. Men who take this stand are sincere and earnest, and they feel that in defending their position they are really defending God's truth. They think that, because some of us do not go with them, we have gone off into heresy and that we are guilty of treason to Christ and His Church. They think this; they say this; and so far as they are able, they carry out their thoughts in deeds. They have created division; they have accused men who are equally worthy and sincere with themselves; and they have shed abroad among the professed followers of the God of love a spirit of criticism and of censure that shames the cause and must surely hurt the heart of our Master. And my insistence is that in all this they have been emphasizing something that is usually not a matter of importance and that is often an actual hindrance to progress in the fellowship of Him who said: 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'"

Very moderately Dr. Carl McIntire replies to this attack editorially: "The position taken by Dr. McGeachy is similar to that taken by the late Dr. Charles Briggs of Union Theological Seminary, New York, for which in 1893 he was suspended from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. One wonders what the brethren in the South are going to do about this subtle, insidious, and yet open attack upon the historic position of the Protestant Church that the Word of God is infallible, pure, and without error. If it has errors, it is not infallible; if it is infallible, it does not have any errors and is trustworthy."

The last words of the editorial are directed especially against the final paragraph, in which Dr. McGeachy sums of his viewpoint thus: "I am insisting on the idea of revelation. But I am not saying that, in order to have revelation, we must have what some brethren seem to demand. These brethren say that the Bible must be absolutely accurate in every detail or else it cannot be the Bible at all. They think of the Book as a sort of Prince Rupert's Drop: you must not break even a tiny

fragment from it; for if you do, then the whole Book flies into dust and nothingness. I had a man say precisely that to me within the last month or so. He held that the Bible must be exact in literally everything or else it was all gone for him. These brethren frequently say that it is dangerous to admit that there may possibly be a flaw anywhere from Genesis to Revelation. Now, I insist that that fear is not Presbyterian doctrine; it is not the doctrine of the Bible about itself."

As the reader peruses this viciously controversial article, which, let us bear in mind, was written primarily for Christian laymen, he is amazed at the satanic cleverness of the writer's paralogic argumentation. First he pretends to accept verbal inspiration. Next he claims that the Bible cannot be regarded as inerrant in all its parts, since that is contrary to the Bible itself. Then he accuses those who defend Biblical infallibility as holding back the Kingdom, creating division and hurting the heart of the Master. Lastly he dismisses the entire subject as unworthy of so much consideration, since after all the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy is not a matter of importance, but claims that often it proves an actual hindrance to progress in the fellowship of Christ. This is destructive cunning and a saddening attempt to dynamite the foundation of the Christian faith by denying the infallible authority of God's Word, concerning which the Christian Church has always judged: *Quidquid Deus revelavit, infallibiliter verum est.*

J. T. M.

Methodists Too Liberal Concerning Grounds for Divorce.—When the Methodists recently held their great "uniting conference," they grappled also with the question under what circumstances it would be proper for a minister to officiate at the marriage of divorced persons. The resolution adopted says that a Methodist clergyman may function at the marriage of a divorced person if this person is the "innocent" party and "it is clearly established by competent testimony that the true cause for divorce was adultery or other vicious conditions which through mental or physical cruelty or physical peril invalidated the marriage vow." That goes a step beyond Scripture. We know from 1 Cor. 7 that there is ground for divorce besides adultery — malicious desertion. But to speak, for instance, of mental cruelty as invalidating the marriage vow is without Scriptural warrant.

A.

Jesuitism and the Persecution of Protestants.—According to the *Sunday-school Times* (July 8, 1939), the catechism of Père Picotin, published by Guirodet of Paris in 1929 and bearing the churchly approbation of Père Ignace Foubiget, S. J., asks the children: "Were it not, then, of great importance, dear child, that the holy inquisition be again restored for the salvation of souls?" The answer is: "Yes, that is the end for which all the faithful must strive." Question: "What are the counsels of the Fathers in this matter?" Answer: "We must root them out with death, kill them, burn them, tear them in pieces, break them on wheels, and crush them." (P. 128 ff.) The report further says: "Antonia Oldra, S. J., of Turin, an Italian Jesuit, has this to say (1927): 'When the Church has exhausted all springs of Christian patience, there remains nothing left, if it and its members are to be protected and heresy against the obedience of the Church in the matter of teaching and true interpretation is to be suppressed, than to resort to the extremities of death-

punishment. Think of the heresies of the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Lutherans, and all those Vandals who are greedy for Christian blood. Remember that one heretic is worse than the greatest criminal, and your conscience will no longer be troubled by the thought of a necessary death-punishment in order to remove all the evil germs of that moral and material infection." The *Times* then goes on to say: "The Waldensians, mentioned by Father Oldra as 'greedy for Christian blood,' are rather an élite people. They hold high positions in Italian life as judges, university professors, physicians, teachers, government officials, officers in army and navy, bankers, manufacturers, and business men. The royal house of Savoy has long engaged nurses, tutors, and governesses from among them just because of their character. . . . 'These are they who have come out of great tribulation.' Here are some of the dates in their church history: 1380 — Burning of the Pastors Galosna and Martino. 1487 — Crusade against them under Innocent VIII and the inquisitor Cattaneo; reign of terror in the Valleys. 1528 — Massacre of Provenza under the Inquisitor Domenico di Roma. 1545 — Edict of Francis I: massacre of innumerable Waldensians. 1558 — Martyrdom of Martino Gonin, Stefano Bruno, Nicola Sartorio, Giofreddo Varaglia. 1560: Destruction of the Calabrian Piedmonteses. 1655 — Massacre of two thousand Waldensians. 1658 — Duke Vittorio Amedeo issues an edict of suppression: 12,000 imprisoned, many exiled, churches destroyed. 1713 — Expulsion of Waldensians from Val Pragelato. 1851 — New persecutions in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. June 24, 1929 — The State gives an authorized standing to the Waldensian Church." It is well for those who suggest that the various churches offer a united front against the evils of our time under the leadership of Rome to restudy the bloody chapters of history that tell of the fury of the Papacy against all who dared to profess the pure Gospel.*

J. T. M.

The Church and Sex.—Under this heading the *Christian Beacon* (August 10), controversial organ of the Bible Presbyterians, writes editorially: "The Modernists are certainly running with a free hand in the Synod of California of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The *Berkeley Daily Gazette* gave lengthy accounts of the meetings and speeches. An Auburn Affirmationist was elected moderator, a man who signed the document which denies the inerrancy of the Scriptures and calls the virgin birth, the bodily resurrection, the blood atonement, and the miracles of our Lord simply 'theories.' According to the report the retiring moderator gave a typical modernist address, and the most attractive class in the Synod was said to be the one on 'Marriage and the Home,' conducted by another Auburn Affirmationist. Of this the report says: 'A wave of surprised laughter greeted Rev. Davis's statement to the effect that *dancing is a clean, frank sex mechanism for persons who have not found their mates.* It should be encouraged, he said, but not for married people.' In the past the Christian Church has always left questions of sex where they properly belong — in the intimate family circle. If the home is failing in this day to meet this ancient problem, then it

* There are not many periodicals today that dare to tell the world what Rome really is and demands.

is not the duty of the Church to take up the problem and to handle it in 'conferences' or 'discussion groups' but rather to give us homes where these questions will remain in their proper sphere. When the Church goes into intimate, detailed sex education, there is little argument left to restrain the State from the same intrusion. If the Church is going to invade the sanctity of the home, what argument is there to prevent the State from invading the same sanctity? The trouble is that when the Church gets away from the grace of God and the sound, simple explanation of the Bible, it invades many foreign spheres and usurps prerogatives which God has not given to it. This Presbyterian leader does not like to see married couples dance but thinks that unmarried couples should indulge in such a 'clean, frank sex mechanism' in order to find out their mate—and all this in the name of the Church! It should be enough to disgust (and it certainly does just this) many Christian people. There is no substitute for the Moral Law and the old Ten Commandments, the Bible's revelation of chastity and purity."

While dancing is by no means "clean," it is certainly a very obvious "sex mechanism," even brutally "frank" at times. By calling it that, this Modernist dance advocate has fitly described just why it is so alarmingly dangerous, not merely for the married but also for the unmarried, and why Christian people, both individually and collectively as a Church, must raise a warning voice against it. Those who claim that dancing has nothing to do with sex are simply not speaking the truth. J. T. M.

Baptist World Congress.—Having met in Berlin, Germany, five years ago, the Baptist World Alliance held its quinquennial meeting in Atlanta, Ga., beginning its sessions July 22. When one reads that one evening 57,000 people entered a baseball park to attend a convention pageant held there and that 28,000 more tried unsuccessfully to gain admission, one is furnished an idea of the tremendous numbers that attended the Congress or at least showed an interest in its activities. Whoever read the newspaper reports had to gain the impression that little else than the subject of religious and political liberty was brought before the delegates for discussion; but from accounts in the religious press we learn that several other topics, for instance, evangelism and religious education, were given much prominence. Unfortunately the social gospel received recognition, too. The reader must not think that these Baptists represented a closely knit organization. Baptists are opposed to everything that smacks of ecclesiastical domination. They are ultracongregational in their conception of the outward form in which the life of the Church at large is to manifest itself. A negative attitude was taken toward the World Council of Churches, though membership in it on the part of the Northern Baptist Church was not branded as disloyalty to the Baptist fellowship. Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke of London was elected the new president of the Alliance, which is said to represent 12,000,000 people in sixty nations. A.

What a "Liberal" has Learned from the Holy Rollers.—Writing under a pen-name in the *Christian Century*, a man who avows himself a "Liberal" states what the churches that represent his brand of religion must learn from the Holy Rollers. His mother has become a member of this sect. What induced her to leave the denomination in which she

had been brought up was the earnestness and the spirit of sacrifice manifested by the Holy Roller preacher and his congregation. This minister called to see the mother when no other minister would. His salary is \$667 a year, while that of the five other Protestant ministers in his town ranges from \$1,800 to \$3,000 and has attached to it the free use of a parsonage. This situation gives the Holy Roller pastor a great advantage with the poor people, struggling to carry on with \$48 a month if they are WPA workers. What this "Liberal" says is something all of us should ponder. A.

On Union.— A letter written by J. E. McAfee and published in the *Christian Century* presents thoughts on the union of church-bodies which might well be pondered quite generally. Speaking of the Methodists, he says:

"What have the Methodists done? They have made one big sect grow where formerly there were three little ones—relatively little. The nature of the growth has not been changed; Methodists are as much a sect as ever, perhaps more one now that they feel the strength of eight millions.

"The sectarian structure is not appreciably changed. The smallest branch of the new body was induced to retire from its historic position on the episcopate, reverse itself, confess its sin, so to speak, and yield to a domination which it formerly scorned. But not even a Methodist will acclaim that as a great achievement, since for Methodists the episcopate is an expedient; the issue of apostolic succession is not involved. We must wait until the Episcopallians and the Presbyterians unite to witness the contortions of libertarian presbyters swallowing in one gulp their historic pride and the apostolic episcopate.

"The Methodists ran true to sectarian form in legislating doctrine by majority vote. They not only arbitrarily prescribed labels by which the elect are to be known in the community, but they voted proprieties and obligations of citizenship, the majority overriding the minority with even more *éclat* than the majority commonly practises in a political party convention in defining party regularity.

"In short, no gain has been made at the points where the vitality and destiny of religion in our American society are at stake. Indeed, it is a question whether a big and trebly powerful sect is not more a menace to these sacred interests than are three sects whose divisions weaken them at the point where they are most capable of doing mischief to elemental religion in a democratic community. The ability of the new big Methodism to override the sanctions of truth and the whole community's right to determine the spiritual equities and destiny of the community—that ability is all the more dangerous now that there are eight millions of sectaries marshaled in one compact host, ready to yield to the domination of a single hierarchy, which is rendered the less responsible to the community because made more powerful in its own right.

"The great and insistent issues of the religious field today are not advanced one whit, so far as the dispassionate onlooker can determine, by the eloquently heralded event of Methodist union. The physical grandeur of the event is rather likely the more effectually to obscure

these issues and overwhelm them with cymbal-clashing demonstrations of irrelevancies.

"What is the nature of truth? What place does religion hold in a democratic society? How are democratic forces and sanctions to be placed in control of the community's religious interests? The Methodists have made no contribution to the answer to these questions. They have rather thrust them to one side in their clamorous achievement of what is at its best an irrelevancy." A.

An Appeal for More Dogma. — "More dogma is the appeal of Canon Bell in the *Atlantic Monthly*," writes the *Sunday-school Times*. "Canon Bell, a former professor of religion at Columbia University, has a far from exalted idea of the average college professor's knowledge regarding the great themes of time and eternity as set forth in Christianity. But he rightly lays his finger on the theological seminaries as the chief delinquents. 'The general public, finding next to no doctrine taught from Christian pulpits and weary of ideas and sentiments spun out of the void, has simply stopped going to church.' This is because 'a great many preachers themselves do not know what the great, agreed teachings of Christianity actually are. That is partly the fault of the institutions which prepare preachers. The American theological college gives a disproportionate deal of time to "religious education" and "Christian social service." There is no fault to be found with religious education, provided one has a religion in terms of which to educate. Nor is Christian social service a thing to be neglected, provided one has a Christian philosophy on the basis of which to construct and manage society. As derivatives of theology both have meaning; as substitutes for theology they are empty wind. A vast number of clergymen do not know what are the accepted principles of the Christian religion. If they are persuaded that they should preach doctrine, they do not even know where or how to begin doing it.' This is unquestionably true, and the injury which the unfaithful theological seminaries have done to the Church and to the nation in our day is simply immeasurable. Theology is the basis of everything. A work containing, on the inside of the back cover, scribbled notes by Woodrow Wilson, was found in Dr. Gresham Machen's library. The author had in various places spoken contemptuously of theology and of the great Princeton theologian [Machen]. Wilson's note was: 'Does the author never realize that, if a man is really a Christian, that which the writer calls theology is the sweetest, dearest thing to his heart?'"

More important still than Woodrow Wilson's remark is that of Luther, who writes: "In the Church nothing should be preached or done except that alone which is God's Word; for here it is not permitted to do or undertake anything according to human judgment; here no man should presume to avail anything; here no thought or action should be recognized but that which comes from God Himself, as also St. Peter writes in his first epistle, 4:11: 'If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.'" (St. L. Ed., 12:841.) Canon Bell's plea for more dogma in American seminaries and pulpits is certainly more than justified.

J. T. M.

Brief Items.—The Lutheran seminary at Mount Airy again is provided with a president. Recently Prof. Luther D. Reed, who has been serving that institution since 1906, first as director of the library and after that as professor of liturgics and church art, has been called to this position of honor and high responsibility. He takes the place of the late Dr. Charles M. Jacobs.

"Just then the woman kneeling beside me, who also, apparently, thought that single souls were important, since she, an extremely busy person, had come here at seven in the morning to help one in its progress, put her hand on my arm and directed my eyes to the altar of the Sacred Heart before us. I saw that what she wanted me to see was the marble statue of our Lord. And I saw that His arms were outstretched as if in welcome. It was this which made me know I was at home." So writes in *America* a woman convert to Romanism. Can anything savor more of stark emotionalism?

Contending that higher education is worldly and leads to sin, Amish and Mennonite groups in Pennsylvania have succeeded in forcing that State to make a change in its education laws which will permit children to leave school at the age of fourteen for farm and domestic work, provided they have completed the highest grade of elementary school in their district. This will lower the compulsory education standard by one year.—*Christian Century*.

Dr. Adolf Hult, professor of Church History at Augustana Seminary, Rock Island, Ill., says in an article in the *Lutheran Companion* that the threatened elimination of the theological faculties in the universities of Leipzig, Heidelberg, and Rostock is not surprising. The theologians, so he says, taught people not to believe. "The world of today has logical minds, and it draws conclusions from the late scepticisms."

Dr. Frank Buchman, leader of the so-called Oxford Groups, is now sponsoring "moral rearmament" by the nations of the world. In the famous Hollywood Bowl he recently addressed a gathering estimated at twenty-five thousand people. What he stresses in his endeavor is the recognition that we all need honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love. Very true; but does he realize that first the tree must be made good before the fruit can be good?

Auf dem Jahresfest der Hermannsbürger Mission, das am 23. und 24. August stattfinden soll, soll besonders des 90-jährigen Bestehens der Missionsanstalt gedacht werden. Am 12. Oktober d. J. werden es neunzig Jahre sein, dass Ludwig Harms die ersten Missionszöglinge in das Missionshaus aufgenommen hat.—A. E. L. K.

Dr. J. Ross Stevenson, president emeritus of Princeton Theological Seminary (Presbyterian), died August 13. He was a thoroughgoing unionist and opposed Dr. Machen in the latter's struggle against Modernism in the Northern Presbyterian Church.

In the June number of the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* an important paper from the pen of Dr. Reu appeared having the subject "Unionismus." Our journal will at an early date print copious extracts and its evaluation.

A.