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Reason or Revelation?

What? Some more rattling of dry bones? As though *we* had to be told what an abominable and dangerous thing rationalism is!—Just read on. The thing is not so dead as you may think. We are dealing with a live issue. There are many more rationalists in the churches than the census lists. Your own theological thinking may have more of a rationalistic bias than you are aware of. And in our spiritual struggles we are inclined to heed the insidious logic of reason more than the sure Word of Scripture, the certain promise of the Gospel. So the time spent in studying the gross forms of rationalism is well spent. That will help us the better to realize the dangerous character of the subtle forms. We shall begin with *rationalismus vulgaris seu communis.*

I

What is the source of the saving doctrine, the seat of authority in religion, reason or revelation? Scripture is most clear on this point. Scripture declares that God's revelation, His revelation in Scripture, Scripture itself, is the sole source of saving knowledge. "To the Law and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," Is. 8:20. Again: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them," Luke 16:29. Again: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine," 2 Tim. 3:16. Once more: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," 1 Pet. 4:11. "The oracles of God," not the oracles of man, the judgments and decisions of reason. "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men," Col. 2:8. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him," 1 Cor. 2:14.

The position of the Lutheran Church is clear on this point.

"Nec ratio humana seu naturalis theologiae et rerum supernaturalium principium est." (See Baier, *Comp.*, I, 82.) "The Evangelical Lutheran Church recognizes the written Word of the apostles and prophets as the only and perfect source, rule, norm, and judge of all teachings — a) not reason, b) not tradition, c) not new revelations." (See *Walther and the Church*, p. 122.) The Formula of Concord states: "We receive and embrace with our whole heart the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the pure, clear fountain of Israel, which is the only true standard by which all teachers and doctrines are to be judged," and "allow ourselves to be diverted therefrom by no objections or human contradictions spun from human reason, however charming they may appear to reason." (*Trigl.*, pp. 851, 987.)

The rationalists use equally clear and vigorous language in proclaiming *their* principle: Not revelation, but reason! The Socinians of old said: *"Nihil in theologia verum est, quod a ratione non approbatur. . . . Nihil credi potest, quod a ratione capi et intelligi nequeat. . . . Nullo modo verum esse potest, cui ratio sensusque communis repugnat."* Nothing is true in theology which does not find the approval of reason! The final judgment must be given by reason. Reason has the right to reverse the judgment of Scripture. And thus reason is the sole authority in religion. When rationalism was in flower, the great majority of the theologians gloried in proclaiming the supreme authority and self-sufficiency of reason. One of their leading lights, H. P. K. Henke († 1809), considered it his duty "to free the Christian doctrine from a threefold superstition, from Christolatry, *Bibliolatry*, and onomatology (the retention of antiquated concepts), and thus change the truth which was accepted on the basis of authorities into the truths of natural reason." (See *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 1939, p. 129.) J. F. C. Loeffler, a general superintendent: "Our reason is manifestly God in us. Why should we seek God outside of us, in the strange voices which are frequently so illusive?" (See Fr. Uhlhorn, *Geschichte der Deutsch-Lutherischen Kirche*, II, p. 81. The book lists many similar statements.) J. F. Roehr, their chief, declared that Christianity is "the religion of reason intimately connected with the history of its founder." Concerning Roehr, Uhlhorn says: "He stood foursquare on the principle that reason alone could decide matters of faith; that there can be no revelation, no immediate intervention of God in general, and no supernatural communication of divine truths in particular; that the Bible is a purely human book, in which noble and wise men of antiquity have set down, in the ordinary manner, the results of their investigation of religious truths; and so much of this is to be retained as reason finds to be of universal value." (*Op. cit.*, p. 162.) The Lutheran rationalist in America,

F. H. Quitman, proclaimed in a sermon on the Reformation: "Reason and revelation are the sole sources of religious knowledge and the norms according to which all religious questions must be decided." All of this was the development of the ideas of J. S. Semler, the father of German rationalism. Semler denied that the Bible was inspired in the real sense of the term and designed as the norm of faith for all men. Only that is inspired which can serve "our moral improvement — *moralische Ausbesserung.*" Christ gave His disciples the right of private judgment. And using this right, Semler deleted from the Bible all those portions which did not find favor with him as being "Jewish conceptions." These portions found place in the Bible only because the Biblical heroes, Christ and the apostles, accommodated themselves in their language to the popular notions of their day. These things are not to be believed by us. — Lessing, the philosopher and dramatist, spoke in the name of the Enlightenment and rationalism when he said: "Christianity does not rest on the accidents of historical events but on necessary truths of reason."

And these rationalists are still with us. We have the Unitarians, and we have the Modernists. W. G. Elliot, Unitarian: "We become Christians solely through the use of reason." (*Discourses on the Doctrines of Christianity*, p. 8.) "No statement can be accepted as true because it is in the Bible. All its teachings must be subjected to the authority of reason and conscience." (Tract published by the American Unitarian Association. See *Popular Symbolics*, p. 401.) Wm. E. Channing, in a sermon on *Unitarian Christianity:* "The Bible treats of subjects on which we receive ideas from other sources besides itself, such subjects as the nature, passions, relations, and duties of man; and it expects us to restrain and modify its language by the known truths which observation and experience furnish on these topics. We profess not to know a book which demands a more frequent exercise of reason than the Bible. . . . With these views of the Bible, we feel it our bounden duty to exercise our reason upon it perpetually, to compare, to infer, to look beyond the letter to the spirit,[1] to seek in the nature of the subject and the aim of the writer his true meaning, and, in general, to make use of what is known for explaining what is difficult, and for discovering *new truths.*" (Works of W. E. C., p. 368.)

The Modernists of today are marching in line with the Unitarians, holding aloft the torch of the old rationalists. (We are not rattling dry bones!) Our next-door neighbors are telling us that reason is the seat of authority and are warning us against "Bibliolatry." David E. Adams: "The final basis of religious

1) That sounds familiar. In the current discussion on verbal inspiration we hear Lutheran theologians asking us to do that.

authority for you is yourself, your mind working on all that has come down in the religious tradition of Christianity and selecting and making your own those things which satisfy the requirements of your intelligence, of your moral judgment, of your spiritual hunger. . . . We have come to the point where each man must decide for himself, in the light of his own best knowledge and experience, what there is in that Book, what there is in the Church, what there is in the Christian faith that is valid for him, in the light of science, in the light of his own best moral judgment, in the light of that little spark of the divine which God has lighted in his soul." (*Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1926.) Semler and Roehr and Loeffler would say that this is just about what they have been saying. Our Modernists are simply repeating what is stored away in old archives. They are rattling dry bones. Let us hear some more of it. Dean F. C. Grant: "The Christian religion does not require any one to go contrary to his own experience either in faith or in conduct, *i. e.*, not contrary to what in popular language is called 'reason,' or the conclusion we draw, the outlook we derive from our experience. This has ever been God's way with man; else what was 'reason' for, which God implanted in us as a guide through the mazes of conflicting sense-impressions and of opinions?" (*Living Church*, Nov. 11, 1933.) In *The Doctrine of God*, p. 175 ff., A. C. Knudson says that the Bible "in a special and preeminent sense" is still the source and norm of Christian belief; "for in it we have the earliest and most trustworthy record of the unique revelation of God which was mediated to the world by Jewish and early Christian history"; but to this must be added three supplementary sources: "the Church, natural reason, and Christian experience." In his book *Ringing Realities*, pp. 91, 216, O. L. Joseph declares: "There are some who sound the alarm that the Bible has lost its authority because scholars have submitted newer interpretations and different applications of its manifold message. The real difficulty is what these alarmists thought the Bible should be has no longer any foundation. The only course is to appeal to the testimony of evidence and to abide by a verdict that is approved by reason, conscience, and experience. . . . If we are to escape the pitfalls of barren intellectualism[2] and of prostrated emotionalism, we must recognize that reason and faith are the twin guides to truth." S. Parkes Cadman, a chief among the Modernists, insists that reason has the right to sit in judgment on Scripture. "Is not the authority of the Bible destroyed when we accept only that which is applicable to us and of which we must be the judges?" Answer: "The authority of the Bible is established by divine inspiration, but it is

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2) That sounds familiar. We are being told that the teaching of verbal inspiration leads to this thing, "barren intellectualism."

also addressed to human intelligence. The Book itself invokes finite reason and appeals to its decisions. Plainly, the Scriptures themselves do not outlaw man's judgment on their contents. Why should we do so?" (*Answers to Every-day Questions*, p. 257 f.) Let us hear a Lutheran theologian who agrees with these people: "The Bible, the Church, and the Reason are all channels or seats of authority in religion. The *crux* in the theological debate has been the false exaltation of one or another of these seats of authority. Certainly the final appeal in religious belief cannot rest on any one of these factors divorced from the others. . . . In the final analysis the Biblical truths and the Church's creeds and confessions must be made real and vital by their personal revaluation and be experienced as religious facts before they command and compel the soul to submission and action. The final appeal is made to the Christian consciousness. All through the medieval and modern period of theological history, though the infallibility of Bible and Church has been preached, there have always stood clear-eyed and honest champions of the necessity and right of Christian experience to interpret and enforce the truths of our holy faith. Schleiermacher stands first among our Protestant theologians in the application of this point of view." (*The Lutheran Quarterly*, 1912, p. 570 f. See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1913, p. 156.) And beware of "Bibliolatry"! "Without a doubt our fathers came very close to Bibliolatry. They could make no distinction between the Word of God and the words of men by which that Word was given." (E. Lewis, *The Faith We Declare*, p. 49.) C. A. Wendell: "Bibliolatry is perhaps the finest and most exalted form of idolatry, but idolatry it is nevertheless." . . . This "stilted veneration for the Word," this "nervous anxiety to prove the complete inerrancy of the Bible from cover to cover." (*What Is Lutheranism?* P. 235.) — Plainly the issue "Reason or Revelation?" is not a dead one. The voice of Semler and Roehr is still heard in the land. A few new terms have been added to the vocabulary of rationalism, but the language is the same.

It is *sola ratio* against *sola Scriptura*. Is their slogan indeed "Reason *alone*"? Do they not stand for "Reason *and* Revelation"? They do say that reason and Scripture are the twin guides to truth. When they list the seats of authority, they never fail to mention Scripture. They do not purpose to get along without Scripture. For one thing, it would never do to propose that within the religious body in which they are operating. If they said, "Away with the Bible!" they would have to leave the Christian Church and start a religion of their own. And, for another thing, they do not want to get along without the Bible. They have a high regard for the Bible. Cadman sees it established by "divine inspiration." Roehr

studied his Bible; for did not the noble and wise men of antiquity set down therein the results of their investigations? H. E. Fosdick wants men to use the Bible. In his *Modern Use of the Bible* he speaks emphatically on this point. "An intelligent understanding of the Bible is indispensable to anybody in the Western world who wishes to think wisely about religion. By no possibility can any one of us be independent of the Bible's influence. Our intellectual heritage is full of its words and phrases, ideas and formulas." (P. 3.) Reason demands of you, as a wise man, to listen when other wise men speak. It is the part of wisdom to treasure up and study the maxims of Confucius and Socrates and Isaiah and Jesus. So there are two guides to truth: Scripture, containing what other wise men said, and your own individual reason. But at bottom there is, in the theology of rationalism, only one seat of authority — reason. For that, too, is the part of wisdom to examine carefully what your peers say and to accept only what stands the test. Have they not just been telling us that each man must decide for himself what there is in that Book that is valid for him, in the light of his own best moral judgment? With them, the statements of Scripture are not final; only so much of Scripture is acceptable as finds favor with reason. Did Jesus feed the five thousand with two loaves of bread? Impossible, says reason. This story is not reliable. Is the sinner justified without works? The Bible says so, but the best moral judgment of man must repudiate such an idea; and Scripture stands corrected before the bar of reason. Reason is set up as the final court of appeal in the theology of rationalism. Its principle is, in truth and reality, *sola ratio*. Walther is right when he says: "The Bible is nearly everywhere treated like the fables of Aesop. I am telling you the truth when I say this. When you begin later to compare the old with the modern theologians, you will see that I have not exaggerated. Science has been placed on the throne, and theology is made to sit at its feet and await the orders of philosophy." (*Law and Gospel*, p. 235.) H. Kraemer is right when he says: "In the eighteenth century the representatives of the enlightenment fought a . . . battle for the rights of human reason. Believing in the autonomy of man, their eyes were naturally blinded to the peculiarly religious and unique character of Biblical realism. The conception of 'natural religion' as the 'normal' and 'standard' religion became paramount, and in their humanist theology the light of reason became *the*" (italics by Kraemer) "organ of revelation." (*The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, p. 116.) [3]

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3) Kraemer is not right when he says: "The representatives of enlightenment fought a *partly legitimate and salutary* battle for the rights of human reason."

Is there any difference between the rationalists of the eighteenth century and the rationalists of 1940 as to their treatment of the Bible? No essential difference. Both groups treat the Bible like the fables of Aesop, accepting in Aesop and in Holy Scripture what is good and rejecting what is not so good. Our Modernists may not use the coarse language of *rationalismus vulgaris*. They will not treat the Bible as a purely human book. They may ascribe to it a higher degree of inspiration than Aesop possessed. They find "the Word of God" in it. But since not all of Scripture is "the Word of God," a careful selection must be made, and reason must make the selection. Here is a typical statement: "All of them [the writers of the epistles] struggled with evident limitations of temperament, environment, and vocation. In their case it is necessary not only to find out what they said but also what they were trying to say, what the eternal Word of God was saying in them to all men everywhere. . . . The wheat must be sifted from the chaff, the 'Word' taken from the worn-out wrappings. And then that 'Word' shall be made plain. All must be fitted to our modern thought. . . . What is warped and ill balanced must be corrected; what was neglected must be added; what was soiled by the heat and dust of controversy must be polished until it is bright and clear again." (Dr. D. H. Forrester, in the *Living Church*, Feb. 11, 1933.) O yes, says Dr. H. L. Willett, the Bible is a great book, but it is not an infallible standard of morals and religion. "No error has ever resulted in greater discredit to the Scriptures or injury to Christianity than that of attributing to the Bible such a miraculous origin and nature as to make it an infallible standard of morals and religion. That it contains the Word of God in a sense in which that expression can be used of no other book is true. But its finality and authority do not reside in all of its utterances but in those great characters and messages which are easily discerned as the mountain peaks of its contents. Such portions are worthy to be called the Word of God to a man." (*The Bible through the Centuries*, p. 289.) And who is the judge to decide which sections of the Bible are God's Word? Dr. Willett continues: "It is inevitable that one who studies the Scriptures should bring every statement and precept to the bar of his own sense of right and judge it by that standard." (P. 291.) Far from accepting the *sola Scriptura*, these men do not even place Scripture on a par with reason, but operate with the *sola ratio*. James Bannerman fitly describes the situation: "He comes to the Bible and sits over its contents in the attitude of a judge who is to decide for himself what in it is true and worthy to be believed and what in it is false and deserving to be rejected; not in the attitude of the disciple who, within the limits of the inspired record, feels himself at Jesus' feet to receive every word

that cometh out of His mouth. . . . The assurance that the Bible is the Word of God, and not simply containing it, in more or less of its human language, is one fitted to solemnize the soul with a holy fear and a devout submission to its declarations as the very utterances of God. The assurance, on the contrary, that the truths of revelation are mingled, in a manner unknown and indeterminate, with the defects of the record, is one which reverses the attitude and brings man as a master to sit in judgment on the Bible as summoned to his bar and bound to render up to him a confession of its errors and not a declaration of its one and authoritative truth." Basil Manly, who quotes this in *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration*, p. 16, points out what inspires the rationalistic attitude: "It ministers to the pride of reason." [4]

It is indeed *sola ratio*. Dr. Hoenecke states the case thus: "The rationalists and the great majority of modern theologians hold that Scripture is not the Word of God but only contains the Word of God. But this assertion refutes itself. For if God's Word were only *contained* in Scripture, if it had to be sifted out of Scripture like wheat from the chaff, we should need a second immediate revelation, in addition to the revelation of Scripture, to serve as the standard and rule for separating that which is the Word of God in Scripture from that which is not the Word of God; for reason cannot be the measure and rule. *If reason could indeed*

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4) The Bible "contains" the Word of God, "the wheat must be sifted from the chaff," — that sounds familiar. J. A. W. Haas has been telling us: "There must be a clear distinction kept in mind between the Word of God and the Bible. . . . The Bible is the Word of God because it contains the Word of God." (*What Is Lutheranism?* P. 176.) V. Ferm has been telling us: "The authority of the Sacred Writings is no longer found in 'the letter' but in the appeal of its spiritual content. . . . To us the 'Word of God' is the validly spiritual content which rises unmistakably in Scriptural utterances and in the pronouncement of Christlike seers." (*Ibid.*, pp. 279, 294.) And Dr. H. C. Alleman has been telling us: "The Bible contains the Word of God. It is the rule of our faith because it enshrines this Word. . . . The Bible has carried with it the husk as well as the kernel. There are many things in the Old Testament and some in the New Testament which are temporal and even provincial. When we read Old Testament stories of doubtful ethics and *lex talionis* reprisals, with their cruelty and vengefulness. . . ." (*Luth. Church Quarterly*, July, 1936, p. 240.) — Lutherans who like the phrase "The Bible contains the Word of God" might look up its pedigree. The Unitarians liked it. "Unitarians believe that the Bible *contains* the Word of God; they do not believe that every word which it contains is the Word of God." (*Scriptural Belief of Unitarian Christians.*) Semler, the father of modern rationalism, used it: "It is inconceivable how the thoughtful Christians confound the Sacred Scripture of the Jews and the Word of God which is here and there contained and enveloped therein." And "among those who would change the statement 'The Bible *is* the Word of God' into 'The Bible *contains* the Word of God' may be named Le Clerc and Grotius, whose views may be readily traced back to Maimonides, the celebrated Jewish Rabbi of the Middle Ages." (B. Manly, *op. cit.*, p. 49.)

serve as the measure, Scripture would be subordinate to reason, and a special revelation, such as is given in Scripture, would in reality have been unnecessary." (*Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik,* I, p. 333.) We are here not concerned with the difficulty confronting those theologians who are not ready to proclaim the absolute self-sufficiency of reason and still feel the need of a special revelation. Our interest at present is to show that any theologian who permits his reason, his scientific mind, his moral feelings, to correct and revise the Bible, is putting reason above the Bible, is proclaiming the *sola ratio,* is marching with the old rationalists.

We have shown that rationalism makes reason the norm and even the source of the saving truth. It was not hard to show this. The rationalists make no attempt to hide their position. We shall now show what the nature and effect of this principle of theology is. It will be seen at once what a wicked, evil, noisome thing it is. It is such a wicked, evil, noisome thing that Luther is compelled to use harsh language in describing it. "He tells us further what Mistress Hulda, natural reason, teaches on these matters, as though we did not know that reason is Satan's paramour and can do naught but defame and defile all that God says or does. But before we answer this arch-whore and Satan's bride, we shall first prove our faith with simple, clear Bible-passages." (XX, 232.) "*Ratio inimica fidei.* Reason, the enemy of faith." (IX, 157.) [5] Note, first, its wickedness and, second, its harmfulness.

First, it is a wicked thing. God directs us to Scripture as the sole source of the saving truth, the sole norm of doctrine. "To the Law and to the Testimony!" Is. 8:20. "Search the Scriptures; . . . they are they which testify of Me," John 5:39. God will have nothing preached in His Church but Scripture: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," 1 Pet. 4:11. God warns us against giving reason a voice in theology: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world," Col. 2:8. The rationalists read this and keep on saying: We will accept nothing but what our reason approves of. God asks us to "cast down imaginations and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. 10:5. What, say the rationalists, discard the noblest gift of God to man, our reason? God tells us in Holy Scripture that human

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5) A similar statement, from a sermon on 1 Pet. 5: "*Nam Satan venit* mit eim sussen, lieblichen wein. Das heisst *ratio humana.* Ist ein schone metz, macht viel zu buben, das man etwas predigt, *quod non est Verbum Dei, sed* neben etwas erdenken; das macht, das man Gottes wort verachtet. . . . Man mus nuechter und wacker sein, am wort hallten. *Sic nostra ratione* [Satan] *impugnat fidem. Ratio* ist des Teuffels Braut." (Weimar Ed., 47, p. 841 f.)

reason is incapable of judging spiritual matters: "The world by wisdom knew not God," 1 Cor. 1:21. Again: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them," 1 Cor. 2:14. And again: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." This "wisdom of God none of the princes of this world knew," 1 Cor. 2:8, 9. And the rationalists make answer: We certainly know all about these things. — They are doing a wicked thing. They are setting their judgment against God's judgment. They make nothing of Scripture.

True, they do not feel that they are doing a wicked thing. They deny that, in taking counsel with their reason, they are acting against God's will and Word. They know, of course, as well as we what is written 1 Pet. 4:11 and Col. 2:8. But they have persuaded themselves that these passages do not set up the principle of *sola Scriptura* or, if they do, that the wise men who penned these words were mistaken in identifying Scripture with God's Word; these passages must be discarded as chaff. However, Scripture remains the Word of God in all its parts. It comes to men clothed with the full majesty of God. And the fact remains that they who presume to sit in judgment on Scripture are, whether they realize it or not, doing a wicked thing. The fact that Scripture is God's Word should "solemnize the soul with a holy fear and a devout submission to its declarations as the very utterances of God." It is not a small thing when men treat all of Scripture or some parts of Scripture as the words of mere men. It is a terrible situation described by Walther in the words: "There is not in modern theologians that fear which animated David when he said: 'My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee,' Ps. 119:120. Such reverence in the presence of Holy Writ is found hardly anywhere. The Bible is nearly everywhere treated like the fables of Aesop." (*Law and Gospel*, p. 235.)

What animates the rationalists, old and modern, is not the fear of God and His Word but the pride of reason. "It ministers to the pride of reason," says Manly, to have the right and the opportunity to go through the Holy Book of Christendom and pass judgment on the worth and merit of every single statement. The pride of reason, the "*supercilium humanae rationis et philosophiae*" ("proud reason and philosophy," *Formula of Concord; Trigl.*, p. 882), breaks through all bounds and "exalts itself against the knowledge of God," 2 Cor. 10:5. It dares to dispute with God! Our reason is a noble faculty. "It is indeed true that it is of all things the highest and the chief thing, above all other things of this life the best, yea, something divine." (Luther, 19, p. 1462.) But now, Luther continues, "after the Fall, this finest and best of all things is under the

power and rule of Satan," and Satan has filled his paramour with his own spirit. There was no limit to the pride and arrogance of Satan — he would be like God. And reason, inspired and directed by Satan, knows no limit in its aspirations. It would be like God. How did the old rationalist Loeffler express it? "Our reason is manifestly God in us"! Our modern rationalists will not use such coarse language; but when you see how they treat the Bible, telling us what portions are not in accord with the moral sense of modern man, presuming to tell us which doctrines of Christianity we can accept and which doctrines we must reject, instructing us on the basis of their experience and investigation what to believe and what not to believe, you see to what extent sinful pride and satanic conceit will exalt itself — it reaches self-deification. H. Kraemer read the books of the old rationalists and passes this judgment: "Hamann rightly said that, properly speaking, Kant's moralism meant the deification of the human will and Lessing's rationalism the deification of human reason. To reject the God of revelation inevitably means to erect man in some form as God." (*Op. cit.*, p. 117.) And when we hear men like Fosdick and Cadman and Willett so blandly offering us their ideas concerning God and religion in place of what God has revealed in the Bible, we are witnessing a form of self-deification. In its January issue *Fortune* speaks of "those rationalists of the golden age of the American colonies for whom Reason was not merely mechanistic but *divine*." It might have included the rationalists of the era of Modernism. Their pride of reason, too, knows no bounds.

"Proud reason and philosophy" demands to be heard in theology and demands the final word, though it has very little to be proud of. Let us deflate its swollen pride.[6] In the first place, rationalism is engaged in a foolish business. As often as the rationalists bring their findings before their own chosen tribunal, reason, their judge tells them that they do not know what they are talking about and throws the case out of court. If there is a God at all, — and rationalism admits His existence, else it would not take up theology, — He is so far above man that the human mind cannot measure His thoughts, else He were no God. The thoughts and plans of God transcend human comprehension. Scripture says so — and reason says so. Scripture tells us that "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." On the basis of Scripture Luther declares: "What matters it if philosophy cannot fathom this? The Holy Spirit is greater than Aristotle. . . .

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6) See 1 Tim. 6:3 f. "He is proud," τετύφωται, puffed up, *aufgeblasen*. Marginal note: He is a fool. Moffatt: conceited. — Puffed up with conceit.

Major est divini verbi auctoritas quam nostra capacitas. The authority of God's Word is greater than the grasp of our intellect." (XIX, p. 29.) Again: "Ein einiges Wort in der Heiligen Schrift auszugruenden und gar tief zu erholen, ist unmueglich, Trotz geboten allen Gelehrten und Theologen, denn es sind des Heiligen Geistes Wort, darum so sind sie allen Menschen zu hoch." (Weimar Ed. T. R. I, p. 28.) Yes, reason is a fine gift; "the light of reason shows you how to count and add up figures and to see that one thing is more and greater than another." But in one domain of thought reason can show us nothing. Luther continues: "With respect to the things of Christ, who enlightens our heart and conscience, everything that is in us is blindness and darkness; if you will not hold fast to the Word, you will remain forever dead and blind." (XI, 2054.) Dr. Pieper: "To set up human reason as the source and norm of theology is forbidden by Scripture, since Scripture declares that human reason, even when the divine revelation is presented to it, is absolutely incapable of understanding it." (*Lectures on "The Lutheran Church,"* p. 29.) "We must remember that the essence of the Christian religion, the vicarious satisfaction, is for all men, including the philosophers, *terra incognita.*" (*Chr. Dogm.*, I, p. 17.) And add this thought: "Even reason, *in its unfallen state*, is not qualified to sit in judgment on supernatural revelation. How much less is fallen reason able to do so!" (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1939, p. 270.) Now, reason fully agrees with these statements of Scripture. Reason understands that, since it is finite, it cannot grasp and judge the infinite. The philosophers know that. In an article published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, August 5, 1939, "The Crisis of Religion," Will Durant says: "We must beware of expecting a religion to be a body of mathematical truths." [7] The philosopher H. N. Wieman tells the philosophizing theologian Wm. Adams Brown, who had written a book, *God at Work, A Study of the Supernatural:* "We wish to demonstrate that it is impossible to make any rational statement about the supernatural because it is essentially irrational. I believe this book by Mr. Brown demonstrates quite unintentionally that it is impossible to be rational and at the same time make the supernatural the object of supreme devotion." (*The Christian Century*, March 7, 1934.) So, what happens when the rationalists write books on theology? They write themselves down as fools. Dr. H. C. Link is saying that. In *The Return to Religion* the chapter headed "Fools of Reason" states: "Religion has been called the refuge

7) Another statement worth quoting: "In our rebellious youth we proudly judged the 'truth' of religion, and our bulging intellects rejected whatever they could not understand." "Bulging intellects" — a synonym of the phrase "puffed up with conceit," used above.

of weak minds. Psychologically the weakness lies rather in the failure of minds to recognize the weakness of all minds. . . . In deifying the mind, we have abandoned God. We have become fools of reason and the dupes of scientific truth." Exactly what Luther said: "Our teachers attempted to fathom it with their reason and in the attempt became fools. Denn es ist kein wort so gering ynn der Schrift, das man mit vernunfft begreiffen kuende." (Weimar Ed., XVII, II, p. 311.) And when the fools of reason go to work, they produce only foolish fables. A wise man will not write descriptions of a *terra incognita*. And no wise man will base his salvation on such assurances. Luther would not. "I am not so foolish *(unvernuenftig)* as to have fables invented by human reason set above the divine Word." (XVIII, p. 87.) — When the rationalist, proud of his reason, makes it the judge of Scripture, he does violence to his reason. Is that something to be proud of?

A second point. Some of the arguments by which the rationalists seek to establish the authority of reason do not display deep logical acumen. Cadman offers this argument: "The Book itself invokes finite reason and appeals to its decisions." What can he mean? Perhaps what W. E. Channing expresses thus: "We feel it our bounden duty to exercise our reason upon the Bible perpetually, . . . to seek in the nature of the subject and *the aim of the writer* his true meaning," etc. Now, there is a use of reason which is proper and necessary in studying the Bible. You must certainly study "the aim of the writer" and the scope of the text and the context and the words. We need our reason to understand the meaning of the words used in Scripture. We must observe the fixed laws of human speech. And we must be able to think logically. We call this the *usus rationis ministerialis, organicus.*[8] But after reason has told us what the words mean, it must not go on to tell us: These words spell nonsense. It has not the right to tell us: This doctrine you may accept, that doctrine you must reject. The *usus rationis* MAGISTERIALIS is forbidden. Dr. Pieper: "Human reason must indeed be employed in interpreting Scripture, never, however, as *principle* but always only as *instrument.*" (*Lectures*, etc., p. 50.) Quenstedt: "Theology does not condemn the use of reason but its abuse and its affectation of directorship, or its magisterial use, as normative and decisive in divine things." (See H. Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology*, p. 35.) Human reason serves as the ὄργανον ληπτικόν, never as an ὄργανον κριτικόν. When she begins to criticize the Bible, we silence her. "Reason is not a leader, but an humble follower, of theology. Hagar serves as the handmaid

8) See Dr. Sommer's article in CONC. THEOL. MTHLY, X, p. 420 ff.: "The Province of Human Reason in Religion."

of her mistress, she does not command; when she affects to command she is banished from the sacred home." (Hollaz. See H. Schmid, *op. cit.*, p. 36.) "Let theology be the empress, philosophy and other useful arts her servant," says Luther. (XXII, 255.) There is something wrong with the argument that, since a certain use of reason is in place, any and every use of reason is proper. Rationalists are not using their reason when they employ this argument.

Perhaps Cadman's statement that "the Book itself invokes finite reason" means what the Unitarian W. G. Elliot expresses thus: "Christianity never tells us to quit thinking but to prove all things and to hold fast that which is good. We are not commanded to accept any teaching without examination but to search the Scriptures daily to see what is true and to judge for ourselves what is right." (See M. Guenther, *Populaere Symbolik*, p. 94.) Well, think! Then you will soon discover that the statement "You must think" is not the same as the statement "You may think anything." And to say that, because the Bereans are praised for searching the Scriptures in order to compare Paul's teaching with them, they would have been praised for sitting in judgment on the Scriptures, does not reveal deep thought.

Yes, we should make use of our reason (*usus ministerialis*); but when the rationalists insist on having reason act also in a magisterial capacity, something queer happens: they refuse to let reason act in her *ministerial* capacity! Take the words "This is My body, which is given for you." Reason, the servant, says: That means Christ's real body, the body which hung on the cross. Reason, the master, says: It cannot mean that; that would be unreasonable. Reason, the servant, insists that the words and the context ("given for you") indicate the real body of Christ. And the rationalists get indignant and say: Drive out the servant! Not everything in rationalism is reasonable!

Finally, — to give one more instance — the exegetical ability of the old rationalists was not of a high grade. Nothing to be proud of there! One of their leading exegetes was E. G. Paulus († 1851). Do you know how he got rid of the miracles related in the Bible? C. H. Sheldon's *History of Christian Doctrine*, II, p. 295, will tell you: "Paulus goes over the list of the New Testament miracles and endeavors to show how they may be accounted for without any appeal to the supernatural and also without any impeachment of the honesty of the writers. The angelic appearances to the shepherds he explains as meteoric phenomena. The healing of the possessed was the natural effect of such an eminent person as Christ engaging the hearty confidence of such patients as the demoniacs. The five thousand were fed because

those who were provided with food were constrained by the example of Christ and His disciples to share their store with the destitute. Lazarus came forth from the tomb because the loud voice of Jesus roused him from his stupor." (Martha's statement, John 11:39: "Lord, by this time he stinketh," probably was due to hallucination.) "The resurrection of Christ also was not a resurrection of the really dead. We cannot tell how much was done toward reviving Him by the cool air of the grotto and by the spices, and how much by the electric currents that accompanied the storm or earthquake (*Das Leben Jesu*)." Other "miracles of exegesis" performed by these men in order to remove the miracles: Jesus did not walk on the sea but *along* the sea; Christ was conversing with two strangers on the mountain, and light caused by lightning or something illuminated the scene — that was the Transfiguration. So the honesty of the writers is saved, but at the cost of their intelligence. The evangelists, these "noble and wise men of antiquity," did not know how to describe common occurrences in intelligible language. Paulus and his *confrères* have also renounced their own intelligence. Or did they honestly believe that their hearers would believe *their* "miracles"? This is how Walther sizes up the situation: "The shallowest minds were regarded as great lights and far ahead of their age. For theologians to achieve some renown, all that was necessary was sufficient boldness, or rather audacity, to declare the mysterious doctrines of Christianity errors of former dark ages, which had been without enlightenment." (*Law and Gospel*, p. 258.)

Well, that was in the dark ages of Enlightenment. Can our Modernists do any better? It seems incredible, but the same shallow, flat, and stale exegesis is offered to the present generation — in the holy name of Reason. On March 27, 1938, in Christ Church Cathedral, here in St. Louis, the dean preached on the feeding of the five thousand and told his audience that — those who had bread shared it with the others; nothing miraculous about it. Dr. George M. Lamsa told us the other day that, when going on a journey, Oriental people always carry a food supply with them hidden under their clothes; and when some of the five thousand saw how unselfishly Jesus distributed the five loaves among the people, they felt ashamed of their selfishness, quickly got out their own food, and passed it around. Dr. C. A. Glover writes a book, *With the Twelve*, and performs the same "miracle of exegesis": "Jesus had been speaking of the larger importance of spiritual food over material sustenance, and when the people saw the willingness of the small boy to share the loaves and fishes, they brought out the lunches that they had prepared for themselves and offered them for the common good." (See Conc. Theol. Mthly,

p. 207 ff.) Dr. Glover can perform better miracles than Dr. Paulus. Jesus' walking on the water means either "that He walked upon a submerged sand-bank" or that he used "his power of levitation"! The Transfiguration was not caused by lightning, but "Jesus admittedly possessed unusual psychic powers, and it is quite credible that the three disciples were in a state of abnormal sensitiveness," etc. All very modern, but just as shallow, stale, and flat as the old rationalism was. Dr. H. L. Willett does not like Dr. Glover's simple explanation of the incidents of Gadara — "the shouts and gestures of the healed maniac filled the swine with panic." He says: "What connection there was between the healing of the maniac and the stampede of the swine we do not know." But he gets rid of the miracle by simply denying it. "The narratives of the destruction of the swine and the cursing of the fig-tree are patently *incredible*. They impose too great a strain on the *moral implications* of the ministry of Jesus." (On three different occasions Dr. Willett discussed this matter in recent years in the *Christian Century*.) On the resurrection of Christ Dr. Willett expresses the same shallow views as Dr. Paulus. Oh, yes, he has found some new terms, but he is convinced, with Dr. Paulus, that the thing did not occur. "Of similar nature was the victory of Jesus over death, although we know few of the facts connected with that experience. The story was told in various ways by the disciples, who, as Jesus, had no other method of interpreting it than as a resurrection, a coming back of his body from the grave." (*Chr. Cent.*, March 3, 1937.) It is nothing but a revamping of the old rationalism, dressing it up in modern style. The poor apostles had only that cumbersome "thought-form," "category," "pattern" — "resurrection of the *body*." We have finer thought-forms and call it "persistence of personality" or some such thing. Dr. Fosdick, too, operates in the style of Dr. Paulus. He is far from impugning the honesty of the writers, but their intelligence suffers sadly at his hands. In his *The Modern Use of the Bible*, chapter IV, "Abiding Experiences and Changing Categories," he states: "The Bible has ways of thinking that are no longer ours.... For example, I believe in the persistence of personality through death but I do not believe in the resurrection of the flesh. Many of our forefathers could not conceive immortality apart from a resurrected body. The resurrection of the flesh was a mental setting in which alone they supposed that faith in life everlasting could be found." (P. 98.) [9] St. Paul was an honest man. He did

9) "Mental setting," "changing categories" — that is simply revamping old Semler's theory: Christ and the apostles accommodated their language to the popular notions of their day.

not want to deceive people by holding out to them the hope of the resurrection of the body. But there was no other "category" available, and he hoped that, when people heard him speak of the resurrection of the body, they would somehow catch the right idea and think of the "persistence of personality" only. Was St. Paul really so stupid? We are not stupid enough to believe that.

Fools of reason! And that does not mean only a *sacrificium intellectus*. Much more, an infinitely greater sacrifice is involved. "*Ratio inimica* FIDEI." The pride of reason is, as we shall show, destructive of the Christian faith. TH. ENGELDER

(To be continued)

The Prophets and Political and Social Problems

(Concluded)

IV

In the Old Testament the messages of the prophets were directed chiefly to God's own people, which had a theocratic form of government.

The well-known saying, The exiles returned from Babylon to found not a kingdom but a Church, expresses at best only a half-truth, for the commonwealth of Israel was from its very origin a Church, a state-church, a church-state, a theocracy, and this theocracy was not founded by the returning exiles, but was a divine institution, organized by the Lord immediately after the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt. It is rather difficult for us to realize all that the term "theocracy" implies. The Jewish Church was not a Church within the Jewish state, it was the Jewish state; and the Jewish state was not something altogether independent of the Jewish Church, it was the Jewish Church. In Israel the church laws were state laws, the state laws were church laws.

Membership in the Jewish Church and citizenship in the Jewish state were identical terms. If a Jew was deprived of his civic rights, he was by that very act excommunicated from the Church. And if a Jew was put out of the congregation, he lost his rights as a citizen of the Jewish state. No uncircumcized Gentile believer could become a member of the Jewish state-church, just as little as a circumcised idolater could acquire or retain citizenship in the Jewish church-state. A believing eunuch was saved, Is. 56:3-5; yet he never could become a member of the Jewish Church nor a citizen of the Jewish state, Deut. 23:1. He remained without the commonwealth of Israel.

God Himself gave to His people judges, Judg. 2:16-18, and kings, Gen. 35:11; 2 Sam. 5:12, and priests and Levites, Ex. 28:1 ff., Num. 8:6-26, and prophets, Amos 2:11. All these divinely appointed officials and leaders were church officers and state officials at the same time, for Church and State were one. The Lord had assigned to each of these various leaders certain duties which dared not to be usurped by any other ruler. Yet even in assigning these duties, God did not draw a sharp line of demarcation between State and Church. When King Uzziah went into the Temple to offer incense, he was stricken with leprosy, not, however, because a state official had usurped the right of the clergy. A Levite, though a member of the clergy, would have met with the same fate if he had tried to offer incense. For the offering of incense was the right exclusively of the priests, and these priests were punished by death if they would as much as dare to offer any strange fire on the altar of the Lord, Lev. 10:1, 2.

While certain specific duties were assigned to each class of leaders or rulers, all were held in like manner responsible for the welfare of the Jewish commonwealth, for the prospering of the church-state, for the furtherance of the state-church. And part of this responsibility was the mutual supervision enjoined upon all these officers. Kings and prophets and priests alike were under divine obligation to do all in their power that the Word and will and Law of God was to be enforced in Israel, to be made the guiding norm, the ruling principle, for all actions of the leaders of this theocratic commonwealth.

It was the Jewish state which stoned the blasphemer, who had transgressed a law of the Jewish Church; for the laws of the state-church were the laws of the church-state, and therefore the state had the right and the duty to enforce them. It was the Jewish Church which put to death the murderer, who had committed a crime against the Jewish church-state; for the laws of the church-state were the laws of the state-church, and therefore the Church had the right and duty to enforce them.

A brief glance at the history of Israel will convince us that this was actually the practice followed by both civic and religious leaders of Israel. Already Joshua, the military leader of the people, gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem that they should present themselves before God and exhorted them to remain faithful in their service of the Lord. When King Saul had failed to comply with the will of the Lord to slay Agag, the king of the Amalekites, Samuel, the prophet, slew Agag because the will of the Lord had to be fulfilled. It was King David who reorganized the Levitical service in preparation for the future Temple worship. It was

David who took a census of the entire tribe of Levi, divided the Levites into four groups, and assigned to each group its specific duties, 1 Chron. 23 ff. It was David who bought the site for the Temple, who made extensive preparations to make its building possible, who gave the plans and specifications to Solomon and urged the princes and the people to offer willingly for the erection of the Temple. It was King Solomon who built the Temple, and while the priests on the day of solemn dedication brought the ark into the Most Holy Place, because according to God's will that was the exclusive privilege of the priests, it was Solomon, the king, who offered the dedicatory prayer, not the high priest nor a prophet, 1 Kings 8. It was, therefore, no undue meddling in the office of the priesthood when King Joash changed the method of gathering the Temple money, 2 Kings 12, nor when King Hezekiah, and a century later King Josiah, inaugurated religious reforms, 2 Chron. 29-31; 34; 35. That was their duty since they were the heads of the state-church, and the prophets would very properly have faulted them if they had been remiss in their duty.

In view of the peculiar nature of the theocracy the anointing of Solomon in opposition to his brother Adonijah was not a "palace intrigue" on the part of an ambitious mother and a scheming prophet, as unbelieving critics often call it, but an act of obedience to the clearly expressed will of God that Solomon was to be David's successor, 1 Chron. 28:5, 6. It became the duty of Nathan to take a hand in the civic affairs of the theocracy when David was too old and sluggish to insist on compliance with God's will. Take another example. Jehu was anointed king over Israel while Joram still sat on the throne, and he exterminated the family of Joram and the whole house of Ahab. A wholesale slaughter? Yes, to be sure. Was, then, Jehu a second Zimri, deserving the fate meted out to that rebel, as Jezebel sneeringly insinuated, 2 Kings 9:31? Was Elisha, at whose command Jehu had been anointed, a political intriguer? No. It was the Ruler of the world, the covenant God, who wanted the house of Ahab to be rooted out because of its idolatry and therefore charged Elisha through Elijah to anoint Jehu as the executor of God's will and decree, 1 Kings 19:15–17; 2 Kings 9:1–13. Three times in the latter quotation we meet with the expression "Thus saith the Lord," vv. 3, 6, 12; and after Jehu had finished his bloody work, we are told that the Lord approved his action and promised him that his children up to the fourth generation should sit on the throne of Israel, 2 Kings 10:30.

In none of these incidents were the prophets guilty of meddling in affairs which were not committed to them. They were simply doing their duty, which they, as messengers to a theocratic nation and king, were commanded to do by the Lord Himself.

V

The prophets preached the Word of God without addition or diminution.

The covenant God of Israel, who had chosen the seed of Jacob as His own peculiar people and had given them a theocratic form of government, was a holy God and therefore demanded holiness of His people in all their relations to their God and their fellowmen. This holiness was to be manifested in maintaining that high standard of social relations He had laid down in His holy Law as published by Moses. Their community life was to be a shining example to all surrounding nations, none of which had statutes and judgments as righteous as the Law set before Israel. Deut. 4:5–9. On the Jewish social order compare, *e. g.*, many of the regulations recorded in Ex. 21–23; Lev. 25; Deut. 12–15; 19–25.

The maintenance, and in many instances the reestablishment, of this divinely ordained social standard was one of the chief duties of the prophets sent to Israel by the Lord. As ambassadors of the Lord of hosts, they insisted on the carrying out in all its details of the social legislation enacted by the Lord, never once altering its ordinances, never toning down its requirements, never diminishing its far-reaching obligations. "Hate the evil and love the good," Amos 5:15, was their unvarying demand. Like God, the prophets were imbued with an intense hatred of evil; their heart glowed with fervid love of all that was good in the sight of the Lord; and, like God, they required the same hatred, the same love, from all their people, because they were to be God's people not only in name but in fact.

In scathing terms the prophets denounced the sins of their day and age. Hosea paints a lurid picture of the social conditions prevailing in his time and threatens his people with rejection and utter destruction, Hos. 4:1–11. Conditions in the day of Malachi, the last of the prophets, were not much better, and the prophet pronounces God's judgment "against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right," Mal. 3:5. Amos and Isaiah and Micah unite their protests against the grinding oppression of the poor, Amos 2:6, 7; Is. 3:13–15; Micah 3:1–4. Jeremiah joins them in denouncing the bribery and injustice at the courts, owing to the covetousness of the judges, Jer. 5:26–28. Cp. Is. 1:21–23; Amos 5:12; 6:12; Micah 2:1, 2. With like vehemence they condemn the luxuries and intemperance of princes and people, Amos 6:3–8; Is. 3:16–28; 28:1–8; the prevalent immoralities, incestuous fornication, unjust divorces, Jer. 5:7, 8; Hos. 7:4; Amos 2:7 b; Mal. 2:14–16, the lying and deception so universally practiced in every profession, Jer. 9:2–6; Hos. 10:4; Amos 5:10. Denunciation and

condemnation of existing social evils were the first steps in the effort of the prophets to reestablish the social order which God demanded of His people.

Here is a lesson for every Christian pastor and layman. It is the duty of every true Christian, and particularly of every Christian pastor, to call the congregation's attention to maladjustments of the social order within its midst wherever they are in conflict with the Word of God, and not only with human conception of an ideal social order. Christians must be told that, in permitting such conditions to exist without as much as a word of protest, they are sinning against the clear word of God, applicable to all times and circumstances, "Hate the evil and love the good," Amos 5:15. Above all, the Christians themselves in their social relations are not to become or remain guilty of any transgression of God's Holy Law. The sinfulness of such perversions of their social duties must be clearly pointed out to them. They must be threatened with the wrath and punishment of God. They must be told that persistence in such sins excludes them from the Kingdom and will lead to their excommunication from the Christian congregation, because they are reversing the will and word of God, they are loving the evil and hating the good.

The prophets were not satisfied with a merely negative denunciation and condemnation of existing social evils. Their proclamation was at the same time a constructive one, declaring very clear and well-defined principles, which were to guide their people in their social relations, and offering a very definite plan, which would enable Israel to carry them out. The principles underlying the proper social relations are briefly but quite comprehensively summarized by Micah in the well-known words "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6:8. A few decades earlier Hosea had told his hearers: "Sow to yourselves in righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you," Hos. 10:12. Justice, mercy, humility, that is the trinity of virtues which the Lord demanded of Israel, and justice, mercy, humility are the irremissible requirements on which the prophets insisted in their efforts to maintain or reestablish the ideal social order demanded by the Lord.

Just what is meant by justice Isaiah tells us in the words, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" Is. 58:6. "Take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity," Is. 58:9 b. This demand still holds good in our day.

If any one ought to be willing to practice social justice, it is the Christian, who calls himself a child of the God of justice and righteousness. In the Christian Church there should neither be found nor tolerated unscrupulous politicians who make glowing campaign promises with no intention to carry them out or even to remember them once they are elected. In the Christian Church there should neither be found nor tolerated any "putting forth of the finger," any scorning of the rights and privileges of the forgotten man, any rousing of class hatred, any inciting of the passions of the laboring class against the capitalists, the employers. Christian candidates for, or incumbents of, any civic office must be lovers of truth, justice and equity. And it is the duty of the pastor so to instruct his parishioners, as the prophets so taught their people.

The demand that every yoke be broken, Is. 58:6, means that the Christian congregation, together with its pastor, dare not tolerate any one in its midst that grinds the face of the poor, Is. 3:15, by paying starvation wages, by employing sweat-shop methods, by promising amelioration of unbearable conditions but constantly failing to carry them out. Justice, as enjoined upon His children by the Lord, demands, and the congregation must insist, that an employer be just and fair to his employee; that his factory or workshop be made as sanitary and the machinery as safe as is consistent with the nature of his business; that he pay them a living wage, so that they may properly house, feed, and clothe their family and enjoy a just and equitable measure of the conveniences and comforts of life.

God's prophets were not satisfied with demanding mere social justice. They required more. They asked for mercy, that kind and loving disposition which will, as Isaiah puts it, induce a person to deal his bread to the hungry, bring the poor that are cast out to his house, cover the naked, and not hide himself from his own flesh. Mercy goes much farther than mere justice. It is not satisfied with the mere doling out of alms, of charity. There is a charity that pains the recipient just as keenly as, and wounds him perhaps more deeply than, the pangs of poverty and hunger, a charity which impresses upon the needy one that he is at the receiving end, which humiliates instead of relieving, which is as frigid as ice and leaves the heart of its victim just as cold. That is not mercy. The merciful man will "draw out his soul," Is. 58:10. He will let his soul, his heart, his affection, go out to the hungry, the poor, the sick, and the homeless. Such mercy involves sincere sympathy with the needs of the neighbor, not only with his material and physical needs, but particularly with his spiritual trials and afflictions. Isaiah exhorts, "Satisfy the afflicted soul,"

v. 10. Not only the body but, above all, the soul needs to be satisfied, needs to be consoled and comforted and strengthened by the Bread of Life.

The prophets insist on still another requirement in the observance and maintenance of a social order pleasing to God. In close connection with the demand to do justly and to love mercy, Micah adds another requirement, "to walk humbly with thy God," Micah 6:8. Far from boasting about our accomplishments and trusting in our justice and mercy, we must humbly confess that we are and remain sinners, who, when they have done all those things which are commanded to them, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do, Luke 17:10; by the grace of God we are what we are, 1 Cor. 15:10.

The prophets did not regard their task as finished when they had laid down God's social code in its eternal principles and with all its divinely prescribed details of putting this code into practice. The Lord had conceived a plan whereby this code could be made operative, and the prophets were delegated to proclaim this plan to the people. This plan was none other than to make sanctification, the indispensable prerequisite to social justice and mercy as demanded by God, possible through justification of the sinner by the atoning blood of the promised Messiah. This Gospel-message remained an essential part of the proclamations of the prophets. The very first chapters of Isaiah with their vehement condemnation of every manner of social injustice, every form of social maladjustments, are interspersed and finally climaxed with sweetest Gospel invitations, Is. 1:18, 27; 2:1–5; 4:2–6. And this is the method adopted by every Old Testament spokesman of God. The prophets knew that this Gospel was the only means whereby a people could be called into existence that would be willing and able to comply with the high social standards set up by the God of holiness for His chosen nation. Therefore they were not satisfied with mere denunciation of social ills, with demanding justice and mercy and humility, nor even with what manner of outer social reform they might have attained. God was not satisfied with anything less than a change of heart, and a change of heart effected by faith in His Son as the promised Redeemer, and also the prophets were satisfied with nothing less. They would think of changing God's plan as little as they would think of changing God's demands. In the very center of the social order proclaimed by them as the will of God for His people stood the Woman's Seed, the Messiah, the suffering Servant, and His vicarious death, from whom radiated strength and willingness into the hearts and minds and members of the believers to live up to the demands of this

social code, constantly progressing in justice, increasing in mercy, growing in humility.

Wherever the social order as demanded by the Lord was maintained and complied with, this was due to the untiring efforts of the prophets of God and their conscientious preaching of God's Word without addition or diminution. And wherever prophets so called deviated from the Word of God or the people refused to hear and obey the faithful spokesmen of God, deterioration, disintegration of the social order, set in and increased in the same ratio that the setting aside of God's Word became the accepted fashion of the times. Once more let us recall to memory that all the social messages of the prophets of which we have taken notice so far are addressed to Israel, the theocratic nation, divinely instituted as such.

The prophets had messages also for the surrounding Gentile nations, and many of their proclamations to these nations or to individual members touched upon social questions. Consistent with their call to be spokesmen of God, they preached these messages with the same scrupulous avoidance of any addition or diminution. They left the Law of God unchanged, that Moral Law which obligates every human being to unselfish service of God and his fellow-man, that Law which God has inscribed into man's heart, this Moral Law they proclaimed just as God had given it, without omitting or altering one jot or tittle of its demands, of its threats, of its universal obligation. In language just as straightforward, just as unequivocal, as that employed against Israel they reproved and condemned unmercifully the sins and iniquities, the many transgressions and crimes against social justice and equity prevalent among these nations. Read Obadiah's scathing reproval of Edom's unnatural cruelty and inhuman hatred, and compare with this message those of Nahum against Nineveh, of Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel against the surrounding Gentile nations, and you will find that the prophets demand the same obedience to God's Law and threaten transgressors with like penalties whether they are addressing Gentiles or Jews. Neither do they offer any other remedy for these existing social maladjustments than that offered to the Jews. They demand of the one as of the other repentance, a change of heart, a change impossible to natural man, a change effected only by faith in the promised Messiah, a faith wrought by the grace and power of the Lord through His Gospel. This explains why there is not a nation to whom the prophets do not speak of the future Savior from sin. Even Obadiah, whose message comprises only 21 verses, devotes four verses to the proclamation of the deliverance to be wrought upon Mount Zion and to the announcement that saviors, men with

the message of salvation, shall judge Mount Esau, vv. 17, 19, 20, 21. (See *C. T. M.*, 1939, p. 603 f.)

Just as careful were the prophets not to add anything to the Word and will of God in their messages to the Gentile nations. They remained ever aware of the fact that the Gentile nations were not divinely constituted as theocracies. They did not, therefore, impose upon the heathen nations the whole body of laws given to the theocratic people of Israel, nor did they ever demand that the Gentiles adopt all the various rules and regulations of social life laid down for Israel in the Mosaic Law. The Sabbath law, *e. g.*, had both a religious and a social, humanitarian aspect. One of its purposes was to afford to the servants a day of rest and recreation, Deut. 5:14, 15. Yet God had never demanded the keeping of Saturday as the day of worship and rest of any Gentile nation. That was a law specifically Jewish. There is not a single instance on record that the prophets ever faulted the Gentiles for not observing Saturday as the day of their worship or that they ever demanded the introduction of Saturday or any other day as the divinely prescribed day of rest and recreation as one of the essentials in a God-pleasing social order. Since God did not demand of the Gentiles compliance with the specific Jewish laws, neither did the prophets. Instead of adding to God's Word directed to the nations beyond Israel, they were satisfied to preach this Word according to God's will and rejoiced over every success of this Word, even though the convert did not outwardly join the Jewish commonwealth nor submit to all its social requirements.

Like the Church of the Old Testament and its prophets, the New Testament Church and its pastors, as spokesmen of God, have no other message to proclaim than that which they were commissioned to preach. Jer. 23:28; Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Pet. 4:11. Within its own midst the Church must seek to establish and maintain a social code in exact conformity with God's revealed will, and from all its members it must demand strict and conscientious observance of, and obedience to, all its principles without exception. It dare not change one letter of these social precepts and principles so far as they are still valid in the New Testament. They are the unalterable Word of God to His Church, and the Church ceases to be the spokesman of God as soon as it usurps the right to substitute its own views for the Word and revelation of God. The Church must teach its members that a mere external observance of these principles will not satisfy the Lord of the Church. He demands, and the Church will insist, that it must be a conformity which flows from the heart, and not a heart as it is by nature, a heart naturally sympathetic, kind, and loving, or which has trained itself to such sympathy and kindness. The Church, like its Master, must

insist on a change of heart, on repentance and faith in the atoning blood as the indispensable requisite for a fulfilment of the social code laid down by the Lord for His Church. Since such repentance and faith can be wrought only by the divinely instituted means of grace, the Gospel and the Sacraments, the Church will regard it as its primary duty to preach this Gospel in its unadulterated purity and administer the Sacraments in strict accordance with Christ's institution. There is no other means to engender and strengthen faith, and there is no other means to establish a social order which is based on saving faith except God's own appointed means. And if the Church wants to make God's social order operative within its midst, it must preach the Word of God without addition or diminution, the Law with all its social demands, the Gospel with the fulness of grace, which enables man to put those demands into active operation.

The Church, like Israel's prophets of old, has a message for those without the pale of the Church of God. It is to be the teacher of the world also with respect to the best solution of social problems. Christ has commissioned His Church to go and teach the world to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded them, Matt. 28:20. And a very essential part of these commandments is the social code prescribed by Christ in His Word. Yet in trying to live up to this commandment of its Master, the Church must never forget that, before the world can actually live up to the requirements of this code, it must be discipled. And this discipling is possible only through the preaching of repentance and faith, and, we repeat it, such faith is engendered only through the Gospel of the atoning vicarious sacrifice of Christ, the Son of God. This Gospel must be preached to the world without diminution and without addition. Without diminishing. The Church, as the spokesman of God, and its messengers, as the mouthpieces of the Lord, dare not to be satisfied with a mere "social reform," with the introduction of man-conceived social improvements, or with the external observance of some or even all of God's social requirements. It must insist on a change of heart. It must continue to preach what God has commanded her to preach, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." It must continue to tell the world, "He that believeth not shall be damned," in spite of all social uprightness and integrity. No social gospel can save the world from sin and Satan, can possibly disciple the world or a single individual. The social gospel is not a Gospel as God conceives the term; it is not a power of God unto salvation. It must perforce be satisfied with a social code far beneath that demanded by the Lord. In order to have any hope of success, it must lower the standard of social order sufficiently to make this order and the

legislation establishing it acceptable to the community. Else there would ever be present the danger of wide-spread secret or open disregard for this particular legislation and of breeding gradually a disrespect of all law and all order. Even if the champions of the social gospel should succeed in enforcing a given social order, it would not be the Christian social order; for that requires not an enforced obedience but willing observance, and the willingness of faith, engendered by the Gospel of Christ's vicarious atonement. And since the proponents of the social gospel will not accept this atonement, their method of establishing a so-called Christian social order is one which omits the very heart and soul of God's Gospel. The preaching of such a gospel instead of the Gospel of God unto salvation would call down the curse of God upon every church and every pastor proclaiming it. Gal. 1:8, 9.

The Church must not *add* to God's social order or to His plan to make it operative. The Church must not demand that the State should introduce all those rules and regulations prescribed in the Old Testament for the maintenance of His social order in Israel or that it should establish a specifically Christian social order. That would be adding to what God demands of the State, for God did not demand that of the non-Israelite commonwealths even in the Old Testament, nor did God give to the State the administration of those means whereby alone His divinely prescribed social order can be established and maintained. The Church should not demand more than God requires.

The prophets had a message also for such members of the Jewish Church as dwelt in Gentile countries under a heathen government. Though far removed from the land of promise, from the Temple and its worship, they were still members of God's people, and God was willing to be their God and dwell in their midst. For this purpose He sent to them one of His prophets, Ezekiel, who pleaded with them to remove all idolatry out of their homes and hearts and remain loyal to the Word and will of God. Ezek. 14:1-11. Scripture names many Jews who would rather have suffered imprisonment and death than transgress God's Law, *e. g.*, Daniel and his friends, Dan. 1:3-16; 3:1-30; 6:1-28; Mordecai, Esther 3:1-15; cp. Heb. 11:33-40.

Another prophet took a very keen interest in his exiled countrymen in distant Babylon. We are told that Jeremiah wrote a letter to them, instructing them as to the proper civic and social relations in their new surroundings. Jer. 29:1-32. It is remarkable that neither Ezekiel nor Jeremiah ever so much as mentioned the building of a temple or the establishment of a more or less elaborate temple service as one of the duties of these Jews living in a Gentile country. On the contrary, Ezekiel assures them that, though they

had been cast far off among the heathen, yet God would be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they should come, Ezek. 11:15, 16. Neither do the prophets make it obligatory on these Jews to make any effort towards changing the government of Babylon into a theocracy after the model of the Jewish state or toward establishing a social order patterned after the order prescribed to Israel. They are simply told to build homes, plant gardens, marry, and give their sons and daughters in marriage, in brief, to make the land of their exile, though a Gentile country, their homeland, the native land of their children and grandchildren. They are charged to seek the peace, the welfare, of the city, politically, commercially, socially. In all their relations, as subjects or leaders, as laborers or capitalists, as neighbors or as citizens, they were to practice the eternal principles of justice, mercy, and humility. Thus they were to be shining examples of civic and social virtue to their heathen fellow-citizens. By word and example they were to endeavor to bring their heathen fellow-citizens to a saving knowledge of the God of Israel and His promised Messiah, at least to do their share towards developing and promoting a social consciousness within their community, towards raising the social standards of their fellow-men, and towards an amelioration of the general social order wherever that was possible. They were assured that in the peace of their commonwealth they would have peace. If justice, mercy, and humility, even as civic virtues, would be practiced in a community which was still preeminently pagan and would presumably remain that, they themselves would reap the benefits of that higher social order inaugurated by their example and efforts.

There is a lesson here which every Christian citizen will do well to observe. The Christian citizen as a Christian will demand of all men no more and no less than God requires in His Word concerning social relations within and without the Church. He will never forget that the social order laid down by the Lord Himself is the only social order which the Church as Church, and he as a member of that Church, must proclaim and maintain. Yet he will constantly remember that it is God's will to have this order established only within His Church and by no other body than this Church. While he will make use of every opportunity to bring Christ and all spiritual, material, and social blessings connected with the Christian religion to the unchurched, he will realize that he can never hope for a Christianized world or a Christian social order within this world. He will therefore endeavor by word and example to help in establishing and maintaining a social order of the highest possible standards within his community. To this end he will study to understand the underlying causes of social mal-

adjustments and bend every effort to the removal of these causes. If it is impossible for him to participate personally in the actual social work, he will pray that God grant His blessing and success to every civic effort in this direction. He will lend his influence toward having appropriate legislation enacted and will willingly pay his taxes and lend his moral and financial support to every civic endeavor for the creation of a social consciousness and for remedying the various social evils.

For the purpose of doing his full duty in the adjustment of the various social problems of his commonwealth the Christian citizen may join any purely civic body or club organized for the improvement of the social order. He is, however, not at liberty to join other denominations in the social work carried on by them, whether they call this association an undenominational, a non-sectarian, or an interdenominational body. This would run counter to such Scripture passages as enjoin avoidance of such as "create divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." Also in his social work the Christian must be careful neither to add to, nor diminish from, the Word of God.

VI

The prophets were loyal to their Lord, doing their duty without fear or favor.

The prophets were loyal to their Lord. They were willing to preach what God asked them to proclaim whether their message met with any visible success or not. Isaiah knew that his sweetest Gospel-message would fall upon deaf ears, that it would serve only to harden by far the great majority of his hearers, that only a small remnant would be willing to listen to him, repent, and walk in the ways of the Lord. Jeremiah had preached 23 years to a people that refused to hear him. Yet neither Isaiah nor Jeremiah nor any prophet of the Lord became disloyal to his Lord because of his lack of success, because the social order of his day deteriorated from decade to decade in spite of all his efforts at reformation. A Christian preacher should not become discouraged if his efforts in establishing a social order within his congregation or commonwealth along the lines indicated above do not at once appear successful. The non-success of his efforts should not induce him to follow the methods employed by modernistic unionistic churches and denominations. As a loyal servant of his Lord, he will keep strictly within the bounds and limits laid down in God's Word, deviating from them neither to the right nor to the left.

A preacher who will under all circumstances make God's Word the norm of all his activities, as far as they are related to the

solution of social problems also, will never be popular with the world. The prophets in spite of their insistence on the establishment of a social order of divine institution, or rather just because of this insistence, were not popular with Israel. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One," Acts 7:52. The truth of Stephen's charge is proved by the lives and experiences of practically all prophets. Cp. 1 Kings 19:1-10; Jer. 26-29; 36-38; Ezek. 2:7-9; Amos 7:10-17; Micah 2:11. Ahab very adequately expressed the general regard in which the prophets were held by the people when he told Jehoshephat, who had asked him to consult Micajah, a prophet of the Lord: "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." 1 Kings 22:8.

Strange as it may seem, this hatred directed against the prophets of the Lord was almost universal. These champions of the downtrodden and oppressed were just as unpopular with those whose rights they defended as with those whom they denounced for their violation of these rights. Princes and prophets and priests and people were unanimous in spurning the message of the prophets, in turning against the spokesmen of God, in demanding their imprisonment and death. Cp. Jer. 25:1-7; 26:7. The prophetic call to repentance was just as hateful to the oppressed as to the oppressor, to the unjust judge and the false witness and the bribing opponent, as to the victim of their intrigues. Yet the prophets remained loyal to their high calling. Though they were branded and pilloried, persecuted and imprisoned, without fear and without favor they demanded what God required: justice, mercy, humility, repentance, faith. That was their unalterable message to rich and poor, to the man in power and the man in the street.

To this day the world does not want to hear the message of Christian preachers and does not want to hear of a Christian social order based on sanctification through justification by the atoning blood of Christ. The world hates God's Law because of its insistence on holiness and perfection, and it hates even more intensely the Gospel of Christ crucified as the only means of salvation. The world is too well satisfied with its own righteousness to accept the Biblical doctrine of total depravity. Natural man thinks too highly of his own wisdom to take his reason captive under the obedience of Christ. We cannot popularize the Word of God, nor can we popularize the social order demanded by this Word. A popularized Law is no longer the Law of the holy and just God, and a popularized Gospel is no longer the Gospel of Christ, which was at all times an offense and a stumbling-block to man, and is particularly at this present time folly and foolishness to many so-called Christian churchmen and social workers.

The Church of Christ and its individual members, pastors and laymen, will be swayed from the course charted by the Master in His Word by the lack of popularity as little as by the lack of outer success. Undismayed by the ridicule and hatred of the world, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, they will go on preaching the Gospel to all nations in an endeavor to disciple them and teach them all things the Lord commanded. The Church can make no better contribution towards improvement of the social order than loyally fulfilling this commission. This Gospel will beget men and women who really have the eternal as well as the material and social welfare of their fellow-men at heart. Constrained by the love of Christ, they will do all in their power to establish and maintain within this world of sin and iniquity a social order which is not ruled exclusively by greediness and injustice. By word and example they will do their share towards aiding civic righteousness, justice and equity, and good will, mercy and charity in making their beneficial influences felt, and so help to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free. Loyalty in preaching the Gospel pure and unadulterated is loyalty to God, to the Church, to the State. T. L.

Entwürfe über die von der Synodalkonferenz angenommene Epiſtelreihe

Exaudi

2 Kor. 5, 1—10

Wie wunderbar iſt doch die Veränderung, die mit dem Menſchen bei ſeiner Bekehrung vor ſich geht! Sie iſt ſo groß, daß der Bekehrte geradezu als eine neue Kreatur bezeichnet wird. Durch den in ihm gewirkten Glauben ſteht er in einem neuen Verhältnis zu Gott. Dieſer iſt ſein lieber Vater, der ihn liebt und deſſen Liebe der Gläubige erwidert. Sein Glaube ſpiegelt ſich aber auch wider in ſeinem Wandel, das iſt, ſeinem geſamten Denken, Reden und Handeln. Dieſe Tatſache behandelt der Apoſtel in unſerm heutigen Text.

Wir Chriſten wandeln im Glauben und nicht im Schauen

Dies offenbart ſich

1. in unſerer Sehnſucht nach dem Himmel
2. in unſerm Streben, allezeit unſerm Heiland wohlgefällig zu ſein

1

Wir haben hier auf Erden keine bleibende Stadt, Hebr. 13, 14. Mit dem Tode verläßt unsere Seele den Leib, der zurückbleibt und zerfällt. Daher bezeichnet der Apostel diesen als eine „Hütte" oder genauer nach dem Grundtext als ein „Zelt", V. 1. 4. Ein Zelt ist ein leichter Bau, der wohl schnell aufgeschlagen, aber auch ebenso schnell wieder abgebrochen werden kann. Der Mensch ist vergänglich, Ps. 103, 15; 144, 4. Dem Anschein nach geht es mit dem Tode ganz zu Ende mit dem Menschen. So urteilen auch viele Weltmenschen.

Doch wir Christen bilden uns unsere Meinung über den Tod nicht nach dem äußeren Schein, nach dem, was uns vor Augen liegt; denn wir wandeln ja nicht im Schauen, sondern im Glauben. Daß unsere irdische Zeltbehausung abgebrochen wird, entmutigt und erschreckt uns gar nicht; denn unser Glaube belehrt uns, über den Tod hinauszuschauen in die Ewigkeit. Da hat, im Gegensatz zu unserm jetzigen Zelt, Gott uns einen festen Bau im Himmel errichtet. Dieses Haus ist nicht mit Händen gemacht, das heißt, vergänglich, wie alles, was von Menschenhand gefertigt wird, sondern ewig, weder dem Wechsel der Zeiten noch dem Verfall unterworfen, V. 1. Mit diesen Ausdrücken redet Paulus von unserm Auferstehungsleib, der im Himmel unsere ewige Behausung sein wird. Mit diesem herrlichen Leib werden wir überkleidet werden, sofern wir durch den Glauben mit Christo und seiner Gerechtigkeit bekleidet sind, V. 2. 3. Vgl. Gal. 3, 27; Röm. 13, 14.

Obwohl von dieser himmlischen Behausung jetzt mit irdischen Augen nichts wahrzunehmen ist, so sind wir dennoch gewiß, daß sie uns dereinst zuteil werden wird. „Wir wissen", V. 1, das heißt, wir haben die gottgewirkte Glaubensgewißheit, die niemand und nichts zum Wanken bringen kann. Es ist nicht menschliche Spekulation, die uns hier etwas vorspiegelt, sondern wir haben ein Wissen aus dem Glauben, den wir im Herzen haben und in dem wir wandeln. Grund unserer Gewißheit, daß wir in die himmlische Behausung einziehen werden, ist die Tatsache, daß Gott uns dazu bereitet hat, V. 5. Er wird seinen Zweck erreichen. Überdies hat er uns auch seinen Heiligen Geist in die Herzen gegeben als ein Pfand für die Beziehung der himmlischen Behausung, V. 5; 1 Kor. 1, 22. Wie wohlgegründet ist daher unser Wissen!

Diese Gewißheit, daß wir eine himmlische, ewige Behausung haben, bewirkt, daß wir unsere Gedanken immer mehr abwenden von unserm irdischen, gebrechlichen Zelt und unsern Glaubensblick richten auf den Himmel. Die herrlichen Vorzüge des himmlischen Hauses vor dem irdischen treten je länger, je klarer zutage. Ganz natürlich entsteht daraus eine herzliche Sehnsucht nach dem Himmel, V. 2. 4; Röm. 8, 23; Phil. 1, 23. Was wäre schöner, als so bald als möglich frei zu werden von unserer irdischen Hütte mit ihren Gebrechen und einzuziehen in den festen, ewigen Bau im Himmel, um daheim zu sein bei dem HErrn? V. 8.

2

Doch die Sehnsucht nach dem Himmel läßt uns Christen die Tatsache nicht aus den Augen verlieren, daß wir zur Zeit noch hier auf Erden unsere Tätigkeit haben, gleichsam fern von dem HErrn, V. 6, der durch seine Himmelfahrt uns seine sichtbare Gegenwart entzogen hat. Es ist durchaus nicht einerlei, was wir tun und lassen. Auch unser gegenwärtiges Leben in der Welt wird auf das tiefste davon beeinflußt, daß wir im Glauben wandeln und nicht im Schauen.

Die Weise der Welt ist es, alles Gewicht zu legen auf das, was ein Mensch äußerlich an dem andern sehen kann. Daher kommt es, daß ein Weltmensch, der ein anscheinend untadeliges Leben führt, sich dennoch nicht scheut, in heimlicher Sünde und Schande zu leben. Der Schein ist alles, worauf es ihm ankommt. Gott gegenüber, dem auch die heimlichen Vergehen bekannt sind, fühlt er keine Verpflichtungen.

Ganz anders aber steht es mit dem Christen. Er wandelt im Glauben. Er sucht nicht Menschen zu Gefallen zu leben, sondern als vor dem Angesicht Gottes, den er nicht sieht, wohl aber aus dem Glauben kennt. Seines HErrn Wohlgefallen zu allen Zeiten, jetzt und in der Ewigkeit, zu besitzen, ist Gegenstand seines eifrigen Bestrebens in seinem ganzen Lebenswandel, V. 9. Er will dem HErrn leben, Röm. 14, 8. Der durch den Glauben erleuchtete Christ weiß wohl, was sein HErr, der auch in das Verborgene schaut, von seinen Jüngern erwartet in ihrer Nachfolge, beides in ihrer Beziehung zu Gott und zu ihren Mitmenschen. Schon aus Liebe zu seinem Heiland sucht der Gläubige in seinem Wandel immer vollkommener zu werden, um sich seines HErrn Wohlgefallen zu erwerben und dessen Besitz sich zu sichern, Röm. 6, 11.

Damit aber wir Christen uns dessen recht bewußt werden, welch eine ernste Sache es ist mit unserm Streben nach dem Wohlgefallen des HErrn, und damit wir darin ja nicht nachlassen sollen, weist der Apostel in V. 10 hin auf das Jüngste Gericht. Da wird ein jeder einzelne Mensch, auch wir Christen eingeschlossen, vor dem Richterstuhl Christi Rechenschaft ablegen müssen über alles, was er in diesem Leben getan hat. Auch daran sollen wir Christen denken in unserm Lebenswandel. Wenn wir Gutes getan haben, werden wir einen unserm Wandel entsprechenden Gnadenlohn empfangen, 2 Kor. 9, 6; 1 Kor. 3, 8. 14 f. Wer aber Böses getan und dadurch seinen Christenstand verleugnet hat, verliert damit sein Anrecht auf das himmlische Erbe, selbst wenn er äußerlich mit zu der Zahl der Jünger JEsu gerechnet wurde, Röm. 2, 6 ff.; Matth. 7, 21. Welch schreckliche Möglichkeit!

Wie ernstlich sollen wir daher auf unsern Lebenswandel achthaben und den HErrn inbrünstig anflehen, uns Schwachen seine Kraft zu verleihen, daß unser Glaube erstarke und wir immer völliger werden in unserm Wandel, so daß sein Wohlgefallen auf uns ruht hier in der Zeit und dort in Ewigkeit! G. V. Schick

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Pfingstfest

1 Kor. 2, 6—16

Christi Verheißung: Joh. 14, 5—15. Am Pfingstfest erfüllt. Die Gabe des Heiligen Geistes unbedingt notwendig; denn ohne sein Werk kann uns das Werk des Vaters und des Sohnes nichts nützen. Pfingsten ein wichtiges und ein seliges Fest.

Der Heilige Geist unser einziger Lehrmeister der himmlischen Weisheit

1. Nur er kann sie ergründen.

A. Die Tiefe der göttlichen Weisheit. a. Kein Mensch kann sie ergründen. aa. Wohl brüsten sich die Menschen mit ihrer Weisheit, V. 6b. 12a. „Weisheit" oder „Geist der Welt" bleibt sich in jedem Zeitalter wesentlich gleich, i. e., Werkgerechtigkeit. Verschiedene Formen der Weltweisheit: griechische Philosophie, z. B. Ethik des Aristoteles, Stoizismus; Scholastik der römischen Kirche; Rationalismus in der reformierten Kirche; Modernismus, der den Menschen vergöttlichen will und auf dem Wege einer seichten Moral sein ewiges Glück sucht; Werkgerechtigkeit der Logen. bb. So wunderbar diese Weisheit auch klingen mag, sie vergeht. Ja, sie reißt den Menschen ins Verderben, *katargoumenoi*, Part. Präs.; sie befinden sich jetzt in dem Zustand der Vernichtung. Jeder Weisheitsspruch, so gelehrt er auch scheinen mag, ist nur ein weiterer Schritt zum Verderben. Was für eine Weisheit!?

b. Die göttliche Weisheit übersteigt alles menschliche Denken. aa. Vor Grundlegung der Welt verordnet, V. 7. Ehe überhaupt ein Mensch denken konnte, war diese Weisheit fertig. Von Ewigkeit und darum keiner Wandlung unterworfen wie alle menschlichen Theorien. — Weit über die Vernunft, V. 9. Sie kann nicht mit den menschlichen Fassungsorganen, Auge, Ohr, Herz (Sinn), erfaßt werden. In V. 8 zeigt es sich, daß sie für den natürlichen Menschen eine verborgene und unfaßbare Weisheit ist. (Vgl. A. V., "mystery".) Daran stößt sich unser alter Adam. Seine eigene Weisheit scheint ihm doch viel tiefer und vernünftiger. bb. Der Inhalt, V. 7b. 9b. Der ganze Heilsplan. Welch ein Geheimnis ist die Menschwerdung! 1 Tim. 3, 16. Die Liebe Gottes, die Luther mit einem Feuerofen vergleicht, *Trigl.*, 694, 63; vgl. auch 712, 55, und St. Louis, IX, 1682. Und schließlich das herrliche Ziel, unsere Seligkeit, Röm. 11, 33; Jes. 40, 28.

B. Alles dies kann nur der Heilige Geist ergründen. a. V. 10b. *Panta*, schlechthin alles. Gottes Wesen, das unendliche Geheimnis unserer Erlösung usw., erforscht und ergründet er. b. Nur er; denn er ist wahrer Gott. Wie nur ein Mensch die Gedanken seines Herzens weiß, so kann auch nur Gott sich selbst ergründen. Die dritte Person in der Gottheit. Jes. 40, 13. 14; 11, 2.

2. Nur er kann sie uns offenbaren.

A. Weil er sie ergründet hat, darum kann er allein sie auch offenbaren. Das tut er durch die Apostel. Das wiederkehrende „wir" be-

zieht sich auf die Apostel. a. Sie sind nur Mundstück. *Lalein* unterscheidet sich in Bedeutung von *legein* und *eipein;* vgl. das deutsche lallen. Matth. 12, 34. Der Apostel Rede ist nicht ihre Weisheit. Sie reden, was der Heilige Geist sie gelehrt hat, V. 6a. 10a. Das muß ein Pastor auch heute sagen. Das kann er sagen; denn b. V. 12. 13. Die Apostel haben die ihnen vom Heiligen Geist geoffenbarte Weisheit durch Inspiration uns aufgezeichnet. Der Heilige Geist offenbart nicht nur die Weisheit, sondern auch die Worte. Die Sachen, die wir verkündigen, tragen wir in Worten vor; also Verbalinspiration. c. Der Heilige Geist muß seine Worte auch erklären. Er selbst liefert den Kommentar und das nötige Lexikon, V. 13b. Die biblischen Worte Gnade, Rechtfertigung, Glaube usw. kommen auch in dem Wortschatz der Weltweisen vor. Aber sie bleiben dunkel und unverständlich, bis der Heilige Geist ihren rechten Sinn offenbart. Darum verbinden (*sugkrinein*) wir die hohen geistlichen Sachen mit geistlichen, vom Heiligen Geist gelehrten Worten. Durch die Worte der Schrift offenbart er uns Gottes Weisheit, 2 Tim. 3, 16; 1 Petr. 1, 11; 2 Petr. 1, 16. 21.

B. Wir erkennen und erfassen die himmlische Weisheit, V. 6. a. Alle Christen (die Vollkommenen im Gegensatz zu den Ungläubigen) sind vom Heiligen Geist gelehrt. Ihr verfinsterter Verstand, V. 14, ist nun erleuchtet, 2 Kor. 4, 6. Ohne diese Erleuchtung nimmt der Mensch eine feindliche Stellung gegen Christum ein, V. 8. Er kann und will Gottes Weisheit nicht erkennen. Aber, Gott sei Dank, V. 12. b. Nun können wir auch der Welt Weisheit recht beurteilen, V. 15. 16.

Welch ein herrliches Fest ist Pfingsten! Nun können wir einen Blick in das Geheimnis werfen, das kein natürliches Herz erkannt, das die Engel gelüstet zu schauen, das nur der Geist Gottes erforscht hat. Ja, dies Geheimnis können wir nun zum Teil fassen, dürfen es von ganzem Herzen glauben und uns dessen freuen, bis wir ewig Pfingsten feiern und das Geheimnis schauen und von einer Klarheit zur andern gehen. Amen.

F. E. Mayer

Pfingstmontag

Apost. 2, 33—42

Pfingsten ist das Fest des Heiligen Geistes, des Geistes, der allein die Tiefen der Gottheit erforscht und die seligmachende göttliche Wahrheit lehren kann, die der natürliche Mensch nicht vernimmt (Epistel für den 1. Pfingsttag); der nach der Verheißung des HErrn nach seinem Hingang zum Vater kommen sollte, um als der Tröster und der Geist der Wahrheit an den Menschen zu wirken. Die Zeit seines besonderen Wirkens begann mit dem ersten Pfingstfest. Wohl gab er damals, wie überhaupt in der ersten Christenheit, besondere Gaben und Kräfte; aber schon die Geschichte des ersten Pfingstfestes, deren Schluß unser Text ist, zeigt uns, worin recht eigentlich sein Werk besteht, das Werk, das er noch heute ausführt. Gegenstand unserer Betrachtung sei also,

Wie sich der Pfingstgeist wirksam erweist

1. Er macht die Gläubigen zu Zeugen JEsu
2. Er wirkt in den Sündern rechtschaffene Buße
3. Er erhält die Seinen im rechten Glauben

1

In seinen Abschiedsreden, Joh. 14—16, verheißt der HErr seinen Jüngern den Tröster und redet von dessen Wirken unter den Menschen. Nach Joh. 15, 26. 27 soll der Tröster von JEsu zeugen, und dann sollen auch seine Jünger von ihm zeugen.

Gleich am ersten Pfingstfest sehen wir den Heiligen Geist sein herrliches Werk beginnen, V. 4. Die Apostel verkündigten die großen Taten Gottes, V. 11. Dann trat Petrus auf und hielt eine Predigt, deren Schluß sich V. 33—36 findet und die in V. 36 ihren Höhepunkt findet. Ein klareres Zeugnis von JEsu, vor allem von seinem Heilandsamt, kann es nicht geben. Das war das Zeugnis, das sie von nun an allezeit und überall ablegten: 4, 12. JEsus, der Gekreuzigte und Auferstandene, der Heiland aller Sünder, war die Botschaft, die sie der sündigen Menschheit überall brachten.

Trotz allen Gefahren verkündigten sie JEsum mit großer Freudigkeit, 4, 13. Woher hatten die noch vor kurzem so ängstlichen Jünger diese Kühnheit? Das zeigten sie 4, 32 an. Der Heilige Geist hatte sie zu JEsu Zeugen gemacht; darum sagten sie: 4, 20.

Dieser Geist ist auch heute noch wirksam. Er ruft allen Gläubigen zu: 1 Petr. 2, 9. Auch wir sollen JEsu Zeugen sein. Die Welt braucht heute den Heiland geradeso sehr wie zur Zeit der Apostel. Gebe Gott, daß unser Zeugnis nicht ein bloßes Moralisieren nach Art der Sekten und Logen sei! Sind wir zu furchtsam? Bedenken wir: Luk. 11, 13. Ficht es uns an, daß wir zu ungelehrt sind? Hören wir Apost. 4, 13. Mit Gottes Hilfe wird man es auch uns anmerken, daß wir mit JEsu gewesen sind. Lied 180, 7.

2

JEsus sendet den Tröster. Sein Amt beschreibt der HErr Joh. 16, 8—11. Dies wird er an der Welt tun, an denen, die noch in ihren Sünden leben. Er wird in ihnen rechtschaffene Buße wirken, die heilsame Sündenerkenntnis und den seligmachenden Glauben.

Diese Wirkung sehen wir in unserm Text, V. 37. Diesen Leuten stand ihre Sünde jetzt bergehoch vor Augen, alle ihre Gerechtigkeit erkannten sie jetzt als nichtig, und mit bangem Herzen fragten sie: „Was sollen wir tun?" Petrus zeigt ihnen den einzigen Weg zur Seligkeit und lockt und reizt sie, Gottes gnädige Verheißung anzunehmen, V. 38—40. Und diese Predigt wirkte in ihnen; der Geist schenkte ihnen den Glauben, der sie auch willig machte, sich taufen zu lassen.

Die Zuhörer bei dieser Predigt waren nicht Heiden, sondern Juden; auch die aus fremden Ländern beim Feste Anwesenden hatten offenbar

schon von JEsu gehört. Manche mögen wohl auch früher JEsu Predigten gehört, ihn auch zeitweilig, wie so manche in Jerusalem, für Christum gehalten haben, Joh. 7, 41. Aber dann hatten sie sich von ihm abgewandt und in das „Kreuzige!" eingestimmt. Jetzt aber läßt der Heilige Geist sie wieder einladen und bringt viele zur Buße.

Sollten sich vielleicht unter uns ähnliche Leute finden? Habt ihr vielleicht euch von eurem Heiland abgewandt, aus Weltliebe oder Menschenfurcht den Glauben verleugnet? Derselbe Geist, der damals 3,000 zur Buße brachte, redet heute zu euch und ruft euch zu: Tut Buße! Laßt doch diese Ermahnung nicht umsonst verhallen! — Bist du in Gefahr abzufallen? Schlage in dich und kehre um, damit du nicht verlorengehst!

3

Das Werk des Geistes hört nicht damit auf, daß er die Menschen zum Glauben bringt. Der HErr sagt vielmehr: Joh. 14, 26; 16, 13 bis 15. Die Erfüllung zeigt sich in unserm Text, 41b. 42. Durch Wort und Sakrament stärkt er den Glauben und vertieft die Erkenntnis. In der brüderlichen Gemeinschaft stärkt einer dem andern den Glauben, Luk. 22, 32. Im Gebet vereint, erflehen sie sich Gottes Gaben, Schutz und Beistand, und der Geist hilft dabei ihrer Schwachheit auf, Röm. 8, 26.

In ähnlicher Weise will der Geist auch unter uns wirken. Auch er treibt uns dazu an, daß V. 42 unter uns wahr werde und wahr bleibe. Gebe Gott, daß wir darin den Weg erkennen, auf dem uns Gott zum Himmel führen will!

Bitten wir daher: Lied 134, 3. Paul F. Köhneke

Trinitatissonntag

1 Petr. 1, 1—9

Der Glaube an den dreieinigen Gott ist zur Seligkeit notwendig, und zwar lebendiger Glaube, nicht eine bloße Kopferkenntnis von der Trinität. Petrus lehrt die Dreieinigkeit. Drei Personen, unterschieden nach außen V. 2, nach innen V. 3a. Die göttlichen Handlungen kommen jeder Person ganz zu. Die Wiedergeburt wird V. 3 dem Vater zugeschrieben. Una numero actio. (Pieper, Chr. Dogm., I, 471.) Viel rühmt Petrus von der Gnade des Dreieinigen. Dieser Gnade sollen die auserwählten, zerstreuten Fremdlinge sich trösten, diese Gnade preisen. Das wollen wir heute auch tun.

Wir loben und preisen die Gnade des dreieinigen Gottes

1. Aus seiner Gnade sind wir Christen geworden
2. Aus seiner Gnade ist uns die Seligkeit gewiß

1

„Petrus ein Apostel JEsu Christi." Die rechte Gotteserkenntnis fängt mit Christo an, Joh. 17, 3. Er, der wesensgleiche Gottessohn, hat sein Blut für uns vergossen, V. 2; 1 Joh. 1, 7b. Er ist auferstanden,

V. 3, und hat uns dadurch die Erlösung durch sein Blut, die Vergebung der Sünden, versiegelt. Wir konnten uns nicht selber erlösen mit unsern Werken, waren infolge der Erbsünde auch nicht eines einzigen guten Werkes fähig. Er hat alles für uns vollbracht, nicht etwa nur das meiste, so daß mindestens etwas von uns geleistet werden könnte oder müßte. Nein, alle Ehre gebührt ihm allein. Auch der Glaube rechtfertigt nicht als gutes Werk, sondern lediglich instrumental, sofern er das Heil in Christo ergreift.

Woher haben wir diesen Glauben? Nicht aus uns selber. Was wüßten wir von der stellvertretenden Genugtuung ohne Offenbarung des Heiligen Geistes? 1 Kor. 2, 7 ff. Er hat die blinden Augen aufgetan, die geistlich Toten lebendig, die Feinde zu Freunden, die Widerstrebenden zu Willigen gemacht. Der Apostel lobt den Vater ob der Wiedergeburt; denn er hat Christum auferweckt und somit die ganze Welt absolviert, für gerecht erklärt. Er redet aber auch von der Heiligung des Geistes, die wesentlich darin besteht, daß er uns durch das Evangelium gläubig macht und uns so mit Christi Blut besprengt, Ps. 51, 9.

Das ist Ausführung der Versehung oder Wahl des Vaters, V. 2. Demgemäß hat der Heilige Geist die vom Vater sich Ersehenen in der Zeit geheiligt, das heißt, zum Glauben an das Evangelium gebracht und zugleich ihnen ein neues Herz gegeben und Kraft, siegreich gegen die Sünde zu kämpfen und in guten Werken zu wandeln, Eph. 1, 3—6; Röm. 8, 28—30.

Die ewige Wahl und Versehung Gottes bestätigt gewaltig die sola gratia. Denn die Wahl ist nicht intuitu fidei geschehen, so daß der Glaube oder irgend etwas im Menschen Ursache derselben gewesen wäre. Nicht ist die Wahl Folge des Glaubens, sondern der Glaube Ausfluß und Folge der Wahl. Der Apostel erinnert die Christen nicht nur an ihren gegenwärtigen Gnadenstand, sondern richtet ihren Blick auch rückwärts in die Zeit vor aller Zeit, da ihnen Gott schon zugedacht hatte, was er nun Großes an ihnen tat. Da erkennen wir um so deutlicher: Eph. 2, 8. 9; 1 Kor. 4, 7. Über den Reichtum und die Tiefe solcher Gnade staunend, loben wir Gott den Vater, Sohn und Heiligen Geist und preisen ihn von nun an bis in Ewigkeit.

2

Die Wahl zum Glauben ist auch Wahl zur Seligkeit. Wer glaubt, wird selig. Die Verordnung zur Kindschaft ist eo ipso Verordnung zur Erbschaft. Kinder sind Erben. Wie vollkommen ist doch dies unser Erbe! Wie begehrenswert für die Fremdlinge auf ihrer Wanderschaft durch diese Welt, die mit ihrer Lust vergeht, in der alles eitel und mit Sünden befleckt ist und wo es keinen ungetrübten Genuß, keine ungemischte Freude gibt! Es ist ein unvergängliches, unbeflecktes, unverwelkliches Erbe. Die Seligkeit ist das Ziel der christlichen Pilger.

Sie ist bereit, daß sie offenbar werde in der letzten Zeit, V. 5, am Tage der Offenbarung, V. 7. Da wird ihnen statt Schimpf und Schmach Lob, Preis und Ehre zuteil, V. 7b. Da werden sie vor Freude jauchzen, Ps. 126, 1. 2, unaussprechliche und verklärte Freude haben, die im Schauen Christi begründet ist, V. 8; 1 Joh. 3, 2.

Aber werden wir das Ziel auch erreichen, des Glaubens Ende davontragen? So müssen wir besorgt fragen, wenn wir auf unsere Schwachheit, auf die Feinde und die Gefahren sehen. Doch siehe, auch in dieser Hinsicht hat uns Gott schon von Ewigkeit versorgt. Er hat uns zu diesem Erbe, zum Besitz solcher Seligkeit, prädestiniert. Wer darum an den Erlöser glaubt und auf dem Wege der Heiligung wandelt, diese Kennzeichen der Erwählten hat, der kann daran erkennen, daß auch ihm jenes wunderliebliche Erbe und jene unaussprechliche, herrliche und ewige Freude bevorsteht, und zwar gewiß, Röm. 11, 29; Matth. 24, 24. Lied 355, 5.

Wie das Erbe für die erwählten Fremdlinge bewahrt wird, so werden auch sie für das Erbe bewahrt, V. 5. Auch die Prüfungen verhindern sie am Seligwerden nicht, müssen ihnen vielmehr dazu helfen. Die Erprobung des Glaubens dient zur Läuterung desselben, so daß er am Tage der Offenbarung erfunden wird „zu Lobe, Preis und Ehren". „Das Gold ist ein vergänglich Ding. Der Glaube ist viel köstlicher, hat unvergänglichen Wert, indem er uns vor Gott gerecht und selig macht. ... Und wie nun das Gold, obgleich es ein vergänglich Ding ist, dennoch um seines relativen Wertes willen dem Feuer behufs Schmelzung unterworfen wird, so unser Glaube dem Feuer der Trübsal." (Stöckhardt, 1. Petribrief, S. 36.)

Leider danken wir unserm Gott noch allzuwenig mit Herzen, Mund und Händen. Der himmlische Sinn sollte in uns noch viel ausgeprägter sein. Über den Trübsalen dieser Zeit verlieren wir leicht die künftige Herrlichkeit aus den Augen. Zweifel und andere Sünden wollen uns das himmlische Erbe ungewiß machen. Der Heilige Geist stärke uns im Glauben an JEsum Christum und lasse uns an diesem Glauben unsere Erwählung zur Seligkeit erkennen! So werden wir auch aus solcher Heilsgewißheit heraus mit herzlicher Freude und innigem Dank die heilige Dreieinigkeit loben und preisen. Lied 346, 3.

Paul G. Birkmann

Erster Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Röm. 8, 1—11

Der Apostel Paulus hatte Röm. 7 den großen Kampf des inneren und äußeren Menschen beschrieben. Er hatte erfahren, daß ein ander Gesetz in seinen Gliedern dem Gesetz in seinem Gemüte widerstritt, V. 23. In großer Seelenangst rief er aus: V. 24. Die Heiligung war noch so unvollkommen. Nur in Christo fand er rechten Trost, V. 25.

Welchen Troft haben wir Chriften, wenn unfere Schwachheitsfünden uns quälen?

1. Gott hat die Sünde ſchon im Fleiſch verurteilt
2. Durch Gottes Geiſt ſind wir geiſtlich geſinnt
3. Die noch anklebenden Schwachheitsſünden verdammen uns nicht

1

V. 2. Das Geſetz des Geiſtes, des Geiſtes Gottes. Das Geſetz der Sünde = die Sünde. Der Heilige Geiſt hat uns in Chriſto JEſu lebendig gemacht, uns das Leben in Chriſto JEſu vermittelt. In uns regiert nicht mehr die Sünde, ſondern der Geiſt.

V. 3. Das Geſetz konnte es nicht in uns erreichen, daß wir Gott dienten. Von Natur liegt der Menſch ganz unter der Macht der Sünde. Gott aber ſandte ſeinen Sohn ins Fleiſch, unſer Fleiſch, um uns von der Sünde, nicht nur von der Schuld und der Strafe der Sünde, ſondern auch von der Macht der Sünde, zu befreien. Somit hat die Sünde die Herrſchaft über uns verloren. Dieſe Erlöſung und Befreiung iſt in Chriſto allen Gläubigen vermittelt. Auch die Macht der Sünde hat Gott in Chriſto verurteilt. Sie kann nun nicht mehr über uns herrſchen. Jetzt können wir Gott dienen.

2

„Die wir nicht nach dem Fleiſch wandeln, ſondern nach dem Geiſt." Dieſe und die darauffolgenden Worte reden von dem großen Gegenſatz zwiſchen Fleiſch und Geiſt. Geſetzeserfüllung iſt unmöglich bei ſolchen, die nach dem Fleiſch wandeln. Deren ganzes Beſtreben, Sinn und Wille iſt auf die Sünde gerichtet. Solche Leute ſind Gott bitter feind, V. 7. Wenn Gott etwas im Geſetz fordert, ſo werden ſie ganz empört und ſträuben ſich dagegen. Sie können und wollen nicht nach Gottes Geſetz wandeln, V. 7. Daher kann Gott auch an keinen Werken ſolcher Leute Gefallen haben, V. 8.

Ganz anders verhält es ſich mit denen, die nach dem Geiſt wandeln. Ihr ganzes Sinnen und Trachten iſt auf das Geiſtliche, das Gottwohlgefällige, gerichtet. Gottes Geiſt wohnt in ihnen, V. 9. Chriſtus iſt in ihnen, V. 10. Natürlich redet der Apoſtel von wahren Chriſten. Wer Chriſti Geiſt nicht hat, heuchelt nur und iſt nicht ſein, V. 9. Bei wahren Chriſten iſt nach dem neuen Menſchen der Leib tot um der Sünde willen; der Geiſt aber iſt Leben um der Gerechtigkeit willen, V. 10. Vgl.: „durch die Taufe begraben in den Tod", Röm. 6, 4.

Bei ſolchen Chriſten wird nun, wenn auch noch in aller Schwachheit, die Erfüllung des Geſetzes, die Gott fordert und erwartet, erreicht. Ihr Sinn und Wollen iſt auf Erfüllung des Geſetzes gerichtet. Dieſen Sinn hat der Geiſt Gottes in ihr Herz gepflanzt, indem er ſie in Chriſto lebendig gemacht hat. Nur ſo, keineswegs durch das Geſetz, konnte die Erfüllung des Geſetzes überhaupt möglich gemacht werden.

3

Wenn aber doch die noch immer mit unterlaufenden Sünden uns Not machen wie dem Paulus, sollen wir, die wir in Christo JEsu sind und nach dem Geist wandeln, V. 1. 4, wissen, daß Gott uns beurteilt nach dem neuen Menschen, nach dem Wandel in Christo JEsu. „Das erneute Ich des Christen gilt vor Gott als das eigentliche Ich" (Stöckhardt).

Ferner sollen wir zu unserm Trost bedenken, daß Gott, V. 1, uns versichert, daß nun nichts Verdammliches an denen ist, die in Christo JEsu sind. Hier redet er von dem Wandel der Christen, V. 1b. Freilich werden Christen auch ihre Schwachheitssünden Gott im Gebet vortragen und um Vergebung bitten (fünfte Bitte), aber zu ihrem Trost und ihrer Ermunterung gilt auch dies, daß Gott uns nach dem neuen Menschen beurteilt, nicht nach dem alten Menschen und uns daher nicht anrechnet, was unser Fleisch noch Übels tut.

V. 11. JEsus, der um unserer Sünden willen gestorben ist, ist wieder auferweckt. Auch unsere sterblichen Leiber sollen auferweckt werden. Dann werden wir in aller Vollkommenheit unserm Gott dienen.

J. W. Behnken

Miscellanea

Our Arguments for Lutheran Parish-Schools

We have had our Lutheran parish-schools with us for a full century now, since it is a historical fact that the Saxon immigrants established schools for their children both in St. Louis and in Perry County immediately after their arrival in this country, in fact, before most of them had their own homes. In many congregations that were established with the ideals of Dr. Walther in mind, especially in his classic *Die rechte Gestalt einer vom Staat unabhaengigen Ortsgemeinde*, the Christian school was erected next to the church-building, often even before the latter was planned, because it was considered self-evident that the children should receive an adequate training in the Christian doctrine and in Christian conduct.

Times and conditions have changed, especially in the last generation, and perhaps the members of our congregations have changed with them. In some sections of our Church the existence and maintenance of Lutheran parish-schools are still considered self-evident. Social and economic conditions have changed; standards of public schools have been raised; the German language, which, even four decades ago, was regarded as a prime reason for maintaining church-schools, has been largely superseded by English; the size of families has been reduced, and childless homes are increasing in number. These and other factors have definitely influenced attitudes, changed viewpoints, and — had a decidedly detrimental effect upon the parish-school system of our Church.

With this situation staring us in the face, we have been put on the defensive; for, instead of having parents and entire congregations requesting Christian schools, we have found both to have grown indifferent, in many cases even hostile, to regular, full-time schools under the auspices of the local congregation or of a group of congregations. Our stand in behalf of Lutheran parish-schools has been neutralized, if not vitiated, by pressure brought to bear, from without and within, urging that we must compete in every way, in curriculum and course of study, in buildings and equipment, in procedures and methods, with the State schools. The public schools, by the mere fact of their being State-supported, set the standards, and often State authorities made it a point to foist and force these standards on Lutheran parish-schools. In not a few States all schools, whether public or private, are directly or indirectly under the supervision of the State, either by open legislation or by regulations drawn up by the State Department of Education, sometimes under an arbitrary interpretation of some provision in the laws of the State. The veiled and often even the open challenge has been made that Lutheran parish-schools are un-American because they do not operate under the complete control of the State. These considerations frequently made a deep impression on people who were not properly imbued with Scriptural ideals in the education of their children. Many of them make invidious comparisons between the imposing struc-

tures of the State schools and the comparatively insignificant buildings in which many of the Lutheran schools are housed.

This negative attitude was further strengthened by arguments which frequently had a great show of validity. In a great many cases the cost of the parish-schools is the chief deterrent. All citizens, as a matter of course, pay taxes for the support of the State schools, and the proportion of these taxes, as they are intended for the schools, includes the major part of the sum paid over the counter at the county court-house or in the city hall. If Christian parish-schools are established and maintained, this means that much of an additional expenditure, an extra burden laid upon the shoulders of the tax-payer who is a Lutheran. If a congregation happens to be located in a part of a city where only the best of everything is found in the schools, its members will frequently demand buildings and equipment which will at least compare favorably with those of the State schools. When the cost of erecting and maintaining a Lutheran parish-school rises to fifty, hundred, and even a hundred and fifty and more dollars a child per year, the load cannot be assumed by the congregation. This argument is quite often supported by a complaint associated with that of inferior equipment, resulting in the inefficiency of parish-schools as compared with State schools. Since the course of study in the Lutheran schools quite frequently is not so elaborate and comprehensive as that of the State schools, especially as to certain externals, frills, and fancies which are sometimes fostered by the State schools, the charge is made, whether justly or unjustly, that the parish-schools do not accomplish as much as the schools which are acknowledged, by common consent, as the standard schools of a city or a community.

One of the supposedly weightiest arguments which was often used in favor of parish-schools was that taken from the pedagogical classics of Luther, especially his treatise *To the Mayors and Aldermen of All the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools*, of 1524, as well as his earlier writing, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation with Regard to the Amelioration of the Christian Station*. The mistake in the argument was made in using the logic of Luther, which pertained to Christian *state* schools, to apply to Lutheran *parish*-schools. As we shall see, the points made by Luther can be utilized to this day, but not in the form in which the alleged proof was ordinarily offered. Luther was handicapped by the fact that he could not yet, as he complains, establish congregations independent of the state and was therefore compelled to have recourse to *Notbischoefe*, that is, the rulers of the various German principalities, who were the patrons of the schools. The reference to Luther as the great champion of Christian parish-schools was misleading, to say the least.

To continue in this same strain of frankness, there were other flaws in the arguments which were frequently advanced. Thus the issue was often clouded by the assertion that it was contrary to Holy Scripture to call women teachers for elementary parish-schools, a contention which is not supported by the Bible, especially not by 1 Cor. 14:34 and 1 Tim. 2:12, since these passages speak of teaching publicly, "in the congregations," but not of teaching children of elementary school age. Here the

casual way in which the Lutheran Confessions and also Luther refer to the teaching of women has the background of usage in the times of the New Testament. We ought to be frank enough and honest enough to drop arguments which prove nothing and to discontinue the use of weapons which may prove to be boomerangs.

For we have sufficiently weighty arguments for the establishment of various agencies and institutions intended for the education and training of the young, specifically such as may be applied to Lutheran parish-schools. But we keep in mind that these arguments will have force only in the measure in which we acknowledge that the Bible does not command any particular agency or institution. We find there suggestions, rules, principles, but no precepts or ordinances specifying agencies or schools for the instruction of the young. Pedagogical maxims will be found by the score, and their value and weight in our argumentation are very apparent. Likewise the Lord lays down aims and objectives for us to keep in mind, and He directs the attention of those who have children in charge to these demands. Yet He does not say: These aims may be attained only by this or that specific agency. The *manner* in which those who are in charge of children will carry out His will is not prescribed but left to the freedom of parents and others whose motivation in life is the love of Christ.

One fact stands out clearly from the outset, namely, that the Lord holds parents responsible for the rearing of their children in the fear of God. That this was true in the Old Testament appears not only from the implications of the Fourth Commandment and from passages like Deut. 6:6, 7, but also from the manner in which parents were held responsible for the actions of their children and realized this obligation. The examples of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of David, of Eli, and others present the situation both from the positive and from the negative angle. And the same responsibility rests upon parents according to the New Testament, as Eph. 6:4; 1 Thess. 2:11; Heb. 12:7; Luke 2:48–52, and many other passages show. In this connection Luther's exposition of the Fourth Commandment in his Large Catechism may well be consulted, especially the last paragraphs, where he summarizes some of his arguments and finally concludes: "Let every one know, therefore, that it is his duty, on peril of losing the divine favor, to bring up his children above all things in the fear and knowledge of God and, if they are talented, have them learn and study something that they may be employed for whatever need there is." (*Conc. Trigl.*, 629 f.) This responsibility which God has laid upon parents cannot be stressed too strongly and too frequently, especially in our days, when so many counter-currents tend to drive the vessel of this obligation from its course. This point is fundamental in our entire argument in behalf of adequate Christian indoctrination and training and should therefore run through all our efforts like a golden thread.

At this point some one might well interpose the argument: If God has laid the responsibility for the Christian rearing of the children upon the parents, why speak of agencies and institutions for religious education established by Christian congregations? This objection may sound plausible enough, at first blush, but we shall see that it does not possess

the cogency and validity which its proponents want it to carry. For there are some weighty considerations in favor of cooperation in matters of Christian education.

The first of these considerations is chiefly historical. For while the Lord, even in the Old Testament, as we have seen, placed the first and foremost responsibility for the rearing of children on the respective parents, He nevertheless addressed Himself to the entire congregation, to Israel as a nation, when He uttered the words recorded in Deut. 6:6, 7. Under theocratic conditions the congregation of the Lord and the state were identical, and the congregation, acting also as the state, was in charge of the rearing of the children and of their conduct in keeping with the Moral Law, the Ceremonial Law, and all other ordinances and precepts of the Lord. This fact explains the punishment of the Sabbath-breaker, Num. 15:32–36, and of the blasphemer, Lev. 24:10–14, but also the evident feeling of responsibility on the part of pious rulers to have the people taught in the Law of the Lord, as we learn from 2 Chron. 17:7–9 and 30:1 ff. God wanted the entire nation, as the people of His choice, to feel the responsibility for all its members, both in the matter of learning the Law and of keeping its precepts and ordinances. We shall do well to remember this historical fact and apply its lessons to the extent in which they emphasize the fact of mutual responsibility.

In the New Testament there is no theocracy, and hence we have no ordinances and precepts of the Lord which place the responsibility for the upbringing of children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord directly on any congregation or on any agency established by a congregation. We have no word of the Lord commanding us to establish and maintain a parish-school or a Sunday-school or a summer-school, or an institute of whatever kind; nor has God prescribed a course of study in religion and religious training that includes so much memory work (Catechism, proof-texts, hymns, etc.). This He has left to the wisdom and the freedom of the Christians and of the Christian congregations.

And yet the Lord has laid down some very important principles for the rearing of children, which concern not only the parents but the entire congregation as well. For one thing, it is evident that those who are baptized into the name of Christ, while essentially and primarily being made members of the body of Christ, of the *una sancta*, thereby are also added to the roster of members whose names are listed in the church-book. Evidence for this is found in Acts 2:41, where we read: "They that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The same truth is apparent from Acts 10:48; 1 Cor. 1:13–16, and other passages. And that children were included in the membership of the corporate body of the congregations may be inferred from Acts 2:39; Col. 2:11, 12 and the other *loci* commonly adduced to prove the necessity of pedo-baptism. And here it should be noted at once that membership in any organization implies a reciprocal relationship, cooperation, mutual responsibility. If a person, young or old, is a fellow-member with me in the body known as the local Christian congregation, then his qualifi-

cations for such membership and the exercise of his duties as member are matters of my concern.

This argument bears even greater weight when we consider that the Lord has clearly set forth the conditions and obligations of adult membership in the Christian congregation, especially with regard to the great privilege of partaking of the Holy Supper. A notable passage concerning the Lord's demands for adult membership is found in Heb. 5:12 to 6:2, where the holy writer specifically states that he expects Christians to go beyond the principles, the first steps in the knowledge of Scripture truths and doctrines, and to go on to perfection. A similar thought is presented by the Apostle Paul in his Letter to the Ephesians, where he urges his readers to "grow up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ," 4:14, 15. Cp. also 1 Cor. 3. The Lord expects the members of a Christian congregation to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear," 1 Pet. 3:15, to be able to "try the spirits whether they are of God," 1 John 4:1, and "earnestly to contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," Jude 3.

To these general qualifications for adult membership we must add those which are specifically connected with the privilege of receiving the Lord's Supper, as given particularly in 1 Cor. 11:26–32. The conditions laid down in this passage by the apostle, "examine oneself," "eating and drinking unworthily," "not discerning the Lord's body," "judge ourselves," and others, indicate that those who are admitted to the Sacrament must be familiar with the doctrines of sin and grace, of the substitutionary atonement, the nature of faith, the requirements of true sanctification, the elements in the Lord's Supper, the Real Presence, and others. Without at least some measure of understanding of these Biblical truths one can hardly partake of the Lord's Table with any degree of profit or blessing to oneself. To this must be added the instruction and warning contained in 1 Cor. 10:16–21, namely, that of the fellowship of the believers with one another, as well as with Christ, by virtue of their being partakers of that one bread, and that of shunning the table of devils if one would experience the blessing of the Eucharist in one's life.

All these facts are so important because the New Testament clearly shows that the Lord addresses these instructions and warnings not merely to the individual in his personal relation to his Savior but also in his relationship to all the other members of the congregation who, with him, enjoy the privileges of the Sacrament. That Christians, within the organization of the Christian congregation, are responsible for the conduct of one another is shown throughout the New Testament. The Savior spoke about this responsibility during the latter part of His ministry, when He discussed the question of mutual watchfulness and of Christian discipline in the congregation, Matt. 18:15–18. The Apostle Paul brings it out in 1 Cor. 5:1, 2; 2 Cor. 2:5–7, and in many other passages, especially in his heart-searching plea in Gal. 6:1–5. But we note in particular that in 1 Cor. 11 he places the relation of a Christian to the Sacrament under the supervision of the Christian congregation; for he introduces the paragraph on the proper use of the Holy Supper

with the reference to his readers' being together "in the church," "in[to] one place," the situation being clearly that of a meeting of the congregation, probably for the preliminary meal of the *agape*, but certainly for the celebration of the Eucharist. We note especially the use of the plural pronoun in the entire narrative, as in verse 30. It cannot be denied that St. Paul holds the congregation responsible for those who are given the privilege of receiving the Lord's Supper in its midst.

On the strength of the points here presented we cannot but conclude: If a congregation is responsible for the doctrinal knowledge possessed by its members, for their conduct in agreement with the Word of God, and especially for the fitness of its members to be admitted to the Holy Communion, then it must also have the obligation to provide for the indoctrination of its members in a degree commensurate with the Lord's will. We keep in mind throughout this discussion, of course, that the first responsibility, also for the indoctrination of children, rests with the parents. If parents can prepare their children for adult membership in the congregation, so that an examination conducted by its delegated officers, if necessary in the presence of the entire congregation, will satisfy the members that the candidates for membership are qualified, there is nothing essentially wrong with the situation, but it is rather a cause for rejoicing. If parents are not in a position to prepare their children for adult membership, specifically for confirmation and admission to the Lord's Supper, then the law of Christian love places the obligation of providing the proper indoctrination on the congregation. And this duty, namely, that of preparing children and others for the privileges of partaking of the Eucharist, is not to be assumed by some society or organization consisting of the parents of the children concerned, but pertains to the entire congregation. For if the children were already received into the Christian congregation by Holy Baptism, they are members of the congregation, whose spiritual welfare is a vital concern of all; and if the candidates are adults without previous church connection, then the obligations laid upon the whole congregation as to fellowship with the membership in Christ make the congregation responsible for an adequate training of the candidates before they are admitted to the Lord's Supper.

All these considerations were carefully observed in the early Church, as information of an unassailable type clearly shows. With regard to candidates from the ranks of the Jewish Church we must remember that they, as a rule, had a very comprehensive knowledge of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and it was but necessary to furnish proof that the Messiah for whom they had been waiting had already appeared in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The Christians in Jerusalem, for example, including the proselytes, or Hellenists, will come under this category. The same may be said concerning the Christians at Lydda, Saron, Joppa, Caesarea, Ptolemais, and Tyre. Even the centurion at Caesarea must be considered as belonging to this class; for he is described as being God-fearing with all his house, which means that he had an adequate acquaintance with the Scriptures of the Jews and had accepted the God of the Jews.

The situation is somewhat different as soon as we cross the boundary into semipagan and Gentile conditions. When the people of Samaria with one accord gave heed to the preaching of Philip, Acts 8:6, the apostles at Jerusalem sent Peter and John to visit these congregations. This measure certainly helped the Samaritan Christians in clinging steadfastly to the one true Gospel. A similar situation obtained at Antioch in Syria. When lay Christians from the South had founded the congregation at Antioch, so that a great number believed and turned unto the Lord, Acts 11:21, the congregation at Jerusalem sent down Barnabas to find out the true status of affairs. This was not a meddling with the internal business of the congregation but a precaution to establish and develop the existing unity of spirit. How seriously the Christians of Antioch took the matter of adequate indoctrination for adult membership is seen from the remark of Luke: "A whole year they assembled themselves with the church and taught much people," Acts 11:26. In the field of foreign missions proper the procedure was customarily even more careful. With the exception of the conversion of the jailer at Philippi, where the number of miraculous elements are so plentiful, we find that St. Paul always devoted himself to the instruction of the Gentiles with great zeal. When he was prevented from remaining in a city for more than a few weeks at a time, we usually find him making arrangements for the further instruction of those who had declared their belief in Jesus Christ. Thus Silas and Timothy remained in Macedonia when Paul went to Athens and later to Corinth, Acts 17:14. Paul himself taught in Corinth for more than a year and a half, and in addition Apollos later went from Ephesus to Corinth and further established the congregation in the truth of the Word, Acts 18:27; 1 Cor. 3:4-6. After the congregations in Galatia had been established during the first missionary journey of Paul, he visited them a second time for the purpose of confirming them. And again, on the third journey, he took time to pass through the upper coasts, that is, the interior tableland, of Asia Minor, where these congregations were situated, Acts 19:1. We also find that Paul made it a point to have the brethren everywhere more fully established in the doctrine which he had taught them. He sent Timothy to Corinth in order that the Corinthians might have the benefit of his teaching. Later he sent Titus to the same city, 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 7, 14. He evidently took the indoctrination for adult membership very seriously, as is evident also from a pattern, form, or summary of doctrine which served as a basis of the instruction given: "Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you," Rom. 6:17. This outline for Christian teaching (τύπος) may have been very similar to "the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me," 2 Tim. 1:13, namely, a summary of the chief points of Christian doctrine. Beyond a doubt the Apostle Paul considered it his duty to provide for adequate instruction of candidates for membership in the Christian congregation, and he caused this method to be followed in the various congregations founded by him, placing the responsibility for such indoctrination and its attendant Christian discipline on the congregation, as the body in charge of the means of grace. Let us hasten to add that the custom

thus established by the great apostle was followed by Christian congregations for many centuries, as the history of religious education shows. (Cp. *The Religion of the Child*, pp. 89—103.)

But how does all this affect the situation in our Lutheran congregations today? What bearing, in particular, does it have on the topic of this paper?

The answer is, as may be gleaned from the discussion above, that the Lord expects every Christian congregation to uphold the standards of adult membership laid down in His Word, especially with reference to admission to the Eucharist. And again we say that God has not designated the agency or institution by and through which such instruction is to be given. He leaves this to Christian liberty, but in such a way that this liberty, guided by the law of love, will not degenerate into license and disorder. As the Apostle Paul puts it: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another," Gal. 5:13. And again: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient," 1 Cor. 6:12. Cp. chap. 10:23. And St. Peter writes: "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God," 1 Pet. 2:16.

All institutions, agencies, and forms of Christian instruction are ours, but it is a matter of Christian wisdom to choose and maintain those which serve best in given situations, whether these be the Sunday-school or the Saturday-school or the summer- or vacation Bible-school or week-day religious instruction or training classes or confirmation classes or a full parish-school. But the listing or enumerating of the institutions and agencies in this order does not imply that they are of equal value for that indoctrination which is manifestly required according to the passages referred to above. It may not be altogether a matter of simple arithmetic, since other factors are also involved, but this line of argument carries much weight.

The Sunday-school, for example, can under the most favorable conditions yield only about fifty hours of instruction a year, about half of which is in the field of indoctrination. Even if the heroic experiment now being carried out under the supervision of a synodical committee, namely, to mold the Sunday-school teachers of our Church along certain lines, should prove much more successful, including the obvious regimentation attending the project, we cannot get away from the fact that the optimum expectation of clock hours in eight years cannot exceed approximately four hundred, not including confirmation instruction. Let us suppose that the Saturday-school is able to devote a total of eighty hours a year to actual indoctrination and that the summer-school will add another 45 to 60 hours, our total would still not rise above 170 clock hours of instruction in religion. Let us suppose that, under the most favorable conditions, with another 70 hours gained by week-day religious instruction, we might reach a total of 240 hours for a year of instruction, this would still hardly be equivalent to the work done in any other subject in the course of study of the elementary school. And the saddest part of it all consists in this, that the clock hours alone

cannot give us a true picture of the probable result. Even the most careful coordination and integration of the work done in the aggregate in these schools and classes, disjointed and sporadic as they are bound to appear in the minds of the pupils, will not give us a unit of indoctrination such as is required by a sound Christian pedagogy. It would take a pastor or teacher with almost superhuman ability to work out a plan which would cover, in a progressive way, all the Bible-history work and Catechism instruction which would be conducive to a gradual but definite growth in the knowledge pertaining to salvation. If there is truly no other recourse, a pastor or a congregation may have to make the most of such a situation and try to erect a structure of Christian education and training which will at least approximate the requirements of adult membership. Experience seems to have shown that it is seldom possible for agencies which are so disjointed to integrate the Scriptural facts taught with life, even if a preconfirmation training class precedes the regular confirmation class.

We are practically compelled, therefore, to consider the case of the Lutheran parish-school in accordance with the claims of the generations which preceded us. Without including the vexing question of the German language as one of the reasons for establishing these schools during the first seventy-five years of our existence in America, we may safely say, at least for those pastors who had the proper conception of the Biblical requirements, that they wanted to give instruction in Bible History in the Catechism, and in Christian hymns by means of a parish-school because all the arguments connected with Christian indoctrination favor this agency. A Lutheran parish-school, established and conducted according to recognized principles of a Christian pedagogy and religious philosophy, may count on a total of 300 to 400 hours of instruction a year in Bible History, the Catechism, memory work, and hymns (including singing instruction). This does not include the fact that all the work of a Lutheran parish-school will be permeated and impregnated with the spirit of true religion, whereby practically every subject will be presented throughout from the viewpoint of Christianity.

However, it is not merely the positive instruction in the truths of the Bible that we have in mind when we declare the Lutheran parish-school, with its graded and spiral system and program, to be the ideal agency for Christian indoctrination but also its prophylactic function. While it is true that many teachers in the State schools do not make it a point to attack the Christian religion, the spirit of a mere moral training of the young as well as that of unionism are bound to cause trouble in most instances. This is true, in a large measure, even in the high-school years, after the children attending these schools have already been confirmed. How much greater is the danger before the children have ever been given a solid foundation of Christian truth, and in particular when the text-books used in the State schools are permeated with evolutionism and other anti-Scriptural material. A single seed of unbelief placed into the impressionable mind of a child may grow up into a tree of skepticism which will make the growth of the seed of the Word practically impossible.

How shall we arrange our arguments in favor of the Christian parish-school? Let us suggest the following order:

1. While it is indeed true that the Lord has charged first of all the parents with the bringing up of their children in the nurture of the Lord, the points which Luther mentions with regard to Christian State schools may be transferred *in toto* to the Lutheran parish-school, namely: "In the first place, there are some so lacking in piety and uprightness that they would not do it if they could. . . . In the second place, the great majority of parents are unqualified for it. . . . In the third place, even if parents were qualified and willing to do it themselves, yet on account of other employments and household duties they have no time for it." (Painter, *Luther on Education*, 179 f.)

2. Since, in the majority of cases, membership in the Christian congregation is involved (the children having been admitted by Holy Baptism), the congregation as such is charged with the responsibility of preparing these young members for adult membership in the church. In the case of children who are not yet baptized the Great Commission and the law of love lays the duty of caring for their instruction in the Word of God upon the entire membership of the Christian congregation.

3. Although economic conditions and the pressure of State supervision of elementary instruction may appear to be real obstacles in the way of Lutheran parish-schools, earnest and prayerful efforts on the part of pastors and congregations will, in most instances, be able to overcome such difficulties and to establish Lutheran parish-schools which, *caeteris paribus* and even with a measure of supervision on the part of the State, will take their place by the side of State-supported schools. Success, in most cases, depends upon a real appreciation of the Scriptural requirements for adult membership and upon the trust in the Lord's omnipotent assistance.

P. E. KRETZMANN

The Relation Between the Kingdom of God and the Church

In the winter 1940 issue of *Christendom* an article by Dr. E. H. Wahlstrom has the title "The Kingdom of God and the Church." By special permission of the publishers (The World Conference on Faith and Order and the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City) we reprint the last section of this article, having the subtitle "The Kingdom and the Church." Dr. Wahlstrom, we ought to add, is professor of New Testament language and literature in Augustana Theological Seminary. What he discusses in this section is somewhat of a moot exegetical question, on which our readers will be glad to hear what a distinguished New Testament scholar has to say.

"The Kingdom and the Church. From our preceding study it is evident that the Kingdom and the Church are very closely related concepts, indeed parallel or synonymous. Almost all that we have said about the Kingdom can be said about the Church, and *vice versa*. The Kingdom and the Church are both the result of God's saving activity. They have been and are established by His redeeming grace. It is clear, too, that the constituency of the Kingdom and of the Church is the same. The citizens of the Kingdom and the members of the

Church are those who have been redeemed, forgiven, and have received the Holy Spirit. They have 'tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come.' They are the ones in regard to whom God's will to save has been carried out and who now live in fellowship with God.

"Both the Kingdom and the Church are universal concepts; both include all in the past and in the future whom God has called into the fellowship with Himself. Christ is the Head of both the Kingdom and the Church. Both the Kingdom and the Church are free gifts of God; both are open to receive all who are in need. In regard to the future we speak of the Kingdom of God in glory and of the Church Triumphant in heaven. And finally, the one who establishes the Kingdom and the Church is not man, not even the 'new man,' but God, who calls and redeems through His Word of grace.

"On the basis of this study it seems rather reasonable to identify the two concepts, the Kingdom and the Church. The one who first made this identification was Augustine; but the Church which he spoke of was the external, ecclesiastical organization. Luther, on the other hand, made the same identification; but the Church to him was the sphere in which the redeeming grace of God operates. It may be pointed out as significant in this connection that Paul treats practically of the whole of Christian teaching without making the concept of the Kingdom central. In the same way the Lutheran dogmaticians, ancient and modern, present the whole range of Christian doctrine, using almost exclusively the concept of the Church Militant and Triumphant. It may be that something is lost by this neglect of the concept of the Kingdom, but we are pointing out here merely that the Kingdom and the Church are so closely related and parallel that the one may take the place of the other.

"The chief difference between the Kingdom and the Church lies in the fact that the Church must be seen from two aspects. The Church is both the object of God's saving grace and the witness in the world to this grace of God. In so far as we think of the Church as the object of God's grace, it is identical with the Kingdom, and whatever is said about the one may be said about the other. From that point of view both the Kingdom and the Church are the sphere in which God's will to save and to redeem is realized. The establishment of the Church is in this aspect identical with the establishment of the Kingdom. But the Church is also a witness to this grace of God. The Church has been entrusted with the 'Word of Reconciliation,' and it is charged with the duty to 'preach the Gospel to every creature.' From this point of view the Church is not identical with the Kingdom but is the agency through which God establishes His Kingdom. We would not speak of the Kingdom as an instrument but as an end in itself. The Church, however, is both. It is an end in itself in as far as it is the redeemed people of God; it is an instrument in as far as it is true to its mission to proclaim the Word.

"In order to carry out its mission, the Church has developed a complicated system of institutions and rites as convenient ways of doing the work which has been entrusted to it. It is because these external

forms are not essential to the Church that the Church cannot from this point of view be identified with the Kingdom. The Church is God's agency of salvation; but when men are saved by His grace, they enter both the Church and the Kingdom.

"It would seem from this study that the confusion about the relation between the Kingdom and the Church arises principally at two points. In the first place, it is forgotten that the Kingdom is the Kingdom of Grace, and instead it is restricted to the 'new man's' making the 'doing of His will the supreme aim.' (Dodd, *Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 28.) In the second place, we have failed to keep clearly in mind the two aspects of the Church. It might be closer to the truth to say that we have failed to see the Church clearly as the redeemed people of God. We have identified the Church with some external, ecclesiastical organization, interested in the general uplift of society and having a more or less political character. Then we have found it impossible to think of this Church as the Kingdom. A renewed study of the nature of both the Kingdom and the Church should enable us to see more clearly both the similarity and the difference between these two concepts." A.

An Attempt to Stem the Tide of Religious Illiteracy

Writing in *America* (Roman Catholic weekly) on the topic of religious illiteracy in the public schools, Paul L. Blakely presents figures that are startling, and he at the same time discusses the plan introduced in various sections of the country to have public-school pupils dismissed at certain hours during the week in order to make it possible for the churches to give these boys and girls religious instruction. We reprint the article *in toto*.

"Some weeks ago the Kentucky House of Representatives considered a bill to permit the local boards of eduction to provide 'moral instruction' in the public schools. By a vote of 34 to 33, the House rejected the bill on the ground that it would 'endanger religious freedom.'

"This bill, it would appear, was permissive in character, not mandatory. The boards would be authorized to institute courses for the benefit of pupils whose parents wished them to have some training in morals, but [the bill] compelled no pupil to take this instruction. It is hard to see in this permission any encroachment upon religious freedom. No State, of course, can oblige any child to receive instruction in religion or morals. But there is no prohibition, either in the Federal Constitution or in the Constitutions of the several States, which forbids the public-school authorities so to arrange their schedules that the children may receive such instruction in religion as their parents may desire.

"This has actually been done in some States. Under this arrangement one or two periods are set aside weekly during which the children, on written request of their parents, attend classes in religion conducted by teachers who have been approved by the respective religious authorities — Jewish, Catholic and Protestant — and by the school board. On its face the action by the Kentucky House would debar this plan. In one sense it actually limits religious freedom, since it obliges parents

who are not able to send their children to religious schools to entrust them to publicly supported institutions in which 'moral instruction' is forbidden.

"To Christian parents and educators this deliberate exclusion of religion from the public schools is daily becoming more intolerable. In this unhappy exclusion, which has been the rule for a century and more, is found the reason for the statement that we are rapidly becoming a nation of religious illiterates.

"Precisely how many boys and girls are growing up in utter ignorance of religion no one can say. Obviously, the children in Catholic primary and secondary schools and in a few non-Catholic private schools must be excepted; but these, compared with the total number of children of school age, are hardly one in six. Dr. H. G. Ross, secretary of the International Council of Religious Education, thinks that at present from fifteen to twenty million children under seventeen years of age 'are without religious instruction.'

"Dr. Ross's estimate will not seem excessive when we consult the school and population statistics. In 1930 there were 36,164,601 persons in the United States over five and under twenty years of age. The number has grown somewhat in the last decade, but allowing for this increase and also for the fact that the age limit fixed by Dr. Ross does not correspond exactly with that of the Bureau of the Census, it is clear that the number of young religious illiterates — approximately from forty to sixty per cent. of the whole group — is appalling. Personally I am inclined to take Dr. Ross's figures as an underestimate.

"According to figures for 1936, 26,307,098 pupils were enrolled in the public elementary schools, and about 6,700,00 in the public high schools. How many of these boys and girls are receiving any instruction in religion outside the school which can be termed adequate is a question that cannot be answered definitely. No census covers this field, and we are obliged to rely upon reports. That of approximately 36,000,000 young people, from fifteen to twenty millions are 'without religious instruction' seems to me to be well within the bounds of fact. In some parts of the country, this horrifying proportion of illiterates may well be higher.

"If the welfare of this country is conditioned, as Washington believed, upon the preservation of religion and of morality by our people, the future does not present a pleasing prospect. As Dr. Luther Weigle, of Yale, has well said: 'When the public school ignores religion, it conveys to our children the suggestion that religion is without truth or value. It becomes, quite unintentionally I grant, a fosterer of atheism and irreligion. The present system reflects the conviction of no one except such free-thinkers as have been fetched up on atheism. . . . The ignoring of religion by the public schools of America endangers the perpetuity of those moral and religious institutions which are most characteristic of American life. It imperils the future of religion among us and, with religion, the future of the nation itself.' (*New York Times*, May 16, 1926.)

"The fear that by giving children in the public schools an escape from religious and moral illiteracy we in some way 'endanger religious freedom' or subject the State to the Church is quite without foundation.

We do not ask the State to teach religion, for that is not its function. All we ask is that children in the public schools be given an opportunity to learn something about almighty God and His Law.

"A short time ago a non-Catholic physician said to me: 'I know my children ought to have some religion, but how can their mother or I teach them? We don't know enough to teach it. The Sunday-school can't help me. It's not open on rainy Sundays; it's closed all summer; and it has no trained teachers.'

"I believe that many non-Catholics are anxious to give their children an education in religion but find themselves in the position of my friend. The Sunday-school is not the answer, nor, I admit, is the plan of dismissing the children twice a week for religious instruction a complete answer. The real answer is the system which does not divorce religion from education. But the religious-instruction plan will help many and will reduce the number of our religious illiterates." —

An important subject! That the ignorance in religious matters of the average boy and girl in America is simply abysmal a mere casual inquiry quickly reveals. We agree with the article in its advocacy of the Christian day-school as the ideal solution, and, in its indorsement of a dismissal of pupils from the public schools for an hour or two every week to receive religious instruction as a measure which, at any rate, is better than to have them receive no week-day religious training at all. At the same time we heartily approve of the action of the Kentucky House of Representatives when it rejected a plan permitting local boards of education to provide "moral instruction" in the public schools. The little information given seems to indicate that the danger scented by the legislators was real. A.

Sin and Grace Stirs Cornwall

The very teachings that are looked upon by many as an old story in our circles have a way of stirring people mightily in other parts of the world. Just five years ago a grocer's clerk in Michigan, Joseph Pedlar by name, set out as the first lay preacher and missionary of our Synodical Conference. He is a man of middle age, and he was confirmed as an adult by the Rev. Theodore Nickel, then at Bessemer, Michigan. Joseph Pedlar felt a desire to go to Cornwall, the land of his birth, as missionary. He studied Christian doctrine and other seminary subjects with his pastor, coming three nights a week, five hours each time. So diligently did he study, and so great was his interest, that he satisfied all concerned as to his fitness to preach.

Without salary or support and without ever having cost any of our boards a dollar, Joseph Pedlar went to Cornwall, where he has been preaching sin and grace for five years, with amazing success. He supports himself and his family by part-time work in a grocery.

"I have two services every Sunday, at 11 A. M. and 3 P. M," writes Mr. Pedlar under date of January 10. "I also have an adult class. The interest is wonderful. The class was formed, and I was asked to take it because, they said, I was 'the greatest authority they knew on the Bible.' We have eighteen and are hoping to get more. The steward said

to me: 'All we have heard about has been assessments (church dues), but we have neglected the spiritual side entirely.' 'Your Lutheran Church,' he said, 'has the pure Gospel, but our Church is rotten.' This man has become a convert through Bible-study. I shall try and hold this class together and give them the full Lutheran teaching. If only I had more time, I could form other classes during the week, but I am busy all day Sunday. Men even beg me to come to their houses for discussions of Bible-truths. I've never seen such interest in the Scriptures. Dare we neglect these opportunities? We could have a class every night in the week at Perranwell, Goonhavern, Wheal Francis, Rose, Callestick, Silverwell, Crosscombe. They are all waiting for the Word."

In a long letter, in his modest way, Mr. Pedlar describes his missionary experiences in the various villages where he is preaching and the splendid reception everywhere. The people are overjoyed at hearing of sin and grace in this age of Modernism. They crowd the chapels, and Mr. Pedlar is booked up solidly with appointments six months in advance. He conducts simple Lutheran preaching services in borrowed chapels and rides from place to place on a bicycle, over wide, solitary moors, over break-neck hills, or else climbs along a teacherous footpath that skirts granite cliffs 400 feet or more high, with the stormy Atlantic at the foot of these perilous cliffs, drenching him with spray.

One of our American pastors, who has spent several months of each year lately working with Mr. Pedlar in Cornwall, said of this remarkable man:

"Each time that I have been over, I have returned to America astonished at the way in which God's Word is stirring Cornwall. People sixty miles away were discussing Joseph Pedlar. I have heard him preach several times. He preaches simply and naturally, without stooping to any of the tricks of oratory. He tells the plain story of sin and grace in an animated, gripping conversational tone. The people in the chapels, accustomed, as we in America also, to the "Big Five" of the liberal parson (politics, social gospel, industry, race relationships, and war), are stirred mightily. They sit with a most pathetic eagerness of face as Mr. Pedlar explains the truths of Law and Gospel. Mr. Pedlar has no delusions. He does not share the liberalistic view that prosperity, rather than sin, is at the root of all our evils. Neither does he believe for a moment that the Church should try to solve the problems of men and nations with the communistic social gospel. He preaches only sin and salvation."

"In Truro," this pastor says, "I met a very prominent official of the Duchy of Cornwall. In his hand he carried a copy of Dr. J. T. Mueller's *Christian Dogmatics*. He had read this book carefully several times, he told me. Through it he became a convert to the Lutheran movement and one of its most valued champions. The same book, by the way, has just recently opened the eyes of a very able man from London, who came to Cornwall a militant evolutionist. Mr. Pedlar gave him Dr. Mueller's book to read and explained matters to him in detail. This man has openly rejected evolution and all other isms. Mr. Pedlar prizes, next to the Bible, Dr. Mueller's *Dogmatics* and Dr. Walther's *Law and Gospel*."

F. R. Webber

Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

Pastor J. F. G. Harders. — The *Apache Scout*, published "in the interest of the Gospel of Christ among the Apache Indians," offers, in its issue of December, 1939, a fine biographical sketch of Missionary J. F. G. Harders, who to many hundreds outside his immediate field has become favorably known through his excellent mission story *Jaalahn*. He spent the last ten years of his life in Globe, Arizona, once a famous mining-town boasting about twelve thousand inhabitants. To this strange city, where Chinese, Jews, Germans, Syrians, Cousin Jacks (English from the Cornish Coast), Poles, Russians, Spaniards, Turks, Greeks, Ethiopians, French, and last, but not least, Apaches mingled in stores and saloons, gambling-dens, and pool-halls, all trying to earn money and then again to enjoy themselves by spending their easily gained silver in this queer "cross-roads of the world." Into this modern Babel moved Pastor Harders with his wife and seven children in 1907, after he had served for twenty years Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. An affliction of the throat forced him to resign his pastorate. He was called to be missionary to the scattered bands of Apaches living at Globe and nine other places in the vicinity and to act as superintendent of the Apache Mission, which then was only fourteen years old and had but two stations, where overburdened missionaries were trying to evangelize five thousand Apaches. He also gathered and served white congregations in Phoenix and Tucson, his entire missionary field being about as large as half the State of Wisconsin. From Globe Pastor Harders covered his large field on foot, on horseback, by wagon, stage-coach, and train. His devoted wife and two daughters rendered noteworthy assistance by teaching and rendering physical aid to the needy. At Globe he erected a church-building to serve the Apaches for regular worship. For himself and his large family he bought a four-room house and two lots, the house being still used by one of his succeeding missionaries. Since Pastor Harders was one of the only three Lutheran pastors in Arizona at that time, his chapel at Globe became a sort of center for Lutheranism, where not only Apache but also English, German, and Scandinavian Lutherans gathered for worship. A special midweek service was held for a congregation of Chinese, consisting at times of sixty souls. At the side of the chapel there was erected a schoolhouse and a porch extension taking care of about forty Apache pupils. Rev. N. C. Nitz, the author of the mission article, writes: "Eternity will reveal how many lives were touched by Pastor Harders during the ten years of tireless activity in Globe. He had the exceptional knack of turning the most casual every-day conversation into religious channels. He talked as man to man, becoming, like Paul, all things to all men that he might gain some. Whether he was sitting on the steps of the Gila County court-house — coatless, ten-gallon hat, shirt open, smoking, — talking with a group of Mexican laborers; whether he was sitting on the iron-pipe fence that used to surround the old Arizona Eastern Depot, talking with Negroes who were waiting for the evening train

to pull in so they might clean the coaches; whether he called on Judge Little or Judge Whitcher for legal advice or a chat on politics; whether he was squatting before the camp-fire in an Apache tepee and sharing a mess of indigestible frijoles with his hosts; whether he was conducting a formal service in his chapel; whether he was invited to share coffee and tamales with a Mexican family in the 'smoker'; whether he was accompanying a criminal on his way to the gallows — always he was bearing witness for the Christ he loved intensely and proclaimed with sober zeal."

"It seems fitting that the man of God who mingled with this motley population so much in life, should slumber among them also in death. A slab bears the registry number of the grave and the inscription: "Rev. J. F. G. Harders, died April 13, 1917, age 55."

We include this reference to Pastor Harders in our column not only to draw the attention of our brethren to the *Apache Scout*, a most interesting mission monthly (Rev. A. M. Uplegger, Box 938, Globe, Ariz., 50 cts. a year; reduced rates at club subscriptions) but, above all, to honor the memory of a leading missionary, who, when God took him away from a large and prosperous church, went to a humble mission-field and there made the best of every opportunity to preach Christ.

J. T. M.

Wartburg Seminary Again Has a President. — From the *Lutheran Standard* we learn that the Rev. J. Bodensieck, known in Lutheran Church circles as the editor of the *Kirchenblatt*, the official German paper of the A. L. C., has accepted the call to become the president of Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. In addition to performing administrative duties the new president will give several theological courses. It was nine years ago that Pastor Bodensieck became editor of the *Kirchenblatt*. Before that time he had been a member of the faculty of Wartburg Seminary. Hence both those that extended the call in the name of the Church and the called professor himself were fully acquainted with all the questions that required consideration. May God use the services of the new president in strengthening the forces of conservative Lutheranism!

A.

Tributes to Dr. Edwin Heyl Delk. — The *Lutheran* (Feb. 21, 1940) contains two tributes to the late Rev. E. H. Delk, for many years a prominent member of the General Synod. His doctrinal stand is briefly but adequately characterized in the *Concordia Encyclopedia* as follows: "An advocate of rationalism and evolutionism in religion. In *The Need of a Restatement of Theology* (1917) he demanded that the teachings of the Lutheran Church be brought into harmony with modern evolutionistic science and philosophy." Neither of these two facts, however, is clearly brought to the attention of the readers of the *Lutheran* in the "tributes," one of which is written by President Hamsher of the Central Pennsylvania Synod and the other by Dr. M. H. Valentine of Gettysburg, Pa. Characterizing Rev. E. H. Delk, Dr. Valentine writes of him: "He knew the Scriptures not simply objectively, in their contents; he was acquainted by personal experience with the truths they reveal and the grace which they offer and impart to the believer. Hence his preaching had in it the indispensable note of assurance, conviction, and

authority. He concentrated upon the ministry of the Word the resources of a well-stored mind. He was a student of theology and acquainted with its problems. He was *in all central beliefs a Lutheran by conviction* [italics our own], versed in the teachings of his Church and in love with its cultus, and moved amidst them all with the ease of one walking in familiar places and in congenial surroundings." More overt is President Hamsher's praise of the departed U. L. C. A. leader. He writes: "He was an independent thinker. Loyal to the Church he loved, he was open to truth from every legitimate source. He evidenced this respect for the personality of others by fellowship with them in discussion and service. *Our day needs his insistence upon the individual's right to think and speak and worship according to the dictates of a good conscience* [italics our own] in both Church and State."

One cannot but regret that Dr. Delk's rationalistic course is not condemned. Dr. Delk belonged to an old, bad order of things, which permitted Lutheran ministers to practice the most pernicious kind of unionism (Dr. Delk was a Freemason of high standing), champion the most deadly sort of rationalism, and violate Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in a most offensive manner. Dr. Delk, as the *Lutheran* says, was a Lutheran "in all central beliefs." But what does that mean in the case of a man who is both a syncretist and a Modernist? And when the *Lutheran* claims that "our day needs his insistence upon the individual's right to think and speak and worship according to the dictates of a good conscience," it sets itself against all progress made in recent years in the Lutheran Church for greater confessionalism in doctrine and life and places in the way of Lutheran Church union insuperable obstacles. What our day needs is not insistence upon one's right to think and speak and worship according to the dictates of one's renegade reason (for by that Delk was guided and not by a "good conscience") but insistence upon the Christian duty to think, speak, and worship as God's Word demands, teaching men to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, Matt. 28:20. The Lutheran Church in America has indeed a great mission to perform, but it will truly accomplish its divinely imposed task only when it is absolutely loyal to Him who is "the Way and the Truth and the Life," John 14:6. J. T. M.

Lutheranism and Karl Barth. — How far the theology of Karl Barth is removed from that of Luther and Lutheran theologians in general is evident from an article of his which, originally written in French, was published by the *Watchman-Examiner* in an English translation. It has the heading "Niemoeller's Offer to Fight." Having stated that Pastor Niemoeller, who is now kept in a concentration camp in Germany, had offered to participate in the war in the German marine, an offer which the government rejected, Barth continues:

"Do not forget that Niemoeller also is a good — a too good — Lutheran. Lutheranism permits and demands the belief that there is a real chasm between the ecclesiastical and the political. At the bottom of this strange act of Niemoeller's you will find the Lutheran dualism between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of the secular powers, between the Gospel and the Law, between God revealed in Jesus Christ and God working in nature and through history. Lutheran-

ism is well adapted to the German nature. *Anima Germanica naturaliter est Lutherana.*

"There are some German theologians and Christians who are free from the ingredients of this doctrine. There are just a few, you may be sure! But I fear that Niemoeller was never one of this small number. He is capable of letting himself be put to death by Hitler in the cause of Christ, but he is also capable of being an officer in a warship of that same Hitler.

"Our friends in the Confessional Church are Germans and Lutherans. Among them there is a small minority of men and women — some since the beginning of the war — who see what they ought to see, who suffer, and who hope and secretly struggle with us. They need our profound sympathy. They need our prayer. The day will come when they will come out in the open and we shall hear them. Let us also love the others, all that poor majority who today wander about in a fog. Believe me, they are not bad; they are only too German and too Lutheran. There are also in this majority — Niemoeller is a remarkable example — really sincere folk, very cultured and very religious. The day will come when their eyes will be opened. The inevitable catastrophe of Hitler's system will produce this spiritual change, and the existence of an ecumenical community of faith, love, and hope will help them more than anything else, and, above all, the action of the living Word of God which will not fail to accomplish His plans among us all: Swiss and British sinners, and German, too."

From these remarks, too, it is evident that Barth is typically Reformed, unable to understand the Lutheran position. He is a follower of Calvin, who did not keep matters of the Church and of the State separate. A.

"I'll Stay where You Want Me to Stay." — No doubt our readers are familiar with the spiritual song by Mary Brown, which is much used in fundamentalistic circles: "I'll Go where You Want Me to Go," the first two lines of the first stanza reading: "It may not be on the mountain height or over the stormy sea." In the *Watchman-Examiner* D. T. Burress publishes a new stanza to the song, which we add here because of its deep inward spirituality as evinced in the faithful continuation of a pastor's work under trying circumstances. The heading which D. T. Burress has chosen is the one given above. The stanza reads:

There may be somewhere a more likely field
Than the one where the Lord placed me,
Where salary might promise a greater yield
And the people my virtues see;
But, being my Savior knows fields and men
And my planning oft goes astray,
I'll labor my best right here where I am —
I'll stay where you want me to stay.

Chorus

I'll stay where you want me to stay, my Lord,
Though many may beckon away;
I'll labor and pray, leave results with Thee —
I'll stay where you want me to stay.

A brother writes: "This stanza has given me so much strength and encouragement to continue in my difficult field that I ask you to place it within reach of tried and afflicted brethren." J. T. M.

Presbyterian Committees Submit Report. — In the *Presbyterian* of March 7 an editorial appeared which has to do with the projected union of the Northern and Southern Presbyterians and which we herewith reprint: "Committees in both our own Church and in the Southern Church have agreed upon eight basic principles for union. These were approved by our last General Assembly in Cleveland and were embodied in a letter released by the committees under date of February 1, 1940, reciting the progress of events and giving the points named below as those now agreed upon by the two committees, and 'both committees now present to their respective judicatories the following statement of the basic principles which in their judgment may be used to achieve a reunion (of the two churches)':

"1) The standards of the two churches to be the basis of the reunion.

"2) A brief statement of the Church's faith to be drawn up, based upon the brief statement adopted by the General Assembly of the U. S. A. Church in 1902, and the brief statement adopted by the Assembly of the U. S. Church in 1913.

"3) Provision to be made for local self-government by the erection of reorganized regional synods, to which would be committed final authority in all local affairs. Final jurisdiction not to go beyond the synod as to all matters not delegated to the General Assembly.

"4) The presbyteries to remain as they are, subject to such amalgamation or change of boundaries after reunion as might seem best to their reorganized synods. Church sessions to remain as at present, subject to combination of congregations as a result of union under the authority of the presbytery. The authority of the session and of the presbytery to remain unchanged.

"5) The unity of the Church to be maintained and expressed through a General Assembly which, in cooperation with the presbyteries, would have authority in regard to any change of the constitution; would administer the general interests of the reunited Church, such as foreign missions, publication, education, pensions, national home missions; would be the court of final appeal in all cases that involve interests extending beyond a given synod. The basis of representation in the General Assembly to be a matter of further study.

"6) The control of educational institutions to be worked out according to the requirements of individual cases.

"7) While commending to all its members devoted loyalty to the nation and maintaining its duty of moral leadership, the reunited Church will continue to recognize the principle of the separation of Church and State as first announced by the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church in 1729, and should maintain the spiritual character of the Church, as separated from the kingdom of this world and having no other head than the Lord Jesus Christ.

"8) Negro congregations, presbyteries, and synods are to continue as at present, except where they may be combined."

It will be noted that in the above nothing is said of the feeling of uneasiness which pervades large circles of the Southern Presbyterian

Church (Presbyterian Church of the U.S.) with respect to the doctrinal laxity which has inundated Presbyterianism in the North to an alarming extent. The Bible Christian wishes to know, Will the united body-to-be definitely reject Modernism? If the form of church government pointed to is regarded as an adiaphoron we do not object to it. Formerly Presbyterians looked upon it as resting on divine authority. A.

Liberalism Is Not Christianity, Modernist Admits. — Under this heading the *Christian Beacon* (Jan. 25) writes: "There appeared in a recent issue of *Fortune* an editorial in which the Christian Church of the past hundred years was said to have failed in its task. An editorial in the *Christian Century* for January 17 seeks to explain this supposed failure. First of all, attention is called to the two major conceptions of Christianity — Conservatism and Liberalism. The surprise comes near the end of the editorial, when it is admitted that *'Liberalism is not Christianity at all.'* In describing the emergence of Liberalism, the editor says: 'Over against the Biblical cosmology with its concept of divine creation, science set the doctrine of evolution according to natural law. Liberalism accepted these views.' Later on we read: 'Liberalism looked at Christianity through the eyes of science. *Through nature to God* was one of its watchwords. *Through man to God* was another. Its doctrine of nature was that of an evolutionary process culminating in man. Its doctrine of man was stated in terms of the physical and biological process which, according to scientific discoveries, had produced him. This is not Christianity,' continues the editor. That is what Bible believers have always contended. Humanism has for these many years paraded as a more recent brand of 'Christianity.' But now the chief organ of Liberalism in America admits that the doctrines it disseminates are not Christian. However, it continues to call itself the *Christian Century*. In addition to this admission the editor gives in the following words a pretty fair discussion of Christianity: 'Christianity does not look at the world through the eyes of science. It looks at science, at the world, and at man through the medium of its own revelation. Its God is not a goal to be arrived at by cognitive inference — at best such a God is only an *idea* of God. Its God is the *given* reality from which all Christian thinking sets out. And it sets out with a God who has revealed Himself. *Through God to nature, Through God to man,* these are Christianity's true watchwords. Nature does not define revelation; revelation defines nature. Man does not define revelation; revelation defines man. And science does not define either man or nature; revelation transcends science and puts science in its place, in an honorable place, but not on the throne.'"

It is indeed extremely rare for Liberals to acknowledge that their rationalistic speculations are not Christian, but this extraordinary thing the editor of the *Christian Century,* by way of exception, here accomplishes. Very clearly he points out the *terminus a quo* of Liberalism, *evolution,* and its *terminus ad quem,* finding God through science and man. Hence Liberalism cannot be anything else than naturalism or

paganism, terminating not in the discovery of the true God but in the apotheosis of man. Christianity and Liberalism must therefore forever remain *plus quam contradictoria*, to use Luther's phrase, and it is gratifying to note that the *Christian Century* for once makes this very plain.
J. T. M.

Conflicting Marriage Laws. — In an editorial on the subject "Iowa Pastors Want Less Marriages" the editor of the *Lutheran Companion* writes: "The title of this editorial may be misleading. What the Iowa pastors really want is less marriages of young people who come from Illinois. The Illinois marriage law is stringent, demanding a medical examination for both parties before a marriage license can be issued. There is no such law in Iowa, wherefore Illinois couples who desire to evade their own law flock to bordering Iowa towns in large numbers to be married.

"This, of course, has resulted in a profitable marriage business for ministers in these towns, particularly in Davenport, Iowa. But the Davenport pastors are not happy about it. On March 4 the Davenport Ministerial Association went on record urging an Iowa law similar to that of Illinois, and a special committee was named to consult with the county medical association and with State authorities with a view of having the legislature amend the Iowa marriage statutes.

"This is a commendable action. The present state of America's marriage and divorce laws is chaotic, and the lack of uniformity is a constant encouragement to law evasion. When more ministers take a definite stand similar to that of the Davenport Ministerial Association, there will be hope of getting somewhere in the effort to remedy the present scandalous situation. When men plead for laws that will result in less income for themselves, it is more than likely that phlegmatic lawmakers will 'sit up and take notice.'" A.

The Doctrine of Immortality in Modernistic Judaism. — Every now and then the Tract Commission of liberal Judaism sends out pamphlets in which it presents its belief and unbelief. Of special interest to us in this after-Easter season is a tract entitled "Immortality in Judaism," by Israel Mattuck. It begins with the statement "Judaism has no dogmatic theology. It is, therefore, always difficult to state authoritatively, and sometimes it is difficult to interpret definitively, its teachings on matters of belief. Judaism has laid more stress on compliance in practice than on conformity in thought, prescribing laws to be obeyed, but *no dogmas that must be accepted*" (italics our own). Next Rabbi Mattuck points out that the thought of immortality in Judaism revealed itself in two ways: in its older form, in its belief in the resurrection, which was "closely bound up with the belief in the coming of the Messiah, when a new age will be inaugurated on earth for Israel and mankind, differentiated from the times that precede it by the redemption of Israel from exile and of all humanity from evil." "This Messianic belief," the writer then goes on to say, "in earlier times ignored the individual. The consummation of the individual's life was, for the earlier prophets, in the nation's destiny. A change came about through the Babylonian Exile, which broke up the life of the nation. That in

itself produced an increasing religious emphasis on the individual. Liberal Jewish teaching has shifted all emphasis on to the hope for immortality. But immortality means the continuation of life, with the promise of its fulfilment through the further development of its goodness and the correction of its failures. It must, therefore, mean a life after death continuous with this life, showing the consequences of the way this life was lived. But it is not confined to those consequences; it presents new opportunities for the development of personality. The life after death, like the life before, must be both a way of experiencing and a way of becoming. Progress is of its essence. The life on earth does not therefore establish by its character a permanent state in the next life, but helps or hinders the progress in goodness which constitutes the next life. The belief in immortality implies that death will reveal the better way of life, which will mean joy to the righteous but will be hard for those who have shunned it here." The tract closes with the words: "There is a hope for man that grows out of his unrealized possibilities. It is the spirit within him that makes him aware of his possibilities and his failures. In his spiritual self-consciousness lies the essence of his being; it is his guide in this life and the root of his immortal hope. Because of it he will so live here as to realize more and more that which is eternal, and this realization of the eternal so enlarges life as to swallow up death."

All of which means that modern Judaism is essentially just as pagan as was Socrates or Seneca, that it has no definite hope of immortality at all, and that whatever reward the modern Jew expects in a world to come is the reward of his good works. Modern renegade Jews and modern renegade Christians therefore hold the same views on immortality, and that explains why they so readily engage in mutual spiritual fellowship; both have apostatized from God's Word and both advocate neopaganism. J. T. M.

Prof. J. v. Walter heimgegangen. Am 5. Januar ſtarb in Nauheim, wo er Erholung von ſchwerem Leiden ſuchte, im 64. Lebensjahr der o. Profeſſor für Kirchengeſchichte an der Univerſität Roſtock D. Johannes von Walter. Er wurde 1876 in Petersburg geboren und entſtammt einer alten baltiſchen Familie, die eine große Reihe hervorragender Gelehrter und Staatsmänner geſtellt hat. Er habilitierte ſich 1901 in Göttingen, wurde 1909 a. o. Profeſſor in Breslau, 1917 o. Profeſſor in Wien und kam von da aus 1921 nach Roſtock. Von den zahlreichen Werken, die wir ihm verdanken, ſeien beſonders hervorgehoben die über die erſten Wanderprediger Frankreichs (1903—1906), die Ausgabe der *Diatribe de Libero Arbitrio* des Erasmus von Rotterdam und die Erſtausgabe der *Libri Quattuor Magistri Gandulphi Bononiensis Sententiarum* (1924) ſowie „Die Depeſchen des Venezianiſchen Geſandten Nicolo Tingolo über die Religionsfrage auf dem Augsburger Reichstag" (1928). Sein Hauptarbeitsgebiet war und blieb die Reformationsgeſchichte. Für Theologie und Kirche, darüber hinaus für die ganze deutſche Geſchichtſchreibung bedeutſam iſt die in vier Bänden erſchienene und erſt vor kurzem vollendete „Geſchichte des Chriſtentums"; hier hat er in wiſſenſchaftlicher, gediegener und lebendiger Darſtellung Kirchengeſchichte, Dogmengeſchichte und Geiſtesgeſchichte des Abendlandes in muſterhafter Weiſe zuſammenfaſſend dargeſtellt. Auch als Lehrer war er ungemein eindrücklich. Die beſte Tra-

dition deutscher Gelehrtenarbeit und das ungefärbte Bekenntnis zu dem Evangelium nach dem Verständnis Martin Luthers haben sich in ihm zu einer lebensvollen Einheit verbunden. Auch unsere „Kirchenzeitung" verdankt ihm manchen trefflichen Aufsatz, der immer wieder seinen Höhepunkt in der theologia crucis fand. R. i. p. (Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung)

Educational Briefs. — The Theological Seminary of Gettysburg has been the recipient of a gift of $25,000 under the will of Theophilus Stork, Esq. The money will be used for the memorial chapel soon to be erected.

A bequest of $50,000 was made to Roanoke College by George Washington Tompkins, a member of the Board until his death. A bequest of $10,000 was made to Pres. Charles J. Smith of that school "in recognition of his uniform kindness to me and of his service to Roanoke College and the community." Of the $50,000 one half will be added to the endowment and the other half to the scholarship fund for students for the ministry. An unnamed donor gave the same school $15,000, to be used in the construction of a chemistry building.

Prof. Ernest Lawrence, a former student of St. Olaf College, was recently awarded the Nobel prize in physics. This is the highest distinction that can come to a scientist. The prize amounts to the sum of $40,000. St. Olaf has among its graduates over one hundred Ph. D.'s and over one hundred M. D.'s; of the Ph. D.'s the chemistry department claims the largest number.

According to the *News Bulletin* official accreditation by the American Association of Theological Schools of Hamma Divinity School was recently announced. Other Lutheran schools of theology so accredited are Augustana, Gettysburg, and Philadelphia.

The Graduate School of Philadelphia Seminary has an enrolment of 116. Nine of the graduate students live on the campus. One is from Canada, two from Germany, and two from Japan. The others come to the campus on Wednesday and Thursday of each week, when eight courses are offered. Of the graduate students, twenty-one are non-Lutheran pastors.

Luther College in Regina, Sask., Can., reports its highest enrolment for eight years, despite the fact that a number of Luther College students have joined Britain's over-sea forces.

The last convention of the Minnesota District created a new office in our Church, that of director of Christian education. Recently Pastor H. J. Boettcher of Edmonton, Alta., Can., was called for this office. Seven Districts of the Missouri Synod have the office of a full-time school superintendent, but the office of director of Christian education is new, and differs from the former inasmuch as its incumbent is charged with the supervision and guidance of the entire educational system of the District, including parochial schools, the Sunday-schools, the summer-schools, the Saturday-schools, week-day classes, and Bible classes. His influence is to be extended also to the Christian training in the home. Approximately twenty thousand children are placed under his supervision. Much of the director's time is to be spent in visiting the congregations and the educational agencies in the District. Pastor Boettcher

is well qualified for that responsible position. He entered the Canadian missionary field in 1918. His first charge was at Camrose, Alta., and adjacent territory. While living in Camrose, he found time to attend the normal school and qualify for a Provincial Teacher's Certificate. Since then he has acquired a Master's degree from the University of Alberta. He is well known as an ardent advocate of Christian education, and of parochial schools in particular. In 1921 he resigned from the ministry and took charge of the parochial school at Stony Plain in order to lead the fight for the Lutheran parochial schools in Alberta, which had been closed during the World War. It was the superior work of Pastor Boettcher in the Stony Plain school that regained for our school the confidence of the educational authorities in Alberta. In 1927 he reentered the ministry by accepting a call to Edmonton, where he labored with signal success, always stressing Christian education. The rest of the Church might well watch carefully the new educational venture of the Minnesota District. We believe the District has taken a forward step.

According to the *Journal of Educational Sociology* children in the United States attend the movies, on the average, more than once a week. They flock there largely over the week-end, particularly on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday. Programs over the week-end, however, are not selected with a view to suitability for children. It is estimated that only one picture in five, on the average, is appropriate for the child, while one in three is definitely objectionable for him. Many educators believe that the movie is a more potent influence on character-building than the public-school system; but it is run on a haphazard basis so far as child welfare is concerned, and often is in competition with the school, the home, and the church.

The *Lutheran Companion* quotes Dr. James Rowland Angell, president emeritus of Yale University and educational counselor for the National Broadcasting Company, as asserting "that, if the children of the United States are not given proper religious instruction, it can hardly fail to be a catastrophe not only for our own country and for our own religion but for civilization and humanity itself." "We are living," said Dr. Angell, "in a world of which a very large part of the most intelligent and vigorous youth are being subjected to a type of training which is instilling in them a type of nationalistic religion which is violently antagonistic to Christianity as we know it." Dr. Angell suggests that the American educational system be revised in such a manner as to provide an opportunity for public-school children to study religion. He admitted that there is danger in such a move, since it could be construed as a violation of the principles of the separation of Church and State, but insisted that the task must be undertaken despite the dangers involved.

According to the reports in recent issues of *School Life* special efforts have been made of late in a number of States to make it possible for children attending public schools to receive religious instruction during week days and during public-school time. The Board of Regents of New York State voted to permit the public schools in the State to excuse children whose parents desired it, for one hour each week, in

order to receive religious education outside of public-school buildings and grounds. Likewise, the State Legislature of Maine has authorized a survey to be made for the purpose of ascertaining the religious affiliation of pupils attending the public school in each city and community, in order that an arrangement might be made by which pupils, upon request of parents, may be excused for at least one hour each week in order to receive moral instruction in accordance with the religious faith of the respective pupil.

In Knoxville, Tenn., Bible-teaching, supervised by the churches of all denominations, is regarded as an elective subject in the high schools, for which ½ credit is allowed for each term's work, or one full credit for each year's course, which is accepted by colleges and universities as a full college entrance credit.

It is estimated that there are about 1,000 communities in the United States which have made arrangements with local school boards and churches to provide instruction in religion during the week and on public-school time.

In December, 1938, the following regulation was passed by the school board of St. Louis:

"Civil and moral delinquencies of both the juvenile and adult population have in large areas been found to be closely correlated with disadvantageous material and social environments. In both of these the schools can and should exercise constructive as well as ameliorative influences. Among these are pervasive civic and moral influences made effective by an enlightened socially pointed curriculum, the bases of which rest on spiritual and economic foundations and the objective of which is found in culturally integrated individuals.

"In harmony with this view, the need for economic orientation has been increasingly emphasized in curriculum-planning. On the other hand, attenuation of spiritual forces, particularly those inherent in religion, has, it is feared, weakened one of the bases of our educational structure and thus has hindered the attainment of our American educational goal.

"In order that opportunity may be given for the reestablishment of what may have been lost, or at least the strengthening of what has been retained, the following recommendations are submitted:

1. "That, subject to regulations made by the Superintendent of Instruction, pupils be excused from school during the daily sessions to receive religious instruction at places and by teachers designated by their parents;

2. "That high-school credit for instruction in religion be allowed in accordance with the principles that now apply to instruction in music given by private teachers;

3. "That the foregoing is not to be construed as authorizing religious instruction in public-school buildings or by public-school teachers during school hours or as implying the schools' advocacy of one or other form of religious faith;

4. "That, in accordance with the principle of absolute impartiality, the inclusion or non-inclusion of pupils among those who receive religious instruction be recognized as exclusively a parental prerogative; and that those whose parents do not desire recourse to the arrangements herein authorized receive during the absence of others instruction provided for in the curriculum."

We believe this to be a model regulation, avoiding all possible pitfalls of a delicate problem. Other communities might well use this as a basis for similar regulations. The plan was inaugurated in St. Louis last fall and so far has worked well, beyond expectation. A. M. R.

Brief Items. — There has during the last months been a good deal of discussion in the religious press of President Lincoln's attitude toward Christianity. The *Gideon*, the journal of the well-known organization consisting of Christian traveling men, submits these remarks to its readers: "The fact remains that it was not until he gazed over the thousands of graves at Gettysburg, when he went there to deliver his immortal speech, that he said that he then and there accepted Jesus as his personal Savior and could then say, 'I love Jesus.' It was on the basis of this confession that his name is included among the 'one hundred prominent twice-born men' in the book prepared by Pickering and Inglis, Edinburgh, Scotland."

Prof. Kirtley F. Mather of Harvard told the American Association for the Advancement of Science recently that "man's golden age is still in the future. The prospect that the sun will burn itself out or the relations of earth and sun change is remote. The critical question now is: How can two or three billions of human beings be organized for the wise use and equitable distribution of resources which are abundant enough for all but unevenly scattered? Two antagonistic alternatives present themselves — regimentation or democracy. Regimentation may be good for man as an animal; needs for earthly goods may be supplied. But if man attempts to live by bread alone, he commits collective suicide. The best and perhaps the only chance for mankind to succeed is through progress in the art of living on a high spiritual plane. There is no evidence that man is 'weighted down with intelligence.' On the contrary, it is failure to act intelligently that endangers individuals and groups. Precisely those qualities which have long been extolled in Christian doctrine must be developed to the fullest possible extent." So reports a correspondent in the *Christian Century*. Materialists should heed what Professor Mather says and then repent and turn to the Bible for true wisdom.

The *Religious News Service* carried this bit of information: Publication of two new magazines, continuance of a third, and issuance of a two-volume gazeteer concerning the missionary work of the Church were approved by the Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church recently. The new publications will be the *World Outlook*, a missionary magazine with national circulation, and the *Pastors' Journal;* continuance of the *Upper Room* was approved. First issues of the new magazines will appear in September.

In January, 1921, the Rev. E. J. Van Etten of Calvary Protestant Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh broadcast the first religious service in history. The nineteenth anniversary of this event was recently observed. These words of Dr. Van Etten deserve quotation: "No matter how perfectly complete radio transmission may become, it can never take the place of going up to Jerusalem."

Lawrenceburg, Tenn., has had a grim experience with faith-healing. Five members of the Cedar Springs Church of God died within the year because their families refused medical care for them, even against the protests and urgings of their less sanctified neighbors. Seven members of the families afflicted by this craze are now under indictment,

charged with involuntary manslaughter, though there seems to be nothing involuntary about it. They "trusted faith for healing powers and scorned medical aid." Their pastor, the "Rev." Tommie Lee Phillips, has sidestepped any responsibility by saying it was optional whether members accepted medical treatment. Says Tommie Lee: "If they got faith strong enough, they don't need no medicine; if they want to take medicine, that's their business." One wife and four babies were the innocent victims of this unintelligent fanaticism. The poor things probably had no say in the matter. — The *Lutheran.*

According to cable dispatches from Germany, Senator Borah was a direct descendant of the family from which Katherine von Bora, Luther's wife, came. — *Lutheran Companion.*

Visiting New Orleans, La., the editor of the *Lutheran* came upon facts which led him to include this paragraph in his travelog: "An indirect evidence of unusual priestly grasping of authority is hinted at in descriptions of the career of a certain Father Antonio de Sedella, a Spanish Capuchin friar, who from 1795 to 1829, when he died, was pastor of the cathedral. He clashed with his own church authorities, one reads in the official historical sketch of the St. Louis building. Verbal tradition states that his regard for Catholic discipline reached the stage of his approving the methods used by the Spanish Inquisition. Old records are cited to prove that instruments of torture have been found in the lower levels of the church structure and that the priest was escorted by a band of soldiers to a ship leaving New Orleans for Europe on the eve of putting heretics to the torture. It is the nearest the Inquisition came to America."

On February 8 of this year Bishop Paul de Schweinitz of the Moravian Church died in Bethlehem, Pa. A report says that he was a direct descendant of the founder of his denomination, Count Zinzendorf. He had been in charge of Moravian missions for a number of years. At one time he held the position of president of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. His age was seventy-seven years.

In Lhasa, Tibet, a six-year-old Chinese peasant boy was crowned as the fourteenth Dalai Lama, chief civil and religious Tibetan ruler. He was selected as the reincarnation of the thirteenth Dalai Lama, who died in 1933. Chinese influence in Tibet was believed to be strengthened by the boy's enthronement. A regent will govern during his minority.
America

Despite war conditions the Roman Catholic Church reported an almost unprecedented gain in baptisms in Japan last year. The increase in Korea was more than twice as large as that in Japan proper. The total Catholic population of Japan is now placed at 283,491, an increase of 12,588 for the year. Former Protestants made up 220 of the increase.
Christian Century

The Archbishop Joseph Schrembs (Roman Catholic) of Cleveland, O., who recently pronounced the interdict on an Italian church of his diocese because it refused to receive the priest he appointed, was highly honored by Pope Pius XII. The *Christian Century* reports: "Bestowal of the right to wear the pallium, an ornament of pure lamb's

wool, as a mark of special favor and evidence of unusual service and loyalty to the Vatican on the part of Archbishop Schrembs, was the first instance of such award to an American prelate in charge of a diocese. It was the third such award in 200 years." How far the picture of this churchman takes us away from the religion of the New Testament!

When Dr. Walter T. Brown, member of Victoria College, Toronto, recently lectured to a gathering of Toronto ministers on the "Changing Trends of Philosophic Thought," he stressed, as the correspondent in the *Christian Century* reports, the following ideas: "Nineteenth-century religion was dominated by the evangelical revival, with its concern almost exclusively centered on the individual soul." At present he "sees a marked disposition to return to metaphysics." The Catholic objection to Communism is "not to its economic theory but to its materialist basis," he holds. According to him "Protestantism also is now insisting that the center of attention is not man but God, and the reality of God is becoming the supreme theme in thought and teaching." Evidently Dr. Brown said this with Barthianism in mind.

"A group of eighteen eminent North American scholars is now engaged in revising the American Standard Version, which was published in 1901 and which itself was a revision of the English revision (published in 1881—1885) of the King James Bible (1611). The committee began its work in 1930, postponed it temporarily in 1932, and recommenced in 1937. Originally having estimated the work as a five-year job, the committee believes four more years will be required for completion."
Dean Weigle, quoted in the *Christian Century*

Students of history have at some time or other had their attention focused on Iona, a little island on the northwest coast of Scotland. It is famous in the history of missions, for St. Columba came there from Ireland in the sixth century, and it was from here that Scotland was given the Gospel by his monks. The press reports that the old gray stone cathedral has been restored and special ministerial workers are now being trained in this historical locality.

One of our exchanges reports that this year Turkey has not seen the usual numerous and picturesque trains of pilgrims from Central Asia to Mecca, the holy center of Islam. The Mecca pilgrimage is known as the Hadj, and every Moslem who has attained maturity, whether man or woman, must perform it at least once in his or her life, if it is possible. Our authority reports that in general the last years have seen a sharp decrease in the numbers of those who perform the pilgrimage. Let us hope that it is an indication of the waning of the power of the Mohammedan delusion.

A pamphlet entitled *He Beholds New York,* issued by the Greater New York Federation of Churches, is filled with striking facts of that great city. Here are a few: In New York City there are 500,000 families living in slums, 700,000 jobless, 350,000 Negroes victimized by prejudice, 150,000 Puerto Ricans suffering beyond all others, 1,000,000 victims of venereal disease, 1,000,000 arrests, 7,000 children arrested,

5,000 cases of neglected children brought to court, 1,163 suicides, 1,200,000 children untaught in any religion, 5,000,000 people unassociated with any Christian Church. — *Watchman-Examiner.*

A writer in the *Christian Century* deplores the difficulties unionism is meeting with in China. He admits that "it grows rather more and more evident in China that the leaders of the several churches are pretty well convinced that the best progress is being made along denominational lines and that organic union is apt to sacrifice efficiency and energetic evangelism. They find in union movements too much tendency to come down to the lowest common denominator and to hold fast only to those things which all hold in common." Unionism, it has been well said, is like a mild cold wave in fall which produces an enormous expanse of ice on a lake but does not make this covering sufficiently strong to bear any weight.

The Archbishop of the Anglican Church residing at Ottawa died in January at the age of eighty-one years. It was Dr. John Charles Roper, who from 1897 to 1912 was professor of dogmatic theology at the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York.

An exchange reports that the number of Roman Catholic priests in Brazil is very small. We are told that there are only 4,700 priests in that country, of whom not more than 2,200 have been regularly ordained. What a vast mission-field!

The following words of Dr. Alexis Carrel, quoted in the *Presbyterian*, contain much food for thought: "An unexpected phenomenon has taken place. Neither man nor his institutions have satisfactorily adapted themselves to our immense progress. Happiness eludes us. Instead of dying rapidly by the infectious diseases that we have conquered, we die more slowly, more painfully, of degenerative diseases. Medicine has not decreased human sufferings as much as we had hoped. Suffering is brought to man not only by bacteria but also by more subtle agents. Nervous fragility, moral corruption, insanity, are more dangerous to the future of humanity than yellow fever or cancer. As many patients are victims of insanity as of all other diseases put together. A large percentage of the population is weak-minded. The number of criminals in the United States has risen above 4,000,000." A.

Book Review — Literatur

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Kommentar zum Alten Teſtament. Herausgegeben von Prof. D. Ernſt Sellin. Band XVI, 2: „Das Buch Ruth", überſetzt und erklärt von D. Dr. Wilhelm Rudolph. A. Deichertſche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Leipzig. 47 Seiten 6½×8½. Preis: RM. 2.50.

Der „Kommentar zum Alten Teſtament", der von dem in der ganzen theologiſchen Welt bekannten Berliner Profeſſor der Theologie Sellin in Verbindung mit ſechzehn andern namhaften altteſtamentlichen Gelehrten herausgegeben wird, geht jetzt ſeiner Vollendung entgegen und gilt mit Recht als ein hervorragender wiſſenſchaftlicher Kommentar der Gegenwart, ein Seitenſtück zu dem neuteſtamentlichen Auslegungswerk von Theodor Zahn und fünf angeſehenen neuteſtamentlichen Gelehrten, das ſchon länger abgeſchloſſen vorliegt. Die Stellung der Bearbeiter iſt im ganzen eine konſervative, wie ſchon die Namen der Mitarbeiter E. König und O. Procksch anzeigen, aber freilich nicht in dem Sinne, wie dies bei dem älteren, aber durchaus nicht veralteten Kommentar von C. F. Keil und Franz Delitzſch der Fall war. Der modernen höheren Kritik werden oft Zugeſtändniſſe gemacht, und die feſte Inſpirationslehre iſt aufgegeben; aber in ſprachlicher, hiſtoriſcher und oft auch inhaltlicher Hinſicht läßt ſich viel aus dem Werke lernen. Dies gilt auch von den beiden neueſten Lieferungen zu den kleinen in der hebräiſchen Bibel im dritten Teil, unter den Hagiographen, ſtehenden Büchern Ruth und Klagelieder. Wir reden zunächſt von dem Büchlein Ruth und erkennen mit Beifall an, daß der Verfaſſer D. Dr. Wilhelm Rudolph, Profeſſor der Theologie in Gießen, in den einleitenden Fragen viel beſonnener und konſervativer iſt als man es heutzutage gewohnt iſt. Er nimmt als Abfaſſungszeit die Jahre 1000 bis 700 an (S. 7), wozu wir bemerken möchten, daß man kaum einen ſo großen Zeitraum anzunehmen braucht, denn das Buch iſt offenbar entſtanden zu einer Zeit, wo David als König ſchon große Bedeutung für Israel hatte. Der Verfaſſer ſagt mit Recht, daß die Stellung unter den Hagiographen keineswegs eine ſpätere Abfaſſung anzeige (S. 7) und daß das Buch „vordeuteronomiſch" ſei (ein Ausdruck hergenommen von der nach unſerer Überzeugung verkehrten modernen Auffaſſung, daß das Deuteronomium nicht von Moſes herrühre, ſondern erſt im Jahre 622 unter dem König Joſia an die Öffentlichkeit gekommen ſei) (S. 5). Er ſagt ebenfalls mit Recht, daß die Glaubwürdigkeit der ganzen Erzählung nicht durch die traurigen Vorkommniſſe in der Richterzeit in Frage geſtellt werde (S. 8) und lehnt die moderne Auffaſſung des Buches als einer Tendenzſchrift, die die Ehen mit heidniſchen Frauen in der Zeit nach dem Exil unter Esra und Nehemia rechtfertigen ſollte, ab (S. 9). Obwohl er von dem Buche wiederholt als einer „Erzählung" redet, die „in die Blütezeit der israelitiſchen Erzählungsliteratur gehört" (S. 8), ſo betont er doch zutreffend, daß es nicht von Menſchen, ſondern von Gott reden wolle (die Hauptperſon der Geſchichte ſei weder Ruth noch Noomi, „die Hauptperſon iſt Jahwe", S. 11), und fügt hinzu: „Gewiß verwendet der Erzähler alle Sorgfalt auf die Zeichnung der einzelnen Charaktere, und die Geſchichte erhält ein ſchönes Gleichgewicht, indem in Kap. 2 Ruth, in Kap. 3 Noomi, in Kap. 4 Boas die Initiative ergreift. Aber daß Ruth auf den

richtigen Acker kommt, ist Jahwes Führung, daß der kluge Plan der Noomi gelingt, ist Jahwes Gnade, und daß der Ehe des Boas der erwünschte Sohn entsprosst, ist Jahwes Geschenk. Wenn die Gabe Gottes hier in Familienglück und berühmter Nachkommenschaft, also in lauter äußerer Lebensförderung besteht, ist das gut alttestamentlich gedacht; aber schon im Alten Testament selbst hat man erfahren, daß äußeres Wohlergehen nicht der Gradmesser für Gottes Liebe ist, und vollends der Christ weiß, daß Gott nicht immer so handgreiflich schenkt und daß der Weg zum Leben durch Leiden und Tod gehen kann." (S. 11.) So könnten wir noch andere Punkte namhaft machen zum Beweise, daß der Standpunkt des Verfassers ein konservativer ist. Er mißdeutet auch nicht, wie öfters angriffsweise geschehen ist, die sogenannte „Nachtszene", Kap. 3, und sagt darüber: „Daß der Erzähler hier nicht eine alte Kupplerin zeichnen will, die eine plumpe Verführungsszene vorbereitet, ergibt sich aus der Geflissentlichkeit, mit der er in Kap. 2 Noomi und Boas um den guten Ruf der Ruth hatte besorgt sein lassen. Sowenig der Schritt, den Ruth tun soll, unsern germanischen und christlichen Begriffen von weiblicher Zurückhaltung entspricht, so müssen wir doch anerkennen, daß der Erzähler sich alle Mühe gegeben hat, etwaigen Mißdeutungen vorzubeugen, nicht bloß durch Kap. 2, sondern ebensosehr durch die Begründung, die Ruth für ihren Schritt hat (‚du bist der Erbe [Löser]', Kap. 3, 9) wie auch durch die Art, wie Boas darauf reagiert (10. 11b. 13). Und wenn sich auch nicht aus der Welt schaffen läßt, daß Noomi eine Situation herbeizuführen wünscht, in der bei einem Manne leicht die Hemmungen wegfallen, so darf sie nach der Art, wie Boas in Kap. 2 geschildert ist, damit rechnen, daß er sie nicht in unschöner Weise ausnützt." (S. 32.) Er bespricht und erklärt die sogenannte Leviratsehe nach 1 Mos. 38; 5 Mos. 25, 5—10 (S. 37). Aber freilich finden sich auch abzuweisende religionsgeschichtliche Bemerkungen, z. B. wenn er bei dem Ausdruck „unter den Flügeln des Gottes Israel", Kap. 2, 12, „ägyptische Götterbilder" heranzieht (S. 26). Der ganze Kommentar ist so angelegt, daß erst eine wörtliche Übersetzung dargeboten wird; dann folgen philologische Erklärungen und hierauf die Auslegung. Er ist kurz gefaßt, wie dies heutzutage mehr und mehr geschieht, und außerdem wird Raum gespart durch zahlreiche Abkürzungen, nach unserer Ansicht fast zu viele und zu fernliegende, so daß ein nicht allseitig orientierter Leser ziemlich oft das Abkürzungsverzeichnis aufschlagen muß. Rudolph schließt die Auslegung mit den Worten: „Mit der Namengebung und der knappen Feststellung, daß Obed der Großvater Davids wurde (Kap. 4, 17b), schließt die Erzählung und erreicht damit gleichzeitig ihren Höhepunkt: die Landfremde und Kinderlose wird Ahnfrau des größten Königs von Israel und damit des regierenden Herrscherhauses, weil sie sich unter die Fittiche Jahwes begab. So lohnt der Gott Israels. Und glänzender konnten die Wünsche der Männer (Kap. 4, 11b) und Frauen (14b) von Bethlehem nicht in Erfüllung gehen" (S. 46). L. F.

Bibelhilfe für die Gemeinde. Der zweite Jesaja. Von Hans Wilh. Hertzberg. 182 Seiten 5½×8¼. Preis: Kartoniert, RM. 3.20; gebunden, RM. 4.20. Der zweite Korintherbrief. Von Erich Stange. 86 Seiten, 5½×8¼. Preis: Kartoniert, RM. 1.70; gebunden, RM. 2.50. Gustav Schlößmanns Verlagsbuchhandlung. Leipzig und Hamburg.

Die Herausgabe der Serie „Bibelhilfe" hat ziemlich allgemein Anklang gefunden, und zwar im großen und ganzen verdientermaßen. Die Verfasser der verschiedenen Bücher waren zum großen Teil konservative Theologen, die vom

evangelischen, respektive lutherischen, Standpunkt aus ihre Schriftauslegung darboten. Die hier vorliegenden Bände reihen sich ihren Vorgängern würdig an, leider aber nicht auf derselben Stufe. Die Auslegung der Kapitel 40—66 des Jesajabuches erkennt allerdings die messianischen Teile an, nicht nur in der Übersetzung aller einschlägigen Stellen, sondern besonders auch in den Ausführungen über Jes. 53. Leider ist aber das isagogische Fundament des ganzen Buches nicht im Einklang mit gewisser lutherischer Theologie, weil der Ausleger sich die falsche Ansicht angeeignet hat, daß diese Kapitel des Jesajabuches nicht von Jesaja herstammen, sondern von einem unbekannten Exulanten in Babylonien. Auch wenn Apost. 8, 28 nicht für einen bibelgläubigen Theologen ausschlaggebend wäre, so ist doch schon vor mehr als vierzig Jahren darauf hingewiesen worden, daß die Bezugnahmen des Verfassers von Kapitel 40—66 die Geographie des Heiligen Landes voraussetzen und daß er vom Standpunkt einer persönlichen Kenntnis redet. (*Homil. Review*, XXVII, 168 ff.) — Die Auslegung des zweiten Korintherbriefes hat der Leiter des ganzen Unternehmens, D. Erich Stange, selber besorgt. Auch hier finden wir den wertvollsten Teil der Arbeit, wie in den früher erschienenen Bänden, in der vorzüglichen Übersetzung des Grundtextes. Die Anlage der Bücher fordert eher kurze Betrachtungen und erbauliche Anwendungen als eigentliche Exegese. Die Hauptgedanken des Briefes sind aber durchweg in feiner Weise wiedergegeben, und der Theolog wird an vielen Ausführungen seine helle Freude haben. Ein kurzer Querschnitt am Ende des Bandes, betitelt „Das Wort von der Versöhnung", bringt Gedanken in einer Weise, die zu eifrigem Forschen anspornen. — Der Verleger bemerkt, daß die in der Serie noch fehlenden Evangelienbände, die Apostelgeschichte, die Offenbarung Johannis und die drei Johannesbriefe im Laufe der nächsten Jahre folgen und daß auch aus dem Alten Testament weitere Bände in den kommenden Jahren erscheinen werden, z. B. Hesekiel, Jeremia, Hiob.

P. E. Kretzmann

Why God Became Man. By P. B. Fitzwater, D. D., Bible teacher in the Moody Bible Institute. The Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 79 pages. Price, 60 cts.

More than once the present reviewer has declared that religious literature from non-Lutheran sources is in nearly every case of inferior quality. The truth of this assertion is exemplified by the book under review. We read: "God would have incorporated Himself with the race" — that is, the Second Person of the Trinity would have assumed our human nature — "even though sin had not entered." (P. 5.) How does the author happen to know this? "There are no contingencies in God's plan." (P. 6.) This sentence has a rather fatalistic and Calvinistic ring to it. "Jesus Christ is not the King of the Church." (P. 40.) What an outrageous statement! We readily perceive that this sharp distinction between Church and Kingdom is part and parcel of a modern chiliastic group. True believers are certainly in the Church, and St. Paul says that the Father "hath translated us into *the kingdom* of His dear Son," Col. 1:13. Concerning the unbelieving thief on the cross we read: "He was not responsible for the sin that was *in* him because he was born that way." (P. 46.) A very superficial view of original sin. — True enough, the author says many fine things about Jesus Christ: "He is now and forever the God-man." His virgin birth, His vicarious

suffering and death, and His glorious resurrection are confessed. The author also correctly teaches that Christ, when tempted by the devil, could not sin: "There was no possibility of failure on His part." Unfortunately, however, he spoils all this by declaring concerning the Virgin Mary: "She was not the mother of God, as some falsely teach." (P. 13.) If Jesus Christ is true God and true man in one undivided and indivisible Person, and if the blessed Virgin gave birth to that Person, she must be the mother of God. According to Luke 1:35 Mary gave birth to the Son of God. According to Luke 2:11 she gave birth to Christ the Lord. According to Acts 20:28 God purchased the Church with His own blood. Now, if the divine and the human nature are so intimately united in the person of Christ that the Holy Spirit can call the blood of Christ God's own blood, the mother of Christ is, in deed and in truth, the mother of God. In the fifth century the heretic Nestorius raved against this expression; his error was condemned by the Council of Ephesus in 431. Twenty years later, at the Council of Chalcedon, the Church again confessed the truth: "According to divinity, begotten of the Father before all ages; according to humanity, born in these last days for us and our salvation of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God." In the sixteenth century, when men again presumed to contradict the Scriptural and churchly doctrine, the Church reiterated her good confession: "Hence we believe, teach, and confess that Mary conceived and bore not a mere man and no more, but the true Son of God; therefore she is also rightly called and is the mother of God." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, VIII, 12.) If Mary is not the mother of God, then she gave birth to a mere man, then Christ is not the God-man, then the personal union of the two natures in Christ falls to pieces, then a mere man suffered and died on the cross, and then the whole human race is lost. Can the author not see that it is somewhat dangerous to reject the doctrine under consideration? And does it seem to him a light thing to accuse the pure Church of all ages and her faithful teachers of teaching falsely? Taking over the foregoing review by N. Rasmussen in the *Lutheran Standard*, we would add the following. The book under review substantiates the charge that Chiliasm perverts the hope of the Christian by fixing it not so much on the bliss of heaven as on the fabled "golden age" of the millennium. The concluding paragraphs of the book read: "When the purpose of God shall have been fulfilled in gathering out a people for His name, Acts 15:14, Christ shall return in person and power to establish His kingdom on the earth. This kingdom shall come into realization when He shall sit upon the throne of His father David, Luke 1:32. The completion of the work which the Father entrusted to Him requires the personal return of Jesus Christ to the earth. . . . Upon the ruins of the kingdoms of this present evil world will be established the Messianic kingdom. The Stone hewn out of the mountain without hands will smite the image of the Antichrist and pulverize it. When the dust thereof is scattered as the chaff on the summer threshing-floor, then will appear the kingdom of the Son of Man, Dan. 2:44, 45. Christ will then reign until He

has put all enemies under His feet. This is the golden age of which the wise men of all ages have dreamed and [which] God's prophets have foretold. Peace will then fill the earth because righteousness and justice shall prevail. The knowledge of the Lord shall then cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Sin and sorrow shall be no more. And then, when His mediatorial work shall have been completed, He will yield the kingdom up to God, and God will become all in all, 1 Cor. 15:24–28. Hallelujah! Amen." (Pp. 66, 78.) TH. ENGELDER

Winona Echoes 1939. Forty-three Notable Messages by Speakers at the 45th Annual Winona Lake Bible Conference. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 320 pages, 6×9. Price: Cloth, $2.00; paper, $1.00.

The Winona Lake Bible Conferences have become so well known throughout our country that they require no further introduction or description. At Winona Lake, Ind., Fundamentalists of many denominations meet each summer for Bible-study and the discussion of timely theological subjects. Among the addresses offered in this volume we note "Paul in Damascus," by H. W. Bieber; "The Power of the Holy Ghost," by G. Douglas; "Calvary," by R. G. Lee; "God's Message to America in an Hour of Crisis," by P. W. Rood; "Witnessing Christians," by A. S. Johnson. But in a special way the *Winona Echoes 1939* are dedicated to the memory of the late evangelist and Bible-teacher W. E. Biederwolf, who was one of the main supporters of the Winona Bible Conferences. Besides a sketch of his life we find in them tributes by many of his friends, a picture of the well-known and popular Bible Conference promoter, and the last sermon he preached shortly before his death in the Royal Poinciana Chapel, Palm Beach, Fla. What delights the Christian reader of these *Echoes* is the clear and convincing testimony of salvation through faith in Christ, set forth by various men from different points of view. In an age when Modernism is so very widely spread it is gratifying to notice that there are still witnesses of the Gospel who glory in preaching Christ Crucified.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie. 40. Band. 4. Heft. Urchristentum und Geschichte in der neutestamentlichen Theologie seit der Jahrhundertwende. Von Lic. Habil. Konrad Weiß, Dozent an der Universität Berlin. C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh. 1939. 36 Seiten 6×8½. Preis, kartoniert: RM. 1.00.

Dieser Aufsatz orientiert trefflich über die verschiedenen Ideen und Richtungen, die seit dem Jahre 1900 in der neutestamentlichen Forschung prominent geworden sind. Angeknüpft wird insonderheit an die Namen Adolf Harnack und Alfred Seeberg. Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule wird geschildert. Natürlich werden auch andere Forscher, wie Th. Zahn, A. Schlatter, Rudolf Otto, Kittel und M. Dibelius, etwas besprochen. Daß der Verfasser von orthodoxer „Versteifung" redet, erregt Zweifel darüber, ob er genuin-lutherische Schriftforschung objektiv beurteilt. W. ARNDT

What Is Buchmanism? By W. G. Schwehn. (Tract No. 132.) Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 31 pages, 5×7¼. Price, 12 cts. per copy, postpaid; dozen copies, $1.20, and postage.

Concordia Publishing House is to be commended for publishing this tract on Buchmanism, or Moral Rearmament, one of the ephemeral phenomena of our bewildered and confused religious world. Rev. Schwehn, pastor of our Lutheran Church at Hannibal, Mo., investigates the claims of Buchmanism as to its success in "transforming lives," shows that it does not understand the true character of sin, totally ignores the vicarious atonement, justification by faith, and therefore lacks every basis for a true moral rearmament. The tract is intended for the general public, and we hope that it will enjoy a wide distribution among our laity. There is room for debate as to the author's statement that Buchmanism "had its origin in this country." It is true that Frank Buchman was trained for the Lutheran ministry in America and still is on the roster of ministers in the Pennsylvania Ministerium. But the movement was started by Buchman at Oxford and had its first successes on European soil. F. E. Mayer

Daughter of the Euphrates. By Elizabeth Caraman. Harper & Brothers, New York. 277 pages, 5½×7¾. Price, $2.00.

In Kurdistan there existed up to the time of the late World War a fairly flourishing Armenian Christian Church, which in spite of frequent bitter persecutions and horrible massacres adhered steadfastly to the faith of their fathers. During the World War (1915—1919), however, the enraged Turks, through unmerciful billeting, rape, murder, and exile, destroyed entire Christian towns and communities, among these the village of Habousie, where the author had spent her sweet childhood days. As a girl of eleven she saw her father murdered and her mother led off to a fate uncertain only as to details — rape and murder. With an unusual fortitude and resourcefulness, however, she herself finally effected her escape and that of her sister — sole survivors of a family which before the persecution numbered over forty members. The pathetic story is plainly but charmingly told, and throughout the writer makes the impression that what she says is absolutely true. At times she speaks with almost too great frankness, so that it may be well to reserve the story for experienced readers. Western Christians will lay aside the book with a feeling of shame at their own petty "sacrifices" on behalf of Christ when they compare them with the almost superhuman sacrifices made by these simple Armenian Christians in the East. The book has many an important lesson to teach to our present-day Christian generation. J. Theodore Mueller

Weg und Zukunft der Gemeinde JEsu. Das Lamm Gottes und der Widerchrist. Sieben Predigten über Offenb. 12—14. Von Mag. Hellmuth Frey. Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart. 60 Seiten 5½×9. Preis: RM. 1.20.

Die hier gebotenen Predigten wurden im Sommer 1938 in Dorpat (Estland) gehalten, also ein Jahr vor dem Unwetter, das über die deutschen Lutheraner der baltischen Provinzen hereingebrochen ist. Doch war die Notlage infolge der

unmittelbaren Nähe des Bolschewismus schon groß genug. Für den Verfasser und seine Zuhörer war das, was er von Kampf und Trost sagt, wahrlich mehr als bloße Phrase. Die Predigten sind durchhaucht von heißer Liebe zu Christo und seinem Wort. Die Meinung des Verfassers, daß die Zahl 666 die Worte „Kaiser Nero" bedeute und daß damit antichristliche Mächte gemeint seien, die in einem noch zukünftigen Reich und Herrscher ihre Spitze erreichen würden, können wir nicht teilen, da uns der Papst der Antichrist ist. Im allgemeinen aber haben wir hier treffliche lutherische Schriftauslegung mit ernster, packender, zeitgemäßer Anwendung. W. Arndt

„Viel Gnade und Friede", 1 Petr. 1, 2. Eine Bibelwoche über den ersten Petrusbrief. Von J. Schieder. 1939. Chr. Kaiser-Verlag, München. 71 Seiten 6×9.

Eine im allgemeinen treffliche Serie von sechs Vorträgen. Frisch und kräftig wird gezeichnet, tief ins Leben wird hineingegriffen, viele Beispiele werden gegeben. Den großen Gedanken, die der Apostel niederschreibt, wird nachgegangen. Eine Erläuterung, die von Vers zu Vers geht, ist natürlich ausgeschlossen. Daß dies die letzten Worte Petri sind, ist eine Meinung, die wir nicht teilen. Noch weniger stimmen wir dem Verfasser bei, wenn er in der bekannten Stelle von der Höllenfahrt, 1 Petr. 3, 19—21, einen Hinweis auf das große Erbarmen JEsu sieht. Ebenso müssen wir protestieren, wenn er am Schluß der Vorträge sagt: „Nichts ist uns hoffnungslos, auch nicht die Sünde, vielleicht, vielleicht nicht einmal die Hölle." So findet sich neben goldenen Aussprüchen und Paragraphen auch manches Verkehrte. In formeller Hinsicht sind die Vorträge vorbildlich. W. Arndt

Die Vollmacht JEsu. Eine Unterweisung im Evangelium. Von Martin Jäger. Chr. Kaiser-Verlag, München. 147 Seiten 5¾×8¾. Kart. RM. 3.00.

Um die jungen Deutschen dazu zu bringen, sich mit JEsu zu beschäftigen, geht der Verfasser aus von einer Wahrheit, die von allen, die nicht einfach Gottesleugner sind, anerkannt wird, der Tatsache der Allmacht Gottes. Er wirft dann die Frage auf: Wie stellt sich JEsus zu der Allmacht Gottes? Von hier aus bespricht er die Person und das Wirken unsers Heilandes. Man muß zugeben, daß auf diese Weise geschickt und treffend ein Gespräch über JEsus eingeleitet wird. Die Ausführungen sind konkret und packend. Folgende sechs Kapitelüberschriften geben etwas Aufschluß über den Gang der Erörterungen: JEsus rechnet mit der Allmacht Gottes; JEsus lebt in der Vollmacht seines Vaters; JEsus stößt auf die Eigenmacht der Menschen; JEsus endet in der Ohnmacht des Kreuzes; JEsus wirkt durch die Ohnmacht seiner Gemeinde; JEsus kommt in der Allmacht Gottes. Die dogmatische Einstellung des Werkes ist reformiert. W. Arndt

Gottes Wort am Sarge. Von Paul Schempp. Chr.-Kaiser-Verlag, München. 121 Seiten 6×9. Preis, kartoniert: RM. 2.20.

Die Auswahl der Texte in dieser Sammlung von 25 Grabreden ist reichhaltig; die Erklärung des Textes und die Anwendung auf den besonderen Fall ist mit einigen Ausnahmen gut getroffen. Das Niveau der Dorfgemeinde, in deren Mitte diese Reden gehalten worden sind, muß sehr hoch sein. Wir wundern uns, ob die Durchschnittsgemeinde die schwungvolle Sprache würdigen und besonders, ob sie dem Philosophieren über „die Rätselhaftigkeit des Todes und dessen Schatten auf das Leben" folgen kann. Der Verfasser scheint unsers Erachtens zu

sehr unter dem Einfluſſe des barthianiſchen — ſagen wir lieber des calviniſtiſchen — Peſſimismus zu ſtehen und ſchildert das Leben, und gerade das der Chriſten, in zu dunklen Farben. Man vermißt das Gerhardtſche „Mein Herze geht in Sprüngen". Das mag daher kommen, daß die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und ſeine das Dunkel des Grabes erleuchtende Herrlichkeit nicht genügend betont wird. Die Anſprachen werden aber dem Paſtor bei der Ausarbeitung von Leichenpredigten manchen Wink geben. F. E. Mayer

The Fine Art of Public Worship. By Andrew W. Blackwood. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 247 pages, 5½×8. Price, $2.00.

After reading this book, we can still better appreciate as a precious heritage our Lutheran form of worship, including the sermon, the liturgy, the lectionary, the hymns, the music, and the appointments themselves, wherever all these still conform to good tradition. But the book directs us to give better attention to some things which we have, so that they will better serve their purpose. We refer to the training of the leader in worship, the public reading of the Scriptures, the selection of the hymns, the leading in prayer. Every church service should have not only a unified plan but also, in all its parts, serve a distinct purpose: the edification of the worshiping congregation.

The sermon should supply the needs of the congregation and be well delivered, the Scripture should be read so that all can hear and understand, the collects and prayers should be well chosen and well spoken, the hymns should be selected to conform to the particular service and be well sung to suitable hymn tunes, the congregation should heartily join in the singing of the responses, the attitude of the worshiping congregation and of the spiritual leader in God's holy temple should be that of awe and reverence. All this must be learned and practiced. The public reading of Scripture, for instance, is a real art. And we have often wondered how much a congregation has understood of the collect and made it its own prayer. Nor should we introduce something into our church services "just because it is nice." Let our church services conform to good usage, be dignified and edifying. J. H. C. Fritz

Stories of Popular Hymns. By Kathleen Blanchard. 142 pages. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price, $1.00.

A book of stories on our favorite hymns ought not merely to retell the various legends that have in the course of time gathered around these hymns. That is largely what this book does. In recent years a number of reliable works have been published that give authentic information about most of our hymns, so that no author has an excuse for rushing into print with stories about our hymns without checking all available sources carefully. That is what the present author has often failed to do. The story about Neale's great hymn "Art Thou Weary, Art Thou Languid?" is a case in point. The author calls it a translation from the Greek, even though Neale himself wrote nearly seventy-five years ago that it was not a translation. Another example is the account given of the hymn "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee." It is stated as a historical fact that Bernard of Clairvaux is the author,

in spite of the fact that all research thus far has failed to establish any proof. At best it can only be said that the hymn is ascribed to St. Bernard. Finally we hold it to be unwise in any collection of popular hymns and hymn stories to omit the most popular hymn of all, namely, Luther's "A Mighty Fortress." That hymn has been translated into more languages than any other single hymn in the world, yet the author makes no mention of it nor of Gerhardt's "Commit Thou All Thy Griefs" nor of Nicolai's "Wake, Awake" nor of Tersteegen's "Gott ist gegenwaertig." In fact, Lutheran hymnody is represented by one hymn alone, Rinckart's "Nun danket alle Gott," although sixty-seven hymns are discussed! W. G. Polack

Von gestern und heute. Ein nachdenkliches Abc, gesammelt und herausgegeben von Hans Dittmer. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Hier wird uns eine Sammlung von Geschichten, Zitaten, Anekdoten und Aussprüchen geboten, die dem vielbeschäftigten Pastor gute Dienste leisten kann, nicht sowohl und hauptsächlich für die Predigt als für Illustrationen im Schul- und Konfirmandenunterricht sowie für Bibelklassen. Während manche der Auszüge auf deutschländische Verhältnisse zugeschnitten sind, so läßt sich doch bei weitem die größte Mehrzahl auch hier in Amerika verwerten. Nur selten stört ein Zitat die Andacht. Das Buch wird hiermit unsern Lesern angelegentlich empfohlen, womit nicht gesagt ist, daß wir alles, was in dem Band enthalten ist, rückhaltlos unterschreiben. P. E. Kretzmann

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Tangled Threads. By Paul Brockhaus. 189 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, $1.00.

The Glory of His Grace. By W. H. Wrighton. 126 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, $1.00.

From Bica Press, 843—845 Wells St., Chicago:

The Mystery of East Mountain Temple. By John Bechtel, Hongkong, China. 127 pages, 5×7½. Price, $1.00, net.

From Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, London, Edinburgh:

The Minister's Annual. Vol. 12. Compiled and edited by Joseph McGray Ramsey. 576 pages, 5½×8½.

From the Abingdon Press, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago:

Remembering Christ. By Walter Russell Bowie. 183 pages, 5¼×7½. Price, $1.50.

From Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn.:

The Psalms for Every Day. With a Thousand Illustrations from Life and Literature. By Jane T. Stoddart. 382 pages, 6×9. Price, $3.50.

From Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York:

For Hungry Souls. By Roy G. Mansbach. 30 pages, 6¼×9. Price, 35 cts.

From Light and Life Press, Winona Lake, Ind.:

Youth Speaks! By Leslie Ray Marston, Ph. D. 206 pages, 5×7½. Price, $1.25, postpaid.