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## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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## Theological Observer

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**Selective Fellowship.**—This term is used a good deal these days. What does it mean? When the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America assembled in June, it adopted this resolution, "Because of the confidence born of association, conference, and co-operation through many years, we extend our hand of fellowship to all American Lutherans who adhere to the historic standard of the Lutheran Church. We find their doctrinal declarations to be in essential accord with our own. We believe no additional theses, statements, or agreements are necessary for fellowship among American Lutherans. Wherever our congregations and pastors find those ties that bind Lutheran Christians and that teaching and practice conform to official declarations, they may in good conscience practice selective fellowship both in worship and work." This resolution throws light on the question: What is meant by selective fellowship? The term is based on the idea that it is right and proper for us to have fellowship with people who are of the same faith as we, even if they belong to a church body which is not in fellowship with our own organization. That there is some truth in this view cannot be denied. If a person comes to embrace our faith while he is still a member of a heterodox denomination, he is virtually our brother even though external barriers separate him from us. Our fathers held that if such a person testifies to his faith and bravely holds aloft the flag of truth, we should acknowledge him as a brother in spite of his heterodox connections. They said that such a person is *in statu confessionis*, in the state of confession of the truth. To what extent such an acknowledgment of fraternal relations could be made manifest and be put into action, is, of course, difficult to say. There every case demands special study and scrutiny.

But while admitting that something can be said for the principle of selective fellowship, would it be proper and wise to say that this principle henceforth is to guide us in our attitude toward other denominations and church bodies? We fear that if this principle were adopted as the basis of our policy, endless confusion would result. It might seem to one man that fellowship can be established in a given case, while to another man it might appear that this cannot be done, and the two brethren might come into a state of violent disagreement with each other. For the rank and file, the great majority of the church members on both sides of the fence, great bewilderment would result, we apprehend. No one would know which way to turn. Church discipline, that is, the discipline of church bodies with respect to their members, would just about disappear in the confusion that would reign. Certainly the cause of law and order would not be served. Frankly, we are afraid of any course of this nature. It will be far better that we follow the present road with its inconveniences and discomforts than to decide not to have any road at all, but to let everyone follow the path which he selects. In addition to everything else, let 1 Cor. 14:40 and 1 Tim. 3:15 not be overlooked.

A.



**Missouri Synod's Candor Questioned.**—It was to be expected that the *Christian Century*, if it should take any notice at all of the Missouri Synod Convention in Saginaw, would criticize the resolutions passed there with respect to membership of the Missouri Synod in the National Lutheran Council. The editor of the *Christian Century*, after describing the functions of the National Lutheran Council, writes, "In some of this activity 'the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States' is already unofficially co-operating. The recent convention, which is reported on p. 837, noted this fact and tacitly agreed that it might continue—unofficially. But it recoiled from going further, at least at this time. The logic of those who pointed out the need for combined efforts when the opportunity opens for the Lutherans of America to extend compassionate aid to the members of their household of faith in Europe move it—but not enough. It acknowledged the necessity of collaboration against the inroads of paganism and the challenge to religious liberty of the Roman Catholic Church—but it was not prepared to act. It stated that 'apparently' there was some doctrinal taint in the constitution of the National Lutheran Council which overbalanced all these considerations. The Missouri Synod was sorry, but for another three years this one word 'apparently' is to deprive other Lutherans of the substantial aid it might provide by accepting the responsibilities of full membership. Of course, it is going to continue unofficial help, but this must not be apparent. The position is not one which will increase respect for Missouri Synod candor."

In commenting on these remarks, we must say, in the first place, that the *Christian Century* from its position, which stands for the unification of all Protestant churches at a surprisingly low cost, could hardly have done otherwise than to condemn the position of the Missouri Synod at Saginaw. Its editors cannot be expected to understand the way of thinking which actuates Missouri Synod Lutherans, to whom the majesty of God's Word is one great controlling fact in all their teaching and practice. The *Christian Century*, too, endeavors to live up to its principles, but they are very much different from those that are the guiding stars of the Missouri Synod. With the *Christian Century* expediency plays a big role excepting in questions of the broadest doctrinal and ethical nature. With the Missouri Synod expediency is limited to a very small area, namely, to that sphere where the Word of God has not spoken. What actuated the convention in Saginaw was the desire to be truly loyal to the mandates of the Holy Scriptures. Its great aim was to follow the light that God in His mercy has placed before us in the writings of the Apostles and the Prophets. To be obedient to the Word speaking to us in these writings was of more importance to it than to achieve actual or apparent benefits and successes through co-operation with other Lutherans. It seems to us that the historian who will objectively view the decisions of Saginaw will have to come to the conclusion that after all the Missouri Synod Lutherans were very eager to maintain absolute faithfulness to what God has said. He will probably accuse them of obscurantism or medievalism, but in all fairness he will have to add that what weighed more with Missouri than outward success



was the consideration of adherence to the Bible. He will, if he is fair, say that the action of the Missouri Synod showed that this body does not value isolationism *per se*, that is, for its own sake; that it is not a body which thinks it has to foster isolationism at all costs and avoid co-operation with others. If he is not prejudiced, he will have to admit that at Saginaw there was evident the strong desire to engage in co-operative efforts with others bearing the Lutheran name. The factor that raised a barrier to progress in that respect was not the desire to remain isolated, but the desire to be faithful to such directives as God has given us in the Scriptures. The criticism of the *Christian Century* is unjustified. It is not the Missouri Synod candor that should be questioned by this journal. If the editor of the *Christian Century* had attacked the Missouri Synod's understanding of the importance of doctrine and of adherence to all the teaching of Scripture, he would at least not have violated his own principles of fairness. In casting doubt on Missouri Synod's uprightness in its resolutions, he has gone beyond the legitimate sphere of polemics and is attacking motives. That certainly will not help in the discussion of the principles involved.

A.

**Augustana Synod Missionaries in China.**—According to a radiogram, dated May 6, the majority of the missionaries of the Augustana Synod are in Sian. The radiogram adds, "A few are staying. All is quiet at present." The message was sent by Victor Swenson. The *Lutheran Companion* comments on this radiogram, "This would indicate that Missionary Swenson, who is president of the Augustana Mission in Honan, and some other workers have decided to stay at their posts in the face of Japanese invasion, which is now sweeping over our field. This is Christian devotion of the highest type. It is evidence of true missionary heroism."

A.

**The Living Church on Union of the Presbyterians and Episcopalians.**—As our readers know, the *Living Church* is the mouthpiece of the High Church party in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Speaking of the recent deliberations of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (Northern Presbyterians) with reference to the subject of union of the two bodies mentioned, the *Living Church* says, "If press reports are to be trusted, there is a touch of irritation about the action of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. on unity with the Episcopal Church. The Assembly is said by the *New York Times* to have suggested in a resolution that the Episcopal Church at its General Convention in 1946 'propose a specific program for the merger of the two churches.' . . . There is considerable excuse for irritation on the part of the Presbyterians. Again and again, through the course of the negotiations, Episcopalian advocates of unity, whose zeal has outrun their discretion, have unintentionally given the impression that there are no real issues dividing the two churches. The preface to the Ordinal has been pooh-poohed for its alleged lack of scholarship—by Episcopalians. Extensive and subtle arguments have been framed—by Episcopalians—to show that because the ministry and the sacraments are mentioned separately in the Lambeth Quadrilateral from the faith



of the Creeds, the Episcopal Church has no doctrine about the ministry and the sacraments. The inference has been allowed to stand that the entire sum of the Church's teaching about the priesthood is expressed by the short form of the ordination sentence in the Prayer Book — again, by Episcopalians. The intransigent attitude of the Church as a whole toward divorce and toward substitution of grape juice for wine in the Holy Communion has been soft-pedaled — by Episcopalians. In their eagerness to effectuate the declared purpose of all of us to seek unity, some of our negotiators have tended to give the impression that nothing remains to be discussed but administrative details. Small wonder that the Presbyterian General Assembly should feel impatient with the pusillanimous action of the General Convention [of the Episcopalians] in tossing the problem into the 'wastebasket' of the Lambeth Conference." The words quoted show what difficulty a High Church Episcopalian who is conscientious has when he contemplates union with the Presbyterians who reject many of the things held precious by him. Too bad that his decisions are not always based on Holy Scripture! A.

**The Southern Baptist Convention.**—The Southern Baptists are known for their conservative attitude in matters of doctrine. Their this year's convention was held in Atlanta, Ga., May 16—18. Its Foreign Mission Board in 1943 received \$2,166,805.46 for its work. The denomination has 484 missionaries in its various fields (Africa, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, China, Colombia, Manchukuo, Europe, Hawaii, Japan, Palestine, Syria). For Home Mission endeavors \$992,708.67 were received. In this work 489 missionaries are engaged, who are serving at 1,037 stations. The convention, representing a membership of 5,493,027, re-elected Dr. Pat M. Neff as its president. In its Sunday school department numbers are decreasing — a loss of 242 schools and 97,951 in enrollment was reported. The denomination has three theological seminaries, with 1,250 ministerial students and 124 volunteers.

Concerning race relations these resolutions were adopted: "1. That we reaffirm our deep and abiding interest in the welfare of all races of mankind, and particularly our interest in the welfare and advancement of the Negro race, which lives in our midst to the number of some ten or eleven millions.

"2. That this convention would urge the pastors and churches affiliated with the convention, and all our Baptist people, to cultivate and maintain the finest Christian spirit and attitude toward the Negro race, to do everything possible for the welfare of the race, both economic and religious, and for the defense and protection of all civil rights of the race." A.

**The Northern Baptist Convention.**—This convention was held May 23—26 in Atlantic City, N. J. The number of churches belonging to this denomination in 1943 was 7,367. In 1918 the number was 10,666. The reporter in the *Watchman-Examiner*, however, says, "It is to be noted that while we have fewer churches than in 1918, we have more church boards, and on the basis of the amount raised annually for two purposes, they are giving fifty per cent more per capita. The new president of the convention is Anna Canada Swain (Mrs. Leslie Swain). Only



once before has the Northern Convention elected a woman president; that was when Helen Barrett Montgomery was chosen." The Board of Foreign Missions, so it was reported, has decided to abandon its "inclusive policy," that is, the policy not to insist absolutely on orthodoxy in engaging missionaries. The *Watchman-Examiner* says, "The overwhelming majority of our Baptist churches are no longer in any mood to be silent concerning the kind of Christian belief taught in the mission fields by those whom they support." It is tragic that the disavowal did not come earlier and that it took a revolt to bring it to pass. A.

**Parochial Schools or a Pagan Nation?**—It is certainly most gratifying to note that also Protestant churches, who in the past have been rather indifferent regarding this question, are now taking up for consideration the problem of Christian day schools. *The Lutheran Outlook* (February, 1944) editorially comments on this subject in connection with a statement on this point by the Roman Catholic educator Thomas S. Bowdern of Creighton University, Omaha, Nebr., "who precipitated the discussion." Dr. Bowdern's hope for the future was based primarily on the church-related college, but he stated that it must be a church-related college "built on some kind of a church-related high school and a church-related elementary school." According to Professor Bowdern, a New York prison survey revealed that no Catholic prisoner had gone farther than the sixth grade in a Catholic school, and he concluded: "When they [the children] stay in school, they stay in church; when they stay in church, they stay out of jail. We are convinced that the Church cannot survive without a school. No school, no Church." "Statements of this kind from a leader in the Church of Rome," writes *The Lutheran Outlook*, "are, of course, not surprising. But there are leaders in other church groups who are beginning to see eye to eye with the Romanists in the matter of church education. At a recent meeting of a number of educators, executives, and editors from the three major Lutheran groups in America, the dean of a theological seminary of the United Lutheran Church in America was insistent in urging that the Lutheran Church begin to give serious thought to the restoration of the parochial school." After having quoted his plea for parochial schools, the writer continues: "And now comes Dr. George A. Buttrick, famed pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City, and tells the Ohio Pastors' Convention at Columbus, Ohio, that unless an agreement can be made with the public schools upon a 'syllabus of religious instruction,' he favors the establishment of Protestant religious schools." The writer concludes his article with the words: "So far as its own children are concerned, the churches may indeed give serious consideration to the re-establishment of the parochial school, but this touches only one half of the problem. What about the other half of America's children who have no church connections and are receiving no training whatsoever?" The multitude of churchless children of the unchurched should indeed be given attention, but if the churches will conduct parochial schools and if in these schools not Humanism nor Modernism will be taught, but genuine Christianity, as set forth in Holy Scripture, they will have gone a long way in solving the problem of keeping our nation from becoming pagan. J. T. M.



**The Problem of Eternal Security.**—Under this heading *The Sunday School Times* (April 15, 1944) answers a letter of one of its readers regarding the believer's personal assurance of salvation. The question is one of perennial interest to every Christian, especially now when there are so many adverse factors tending to weaken his faith. But with its Reformed background *The Sunday School Times* finds itself in a quandary when dealing with the subject. With the Reformed in general it holds that "salvation is a once-for-all gift from God," that is to say, if a person has once been brought to faith, it is impossible for him to be eternally lost. It argues this from the "viewpoint of logic and reason," for "since life received at the new birth is eternal or everlasting, it is a contradiction in terms to suppose that it can be cut off." But the writer admits that "the teaching of Scripture is safer and more important than our process of reasoning" and therefore quotes such passages as John 10:28, 29; 3:16; 5:24; 6:47; and Rom. 6:23, all of which assure the Christian of everlasting life through faith in Christ Jesus. However, as the article declares, "these passages do not of themselves fully solve the difficulties of Hebrews 6:4-6." To retain his "once-for-all gift of salvation" doctrine, the writer adopts Scofield's interpretation of the term "partakers" (*metochous*) in this passage as meaning "going along with" ("but not necessarily possessing the Spirit"), which, of course, is an impossible interpretation, since the text speaks of persons who actually have been converted, and not (as Scofield suggests) of persons who merely are *nominal* Christians. In closing, the writer finds a definite proof for his "once-for-all gift" of salvation in v. 9, although also this verse does not solve his problem. The matter is important, since the reading of Reformed literature is liable to confuse even Lutherans well trained in theology. For one thing, the Reformed doctrine of the "once-for-all gift" of salvation is not Scriptural. Scripture teaches that believers may fall from grace and lose their faith, Gal. 5:4, 5; Luke 8:13; 1 Cor. 10:12, though the final salvation of the elect is sure, Rom. 11:5, 7; Mark 13:20, 22; etc., even though they fall temporarily, 2 Sam. 12:7 ff. But on God's part there is no reason why believers should fall, since His faithfulness guarantees such salvation, 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:20 ff. All the passages which *The Sunday School Times* quotes are universal Gospel promises of divine grace, upon which the believer should rest his assurance of salvation as definitely certain on God's part. The mistake which the Reformed here make is that they base their salvation, not on the divine Gospel promises, but, as the sainted Dr. Pieper pointed out, upon the *gratia infusa*, as does Rome. Finally, the passage Heb. 6:4-6 must not be misinterpreted as Dr. Scofield does, for it deals with persons who have been converted, but who, having fallen from faith, continue to crucify for themselves the Son of God and expose Him publicly (note the present participles *anastaurountas* and *paradeigmatizontas*). As Scripture does not teach that "once converted, always converted," so it does not teach that "once fallen away, always fallen away." Nor does it teach that such church members as fall away have never truly believed. The Reformed doctrine of final perseverance rests, not upon the Gospel but upon the Calvinistic error of absolute predestination, which Lutheranism rejects as in opposition to Scripture. J. T. M.



**Roman Catholic Statistics.**—That Rome is still powerful is evident from the statistics published in the official Catholic Directory for 1944, from which the *Living Church* (Protestant Episcopal) takes over some important items. The total number of Roman Catholics in the United States, Alaska, and the Hawaiian Islands is 23,419,701. The number of converts in 1943—1944 is said to have been 90,822—3,917 more than in the preceding year and more than double the number that entered the Roman Catholic Church in 1933. "The archdioceses of Chicago, Boston, and New York each have Roman Catholic populations in excess of one million. There are 37,749 clergymen in the Roman Church, the largest number ever recorded in its history in America." Let no one say that Rome is not a formidable foe. A.

**Norwegian Synod Plans Seminary.**—In a report on the convention of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church held this year, the following information is submitted: "The Synod has decided to establish a theological seminary. However, this cannot be done now, since Selective Service rulings require that a theological student of 'draft' age be in attendance at a recognized seminary established before October, 1940, if he is to continue his theological studies. Nevertheless, the Convention resolved that the annual synod-wide Thanksgiving offering be set aside for the Seminary Fund; it also authorized the Board of Regents to make certain other preparations for the establishment of the seminary. It furthermore became clear that it is the desire of the Synod that the seminary be established as soon as possible." When this plan is realized, may the new seminary become a pillar of conservative and evangelical Lutheranism. A.

**Missions Have Never Been Stopped by War.**—So says Professor Kenneth Scott Latourette of Yale, member of the Board of Managers of the American Baptist Mission Society, as quoted in *The Christian Layman*. *The Watchman-Examiner* (July 6, 1944) offers the following condensed report of Dr. Latourette's "story of missions in wartime": "In 1789 the French Revolution broke out. It was followed by the Napoleonic Wars, which lasted from 1792 to 1815. In the span of those distressed years the following events occurred: 1792—In the year of the Reign of Terror in Paris the Baptist Missionary Society was organized, growing out of the efforts of William Carey. 1799—When Napoleon was returning to France from his campaign in Egypt in an effort to break Britain's communications with India, the Church Missionary Society was formed. 1804—About the time that Napoleon was giving the greatest threat of invasion England has had between the Spanish Armada and the Nazi attempt in 1940, the British and Foreign Bible Society was organized. 1810—At a time when New England was distraught by our attempts to maintain our neutrality in the Napoleonic Wars, and on the eve of our second war with Great Britain, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was organized in New England. 1812—While American ports were being blockaded by the British, the first party of American missionaries, of which Adoniram Judson was a member, sailed for



*India.*" The facts here given might encourage us in our own efforts toward postwar missionary expansion. The Great Commission holds as long as the world stands: "Preach the Gospel to every creature," and the time to prepare for this greater work in the Lord's harvest field is right now while God's own great sermon of repentance is resounding in our ears.

J. T. M.

**The Destruction of War.**—Quoting a "London Letter," printed in the *Australian Christian World* (February 18), Dr. H. Hamann, in the *Australasian Theological Review* (Jan.-Mar., 1944), writes the following regarding the destructiveness of war in the religious and cultural realms: "Our colleges for ministerial training are now beginning to experience the full effect of the war in depriving them of candidates for admission. All our young, able-bodied men are either serving in the forces or are engaged in some form of national service from which they cannot be released. There is therefore practically no residue left from which candidates may be recruited. The sources of supply being thus cut off and most of the students in residence at the outbreak of war having completed their course of training, many of the theological colleges have reached the point at which it has become necessary to consider the question of temporarily closing down. In several cases also the fact that the college buildings have been partly requisitioned has aggravated the situation. Cuddesdon, one of the important Anglican colleges, has decided to close down at the end of the present term, owing to the decline in numbers and the requisition of its main buildings. Among the Free Churches several of the Methodist colleges are already closed for the duration of the war, and the Congregationalists and the Baptists are faced with a similar necessity. A significant indication of the startling decline in the number of ordinands in the Anglican Church is given by the Archbishop of York, who has stated that as far as he can see, there will only be one candidate for ordination in his diocese this Advent. In view of the dwindling number of clergy available for staffing the parishes, he believes it will be necessary to close some churches and to reduce the number of services in others. It is not surprising therefore that, as the Archbishop of Canterbury says, one of the chief difficulties confronting all bishops in England today is the supply of chaplains in the forces. Yet the need is urgent and the opportunity immense." The "Letter" further describes with what hardness the conditions are pressing on Teachers' Training Colleges. It says: "It is officially estimated that by 1945 the loss of new intake alone will amount to over 20,000 teachers." But that is not all. The "Letter" goes on to say: "In addition to its effect on the supply of clergy and teachers, the war is making heavy demands upon the medical profession. Hospitals are to lose more of their medical staffs in order to meet the expected urgent demands of the services in the near future. It is announced that fifty per cent of the newly qualified doctors . . . are to receive their calling-up papers almost immediately. The hospitals are already greatly understaffed, and this new demand will increase their difficulties enormously. . . ." Commenting on the situation, Professor Hamann adds the following very earnest, hortatory remarks: "Conditions such as these, which



one imagines must prevail more or less in all belligerent countries, help to bring home to us, in a manner far more convincing and eloquent than the most dreadful material devastation, what people meant when they expressed the fear ten or twenty years ago that another world war would mean the end of civilization. Yet there are some 'leaders' who would tell us that art, culture, civilization count for nothing in this war. One who speaks thus has furnished us with an accurate index of his intellectual caliber as well as with a complete measure of his moral worth. Christians who are Christians indeed and well instructed will continue to do their duty by their respective country; but love and sympathy will move them to let their prayers rise to God 'like a fountain night and day' that it would please Him soon to restore the blessings of peace." J. T. M.

**Weidener Bible Now in Harvard.**— *America* (Jesuit weekly) submits interesting information on an old Gutenberg Bible. This Bible was printed in 1455. It belonged to Rev. Johannes Vlyegher, a canon of the cathedral of Utrecht, who in 1471 gave it to the monastery of St. Mary's in the vicinity of Amersfoort. "The Earl of Ashburnham got hold of it in 1814. It was sold to Robert Hoe of New York, and Peter A. B. Weidener of Philadelphia, who died in 1915, bought it. On May 7 of this year the Bible, one of ten complete copies known to be in this country, was presented at Cambridge, Mass., by the Weidener family to President Conant and the Fellows of Harvard College." The work consists of "two handsome volumes of 624 leaves." A.

**The Norwegian Lutheran Church of America Votes to Change Its Name.**— On this topic the *News Bulletin* of the National Lutheran Council writes, "The change of name of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, first voted at its biennial convention in 1928, is expected to be consummated at its biennial convention in 1946. For many years there appears to have been a decided majority in favor of dropping the word "Norwegian" from the title of the church body on the ground that it works hardship upon the members of local congregations who are not Norwegian in origin or background. A steady increase in the use of English for services of worship and a decline in the use of Norwegian has lent weight to the argument. At the 16th biennial convention at Minneapolis early in June (this year) the body unanimously adopted the name "The Evangelical Lutheran Church," which will become official if approved by a two-thirds vote of the delegates to the 1946 convention. A prior vote on May 31 favored a name change by 766 to 269. First balloting on June 2 uncovered 10 suggested names, among which the name finally selected mustered only 90 votes." A.

**Augustana Synod Likewise Votes to Change Its Name.**— At its recent convention in St. Paul, Minn., the Augustana Synod resolved to drop the term "Synod" in its name and to substitute for it the word "Church." The body henceforth will be known as the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church. However, the action of the convention is not as yet the last word in this matter. What the *Lutheran Companion* states must be noted: "Inasmuch as a constitutional change is involved, the matter must come before the Synod again for a final decision."



**Brief Items.**—James Forrestel, Secretary of the Navy, former president of Dillon, Reade, and Company (a financial firm of high rating), recently stated when he received the degree of doctor of laws at Princeton, that the privately endowed liberal arts college is "one of the foundations upon which our democracy is built." According to his statement, the experience of the Navy shows there is a need of return "to certain basic compulsory courses rather than allowing complete freedom of selection to its students." And then he added, "I would even like to see Greek and Latin restored to their ancient glory."

Word from Switzerland brings the following welcome news to the Western world: "Pastor Niemoeller's health is good and his detention less strict. He has been given a bed instead of a pallet, which was his only couch until recently. He is interned with five Roman Catholic churchmen. Intercession on his behalf continues in his church at Dahlen. His wife is allowed to visit him every fortnight. He is greatly saddened by the news that his younger son is suffering from tuberculosis."

*The Lutheran*

On May 15, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Sergei, died, 77 years old. He had the title of "Patriarch." As his death was reported, the religious press emphasized that the Society of Militant Godless in Russia has been disbanded and that in Moscow a theological institute of the Orthodox Church will, according to present plans, soon be opened.

"We were struck by three things about it [the President's prayer]. First, nowhere in it does he recognize the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . The other striking feature of the prayer is that the President, speaking of those who shall die, prayed 'Embrace these, Father, and receive them, Thy heroic servants, into Thy Kingdom.' . . . The third thing about the prayer which needs to be mentioned is that there is not any reference of any kind to sin or to a confession of sin on the part of the nation."

*Christian Beacon*

According to a report in the *Columbus Dispatch*, the Ohio District of the American Lutheran Church has gone on record as opposed to "even a consultative membership" in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. That is good news.

Dr. W. P. Hieronymus, director of parish education in the American Lutheran Church, has authorized publication of the following: "Parochial school teachers are *urgently* needed for all elementary grades. We could place about seven teachers right now, if available." We see that the acute shortage of teachers so distressing in our own circles is not confined to our body.

A British visitor who toured our country recently states in an article that appeared in the *Christian Century*, "Church attendance in America is plainly much better than in Britain. Ministers complain that only 70 per cent of the American people are actively connected with the Christian churches, while in Britain we put the percentage as low as 20 per cent. . . . Regular church attendance among you is probably due more to faithful pastoral work than it is to advertising or stunts



such as I noticed in one case, 'Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness in our fully air-conditioned auditorium.'"

The Wisconsin Synod, according to its statistical report, numbers 191,008 communicant members. Contributions for all purposes in the last year amounted to \$2,856,681.87.

When, recently, George W. Truett of Dallas, Tex. (Baptist), had served his church forty-seven years and on account of ill health tendered his resignation, the church refused to accept it. Under his guidance the membership had grown from 715 to over 8,000. Now the news of his death comes in the press. He reached the age of 77. In 1927 he was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and served for one year. For five years he was the head of the Baptist World Alliance.

A report in the *Lutheran Standard* for July speaks of the disaster that has descended on the mission workers of the American Lutheran Church on New Guinea. Of the group seven lost their lives, and four are still missing. A person's heart bleeds when one thinks of these losses.

The Southern Presbyterians, so the press reports, refused to withdraw from the Federal Council of Churches. The vote approached unanimity. Is the influence of the North making itself felt?

"We pay any price for war, but we expect peace to come down like a dove and mount on our shoulder for nothing, perhaps even paying a little for the parking privilege." — Remark by Walter H. Judd, Member of Congress from Minnesota.

The National Lutheran Council is endeavoring to help nine orphaned missions in China and neighboring countries: The Norwegian Missionary Society, the Norwegian China Mission, The Lutheran Free Church of Norway, The Finnish Missionary Society, The Christian Mission to Buddhists, The Schleswig-Holstein Mission, The Berlin Missionary Society, The Hildesheim Mission to the Blind, and the Tibet Mission.

According to Dr. Dell's page in the *Lutheran Standard*, "The Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury (Church of England) approved the amendment of the Book of Common Prayer to permit marriages between certain relatives. The change would allow a man to marry his wife's sister, his aunt, or his niece. (There are some Lutherans who believe the first two cases to be forbidden in Leviticus.) The Convocation also agreed to delete the phrase 'resurrection of the body' at cremation ceremonies." This is saddening. Dr. Dell properly asks, "Doesn't the Church of England still confess the Apostles' Creed?" As to the marriage restrictions in Leviticus, our old literature contains abundant exposition. Cf. for instance, *Theological Quarterly*, III, p. 409 ff.

A Chinese professor, speaking in Australia recently, stated (see *Christian Century* for July 5, 1944), "I do not think the East has profited very much from a century of contact with the West, which came with a gun in one hand and a Bible in the other. The Japanese became more interested in the gun than the Bible. . . . The race prejudice shown by most Western nations is very similar to what Hitler has been preaching for years." Let these words be pondered, especially by all who are interested in the success of Christian missions.



Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, well-known Modernist and prominent Presbyterian (moderator of General Assembly in 1943), will retire as president of Union Theological Seminary next year. This, however, will not terminate his sphere of influence in the training of future ministers, since he has been elected to and has assumed the presidency of Auburn Theological Seminary, the birthplace of the notorious Auburn Affirmation. Judging from his writings and from a sermon which we heard him deliver as moderator before a large gathering of Presbyterians, we can well understand that he will feel at home at Auburn, which together with Union has spearheaded Modernism in the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, Professor of Systematic Theology at Union, will succeed Dr. Coffin in the presidency of Union. Dr. Van Dusen's theological position is similar to that of his predecessor.

F. E. M.

From India there comes a report via the Associated Press that Gandhi has stated to Mohamed Ali Jinnah that he is willing to strive for the self-government of India with the idea that the country be divided into a chiefly Hindu and a chiefly Moslem state. If that plan should meet with favor and be carried out, Christian mission work might become more difficult than ever. May God in His mercy so guide affairs that the cause of the Gospel is not encumbered still more.

Casualties among the chaplains have been higher than in any other branch of the service excepting that of the bombers. 65 chaplains have died, 38 are prisoners, and one is missing, according to information given in the *Protestant Voice*.

Union Seminary, New York, mourns the death of Prof. James Moffat, who departed this life almost 74 years old. He had taught Greek at Oxford and Church History at Glasgow, and in Union Theological Seminary in New York he served as Professor of Church History. He was a voluminous writer; his best-known work is his translation of the Bible, the New Testament section of which appeared in 1922.

A missionary, the Rev. J. C. Jensen, addressing a letter to the *Watchman-Examiner*, says, "If Jesus is not the Christ and if His blood does not really atone and cleanse from sin and if He did not really rise from the dead and is not really at the right hand of God, then it seems to me that missions, home or foreign, are an impertinence." He might have omitted the "it seems to me."

It is reported that Myron C. Taylor has again been sent to the Vatican to represent President Roosevelt. Is the President, in sending Mr. Taylor back to the Vatican, thinking of the approaching election?

According to the *Protestant Voice*, the reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, whose headquarters are at Independence, Mo., objects to the name "Mormons" if applied to it. The contention is that after the death of Joseph Smith the Latter-Day Saints, who are now in Utah, became a distinct body. The son of Joseph Smith, Joseph Smith, Jr., became the presiding elder of the reorganized body and his grandson, Frederick M. Smith, is now president and prophet of the so-called reorganized Church.

A.