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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

Is Lutheran Opposition to Unionism Unchristian and Resting on Human "Rationalization"? — The editor of the *Christian Century* writes at length on "Southern Baptist Isolationism," which, naturally, he condemns. He finds himself in accord with the *Biblical Recorder*, the organ of the Baptists of North Carolina, which likewise deplores "the isolationist behavior" of Southern Baptists. The editor of the *Christian Century* says about Southern Baptists: "Their reputation for self-sufficiency does not derive alone from their refusal to cooperate in large general enterprises like the Federal Council of Churches; it extends down to the local community. Here they impress their brethren as being a formidable obstacle to the broader fellowship which is striving to come to realization throughout the whole Protestant world." Making comparisons, the editor continues: "It is true that their neighbor denomination, the Southern Presbyterian, rests under similar criticism in respect to the more general forms of cooperation, but its membership is only one tenth the size of the Southern Baptists and its non-cooperation does not extend so consistently to the local community. It is also true that the Episcopalians and one strong Lutheran body are conspicuously non-cooperative; but they, too, are less numerous than Southern Baptists, and, besides, they do shield their unchristian aloofness behind a rationalization which quiets their conscience with respect to their unfraternal behavior toward the growing movement for fellowship and cooperation."

It is the last sentence quoted to which we should like to draw attention in particular. "Unchristian aloofness"! The Lutheran body charged with this attitude evidently is the Synodical Conference. Its earnest endeavors to avoid giving aid to, or countenancing, false doctrine is termed "unchristian aloofness." And when it quotes Bible-passages showing that its refusal to join hands with errorists is based on the Scriptures, this exposition and defense of its course is by the *Christian Century* called a rationalization. The term need not frighten us. It sounds formidable, but the charge it implies is not true. What it suggests is that Lutherans first adopt aloofness and then try to find arguments for it in the Scriptures or elsewhere. It is the other way around. We find the Scriptures warning us against toying with error and directing us to avoid false teachers, and studying these warnings we see that the course of aloofness is the only one compatible with the Scriptures. No one can read the Bible without being impressed with its tremendous earnestness when it is speaking of clinging to the truth and avoiding error. There is not one sentence in it that sanctions doctrinal indifference. To heed this position of the Scriptures and to draw the practical conclusion is not a rationalization of the position of aloofness but is simply faithfulness to God's Word. A.

A Billion Copies of Luther's Small Catechism. — Prof. A. C. Streng of Texas Lutheran College, Seguin, Tex., junior college of the American Lutheran Church, is endeavoring to secure a "fair estimated figure of the approximate number of copies which have been published of Luther's

Small Catechism since 1529." He writes in a letter to the undersigned: "Frequently one reads of estimates of the large number of copies which have been printed of several other books, but in such compilations Luther's Small Catechism is never mentioned. Just recently a writer in a widely used History of Education wrote that the *New England Primer* had been printed in no less than three million copies and intimated that there was probably no other schoolbook that had been so widely used in America." We pass on the problem to such pastors, teachers, and professors as may help Dr. Streng, who can be reached under the address given above, in solving it. Dr. Streng writes: "I hope you will not consider this effort a waste of time. You know better than I that it is a real rarity that one little book should retain its value and well-deserved popularity for more than four centuries." We agree with the writer's statement and hope that the Lutheran Church will never tire of its great "Laymen's Bible." In the interest of the venture we quote Professor Streng's approach to the solution of the problem. He writes: "It would be conservative to estimate that each Lutheran had at least one copy of the Catechism. It appears as though it would also be fair to estimate that there have been about four generations of Catechism-users to the century. The average number of Lutherans per century has been estimated as follows: 16th century, 10,000,000; 17th, 20,000,000; 18th, 30,000,000; 19th, 50,000,000; 20th, 80,000,000. The number, then, would be: 16th century, 10,000,000 times 4 = 40,000,000; 17th century, 20,000,000 times 4 = 80,000,000; 18th, 30,000,000 times 4 = 120,000,000; 19th, 50,000,000 times 4 = 200,000,000; 20th, 80,000,000 times 1.5 = 120,000,000. Total: 560,000,000. It should not be forgotten that there have been a large number of 'explanations' of Luther's Small Catechism, and at least one 'explanation,' on the average, has come into the hands of the average Lutheran. Very frequently the Catechism has also been reprinted in various 'Graded Lessons' of various church-bodies and in a goodly number of other publications. Would it therefore be fair and safe to estimate that there have been printed at least a billion copies of Luther's Small Catechism since the days of Dr. Martin Luther? Or would figures derived at in some other way give us a fairer estimate?" To us it appears as if the estimate were fair enough; what do our readers think? But if Luther's Catechism has been sold in a billion copies, how does it rank among the best sellers outside the Bible? The question certainly is one of sufficient importance for further investigation.

J. T. M.

The Question of Infant Baptism.—The *Christian Beacon* (July 4, 1940), in view of the all too general neglect of pedobaptism today, publishes a sermon on infant baptism preached years ago by Rev. I. S. McElroy, Richmond, Va., but now long out of print. The sermon possesses many points of value and argues the necessity of infant baptism on the following grounds: 1. Children are church-members and therefore should be baptized. 2. The apostles habitually practiced household or family (infant) baptism. 3. Christ commands household or family (infant) baptism. 4. The Church of God has always believed and practiced household or family (infant) baptism. There is perhaps little fault to be found with the three last arguments, which also we Lutherans use when stressing

the necessity of infant baptism. But the first argument of Dr. McElroy has no value at all, since it is based upon false premises and therefore is fundamentally false. The Presbyterian minister reasons thus: The children of church-members were members of the Church under the Old Testament. The Church under the Old Testament is identical with the Church under the New Testament. Therefore the children of church-members are members of the Church under the New Testament, and it is therefore the "solemn duty and sweet privilege of every member of the Church to have his or her children baptized." One half of the sermon is devoted to this argument, which, however, Baptists and other opponents of pedobaptism might use against his process of reasoning; for they might say: "If children already are members of the Church, why should they be baptized? Public Baptism has the nature of a *confession of faith*, and this should be made when the individual is grown up and fully instructed in the faith." To this the orthodox Presbyterian will reply: "No, indeed; Baptism is the outward sign of the inward state of grace and thus of the actually existing state of church-membership, so that it must not be omitted by any means." What we wish to point out is that no one can really argue the intrinsic necessity of infant baptism who does not accept the Scripture doctrine of the function and efficacy of the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments, though he may say, of course, that infants are to be baptized since Christ commanded this and the apostles as well as the early Christian Church invariably practiced it. A comparison of the Lutheran argumentation for infant baptism with that of the Presbyterian minister will show how essentially different the Lutheran doctrine is from the Reformed view. Lutheran theologians demonstrate the intrinsic necessity of infant baptism thus: (a) Baptism is an efficacious means of grace, the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, Tit. 3:5; John 3:5, 6. (b) Infants are in need of regeneration, since they are flesh born of flesh, John 3:5, 6. (c) Christ expressly commands that infants should be brought to Him, Mark 10:13-15. (d) Infants can believe, so that by faith they can apprehend the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation offered and conveyed to them in Holy Baptism, Matt. 18:6. This simple argumentation is Scriptural and unanswerable, especially in view of Christ's command in Matt. 28:19 and the consistent practice of the apostles and the early Christian Church, Acts 16:15; 16:33. Today, when Fundamentalism is again coming into strength, the question of infant baptism is being given much consideration in church-papers; we therefore have all the more reason to make clear to our parishioners the Scripturalness of the Lutheran doctrine of infant baptism.

J.T.M.

Auburn Affirmationists Rule Presbyterian General Assembly.—The *Sunday-school Times*, in its issue of July 13, 1940, carried the following story concerning the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., which met in Rochester, N. Y., in May: "The General Assembly of the [Northern] Presbyterian Church at Rochester elected as moderator for next year a signer of the Auburn Affirmation, an 'affirmation' which makes optional for Presbyterian ministers belief in the inerrancy of Scripture, the virgin birth of Christ, the substitu-

tionary atonement, the bodily resurrection of Christ, and the supernatural character of Christ's miracles. An affirmation which reaffirmed these essential doctrines of the Christian faith was presented in an overture from the Arkansas Presbytery but was voted down *unanimously*. It was a glorious day for *Modernism*. Dr. H. McAllister Griffiths, in reporting the Assembly meetings for the *Christian Beacon*, said: 'They jubilated openly that at last a signer [of the Auburn Affirmation] had become moderator. When they produced the 'Affirmation' in 1923—1924, they were a minority in danger of expulsion. Today they sit in the seats of the mighty. They first pleaded for toleration [for themselves], divided evangelicals by every art known to ecclesiastical politics, won battle after battle on the representation that the 'issue is not doctrinal' and, after achieving mastery, denied toleration to those from whom they had gained it for themselves, and forced them out of the Church. They deprecated controversy as all 'fifth columns' do until they are ready to take over. Today the Church, which still contains hundreds of thousands of true, God-fearing, Christ-loving people, is in the iron grip of its modernist 'fifth column.' Dr. J. B. C. Mackie of Philadelphia is reported as having told Dr. Griffiths that the Affirmationists are now running the Church. 'We had a long fight; our horns were locked hard with you fellows for a long while,' Dr. Mackie said. The conservatives with their 'fight from within' program did not so much as lift a voice. Even when the vote came for the unanimous election of the Moderator, not one single 'fight from within' voice was heard.'

This report is confirmed by an article in the *Christian Beacon* (Aug. 1, 1940), entitled "The Auburn Affirmation Bears Fruit." It is written by Dr. W. C. Robinson, professor of theology at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga., and convincingly proves how thoroughly the Modernists control the Northern Presbyterian Church, after they have put to silence all conservative elements. It is a pitiful story indeed of violent oppression of the Christian truth by faithless schemers without principle and without conscience.

J. T. M.

Do the Scriptures Vary in Importance?—In view of the current liberal view that there are in Scripture parts of primary, secondary, and tertiary importance, it may be interesting to consider the simple, but correct reply which the *Sunday-school Times* (Aug. 3, 1940) gives in answer to the question. Liberal theology, of course, makes this distinction to discard as uninspired whole portions of Scripture; while the *Sunday-school Times*, though indeed acknowledging a difference, upholds the "inspiration, divinity, and eternal importance" of *all* Scripture. We read: "The question would seem to be a proper one. And most true, reverent students of the Bible would doubtless agree that not all of the books of the Bible are of equal importance if the question refers to what matters are of the greatest importance to mankind. But it is imperative to remember, as we recognize this, that '*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine [teaching], for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good

works' 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. This central passage on the inspiration of the Bible declares that every book of the Bible and *every word* [Italics ours] of the Bible is 'God-breathed' (the literal meaning of 'given by inspiration of God'); and that every part of the Bible is divinely important and divinely useful to us for our teaching, for the reproving and correcting of our mistakes and sins, for our instruction in righteous life and living; and, therefore, that if God's people would be mature, complete, in their spiritual life and every-day living and would be completely equipped for good works and for living as God would have them live, *they need to read and to use the entire Bible*. This central passage on the inspiration of the Bible is also immediately preceded by the inspired declaration that 'the Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' To be made wise unto salvation through faith in Christ as Savior is the supremely important matter for every man, woman, and child in the world; for 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God' and 'the wages of sin is death,' both the first death, of the body, and the second death, of the spirit. Rom. 3:23; 6:23. Therefore those books or passages of the Bible which show lost men how to be saved—and there are many such passages—are of the greatest importance. But after being saved [i. e., brought to salvation], we need to know how to live, how to honor and glorify God, how to lead others to Christ, how to recognize sin and be delivered from sinning, how to be completely furnished for the life-long business of living; and for all this the whole Bible is needed. Therefore the whole Bible is of inspired, divine, and eternal importance." The distinction here made is thus one of our *need* and not one of any "degrees in inspiration" as liberal theology in Lutheran circles has falsely declared. The distinction is similar to the one which our Lutheran theologians have made between fundamental and non-fundamental articles of faith.

J. T. M.

Concerning the Work of the Episcopalians among the Colored People. In the *Living Church* an Episcopalian bishop discusses briefly plans which are considered in Episcopalian circles to create a colored missionary district in our country. It is Bishop Barnwell of Georgia, who writes as follows:

"It was not proposed by the provincial commission on Negro work to 'form all Negro congregations in the province into a missionary district.' It was proposed that we form a 'missionary district to consist of the Negro work in such dioceses as shall by request of their bishops and diocesan conventions ask to have their Negro work included in such missionary district.' We also asked that a Negro bishop be elected for this missionary district when it is created.

"The provincial commission does not contemplate, nor does it desire, that more than four or five Southern dioceses do so consent. We should like to see about half of our Negro work developed under the plan of the missionary episcopate and about half remain under the administration of white dioceses, as in the past. We should then be able to see—about twenty years from now—whether or not there is any virtue in the racial-episcopate plan which has been considered for years." A.

Walter Rauschenbusch and the Social Gospel.— Under the heading "Walter Rauschenbusch — a Great Good Man" the *Religious Digest* publishes excerpts from an article which first appeared in the *Colgate-Rochester Divinity School Bulletin* on this late leader of social gospelism. Of special value is the "summary of belief" at the end of the article, showing that Rauschenbusch believed (1) that the kingdom of God on earth constituted the core of Jesus' message — that this kingdom would be realized by good people leagued in a society of goodness; (2) that the Church is the chief agency for building this divine society upon earth and that it must fulfil this mission or perish; (3) that nothing that concerns the life of man is outside the will of God and that religion, to be effective, must penetrate and Christianize every phase of individual and collective life; (4) that if the Church would seriously undertake the task of establishing on earth the kingdom of God, it would become the spiritual organ of a new world order; (5) that, when Jesus prayed, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," He was not uttering idle words but outlining a program for His disciples." To this "summary" the writer adds under the title "The Heart of the Gospel": "Man is more valuable than profits, creeds, denominations, or the world itself. Creeds, doctrines, and institutions are good only as they serve life. Moreover, every life is valuable. We must have compassion on people regardless of race, class, or condition. Every citizen of the Kingdom must oppose every evil that seeks to destroy human life. Where does that put us with reference to the liquor traffic, greed, injustice of every sort, unemployment, war? Rauschenbusch held that, wherever the economic system dehumanizes man, it, too, is evil; that, while the Christian ideal pretty largely dominates the home and public education, the economic, the industrial, and the international orders are far from the Kingdom."

The reason why we here quote this "summary," is not only that it presents a clear and concise picture of the social gospel for which Rauschenbusch stood and for which today Modernists still stand, but also that, misunderstanding the essence and aim of social gospelism, believing Christian circles today are turning to it with an emphasis that we cannot help regarding as misplaced. As the "summary" shows, Rauschenbusch adopted into his religious system not an iota of the doctrinal content of true Christianity. His "Christianity" was entirely social, or earthly, the fostering of the *iustitia civilis* with all its temporal benefits. As Ritschl, the father of social gospelism, so also Rauschenbusch did not acknowledge sin in its actual condemnability, nor Christ's atonement as the sinner's only way of salvation from sin. But just these two, sin and grace, or, to use the Savior's words, "repentance and remission of sins, should be preached in His name among all nations" (Luke 24:47); just that is the business of the Christian Church as such. The Christian Church is, of course, interested also in the social welfare of the world, but this follows as a necessary result of the preaching of the Law and the Gospel. By the spiritual Gospel, which it proclaims, the Church becomes a haven for good, "a light of the world and a salt of the earth." Believing Christians at times may have somewhat left out of view their social obligations, but not because they stressed their primary duty of preach-

ing repentance and remission of sins too much. The reverse rather is true: had the Church been more faithful in the proclamation of repentance and remission of sins, its charitable, or social, activity would have been greater also. Believing Christians who today demand greater emphasis on the social work of the Church should remember the final commission of their Lord, Mark 16:15 and Matt. 28:19, as the first thing that must come first. In the Pauline epistles the relation between Christian teaching and Christian holy and helpful living is clearly pointed out, and what we confessing Christians of today should strive at is not a quasi-imitation of Rauschenbusch but the faithful following in the footsteps of the great apostle who through the ceaseless preaching of the spiritual Gospel did more for the society of his time than all social gospelists have done for the time in which they lived and proclaimed their social gospel falsely so called, which benefited men neither spiritually nor temporally; for in every way the social gospel as advocated by Rauschenbusch, Kagawa, Fosdick, Bishop McConnell, and hosts of other Modernists has proved itself a dismal failure. J. T. M.

Einstein's Failure to Explain the World through a Unifying Theory.—Facile behaviorists who believe they can reduce social relationships to a formula may learn some wisdom from the latest declaration of Professor Einstein concerning the physical universe. For years, Mr. Einstein's consuming ambition has been to find an all-comprehensive physical theory into which the entire world of material phenomena could be fitted. He maintains that he has accomplished this for the world of heavenly bodies including the earth, through his theory of relativity, or "field theory." But the field theory breaks down completely when it comes to dealing with the atomic world. The atoms refuse to fit into any predetermined system of cause and effect and are governed by the "inexorable" law of indeterminacy or the "quantum theory." The reconciliation of the field theory and the quantum theory would solve the riddle. But after years of the most passionate effort Einstein finds himself further from the goal than ever. Furthermore, Einstein sees no hope that such an all-embracing theory can ever be attained. In other words, he admits the existence of a mystery beyond the power of the human mind to solve. If this be the physicist's admission concerning the world which he can see and handle, why scoff at the existence of mysteries in the world beyond the reach of any human measurement?

America

Luther Academy.—For the fourth consecutive year the Luther Academy met at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, from July 16 to July 24. This academy is patterned after the *Luther-Akademie* in Sondershausen, Germany, in that it serves as a forum for the leading men of all sections of the Lutheran Church and gives an opportunity for the formation of better mutual acquaintance.

The subjects discussed at this year's meeting of the Academy included the following: "The Second Chapter of James," by Dr. Julius Bodensieck, president-elect of Wartburg Seminary; "The Ancient Hebrews," by Dr. H. Lutz, professor of Assyriology in the University of California; "The Lord's Supper," by Dr. M. Reu of Wartburg Seminary; "Church

Architecture," by Dr. Luther Reed, president of the Mount Airy Seminary; "The New World View," by Dr. Ad. Pilger of Fond du Lac, Wis.; "The Effectiveness of the Sermon," by Prof. E. J. Friedrich of Wheat Ridge, Colo.; "The Kingdom of God," by Dr. M. Reu; "Berthold of Regensburg," by Prof. S. F. Salzmann; and "Papacy and World Dominion," by Dr. C. B. Gohdes of Columbus, O.

A total of 141 pastors from five different synods of the Lutheran Church attended the academy of 1940.

M. SCHARLEMANN

A Practical Description of "New Thought."—No doubt there are times when pastors are asked to give inquiring church-members a concise and practical description of what "New Thought" is. Perhaps the following witty, yet apposite description, offered by the *Christian Beacon* (July 25, 1940), may be of help to them. "New Thought is a hybrid between a personality show and a healing cult. Perhaps it would be well to consider what Old Thought is first. Old Thought is any form of authority, be it physician or Church. Calvinism and other forms of orthodoxy which lay emphasis upon man's sin, the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and punishment are all Old Thought. New Thought is opposed to such antiquated creeds and rituals. Originally springing from the same source as Christian Science, it first became a full-fledged religious sect about 1890 under a Bostonian by the name of Holcomb. The doctrine of New Thought is quite appealing to man. 'Man is made in the image of God, and evil and pain are but tests and corrections that appear when his thoughts do not reflect the full glory of the image. Man is God incarnate. There is no such thing as sin.' (See Rom. 3:23.) Troubles and afflictions, pain, disease, and death are only illusions. (See Ezek. 18:4.) All that we need is to realize our glorious deity and that we are actually God, and all will be well. Not only will health be restored and troubles be gone, but riches and wealth will roll in upon us. New Thought bears a close affinity to nineteenth-century Unitarianism, and one can detect a very real similarity between it and Modernism. 'Man's fall was upward. The chief aim of man is the development of his own personality.' New Thought has the peculiar virtue, however, of offering a definite solution to the problem. For best results one should get a 'beautiful thought and then begin to breathe deeply through the nose and exhale through the mouth, thereby exercising the solar plexus and increasing the blood flow.' The causes of all disease and disorder are bad mental words and pictures. The cure results in the displacing of the bad with good mental pictures. Consequently, New Thought subscribes to what it calls the 'silent message.' It has six steps: first, return every day to a quiet room alone for one half hour at least; second, take a restful position, relax your physical body, breathe freely and deeply for a few minutes; third, relax your mind, shut out all sensations; fourth, when calm and peaceful, concentrate on some affirmation such as the following: 'I am an expression of divine life, and in vitality, body, and affairs I show forth the limitless love, power, and wisdom of my Father'; fifth, let the affirmation fill you until rest and peace steal over you (until you go to sleep, in plain English); sixth, do this every day. There is also the solar-plexus method of rubbing one's stomach and keeping the mind filled with beautiful thoughts. Stephen

Leacock, in his book *Essays and Literary Studies*, makes the following observations: 'Here is a creed of self-development. It arrogates to itself the title of New Thought, but contains in reality nothing but the old selfishness. According to this particular outlook, the goal of morality is found in fully developing oneself. *Be large*, says the votary of this creed, *be high, be broad!* He gives a shilling to a starving man not that the man may be fed but that he himself may be a shilling-giver. The whole of his virtue and his creed of conduct runs to a cheap and easy egomania in which his blind passion for himself causes him to use external people and things as mere reactions upon his own personality. In its more ecstatic form this creed expresses itself in a sort of general feeling of uplift or the desire for internal moral expansion. The votary is haunted by the idea of his own elevation. He wants to get in touch with nature, to swim in the greater Being, to tune himself, to harmonize himself, and generally to perform on himself as on a sort of moral accordian. He gets himself somehow mixed up with natural objects — with the sadness of autumn he falls with the leaves and drips with the dew. Yet, odd though this may seem, this creed of self-development struts about with its head high as one of the chief moral factors which have replaced the authoritative dogma of the older King.'

The fundamental idea of New Thought is the pantheistic tenet that thought is superior to matter and that, if one has the will to conquer, he may overcome all hindrances to health and happiness. All objections against Christian Science hold with equal force also against its sister delusion, called New Thought. J. T. M.

Who Reads the Papers? — In reply to this question the *Lutheran* (May 8) writes: "Not as many people as we would like," and then comments: "News-stands are loaded with periodicals of bewildering variety, which are bought in vast quantity. In competition with them our serious and sober church-papers have a hard battle. Six well-known Methodist weekly papers, according to Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, had a circulation in 1922 of 250,311. In 1939 the circulation total was 220,727. The same story can be told in most church circles. The *Churchman*, much-respected periodical in the Protestant Episcopal Church, is asking whether all church journalism must be keyed down to the level of the 'gum-chewers' tabloids.' Will it be necessary to put all the news in pictures to save people the trouble of reading? And must discussions of all serious subjects be dropped to save readers from the pain of thinking? Here are some late figures on circulation of representative periodicals. They are worth thinking about. *Lutheran*, 20,100; *Watchman-Examiner* (Baptist), 11,192; *Christian Advocate*, New York (Methodist), 55,351; *Presbyterian*, 10,500; *Living Church* (Episcopal), 7,645; *America* (Roman Catholic), 27,240; *Commonweal* (Roman Catholic), 15,000; *Christian Century*, 29,911; *Christian Herald*, 252,881; *True Story Magazine*, 2,005,139." The list certainly is interesting. In general, conservative Christian periodicals in an orthodox denomination have more readers than liberal periodicals. At any rate, considering that our *Lutheran Witness* has more than 90,000, our *Lutheraner* close to 25,000, and our *Walther League Messenger* about 60,000 subscribers, the editors

of our church-papers have much to be thankful for, thanks largely to the care of many conscientious pastors and laymen who make it their business to promote the reading of their church periodicals in their congregations. Ultimately the one to lose by the loss of subscribers to the church-papers is the Church; for church-members badly informed on matters pertaining to their Church will find it hard to remain interested church-workers. We quote the list from the *Lutheran* for possible use and comparison by our pastors. J. T. M.

Future Presbyterian Ministers.—Dr. Carl McIntire, editor of the *Christian Beacon*, witnessed among others the licensure of Mr. Salvatore C. Schangler, recent candidate of Princeton Seminary, as also the reception, under the care of the Brooklyn-Nassau Presbytery, of Mr. Wm. M. Lovell, second-year man in Union Seminary, N. Y., and graduate of Yale. Reporting editorially on the experience, Dr. McIntire says (*Christian Beacon*, June 27):

"Mr. Schangler came highly recommended by the Presbytery's committee and was asked to read his statement of belief to the Presbytery. In his statement concerning the Bible he took the Barthian position represented by the recent professor in Princeton Dr. Brunner, though he did not tell the Presbytery that it was the nucleus of the Barthian position. Nevertheless, when his statement was read, there apparently was some question in the minds of presbyters, for they asked him questions concerning it. He said: 'The Bible contains the Word of God, and it has in it a revelation of God which is unique as to the goodness and the mercy of God. Besides the revelation of God the Bible has also human records, some of which historical records are not necessarily unique.' Here the distinction between the revelation which the Bible contains and the historical material which the Bible contains, which is the very *crux* of Barthianism, was brought before the Presbytery. Nevertheless he said that the historical sections were authentic. The young man's own pastor, Dr. Armes of the Bedford Presbyterian Church, speaking for the young man, attempted to explain the difference by telling the presbyters that they could all understand that in seminary when the students dealt with different dialectics, he would like to draw these lines. Dr. Armes is known as a premillenarian and Fundamentalist, and when one of his promising young men went to Princeton, it was necessary for him in the Presbytery of Brooklyn-Nassau to help the young man on this very vital issue. There is a great gap between saying that the revelation sections of the Bible and the historical sections of the Bible vary in their uniqueness. There is a great gap between saying that the Bible contains the Word of God and that the Bible is the Word of God. *Yield on the point that the Bible is the Word of God, and the citadel of Protestantism is lost.*" (Italics our own.)

"The young man from Yale had read in his behalf a letter from one of his professors in Union Seminary which said, 'Few students we can recommend so unqualifiedly.' In his first statement as to why he was going into the ministry he did not mention the name of Jesus Christ. He said that in his first year at Yale he saw the social need and that there was no institution more fitted to meet the need of the day than

the Church. When asked directly, 'What does Jesus Christ mean to you?' he said, 'He stands as a driving motive.' When asked, 'What is your conception of the ministry?' he said it was one of the most difficult positions to hold today because a minister had to be well read in psychology, sociology, human relations, literature. He said he was interested in working among laboring groups. Coming under the care of the Presbytery, the young man was to be examined as to his own religious experience. He never once said that he was saved or that he personally trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior. These matters were not brought out by the Presbytery. He was highly praised and commended for his prospects as a brilliant young candidate, and received apparently on the basis of his character."

Dr. McIntire's sane comment on this happening is contained in the title prefixed to the editorial, "Future Ministers." Pity the Church having such ministers to feed Christ's flock! J. T. M.

Brief Items.—Several months ago Prof. Olaf Elias Brandt of the Norwegian Lutheran Church passed away. He was a graduate of Concordia Seminary, belonging to the class of 1883, and in 1915 had received the honorary D.D. from Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis. He had been professor at Luther Seminary since 1897. From 1897—1902 he was the associate editor of *Kirketidende*. When in 1917 the merger of Norwegian synods was formed, he cast his lot with the majority.

May, this year, is a busy month in Rome, to be marked by all the impressive ceremonies customary when holy souls are officially elevated to the altars of the Church. On May 2 Blessed Gemma Galgani and Blessed Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier will be solemnly canonized. Later in the month several beatification ceremonies will take place, among them being those of the Venerable Rose Philippine Duchesne and the Venerable Joaquina de Vedruna de Mas.—So wrote *America*. The old game continues.

That Calvinism has not vanished entirely is apparent from an article in the *Presbyterian* having the heading: "The War and Contemporary Theology." The writer says: "The reassertion of original sin as an incontrovertible fact leads directly into the reassertion of irresistible grace, and the problem posed by the first doctrine finds its solution in the second. Incapable of effective righteousness without the help of God, without aid from what the Barthians call 'beyond,' we find that help in a power which takes hold of our lives both for instruction and command. As for its irresistibility, man's lower estimate of self always brings with it a higher estimate of God." The teaching of irresistible grace was one of the earmarks of the old Calvinism. Here we have an outcropping of the rationalism (combated in Dr. Engelder's present series) which makes conclusions and draws inferences running counter to clear statements of the Scriptures.

The attention of all of our pastors and teachers is herewith drawn to the educational number of the *Northwestern Lutheran* (Wisconsin Synod), which effectively brings the case of our Christian day-schools and of Lutheran schools and colleges before its readers. Whoever is

looking for a good tract pertaining to this important matter might simply order this particular issue of the paper mentioned (Vol. 27, No. 16).

Writing about this year's Assembly of Northern Presbyterians, an elder who attended the meetings as a delegate writes in the *Presbyterian* of July 4: "One thing I learned is that it is a preacher's convention. The average elder, like myself, does not have a chance to be informed upon many of the overtures and propositions, while the minister, working at church government and instructing his congregation 365 days in the year, is properly organized and is able to guide the destinies of the Church, while we humble elders vote 'Yes' and 'No' without a full comprehension or thorough understanding of the issues. There were overtures and propositions which had dynamite in them, and at this time, in the chaotic state of civilization, if adopted and practiced by a majority of the church-membership, might change the whole course of religion. We, as commissioners, were handed the printed dockets and printed reports on these various questions, which were so voluminous that it would take weeks and months to digest them properly." Many Lutheran laymen who have served as delegates voice similar sentiments. The question arises whether our synodical conventions are always as fully aware of the needs, handicaps, and predicaments of the laymen as they should be.

The *Lutheran* of July 24 reports that, when the Church Architectural Guild held its organizational meeting in New York City the latter part of June and thirty-seven representative architects were enrolled as charter members, "two Lutheran clergymen were also elected honorary members in recognition of 'distinguished service to the cause of church architecture.' These non-professional members are the Rev. Dr. Luther D. Reed of the Philadelphia seminary and the Rev. F. R. Webber, whose books on *Church Symbolism* and *The Small Church* are recognized as authoritative by ministers and architects alike." We are happy to see that the unselfish services of our brother Pastor F. R. Webber have received this well-deserved recognition.

Concerning the Auburn Affirmation the *Presbyterian* of July 18 writes: "Many who signed this historic challenge to the importance of certain vital parts of Christian truth now heartily deplore their hasty action. Some have said so. Others, who have confessed it privately, would do well to make public their feelings. God has written 'Ichabod' over the doors of the seminary where this document was incubated. [This is a reference to the discontinuance of Auburn Seminary as an independent institution.—A.] It wanders like a ghost about the halls of another seminary that gave up the Presbyterian Church for the pottage of German new theology. [The writer here refers to Union Seminary, which has received Auburn Seminary under its roof.—A.]" Those that consider Modernism innocuous ought to see the handwriting on the wall.

Referring to an article in the *Walther League Messenger*, by Dr. W. A. Maier, on the subject "Don't Marry Outside the Church," the Jesuit weekly *America* says: "Our Lutheran friends, looking at this problem from their own angle, naturally enough, suggest as a remedy that promises be exacted from the Catholic party that the Lutheran faith

will be respected, that the marriage will be performed and all children be brought up in that Church. This stand is not surprising, as the Lutherans have always been the most rigid and logical of all the Protestant sects. They do indeed pay a compliment to our Catholic logic in keeping it to face what to them is a danger. And their stand is, in a sense, welcome to us; for it may perhaps serve to convince our Catholic youth that marriage with Protestants is simply not to be contemplated."

In England a Roman Catholic organization has been founded which terms itself "The League for God." This league now prints 70,000 leaflets each month. In justifying its existence, a writer in *America*, one of the promoters, says: "The terrible tragedy in England is that its people have grown shy of God. We found them not simply willing to listen to us talking about God but almost passionately interested in what we had to say. We found a people starved for God—though they themselves in many cases only faintly suspected it. The Reformation and the consequent discrediting of religion in England had robbed them of God, but they were extraordinarily anxious to meet Him again once He came their way." Is the Reformation at fault? How about the appalling religious indifference in Spain, on which we reported some time ago?

Mormons are at present engaged in forming a "stake" or diocese in Washington, D.C. We are told that this is the third "stake" east of the Mississippi. In Washington there are said to be about 3,000 Mormons. Who would believe that a delusion of this sort could spread so widely!

A shocking religious fraud has just been uncovered by Federal officers. It consists in the venture promoted by a certain Guy Ballard, who, assisted by his wife, termed "Joan of Arc," and a son, Donald, termed "Jesus" and "Lafayette," started the "Great I Am" ism and who made the claim that he had attained to a condition of self-immortality, through which he had overcome disease, death, etc. Recently the swindler died, but his widow continued the fraud, pretending that her husband had now "ascended" and become the equal of Jesus. One can hardly believe the statement made in the press that these swindlers succeeded in collecting more than three million dollars, asserting that their object in gathering funds was charity. Since they offered their followers the condition of self-immortality and sent this offer through the mails, the widow and her son have been arrested for fraudulent use of the mails.

The *Christian Century* (undenominational) prints this item: This nation's drink bill in 1939 was \$3,228,491,968, according to Mrs. Ida B. Wise Smith, president of the WCTU. This represents \$24.64 for each man, woman, and child in the country. There are now twice as many saloons as churches, and fifty per cent. more is spent for liquor than for education.

In Canada Jehovah's Witnesses, as we gather from the religious press, have been declared by the government to be an illegal organization. It seems they made themselves a nuisance. Whoever has had any dealings with these people, better known as Russellites, will agree that they are a human pest. Precisely on what grounds the Canadian authorities base their action we have not as yet heard.

A.