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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Dr. Hult Gone to His Rest.—With deep sorrow we read in the *Lutheran Companion* (Augustana Synod) that Dr. Adolf Hult, professor at the Augustana Seminary in Rock Island, Ill., has been taken from us. Ever since the day when we first read an article of his, we have belonged to the large circle of his admirers. He was a conservative Lutheran, standing firmly on the Scriptures and the Confessions, and his thoughts he expressed in forceful language reminding one of the diction of Carlyle. The *Lutheran Companion* states that the deceased "was not only a preacher and an editor but also a poet and a musician. His love for the highest and noblest form of church music and hymnody, particularly the Lutheran choral, as well as his staunch championship of Lutheran practices, contributed much in raising the standards of worship within the Augustana Synod and in wider circles." What always impressed us was his strong aversion to everything that savored of sham and cant and his unflinching championship of the old evangelical truth. If we are not altogether mistaken, it was he who made the statement that the grandest book which the Lutheran Church of America produced was *Walther's Law and Gospel*. May the memory of this gifted Lutheran leader help to keep alive in us the appreciation of the treasures we possess in our Lutheran literature and music. He died March 6, being a little more than 73 years old. He served as pastor of churches in Chicago and Omaha, and in 1916 he became professor of church history at Augustana Seminary, which position he held to the time of his death.

A.

The Need of More Chaplains.—In the March 11, 1943, issue of the *Watchman-Examiner* some important information concerning the number of chaplains serving now in the Armed Forces of the United States and the need of more of them is dwelt on. We quote, "There are now nearly 5,000 chaplains with the Armed Forces of our country. Dr. S. Arthur Devan, the Executive Secretary of the General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains, feels that 3,000 new chaplains must be found to fill denominational quotas for 1943, while Dean Luther A. Weigle, of Yale Divinity School, says, 'America's Armed Forces may need 10,000 chaplains before the war closes.' For the churches to give up so great a number of young and able-bodied pastors would create an alarming condition here in our churches. On the other hand, we say again, as we have said before, that a chaplain's work creates a Christian opportunity second to none." The latter sentiment we heartily endorse. In an editorial the same paper under the title "Shortage of Chaplains" mentions that Brigadier General William R. Arnold, Chief of Chaplains of the Army, "appeals to all chaplains in the service to aid in recruiting chaplains." The editor continues, "The originally strict qualifications for chaplaincies have been considerably modified and the age limits lowered and raised. Even with that there is need for as many chaplains as are now in service. Chaplain Arnold says that there is need for two Negro chaplains for each Negro chaplain

now on duty. The spiritual care of the men in our Armed Forces is at present the greatest undertaking available to our churches. While it is essential that the home front be preserved intact, yet the spiritual aids available at home are more numerous than in the camps or with the troops." Let us bear in mind that it is impossible at present to think of expansion in the foreign field, even to maintain our present strength of missionaries is exceedingly difficult. We may find some compensation in the major effort beckoning us through the work to be done by chaplains in the Army and the Navy. A.

"Let's Go Together."—On the "Washington" page of the *Lutheran* (U. L. C. A.) we find under the caption mentioned the following statement:

"A representative group of Washington laymen heard Dr. Ralph H. Long, executive director of the National Lutheran Council, present the far-reaching work of the Council. It is likely the most effective Lutheran enterprise in the world today. The president of no single Lutheran body has the responsibility now resting upon the director of the National Council. Perhaps the Council holds the key to the future of our Church in this country. . . . Since the only generation we have is the present, we see no reason for delaying an aggressive move for organic union within the framework of the Council. If our fathers had the right to separate, their sons surely have the moral right to unite. Why must certain ultraconservatives who 'are not ready' determine the speed of this movement? . . . We believe the National Council is the place to begin this determined effort. Change its constitution if need be to make the effort possible. . . . One of our Washington colleagues asked this question at the close of Dr. Long's address, 'Where do you suppose the priest and the Levite were going when they passed the broken and robbed man on the road to Jericho in Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan?' Our colleague thought they were perhaps headed for a theological conference to draw up some 'articles of agreement.' The writers of this page believe the time for the theological debate among Lutherans is far, far past. We hold that it is lack of intellectual poise to fail to see the unity which now exists among Lutherans. . . . The man beside the road is our broken and robbed world. The mother of Protestantism and the largest Protestant Church in the world has a responsibility second to none other to go to work *together* in His name. . . . Either the elected leadership of our Church must lead or forfeit the confidence of our most alert clergy and laity."

It is difficult to comment with becoming calmness and moderation on sentiments like those expressed above. What a pity if any person thinks that the time for theological debate is past, far past! There is a kind of theological debate which is, and always has been, obnoxious, a debate which has selfish aims, which puts the victory of one's own propositions above the victory of the truth, which is carried on in the "I-know-it-all" and "I-am-better-than-thou" spirit. Debates of that kind every child of God condemns. But that debates in which the earnest effort is made to set forth clearly the divine teachings of the Scriptures as they are voiced in our grand Confessions should be con-

sidered out of date is tragic and disastrous. Nothing will more quickly sound the death knell of true Lutheranism than the universal acceptance in our ranks of the view that doctrinal discussions are no longer needed or desirable. We hope that our laymen, most of whom have themselves received thorough training in Lutheran doctrine and love the teachings of the Bible, will not be influenced by jibes such as those contained in the above quotation.

A.

The Fight for the Doctrine of Inspiration.— Under the heading "The Issue in the Southern Presbyterian Church" the *Christian Beacon* (Feb. 18, 1943) shows in a lengthy article how liberalism is rapidly and irresistibly gaining a foothold in that denomination. We read (quoting the article only in part): "There is an issue upon which Christendom is divided. It is found in most denominations of Protestantism. God's people must face this issue. It involves that which is vital to Christianity. The issue that overshadows all other questions is, Is the Bible the Word of God written? What is its authority? Is it the only infallible rule of faith and practice for God's people? The affirmative has been the constitutional and historic answer of Presbyterianism, but in recent years men have crept unawares into the ministry who try to make a distinction between infallible and inerrant. Webster's Collegiate Dictionary says, 'That is infallible which makes or is capable of making no mistakes'; again, 'That is inerrant which contains no errors.' It is apparent, then, that infallible and inerrant are synonymous. These men who attempt to make a distinction between infallible and inerrant have been miseducated in our church colleges and seminaries where professors and presidents have taken vows that they believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice, but apparently with mental reservations."—By documentary evidence it is then established that the late Dr. W. W. Moore, president of Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., did not believe in the "inerrancy of the autograph Scriptures." A former student of his writes: "I asked Dr. Moore whether he believed that theory [of the inerrancy of Scriptures]. He replied that he did not, and he spoke, humorously and pleasantly, of the 'mossbacks' who did. As I was leaving, he said, very earnestly, that he sometimes almost despaired of the Southern Presbyterian Church because of its ultra-conservatism." His successor in office, Dr. B. R. Lacy, invited Dr. E. Brunner to lecture at Union in 1939. In January, 1939, Dr. Brunner spoke to the ministers of Charlotte, N. C., and as the *Charlotte Observer* quotes him, "he did not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures; he was scientifically an evolutionist; he questioned the account of the creation as given in Genesis; and believed that the Bible is abundant in errors of various sorts." Though the Mecklenburg Presbytery protested against Brunner, he was nevertheless permitted to lecture at Union. The article continues: "Young men are coming out of this seminary who tell presbyteries when they are examined for licensure or ordination that they are not sure they believe in the resurrection. One who came before the Mecklenburg Presbytery, who had received all his education in church institutions, including Union Seminary, said that

he was 'an evolutionist and did not accept the historicity of the early chapters of Genesis.' Mecklenburg Presbytery refused to license him, but Union Seminary took him on as an instructor. Another young man from this Seminary came before Mecklenburg Presbytery recently and was licensed, though his views of the inspiration of the Scriptures were not in accord with the constitution of the church or of the teaching of the Scriptures. Thus, the message of the ministry of the church becomes a babel of confusion and contradiction. Churches that have been blessed with a sound ministry are greatly distressed when they have to look for another minister lest they be deceived and an unsound minister becomes their pastor." By the way, in a letter addressed to Dr. A. J. McKelway, editor of the *Presbyterian Standard*, Charlotte, N. C., Dr. Moore wrote, among other things: "What I want to say is that things have reached a very unhappy pass with us if we are to shut out a man from the ministry among us who believes and preaches the essence of the Gospel . . . because forsooth he does not define the mode of inspiration in just the same way that the majority of our Southern preachers would, or because he does not take the view of some other matter that is not vital. . . . You know my own conservative temperament and views, but I am 'agin' the policy of trying to secure copper plate similarity among thinking men by the terrors of presbyterial examinations. In short, I hope, Mr. H. has misjudged us and that the Mecklenburg Presbytery will satisfy herself that he is sound on the essentials and leave him his freedom as to incidentals." According to this letter, Dr. Moore regarded the denial of verbal inspiration and belief in evolution as "incidentals."

J. T. M.

Debate Among Episcopalians on Union with the Presbyterians.—The Archbishop of Canterbury had sent a congratulatory letter to Bishop Parsons of California, who is a member of the committee seeking to bring about a union of the Northern Presbyterians and the Episcopalians in our country. Bishop Manning of New York resented what he regarded the unwarranted interference of the Archbishop of Canterbury in affairs of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States and addressed a critical letter to Bishop Parsons to which the latter replied. Referring to this correspondence the *Presbyterian*, published in the circles of the Northern Presbyterian Church, has this to say:

"Squalls Ahead. The interchange of letters between Bishop Manning of New York and Bishop Parsons of California concerning the letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury is an ominous sign that disharmony prevails among our Episcopalian brethren concerning the matter of Church union. We believe something almost equivalent prevails among us. One may deplore the situation and condemn this side or that as sentiment suggests, but the basic fact is this: Presbyterians generally are not zealous for a union which 'makes Episcopals out of Presbyterians,' and Episcopalians generally are not in favor of a union which is 'essentially Presbyterian.' The proposed plan will fall between the two stools. Probably any other proposal would have the basic weakness of trying to do the impossible. Let us be brethren.

Pressing this proposal at this time strikes us as similar to an attempt to merge Parliament and Congress, or exchange citizenship with the British, or use one another's currency. Pence and pennies are spelled much alike but try to pay the American in pence and the Britisher in pennies and see what confusion would result." A.

The Religious Education of Youth.—*The Australian Lutheran* pleads for more religious education of children and young people. From the lengthy article we quote the following: "Unless we wish to train and develop a race of atheists, that is, people into whose life the thought of God does not enter, we must instill the fear of God into the hearts of children. Those who are desirous of having their children learn something about religion are in most cases quite satisfied with the half hour a week that is devoted to this subject in our schools. But many are becoming aware that this half hour a week is altogether inadequate. In an article contributed to the *Australian Christian World*, the Rev. R. G. Arthur, M. A., rightly says: 'We must face the fact that our state educational systems are producing minds that are pagan rather than Christian. Generally speaking, religious instruction in state schools counts for little in the thinking and living of Australian children. Even where it can be said to be effective in itself, our state education system is such that the Christian story, the Christian faith, the Christian way of life, hardly bears a meaningful relationship to the rest of what our children are learning at school.' The writer is evidently speaking from an experience gained in conducting such classes and then examining them as to the results. When in answer to the question: 'write what you know about God,' he got answers like these: 'God is very religious,' 'God is a man who can do anything at all,' 'God was crucified by the angels,' he must surely have thought that he had been spending his time for naught. Not less discouraging were many of the answers given to a question concerning Jesus: 'Jesus was a Christian, and He made the animals,' 'Jesus was an Arabian,' 'Jesus helped the people to get across the Red Sea, but when the soldiers tried to cross the river, they were all swept away.' That appears to be as much as many children remembered about Jesus. Similarly hazy were the ideas about what it means to be a Christian. 'A Christian is a person who is civilized and believes in God,' 'A Christian belongs to the Church of England,' 'A Christian does not go into a Catholic church.' That was some of the information given. And yet, when some Christians establish schools for their children in which instruction in the one thing needful is the chief concern, many look at them askance and hold them up to ridicule. The establishment of church schools has its difficulties. Where it is not possible, the home must supply the religious instruction."—In connection with this we might quote what a well-known professor of theology in a Presbyterian seminary wrote us recently about Christian training. He says: "The people sorely need to be indoctrinated. Of course, with your day schools, your constituency is better trained than most Presbyterians are today. I was brought up in a Christian school, first till the age of 10 in the Netherlands, then, after two years in a public school,

I was the first graduate of a Christian school in Munster, Indiana. And I have seen the difference between those trained in a Christian school and those not so trained. Even at best there is much need for stress on sound doctrine." J. T. M.

"Six Peace Pillars" of the Federal Council.—The Federal Council has a commission which has given study to foundations for "a just and durable peace." This commission has issued a statement in which the political propositions which in the view of the commission have to form the base for such a peace are set forth. Since without a doubt these propositions will receive wide discussion in the religious press, we here reprint them:

1. The peace must provide the political framework for a continuing collaboration of the United Nations and, in due course, of neutral and enemy nations.

2. The peace must make provision for bringing within the scope of international agreement those economic and financial acts of international governments which have widespread international repercussions.

3. The peace must make provision for an organization to adapt the treaty structure of the world to changing underlying conditions.

4. The peace must proclaim the goal of autonomy for subject peoples, and it must establish international organization to assure and to supervise the realization of that end.

5. The peace must establish procedures for controlling military establishments everywhere.

6. The peace must establish in principle and seek to achieve in practice the right of individuals everywhere to religious and intellectual liberty.

The Church as such is not concerned with the questions of statesmanship that are involved. Let it indefatigably preach the Gospel of redemption so that more and more the spirit of Christ will fill the hearts of individuals, who then will seek to establish the principles of true justice in the relations between nations and individuals. A.

Pronouncement of the World Council of Churches with Reference to Postwar Conditions.—In Geneva, Switzerland, the World Council of Churches maintains an office from which a statement has been issued setting forth in eleven points what the churches should consider their function in the days that will follow the war. We reprint these eleven points as published in the *Lutheran Companion* (Augustana Synod):

"1. The Church has a specific task in relation to peacemaking and the creation of an international order. A division on this point, however, arises over the question whether this task consists exclusively in reminding the nations of the Divine Commandments or whether it should include the interpretation of them in terms of concrete policy.

"2. The Church can perform its task in this realm by itself, constituting a world-wide fellowship under one Lord in which national differences are eliminated.

"3. The Church must proclaim to the nations that Jesus Christ is Lord over all men and all powers.

"4. The Church must proclaim the Divine Commandments concerning the order that is to reign in the world.

"5. The Church will call the nations to repentance for their common guilt and to work for reconciliation.

"6. The Church is to proclaim that international relations must be subordinated to divine law.

"7. The Church is to proclaim that the State is neither an aim in itself nor a law unto itself and that its God-given function is to maintain an order based on law that guarantees fundamental human rights.

"8. The Church will proclaim that political power must be exercised with a sense of responsibility toward all those who are affected by that power.

"9. The Church is to proclaim that society must provide all its members with the opportunity to fulfill a meaningful vocation and that it should provide conditions of social security for all.

"10. The Church is to proclaim that the nations are interdependent and that they must all have equal access to the resources of the earth.

"11. The Church will proclaim that no people can claim the right to rule over another people and that the dominating purpose of colonial administration must be to prepare colonial peoples for self-government."

Here we have an earnest attempt to grapple with problems which affect everyone of us. Our approach to this pronouncement should be as sympathetic as possible. The paragraphs are published in this journal in order that our clergy may ponder them and where an opportunity offers help to clarify the issues.

Our comments have to be brief. The reader will observe that the World Council members are in disagreement among themselves on the question whether the churches should confine themselves to the teaching of divine truth or should endeavor to show the states and nations how these truths must find expression in definite attitudes, decisions, laws, and regulations. Reformed churches have quite generally sponsored the latter view. That the historic Lutheran position is that the Church must confine itself to the preaching of divine truth and must not presume to dictate to the State what laws and policies it ought to adopt is well known and requires no lengthy proof.

Paragraph 2 is vague. Apparently it speaks of outward Christendom. That national differences should not hinder to establish a practice of fellowship between Christians is at once accepted by us. But is true fellowship possible where there is fundamental disagreement in doctrine? The paragraph does not touch that point, and yet it is vital.

Paragraph 3 is right if the meaning is that the supremacy of Jesus must be proclaimed to all men. It is wrong if it is to imply that the governments of the world must be told by the Church that they have to administer their affairs according to the Sermon on the Mount or the Bible in general. If the men that constitute the government in a given country are Christians, they are to hear in their churches what the Word of God says with respect to the attitudes of public officials. But is it the business of the Church to approach, let us say, the heathen government

of Japan and to tell it that it must manage its affairs according to the rules laid down by Jesus, our Lord? Christ did not undertake to inform Pontius Pilate and Herod Antipas, nor did Paul, as far as we know, tell any of the Roman governors in whose provinces he did his work or Emperor Nero himself what the conduct of the government would have to be.

Paragraph 4 we can accept provided the preaching of Bible truth is meant, likewise paragraph 5 if "nations" is here to be thought of as the aggregate of individuals. Paragraph 6 can be correctly interpreted, too. We have no quarrel with paragraph 7 if the meaning is that the message of Paul in Romans 13 as to the function of the State is to be proclaimed.

The contents of paragraph 8, we think, come within the sphere of the Church's proclamation. If paragraph 9 means that the Golden Rule must be preached by the Church, we accept it. With respect to paragraph 10 we believe that what it states can likewise be regarded as being contained in the Golden Rule. For paragraph 11 we can find no warrant in Holy Scripture. It is true that everyone should love his neighbor as himself, but that principle or commandment does not exclude the possibility that at times one people will have to rule over another people in order that the best interests of all concerned may be served.

On all these matters we feel a theologian must speak with moderation and caution. The chief truth which must be borne in mind is not expressed in the paragraphs submitted, perhaps because no unanimity could be arrived at among the members of the World Council on that particular point, and that is that the great function of the Church is to preach the Gospel of Jesus as the Savior of sinners. All efforts to make conditions here on earth conform more closely to the teachings given us in the Sermon on the Mount will have but little value for this life and no value whatever for the vast eternity lying ahead if individuals are not led to accept Christ as their personal Savior. A.

Are Calvinists and Episcopalians Agreed As to the Efficacy of Baptism?—In the *Presbyterian* a writer argues for the view that on Baptism Presbyterians and Episcopalians hold the same teaching. He first draws attention to the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer and to the teaching contained in it as to the significance of Baptism. There the minister is instructed to say after the baptism has been performed: "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child (this person) is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church," etc. Other quotations of like tenor taken from the Book of Common Prayer are submitted. Next the writer quotes the Presbyterian Confession of Faith (chapter 28, section 6): "The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in His appointed time." The writer concludes, "Thus, what the Book of Common Prayer asserts, Presbyterianism also

asserts, namely, that in baptism God has regenerated the soul of the baptized, has begun in him the work of efficacious grace." We cannot concede that the writer's conclusion is justified. The words which he has quoted from the Presbyterian Confession of Faith do not call baptism a Sacrament of regeneration, a means bringing God's grace to all who undergo baptism, but merely state that "grace is conferred by the Holy Ghost to such as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will." It strikes us that there is an important difference here between Episcopalian and Presbyterian teaching. The Presbyterian view here, as elsewhere, is connected with the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, which is not the case in the Episcopalian teaching. A.

The New China.—All friends of Christian missions are wondering what will be the state of affairs in China when the bloody World War will be concluded and normal relations have returned. The question is discussed in an interesting way in an editorial of the *Watchman-Examiner* (March 4), which our readers will peruse with profit.

"We are so concentrated on our own affairs, domestically and in relation to the war, that we are likely to lose sight of the vast changes which are constantly taking place in China. With great sections of their country occupied by the invaders and with the whole national economy concentrated on the prosecution of the war, it is interesting to learn that the Chinese government is working out far-reaching plans for the construction of a great commonwealth when victory has been secured. Looking toward this end, they are calling to their assistance such available international help as may be obtained. In China's plans are the construction of one hundred thousand miles of railroad, one million miles of macadam roads, improvement of existing canals, construction of new canals, conservation of rivers, and tele-communication lines and systems. Along with these will come the development of commercial harbors, strategically located. Modern cities will be built in all railway centers and termini and alongside harbors. Water power is in the process of development, iron and steel works are being developed, and the agricultural areas are being taken care of by enlarging co-operatives. These plans are but the beginning. Can anyone predict the China of fifty years from now? The problem to which we must give our prayers and thoughts is as to how we, as Christians, can integrate Christianity into this future empire." A.

An Ominous Move?—Under the heading "Navy to Educate Chaplains" the *Christian Century* prints an important editorial which we feel we have to bring to the attention of our readers.

"Something new was added to American church life last week when the United States Navy announced that henceforth it would select and train its own chaplains. The announcement was tucked away in the detailed description of the Navy's new V-12 program. This is the scheme under which it plans to educate high school and college boys from 17 to 20 years of age for commissions. Under this new plan the Navy will offer courses to picked youths designed to prepare them for 'specialized service, including chaplain, medical,

dental, and engineering officer candidates.' These courses are to fill twelve 16-week terms. While the curricular details have not yet been made public, the students will be regularly enlisted in the Navy, drawing Navy pay and allowances, and the Navy will be in complete control of their studies. 'The Bureau of Naval Personnel,' says the announcement from the Navy Department, 'will prescribe the curricula necessary to insure production of officer material for the various branches of the naval service, including . . . chaplains.' Well, here it is—the United States Navy stepping in to control the education of boys as Christian ministers, with their training for that holy office fixed by the Navy's judgment as to what will produce officer material! Not in the 150 previous years of the nation's history has the issue of state control of the functions of the church been raised in such aggravated form. And this by a government which professes to be fighting for freedom of religion! The *Christian Century* has long opposed the inclusion of chaplains, with military and naval rank, among the commissioned officers of the Army and Navy. We have always believed that ministers could render more effective spiritual service to the enlisted men simply as chaplains, bearing only the commissions of the churches which send them to this particular task. Now that, under the revealing stress of the present crisis, the Navy has reached out to take over the selection and education of the young men who are to go into this branch of the Christian ministry, we are more than ever convinced that the whole system whereby chaplains are made commissioned officers is wrong in conception and spiritually disastrous in its implications."

This is startling news. Does the Navy intend to give theological training to its future chaplains, or will it make provision for their theological education in seminaries of the Church with which they are connected? We have no information on this subject except that which is contained in the quoted editorial. Comment, hence, should be cautious. More information has to be sought. Let us hope that what the Navy has in mind is not a plan according to which its future chaplains will be given their theology by naval headquarters. Such a course would be in direct opposition to the First Amendment of the Constitution.

A.

Is the Catholic Clergy Fascist in Its Sentiments?—A writer in *America* (Roman Catholic) calls the view that the priests of Italy are Fascists a Leftist myth. He speaks of secularism as being strong in Britain and the United States. Its adherents, he says, "have a traditional hatred of all organized religion and especially of Catholicism. They regard the Church as the enemy of liberty and progress, as did Voltaire and the encyclopedists before them; and now they look upon its growing prestige in the modern world with suspicion and ill-concealed fear." He thinks that evidence is accumulating to show that these people "are intensifying their constant campaign to undermine the influence of the Church and especially that of the papacy." It is these secularists whom he blames for the widespread view that the Catholic clergymen of Italy are Fascists. The writer is at no particular pains

to furnish evidence for his view that the Catholic clergy are non-Fascist; he chiefly enters a staunch denial. The only thing approaching a proof is an excerpt from an encyclical by Pope Pius XI, in which the rights of workingmen are championed. A.

British Council of Churches.—*The Christian Advocate*, some time ago, carried the following item:

"A significant bit of evidence showing the trend of religious thought in Britain in wartime is reported in the cables of September 26, which announce the formation of a British Council of Churches. Three groups, long the leaders in co-operative Christian effort, represent the Church of England, the Roman Catholic, and the Independent churches. The Rev. William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the most liberal Christian leaders in the world, in a sermon which officially inaugurated the Council, said, 'The difference between Catholic and Protestant is very small, compared with the difference between Christian and non-Christian. Our differences remain. We shall not pretend that they are already resolved into unity or into harmony, but we take our stand on the common faith of Christendom.' This union for Christian action will set the Christian cause forward along a score of fronts."

So reports the *Advocate*. As to the progress of the Christian cause visualized by the writer we fear that it will turn out to be a *Fata Morgana*. T. L.

Present-Day Tendency in the Covenant Church.—In the *Lutheran Companion* (Augustana Synod) of March 10 an editorial appears having the title "Where Is Covenant Church Drifting?" On account of the information contained in the editorial we reprint it here.

"On a foregoing page is a significant editorial taken from the *Covenant Weekly*, official organ of the Evangelical Mission Covenant Church of America. It laments the fact that in that church body the practice of observing the great seasons of the Church Year, particularly Advent, seems to be passing. It asks, 'Will the time come when our *julotta* services will be discontinued also and our churches be dark on Christmas night?'"

"There are many pastors and members in the Augustana Synod who will read these words with a real sense of sadness. They know that the Covenant Church stemmed from the same Lutheran root in the Far North as did the Augustana Synod. They also know that originally most of the pastors and members of the Covenant Church regarded themselves as Lutherans and that some of their churches bore the name of 'Lutheran.'

"However, the Congregational tendency has been strong in the Covenant Church from the very beginning, and the lack of any credal basis has permitted wide latitude of individual belief. Neither has there been any uniformity in the training of its pastors, and many of them have obtained their theological education in modernist schools. It is probably not without reason that the *Covenant Weekly* declares, 'Our pastors are leading us away, in ever greater number, from the observance of the holy Advent season.'

"Puritanism and Congregationalism in New England once drifted

into Unitarianism, not only as a protest against an austere form of Christianity but also because it lacked a real credal foundation. (The Puritans, it will be remembered, actually refused to observe Christmas.) Is it too late for the Covenant Church to stem the tide that has set in and to turn back to the type of conservative Lutheranism that once flourished to such a large extent within its fold?

"This is not written in the spirit of a carping critic. We have too much respect for the many fine spiritual qualities found in the Covenant Church, and we are too conscious of many shortcomings in our own church body to permit us to seek to remove any motes from a brother's eye. However, we have always cherished the hope that some day there might be a reunion of all those who possess a Lutheran heritage from the Far North. Is that hope a forlorn one, and is that day of reconciliation gone forever?" A.

Modernism Retreating.—An arresting article has been written by the editor of the *Christian Century*, Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, on the book of Reinhold Niebuhr *The Nature and Destiny of Man, Vol. II—Human Destiny, the Gifford Lectures.* It is not our intention to write a review of Niebuhr's book. We merely wish to call attention to some statements of Dr. Morrison which show that winds on the ocean of Modernism have shifted somewhat. The editor of the *Christian Century* has given his article the title "Dr. Niebuhr's Unorthodox Orthodoxy." He tells us that Niebuhr not only rehabilitates the Pauline doctrine of sin, but "upholds such early Christian beliefs as the second coming of Christ, the final Judgment, and of all things, the resurrection of the body!" Dr. Morrison asks, "As a measure of Dr. Niebuhr's orthodoxy what more could even the Fundamentalist require?" But he brings out that Niebuhr's treatment of these matters is highly unorthodox. "He is unorthodox in the freedom of spirit with which he deals with these Biblical concepts. He refuses to be bound by their literary or even their historical meaning. They are symbols of revelation and as such are open to critical examination, but always in the light of the revelation which first poured through them. As symbols the possibility is always present that the changing human situation will throw fresh light upon them, disclosing a profounder meaning than even those who first conceived them imagined. The perennial task of the theologian is to discover this deeper meaning, a task which must be performed, however, always in the light of the revelation." Reading this, we are not surprised that Niebuhr's orthodoxy is called unorthodox.

Perhaps nothing better characterizes the religious and theological thinking of the two men under discussion than one of the closing paragraphs of Morrison's article: "It has been a grateful task to interpret Dr. Niebuhr's latest book, because I found myself reading his chapters with a vibrant and sympathetic response. Like him, I have come to evangelical orthodoxy by way of liberalism, though in my liberalism I was always haunted with a feeling of its incompleteness and a sense that it represented a bypath or, better, a detour, which would 'come out' again upon the highway of evangelical faith. Unlike him, however, I cannot now pronounce anathemas upon liberalism. I am its beneficiary. It is liberalism that has led me to evangelicalism. And I believe

it is Dr. Niebuhr's liberalism that has led him back to orthodoxy. Had not liberalism opened his mind to the empirical insights which flash from his pages and illuminate the Gospel, he would still be bound by the authoritarianism of the letter of Scripture, and his orthodoxy would be that sterile and wooden thing which has lost for conservative Protestantism any vital contact with the actualities of modern life."

It is clear that Dr. Morrison thinks that whoever believes in the inerrancy of the Scriptures and follows them faithfully has a sterile and wooden orthodoxy which blinds those who profess it to the actualities of modern life. We conservative Christians must tell him that since the Son of God regularly appealed to the Scriptures, saying, "It is written," we intend to continue in our course and that we believe it is far safer to be on the side of Christ than on that of the wisest editor or philosopher that our age can produce. The authority of the Scriptures is to us not a heavy yoke, but a blessing for which we, conscious of our own feebleness and lack of understanding, are sincerely grateful. At the same time, it is cheering to observe that prominent Modernists themselves are now relinquishing the radical positions which years ago they occupied with the greatest assurance. A.

Superstition Will Not Die.—From the *St. Louis Register* (Roman Catholic) of February 12, 1943, we take the following item referring to the picture of a bleeding crucifix kept in Chicago. Comments will not be necessary.

"Shown here is the 18-inch crucifix that bleeds from the hands, feet, and right side, much like the famed crucifix of Limpas, Spain. This image, owned by a Chicago priest, is kept in the priest's living quarters, a little enclosure at the rear of the church, according to Walter Matthews, who has seen and handled the phenomenon. At first the crucifix was placed in the church; but, after the second or third bleeding, the pastor deemed it best to remove it to his quarters. In this picture, taken by Milton Karstetter, blood can be seen on the wound on the right side. This blood has been thoroughly examined and has been proved to be genuine. Mr. Matthews reports that the curing power of the crucifix has resulted in the complete recovery of the assistant pastor's mother, who had been seriously ill." A.

Will Papal Headquarters Be Taken to America?—This matter is receiving some discussion these days. The *Lutheran* on its page entitled "The Church in the News" writes:

"A plan to arrange for the Pope to move temporarily from Italy to Brazil is back of the Spellman trip, believes Michael Williams, Catholic publicist, writing in the *Brooklyn Eagle*.

"The Pope has said he would not leave Rome even though the Vatican were bombed. 'I have ordered all my bishops throughout the world to remain at their posts as good shepherds among their flocks in times of national distress,' the Pope said last December. 'The bishop of Rome does not wish to be the first to disobey that order, which he himself has given.'

"For some years there has been talk about the Pope changing his place of residence. In 1937 an English Catholic, William Teeling, wrote,

'The hegemony of the Church is fast slipping away from Europe, and it is no fantastic idea to imagine an American Pope spending half the year at the Vatican and the other half in the New World.'

"Back of the idea of the Pope leaving Rome in the immediate future is the possibility of Hitler invading Italy and trying to control the Catholics of the world by bringing pressure on the Pope." A.

On Race Relations.—On February 9 when the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church was in session in New York it adopted paragraphs pertaining to the relations between Christians of various races, which we here reprint. They appeared originally in the *Living Church*.

"1. Fellowship is essential to Christian worship. Since there are no racial distinctions in the mind of the Father, but 'all are one in Christ Jesus,' we dare not break our Christian fellowship by any attitude or act in the house of God which marks our brethren of other races as unequal or inferior.

"2. Fellowship is essential in church administration. Through the privilege of exercising initiative and responsibility in church affairs, through fair representation and voting power in all its legislative assemblies, will Negro churchmen be assured that their fellowship in the Episcopal Church is valid and secure.

"3. High standards must be maintained in every department of our work with the Negro. This principle applies to buildings, equipment, maintenance, personnel and general policy in the case of institutions, and especially to training and support of the ministry. Where separate facilities are still maintained, they should provide the same opportunities as those which are available to other racial groups.

"4. It is both the function and the task of the church to set the spiritual and moral goals for society, and to bear witness to their validity by achieving them in her own life. The church should not only insure to members of all races full and free participation in worship, she should also stand for fair and just access to educational, social and health services, and for equal economic opportunity, without compromise, self-consciousness, or apology. In these ways the church will demonstrate her belief that God has 'made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth.'" A.

Brief Items.—Preparations are being made for the celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of establishing Norwegian Lutheran Church work in America. The first congregation was organized in 1843. Before this there had been preaching by Norwegian laymen and also by pastors. Immigration of larger groups began in 1825 with the arrival at New York by the sloop "Restaurationen," and preaching had been carried on during the 1830's. Well known from this period is the layman from Norway, Elling Eielsen, who later was ordained as pastor. And there are others. But it is reckoned that church work began in 1843.—*The Lutheran Outlook* (the successor of the *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*.)

Due to the travel restrictions the decision has been made not to hold the special centennial convention of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America which was scheduled for this spring. Instead the districts of the Church will hold their regular conventions, and plans are being made for the appropriate observance of the Centennial of the Church at these conventions.—*The Lutheran Outlook*.

One third of Germany's 18,000 evangelical clergymen are serving in the armed forces, according to reports reaching Stockholm. A total of seven hundred have been killed in action, it was estimated, most of the casualties occurring in Russia.—*The Lutheran Outlook*.

In a friendly letter Professor E. Theodore Bachmann of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Maywood, Ill., comments on our statement made with reference to Dr. Wickey's address at the installation of four men at their seminary when his theme was "Only Christ, Only Faith, Only Grace, Only Scripture," concerning which a reporter added that these expressions are to be applied in a creative sense. Our editorial remark at the time was (see March issue): "We wonder what the meaning is. Is there to be an evolution in doctrine?" Dr. Bachmann assures us that whatever may have been in the mind of the reporter when he employed that phrase, Dr. Wickey's address did not advocate an evolutionary treatment of doctrine. We hope that through these remarks whatever suspicions may have been aroused by our comment will be removed.

Professor Arnold Guebert of Concordia College, Edmonton, Alta., has a number of copies left of his conference paper entitled "Trends and Tendencies of the Times" and is willing to sell them for 40 cents apiece. They are mimeographed and are bound in covers of heavier paper. The contents of the essay may be described thus: "The chief trends of the present day in the theological, economic, and political field are briefly discussed in the light of God's Word under these headings: 1. The Pagan Trend in Our Culture; 2. Capitalism or Socialism? 3. Totalitarianism, with Special Reference to Hitlerism. A short analysis of the Christian philosophy of life precedes the main body of the essay." The study is penetrating, and Professor Guebert's presentation both informs and stimulates.

Via Sweden the news has come that Bishop Wurm in a letter to Goebbels has protested against the decree prohibiting the printing and mailing of Bibles. He stated that newspapers and journals are filled with attacks on Christianity and that many of these publications reach the soldiers, while the Church is not even permitted to have Bibles or hymn-books or religious pamphlets printed.

The American Lutheran Publicity Bureau of New York has published a Lutheran publicity stamp or sticker. It is printed in the national colors with a display of the United States flag, the Christian Church flag, eagle, shields of our country, and the Luther coat of arms. The text matter is "Always a Priority—the Church" and "A Changeless Christ for a Changing World." To obtain a supply of these stickers send a stamp and addressed envelope with ten cents in stamps or coin to the Lutheran Press, Room 812, 1819 Broadway, New York, N. Y.