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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

J. T. Mueller

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

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Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

Commissions on Fellowship.—The executive committee of the American Lutheran Church selected the *personnel* of the Commission on Fellowship. Instead of two committees, as in the past, there will be now only one. The following are the members: the Rev. Dr. Emanuel Poppen, president of the American Lutheran Church; the Rev. E. F. Brandt of Oak Harbor, Ohio; the Rev. Dr. P. H. Buehring, Columbus, Ohio; the Rev. August Engelbrecht, Mendota, Ill.; the Rev. Theodore Fritschel of New Hampton, Iowa; the Rev. Dr. K. A. Hoeffel, Milwaukee, Wis.; the Rev. L. Ludwig of Portland, Oregon; the Rev. Dr. M. Reu, Dubuque, Iowa, and the Rev. Dr. Walter E. Schuette of Sewickley, Pa. The U. L. C. A. Commission on Relations to American Lutheran Church-bodies for 1941—42, as recently announced, has this membership: the Rev. F. H. Knubel, D. D. (chairman), 39 East 35th St., New York, N. Y.; the Rev. Henry H. Bagger, the Rev. Paul H. Krauss, the Rev. H. Offerman, the Rev. Paul H. Roth; E. F. Eilert, J. K. Jensen, E. Clarence Miller, Edward Rinderknecht. — N. L. C. B.

Does Joint Acceptance of a Confessional Statement Matter?—The president of Augustana College, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, in an address at the American Lutheran Conference convention last November, included these remarks: "I cannot escape the conviction that many within the Church of today have only a dim awareness of the panoply of God which is stored up in the Word, for all our discussions about inspiration of the Bible. There is a tendency to draw up statements about the nature of Inspiration and to believe that, if we could agree on such statements, a certain kind of unity would result which would make us different from what we have been. I am frank to state that I can conceive of success in the formulation of such phrases with the real result that we remain exactly where we were. Suppose that the representatives of three million of Lutherans discovered a formula on which all could unite, and that statement said that the Bible is inspired as inspiration was thus defined, what then? What difference would it make, except probably that we deceived ourselves that it made a difference?"

These are words which compel one to pause. From a certain point of view what Dr. Bergendoff says is right. The mere acceptance of joint statements is not something to rejoice over. It may in reality be a factor bringing about a sorry delusion. If church-bodies sign statements merely to sign something, then it would be far better if the ceremony were not undertaken at all. Undoubtedly such signing of documents often took place in the Middle Ages when coercion was practiced. It was and is an abominable thing. But when representatives of two church-bodies draw up a statement which represents their heart's conviction and they submit this to their church-bodies and the church-bodies after careful examination find that the statement represents the doctrine which is held in the two bodies, then there is great cause for rejoicing, because it has become evident that there is agreement. It is true that the doctrine in the two bodies may not be dif-

ferent after the signing from what it was before, but at any rate, through the joint acceptance it has become evident that there is unity of faith, a situation which is necessary before there can be true fellowship. It might be added that from another point of view the drawing up of a joint statement is important. What we have in mind is that the forceful testimony to the truth rendered by representatives of church-bodies will have a kindling effect on those who read the statement, and they will through the power of this testimony be brought to occupy a Scriptural position in the questions under discussion. We say, therefore, in conclusion, Let us not deceive ourselves and ascribe too great a significance to the signing of joint doctrinal statements. However, let us, in addition, not undervalue joint acceptance of agreements and confessions, but realize that it is in this manner that the Church does its work here on earth. A.

A. L. C. Testimony with Respect to Verbal Inspiration.—In reviewing a book by Dr. Moffatt (*Jesus Christ the Same*), in which the teaching of verbal inspiration is attacked, Dr. J. A. Dell of the faculty of the Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, writes in the *Journal of Theology*, issued by the American Lutheran Conference: "The readers of this magazine will remember that I have shivered more than one lance in defense of the term 'verbal inspiration,' holding that, if the words are not inspired, the Bible is not inspired. What, then, does Dr. Moffatt, who calls the 'theory of verbal inspiration' a caricature, believe concerning this written record? He says: 'We may say that, as God's self-revelation enters into history and experience, to carry out His purpose and to realize His will, preeminently through the life of Jesus Christ on earth, the Word cannot be confined to its immediate and original audience. These recipients attest it, but they do not exhaust its significance. In their testimony lies a historical guarantee of its characteristic qualities. But also through them the revelation is transmitted; it is communicated afresh to successive generations, and Scripture, or the written Word, is a vital factor in the process.' The point with me is, Is it a reliable factor in the process of transmitting God's self-revelation to successive generations? Can I today rely on its statements (conveyed in words) as true? If it is a patchwork of the opinions of uninspired men, I could have little confidence in it." We recall that on at least one occasion Dr. Dell took one of his brethren in the American Lutheran Conference to task for not adhering to the doctrine of verbal inspiration. The remarks just quoted are evidence that he means to continue to uphold the truth with respect to the character of the Holy Scriptures.

The attitude of Dr. Dell is shared by Dr. M. Reu, as a remark in the February, 1941, number of the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* again indicates. Reviewing a book by Dr. Tidwell (*Christ and the Pentateuch*), Dr. Reu says: "Also to us the Bible is the inspired Word of God in all its details, also to us the Old Testament points to Christ," etc. It is our hope that this testimony will prove effective, in the first place, in the American Lutheran Conference and, next, in the United Lutheran Church of America. A.

Is the Lutheran Union in the Offing?—The address of Dr. P. O. Bersell, President of the Augustana Synod, at the 1940 convention of the American Lutheran Church in Detroit, Mich., has been published in the *Lutheran Companion*, Jan. 23, 1941. From the paragraphs headed by the caption "Not Interested in New Theological Theses" (supplied by the *Companion*) we submit the following: "I would like to make two statements. The one is that the Augustana Synod is interested in confirming our fraternal fellowship, and establishing such fellowship where it is not today, on the basis of our knowledge of one another, on the basis of Christian confidence the one in the other. The Augustana Synod is not interested in any new theological theses. There were enough of them written in the sixteenth century to last until Judgment Day. We as a synod have made our confession concerning the faith that is once and for all delivered unto the saints. And may I, with your indulgence, President Poppen, say to this convention what I have said to you privately, that, if the American Lutheran Church is waiting for the Augustana Synod to 'endorse your note' to the Missouri Synod, if you want us to be a cosigner to the agreement, if you are waiting for us to adopt those articles as a premise for your concordat with the Missouri Synod, you may as well forget about it right now. . . . The sentiment, Mr. President, that I want to convey to your body is this, that the Augustana Synod is not interested in creating any police department with any detective bureaus to spy upon the actions of any members of the American Lutheran Church, nor have we any desire whatsoever to attempt any discipline upon any members or pastors of the American Lutheran Church from our side of the fence. And we believe, trustingly, that the attitude of the American Lutheran Church as such, all signs to the contrary notwithstanding, as far as individuals and groups here and there may be concerned, will be the same spirit of mutual trust."

In the *Journal of Theology of the American Lutheran Conference*, February, 1941, p. 210 ff., the editor-in-chief, Dr. G. M. Bruce, professor of theology in the Norwegian Lutheran Church, comments on the statements made in *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, January, p. 62, regarding the 1940 convention of the American Lutheran Conference. He says: "What Dr. Arndt says about the conditions for fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod and the attitude of the latter body to the American Lutheran Conference confirms what we said in an editorial in the November issue of the *Journal of Theology*, for which we received some pointed criticism on the floor of the Minneapolis convention. These words [of Dr. Arndt]: 'There can be no fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod unless the American Lutheran Church either leaves the American Lutheran Conference or the latter, both with respect to doctrine and practices, places itself on the foundation of the Synodical Conference,' are plain and readily understood, and they express beyond any doubt the general attitude of the leadership both in the Missouri and Wisconsin synods toward the Lutheran groups outside of the Synodical Conference. In other words, American Lutheranism must go to Canossa in order to be recognized as truly Lutheran, not only in matters of doctrine but also in matters of practice. This may

prove to be a long and hard road to travel for two thirds of American Lutheranism now outside the Synodical Conference, and we question very much whether attaining such a goal would be worth the cost. Since there is only one way to such recognition and fellowship, the way to Canossa, the futility of negotiations, whatever the result in theses more or less approved mentally or otherwise, should become quite apparent."

Sentiments like those expressed by Dr. Bersell and Dr. Bruce are not conducive to Lutheran union.—Dr. Bruce's comment on another paragraph in the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY article makes better reading. This paragraph states: "A person cannot help asking, Is the American Lutheran Conference not at all interested in doctrine? Apparently there was no discussion of doctrinal issues, no mention of the denial of Verbal Inspiration which occurred in the Norwegian Free Church, no pointing to the necessity of reaching Scriptural practice concerning unionism and lodge-membership. Dr. Bruce comments: "We believe this is a point well taken and worthy of serious consideration. It is a fact that we cannot deny that doctrinal questions have received little or no attention at the convention of the American Lutheran Conference. We have been too occupied with the consideration of practical questions and the implementation of cooperative enterprises to give any attention to doctrinal matters. We believe the time has come when a session of the convention should be set aside for the consideration of a doctrinal question of special current significance. There is one fine feature about our conventions which meets with general approval and that is that the devotional element has been given due prominence. This feature should be continued. But let us add another standing feature to our program, namely, the consideration of some fundamental, doctrinal question, with an orientating and scientific presentation by one of our theologians and ample opportunity for free and open discussion. We can well afford the time for such a consideration and would profit greatly by doing so." "Doctrinal questions of special current significance" to be discussed would naturally be Verbal Inspiration, Conversion, Millennialism, Unionism, etc.—

The *Lutheran Herald* of Feb. 25, which just came to hand, speaks of this matter in an editorial entitled "The Other One-Third." "In commenting on the recent meeting of the National Lutheran Council, we raised the question whether it is possible to discern any growing feeling of unity among the various groups composing American Lutheranism. We did not have reference to the relations between the bodies making up the Council; we are convinced that the ties binding them together are becoming stronger all the time." It is the judgment of the *Herald* that the Norwegian Lutheran Church is coming closer not only to the American Lutheran Church but also to the United Lutheran Church. "Are there any indications that the Synodical Conference is preparing to forsake its isolationist position and take part in joint Lutheran endeavors? . . . Following the meeting referred to above, the daily press spoke of Lutheran unity as being in the offing. The *Christian Century* apparently placed too much credence on newspaper reports and carried a news item headed 'War Situation Brings Cooperation from Missouri

Lutherans.' Commenting on the matter, the *Christian Century* closed its report thus: 'Who says that war never accomplishes anything?' (The item in the *Christian Century*, Feb. 25, reads: "After refusing for years to cooperate in any way with other Christian bodies, including other branches of the Lutheran communion, the Missouri Synod has announced that it will cooperate with other Lutheran churches in furnishing assistance to 'orphaned' missions and in extending aid to men in armed forces. Who says that . . .?")

The *Herald* editorial goes on to say: "With no intention of casting gloom, we are forced to say that we see little in the picture to make us applaud. We have read carefully the official reports of all meetings looking toward closer unity. We have also read editorial statements in the press of the Missouri Synod and its sister synods, including the statement signed by the editors of the *Lutheran Witness* which sees separation as the only way to attain unity; . . . including also the various estimates — none complimentary — of the American Lutheran Conference which have appeared since our recent convention. And we are convinced that Missouri and her sisters have shown absolutely no intention to seek closer relations with any of us, except on her own terms, terms to which none of us can or will accede." (Italics ours.) E.

The Failure of Modernism. — Modernism has no message of salvation to offer to a world perishing in sin; nor has it any power to accomplish great things. This is witnessed in an editorial, in the *Christian Beacon* (Jan. 23, 1941), which says: "The National Christian Mission has come to Philadelphia and gone. Many meetings were planned. Prominent speakers appeared. One of the leaders, however, accused publicly the pastors of Philadelphia of failing to cooperate, or rather of manifesting the spirit of 'Let George do it.' There seemed to be a lack of spirit behind the whole program. We have followed closely the reports which appeared in the daily press and the releases which were given to the public, and we have not seen in any of them one single statement of the way of salvation for lost sinners. America needs to be told that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses from all sin. America needs to be told that there is a power, a wonder-working power, in the blood of Calvary." Also in the National Christian Mission conducted here in St. Louis there was no emphasis on this fundamental Gospel-message.

But as Modernism has no message, it, too, has no power. In the same issue of the *Christian Beacon* there occurs this editorial: "A young Methodist minister, thirty-six years of age, a graduate of Yale Divinity School, stands in his Methodist pulpit in a town in the Midwest and tells his members that the time has come for the Government to force a union of all Protestant bodies into one Church. One marvels that a congregation of free Americans would even so much as sit and listen to such a discourse. This is what the Japanese government is now doing to the Church in Japan. The article was sent to us by the Rev. Philip Du Bois Arcularius, of the class of 1925 of Yale College, who is a true Bible-believer and a defender of the faith. He wrote: 'Perhaps you have already seen the enclosed clipping. It is the most bald-faced and abject offer to surrender our Protestant heritage that

I have ever heard tell of, especially coming, as it does, from one who professes to be a Protestant pastor. The liberty that our Lord Jesus Christ purchased for us with His precious blood and that our ancestors protected by the shedding of theirs, this foolish young man accounts a mere trifle. He does not appear to realize that he is playing into the hands of Rome, under which, and headed by the false prophet of Rev. 13:11-17, the apostate Protestantism which he represents and advocates eventually will be headed up.' For the Government to do what this Methodist minister desires to have done, the Bill of Rights and all that it stipulates concerning religious freedom will have to be scrapped." The warning that Modernism is playing into the hands of Rome is worth heeding, for never has Rome been more popular in our country than it is today. We may add, however, that Modernism is playing also into the hands of Communism, which is the other extreme of its ill-fated course.

J. T. M.

Distribution of Army Chaplains.—During the annual meeting of the National Lutheran Council at Columbus, O., January 22 and 23, the distribution of chaplains in the service of the Army and Navy was reported as follows:

	Army Regular	Reserve	Nat'l Guard	Navy Acting	Reserve	Total
United Lutheran Church	7	6	5		1	19
American Lutheran Church	1	3	2	6		12
Norwegian Lutheran Church	2	2	4		1	9
Augustana Synod	1					1
Lutheran Free Church		1				1
Missouri Synod	3	15	1	3		22
	14	27	12	9	2	64

N. L. C. B.

Relations between the Presbyterians (Northern) and the Episcopalians.—The chairman of the Episcopal Church's Commission on Approaches to Unity, Bishop Parsons, retiring bishop of California, states, as reported in the *Living Church*, that at the late convention of the Episcopalians three important resolutions were adopted and one canonical change. The first resolution was a mere reaffirmation of the intention of the Episcopalians to bring about organic unity with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and it expressed satisfaction with the Presbyterians' attitude, who had accepted the invitation to carry on negotiations. The second resolution, as pointed out by the bishop, recommends that cooperation be practiced by the two church-bodies in local mission projects. The third resolution is a recommendation that, where circumstances warrant it, the two church-bodies join hands in programs of Christian education. The canonical change alluded to is described by Bishop Parsons as follows: "We are everywhere inviting Presbyterian ministers to preach in our pulpits. This has been done under the canon which allows 'Christian men' with permission of the bishop, to speak in our pulpits. We hope that all Presbyterian ministers as well as all Episcopal ministers are 'Christian men'; but the canon (1907) was expressly worded in that way to raise no question of 'orders.' It seemed as if we must make it clear that the ministers of a Church with which we have entered into so important

negotiations as those with the Presbyterians should have some special recognition, and the canon was therefore amended to specify that ministers of churches with which we have entered into an agreement to reach organic unity may have the bishop's authorization to preach the Gospel in our churches." The bishop states that in view of the amended canon Presbyterian ministers have a special status, since the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church "have entered into an agreement to reach organic unity."

A.

Brief Items.—In Chicago there will probably soon be witnessed a major effort to provide religious education for children attending the public schools through special week-day instruction given by the churches. At a meeting of church representatives Prof. W.C. Bower of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago is reported to have stated that the week-day religious education program which is in the making would have to recognize the principle of separation of Church and State and yet would endeavor to give religion a significant place in the educational program. If any children are through this method brought to Christ, we shall rejoice. The ideal solution, of course, is that provided through our Christian day-schools.

Gambling is on the increase throughout California. A new race-track costing \$1,500,000 is being opened in Albany. Under the new set-up the University of California receives this year nearly \$400,000 from the proceeds of the tracks, according to the *Daily Californian*, a student paper. The board of regents officially protested to the State Racing Commission against licensing this track, which is adjacent to the university.—Correspondence for the *Christian Century*.

According to the *New York Times* the New York State Court of Appeals refused to give Bertrand Russell permission to appeal from the decision of Justice John E. McGeehan of the State Supreme Court. It will be recalled that Bertrand Russell's appointment as professor in the City College of New York was revoked by this justice because Russell "has taught in his books immoral and salacious doctrines." So the victory for decency was endorsed by the Court of Appeals.

The following statistics are cited by the *N.C.W.C. News Service* from the *Annuario Pontificio*, papal year-book. There are 1,730 separate ecclesiastical jurisdictions throughout the world (dioceses, vicariates, etc.). There were 55 cardinals at the beginning of 1941. Missionaries depending on the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith total 73,887 (20,578 priests; 8,514 Brothers, 44,895 Sisters). There are 935 religious orders, of which 159 are of men, 776 of women. The Holy See has representatives in 60 countries, and 35 have representatives at the Holy See.—*America*.

On January 15 there were 163 Catholic chaplains on duty with the armed forces of the United States, and their number is increasing.

America

The new biweekly whose intended publication was announced about a month ago, *Christianity and Crisis*, began its career February 10. Besides the editor-in-chief, Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Seminary, the editorial board consists of Charles G. Burlingham of New York,

a lawyer, Rhoda E. McCulloch, who is editor of the *Woman's Press*, John A. Mackay, president of Princeton Seminary, Francis P. Miller of the Council of Foreign Relations, Edward L. Parsons, Protestant Episcopal bishop emeritus of California, and Henry P. Van Dusen, professor at Union Seminary. The journal favors an aggressive antitotalitarian course. The clocks are turned back nine hundred years, a crusade is impending, and clergymen are contemplating donning a coat of mail to fight what they consider the battle of the Lord—and all of it under the banner of the Prince of Peace!

Why is Mr. Rutherford, the head of the cult known as that of "Jehovah's Witnesses," called "judge"? According to *America*, he had set up a law practice in Booneville, Mo. He acquired his title of "judge," so it is said, when he "filled in" "for a four-day absence of the regular judge in the Cooper County Circuit Court, a practice not unusual in sparsely settled regions, where spare judges are not grown on trees." What a judicial career!

Does the Catholic Church sanction strikes? *America* writes (February 8): "Catholics, whether they are Congressmen or otherwise, who deny the right to strike and advocate repression, find themselves out of harmony with the Church's teachings, which defends these rights while urging the use of every means of conciliation."

In Charlotte, Vt., where he lived in retirement, a man died on October 9, 1940, whose name is referred to with respect the world over, Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell of Labrador. We are told that a sermon by Dwight L. Moody moved this man when he was still a student at the University of Oxford to choose the career of a medical missionary. The people of Labrador will never forget him as one of their great benefactors. While this notice appears late, we believe it better to let it be printed late than not at all.

Agreement with the district attorney of Madera County, Calif., was reached last week by A. L. Wirin, attorney for the Southern California Committee of the A. C. L. U., in the case of James Bishop Carr, who served a twenty-day jail sentence for refusing to allow his daughter to attend school on Friday. Carr is a member of the Pentecostal sect which observes Friday as the Sabbath. Authorities agreed to withhold any further prosecution and to arrange for the child's private instruction one day of each week.

How far Modernism and unbelief have entered the mission-fields can be seen from a correspondence in the *Christian Century* referring to the doctrinal platform which the Union Church in Japan will be given. A commission is debating the creedal basis of the union venture. People anticipate that the Apostles' Creed will be accepted as basic. However, the fear is voiced "that objection may arise over the doctrines of divine judgment of all things earthly, of the resurrection of the body, which is widely regarded as unscientific and superstitious, and on the Virgin Birth, which is said to be immoral." The correspondence continues: "That these are problems which will continue to plague the Church in Japan can be prophesied, whatever the decision at this time." What a frightful defection from Bible-teaching is reported in these few words!

Bingo statistics for the past year are a sad commentary on how representative American people are investing their time and money. In Cincinnati, during the record-breaking year of 1940, gross bingo receipts exceeded the two-million mark, a 23-per-cent. increase over 1939, netting the sponsoring organizations over \$1,000,000 at the expense of the three million persons in attendance. The average weekly attendance was over 60,000 in this single city. One minister, in a sermon published in a local paper, points to the fact that Americans spend \$600,000,000 annually upon dogs in contrast with lesser amounts for the work of the Church and then quotes Martin Luther: "Whatever thy heart clings to and relies upon, that is properly thy God." The nation as a whole seems to be "going to the dogs. As for us in Cincinnati, we are going bingo." — Correspondence in the *Christian Century*.

A correspondent of the *Christian Century*, writing from Edinburgh, Scotland, states that December 1 (the Sunday nearest to St. Andrew's Day) was observed in that country as Foreign Missions Sunday. He reports with joy that the observance of that occasion met with greater success than any in previous years. A moratorium on foreign mission-work which some had feared would put in its appearance on account of the war conditions involving the larger part of Europe, Scotland included, did not become a reality. Ten thousand pounds more were contributed for foreign missions in 1940 than in 1939.

A convert from Catholicism was recently inducted into the ministry of the United Lutheran Church in a ceremony led by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Trexler, president of the United Lutheran Synod of New York. The new minister is Nicholas Wesselengi, who until his confirmation into the Lutheran faith two years ago had served as a Roman Catholic priest in his native Hungary and in Windsor, Ontario. The ordination was performed at the First Hungarian Wendish Church in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. — *N. C. L. Bulletin*.

Rumors that Martin Niemoeller, imprisoned head of the German Confessional Church, had become a Catholic are denied by his relatives and friends as well as by Berlin authorities. Unfounded reports of conversions do no good to the Church and are unfair to non-Catholics. We have heard too many such of late. — *America* (Roman Catholic).

Nach einer Aufstellung des Boersenvereins deutscher Buchhaendler entfiel von den Veroeffentlichungen des Jahres 1939 wie im Vorjahr die groesste Zahl, 16,7 Prozent, auf die schoene Literatur. An sweiter Stelle stehen die religioesen und theologischen Schriften mit 9,5 Prozent, ein Zeichen, wie stark das deutsche Volk sich mit religioesen Fragen beschaeftigt. 7,6 Prozent betrafen Technik und Handwerk, 6,8 Prozent Geschichte, Kulturgeschichte und Volkskunde, 5,7 Prozent die Rechtswissenschaft, 5,6 Prozent die Jugendschriften, 2,4 Prozent Philosophie und Weltanschauung. — *Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung*.

These words referring to France, printed in the *New York Herald Tribune*, may well be pondered by all citizens of our country: "A striking feature of the third republic was its repudiation of God. No statesman of republican France ever mentioned the Deity in his public addresses. It would have been political suicide for him to do so. French

Freemasonry, as contrasted with the lodges in the United States and England, was largely atheistic, and in the late parliamentary system was a force to be reckoned with. . . . The name of God was tabu in the French classroom." If political leaders and public-school teachers omit reference to God in their official pronouncements because they recognize the separation of Church and State, their course is to be applauded. Sad to say, in France silence with respect to God in public statements of the leaders seems to have sprung from unbelief.

Dr. Jeremiah Ohl died in Philadelphia on January 21 at the age of ninety years. Distinguished achievement in two fields of church-work marked the career of this veteran minister. He was an Inner Mission pioneer, organizer and rector of the Milwaukee Motherhouse, superintendent for twenty years of the Philadelphia City Mission, and author of *The Inner Mission* as well as active in every Church-wide movement for heightened emphasis on the social ministry. He was a fine scholar in the fields of church art and music. Dr. Ohl was music editor of the Common Service Book, chairman of the U. L. C. Committee on Church Music for many years, author of nine hymns in the Common Service Book, and editor of children's hymnals. — *The Lutheran*.

Jacques Maritain, the famous French Roman Catholic scholar, is soon to join the faculty of the University of Chicago. There he will reenforce the neo-Thomist group. — *Christian Century*.

The United Lutheran Church Publication House has made available the entire common service of the United Lutheran Church on four records. The music for the recordings is provided by Trinity Lutheran Church choir of Lancaster, Pa., under the direction of Dr. Harry A. Sykes, eminent organist and choir-master, and the liturgy is read by the Rev. Donald S. Irvin, pastor of the Church of Our Savior, Haddonfield, N. J. The four records include all details of the service except the sermon.

N. L. C. B.

Evidence of the vitality of religion under war conditions is emphasized by the annual report of the British Foreign Bible Society. This shows that 12,000,000 volumes were circulated during the past year, 750,000 more than in the previous year. The Secretary for Central Europe reports that sales were up by nearly 200,000 and says: "Everywhere in their sorrow, men and women have been turning to the Word."

N. L. C. B.

One prediction at least has come true, that American preachers who almost to the last man vowed they would never advocate our entering another war would, in a crisis, make a complete about face. Episcopal Bishop Johnson of Colorado, now retired, said in a recent speech: "Speaking as an American, as a Christian, and as a bishop of the Christian Church, I say that we cannot be neutral in this conflict without the loss of our own moral ideals and of our own souls. I say that it is the duty of all churches, all believers in God, all true Americans, to oppose this evil thing [Hitlerism] openly and with our whole strength," etc. This is taking the war from the sphere of politics into the realm of religion. It is one of the fruits growing on the tree of the social gospel.

A.