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Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

The Origin of the Norwegian Synod.—In the Norwegian Synod, one of our sister synods in the Synodical Conference, preparations are being made for a proper observance of its ninetieth anniversary. One of its former presidents, the Rev. Chr. Anderson, in the *Lutheran Sentinel* submits these interesting paragraphs on the early history of his Church:

When the Norwegian Synod was organized in 1853, the following seven pastors were in active service: A. C. Preus, H. A. Preus, C. L. Clausen, H. A. Stub, J. A. O. Ottesen, N. Brandt, and G. F. Dietrichson. A total of 38 congregations was served by these pastors, 3 in Illinois, 4 in Iowa, and 31 in Wisconsin. At the time of the organization of the Synod 17 of these congregations had formally accepted the constitution. Most of the others, however, formally joined the Synod later on.

Shortly after the organization meeting in 1853 Rev. V. Koren arrived from Norway and took up his work in Iowa, being the first resident pastor of our Synod west of the Mississippi. In 1854 Pastor O. T. Duus was added to the roster. In 1855 J. Storm Munch was added. At the meeting at Coon Prairie, Wis., in 1859, the following six pastors were accepted as members of the Synod: P. Brodahl, C. F. Magelssen, Laur. Larsen, F. C. Clausen, N. E. Jensen, and B. J. Muus. In the mean time Pastors Munch, Dietrichson, and Duus had returned to Norway, and Pastor C. L. Clausen was no longer in active service, so that there were altogether 12 pastors. Up to the synodical convention in 1859, 51 congregations had formally joined the Synod.

During these years extensive work was carried on in the Home Mission field. They had no mission board to direct this work. Though these pioneer pastors served a number of congregations, some of them as many as ten or more, congregations which often were scattered and long distances apart, they felt that they had to take time to visit new settlements which were established from time to time and organize the work as far as it was possible. This work was usually attended with great difficulties, as roads and means of transportation were very primitive. Their physical strength was taxed to the limit; but it was a great encouragement to them that their work was greatly appreciated by those to whom they ministered. They sometimes came to places where the people for years had not enjoyed the privilege of having the Gospel preached and the Sacraments administered. When the pastor paid them his first visit, it was an event long to be remembered.

In this way new congregations were organized every year. Strong appeals were made to pastors and theological candidates in Norway to come and take up work in these constantly growing mission-fields. A few came in response to these appeals, but not by far enough to supply the needs. It could not be expected that the overburdened pastors would be able to do thorough work under these circumstances; but they continued diligently and faithfully to minister to the spiritual needs of

thousands of hungry souls, hoping that the time would soon come when the crying need for workers would be met, at least in part, by the men who were being trained at the theological seminary of our brethren in the Missouri Synod.

A.

"This Union Epidemic."—This is the heading of a brief article written by Pastor E. E. Zellmer of Sterling, Colo., and published in the *Lutheran Standard*. Inasmuch as it is somewhat of a counterblast to some of the unionistic utterances which have lately appeared in the *Standard*, we insert it here. When the author says, "As I see it, we, the American Lutheran Church and American Lutheran Conference, are a kind of bridge or central ground upon which the other two may meet with us," he undoubtedly is sincere and believes that we of the Missouri Synod are going too far on the right while the U. L. C. A. is going too far on the left. We do not agree with him. In an earnest doctrinal discussion of all issues involved we trust he would see that we have not overemphasized certain truths or made Lutheranism too narrow a thing. We commend him, however, for uttering a note of warning with respect to the "union epidemic" and hope his words will be heeded.

"Our democracy grants us various privileges, among which is freedom of speech. As this also applies in our religious life and church, I feel constrained to express my views and fears on this 'unity' question which has been introduced in the columns of the *Lutheran Standard*.

"As long as I have been in the ministry, I have not only wished and prayed for a Lutheran unity but have tried to contribute my part towards its consummation; yet through all this I have never wanted a manufactured union or a union built upon sentimental ideals or a plebiscite union, because such unions are not unity. Although we will never reach a complete agreement in all matters of religion here on earth, yet to walk together in unity does demand an agreement in the fundamentals in Scripture.

"It is true that many go beyond the limit in their demands for the establishment of a Lutheran unity; but if I were to choose, I would prefer this attitude to the attitude of those who apparently would ignore things precious and sacred for the sake of an external union. Esau once made this dreadful mistake when he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

"When I read the expressions of some of our brethren on this subject in the *Lutheran Standard*, I ask myself, Whither are we bound? Has the union epidemic also affected us to the extent that we are ready, even now, to go beyond our Lutheran Church and fellowship with any individual or denomination that accepts Jesus Christ as the Savior? Simply to confess that Jesus is the Savior of the world is not enough for a Lutheran Christian; for he knows churches that claim a unity upon such a basis, but where scarcely two agree on doctrinal interpretations of Scripture unless such interpretations are of a liberalistic nature. Are we in the American Lutheran Church or in the American Lutheran Conference so hard pressed that our existence or future usefulness depends on a union with the other two Lutheran bodies? As I see it, we, the American Lutheran Church and American Lutheran Conference,

are a kind of bridge or central ground upon which the other two may meet with us. Would it not be wisest and most charitable to remain here until this meeting is effected in God's own way? We have made appreciable progress in the past two years toward this end wherever there was a Christian will to cooperate. Good and lasting things do not come easily or quickly. Let us stand our ground, avoiding all unnecessary obstacles on the one side and making no unscriptural concessions on the other." A.

The Book of Job and the Problem of Suffering.—This is the heading of a very helpful article, appearing in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* (January, 1941). There are a number of things in the essay with which this writer cannot agree, as, for example, when it is said that the Book of Job was written at a late time in Israel's history when men, because of the destruction of the Temple, the deportations, the failures of certain prophecies concerning the permanency of Jerusalem, the unanswered prayers of Jeremiah, the affliction of the pious, challenged the theology of the day and began to question the inseparability of piety and prosperity. This is spoken in the vein of liberal Bible criticism. The ancient tradition, quoted by Chemnitz in his *Examen*, that Moses, having heard the story of Job in the desert, wrote it to comfort the Israelites in their tribulation in Egypt, is still defended by believing scholars and has much in its favor to commend it even today, though Biblical scholars usually assign it to the Solomonic period. The problem concerning the suffering of the righteous is certainly as old as the first day when such suffering occurred and was no doubt considered by Jacob when his pious son was taken from him, as by Joseph himself when he was sold into Egypt and there cast into prison because of his integrity. Nevertheless, the fine analysis of the Book of Job and its major problem, presented in the article, makes it worthy of careful study. Job, having been severely afflicted by God, is visited by three comforters, who in their well-meaning way desire to argue him into repentance because of some great transgression which must have brought upon him this almost unbearable punishment. Against this line of argument Job maintains his integrity, though he freely admits his imperfection and failings, God alone being absolutely perfect; and so from the condemnation of his friends he appeals to God Himself for an equitable decision of his case. When the three comforters have been silenced, Elihu speaks, showing the educative value of suffering. "Suffering enriches life, opens up our springs of compassion, gives us the power to endure and to comfort, provides a new and larger vision of God. It unites us to God [of course, by enduring faith only], as nothing else can unite us." After Elihu, God Himself speaks, and though He does not answer the questions of Job and therefore does not solve the problem of suffering, "He reveals His providence in the heavens and on earth, His kindness toward the wild beasts, and His care for the 'noblest of His creatures.'" "The final word is that God is Love." "In all his sufferings Job must learn that God was near." In his conclusion the writer suggests that the solution to the problem of suffering comes, if at all, not in the Old Testament but in the New, and he refers the reader to G. Campbell Morgan's little book *The Answers of*

Jesus to Job. Very appealing, too, is his quotation from the *British Weekly*, which presents this climax: "And if out of that appalling evil [Christ's crucifixion] this supreme blessing [conquering human sin] is coming, . . . I will believe in the hidden good of my own suffering; moreover, that wherever suffering is, there God is, sharing it all, even the consequences of our own sin, that He may redeem us from it." We wish to underscore this truth that we Christians must view all our sufferings in the light of the cross of Calvary where divine love shines in its perfect splendor.

There is, however, one important point which the article, helpful as it is, does not touch upon, a point which St. Paul brings into full view in Rom. 11:33-36: "How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things: to whom be glory forever!" Is not this really the focal point in the two magnificent discourses of God? The writer says: "Strangely enough, the questions of Job are not answered. Instead of answering Job's questions, God buries Job beneath an avalanche of new questions." But is not the reason for this very act of God the fact that His judgments are unsearchable and His ways past finding out? We personally believe that this is the chief lesson which God meant to teach Job, though actually there was sustaining consolation in the revelation of His providential care. We have indeed much new comforting revelation in the New Testament regarding the suffering of God's dear children, and this consolation we greatly need, especially today when thousands of righteous believers are in deep distress. All suffering of God's children must in the end redound to God's glory and their own good, as also, of course, to the good of others. But after all is said, God's judgments remain unsearchable and His ways past finding out; and so we must patiently endure all trials, looking with ever-increasing faith to the time when we shall understand the why and wherefore of our earthly affliction in the perfect light of heaven. This, we believe, is the peculiar lesson of the Book of Job.

J. T. M.

Unusual Missionary Interest. — Ernest Gordon, in the *Sunday-school Times* (April 19, 1941), reports a case of unusual missionary interest when he writes: "Wong Moon Him operates a grocery store in San Antonio, Tex. Born in China, he came to the United States eighteen years ago and was converted in a Christian mission in that city. Immediately his heart was set on fire for the cause of Christ. He won his wife to the Savior and later, because of his zeal, was made deacon of the Chinese Baptist Church of San Antonio. His ambition is that some day he and his eight children may all be preachers of the Gospel in his homeland. But Wong Moon Him is not waiting until some far-off opportunity offers. Following his conversion, he began writing to his eighty-year-old mother, 250 miles from Canton, telling of the wonders of the Christian life. When, to his great joy, she was converted, he sent money to buy property next to her home to be dedicated as a preaching stand. Then he wrote to the nearest Baptist missionary, asking him 'to send a Chinese preacher to preach at Hoy Sun each Sunday. I will pay the expenses.' Later he had ten phonograph records made in which

he preached and sang in Chinese and talked personally with his mother. These he sent to China with the request that they be played to his mother in Hoy Sun village, and after she had heard them, that all the villagers be invited to come and hear the message, too. A few days later the returning missionary received a check for \$100 on the Bank of Canton to pay his expenses to Hoy Sun, with the request that, if he would be unable to get to that village, the money be employed somewhere else for the cause of Christ. Wong Moon Him also sent ten handkerchiefs with Gospel-messages written upon them to distribute among young people interested in learning about Christ. He gave an order on the Bible Society at Shanghai for Testaments and other literature for wide distribution. More recently he has been licensed to preach, and seven Chinese were converted at his second service. His seventeen-year-old daughter has volunteered for missionary work in China." Such extraordinary zeal for missionary activity, we believe, deserves wide publicity, especially in view of the novel ways which it has found to express itself. How much cannot a believer accomplish in the Lord's service if only he is willing to dedicate his talents fully to the Lord!

J. T. M.

The Peril of America.—The *Watchman-Examiner* (North. Baptist) under this head calls attention to the fact that, while the menace to our integrity and welfare from foreign powers must not be ignored, "the greatest peril to the United States just now is within its own borders." It writes: "That peril is the growing mass of unchristianized people who dwell among us. 'The enemy has come in like a flood,' and the Christian churches in the land have done comparatively little to stem that flood. If there is any real menace of a dictator in this country, this Christless element will furnish the solid foundation on which his power will be built, because spiritually decadent and morally confused people are always ready to submit to authoritative and paternal human leadership." In the conclusion of the editorial the writer says: "The peril to this nation is the supine character of our Christianity. The Christians of the United States are not storming the gates of hell. For years they have allowed the bastions of hell to be pushed farther and farther into their character. With what result? We have today an estimated 17,000,000 American youth of school age not now reached by the Christian churches. Out of this vast host the majority of the estimated 4,750,000 criminals in this country have been recruited. We are paying for this with a criminal record that reaches an alarming percentage of our homes. Every twenty-two seconds a major crime is committed in this land, the majority by youth. We cannot rear pagans and keep this country Christian. Christians cannot permit the constant multiplication of citizens devoid of spiritual life and morality and keep their own freedom and sacred institutions. The greatest peril we face is here in our midst. Never before was there so great a need for spiritual mobilization of our Christian forces."

While it is true what the editorial here says, it fails definitely to put the finger on the festering cancer sore in a majority of our churches. The greatest peril to the welfare of our country is, after all, the rank unbelief

of such Modernists as Fosdick, Buttrick, Hocking, and others, who dynamite the foundation of the Church by denying the Christian truths of sin and grace, justification and sanctification, and, above all, of the sole authority of the Bible in religion. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America is a remarkably influential and far-reaching organization in our country, and yet as a body it denies both the *sola Scriptura* and the *sola gratia*, so that it cannot lay any claim to representing the "Churches of Christ in America." As we see it, there is only one thing that can save Christianity in our land, and that is a firm conviction of the divine truth as taught in Scripture, joined with that daring Christian boldness which is always ready to attack the hostile forces of infidelity within the Church and without.

J. T. M.

Pacifism.—The *Christian Beacon* (March 20, 1941) writes: "One of the serious charges made against the Church by men of the world is that it changes its position in each varying circumstance. In times of peace ministers are pacifists. In times of war they forget their pacifism and change their position. The validity of such a charge can be seen in the *Presbyterian Tribune* (the mouthpiece of the Modernists of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.). It formerly held a strict pacifist position, but its editor now announces that the members of its editorial council have changed their opinion about war and that the paper can no longer hold the strict view. Therefore, it must open its columns editorially to *pro* and *con*, some against war, some favoring war. There you are! How ridiculous! What a spectacle! No wonder people lose confidence in a Church and the leaders of a Church! War comes, the nation is involved; we pass a lend-lease bill, and then these men flop over to the side of public sentiment. Regardless of the reason given for their change, they have changed. If these Modernists believed the Bible and took it as their guide and were true spokesmen for the Lord Jesus Christ, they never would have held the extreme pacifist position in the first place, and secondly, their position could be consistent and the same throughout the years. The Bible does not change. The teaching of the Bible has not changed since the day of the prophets and the apostles who gave it to us. From age to age it has been the same. A national calamity, an international war, a world conflagration, no matter how intense or what its proportions, cannot alter the teachings of the Bible and the duties therein required of men. The position of the Bible has been clearly summarized in the historic *Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms*, in which it says that Christian men may on just and necessary occasions wage war. The right of self-defense, clearly presented in the Scriptures, involves this. But after the war is over pacifists will again bud forth and spin their spider-webs. One would think that after a while these Liberals would realize how ridiculous they appear and would at least confess that the Fundamentalists who appeal to the Word of God are consistent in that they have not changed their position but based it squarely upon the 'Thus saith the Lord': 'It is written in the Word.'"

The point which the *Christian Beacon* makes is certainly well taken. There is no greater inconsistency than that of erring perverted human

reason and no greater consistency than that which the inerrant divine Word offers to us amid the changes of times and circumstances. The utter worthlessness of Liberalism is convincingly demonstrated by its constant shifting of views and opinions. J.T.M.

"Predestination.—To THE ERROR: It is surprising that my friend and seminary classmate the Rev. Irwin St. John Tucker should express so superficial an interpretation of Article 17—as though it proclaims Calvinism. The sense of the article is this: (1) Predestination to life is the purpose of God to deliver mankind from damnation to salvation through Christ. Men are called to a life of grace; and as they respond, they attain this salvation. (2) This consideration of predestination is of comfort to the godly. Also, to the carnal, the [implied] threat of a predestination to damnation leads to desperation and loose morals. These are not the works of God, but of the devil. (3) There is a Scriptural doctrine of predestination and election as there is a Scriptural presentation of what is God's will for mankind. It will be seen from this that (1) stress is laid on the positive doctrine of predestination to Life; (2) the article stops short of a negative doctrine of predestination to damnation and implies that such a doctrine is devilish, not godly; and (3) it also implies that the only Scriptural doctrine of predestination and election is that to life. Now, the official statement of Calvinistic doctrine (see Westminster Confession, chapter III, Of God's Eternal Decree) declares (1) predestination to life for those who are the elect, and (2) predestination to damnation for those who are not the elect; and affirms that these together are the true doctrine contained in Scripture. This comparison should make it clear that, if Article 17 'proclaims predestination and election to be the faith of the Church of England,' something other than the Calvinistic doctrine is meant; and the contention of the Rev. E. D. Weed is upheld against the conclusion jumped at by the Rev. Irwin St. John Tucker.

"[REV.] THEODORE J. DEWEES, Binghampton, N. Y."
(*The Living Church*, April 9, 1941.)

We are submitting the above in order to show that it is not only within the Lutheran Church that the clear teaching of Scripture on the election of grace is being muddled; yes, and turned into its very opposite. Article 17 of the Articles of Religion of the Episcopal Church teaches particular election: ". . . those whom [before the foundation of the world] God hath chosen in Christ out of mankind. . . . They which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God be called according to God's purpose by His Spirit working in due season; they through grace obey the calling," etc. We cannot understand why the Rev. Th. Dewees should say: "The sense of the article is this: (1) Predestination to life is the purpose of God to deliver mankind from damnation to salvation through Christ. Men are called to a life of grace; and as they respond, they attain this salvation." And we could never understand why here in America Lutherans should attempt to interpret the particular election of the Formula of Concord in the same way, identifying the election of grace with the universal plan of salvation and speaking of an election in the wider sense and an election in the narrow sense. Perhaps the

following statements by E. J. Bicknell in *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles* will shed some light on the matter. "We need to bear in mind that Scripture insists upon three great thoughts. (I) God has an eternal purpose of love for all nations and individuals whom He has made. (II) Salvation and grace are from first to last the gift of God's free bounty. (III) *Man is responsible to God for his conduct.* . . . The articles give only one side of the teaching of Scripture. They deal with salvation entirely from God's side and ignore *man's cooperation*. The complementary side of the teaching of Scripture is passed over in silence." (Pp. 282, 285.) Because of their synergistic prepossession Bicknell and Dewees make the particular election of the Thirty-nine Articles to mean God's universal will of grace and the right use made of it by the assenting will of man. For the same reason Lutherans in America have said: "It is thus through the action of men that the universal will of God is changed into the election of particular men."

On the other hand, Dewees is right in denying that Article 17 teaches a predestination to damnation. Bicknell, too, states: "The last two sentences deny the Calvinistic doctrine of 'particular redemption,' i. e., that Christ died for the elect only," etc. (P. 289.) Why should men think that Art. 17 proclaims Calvinism? We know why here in America men insist that those who teach particular election have Calvinistic leanings. These men are obsessed with the idea that the obverse and corollary of an election to life *must* be an election to damnation; that particular election leaves no room for universal grace. E.

Eine zutreffende Charakterisierung lutherischer Orthodoxie. In schalen, liberalen theologischen Kreisen ist es Sitte geworden, mit absoluter Verachtung auf die lutherische Orthodoxie im 17. Jahrhundert herabzublicken. Die theologische Literatur dieses wahrhaft heroischen Zeitalters wird allerdings kaum mehr gelesen; man begnügt sich mit Zitaten und wiederholt, was andere verächtlich über die großen Männer dieser Periode geurteilt haben. Um so erfreulicher ist es, wenn man einmal wieder so etwas über die lutherische Orthodoxie liest, wie es Pfarrer D. Friß, Luigshausen, Kreis Ulm, in einer Reihe von Artikeln, betitelt „Warum siegte der Pietismus über die Orthodoxen?“ (Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung), in dem dritten der vier Aufsätze darlegt. Er schreibt: „Den Orthodoxen ist es ein heiliger Ernst um ihre Sache [Sperrdruck im Text]. Wie hätte sonst so mancher angesichts des Todes oder auch etwa vor einer lebensgefährlichen Operation feierlich noch bezeugen können, daß er von Herzensgrund feind sei den Irrtümern der Papisten, Sakramentierer, Zwinglianer und Calvinisten, Schwendfelder, Wiedertäufer, Flacianer, weil diese Irrtümer dem hellen, klaren Wort Gottes zuwider seien? Die Orthodoxen waren überzeugt, daß ihre Gegner das Heiligste antasteten: die katholische Kirche nehme die Gewißheit durch die Lehre, der Mensch werde nicht durch den Glauben allein gerecht, er müsse das Seinige selbst dazu tun. Der Calvinismus bringe durch seine Prädestinationslehre den Menschen zur Verzweiflung, daß er nie mehr von Herzensgrund fröhlich sein könne. Bei Arnd werde das Gewisse, Gottes geschriebenes und gepredigtes Wort, dahintengelassen. Darum hielt man die Polemik auch auf der Kanzel für Pflicht. Das sei man der Ehre Gottes schuldig, die durch falsche Lehre angetastet und verkleinert werde, aber auch der Ge-

meinde, daß sie die Geister prüfen lerne, nicht lau werde und vor Abfall bewahrt bleibe, und den ‚Verführten und Verkehrten‘, daß sie womöglich noch für die Wahrheit gewonnen werden. Glaubensstreue galt als unbedingte Pflicht. Der lutherische Christ darf nicht sich ‚akkommodieren‘, aber auch nicht ein ‚Neutralist und lauer Wetterhahn‘ werden. Wenn der Christ auch die Heimat verlassen und ins Elend ziehen muß, so ist doch die ganze Erde des Herrn. Wer um des Glaubens willen das Leben lassen muß, hat den Trost: ‚Selig seid ihr, so euch die Menschen hassen, . . . denn euer Lohn ist groß im Himmel.‘ — So sagen wir, statt die Orthodoxen ‚männlich‘ zu schelten, lieber: die Orthodogie zeigt sich in der Nachfolge Luthers männlich, tapfer im Kampf für die Wahrheit, in der Rede mitunter derb, aber noch frisch und vollstündlich, ihrer Sache gewiß. Es ist menschlich begreiflich, daß mancher in dem fortwährenden Kampf schließlich streitlustig und eigensinnig wurde, Wesentliches und Unwesentliches verwechselte, aus den Anschauungen der Gegner Folgerungen ableitete, an die diese nie gedacht hatten, Mißtrauen zeigte auch gegenüber solchen, die im wesentlichen auf demselben Glaubensgrund standen. Vielleicht haben auch mitunter die Nerven versagt, wiewohl auch kränkliche Männer wie Rabus und Thumm Erstaunliches geleistet haben. Hinter all dem scharfen Kampf verbirgt sich doch eine seltene, warme Frömmigkeit, wie sie Lukas Osiander d. J. in seinem Buch gegen Arnd geschildert hat: Ein rechter Christ hält sich steif an das geschriebene und gepredigte Wort Gottes und glaubt ihm einsältig. Er setzt sich alle Tage aufs wenigste einmal auf die Rechenbank, bedenkt, wie er das Leben zugebracht, bekennet Gott seine Fehler und bittet um ihre gnädige Verzeihung im Glauben. Im übrigen befiehlt er sich jederzeit in den Schutz und Schirm des treuen Gottes, wartet seines Berufs getreulich und redlich, dient seinem Nächsten mit den von Gott empfangenen Gaben, so gut er kann. Geht es ihm wohl, so dankt er Gott darum und wird nicht übermütig. Geht's ihm übel, so lernt er Gott in Lieb und Leid danken und das Kreuz geduldig tragen. Er bedenkt die Stunde des Todes, so wird er das Herz nicht an den Mammon hängen und die rechte christliche Gelassenheit haben. Alles, was er tut, das tut er im Namen Jesu und in der Furcht Gottes und läßt es aus Glauben hergehen. — Der Christ weiß — so war schon in der Bauernposille des älteren Lukas Osiander zu lesen —, daß mit der Reformation die zwölfte Stunde der Welt ihren Anfang genommen hat, ‚auf einen dunkeln Tag ein schöner, klarer Abend, ehe die Sonne untergeht‘. Nun da die Kriegskatastrophe hereingebrochen war zur Strafe, daß die Evangelischen das Evangelium verachten und die Katholiken es lästern und verfolgen, schien noch mehr die Zeit dem Ende zugerückt. Aber es galt, die letzte Stunde auszukämpfen. Es hat etwas Ergreifendes, wie die von Kriegsnot, Hunger und Seuchen bedrängten Pfarrer ihren Studien obliegen; durch Trägheit und Hinbrüten werde ja der Geist stumpf; wer das Studium versäume, könne auch andern kein Führer sein, auch nicht die Wahrheit gegen ihre Gegner verteidigen. Auch die schweren Fragen der Zeit, die Frage des Zinsnehmens und des Kriegsführens, wurden mit Ernst durchdacht. Erquicklich aber ist, wenn einer dieser Männer, so ganz anders als Spener, sich seines ‚lustigen Gartens‘ freut, in dem er ‚vielen Unmuts vergaß‘, dankbar für die irdischen Gaben Gottes, und doch den Blick gerichtet auf das Ufer und den Port, da das Schiffelein einmal nach mühseliger Fahrt anlanden soll.“

Man ist versucht, den ganzen Artikel abzudrucken, besonders das gleich Folgende mit dem dargelegten Gegensatz zwischen dem männlichen Orthodoxismus und dem „gedämpften“ Pietismus mit seinem „weibischen“ Zug. Aber dazu fehlt der Raum. Liest man solche Artikel über die lutherische Orthodoxie des 17. Jahrhunderts wie den obigen, so weiß man nicht, was man über das Gefasel urteilen soll, daß sich zwischen der lutherischen Orthodoxie des 17. Jahrhunderts und Luther eine große Kluft finde. Ausnahmen gibt es ja in allem; aber die Vertreter der wirklich lutherischen Orthodoxie sind, wenn auch hier und da unsicheren Fußes, doch treu und redlich in Luthers Fußtapfen weitergegangen, um als Schrifttheologen das durch die Reformation neu erworbene Evangelium rein zu bewahren und es unverfälscht an die folgenden Geschlechter weiterzugeben. Uns dürften sie in ihrer Glaubensstreue gewiß vorbildlich sein. J. T. W.

Übertritt zur evangelischen Kirche. Von dem seltenen Fall, daß gläubige Katholiken, von eschatologischen Hoffnungen ergriffen, den Wandelstab in die Hand nahmen, berichtet die „Schönere Zukunft“ (Heft 9/10 vom 24. November 1940). Die schwärmerisch-eschatologische Bewegung ist geknüpft an den Namen des Pfarrers Ignaz Lindl aus Grundremmingen bei Gumbelshausen (Schwaben), der mit seinen „Erweckten“ dem „Willen des Herrn“ zu folgen glaubte, als er das Vaterland verließ und in der Fremde das „gelobte Land“ zu suchen begann, wo man ganz der Pflege einer frommen Innerlichkeit leben konnte. Er glaubte es, ähnlich wie die „Erweckten“ aus der evangelischen Kirche, in Rußland gefunden zu haben, und begab sich 1819 an den Zarenhof; 1820 beorderte ihn der Zar als Probst der in Südrußland angesiedelten deutschen Katholiken nach Odessa. Von hier aus ermunterte er seine schwäbische Gemeinde, ihm zu folgen. 400 seiner Anhänger erhielten die Erlaubnis zur Auswanderung. Mit 50 Wagen und 60 Familien langten die Lindl-Leute in Bessarabien an. Gebet und Predigt leiteten die schwere Aufbauarbeit ein. Die Kolonie lebte „urchristlich“ als Arbeits- und Gütergemeinschaft. Ein geübter Sängerkhor umrahmte Lindls Predigten, in denen er den nahen Weltuntergang verkündigte. Große Pilgerscharen aus ganz Bessarabien strömten zu diesen Predigten herbei. Es wurde eine Schule und eine Kirche gebaut, und im Laufe der Zeit entstanden neue Ortschaften. Nachdem Lindl wieder nach Deutschland zurückgekehrt war, trat fast die ganze Kolonie zur evangelischen Kirche über. Es loderte sich dann allmählich auch die gemeinschaftliche Betriebsordnung, und jeder Kolonist erhielt Eigenbesitz. (Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung.)

Brief Items.— Out of Hawaii's 400,000 people more than 118,000 are Catholics. By papal decree of February 22 Hawaii has been raised to the rank of a diocese and created a suffragan see of the archdiocese of San Francisco. Though missionaries landed there in 1827, not until 1839 were they free to carry on their work. The See of Hawaii is at present vacant.— America (Roman Catholic).

“Dr. J. Gresham Machen long ago used these prophetic words: ‘America is today running on the momentum of a godly ancestry. When that momentum goes, God help America!’ Whither are we drifting today with our cocktails, play-boys, and flappers so much in the public eye?” So writes the *Watchman-Examiner*. As the years roll by, every church-

body should not fail to ask itself whether it probably is merely "running on the momentum of a godly ancestry."

The leading official magazine of the communistic party in Moscow is the *Bolshevik*. According to *America* this paper stated the Soviet aims as follows: "The U.S.S.R. wants to keep aside from any conflict. Its only aim is a European war in which the capitalistic countries alone will be involved. The U.S.S.R. hopes to change this war into a civil one and expects that the world revolution will be the final result." What demoniacal purposes the Red leaders entertain if this statement is authentic!

The Supreme Court of the United States, in a decision written by Chief Justice Hughes, upheld the conviction of 68 Jehovah's Witnesses who had offended against the law by parading the streets of Manchester, N.H., without a license. Among the statements made by the Chief Justice was the assertion that this action against Jehovah's Witnesses was not taken on account of their religious views but on account of their disregard of a city ordinance. This sentence of his opinion deserves being quoted: "The authority of a municipality to impose regulations in order to assure the safety and convenience of the people in the use of public highways has never been regarded as inconsistent with civil liberties but rather as one of the means of safeguarding the good order upon which they ultimately depend." That is sound reasoning.

"Two little children, aged about seven and eight years, died some 40,000 years ago in a cavern in Syria. Their bones were recently discovered by the Rev. John C. Doherty, S. J., of the Boston College Department of Anthropology. Father Doherty believes these remains—showing a straight chin and a straight forehead—point the way to a link between Neantherthal man and modern man. Are those little innocents, now in limbo, aware of the help they gave unwittingly to modern science?"—Make your own comments, brethren!

In Holland there is said to be a noticeable revival of religious interest, which is evident particularly among the laboring classes. The tribulation which has come to that country may have brought on this good result.

In Spain, so the *Watchman-Examiner* reports, the government has seized 110,000 Bibles which are the property of the British and Foreign Bible Society. There is said to be much persecution for the workers of the British-Spanish Gospel Mission. At the same time the Spanish government does not fail to see that Masonry is a dangerous element in the State, and in Spain "it is now a criminal offense to be a Mason." Students of history know what a wave of resentment against the Masonic order swept through the United States more than a hundred years ago and that in several States at that time legislation was passed against Masonic lodges.

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