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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Information on China.—The April 17 issue of *America* (Roman Catholic) carries four articles on China which contain an abundance of information on present conditions in that country and its outlook for the future. A military authority, Conrad H. Lanza, sketches the wars of China since 1894, when it was quickly defeated by the Japanese and Korea was annexed by the latter. Prospects from the military point of view, so this observer says, are not reassuring. "When the Chinese retreated to their distant fastnesses in the interior, they took with them machinery which they had salvaged. Four years have gone by, and the machinery is about worn out. Neither new machinery nor parts for old are obtainable. Gasoline has nearly disappeared. Gas from charcoal has been used for running trucks, but charcoal, too, is becoming unobtainable. Transportation is breaking down. Food is lacking. There are provinces which have more than they need, but there is no way to ship the food to where it is badly wanted. Chinese clothes are mostly cotton; so are the peculiar kind of shoes which Chinese wear. There is a shortage of cotton, and the looms which were removed to the interior no longer suffice for what little cotton there is. Metal goods of all kinds are lacking. No wire for telephones, no steel for anything—not even for military needs. A year ago American air forces in China bombed Japanese installations from twenty to twenty-five times a month; but now they do so rarely—no gasoline. China claims to have located an oil field. There is no well-digging apparatus, and if there were, there are no refineries. Chinese economy is slowly but surely bogging down." Col. Lanza holds that through the Japanese blockade Chungking, China, "is being slowly and painfully strangled to death by economic pressure." According to his view the plan of the allies first to crush Hitler before bringing aid to China may be a mistaken policy.

Speaking of China from the point of view of Christian missions, Dr. Joseph P. Y. Fang, a Chinese Roman Catholic educator, says, "Three and a half million Chinese Catholics is a small proportion of the whole population of China" (which he holds is about 450 million), "but they are good Catholics of sincere faith. They may be considered rather as good citizens, but they do not belong to the ruling class because of the lack of higher education." He states that in spite of the war the Roman Catholic Church has made constant gains. Bishop Yu-pin, the first native bishop of Nanking, is said to have been an important factor in extending the influence of the Church. As to the general outlook for Christian missions he says, "It is undoubtedly true that after the war, perhaps even before the end of the war, the foreign missionaries in China will find themselves being drawn always closer to Chinese hearts and will find them much more easy to deal with than ever." Americans are highly esteemed in China, "the United States has always been regarded as the most friendly country by the Chinese people, owing to her generosity and peaceful spirit." He thinks that the visit of Archbishop Spellman in China, spoken of these days, if it eventuates, will be

viewed with much interest by the Chinese and give great aid to the Catholic cause. If the figures which he submits as to the number of Roman Catholic converts in China are correct, then his Church has made important strides forward during the last years. The adherents of Protestant churches are estimated not to number a million as yet.

A third article is written by John J. Considine, a clergyman who writes "on the economic potential of China from observations made in that country as field representative of the Fides service." That great difficulties lie ahead for China politically the following paragraph confirms. "What hope for the Communists of ruling China? They hate Japan and are bound in a United Front with Chiang Kai-shek, but in Kansu and Shensi, of the northwest, they maintain a quasi-independent realm with a quarter to a half million troops. Their organization, the Kungchandang, loses no love on Chiang's organization, the Kuomintang, though they have great personal regard for Chiang. If Japan is defeated, they expect in turn to achieve a victory over the Kuomintang. Should they do so, China would be ruled by the radical agrarian democrats, a body calling itself Communists but, because definitely Chinese, not of the same temper as Russian communism." Of Chiang Kai-shek he has a high regard, saying, "He has tenacity, energy, initiative, is ambitious and, of necessity, ruthless." According to this authority Chiang Kai-shek wishes to promote the commercial and industrial development of his country without, however, doing it through granting special favors to foreign nations. The importation of an overabundance of foreign goods is something the generalissimo seeks to avoid. Altogether his aim is to make China a self-sufficient nation. At present, so Mr. Considine says, much wretchedness is in evidence. "While the Chinese average farm family does not live in the dire poverty of India, it is so near the level of minimum existence needs that any disaster tips it into want. Before the war, a farm family's income was said to be between 150 and 250 Chinese dollars, with the dollar rated two to one of American currency." On this same point he says, "Prof. Chiao Chi-ning, of the University of Nanking, now operating in Szechwan, estimates that of every ten men in China, the tenth would starve if the other nine were properly fed. Even in a normal year, China produces only ninety per cent of the food it requires. Another two and a half per cent is imported, but the remainder never appears; China merely tightens its belt." This writer correctly points out that unless China is brought Christianity, its development after the war may mean the building up of a colossus which will constitute a definite threat to the peace of the human family.

The fourth and last article is written by a Protestant authority on missions, the well-known Yale professor Kenneth Scott Latourette. The caption of his article is "China Faces a New World." On account of the careful study which Dr. Latourette has made of conditions in China and of its past history, his words carry peculiar weight. He writes, "In answer to the questions concerning the Chinese future, it must first be said that there is every prospect that ultimately the Chinese would build an efficient and stable government. . . . The Chinese have a genius for political organization. Before Rome made the Mediterranean world into a state, the Chinese had brought under one rule an

area not much smaller than that controlled by the Eternal City. The Roman Empire has long since disappeared, but the imperial structure of China has lasted into the present century. From time to time it has seemed to break down, but always it has been renewed and further elaborated. On the whole, it has given a good government to those under its jurisdiction. The tradition of unity has been so thoroughly established that it is highly improbable that it will be lost. The weakness of the past century must be attributed to the fact that China was then under a declining dynasty whose great days had passed. . . . When, in 1912, the dynasty was unseated, its fall carried with it the time-honored political structure. The Chinese have since been having to devise a new one. That has not been easy. A new government for 400 million people cannot be built overnight. The wonder is, not that China has been chaotic, but that it has made such amazing progress toward a new comprehensive, national administration."

Professor Latourette does not think that stability will soon be achieved. Neither does he hold that China will accept Communism, "at least not in such sense as we see Communism in Russia." As he views it, two major political difficulties have to be overcome—"The necessity of creating a new political structure for so large a mass of mankind, and political corruption." While China will go through the process of organization, it will constitute "a temptation to strong neighbors," and for its defense it will have to depend to some extent on the United States. By and by it will be strong enough to defy external enemies. After internal unity has been achieved, there will be the danger that China will endeavor to subjugate its neighbors. But Professor Latourette hopes that China will be willing "to take her place as a partner in a comprehensive international organization." "Today, many in the highest places in China are pleading for enduring co-operation among free peoples." Professor Latourette says in conclusion, "Here, too, is an opportunity for the Church. If it employs the present to strengthen its foundations in China, through its supranational fellowship the Church can reinforce those elements in Chinese tradition which make for international co-operation and can inspire Chinese with a richer vision of a united humanity than their past has taught them." Professor Latourette ought to have added that Christian missionaries must not repeat the mistake made by some of their number in the twenties who preached the social gospel and, to some extent at least, were responsible for the uprising which greatly troubled China in that decade.

We have submitted the above material because of the interest which exists in our own church body with respect to Christian missions in China and because we should be willing, as soon as there is an opportunity, to expand our work in that country and to take the message of the saving cross to as many of its unevangelized sections as lies in our power.

A.

A Living Review and Dead Seminaries.—Under this heading the *Sunday School Times* (January 9, 1943) editorially takes notice of the hundredth anniversary of *Bibliotheca Sacra*, using the occasion to call attention to the terrible consequences of yielding the orthodox theology

for which in its essential features *Bibliotheca Sacra* has always stood. We read: "Andover Theological Seminary was, humanly speaking, the powerhouse of American Christianity in the greater part of the nineteenth century. It was splendidly manned. It poured out a continuous stream of thoroughly trained ministers. From it were organized missionary societies, educational societies, the American Tract Society [publisher, by the way, of *The New Testament With Notes*], the American Temperance Society. Its graduates pioneered the West, founded colleges, went overseas on Christ's errand. Its publishing house of Draper supplied the ministry with standard and new theological literature. Its theological organ was *Bibliotheca Sacra*, which, decade after decade, entered the studies of ministers both at home and abroad, instructing, confirming, introducing new theological thought. It was founded in 1843, a century ago, by Dr. Edward Robinson, known in his day, and even to our day, as a pioneer student of Biblical topography at a time when Palestine was a remote and dangerous land for travel and investigation." The article then describes the history of *Bibliotheca Sacra* and points out what befell Andover when it opened its doors to infidelity. We read: "The destruction of Andover by Unitarians and Modernists jointly is the most terrible branding of Unitarian 'ethics' imaginable and not the least so for being a self-branding. The Oberlin Seminary of Dr. Wright's day has faded into Laodicean theological tepidity [Dr. G. F. Wright of Oberlin was editor of the periodical from 1883—1921]. But God does not leave Himself without a witness, and the Dallas Seminary, with the old theological mouthpiece and instructor in evangelism, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, goes on its prosperous way." To this it adds by way of conclusion: "And this recalls that God's witness is sometimes of another and severe, not to say, punitive, sort. Auburn Seminary [Auburn Theological Seminary, orthodox Presbyterian, founded in 1819 in Auburn, N. Y.] associated itself with a so-called 'Affirmation,' which denied some of the most important and treasured teachings of Christianity. Shortly after, it went out of existence. Ichabod! Its evangelical glory had departed! This is what a recent visitor to it reports: 'A year or so ago Auburn Seminary closed its doors; its magnificent library was sold piecemeal, and the grounds and buildings leased to the National Youth Administration. The fine old library is now used for storage of tools and implements; another building as a machine shop for training apprentices. . . . The remnants of Auburn are tagged to Union Theological Seminary, New York City, where they are given one room and two professorships. As to the old Auburn buildings, probably the only usable portion is the chapel. It is possible that the blight which has come upon the seminary is the hand of God in judgment upon this once faithful Christian institution for allowing its name to be associated with the infamous Auburn Affirmation.'"—Both Andover Seminary (Congregational, founded in 1807) and Auburn Seminary demonstrate the destructiveness of Modernism. These once flourishing seminaries disappeared because they no longer had any helpful message to offer and any worth-while mission to perform. As Dr. L. Keyser says: "Christianity builds up, while unbelief tears down." And herein lies a warning for all of us to contend for the faith, which was once delivered to the saints. J. T. M.

Presbyterian Notes and News.—As the *Christian Beacon* (April 15, 1943) reports, three alumni of Faith Seminary have recently been granted permission to sail to Bolivia to labor among the Quechua Indians, under the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. According to the report "the Quechua Indians number hundreds of thousands and live in the high plateaus and valleys of the Andes Mountains, mostly at altitudes over 10,000 feet. They are direct descendants of the ancient Incas of Peru, who were ruthlessly subdued by the Spaniards and have been enslaved ever since in the bondage of Catholicism with many images of the saints and of Jesus Himself, but without the saving message of His finished work on Calvary."

The same number of the *Christian Beacon*, by the way, publishes a facsimile of the front and first editorial pages of the *Lutheran Witness* of November 25, 1941, with a fine editorial against Modernism ("A New Movement Against Modernism") by Dr. J. H. C. Fritz, which is worth re-reading by our own constituents today. The pages appear under the heading: "What was Said About the American Council when It was Organized by a Missouri Synod Lutheran Paper." The printing of the two pages shows the tremendous influence which Biblical Lutheranism is exerting upon Christian circles outside the Lutheran fold in our country. To complete the picture, we may add that the *Presbyterian Guardian* in a recent issue published on its first page a devotional meditation by Dr. O. P. Kretzmann and on a following page favorably introduced to its readers both Dr. Kretzmann and Valparaiso University.

Again, the *Presbyterian Guardian* (April 10, 1943) is entirely a "Christian Education Number" stressing among other things Christian education by means of Christian day schools, as the following paragraph shows: "The church has a responsibility to contribute to the Christian education of its baptized members; but the parents must themselves do more than simply train their child in the home. That covenant [Christian] child may not be turned over to the public school for secular education. Nor will it suffice even to turn the child over to a Christian school to be educated there. The parents must supervise all the instruction given that child. If no Christian school is available, then their task is indeed difficult. But even if a Christian day school is available, that school must be the servant of the parent. The type of instruction given in a Christian school should be the same, though more diversified, than the child has been receiving in preschool days in his Christian home." The general thought of the article is that the Christian child should receive a Christian education at home and that this Christian education should be continued and augmented in a Christian day school under the supervision of the Christian parents. The Lutheran Church will fulfill the great mission which it has in our country, not by accommodating itself to liberal church elements, but by showing to others the glory and beauty of faithfully adhering to God's Word. This very mission calls for a united Lutheran Church, standing foursquare on God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions in teaching and practice.

J. T. M.

Brief Items.—In a lecture delivered in Denver Dr. Truman B. Douglas of Pilgrim Church of St. Louis stated, "It is the opinion of reliable church historians that more people have died for their Christian faith during the last thirty years than in all preceding history." Thinking of the tragedies that have happened in the Baltic provinces and in sections of Russia proper, one must say that the statement probably is not so wide of the truth as at first glance it may appear to be.

On March 17 there died in Detroit a nationally known Methodist minister, Dr. Merton S. Rice, who was much in demand as a special preacher and lecturer. He reached the age of 71.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has opened correspondence with the patriarch of Constantinople, ranking figure in the Eastern Orthodox Church. He found that official cordially responsive to his effort to bring Eastern and Western Christianity more closely together, according to the International Christian Press and Information service.

Christian Century

In a review appearing in *America* (Roman Catholic) of Reinhold Niebuhr's new book "*The Nature and Destiny of Man, Vol. II (Human Destiny)*" the reviewer voices the complaint "Even the passé indictment of the Papacy as 'Anti-Christ' is dusted off and blessed as 'religiously correct.'" It is indeed startling that a Modernist calls the Pope the Anti-christ. Luther evidently had solid ground under his feet when he made the identification.

"In the twentieth century, war will be dead, the scaffold will be dead, hatred will be dead, frontier boundaries will be dead, dogmas will be dead, but man will live." So spoke one of the wise men of the world of the last century, one of the greatest geniuses of France, Victor Hugo. How much more correct his prognostication would have been if he had said, "In the twentieth century, war will be alive, the scaffold will be alive, hatred will be alive, frontier boundaries will be alive, and all will fear that soon the universe will be told, Man is dead."

At the National Lutheran Council, held in Minneapolis January 27—29, action was taken "providing for the creation of a special committee of sixteen members to be appointed by the eight groups participating in the Council charged with the responsibility of planning a conference of representatives of all Lutheran groups in the Western Hemisphere." This pertains to the plan which Dr. Poppen, President of the American Lutheran Church, submitted to his own church body and which has since then been brought to the attention of other Lutheran synods in our country.

The National Fellowship of Brethren Churches in its 1942 meeting declared concerning the Federal Council, "This organization does not represent the position of a large number of Protestant churches and a vast number of Christians who believe in the absolute inspiration of the Bible as the authoritative voice of God." The resolution was adopted "That we, the National Fellowship of Brethren Churches, ask the Federal Communications Commission to recognize as our Protestant voice the American Council of Christian Churches." A.