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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer — Kircklich-Zeitgeschichtliches

The Lutheran Church and Isolation.— At the meeting of Lutheran editors held this fall Editor H. C. Caspersen of the Lutheran Free Church, according to a report in the *Lutheran Standard*, pointed out that there is a common factor among Lutherans, "namely, our common adherence to the Augsburg Confession and to Luther's Small Catechism." He pleaded for "a friendly, sympathetic attitude toward the World Council of Churches in order to counteract the tendency toward isolation that has developed in certain countries." In an address which President Conrad Bergendoff of the Augustana College and Seminary delivered on the same occasion, he spoke, as the *Lutheran Standard* reports, "about the relationship of our Lutheran Church to other churches." Some of his remarks are summarized in that report as follows, "He began with the indisputable assertion that in America we Lutherans shall have to live with Christians of other denominations. Through his study of American history he has come to understand some of the problems of the other churches, and he is not so sure that we Lutherans have solved our own problems much more successfully than other churches have solved their problems. We Lutherans have been inclined to meet problems which rise in America with answers which were worked out in Europe, perhaps centuries ago. Today . . . we do not know where we stand over against other Christians. We arrive at our attitude toward non-Lutheran churches and ecumenical movements too quickly and are unwilling to try to discover whether the attitudes we take fit the real conditions."

What must be our reaction? The Lutheran Church was built on the principle that the Word of God must be adhered to at all hazards, that whatever is in keeping with the Scriptures is right and whatever is against the Scriptures, even if it should be sanctioned by the organized Church or by human reason or by tradition, is wrong. Every true Lutheran will agree that that position must be maintained. If such a course leads to isolation, we regret such an outcome, but we cannot on that account change our course. Isolation is wrong if it is chosen on its own account. If it is thrust upon us on account of our adherence to the Scriptures, we have to bear it cheerfully as a cross which is unavoidable. At the same time, no true Lutheran should deny that he owes his fellow men, created by the same God as he, redeemed by the same precious blood of the Savior, a tremendous debt, that of acquainting them with the full treasures of Jesus Christ. That obligation, too, must be discharged. Jesus, we do well to remember, addresses the Christians as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He does not want them to keep their light under a bushel, but to put it on a lamp stand. In charting our course these various truths must be borne in mind. A.

Union Resolutions of the American Lutheran Church.— When the A. L. C. in the first half of October held its biennial meeting in Mendota, Ill., quite naturally the question of fellowship with other synods formed

a topic of discussion. The A. L. C. has been negotiating with the Missouri Synod about the establishment of fellowship since 1936. Simultaneously it carried on negotiations with the United Lutheran Church of America, although the work was done by two different committees. As a result of its negotiations with the Missouri Synod the A. L. C. commissioners drew up the so-called Declaration, in which they stated the position of their church body on questions on which a statement was required. The results of its negotiations with the U. L. C. A. were laid down in the so-called Pittsburgh Agreement, which in its three paragraphs speaks of the attitude Lutherans should take concerning lodge membership and unionism and on the doctrine of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. At the convention of the Missouri Synod in 1938 the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod and the *Declaration* of the A. L. C. commissioners were declared to constitute a sufficient doctrinal basis for future church fellowship. A similar declaration was made by the A. L. C. at its meeting in Sandusky in the same year. In 1940 the Missouri Synod commissioners stated that according to their conviction five factors still prevented the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod, to wit:

1. The affiliation of the A. L. C. with the other synods forming the American Lutheran Conference, all of which are not in fellowship with the Missouri Synod;
2. The affiliation of the Missouri Synod with the other synods of the Synodical Conference whose consent will have to be sought before the Missouri Synod can enter into fraternal relations with some other body;
3. Disagreement concerning various points of doctrine or fellowship caused chiefly by statements in the Sandusky resolutions of the A. L. C.;
4. The approach of the A. L. C. to the U. L. C. A. based on the Pittsburgh Agreement which Missouri does not consider adequate;
5. Matters of practice especially such as pertain to lodge membership and unionism.

When the American Lutheran Conference held its meeting in November, 1940, at Minneapolis, Minn., the hopes of Missourians that the A. L. C. would make a strong effort to improve conditions in its sister synods of the American Lutheran Conference in matters of doctrine and practice were not realized. The convention of the Missouri Synod held in Fort Wayne 1941 devoted a good deal of time to a discussion of the fellowship question. While it was gratefully recognized that the fellowship negotiations were not in vain, the Synod was convinced that fellowship between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod could not yet be established. It was resolved, however, to continue the official conferences, and the Committee on Lutheran Union was instructed to draw up with the A. L. C. commissioners and with representatives of the other Synodical Conference bodies one common document containing the articles of doctrinal agreement, because it was felt in many quarters that the method of bringing about fellowship on the basis of two documents (the *Brief Statement* and the *Declaration*) was not satisfactory. The resolutions which were adopted by the A. L. C. at its recent meeting form the next official document which has to be considered in a study of the fellowship question. We herewith reprint the resolutions:

Resolutions Adopted by American Lutheran Church

"Intersynodical fellowship is a matter of deep concern to us. Faithful efforts have been put forth, and considerable progress has been made. We thank God for His blessings, and we express our appreciation to our brethren who have served on these committees. We offer the following resolution for adoption:

"WHEREAS, The Committees on Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church have negotiated with both the United Lutheran Church in America and the Missouri Synod to the end of establishing Pulpit and Altar Fellowship with these honorable bodies; and

"WHEREAS, The American Lutheran Church has adopted the Pittsburgh Agreement and accepted the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod in the light of the *Declaration* of the Commissioners of the American Lutheran Church as a basis for pulpit and altar fellowship; and

"WHEREAS, Though these documents—the Pittsburgh Agreement on the one hand, and the *Brief Statement* and *Declaration* on the other—differ in wording, yet both express the true position of the American Lutheran Church; and

"WHEREAS, The United Lutheran Church in America has adopted the Pittsburgh Agreement; and the *Declaration* of our Commissioners in connection with the *Brief Statement* has found acceptance within the Missouri Synod and was proposed by the intersynodical commissioners of the Missouri Synod as an integral part of the doctrinal basis for future church fellowship; and

"WHEREAS, To our regret fellowship has not resulted since apparently in both bodies there are large and influential groups in disagreement therewith:

"Therefore Be It Resolved, That the American Lutheran Church declare its readiness to establish pulpit and altar fellowship with either or both of these honorable church bodies on the basis of their full and wholehearted acceptance of, and adherence to, either of these documents, in the hope that the existing obstacles may be removed and that such pulpit and altar fellowship may be declared at an early date; and therefore, that the Commission on Lutheran unity be continued."

It will be observed that these resolutions do not state whether the A. L. C. is willing to have its commissioners together with the commissioners of the Missouri Synod draw up one common document setting forth the doctrinal agreement that has been reached. It is evident that the A. L. C. does not go beyond its resolutions of 1940. In the Missouri Synod the hope had been entertained that in these days of doctrinal confusion the A. L. C. would issue a statement constituting a strong trumpet blast in behalf of conservative Lutheranism, a statement serving notice both to the synods of the American Lutheran Conference and the U. L. C. A. that the A. L. C. will not endorse laxity and looseness in doctrine and practice. We are afraid that its resolutions will not be interpreted as having this significance.

The resolutions, it is true, do not justify the statements made in the public press that the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church of America are now joining hands and are establishing pulpit and altar fellowship. The careful reader will see that the A. L. C. makes the establishing of fellowship contingent on the "full and wholehearted acceptance of, and adherence to," the respective document of agreement. It is well known that in the U. L. C. A.

there has been sharp dissent from the position taken in the Pittsburgh Agreement, and it is difficult to see that in the face of such a dissent there can be full and wholehearted acceptance of, and adherence to, this document in the U. L. C. A. in the near future. If the American Lutheran Church insists on this part of its resolutions, fellowship with the U. L. C. A. may be a very remote matter. Developments of the next years will have to show whether the conservative element in the A. L. C., which is quite strong, will be able to assert itself and successfully oppose the wave of unionistic sentiment in its midst, which likewise, sad to say, does not lack force and numbers. A.

The Federal Council and the U. L. C. A. — The question which confronted the U. L. C. A. convention in Louisville whether it should change its status in its relations to the Federal Council of Churches and instead of having a consultative membership advance to full membership was answered in the negative. There had been a strong movement to make the U. L. C. A. a full member of the Federal Council. In fact, the latter organization had invited the U. L. C. A. to take upon itself full membership in the Council. While we deplore even this consultative relationship, we are glad to note that the convention declined to accept the invitation and to accede to the wishes of those who urged full membership. In the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* a symposium was published of prominent U. L. C. A. members expressing their views on the question that was mentioned above. Some of the contributors said things which have to grieve a conservative Lutheran. A number of the writers entirely overlook the fact that in the Federal Council flagrant denial of precious truths is tolerated, that, for instance, proponents and signers of the iniquitous Auburn Affirmation with its denial of things that are absolutely fundamental in the Christian faith hold membership as well as others that are more positive in their Christian teachings. One writer advances these five arguments for acceptance of the Council's invitation: 1. A united spiritual front is needed to preserve and strengthen the interests and convictions that are peculiar to Protestantism. 2. The U. L. C. A. ought to have a full share in serving the country along the lines mapped out by the Council. 3. It ought to be made plain that the U. L. C. A. "stands for the democratic tradition in Lutheranism as over against reactionary isolationism." 4. One serves best by joining one's fellow men in solving the problems that confront all. 5. In this way the cause of Lutheran union will be aided.

The last argument strikes one as particularly strange inasmuch as several of the contributors take the very opposite view and urge that on account of the cause of Lutheran union full membership in the Council should be refused. The writer quoted, who urges full membership, says, "It is less than honest to plead that we must not join the Council now, lest it interfere with the progress of Lutheran union in America. Such a plea serves only to increase the distrust which is helping to keep American Lutherans divided. If other Lutheran groups refuse union with us because we hold membership in the Council, we are dishonest in planning membership after the union has been effected. Lutheran union can be built only upon the foundation of absolute honesty and mutual trust. Let us be our best selves then.

Let us emphasize the democratic, American, co-operative type of Lutheranism which has always distinguished us at our best. If having the courage of our convictions, if being our best selves, is going to stand in the way of Lutheran union, then may the Lord have mercy on the cause of union. This writer is all out for Lutheran union. But it is possible to pay too high a price for it." In a similar way a number of other writers argue for the view that the U. L. C. A. should take upon itself full membership in the Council.

One of the contributors opposing the move is Dr. O. W. Heick of Ellis, Kans. He stresses that some of the objectives of the Federal Council strike "at paragraph 2 of the Pittsburgh Agreement (on Unionism) and the Galesburg Rule, which have guided a large section of the Church in the past. If the U. L. C. A. accepts the invitation to full membership, the development towards sound confessional Lutheranism would thereby receive a serious setback. The confessionally-minded among us will be forced into opposition. All the progress that has been made since the days of Schmucker's 'American Lutheranism' would be jeopardized at once. This would spell the end of all hopes of unity within the Lutheran Church in America. We do not suggest that the delegates to the Louisville convention should be guided, in any degree, by a consideration of what is expedient. Union or no union with the other Lutheran bodies: a vital principle of truth is at stake. By subscribing to the constitution of the Federal Council we would surrender our right to bear witness to the whole truth of Scripture as proclaimed in our Confessions over against the peculiarities of the Reformed tradition. The history of the Lutheran Church in Germany is full of evil portent in this respect. By joining the Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchenbund, the Lutheran Church first had to tone down, officially, what is unique in the Wittenberg Reformation, and later it became almost extinct when, in 1933, the Kirchenbund merged into the Deutsche Evangelische Kirche. *Obsta principiis!*" Finally Dr. Heick remarks that what the Federal Council stands for is chiefly the social gospel. He correctly says, "Time and again the Council has equated the Kingdom with a world free of war, guilt, and fear. But the Kingdom is not humanity refined. It is truly *God's* kingdom, transcending every achievement of the human race." Arguments such as those Dr. Heick utters were effective at the U. L. C. A. convention in Louisville. May God grant that they are heeded to an ever larger extent in his church body and outside of it.

A.

Is This Lutheran Doctrine? — We were amazed to find the following paragraphs in an article by Dr. W. H. Greever published in the *Lutheran* of September 30, 1942, page 19.

"This sacrament of communion is such because through it Christ promises His real presence and special communication of Himself to those who come to His table in faith. He declares that He makes His real presence effective to them by giving His body and blood to them, in, with, and under the bread and wine. This gift is not physically discerned, but is spiritually received, without change in either the bread or wine with which it is mystically connected.

"The purpose of this sacrament is to bestow the gift of grace by which faith is confirmed and assurance of forgiveness of sin is attested. It is essential to the health and vigor of the soul. It is God's continued assertion of the personal covenant He made with the individual soul in Baptism."

In His Holy Supper Christ does not merely promise His real presence to those who come in faith. He actually gives to all participants, believers or unbelievers, His body and His blood. Does the Lutheran deny this? Nor is the Lord's Supper essential to the health and vigor of the soul; else it would have to be given to little children.

T. L.

Rededication to Missions.—The *Watchman-Examiner* (July 2, 1942) reports editorially: "Prior to the Cleveland Convention, rumors were circulated among Northern Baptists in certain places that the day of foreign missions was past because of so many closed doors. The answer to all this kind of talk was given by the Cleveland meeting. In a unanimous action, Northern Baptists voted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, We as Northern Baptists believe that the foreign mission cause is God's cause and that it rests secure in His abiding purpose for all mankind; and

WHEREAS, The difficult days through which we are now passing have helped us to see that the world mission of Christ is no fair-weather enterprise, but the most serious, the most sacrificial, and the most steadfast movement in human history; and

WHEREAS, History reveals that in times of stress God has led His people forward in the extension of His kingdom, this being made possible because in such times Christians have evidenced a deeper desire to share; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we as Northern Baptists reaffirm our faith in the adequacy of Christ for the whole world and the whole of life and in patience, humility, and love rededicate ourselves to world-wide missions in His name."

A Lutheran committee on resolutions might in some places have framed the wording in a somewhat different way. For example, for the words "The foreign mission cause rests secure in His abiding purpose for all mankind," we would have said: "It rests secure in His good and gracious will toward the salvation of all men." Nevertheless, these resolutions, in their general scope, are so praiseworthy that we offer them here for adoption by our own churches in a form suitable to their circumstances. Certainly, the day of foreign missions is *not* past! In view of Matt. 28:19, 20 no Christian has a right to take such a defeatist attitude. Many doors may be closed just now, but (unless Judgment Day should intervene) we may rest assured that upon our earnest intercessions God again will open them as He sees fit. Christ's last great commission makes it obligatory upon us to evangelize all nations unto the end of the world. We are happy to know that also the Northern Presbyterians at their last general convention adopted similar resolutions for greater after-the-war foreign mission work. May the spirit of holy willingness be richly given us for sharing with others the inestimable treasures of Christ's precious Gospel.

J. T. M.

Financial Figures.—In the *National Lutheran Council Bulletin* an article on Lutheran giving appeared which was of more than usual interest. The contents are well summarized in *The Lutheran* of October 21:

"In 1941 the Lutherans of the United States and Canada gave \$58,352,808 for the work of their churches, reports the National Lutheran Council. This sum is considerably above the total of recent years. It was given by 3,573,383 people and averages \$16.33 apiece.

"Giving per person has been on the way up among Lutherans. In 1937 they contributed \$13.88 apiece; 1938 — \$14.43; 1939 — \$15.01; 1940 — \$15.13.

"Lutherans of the Augustana Synod are the most generous givers over this five-year period. Missouri Synod is next; United Danish third, American Lutheran fourth. Highest in per capita giving to general church purposes, other than local congregational expenses, is the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

"Lutherans as a whole are slightly above the average of giving among Protestants of America.

"Lutheran church membership in the United States and Canada totaled 5,052,321 at the close of 1941."

The Exegesis of Premillennialists.—In *Bibliotheca Sacra* an article which appeared on its pages in 1888 is reprinted in which the position taken by premillennialists is defended. Speaking of the exegetical procedure of premillennialists, the writer says, "Whether their conclusion be right or wrong, their arguments evidently depend on the rigid application of the grammatico-historical, inductive method of interpretation which Bengel in the last century did so much to introduce and which, it is not too much to say, has secured the adhesion of the chief part of the most eminent exegetes of our day. Premillennialists, therefore, are everywhere marked by the most emphatic rejection and repudiation alike of the allegorical, the dogmatic, and the so-called rational systems of interpretation as also of the eschatological conclusions which the application of one or other of these methods has led men to adopt."

We are willing to believe that premillennialists desire faithfully to follow the Scriptures in their teachings, but when their exegetical methods are spoken of, we have to point out that in these methods there becomes apparent a sad inconsistency in adherence to the Scriptures. Whoever wishes to be thoroughly Scriptural in his interpretation, must, as will be granted by all, accept the principle *Scriptura Scripturam interpretatur*. This principle, however, implies that the dark, obscure passages must be interpreted in the light of passages that are clear and without any ambiguity. It is this implication of the principle mentioned which is not observed by the premillennialists. They do not give to the doctrinal passages of Scripture that are notable for their clarity that pre-eminence which they must have in the eyes of all who wish to understand God's Word. If this defect in the exegetical procedure of premillennialists were recognized by them, there would be hope of reaching an understanding with this large group of Christians.

A.

A Premillennialist Warns His Brethren. — *Bibliotheca Sacra*, which, by the way, next year will observe its centenary, publishing its centennial issue January 1, 1943 (the first number of Volume 100), has of late been traveling under the flag of premillennialism. All the more remarkable is a warning contained in its editorial section in an article written by Miner Brodhead Stearns against sensational, unbalanced interpretations of Scripture passages having to do with the Last Things, interpretations which make the whole Christian Church the butt of ridicule and censure. The writer says:

"No thinking person would deny that the world is passing through the most extraordinary days of its history. The Bible predicts extraordinary days during the final period of this age and leading up to the glorious visible return of Christ to this earth. Therefore it is very easy to jump to the conclusions that we must now be in those end times, and hence many are prone to seek for fulfillments of Bible prophecies in current events. But while it is perfectly proper to be looking for the fulfillment of prophecy, there is grave danger that many through an excess of zeal may indulge in wishful thinking and misguided speculations which will do more harm than good to the cause of Christ.

"No one believes more firmly than the editors of *Bibliotheca Sacra* in the verbal inerrancy of the Bible and the literal interpretation of its prophecies, and yet a word of warning is not amiss. Many of us remember how during the first world war some were eager to identify the late Kaiser with the anti-Christ on the basis of Zechariah 11:17 and the fact that his right arm was known to be useless. This mistaken identification was vividly recalled recently when a radio preacher was heard identifying Hitler with the man of sin because the former is not married, and Daniel 11:37 says, 'Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women . . .' That there is a deal of difference between 'the desire of women' in the sense in which the radio speaker took it (doubtless a mistaken interpretation) and marriage has been indicated by frequent references in the news to the fact that Hitler is far from insensible to the attractions of the opposite sex.

"This same radio preacher found further proof that we are already in the time of the end in the fact that Joel 3:10 is now being fulfilled for the first time. Granting that there may be a fair number of plowshares and pruninghooks (or their modern equivalents) among the scrap steel being put into war production today, nevertheless agricultural implements are still being manufactured and given priority, owing to the great importance of food in the Allied war effort. When Joel 3:10 is fulfilled, it seems evident that this transformation of agricultural implements into the weapons of war will take place on a far larger scale than anything we have yet seen. Were the speaker's supposition correct, we should be on the very eve of Armageddon, and then what becomes of the rapture of the Church which most premillennial Bible interpreters look for as the next event to be fulfilled in the scheme of prophecy? It is our belief that the Church will be caught away out of this world at least seven years before Arma-

geddon takes place and before the man of sin is revealed as such. For this manifestation awaits, according to 2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7, the removal of the Body of Christ from this earth.

"Should any think that this warning against hasty interpretation is really not needed, let him remember the case of the head of a Bible Institute in Wales who in 1939 made the prediction that there would be no European War in this generation, since God had planned to evangelize the whole world during the next thirty years. When the European war did break out, this brother tried to maintain his position by asserting that there would be no *general* European war in this generation, and published a booklet to that effect. But that was before May, 1940. Let us therefore take warning from these and other examples which could be cited. God's Word is sure, and we are eagerly awaiting the coming of Christ in the air to take His bride to Himself. But let us beware of vain attempts to foresee the future beyond what God has revealed to us, and let us be extremely cautious in our interpretation of what has been revealed, that we bring no reproach on the name of Christ and the sane and prudent interpretation of Prophecy."

The general tendency of this article is altogether commendable. May it be heeded by all who read it. The author, of course, is himself hopelessly entangled in the net of chiliastic vagaries, as his reference to "the rapture" and his statement that it must precede Armageddon by at least seven years amply testify. Perhaps by and by experiences of interpreters like those which he points to will lead him and others to abandon altogether such follies and to be satisfied with the guidance of the clear, unmistakable words of Holy Scripture as to what lies ahead in the future.

A.

Orthodoxy Visits Union Seminary.—In the *Presbyterian Guardian* (October 10, 1942) it is reported that a number of orthodox Presbyterian tracts were recently sent to the students at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, by the Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The results of this venture were most gratifying. With regard to Machen's tract *Is the Bible Right About Jesus?* the article says: "I am glad that I can say that the reaction to this literature on the part of the students was on the whole quite favorable. Several of them expressed to me their appreciation for having received the tracts. The name of Dr. Machen was familiar to most of the students, inasmuch as his *New Testament Greek For Beginners* is used as the textbook in the Introductory Greek Class. One of the students told me that he was surprised to find how much he agreed with Dr. Machen's argument for the trustworthiness of the gospel narratives. There was only one who criticized the tract unfavorably, a student of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., who admitted that he had read only the first few pages of the tract. A number of students displayed interest in the facts presented in [the tract] *The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Action*. Even before the literature was sent, several had inquired of me concerning the number of ministers and members of our church, as well as the facts in connection with its formation. A few of the 'neo-orthodox' students, in particular, expressed a measure of sympathy for our principles and aims as opposed to the bankrupt liberalism that

continues to dominate the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. One such student from that denomination — one of the most brilliant students in the seminary — even told me that, while he could not go all the way with us in our view on the authority of Scripture, he was convinced that our emphasis on the system of Reformed doctrine was basically sound as over against the anti-doctrinal tendency of liberalism."

The concluding paragraph is perhaps the most important in the report since it points out a deplorable neglect of which many Bible Christians are guilty. Assuming that students and other persons in liberal circles are not open to conviction, they decline to send them such literature as might enlighten and win them for Christ. Christian publicity work dare not stop today when so many in the liberal camps are willing to listen to what Christians have to say. By placing such literature into our libraries, public reading rooms, and other places where confessional Christian writings may reach people, we may show the way of salvation to many whom we could reach in no other way. The paragraph reads: "The reaction to this literature of our Christian Education Committee has increased my conviction that the great mass of liberal preachers have never seen a consistent, scholarly presentation of the orthodox standpoint. Union Seminary, like other liberal institutions, practically ignores the work of the great conservative scholars, with the result that the students conclude that the liberal view is the only intellectually defensible position. The circulation of the literature of our Christian Education Committee in liberal circles can perform excellent service in dispersing some of the clouds of ignorance and prejudice that hover over the Modernist camp."
J. T. M.

Going to Canossa? — The new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. William Temple, is known for his unionistic tendencies. After trying hard to unite all Protestants, he now advocates a plan which will take in even Roman Catholicism. In order that the poor, weary, blood-covered world as soon as the war is ended might be put into a better state, a committee for the inauguration of improvements is proposed in which the large Protestant bodies, the Roman Catholic, and the Greek Orthodox churches are to be represented. But not only are all these bodies to co-operate in this broad endeavor; the Pope or a substitute whom he may appoint is to be the chairman of the joint committee. The Pope probably would hail any overture made to him of this nature with a great deal of glee and would regard it as a virtual capitulation of Protestants, a real trip of his opponents to Canossa. He might announce that he would very gladly assume the chairmanship and would do so with the understanding that his appointment to that position meant that he was recognized as the head of all Christendom. The suggestion of Dr. Temple does not seem to have fallen on fertile ground. It is noteworthy chiefly because it characterizes the person who made it.

A.

Anent Race Relations. — When the National Baptist Convention, Inc. (a Negro body having four million members and 20,000 churches) recently met in Memphis, Tenn., there was a good deal of complaint of ill-treatment accorded colored people in the United States. The matter may take on major proportions, and it is good for our pastors to be in-

formed; hence we submit a list of the points which the president of the body, D. V. Jemison of Selma, Ala., enumerated as requests of the Negro. He stated, "Shall the Negroes in this country, for which our fathers fought in every war that has swept across its bosom, be satisfied with less than our guaranteed constitutional liberty? This is all the Negro asks: 1. Abolish legal injustice against Negroes. 2. Stamp out race discriminations. 3. Prevent lynching, burning, or torturing of black people. 4. Assure every citizen of color the common rights of American citizens. 5. Compel equal accommodations in railroad travel, irrespective of color, when same fare is paid. 6. Secure for Negro children equal opportunity to public school education through fair apportionment of public education funds. 7. Emancipate in fact as well as in name a race of more than thirteen million American born citizens." It is not the function of this journal to propose remedial measures for an ominous situation. May God grant our statesmen and legislatures and voters wisdom to discover and to follow the proper course. A.

Brief Items. — Jehovah's Witnesses have published a new version of the Bible, according to *Religious News Service*, which contains passages from the King James, American Revised, and Douay (Catholic) versions. This, Nathan H. Knorr explains, is to permit workers to answer questions in field work. Mr. Knorr has succeeded the late Judge Rutherford as head of the sect. — *Christian Century*.

One of our exchanges reports that the Catholic bishop of Mobile has again issued the warning that "the Sacraments are to be denied to all parents not sending their children to the Catholic school." This is endeavoring to build the Church by legalistic measures.

Wilbur Glenn Voliva, head of the religious colony of Zion, Ill., died yesterday at 72, still holding that the world is flat. The property of the colony was once estimated to have a value of \$11,000,000. Successor of Alexander Dowie, the Australian evangelist who founded the cult in 1901, Mr. Voliva came into the leadership of its affairs in 1906. — *The Christian Century*.

108 candidates have been graduated from our "Seminario Concordia" in Brazil — 82 pastors and 26 teachers. Of these, 79 are now working in six different states of Brazil and 13 in Argentina; one is pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany, and four have been called home by the Lord of the Church. — 85 students are enrolled in our Brazilian Seminary now, in 1942, and 9 in our recently established seminary in Argentina. We have no report as to the enrollment in our Crespo College in Argentina. — From clip sheet issued by the Board of South American Missions (for copies write Rev. E. C. Wegehaupt, 1120 Orchard St., Decatur, Ill.).

A minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church, whose letter is published in the *Living Church* of Sept. 6, 1942, writes, discussing the theological seminaries of his church body, "Several of them, if not all, are understaffed and the salaries paid to the faculties woefully small." As far as the feature of being understaffed is concerned, we wonder what he would say if he saw some of the large classes which have to be instructed in our schools.

Father Divine, as one of our exchanges informs us, has transferred headquarters from New York to Philadelphia. The reason for the transfer seems to be a suit brought against him by two former "angels," who charge him with having gotten five thousand dollars from them under false pretenses. It seems that stormy weather lies ahead for the boat of this archdeceiver. At the same time, he is now operating a hotel in Atlantic City where a room can be had at \$2.00 a week and meals at 15 cents each. Will these ultra-attractive prices aid the false prophet somewhat in rehabilitating himself?

The exchanges state that Albert Schweitzer, famous missionary, musician, and New Testament scholar, is well and still active in his African field. What a pity that he is a missionary without a real mission!

A special correspondence to the *Christian Century* describes the third annual Conference of Science, Philosophy, and Religion held at Columbia University in August. A statement adopted by the Conference emphasizes "the intellectual confusion" which exists in the world of scholars, and it calls for new efforts "to come to an understanding as to the nature of reality and the values of human life." Sad to say, the statement does not make mention of God's revelation in the Scriptures as the infallible basis for a true understanding of the world and mankind.

Plans for the Christian World Mission Convocation, first meeting of its kind ever held in this country, indicate that it will definitely be held in Cleveland, December 6—10, as originally intended. The meeting is to convene under the auspices of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America and is expected to bring together many thousands of people from the some 60 denominations which are members of this largest Protestant interdenominational agency.—*The Christian Century*.

It is almost amusing to see with what seriousness the question is debated at which place in the church the American flag and the Christian flag are to be put respectively. Can one imagine that a real controversy would develop on the question whether or not it is an insult to the American flag if it is placed on the left of the preacher as he faces the congregation while the Christian flag is to the right? What a sad commentary on the sense of value which people possess if they vehemently debate such points! In a Presbyterian church in New Jersey the controversy was settled by the removal of the national emblem from the place next to the pulpit (on the left) to a place in the church proper on the right of the congregation.

Somebody in Indiana has started a "Mothers' Back-to-God Prayer Band," an interdenominational endeavor. The intention is to enroll 100,000 mothers in this undertaking. Wednesdays from 10:00 A. M. to 4:00 P. M. a strict fast is to be kept. What an effort!

The *Lutheran Standard*, the official organ of the American Lutheran Church, is observing its centennial. Its first issue appeared September 21, 1842. Conservative Lutherans will gratefully reflect on the role this paper played in leading the Ohio Synod to the appreciation of sound Lutheranism. Of late there have been many unionistic utterances in it,

which have grieved us. May it in the second century of its existence be granted grace from above to be a strong instrument in defending and spreading the faith set forth in the Lutheran Confessions. The centennial number (September 19) is adorned with many interesting pictures and fascinatingly tells the story of the journal.

Lieutenant General Sir William Dobbie, who is now enjoying a furlough in England after perilous months spent as commandant of Malta, has been justly commended for the zeal he manifested in promoting a religious atmosphere among his soldiers and conducting Bible classes in their midst. He is now said to have declared that he was always "unfailingly conscious" of the Lord's impending return. We are wondering whether he has not become the victim of a false, chiliastic, enthusiasm.

From an article in the *Lutheran Companion* we learn that the confessor of St. Bridget, Mäster Mattias, as early as 1350 translated parts of the New Testament into Swedish. He likewise rendered sections of the Old Testament into that language. His translation naturally was based on the Vulgate. It was in 1526 that the first complete edition of the New Testament was printed in Swedish. The translator was Olavus Petri, who was aided by Laurentius Andreae (Mäster Lars). The version was based on the Greek New Testament of Erasmus, and aid was obtained from Erasmus' own Latin translation and from Luther's German version of 1522.

Prof. H. Shelton Smith, incumbent of the chair of Christian ethics at Duke University, is reported in the *Christian Century* to have "made a slashing attack on the 'progressive' element in Protestant religious education. He warned against the evil effect of John Dewey's philosophy in religious education. He denounced all attempts to make of religion a kind of noble fringe edging human experience. A more authoritative place must be given Jesus as the norm for Christian guidance and conduct. . . . His indictment of the modern trend in religious education begins with Bushnell and includes Coe and Bower."

Reporting on the International Council of Religious Education, a Chicago writer says in the *Christian Century*, "More than 200 ministers and secretaries met during the week to plan for the series of 135 one-day conventions which will carry the needed Christian education advance [a four-year program of educational evangelism] to the churches of the country, following Easter. Nearly every State will have meetings. Teams of leaders in Christian education will thus carry to the country their plan for educational evangelism in the home, church, and community." Not being based on unity in Gospel teachings, the venture will not be able to accomplish much.

A glimpse into conditions in the Southland is furnished by an item in the *Christian Century* to the effect that last winter more than two thousand public school teachers in Tennessee resigned to take up defense work because of better pay. The item furthermore states that last spring the rural schools in the Kentucky mountains closed at the end of a seven months' school year and in many of them teachers had to wait long for their small salary checks.

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