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Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Blessings of Our Synodical Student Welfare Work.—Perhaps only those who read the fine bulletins published by Rev. R. W. Hahn, Executive Secretary of the Synodical Student Welfare Committee, are in a position to visualize how much good our student pastors are accomplishing who serve our Lutheran youth and others at the various universities and colleges of our countries. It is indeed gratifying to hear that the work is expanding and becoming more and more systematized. The following lines have an important tale to tell of missionary zeal and success among university and college students. "As I look back on the four years I spent at the Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy, I cannot but be thankful to God for leading me there, for if I had not gone there, I would not now be a member of the Lutheran Church, and I would not know my Savior as well as I do. I would not have met all the wonderful people I did meet, and my situation today would be entirely different from what it is."—"Our tracts and discussion outlines have gone to New Zealand. A recent college graduate stationed there as a Marine Corps officer asked us to make them available to the college folk now in uniform who regularly assemble at the Lutheran Service Center in Marton, N.Z."—"The Bible class conducted by Student Pastor W. C. Burhop at the University of Wisconsin is studying the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. Excellent! These Confessions are enumerated in the constitutions of each of our Lutheran churches, and a passing acquaintance with them is demanded as a prerequisite for membership. There is, moreover, no better solution to the problem of Lutheran Union than a comprehensive understanding of the Lutheran Confessions." The last remark is very true and worthy of Synod-wide consideration.—"I am happy to report that we have finally gotten started with some student work at Tulane, Newcomb, and Loyola. At our meeting on October 15, twenty-two students were present. We hope to have more than thirty students present on November 8 to organize a Gamma Delta chapter."—"We had 104 students in chapel yesterday and a plate offering of \$21.71, both being records. My mission committee was pleased to hear of these developments at a time when student work is said to be down."—"Valparaiso University was featured in the rotogravure section of the Chicago Sunday *Tribune* on October 3. The Episcopal Religion and Education News Editor of the *Tribune* has a high regard for Valparaiso and our Chicago clergy. 'Your pastors,' he told us recently, 'are alert and aggressive without being offensive.'"—"During a summer night, our second consecutive night on a day coach, we shared a seat with the wife of a college dean and herself a member of a college faculty. Said she of a certain educational figure, soon after we had taken our seat: 'His convictions are as strong as those of a Missouri Synod Lutheran in Minnesota.' The psychological moment for our introduction had come."—"In his parish paper article on 'The Value of the Reformation' Student Pastor E. P. Weber of the University of Florida used and explained the three Latin terms *sola fide, sola*

gratia, and *sola Scriptura*. In another article he quoted an endorsement of our Close Communion practice from the *Christian Advocate*, official organ of the Methodist Church.—“Mrs. A. B. Thomas, wife of Dr. Thomas of the History Department and herself a member of the English Department faculty, will be confirmed in a few weeks, and her three children will be baptized. She was a troubled skeptic, who has discovered that she could not order her life alone. She is a woman of great intellectual capacity and hopes to finish her requirements for the doctorate.”—“A voice from a U. L. C. college paper: ‘The Missouri Synod has a splendid student pastor in Rev. — of Iowa State Teachers College.’—“Our church is overcrowded every Sunday, and my Bible class is enjoying the best attendance and discussions in ten years.”

J. T. M.

The Mission of the Lutheran Church of America Today.—Writing in the *Lutheran Outlook* under the heading “The Church’s Ministry in Wartime,” Dr. E. E. Flack, Dean of Hamma Divinity School, Springfield, Ohio, submits besides other important observations these interesting remarks.

“A glance at the European situation affords us a real warning. In Russia, for example, the Church for decades was dormant, dominated by a static system that failed to satisfy the needs of the suffering masses. The result was a radical turning to atheism. Under severe persecution the Church in that country was for a time all but obliterated. In Germany, also, the rise of a new social and political philosophy caught the Church woefully unconcerned. Having failed to minister adequately to the needs of a nation humiliated and exhausted, it was compelled to harmonize its program with the rigid requirements of the Nazi regime. Statistics regarding the ministry afford insights into the situation. In 1932 there were more than 7,000 Protestant theological students in Germany. Three years later the number had dropped to around 4,000, and by the time of the outbreak of war in 1939 it had decreased 75 per cent. By the time of 1941 the total number of students entering upon the study of theology in Germany was only 39. The University of Berlin, which ten years ago could boast of more than 1,000 theological students, had at this time less than 20. In some provinces as many as 86 per cent of the pastors were mobilized for war. Through the loss of so many ministers there has risen all over Europe a demand for the ministry of laymen, the putting into practical operation of the principle of the universal priesthood of believers. The Church is being tested anew as to the veracity and effectuality of its message and ministry. Among the Protestant denominations the Lutheran Church has been particularly under fire. For various reasons it has the highest responsibility of all. Not only is it suffering most severely, but it is also by its genius most ecumenical; it is never confessionally nationalistic. It is likewise most free from the spirit of revolution and most Scriptural in its approach to human problems. What an opportunity before world Lutheranism today!

“But it is upon American Lutheranism that the burden rests heaviest. Free from the shackles of war-ridden Europe with its State Church relations and vicious social philosophies, the Lutheran Church in America

enjoys the blessings of liberty and an abundance of resources. It has preserved the heritage of the Gospel and the Reformation deep and clear in its life's stream amidst the shallow and bemuddled movements of the denominations. And in spite of its historic, nationalistic, linguistic, and geographical divisions, it has a fundamental and free, Scriptural and confessional faith that gives assurance of a true type of unity. Furthermore, it has a historic testimony to bear in these times to the realities of sin and grace, the relations of Church and State, and the character of the kingdom of God. How can the Lutheran bodies in America measure up to the demand of the hour to provide a common social impact and action toward world opportunities and reconstruction? They can and must do so not by delving into definitions and arguing abstractions, but by examining motivations, mingling methods, and fostering fellowship."

If Dean Flack in the last sentence opposes logomachies, the mere arguing about words, we fully agree with him. The importance of doctrine and doctrinal discussions and of unity in doctrine must, of course, be maintained.

Continuing his presentation, Dr. Flack holds that the area in which the Church can do its work most effectively is that of the local congregation, "which enjoys a peculiar primacy, supremacy, and autonomy." He correctly states, "The Church has no more important function in peace or in war than that of preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments. . . . In the public ministry of Word and Sacrament lie peculiar possibilities of peril or of power; of peril, if perverted to serve political purposes, as is often the case when 'preachers present arms'; of power, if it preserves and applies the Gospel in all its depth and purity. Herein lies the secret of the Church's singular service in peace or in war—to make its ministry so dynamic and emphatic that it brings people to a piercing penitence and a consuming faith and sends them forth to their daily tasks filled with the Spirit, strengthened in mind and heart, and impelled by serving love and a passion for souls. This is the primary process in making Christian people the salt and light essential to the seasoning and preservation of society." This is well said.

In the concluding paragraphs of his article Dr. Flack discusses the wartime aspects of the educational work the Church is doing and of the pastoral ministry (*Seelsorge*). Summarizing, he says, "It is a ministry of worship and stewardship, teaching and testimony, evangelism and mercy, visitation and intercession, commendation and condemnation. All these ministries it fulfills primarily through a parish program that is sufficiently adaptable to satisfy the rapidly changing needs." Dr. Flack urges that the Lutheran bodies co-operate more fully in the present tasks. "Briefly, if the Lutheran bodies in this country fail to realize the possibilities of closer co-operative action, to capitalize upon the inner unity which they already possess by virtue of their common faith and confession, and to vitalize their testimony in these times, they will be doomed to mediocrity among the denominations of America. Lutherans awake! This is a day for action!" These are stirring words, whose appealing warmth we gladly acknowledge. But we urge that co-operation be carried on in such a way that consciences are not violated and

the truth of the Scriptures not jeopardized. After all, there is a thing that is even more important than the avoidance of "mediocrity among the denominations of America," and that is to be faithful to the Word of our heavenly Lord and Master. A.

The Question of Close Communion. *The Lutheran* (Sept. 15, 1943) found itself obliged to deal with the question of Close Communion. One of its readers wished information on the question whether or not "we Lutherans celebrate the Lord's Supper as 'Close Communion.'" The writer reports that one pastor who was asked by a non-Lutheran (desiring Holy Communion) why he could not attend "was stumped and told him so." But that is not all. During the Easter holiday season of 1943 a Roman Catholic with his Lutheran wife and an Episcopal couple communed in the same church, though the pastor prior to this had refused a very serious young man the Lord's Supper. The writer, addressing a member of the church council on this point, was told by him that "he himself had stood in the narthex and invited men in the armed forces and other strangers to commune." The inquirer goes on to report: "Some [who were asked to commune] said they would be glad to, but were not members of the church. He said he assured them that if they sincerely believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, their faith did not matter. I mentioned to this councilman what had happened the year before. He seemed very much surprised and said the Pastor should not keep any one from communing." We regret that the reply given in *The Lutheran*, while defending "selective communion" on two grounds, namely, that of "the significance which the Holy Sacrament has in the Lutheran interpretation of our Lord's words of institution" and that of "Paul's admonition that they who commune shall first examine themselves that they may eat worthily," did not speak with that clearness and definiteness which the case demanded, and that it did not reprove the misuse of the Lord's Supper as it occurred in the stated case (that, of course, after verifying the fact). The reply begins with an apologetic note, closing with the words: "We do not propose to debate an issue about which there have been numerous controversies, but to cite reliable definitions and incidents of significance in Lutheran history." It then declares that Lutherans are not close communionists in the sense of the Roman Catholics with their special sacrificial motivation of the Mass, but that they are "close communionists" in the sense that Baptism must precede Holy Communion, though it is immaterial in what mode the application of water may have taken place. This partial motivation of Close Communion is bound to create a false impression, which the reply seeks to correct by adding: "Nevertheless, the significance which the Holy Sacrament has in the Lutheran interpretation of our Lord's words of institution and of Paul's declaration in his Epistle to the Corinthians of what 'he also received' places very definite restrictions upon eligibility. To the extent that regard for these is insisted upon, we accept the classification of close communionists. We believe and confess that the Lord's Supper is a means of grace; that is, it is a rite instituted by our Lord in which, under the form of earthly elements, heavenly gifts are conferred. It is explained that while the power

of God unto salvation is conveyed generally by the spoken, written, and symbolized Word of God, in the Holy Sacrament it is individualized. We are authorized to believe confidently that each one who repents and believes in Jesus Christ is entitled [?] to receive individually what the words 'given and shed for you for the remission of sins' declare; namely, remission of sins, life, and salvation. It is in order to insure perception of this attribute of individualization that the elements of the Sacrament are distributed from pastor to person, the words of institution accompanying the action of administration."—It is obvious that the doctrine of the Lord's Supper requires restudy by the Lutherans in the United States, and this in the light of Luther's Small and Large Catechisms and of his momentous writings on the subject against the Sacramentarians. The pastor, in exploring persons desiring to commune, will do well to explain to them the "Christian Questions with Their Answers, Drawn Up by Dr. Martin Luther [?] for Those Who Intend to Go to the Sacrament." These questions may also serve as a basis for sermonic lectures on Holy Communion. Returning to the question and reply in *The Lutheran*, let us in closing say that the U. L. C. A. as such has no disciplinary authority and that in consequence pastors who do not practice Close Communion in the full sense of the term can hardly be dealt with to win them over to a more Scriptural practice. The evasive tone of *The Lutheran's* reply is perhaps due to the fact that its authority is so very limited. This lack of authority, in our estimation, constitutes a serious obstacle in the matter of Lutheran church union. And last, though not least: the confessional character of Holy Communion must never be overlooked or minimized. Our Catechism is Scriptural when in replying to the question "To whom must the Lord's Supper be denied?" it answers: "2, to the heterodox, since the Holy Supper is a token and testimony of the unity of faith." In applying this principle there must neither be fanaticism nor unionistic indifference.

J. T. M.

Norwegian Centennials.—1943 was a centennial year in Norwegian Lutheran circles. In 1843 Eling Eielsen, a Norwegian immigrant who was an adherent of Hauge, was ordained to the Gospel ministry. The same year, October 18, to be precise, another Norwegian who had come to the United States, C. L. Clausen, was given Lutheran ordination. His congregation was located at Muskego, Wis. The church building which was erected at that place in 1844 is now gracing the campus of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn.

Pastor Eielsen in 1846 founded a body which gave itself the name Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. In 1848 some of its members separated; the same thing happened in 1850 when a constitution had been adopted. Some members raised the charge that the constitution contained serious doctrinal errors. In 1876 the Eielsen group founded the Hauge Synod; but Eielsen himself with a few followers withdrew and continued the Eielsen Synod.

Pastor Clausen likewise became a member of a larger communion. In 1844 a pastor came from Norway, the Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichsen, who succeeded in organizing a large number of congregations on the old

Lutheran basis. After he had returned to Norway in 1850, a group of young Norwegian theologians came who had been ordained in Norway and who in 1853 together with Pastor Clausen organized the Norwegian Synod: H. A. Preus, A. C. Preus, A. Ottesen, and others. Their aim was to build the Lutheran Church in a sound way and on a strictly confessional basis. Soon another conservative Lutheran of great power joined them, U. V. Koren. These people established friendly relations with the leaders of the Missouri Synod. Pastor Ottesen, at that time pastor at Manitowoc, Wis., and Pastor Koren, serving a church in Decorah, Iowa, attended the Intersynodical Conference at Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1857.

The group of Norwegian Lutherans that had separated from the Eielsen Fellowship in 1848, after varied experiences, formed with Swedish Lutherans in 1860 the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod, and when this union was dissolved in 1870, the same group organized the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod. This latter body divided into two parties in the same year, one continuing the name Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod, the other calling itself the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Conference. (The Danes withdrew in 1874.) These two groups in 1889 with a third group which, under the leadership of Prof. F. A. Schmidt, as a result of the predestinarian controversy had left the Synod, formed the United Norwegian Church (Forenede Kirke.) Thus in 1889 there existed the Norwegian Lutheran Synod, with its staunch confessionalism, the Hauge Synod, the Eielsen Synod (a small body), and the United Norwegian Church. How these bodies (with the exception of the Eielsen Synod, which is still very small) united in 1917 to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America and how at that time for reasons of conscience a little group withdrew, continuing in fellowship with the Synodical Conference, is still vivid in the memories of most of us and need not be related now.

What a study in separations and controversies the history of these hundred years presents! Here there was fire, ardor, zeal, although often a zeal without knowledge. Radical individualism manifested itself. At times the issues were vital and division unavoidable. No doubt much harm was done by the insistence of some to have their way even when the debate pertained to non-essentials. Viewing the proneness of people to espouse and defend error in spite of high motives and good intentions, we may well be filled with fear and trembling and repeat for ourselves the warning, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." We likewise praise God, who sees to it that even in an imperfect, contentious world the Gospel is preached for the salvation of souls. A.

Confusion in the Midst of Unionism.—Dr. H. S. Coffin, moderator of the last General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., addressed the triennial General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the interest of the proposed merger between the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians. Among other things in favor of the merger Doctor Coffin said that the world will not accept the Church's message of "Christ as the Unifier of the world," unless the Church will let Christ unite those of His own household first. In its issue of Oct. 28 the *Presbyterian*

reprinted Dr. Coffin's address in its entirety, though reluctantly. The editor, S. M. Robinson, is a Fundamentalist and has consistently opposed the liberal and modernistic tendencies of the leaders in the Presbyterian Church. In an editorial justifying the action of re-printing Dr. Coffin's address, the nominal head of the Presbyterian Church, the editor says: "Dr. Coffin is president of Union Theological Seminary of New York, which we deem the vanguard of militant theological liberalism in America. We attribute to its teaching and influence a large measure of the spiritual decline and the consequent strife and division which has marred our church life. We look upon Dr. Coffin as the bright and particular star of the forces that doubt some of the grand particularities of our Presbyterian standards. We dreaded and opposed his election as moderator of the last General Assembly." How dare the Presbyterian Church extend the hand of fellowship to the Episcopalians when in their own camp such a wide chasm exists between the moderator of the Church and the editor of one of its leading periodicals? The attempts to unite the churches without doctrinal unity present an intolerable situation.

F. E. M.

A Word in Praise of Missionaries.—In his daily column, printed in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, George E. Sokolsky has much to say in praise of American missionaries, some of whom have now been brought back in the "*Gripsholm*." We read, among other things: "Those who will suffer this change most will be the American missionaries. I know that many at home criticize and ridicule them and speak of the impudence of Americans going over to China 'to force their religion down the Chinaman's throat?' But those who speak that way do not know the truth. The American missionary has been an apostle of friendship. His services to the Chinese people cannot be measured by the converts he has made, but by the love that the simple people of that country have for the United States. These missionaries have healed the sick and taught the young and offered friendship and love even when they were attacked. In the days of 1925 to 1927 when the American missionaries were being driven before Chinese Communist hordes and when some even were killed, most of them rejected armed protection and stood by the revolutionists, who were attacking them. It was a rare example in all human history of turning the other cheek. The American missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, fitted themselves for work in those Asiatic countries. They studied the native languages and dialects and the habits of the people. Many of them taught in those languages. They have adjusted their personalities to the Asiatic environment to which they consecrated their lives. What are they to do now? It is hard for stay-at-home Americans to understand that none of these people can hate their old friends. And they will want to go back when this war is over. The simple people of any Asiatic country are gentle and kindly, except when aroused over some question of 'face,' which really is dignity. Then they become hysterical and do mad deeds. But there will be among these "*Gripsholm*" refugees more memories of warm friendships and happy human relationships than there will be of torture in concentration camps. And as distance in time and space sets them

farther away from the last year or two, they will remember more of the last twenty or thirty years. The Asiatic is a warm personality, who takes friendship seriously. He will always be missed by anyone who has ever known him intimately." George Ephraim Sokolsky, born in New York, Sept. 5, 1893, and a graduate of the School of Journalism, Columbia University, has himself lived in China for many years, working for various Oriental newspapers and receiving Chinese and American decorations for valuable services performed in the journalistic field. He therefore speaks from experience, and his words carry considerable weight (especially as he himself is of the Jewish faith). J. T. M.

Christian University to Be Founded.—There is a strong movement on foot to found what is called a Christian University, "granting doctorate degrees based upon a Christian theism of the Bible exemplified in the historic Reformed creeds, such as Westminster Confession of Faith, upholding the highest academic standards." The sponsors say correctly that "most higher education in America is materialistic, anti-intellectual, skeptical, and distinctly opposed to orthodox Christianity upon which this nation was founded." The last clause may be misunderstood; it expresses the truth if the meaning is that the great majority of the people who founded our nation wished to be loyal to the teachings of Christianity. The movement comes from Reformed circles. Churches represented (not officially) on the committee are Christian Reformed Church, General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in Canada, Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern Presbyterians), Reformed Church in America. As to the basis, the announcement which is circulated says, "The supreme standard of the association shall be the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice." As doctrinal standards are mentioned: the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort, the Westminster Confession, and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms. The announcement states among other things, "Each department of the institution to be established and promoted by this association, therefore, shall rest upon, and conduct its work in accordance with, the propositions of the Christian faith and shall subject its whole procedure as well as its conclusions to the scrutiny and direction of the full-orbed revelation of God in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments." The statement in which the character and purposes of the institution are set forth is signed by 26 persons, most of them clergymen. The school is to be "free from denominational control, but committed to a definite doctrinal basis." To the extent that the project if it is realized will uphold the authority of the Holy Scriptures, we wish it success. A.

Mission Opportunities.—The administration of the Protestant Episcopal Church has sent out information on mission opportunities that beckon today, which is summarized as follows in the *Living Church*:

"In China, if money and personnel were available, there are almost unlimited mission opportunities. The people of that great nation, led by their Christian Generalissimo, have experienced the meaning of

Christianity in the self-sacrificing service of missionaries who have suffered poverty, pain, and death for them. Seldom in the history of the world has a non-Christian nation been so ready to hear the Gospel. — In India, villages send delegations to beg the missionaries to send them a teacher. In the diocese of Dornakal, 150 native clergy baptize approximately 8,000 a year. There is only one American priest, the Rev. George Van B. Shriber. Besides missionaries, teachers, doctors, and nurses could be used in almost unlimited number. — In the rural field, in Negro work. The hunger for religion in all three of these fields is being met largely by the inadequate ministrations of self-taught 'holiness' preachers, whose ideas of religion are pitifully malformed. The fruit of our neglect will soon be apparent in intolerance, atheism, and social upheaval. — In Latin America many opportunities exist to strengthen the work of native clergy. Literature, school facilities, churches and parish houses, and better clergy salaries would accomplish wonders for the strengthening of the Church among our largely unchurched Good Neighbors of the South."

Mutatis mutandis all this could be said with respect to our own mission fields. May God grant that at this crisis in the world's history we manifest both willingness of heart and alertness of mind to meet our responsibilities. A.

World Youth Conference. — It is urged by the National Youth Commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church that a world conference of Christian youth be convened at the earliest possible moment after the cessation of hostilities. The Commission's appeal, issued in the form of identical messages by Dr. William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Bishop Henry St. George Tucker of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, suggests that, since youth "may not have much of a hearing at the peace table," a gathering similar to the World Conference of Christian Youth — Amsterdam, 1939 — be held, "at which all nations and all Christian bodies shall be represented."

We have no doubt that great appeals, similar to those that were made to the youth of the postwar world of World War I, will be made to the youth of all nations after the end of this war. We hope that it will not be forgotten, when these more pleasant days arrive, that the peacemakers of today were the youths of yesterday; that is, the peacemakers of World War II were the warriors of World War I.

With memories before us of the vivid and daring philosophies propounded in the early "twenties," we hope that those who create the patterns of youth conventions in the forthcoming peace era will do their work with greater modesty than their predecessors seemed to manifest. The problems of humanity are so vast and complicated that youth should be encouraged to meet them soberly and with humility rather than with audacious overconfidence and half-developed idealism. Let us not go through the folly again of thinking that a new world can be fashioned by the creation of ambitious slogans.

We must further remember that the youth of this generation have been flung into the arena of serious adulthood with a shocking suddenness. It will hardly do for us to speak of our "tender" youth after they

have been hardened through the fiery processes of war. We must ask our youth to be realistic. It will not do to enroll them in a dreamland economy. They can, however, be challenged to face the hard facts of life and, as they have been good soldiers of their country, so they shall also be good soldiers of Jesus Christ. The Church Militant must recover its standard. Its men and women must believe once more in obligatory morality and in the fundamentals of an undying faith. They must be taught that God still owns this world which He has redeemed through the blood of His Son and that to the degree that willful men ignore His sovereignty in human affairs, they become frustrated in their ideals and defeated in their hopes. If youth in the days to come are to be on the march, then let them march toward God.

Watchman-Examiner, Sept. 20, 1943

What About Neo-Orthodoxy?—This is a term one hears now and then, and we are grateful to the *Watchman-Examiner* for giving us in its issue of October 7, 1943, a discussion of the tendency so named. Some of the chief ideas appearing in the editorial article we here submit.

“Christian traditional orthodoxy reached its supreme height undoubtedly in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Liberalism, as expressed through rationalism, began its attack on orthodoxy in the higher seats of learning and in old established seminaries. . . . The social conditions of society and liberal movements in the international sphere became the absorbing topic. Biblical criticism reached its height with the critics disparaging the prevailing attitude of the common people toward the Bible, which they called ‘literalism.’ Disillusionment came through the First World War. Modernism, however, continued; the great terms of Christianity were given a new interpretation. Cynicism bitterly attacked Christianity. With the world-wide depression came the death knell for the position held by Modernists. The social gospel preachers had nothing to proclaim any more. Furtively, the creative, theologically minded thinkers restudied the sources of their creeds and philosophies and decided that liberalism had divorced itself too completely from the Christian tradition. As interpreted by Dr. Mackay of Princeton, liberal theologians confessed that they had found it necessary to go back before they should attempt to go forward!”

Has a neo-orthodoxy that deserves the name developed? Sad to say, that is not the case. What is now called neo-orthodoxy is “still a philosophy which interprets ancient terms in modern meaning.” It rejects the “Biblical world view.” “It still hangs on to its own processes of rationalization and to its ambitious dreams concerning the evolutionary progress of man. From the writings and speeches of these moderns, who represent a great deal of European opinion, Anglican conviction, as expressed by the Archbishops of York and Canterbury, and some well-known exponents of theology in America, it is evident that it is the ambition of neo-orthodoxy to become the religion of the ‘new democracy.’ It is without doubt their high ambition to work together with their ‘Eternal Father’ through processes of science and creative moral intelligence to unite their efforts in the abolishment of war, the construction of a federal world republic, industrial democracy,

moral education, and the development of world-wide social consciousness." In essence liberal theology has not changed. Its theologians are still "anti-Biblical." "The fact still exists that neo-orthodoxy has no adequate principle of Bible inspiration. Biblical theology is still under attack. The derivation of Christian doctrine from the Bible is not at all a process to which the neo-orthodox will agree. Among them, the authoritarian Bible is but the Bible of the 'literalists.' No credit is given to the Bible Christian for having a consistent principle of inspiration in spite of the fact that the modern Bible Christian is found to be consistent with the record of the development of Christianity." This neo-orthodoxy "is not yet ready to confess the faith. It cannot be said that it is even returning to the faith. We might go farther and say that it is not possible to see how it can return to the faith until it gets rid of its inconsistency with regard to Biblical inspiration. It must put an end to its attempt to speak authoritatively concerning Christianity while refusing to accept the authority of the Word of God."

The closing paragraph of the editorial deserves quotation, "Somehow or other, modern theology has got to come out from under the influence of a materialistic science, or 'scientism,' which turns morals and religion to dust by the use of sterile words. The theologian or scientist who thinks his own outlook superior to the Biblical shows only that he does not understand the essence of the Christian faith." This is well stated. The chief representative of the neo-orthodoxy may be said to be Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Seminary, New York. A.

Fitting Remarks on Deep Sermons.—In a recent issue, Bastian Kruthof in *The Calvin Forum* (November, 1943) pleads for "deep sermons." The following are but a few of the many readable paragraphs in the lengthy article. He says: "It [the sermon] should have depth. . . . This means that a minister should dig into the Bible text with all the tools at his command and haul out the precious truths. No amount of skimming the surface satisfies. No mere pecking at the text will do. Running away from it is absolutely disastrous. It follows that the hearers should enjoy exploring with the minister. They must not be afraid of deep things and should be grateful for their excavations. The deplorable lack of understanding in regard to the Bible is in part the result of a deplorable abuse of the Word of God on the part of some ministers, who seldom, if ever, feed the sheep. The profound sermon must also have simplicity. That is, the great truths of God's revelation must be made plain. It is of the very nature of revelation that it illuminates dark things. Now, we know that there are teachings in the Bible that we cannot grasp fully. But we have no right to cast them aside because we can not understand them completely. This is the mistake of some contemporary preachers and parishioners. They place profound doctrines in a museum and spend their time on lighter things. Their calling should be to make the profound as simple as possible without violence. Faith is our constant helper where reason falters. In fact, for the faithful, God's spirit will inspire both reason and faith. Simplicity demands a lively interpretation and an interesting explanation of the text. Some sermons go limping, because they are not inter-

esting. Perhaps they do not even limp; they lumber along with heaviness like an oxcart. A lively interpretation is the result of a scholarly and an imaginative mind working adventurously with a Bible passage. It is also the first step to a communication from which the hearers will really benefit. The matter of explanation is very important. In a sense it is most important, because through it contact is made with the hearers. Every preacher should strive for contact, for without it he is merely talking to himself. Interesting explanation makes the best contacts at the most possible points. The method of Jesus is our best example. He interpreted profound truths and taught them by means of parables and stories. We know that unbelievers did not understand even His parables, but His people came to know their significance. What sublime stories they are, taken from life, often from the immediate surroundings, and applied to life! They drove home and still drive home the deep matters of God. They enlighten our benighted souls and make our slow understanding leap forward. Deep sermons require the art of illustration."—Nothing new perhaps, but, oh, how necessary it is for us to be reminded of these basic sermonic principles: depth, simplicity, and illustration! The writer closes his article with the words: "What a task the preacher has! He must be theologian and poet, scientist and artist, and practical teacher among the children of men. His is the descent into the deep and the ascent with the treasures of God. And even a little child should learn from him that the profound is simple and that the simple is profound."

J. T. M.

The Scriptures Vindicated Once More. It used to be said by Bible critics that the account in Genesis of conditions in the lower Jordan Valley at the time of the Patriarchs must be wrong, because if we judge by conditions as they exist there today, we must conclude that the country through which the Jordan flows always has been desertlike and barren. Now, as the *Watchman-Examiner* (Baptist) points out, this view of the wise critics has been exploded. "Dr. Nelson Glueck, director of the American School of Oriental Research of Jerusalem, has developed recent excavations in the Jordan River Valley resulting in the discovery of the ruins of seventy villages that existed between 3500 B. C. and the twelfth century A. D. The inhabitants then totaled 35,000 to 40,000, compared with the 12,000 Arab encampments today. . . . It is also disclosed that elephants roamed the Jordan area and the hills above the coastal plains. Among the remains dug up from the ancient bed of the Jordan River was an elephant's tusk two yards long. The finds also included bones of rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, and similar animals." To what extent the remains of animals mentioned in the last sentence may point to the action of the great flood in the Jordan region we do not know. At any rate, the attack of the critics as to the unhistorical description of Genesis 13 has been exploded.

A.

Chicago Theological Schools Unite Their Forces.—The *Christian Century* of November 10, 1943, reports, "A total of 283 theological students—257 men and 26 women—are enrolled for instruction under the Federated Theological Faculty at the University of Chicago. The Federated Faculty is composed of the faculties of the University of

Chicago Divinity School, the Chicago Theological Seminary [Congregational], the Disciples Divinity House, and the Meadville Theological School [Unitarian]. In the present student body there are 72 Congregationalists, 45 Methodists, 37 Disciples, 36 Baptists, 27 Presbyterians, 18 Unitarians, and 12 Lutherans, together with representatives of about a dozen other denominations." We imagine that the Lutherans referred to are enrolled in the graduate courses. Since the four schools mentioned all stand on the basis of Modernism, not much can be said against their working together.

A.

What Protestantism Needs. — Speaking of Protestant re-orientation, Charles Clayton Morrison, the editor of the *Christian Century*, expresses the following views. The situation, he thinks, calls primarily for three things. "First, it calls for a recovery of the conviction that our Christianity is true! This conviction has been diluted and whittled away by secularistic Modernism almost to the vanishing point. Second, it calls for a recovery of the conviction that the insights of Protestantism at those points where they are in irreconcilable conflict with Catholicism are important! This conviction has been toned down by an endless tolerance to the point of indifferentism. And third, it calls for a hearty and penitent recognition that the convictions which the Protestant churches share in common are so many and so substantial, and their differences so few and of such little weight, that close co-operation becomes a paramount duty and the continuance of their separatism a sin and a scandal." The first two points of Dr. Morrison are well taken and should receive the hearty assent of every Protestant. In the third point he is only partly right. It is true that the divisions which exist in Protestantism are scandalous. But the solution is not a course of indifference concerning these divisions, but a removal of the cause, the errors that have torn the Church apart.

A.

Woman's Choice Is Job or Home. — Under this heading, "a woman doctor" in *America* (Dec. 4, 1943) discusses the serious problem involved in the almost universal employment of women today in the various industries connected with the war. There is perhaps little that can now be done about the employment of women in activities which properly are outside her proper sphere. But the "woman doctor" is looking forward to post-war times when in some way normalcy must be restored to the world, and it is from this point of view that she offers a number of suggestions. The opening of the article is interesting: "A woman physician treating women in industry and other work fields has many occasions for noting with sorrow that her sex cannot with impunity violate the divine and natural laws which limit her to home or work, while man has home and work." The writer, however, is not bigoted in her views. She says: "To say that all women must devote their lives to home cares is one of the vicious half-truths utilized by the Nazis. To say that all women may have homes and jobs is a half-truth no less dangerous." But she contends: "Unless a majority of women fulfill their function of motherhood, the race will fail. . . . When this war is over, we must expect that the balance of the sexes in society

will be awry. There will be more women than men. Out of that situation can grow alarming threats to the family. In no small measure this could be mitigated by the voluntary refraining from matrimony on the part of those women who have the ability to find significant careers for themselves. The career woman, thoughtfully renouncing ideas of marriage, will do a better job. The married, abandoning any idea of a career, will make a better home. Not long ago in *America* a Catholic professional woman pleaded for some recognition by the Church of that state of life in which the secular single woman finds herself. She spoke of 'the forgotten woman.' Most people are desperately in need of guidance for their lives. This guidance comes most safely from the Church. This is not the time to forget any group. Clear-cut guidance for the woman who must choose not a career *and* marriage, but a single career, seems to be one of the necessary plans for our world of tomorrow." As is evident from her statements, the writer does not attempt a solution of the problem, but by suggesting that the Church guide women on this point, she reminds Christian pastors of a duty which they dare not ignore. These, as we see them, are the facts that face them after the war: 1. There will be more women than men, so that many women must choose a single career, very many indeed against their will. Such women need guidance, because they are subject to manifold temptations and are apt to withdraw their talents from the service of the Church. 2. Many women who marry will want to continue their extramarital work. In some cases this may be necessary; in others, however, not. Now, the woman who has enjoyed economic independence with all the emoluments which her own pay check offers her is hardly inclined to accept the hardships and self-sacrifices necessitated by the single pay check, which must serve all members of the household, husband, wife, and children. But the home can be maintained only by such rigid self-sacrifice on the part of husband and wife (including also the children). In other words, the married woman (just to name one of the parties involved) must be satisfied with less costly jewelry, clothes, and other luxuries (and let us add, necessities) than her "career-lucky" sister may possess. But in this very self-sacrificing way the home and with it the Church and the country are built and preserved. Above all, this self-sacrificing way is the Christian way which God has prescribed for husband and wife in Scripture; and that Christian way is, after all, the most satisfactory. In spite of the many sacrifices the married woman is asked to make constantly and in spite of the drudgery which will be hers for many years of her life, she certainly will have more out of life and put more into life than her lonely, though perhaps richer sister who must choose the single career. In short, while guiding the unmarried single woman to employ her superfluous energy in the service of her Church and country, the pastor must point out to the married woman the glory of a mother's work in the home and of the abiding value of her investment of talents in this most necessary profession. The whole subject should be discussed in conferences, though, of course, the urgency of the problem varies with the localities.

J. T. M.

Bishop Manning on the Three Ranks of Ministers.—One of the chief opponents of union between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians is Bishop Manning, head of the Protestant Episcopal diocese of New York. In a sermon which he preached in the cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City on September 12, 1943, he urged that since the Presbyterians do not accept the Episcopalian view of the ministry, the report of the committee recommending union be rejected. We quote his words on what he believes to be the teaching of the Scriptures on the three ranks of ministers. "Our Lord and His Apostles founded the Church, and the ministry of the Church has come down to us in the threefold order of bishops, priests, and deacons. The Episcopal Church holds this belief as to the ministry of the Church in common with all the historic Catholic Churches of the world, both of the East and of the West, in common with the whole Anglican Communion throughout the world, in common, that is, with three fourths of all the Christians in the world at this time. No one with regard for history can doubt that this has been the belief of the Holy Catholic Church from apostolic days, and no one who understands the official formularies of the Church can doubt that this is what the Episcopal Church holds and teaches as to the ministry. It should be unnecessary to say that this belief as to the apostolic threefold ministry is not the mere opinion of a group or party in the Church. It is not 'High Church' or 'Low Church,' it is the doctrine and teaching of the Church itself as set forth in all her official formularies, and shown by her unvarying practice. In clear and solemn words the Prayer Book declares that 'from the apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church — bishops, priests, and deacons.'"

The good bishop, whom we admire for his courage, overlooks the fact that first-rate scholars of the Anglican Church have admitted that in the New Testament the terms "bishops" and "elders" refer to incumbents of the same office and that hence in the days of the Apostles there were only two classes: bishops (elders) and deacons. We are reminded that Christ instituted but one office, the office of the holy ministry. Christian churches must have their shepherds, or pastors. If it seems desirable that these men should be given assistants ("deacons"), that may be done.

A.

The Immaculate Conception.—That Roman spokesmen still cling to the teaching promulgated as a divine dogma in 1854 that Mary was conceived without sin, is evident from an article in *America* (Jesuit weekly) on the Immaculate Conception, in which this paragraph appears: "When therefore we honor the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Lady, we are acknowledging our supernatural destiny, our supernatural poverty, Christ's generosity in becoming Man and enriching us by His death, and the incomparable honor He paid to His mother by exempting her, from the very first moment of her existence, from the stain of Adam. All men and women should indeed rejoice in this feast; for it assures us that there is one of our own blood and our own nature, wholly and merely creature like us, yet representing in this world one flawless example of our humanity, one human being whom the ugly stain of our tainted heritage never touched. We Americans should call especially upon her to whose Immaculate Conception our land is

dedicated. Our danger is not that we shall deny the natural rights and dignity of man, but shall forget their limitations; not that we shall despise God's handiwork, but shall not realize just how great He wishes His handiwork to be and how far we shall fail of that greatness unless we have supernatural help. That help may our Immaculate Mother bring to everyone in our land." It is with indignation that a person reads these words assigning a place to Mary that belongs to God alone.

A.

Brief Items.—From the South comes the news that opponents of the Methodist Merger of 1938 are organizing. At a recent meeting held for that purpose seven Southern States were represented. It will be interesting to see whether their objective is to oppose Modernism, which has made most alarming inroads in the large body of Methodists.

The church press reports that in France Protestant churches are coming to rely largely on the services of laymen in conducting services. It seems the congregations are experiencing a good deal of difficulty in holding meetings. The present period is called "this period of compulsory silence."

"15 to 20 per cent of disability cases now returning from combat areas are psycho-neurotic cases. This is due to the transition from a life of ease and indulgence to one of strict discipline and hard work. Some of the boys become mental cases because of conflict and some break through worry about their loved ones at home."—Dr. Charles T. Holman. Quoted in the *Lutheran*.

After almost a year of negotiations the American Council of Christian Churches has received the promise that the Blue Network will grant it free radio time. The *Christian Beacon* states that the president of the Blue Network, Mr. Mark Woods, made this promise November 26.

Our attention has been drawn to a few lines published not long ago in the *Christian Herald* and worth pondering.

This is a funny world,
Its wonders never cease;
All "civilized" peoples are at war;
All "savages" at peace.

The Chicago archdiocese of the Catholic Church is said to number 1,600 priests and 1,560,000 members and to be the largest archdiocese of our hemisphere. In addition it is said to be perhaps the richest in the world.

When at the election of a bishop (Protestant Episcopal) for the vacancy in Washington, D. C., Dean Angus Dun of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Mass., was elected on the third ballot, the motion to make the election unanimous was defeated by three negative votes, according to the *Living Church*. The election was not questioned.

Three United States Army chaplains have been killed in action in this war. Five have died as the result of enemy action. Seven have met death from accidents of various kinds. Seven have died following illness, one of them in a Japanese prison camp. These figures from the office of the chief of chaplains of the Army cover the period up to

early summer. Five chaplains have been wounded, and seven are missing in action, the report continues. This brings the casualties to 34. — *The Lutheran*.

The Archbishop of York, after a visit to Russia, declares that so far as his observation reached, there is now absolute religious liberty in that great country. On the other hand, Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke, president of the Baptist World Alliance, declares that religious liberty as understood by Baptists is not to be found in Russia. He declares further that religious liberty is not to be found in the thinking of the Greek Orthodox Church or the Roman Catholic Church. — *Watchman-Examiner*.

Racial discrimination against Mexicans in the United States was strongly condemned by Robert E. Lucey, archbishop of San Antonio, Tex., in a press interview published here recently. . . . "Usually the Mexican worker gets a very, very low salary unless he belongs to the American Federation of Labor, but from its unions colored, Mexican, and Hispanic Americans in general are excluded," the archbishop is reported as saying. — *Christian Century*.

From London comes the news item that several prominent church leaders view with apprehension the tendency to have "special" Sundays such as "Farm Sunday" and "Battle of Britain Sunday." How much we need that note in our country, too!

The *Protestant Voice* of Fort Wayne, Ind., says that "Luther, far from establishing a new religion, simply set the Church's house in order. . . . That was Luther's objective, and he accomplished it."

Augustana Hospital in Chicago is planning "to create a clinical training center to which theological students may come for work in pastoral psychology and psychiatry." Dr. G. E. Westburg of Bloomington, Ill., has accepted the position of director of religious work at this hospital according to a correspondence in the *Christian Century*.

"The success of a minister among the disinherited rests on his preaching ability — his pictorial simplicity, his clarity, and his dramatic eloquence. . . . He will succeed if he uses the people's terminology and limits his illustrations to the area of their rural experience." These words are quoted from an article by David S. Burgess in the *Christian Century* on the topic "The Gospel to the Poor."

On Dec. 15, 1943, Dr. William Adams Brown, one of the founders of the World Council of Churches, died. He was born in 1865, studied at Yale and at Union Seminary, N. Y., and in 1893 was ordained a Presbyterian minister. For many years he was professor at Union Seminary, where he taught systematic and applied theology. He was perhaps best known through his active participation in attempts to unite the churches.

A.

