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## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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## Theological Observer

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**"Folkebladet" in a Belligerent Anti-Missouri Mood.** In the *Lutheran Sentinel*, the official paper of our Norwegian brethren, the Rev. Norman A. Madson, President of the Norwegian Lutheran Synod, reports on an article that appeared in *Folkebladet*. We quote his summary of the contents of that article.

"The official organ of the Lutheran Free Church is *Folkebladet*, which, in the Dec. 2, 1942, issue, has this to say relative to the biennial convention of the American Lutheran Conference at Rock Island, Ill., Nov. 11—13, 1942 (the editor is speaking about future colloquies between the Conference and the Missouri Synod):

"1. He hopes that the Conference will never agree to the Missourian position on *unionism*. (The editor is evidently fed up on the constant reference to what he calls—I'm quoting him verbatim—'der andere Geist,' which he informs us was said four hundred years ago under circumstances far different from ours and perhaps even then not fully justified.)

"2. He hopes that the Missourian doctrine of *inspiration* will never be adopted. For, he tells us: 'It is an outlived conception, if it ever lived; it is unscriptural; it is making a fetish out of the Bible. The Bible is the document of revelation, not revelation itself.'

"3. He hopes that the Missourian doctrine of *predestination* will not be the prevailing one in American Lutheranism. He has a suspicion that they do not believe in it themselves. And then he adds: 'Indeed, it does sound as though Dr. Maier forgot the doctrine in his radio preaching.'

"4. He hopes that the Missourian concept of *separation of Church and State* will be shunned as impossible in a world of social change and in a time when the Church very largely is becoming conscious of its responsibility for the kind of civilization we have.

"5. And finally he hopes that the Missourian attitude to *democracy* in the Church will never be a generally established position. It would kill lay activity in the congregation."

Assuming that the above report on the *Folkebladet* article is accurate and sufficiently comprehensive not to give a distorted picture of views expressed there, we ask, What is a person to think of this anti-Missouri attitude of the editor of *Folkebladet*? One thing seems evident to us, and that is that the editor labors heavily under misapprehensions. That is the opinion which at once arose in us when we read what he has to say about the doctrine of predestination and its being preached (or not being preached) by Dr. Maier. He probably does not know the Missouri Synod doctrine of predestination except from articles of our opponents, or, if he has read our own articles, the only thing he vividly recalls is the reference to the *cur alii prae aliis* question. That Dr. Maier preaches the doctrine of predestination quite often, that every time when he mentions the loving resolve of God in eternity to convert His own and to keep them in the true faith he is giving the gist of this grand doc-



trine as held by the Missouri Synod, is something that the editor probably does not understand.

We likewise believe that when he objects to the Missouri Synod concept of the separation of Church and State he sees before himself a straw man who is constructed rather by his own fancy than by the Missouri Synod theologians. Does he really wish the Church to invade the sphere of the State and take over the latter's functions and dictate the laws which we are to live under? And, on the other hand, does he desire the State to invade the sphere of the Church and tell the latter what to teach and how to practice discipline? We hope that he has not become so imbued with the spirit of Geneva as to reject the Sixteenth and Twenty-eighth Articles of the Augsburg Confession, which contain what Missouri teaches on the separation of Church and State. We think especially of this sentence in Article XXVIII: "Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded."

Still more are we of this opinion when we read that the editor is opposed to the Missourian attitude to democracy in the Church. We thought that one of the criticisms voiced against the Missouri Synod is that it introduced democracy into the Church by making the congregations rather than the Synod or the pastor supreme and by insisting on the rights every Christian has as a priest of God. Seventy-five years ago the view was given currency that Missouri in its constitution manifests the influence of the republican form of government obtaining in the United States. Now the editor of *Folkebladet* charges us with being undemocratic. The charge does not make any sense. We are perplexed. What kind of glasses is he using in surveying the camp of Missouri?

It may be that even with respect to the doctrine of *inspiration* the editor does not fully understand our position. He may think that our Synod teaches a mechanical inspiration of the Scriptures, while in reality we definitely reject that theory. If he holds that Missouri teaches the inerrancy of the Scriptures, he is right, and if that doctrine irritates him, we cannot help it. But we should like to show him why it does not irritate us. When he says, "The Bible is the document of revelation, not revelation itself," we reply, Of course, the Bible is the document of revelation; no one denies that. It tells us in what manner God granted His revelations to the people here on earth. But at the same time it gives the content of these revelations. How could it tell us about the manner in which God's message was delivered without revealing the message itself? It seems to us that here, too, the author is fighting one or several straw men.

We finally come to his strictures touching the Missouri Synod position on *unionism*. We wonder whether he really wishes us to call wrong right and right wrong; whether he really would approve of our giving endorsement to a teaching which in reality we abhor because we consider it anti-Scriptural; whether he really rejects the word of Paul that a little leaven will leaven the whole lump. What does he teach as to the attitude of Christians toward error and errorists? Or does he hold the Bible has nothing to say on that topic? If he criticizes the Mis-



souri Synod for insisting on purity of doctrine, we say that in this case he is not fighting a straw man, that we earnestly endeavor to practice such insistence, and that we believe our course to be Scriptural and thoroughly Lutheran as evidenced, for instance, by Luther's explanation of the First Petition in the Small Catechism. We should be eager to hear how he would prove that our position is un-Lutheran and not only our position but likewise that of the majority of his brethren in the American Lutheran Conference. There stand the words of Luther which we teach our children, "he that teaches and lives otherwise than the Word of God teaches profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, heavenly Father!" Will the editor of *Folkebladet* maintain that the thought expressed in these words is unscriptural and un-Lutheran?

What we plead for is the elimination of straw men, set up for the sole purpose of being knocked down. Let us see how the field will look after they have been removed. A.

**Dr. Reu on Efforts in His Church Body to Establish Fellowship with the U. L. C. A.** In an interesting article on Hermann Bezzel, who early in the century was the leader of Lutherans in Bavaria, Dr. Reu in drawing some practical conclusions for our own times writes as follows:

"Wir brechen fuer heute ab. Haben uns diese Zuege aus Bezzels Leben etwas zu sagen? Festigkeit im Bekennen und Treue im Standhalten—brauchen wir das jetzt nicht, da die Zahl derer unter uns waechst, die zur Aufrichtung von Kirchengemeinschaft mit einem Kirchenkoerper draengen, der entweder nicht willig ist oder nicht die Kraft in sich traegt, seine Logenpastoren von sich abzuschuettern und sein Bekenntnis in kirchliches Handeln umzusetzen? Und doch schlaegt das Schrift und Bekenntnis ins Angesicht! 'Wenn ich mit einer einzigen Konzession an Christi Wort mir einen Triumph erkaufen kann und ich mache die Konzession, so habe ich Triumph mehr geachtet als Treue. Wenn ich mir mit einem winzigen Zugestaendnis ein leichteres Leben erkaufen kann und ich tue es, so bin ich Christi Knecht nicht'—so hat ein treuer Gottesmann unserer Kirche gesagt.

"Beduerfen wir einer Erinnerung an die Geschichte? Wie bitter notwendig ist sie, wenn gut gemeinter, aber stuermischer und in seinem Stuermen blind gewordener Enthusiasmus uns den Felsen vergessen lassen moechte, aus dem wir gehauen sind (Jes. 51, 1-2). Keine Kanzeln noch Altargemeinschaft mit anderen als Lutheranern—diese Losung gab Loehe seinen Sendlingen mit, und zu dieser Losung hat sich Ohio tapfer durchgekaempft und sich dann treu dazu gehalten. Sollen wir dies Erbe aufgeben oder wenigstens gefaehrden um eines Linsengerichts willen? Und das tun wir, wenn wir einen Koerper anerkennen, der hier seinen Gliedern gegenueber die Augen zudrueckt."

May this fine testimony not remain unheeded!

A.

**The Centennial of Bibliotheca Sacra.** A stately, impressive issue it is, the one hundredth anniversary number of *Bibliotheca Sacra*, bound in gilt paper, having 207 pages, presenting the pictures of the editors during the past hundred years and submitting several interesting articles tracing the development of this venerable journal. The first editor was Professor Robinson of Union Theological Seminary, New York City, at



that time a Presbyterian school. He served not quite one year. He was followed in 1844 by Bela Bates Edwards of Andover Seminary. The third editor, who was at the helm from 1852 to 1883, was Edwards Amasa Park, likewise a member of the Andover faculty. The next man to serve as editor was the well-known Professor George Frederick Wright of Oberlin College, who held this position from 1884 to 1921. Another well-known Biblical scholar followed him, Dr. Melvin Grove Kyle of Xenia Seminary (1922—1933). With the sixth man the chief editorship was moved to Texas. Dr. Rollin Thomas Chafer of Dallas Theological Seminary served from 1934 to 1939. His brother, Dr. Louis Berry Chafer, professor at the same seminary, is editor of the journal at present.

In speaking of the course which *Bibliotheca Sacra* has followed these hundred years the opening editorial says, "*Bibliotheca Sacra* enjoys an even greater distinction than that it is the oldest among theological journals, namely, that it has continued to the present hour as it began, not only an outstanding representation of scholastic dignity, but an undeviating voice in behalf of conservative Biblical interpretation. . . . The stress of rationalistic forces, which has had its effect on religious literature, has not cast its blight at any time upon the witness which *Bibliotheca Sacra* has borne, and as liberal theology has increased, this unique journal has more and more assumed the defense of that which is confessedly the historic faith of the Church of Jesus Christ. Today this magazine is as a voice lifted in defense of the exposition of the whole Bible and presents that interpretation of it which alone unlocks its richest treasures."

*Bibliotheca Sacra* of late has sponsored the premillennial conception of the teachings of the Bible concerning the Last Times—a conception from which the Lutheran Church absolutely dissents. But for the numerous valiant and brilliant testimonies in behalf of the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures which *Bibliotheca Sacra* during the past century has presented to its readers we are truly grateful. A.

**Emphasis on the Study of the Biblical Languages.** Today, when many theological seminaries, with more or less expressed contempt, neglect Hebrew and Greek, it is refreshing to read what *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Vol. 100, No. 397; January-March, 1943) writes on this point under the heading "The Advantage in Knowing the Biblical Languages." Concluding his article, the author, Prof. J. H. Bennetch, Professor of Biblical Exegesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, says: "It is the belief of the present writer that any thoroughgoing study of the Bible—true penetration into the reaches of divine truth—necessitates a working knowledge of the original. Every instructed student has learned this. Day by day his experience impresses it upon him. The Bible Institutes feel duty bound to include one or both languages in their curricula, although they are unable to offer standard collegiate or seminary courses when they do so. Every good Reference Bible makes allusion to the original languages and not infrequently. Each theological article purporting to give an authoritative discussion must be based on the Biblical languages. At every turn the theologian and the advanced student discover themselves returning to the original text for added information. 'It was Dr. Lightfoot who pointed out that the greatest difficulties of Scripture lie in the



language of Scripture. Unlock the language and phrases, and the difficulty is gone. The difficulties met in Scripture are not, he wrote, to drive us from the holy ground where God shines in majesty in the flaming bush, but to teach us to put off our shoes at the holy ground; not to stand upon our own skill and wisdom, but to strike sail to the divine wisdom and mysteriousness that shine there; not to dishearten us from the study of the mysteries of God, but to teach us, in all humility, to study them more.' This respectful notice of Bishop Lightfoot and his attitude, one who rose to prominence during the nineteenth century because he had almost no equal in expounding the Greek New Testament and its historical background, is recorded by one who in his own right is a scholar of note, the Rev. C. W. Hale Amos, D. D., M. A. (Contab. Hons.), M. R. S. L., late scholar, exhibitor and theological prizeman of Clare College, Cambridge, etc. Furthermore, which of the great leaders in Church History did not make good use of the original? Augustine and Calvin did, Jerome and Erasmus, Luther and Wesley! Men like Spurgeon and Moody, who had no formal theological education, have rarely despised the student who does. On the contrary, it has proved the rule for them to consider the deficiency so real as to establish schools for the next generation where the youth might be instructed in fundamentals which their elders had missed and whose absence had been overcome, in a measure, only by unusual application and diligence as few men know."—While the study of Hebrew and Greek was revived and enthusiastically fostered by the Humanists of the Renaissance, the real friends and advocates of the study of Biblical languages were the conservative Protestant theologians who were imbued with the spirit that prompted Luther to say: "If we yield the languages [Greek and Hebrew], we shall not only lose the Gospel, but shall be unable rightly to speak or write Latin and German." (X:470.) Today liberal theological seminaries in general seem to care little for the Biblical languages, just as they care nothing for the Gospel given us in those glorious ancient tongues, while conservative theological seminaries seek to revive and increase interest in them. Luther's dictum is as true today as it was four hundred years ago: "Those who study the Holy Scriptures should bend their energies on learning the [Biblical] languages." (XIV:1002.)

J. T. M.

**The Study of the Bible in the Roman Catholic Church.** *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (January, 1943), under the heading "Spirit and Life," publishes the address which Rev. T. Plassmann delivered at the closing session of the annual meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association, Cleveland, September 2, 1942. To the writer, the address seems interesting especially for two reasons, namely, first, because of the renewed interest which the Catholic Church (or to be more exact, societies within the Catholic Church) shows in the study of the Bible, and, second, on account of its sharp re-emphasis of the sole right of the interpretation of the Bible by the Church. Dr. Plassmann chides those within his Church that do not carefully study the Scriptures. He writes, for example: "Frequently I have heard the remark by theologians and young priests: 'I used to love Sacred Scripture, but somehow I have lost this interest in my Scripture classes.' Of course, the veteran Scripture professor will



suspect in such words, no matter how immaculate the lips that speak them, a modicum of the proverbial classroom odium, if not downright otium; still there often is a kernel of truth in the complaint. Certainly, *ab initio autem non fuit sic* (Mt. 19:8). A different spirit prevailed when Scripture study was in its infancy and youth. A sacrosanct reverence, an unrestrained fervor, an undisguised devotion prevails in the early homilies and glossaries, catenae and commentaries on the *Scriptura divinitus inspirata*. Every line bespeaks a childlike faith; every paragraph, the motto: *Sancta sancte tractanda*. Those mighty tomes are proof of a genuine consecration to the doctrine which is from God. . . . Spirituality may be found anywhere in this world, and any pious and approved book may be read with profit, especially if it is written by one of the Church's Sancti or Beati. But it is hardly edifying to see the latest gracefully bound brochure of 'Sister Amalia of the Holy Spirit' assigned to the foremost place among the 'Ascetica' in a priest's library, while the lone and lonesome copy of the Holy Bible is squeezed away among dusty Tanquerays and worn-out Sabettis on the lowest shelf, unless it be hidden altogether by the latest issues of 'Look' and 'Peep' and what not." But while the article thus urges the study of Holy Scripture, it nevertheless insists that the Church be interpreter of the sacred text. Speaking of the liturgical movement in the seminaries, Father Plassmann says: "It is well that the Liturgical Movement has entered our seminaries. It has spiritual advantages all its own; it brings our candidates closer to the Holy Sacrifice; but not the least advantage is that it makes the student read and understand the Scriptures from the first line to the last as the Church understands them, for she is Scripture's *optima interpres*." Again: "Needless to say, this line of argument steers clear of the pitfalls of the Reformers and reveals the genuinely Catholic approach as suggested notably by St. Bonaventura. To him the *auctoritas Ecclesiae* was the supreme law." Or: "The Reformation blundered grievously by proclaiming Sacred Scripture a sacrament [means of grace?], as if Sacraments could exist where the Author of the Sacraments has withdrawn; where the Tabernacle, which is the heart and source of all sacramental power, has been violently removed." Or: "Rather was it the sad, iniquitous attempt of heresy, which tore the ship of faith away from its ancient moorings, which ruthlessly wrung the Holy Bible from the consecrated hands of Mother Church, to which it had been entrusted by its divine Author. This was desecration, which made Church authorities wary and the faithful bewildered."—While thus the Catholic Biblical Association urges renewed study of the Holy Scriptures, it denies the Lutheran principle *Scriptura Scripturam interpretatur*, compelling the Bible student to view the whole Scriptural content in the light of the Roman Catholic dogma. No doubt, Catholic Bible students will derive much benefit from their reading of God's Word; let it be hoped that many be led from Rome's pernicious doctrine of work-righteousness to the *sola fide* of the Reformation. But always the Catholic Bible reader is compelled by his Church to recognize the teaching that the Church is the *optima interpres* of the Bible and that therefore "the student must read and understand the Scriptures from the first line to the last as the Church understands them."

J. T. M.



**A New Catholic Translation of the Bible into English.** The correspondent of the *Christian Century* Dr. Edward Shillito writes from London: "The new translation of the Vulgate into English by Msgr. Ronald Knox is reported to have reached its final stages. It has not yet reached the stage in which no correction or alteration in the text can be made. But a number of copies have been printed, and those who have read them can still write to the translator to make corrections or suggestions. The work will afterward receive the official approval of the Catholic Church. It will certainly be welcomed by many who are not Roman Catholics. The translator is the son of the late Bishop of Manchester, himself a stalwart Evangelical. Ronald Knox, while a young Oxford don, not only in church circles, but in the whole university, was famous for his wit and was not subdued by fear of dignitaries. He loved to make sport of 'Modernists' in the Church. In the Roman Church, into which he was received, he has given great services both as a preacher and as a writer of unusual ability." Why people who are not Roman Catholics are said to be ready to welcome this translation we cannot understand.

A.

**Religious Freedom as Seen by a Roman Catholic.** One of the associate editors of *America*, a former professor of history at Loyola University, Chicago, Dr. W. Eugene Shiels, has the hardihood in his journal to discuss religious freedom, which his Church has done so much to oppose. One is eager to see what this follower of the Pope has to say on the rights and privileges which the Holy Father more than once has severely condemned. His subject is "Religious Freedom a Necessity to Preserve the Postwar World." One sentence is altogether of the old style, "Religion knows no freedom where citizens have the power to molest and disintegrate the Church." The reader will observe that "Church" is written with a capital and here refers to the Roman Catholic Church. There are words of praise for our country as "the refuge and the home of the free." The writer admits that a man must follow his conscience in the matter of religion whether it is "correct or erroneous." Furthermore, the assertion is boldly made, "In the Catholic Church this doctrine [of liberty of religion] has always stood pre-eminent." The statement is then uttered that there has come a change in world conditions. A writer is quoted who in his book called *Tolerance* says, "Heresy is no longer the social offense that it once was. In the seventeenth century in France it was stated as an incontrovertible axiom that 'for the State to maintain itself in peace there must be one king, one law, one faith.' This idea is no longer accepted or acceptable, for agreement on the subject of religion is no more at the base of our societies."

Does this mean, then, that in a country like Spain Protestants will be permitted to preach their religion? The author says that in the thoughts to which allusion has been made thus far merely the right of the individual has been considered. He evidently wishes to keep the bars down to some extent. "At the outset, religious liberty is one thing, broad religious activity quite another. Every State must preserve the true religion; so, too, every State must respect the right of religious liberty. But not every State must allow the broadest religious activity."



The author adds, "Take the country where almost everyone professes the same religion. In such a territory the Government must protect the public peace. As our American law has held, 'to prohibit the open, public, and explicit denial of the popular religion of a country is a necessary measure to preserve the tranquillity of a Government.' And the Government may have the duty of putting limits on the activities of people holding other religious ideas, to preserve the peace, to preserve the right of religious freedom against assault." Here we see that the left hand takes back what the right hand has given.

The sentence from American law quoted by Dr. Shiels we should like to see in its context. Explaining his point of view more fully, he says, "Suppose that some country having a common, uniform religious picture admits immigrants of another religion. Must it give the immigrant group the fullest privileges in propagating its cult? Not unless that group can demonstrate, to the conviction of the State, a special divine mandate to carry on its activity." It is very clear, then, that this author by no means espouses religious liberty in the sense in which most Americans understand the term. For him religious liberty is chiefly a condition in which the Roman Catholic Church is tolerated wherever its members do not form the majority of the population and in which, wherever Roman Catholicism is dominant, the State has the right to suppress the public worship of any denomination not bowing to the hierarchy. The clause referring to demonstration of a special divine mandate is, of course, merely a reference to a door which the authorities may open or close according to their will. A.

**The Catholic View of Civil Marriages.** In *America* (Roman Catholic weekly) a picture is spoken of which appeared in *Life* showing a wedding in a Catholic church in London. The commentator in *Life* said of the bride (Carole Landis), "Because her brief earlier marriages had been only civil ceremonies, the Catholic Church permitted her a church wedding this time." This remark leads the editorial writer of *America* to make some comments. He says, "The Catholic Church permitted a church wedding only because Miss Landis was free to marry. Civil marriages between non-Catholics are recognized as valid by the Church unless there is some invalidating circumstance; as there would be, for instance, if one of the parties had a civil divorce from an existing valid marriage. (The Church does not recognize as valid the marriage of a Catholic outside the Church.) If two non-Catholics contract a valid civil marriage and one of them subsequently becomes a Catholic, there can be no new marriage, even in church, with a third person, so long as the other partner is alive; except in certain rare unusual cases, such as the Pauline privilege. As it stands, *Life's* statement is simply a *non sequitur*." It may be that one or the other of our readers will be able to find here information which he has been seeking. The paragraph is by no means clear to us in all of its details. A.

**A Kentucky Decision on the Use of Public Money for Parochial Schools.** In the *Watchman-Examiner* an editorial treats this subject. The writer says, "A prolonged effort has been made in Kentucky to break down the principle of the separation of Church and State by



seeking to obtain public funds for the purpose of conveying children to sectarian schools. December 19, 1942, the court of appeals in Kentucky handed down a unanimous decision which denied to Roman Catholics and all other religious groups the right to use public school busses for the purpose of conveying their children to parochial schools. The tactics employed by those who are ambitious to use tax money for sectarian promotion first includes a wide propaganda campaign after gaining control of the policies of certain outstanding newspapers. Then the humanistic appeal is made that it is a hardship for those who patronize sectarian schools to pay, not only for these institutions, but also taxes for public education. Then is added pitiful stories of how difficult it is for children and young people to have to travel miles, in some cases, in order to get to their sectarian school. All this is said for the purpose of justifying the breakdown of the American principle of separation of Church and State by the use of arguments which seem to affect public feeling."

In discussing the same case *America* (Roman Catholic) speaks of "legal penalties for being Catholic." It states, however, that Kentucky's highest court has granted a re-hearing and that "as a result all children may continue to use the school busses until March 29 and possibly until the end of the school year." It seems, then, that public school busses have been used for taking children to the Roman Catholic parochial schools. The court of appeals called the practice unlawful, but since it has granted a re-hearing, the practice for the first will be continued.

## A.

**Brief Items.** Bishop Conkling of Chicago recently declared that if the plan proposed by the two commissions of the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches were carried out, it would result in "broken churches and embittered remnants." Holding that "even now it has caused serious division within the church," he condemned the proposals that "would equate the diaconate with the licentiate, would set apart elders in a sort of quasi-ordination by Presbyterians, and would administer confirmation by Presbyterians acting as if they were bishops. If our basic principles are capable of such elastic adjustments, I see no reason for our existence in the past, much less for our continuance. . . . I yearn and pray for a united Christendom . . . but, frankly, I cannot walk the way our commission on approaches to unity would propose, nor shall I." The address, according to a report in the *Living Church*, was given in the diocesan convention. — *Christian Century*.

A report from the South says that the Southern Baptist Convention, which is supposed to meet in Memphis May 12–16, will not be dropped, as seemed probable, but that on account of wartime conditions the attendance will not be the expected eight or ten thousand but only about 1,500.

When the International Council of Religious Education recently was in session in Chicago, 475 delegates attended. By majority vote it was resolved to let this organization join the planned North American Council of Churches of Christ. This is the fifth one of the organizations in question which has voted in favor of the new setup.



Tuskegee reports that there were five lynchings in 1942, three of them in the State of Mississippi. All the victims were Negroes. They report the number lynched over the past five-year period as 23.

*Christian Century*

Union Theological Seminary, New York (non-denominational), has called two new professors. John Knox, at present professor of New Testament and Homiletics at the University of Chicago, will become Baldwin professor of Sacred Literature, and John Coleman Bennett, at present professor of Christian Theology and the Philosophy of Religion at the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, Calif., will take over the chair of Christian Theology and Ethics in Union Seminary.

Two ministers of the "Jehovah's Witnesses" were kidnapped and beaten by twelve men near Prescott, Ark., and told to leave the State. They were taken from the home of an old Negro, where they were holding a Bible class. — *Christian Century*.

Membership in the sixteen largest Protestant denominations has grown from 12,260,000 in 1920 to 23,121,000 in 1942, according to Harry S. Myers, secretary of the United Stewardship Council. In 1927 these denominations received gifts of \$459,528,000, or \$22.67 per member. In 1942 contributions, which had fallen to one half this amount per capita, had risen to \$15.17 per person, or a total of \$350,807,000. The prospect for 1943 is a further increase. — *Christian Century*.

General Giraud, at present the High Commissioner of French North Africa, is reported in the *Christian Century* (which presumably took this information from *Life*) to have made this statement about the German people whom he came to know intimately as a prisoner of war in Germany, "Sincere Frenchmen who have been in Germany as prisoners of war can bear witness to its prosperity and to its physical and moral health. Admittedly the Germans do not perhaps have liberty, but there is certainly neither disorder nor anarchy. Everywhere it is work, the only fortune for a people which wishes to live and live happily. May France remember and profit by it!"

From the *Lutheran Standard* we learn that Dr. C. B. Sheatsley, the executive secretary of the American Lutheran Church for its mission work in India, was called to his heavenly reward January 19 of this year. He was 69 years old.

In India a Lutheran magazine appears having the title the *Gospel Witness*. It is published under the direction of the Board of Publication of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India (U.L. C. A. and others). The last number which reached us (October, 1942), under the heading "Father Heyer's Own Story," publishes letters which this first American Lutheran missionary in India wrote.

In January two giants of science departed this life who at the same time were humble Christians. Their names deserve to be held in honor and to be remembered. One was Dr. Howard A. Kelly, a great medical authority, of whom it is reported that he regularly spent from one to four hours a day studying his Bible. The other is Dr. George Washington Carver, a Negro scientist, who became famous through the way in



which he utilized peanuts and sweet potatoes in the formation of special products. A favorite passage with the latter was Phil. 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The case of these two men strikingly refutes the charge often uttered by atheists or skeptics that eminence in science is incompatible with a simple Bible faith.

The Ministerium of Pennsylvania, largest and oldest Synod of the U. L. C. A., mourns the death of its president, Dr. E. P. Pfatteicher. He was well known, not only in his own church body, but in other synods as well. He died January 9 at the age of sixty-eight, having been president of his synod for sixteen years.

An item in the *Lutheran* says that Dr. Ernst Berl of the Carnegie Institute of Technology has discovered a process through which, in merely one hour, he can form coal and oil "from grass, seaweed, and common vegetable materials." The *Lutheran* properly adds: "Incidentally, the millions of years once demanded by biology for the production of coal and oil are made to seem greatly exaggerated."

To those who in an air raid, with genuine contrition, make the ejaculation "My Jesus, mercy," in any language, the Pope has granted a plenary indulgence. The indulgence was promulgated through a decree of the Sacred Penitentiary dated December 19. — *Christian Century*.

When a crisis arises, you have to meet it by forming a new society. That seems to be the principle on which 38 Protestant clergymen acted who organized a group to be known as the "Christian Conference on War and Peace." At the head of the group is Methodist Bishop Francis J. McConnell, and associated with him are, for instance, Doctors Coffin and Niebuhr of Union Seminary.

At the meeting of the Federal Council of Churches held in Cleveland last December its officers had before them an application for membership from the Universalist General Convention. The astounding fact is that the application was not submitted to the Federal Council for action. Undoubtedly the officers felt that there would be strong opposition to acceptance of the Universalists as members of the Federal Council, and they believed it wise not to take any action at all. This silence is quite eloquent. It shows that the Federal Council is unwilling to take a positive stand on the religious issues on account of which liberals like the Unitarians and Universalists have been kept out of the pale of outward Christianity. The term that is used as a rule is that the bodies mentioned are not evangelical, that is, they do not represent the teachings of the Gospel as understood by the great majority of Protestant Christians.

The correspondent from Australia in the *Christian Century* mentions that in that country church broadcasts have been discussed extensively in recent months. The comments published in newspapers were chiefly critical. For the self-examination of all of us we print some of the criticisms that appeared in the Australian press, "Sermons are poor; choirs amateurish; music too ambitious; no theme, no continuity in the service; unnatural voice and mannerisms of the average pulpiteer not very acceptable; Bible passages often unwisely chosen and badly read; not enough thought for the non-church listener." A.