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## Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

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## Theological Observer

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**"German Protestantism — as the Former Dean of St. Paul's, London, Sees It."** — Under this heading the Episcopalian paper *The Churchman* reprints, without comment, from the *Church of England* an attack on Luther and Lutheranism from the pen of Dean W. R. Inge. The article has made the rounds of the press, has been commented upon in our own periodicals, and is perhaps not worth any additional notice. However, it seems necessary periodically to take issue with such examples of dastardly, cowardly, and dishonest criticism. Macbeth, looking on murder, says, "If it were done when 'tis done!" One is tempted to apply the words here. Some lies cannot be killed. There is nothing in this series of indictments that has not been refuted over and over again. What's more, it is impossible that a man of Dean Inge's standing should not know this. The method the writer uses is that of the cheapest rabble rouser, piling one accusation on the other without one single reference to prove his assertions. Here a few examples. The tirade begins:

"If we wish to find a scapegoat on whose shoulders we may lay the miseries which Germany has brought upon the world — not, perhaps, a very scientific way of writing history — I am more and more convinced that the worst evil genius of that country is not Hitler or Bismarck or Frederick the Great, but Martin Luther. This is no indictment of the Reformation, which was quite inevitable in any case. But Lutheranism is essentially German. It has never spread beyond Scandinavia and the Baltic States. In France, Britain, and Holland it gave way to Calvinism, a fine manly creed which leads nations to great prosperity. But as it worships a God who is neither just nor merciful, it is rather stoical than Christian. It is nearly dead now. We are fumbling for a new Reformation and have not yet found it."

Indeed, not a very scientific way of writing history! That Lutheranism is essentially German is as false as that Lutheranism never spread beyond Scandinavia and the Baltic States or that it is nearly dead now; and any textbook of church history might have saved the writer from the one and some study of current church literature from the other misconception. And every Christian (and so every Lutheran) worships a God who is both just and merciful. It is to be hoped that Dean Inge soon finds this God; the time is getting short for him.

One of the chief characteristics of Luther's teaching, the writer goes on, is this: "It was anti-humanist." That is not true. I need only mention that Luther's chief co-worker was one of the greatest humanists — Melancthon. Of course, there was a humanism which Luther (as every Christian) opposed; and this critic of Luther himself admits that the Italian Renaissance "looked like a revival of paganism, as indeed it was on one side." The paragraph ends with the statement: "Luther loaded Erasmus with coarse abuse." Does the writer mean to say Luther opposed Erasmus because he was a humanist? That, of course, is not true. Luther very unwillingly had to break with Erasmus because the latter attacked him and his teaching in his diatribe on the free will.

But we cannot let the reference to Luther's "coarse abuse" pass by without comment, though one feels as though he were carrying coal to Newcastle in doing so; so much has been said on that subject. Yet it may be well to point out that in defending Luther on this charge we should not apologize too much. Some do, because Luther occasionally uses language that would be out of place today. But two things should be remembered: first, his language was not offensive at that time. If that had been the case, some of the contemporaries of Luther would have pointed it out at that time; which they did not. It is, of course, a poor excuse to say that others did far worse; but the fact that Luther's language does not compare with the vile productions of Silvester Prierias and of Henry VIII at least proves our point that it was by no means unusual at that time. But, secondly, Luther was engaged in deadly warfare. He was not discussing academic questions with polite gentlemen. He was fighting Antichrist and the powers of darkness, entrenched behind fortifications that had taken centuries to build. And, as someone has said, you can't batter down Gibraltar with a peashooter.

"By making the Atonement and not the Incarnation the central doctrine of Christianity he threw the whole scheme of salvation out of gear. 'The Christ of the Synoptic Gospels,' says Troeltsch, 'made no appeal to him whatsoever. Nor had he any interest in the law of Christ. He makes Paul his doctrinal standard in everything.'

"And what a travesty of Paulinism he gives us! In place of the intense conviction that 'Not I, but Christ liveth in me,' we have a forensic and legalistic theory of 'justification' — that is to say, of righteousness not 'imparted' but 'imputed' vicariously. Faith, which is really a resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis, a venture progressively justified by experience, is for Luther a confident assurance that we are saved by the merits of Christ. Not for him St. Paul's words: 'I count not myself to have apprehended,' nor his fears that after all he might be 'a cast-away'; Luther has no doubts at all that he has been accepted. This is a lamentable impoverishment of the idea of faith and is likely to encourage antinomianism in practice."

Dean Inge evidently subscribes to the words of Troeltsch which he cites and so makes Troeltsch's religious philosophy his own; hence it does not surprise us that he finds a difference between St. Paul's doctrinal standard, the law of Christ, and the Christ of the Synoptic Gospels. The "travesty of Paulinism" is given by Dean Inge; he completely discards everything that St. Paul says on justification — that it is a forensic act of God, that God imputes vicariously the righteousness of Christ — and accepts only what St. Paul says of sanctification; in other words, Dean Inge has no conception at all of God's "scheme of salvation"; there is in his mind a hopeless confusion of justification and sanctification, where St. Paul, and after him Luther, speak very clearly. Not only that, but his own definitions are nebulous and indicate that he has no clear conception in his own mind of what, *e. g.*, faith is: "a resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis, a venture progressively justified by experience" — what does it mean? With the charge that Luther encourages antinomianism in practice we return to ancient history; the

same charge was made against St. Paul's preaching by the Judaistic teachers of his day and by him brilliantly refuted, as everyone who reads all of St. Paul's letters will discover.

"His teaching about the Holy Communion is grossly materialistic. When asked whether if a mouse ate a crumb of the consecrated bread it would have partaken of the Body of Christ, he replied in the affirmative."

There was a time when Luther was a rabid Papist, as he himself states; in those days he would, of course, answer that question in the affirmative; he believed in Transubstantiation, as all Roman Catholics do. Whether he ever did answer that question in the affirmative I do not know; Dean Inge furnishes no reference; and I have not yet read all of the 87 volumes of the Weimar Edition. But we do know that Luther distinctly rejected the materialistic conception. He said (St. Louis Edition, XX:811): "We poor sinners are not so mad as to believe that Christ's body is in the bread in the crass, visible manner as bread is in the basket or wine in the cup, as the fanatics would like to impute to us, *sich mit unserer Torheit zu kitzeln.*" 872: "It is not possible to cut it into pieces, break it, chew it up, digest it." 1032: "No one sees, touches, eats, and chews Christ's body as one visibly sees and chews up other flesh." Did Luther's detractor ever read and study these treatises of Luther? ("*Dass diese Worte noch fest stehen.*" "*Luthers Bekenntnis vom Abendmahl Christi.*")

"But the most mischievous part of his teaching was what Troeltsch calls the most characteristic and remarkable tenet in his whole system of ethics, the distinction between public and private morality. The Law of Nature, which ought to be the court of appeal against unjust authority, is identified with the existing order of society, to which absolute obedience is due. 'Joyful acceptance of the world becomes patient endurance of the world.' This interpretation, to quote Troeltsch again, 'glorifies power for its own sake; it therefore glorifies whatever authority may happen to be dominant at any given time. Even when this power is most scandalously abused, its authority still holds good.' This is very much like the notorious doctrine of Machiavelli, and (an Englishman may add) of Hobbes. 'The Greeks and Romans,' said Luther, 'did not know the true Law of Nature. The Tartars (Huns) and people of that kind observed it far better.' He despised the masses and advocated breaking on the wheel, beheading, and torture in dealing with them. Bismarck liked to appeal to Luther for the separation of an external policy of force and an inward piety. By his deification of the Government and of loyal passivity, says Troeltsch, 'he provided a most favorable setting for the development of the territorial State. The only service of Lutheranism to the modern State has been to encourage the spirit of absolutism. Christianity and a Conservative political attitude became identified with each other, as well as piety and a love of power, purity of doctrine, and the glorification of war and the aristocratic standpoint.' 'At the Prussian Restoration in the nineteenth century these ideas were revived; they then produced that blend of masculine hardness and class-conscious ruthlessness which

distinguishes modern Lutheranism.' These are the comments of a German Protestant."

All this is perhaps good Troeltsch, but it is not Luther. While it is true that most governments at that time were monarchies, it cannot even be said that Luther knew no democracies; the free imperial cities had a democratic local government. To compare what Luther taught with "the notorious doctrine of Machiavelli" is simply a historic falsehood for which there is no excuse. Luther's "deification of the Government and of loyal passivity" went exactly as far as the Bible goes, no farther. If Lutheranism produces absolutism, territorialism, glorification of war, and the aristocratic standpoint, why was not that attitude changed in those sections of Germany in which Calvinism displaced Lutheranism and in those which were restored to Catholicism by the Counter Reformation? The Prussian Restoration of the nineteenth century, which revived the idea of absolutism, was led by Calvinists. And it would be difficult to find a greater deification of government than that professed by the first archbishop of Dean Inge's Church; Cranmer's only excuse for his many shiftings under Henry and Edward and his eight recantations under Mary was that he felt conscience-bound to obey the law of his sovereign; and while in the very beginning of his career he had leaned toward Luther, he soon became a Zwinglian and then a Calvinist. No one has ever been able to prove to me that the more democratic form of government in the Netherlands had its source in Calvinism; there this more popular form of government goes back to pre-Reformation times. In short, the causes that controlled the development of government in the various states were not at all, or only in a very small degree, of a religious nature.

Years ago a Lutheran scholar (Prof. Wilhelm Walther of Rostock) took up this oft-repeated charge: Luther taught that absolute obedience is due to the government. Joh. Janssen had made the statement (in his *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, Vol. II, 578): Luther preached: Your reason tells you that two and five are seven; but if the government says, two and five are eight, you must believe it in spite of what you know and feel. Professor Walther investigated, wrote to Janssen and others, but neither Janssen nor any of the men who copied from his history had noted the place in Luther's writings where the alleged statement might be found; they had to confess that they had copied it from a *Deutsche Kultur- und Sittengeschichte*, written by Joh. Scherr (3d ed., p. 260). But Scherr gave no reference either, and when asked where he found it, he (after some prodding) answered that he had forgotten; besides, he did not have Luther's works at hand to look for them. Walther knew Luther's writings better; he knew where to find this citation, too, in one of his sermons (St. Louis ed., X:1095); only Luther does not say: If the government says, two and five are eight; Luther says: If *He from above* should say, No, they are eight. He is speaking of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, absolutely unfathomable by reason; but since God says so, I believe it. Government isn't mentioned in the respective paragraph nor anywhere in the context. (See Wilhelm Walther, *Fuer Luther wider Rom*, p. 398 f.) — The chal-

lenge remains: Where did Luther ever say that we owe absolute obedience to the government?

Any attack on Luther would be incomplete without reference to Philip of Hesse's bigamy. So here:

"His admiration for the Old Testament led him to appeal to old Hebrew morals to excuse the bigamy of the Landgrave of Hesse."

Luther did admire the Old Testament, and he admired the New Testament; both were to him the Word of God. Luther never "excused" the bigamy of the Landgrave of Hesse; he always regarded it as the lesser of two evils. In that whole affair one may well differ with Luther. But to insinuate that Luther sanctioned, even favored, polygamy is nothing less than abominable dishonesty.

The document concludes:

"There is very little to be said for this coarse and foul-mouthed leader of a revolution. It is a real misfortune for humanity that he appeared just at the crisis in the Christian world. Even our burly Defender of the Faith was not a worse man and did far less mischief. We must hope that the next swing of the pendulum will put an end to Luther's influence in Germany."

Nothing that I could say would show Dean Inge in a worse light than his own concluding paragraph. Such language judges itself and its writer.

THEO. HOYER

Luther. — "Three centuries ago the power of the German mind shook the Church and the States of Christendom to their lowest foundation. The need of a reformation, which had long before been prepared in different ways, in the most profound and noble minds, awoke with concentrated force in the bosom of an humble and conscientious, yet gigantic monk of Wittenberg, and worked itself out to a clear conviction. He was chosen by Providence to be the oracle of the times, to be the leader of all who longed for deliverance from the fetters of the second Egyptian bondage. Just such a man was needed—one who did not lightly take upon himself the responsible work of reform; who was not filled with empty dreams of liberty; who, in destroying the superstition which had gathered around the faith, would not destroy the faith itself; but who by painful experience was acquainted with the entire system, whose fetters he was destined to break; who, with all the energy of a faithful and obedient monk, had struggled to obtain salvation through the ordinances of medieval Catholicism. He possessed therefore the indispensable requisites of a genuine reformer—an experimental knowledge of the church which was to be reformed, and a deep religious earnestness, which sought not for distinction, but which labored only for the glory of God and the salvation of men. . . . I need not mention the name of *Luther*; it is on everyone's tongue. He needs no monument—a eulogy would be too late. The history of three centuries tells us what he was; Protestantism is his indestructible monument." —*Bibliotheca Sacra*, August, 1847. On account of the dastardly attack of Dean Inge on the Reformer, our brethren will not fault us for reprinting this old estimate of Luther which was reproduced in a recent issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra*.

A.

**Ethical Education Without the Basis of Bible Doctrine.**—Prof. O. C. Rupprecht of our Concordia College, Milwaukee, Wis., who in the December, 1944, issue of this journal reviewed the book of C. H. Moehlman: *School and Church: the American Way*, writes us briefly on the position some educational leaders take on the un-Biblical views voiced by Mr. Moehlman.

"One of the most vigorous denunciations of educational leaders who harbor this sort of blithe optimism as to the power of purely ethical training appeared, ironically enough, in another Harper publication of this year (*The Predicament of Modern Man*, by D. E. Trueblood). In Chapter Three ('The Impotence of Ethics'), Dr. Trueblood asks: 'What is going to buttress our spiritual life in this time of unparalleled danger, when the ancient supports are gone? . . . Is it some general talk about the democratic way of life?' (P. 25.) He answers: 'Here is our predicament: We have inherited precious ethical convictions that seem to us to be profound, central, and essential. But they have a curious inefficacy. *They are noble, but they are impotent.*' (Author's italics.) 'It is clear that something more is needed, that moral convictions, while necessary to the good life, are not sufficient' (p. 51 f.). 'We are now trying the utterly precarious experiment, in which the odds are against us, of attempting to maintain our culture by loyalty to the Christian ethic without a corresponding faith in the Christian religion that produced it' (p. 53 f.). 'The terrible danger of our time consists in the fact that ours is a *cut-flower civilization.*' (Author's italics.) 'Beautiful as cut flowers may be, and much as we may use our ingenuity to keep them looking fresh for a while, they will eventually die, and they die because they are severed from their sustaining roots' (p. 59).

"In England, Sir Richard Livingstone, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, has recently issued the same warning in almost the identical words. 'We are living on character formed in the past by beliefs which are now shaken or destroyed. . . . Lord Bryce was once asked: "What do you think would be the effect of the disappearance of religious education from the schools?" "I can't answer that," he replied, "till three generations have passed." . . . A plant may continue in apparent health for some time after its roots have been cut, yet its days are numbered. . . . Rootless virtues are precarious. But how strong are the roots of our virtues? . . . We are left with traditions and habits of conduct inherited from them (our parents), as the earth may for a time still receive light from an extinct star. But that light will not continue to shine, nor can these habits and traditions long survive the beliefs from which they grew. Those who reject Christian beliefs cannot count on keeping Christian morals.' (*On Education*, Part II, p. 24 f. Macmillan, New York, 1944.)"

A.

**The Lutheran on the Doctrinal Affirmation.**—The Doctrinal Affirmation of the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod is now being studied by the Lutheran churches in our country, but not by all, we are afraid, with that interest which the document merits. In fact, there are some which are absolutely opposed to any more confessions and demand church union on the basis of the received Lutheran Con-

fessions, especially the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism. The *Lutheran* (Nov. 15, 1944), after having discussed the contents of the Doctrinal Affirmation, closes its editorial with the remarks: "Wherein it agrees with the positions expressed by the historic confessions of Lutherans, it is unnecessary. Where it injects new ideas into the tenets of our church, it creates conclusions either ambiguous or out of accord with the Book of Concord." Perhaps the reference is to the doctrine of inspiration, the infallibility and sole authority of Holy Scripture, but these very doctrines form the foundation upon which our historic Lutheran Confessions rest. The negative view expressed in the *Lutheran* is certainly not in the interest of true church unity, and we are sure that the editorial does not represent the opinion of all its readers. The truth of God's Word most assuredly must be so dear to us that for its sake we are willing to spend on it our best time and talent. The Doctrinal Affirmation presents to the Lutheran Church in America an opportunity that should be welcomed by all of us.

J. T. M.

**Baptists on the Horns of a Dilemma.**—Under the heading *Our Confessional Dilemma*, George J. Carlson, in *The Watchman-Examiner* (August 31, 1944), directs the attention of his readers to the fact that Baptists both deny and assert that they have a "Confession of Faith." He denies that the Baptists have a creed, that is, "a dogma that was formulated after long deliberation by theological and church councils and possesses complete ecumenical sanction." In contradistinction to creeds he defines a "confession of faith" as "the expressed belief of many Christians drawn up and drafted by one individual, or several, and given wide but unsubscribed acceptance." A creed is "static," while a "confession of faith need not be." He explains further: "The Baptist method is always contemporaneous, and its very method demands that there shall be frequent, new, purposeful redefining of its historic position. So long as Baptists continue in this method they will avoid the decadence of the past [sic!] and will avoid the destructive changes of modernism, a tree doomed because it has too large a vegetation and too little root [Is that all to be said against modernism?]. Among the various "Confessions of Faith" prevalent in Baptist circles the writer mentions the following: The Confession of Balthasar Hubmaier (Waldshut, 1524), the Anabaptist Confession (Augsburg, 1526), the Confession prepared by a General Synod (Augsburg, 1527), the Schleithem Confession of Faith (1527), the Confession of Seven Churches in London (1644), the Confession of Somerset, England (1656), the Confession of 1689 (London), Keach's Catechism (1693, based on the above Confession), the Philadelphia Confession (1742, a confession adopted by the Philadelphia Association and based on the London Confession), the Philadelphia Confession adopted by the Warren Association in Rhode Island (1767), the Philadelphia Confession adopted in New England (1800), the Concise Statement of Belief, adopted by the Central Association of Vermont (1824), the Seventeen Articles, adopted by the Eastern Maine Association (1825), the New Hampshire Confession of Faith (1833), the Revision of the New Hampshire Confession (1853), Baptist, Why and Why Not (1900), etc. Over against this long list of confessions, to



which others might be added, the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society stated in a pamphlet published in 1943: "The adoption of a doctrinal statement for such use (to interpret the evangelical policy) would be a departure from the *historic Baptist position*, to which our denomination has consistently adhered. The Northern Baptist Convention has repeatedly refused to make normative any confession of faith or creedal statements beyond the affirmation adopted at the Indianapolis Convention in 1922, to wit: The Northern Baptist Convention affirms that the New Testament is the all-sufficient ground of our faith and practice and we need no other statement." "The next 'official' statement (the writer continues) is found in the Northern Baptist Convention *Pastors' News Letter*, under date of January 7, 1944. The title of this statement reads: 'Pastors Urged to Stress Historic Baptist Principles on Denominational Sunday, February 6, 1944.' Then follows the statement: 'Now is a good time to re-educate our people in regard to fundamental Baptist principles.'" Among these "fundamental Baptist principles" the following are mentioned: Separation of Church and State, Religious Freedom, a Regenerated Church Membership, the Priesthood of All Believers, the Bible as the Sole Authority of Belief and Practice. In conclusion the writer says: "Baptists have had a confession of belief that has been normative for their fellowship and the means of loyalty and unity through the years. Now we are on the horns of a dilemma, both denying and asserting that we have a 'Confession of Faith.' Not one of the confessions presented and subscribed to during the years has been abrogated. Our Publication Society, our periodicals, our histories, and our Convention Societies are still presenting 'Confessions of Faith' which are Baptist, some presenting a positive side, while others present a negative side, stating that which is not Baptist. Greater clarification is needed." The tragic confusion here described, in spite of the endless multiplication of confessions of faith, is due to the refusal of Baptists to bind themselves permanently to definite creeds or, as the writer puts it, to "the Baptist method that there shall be frequent, new, purposeful redefining of its historic position." In this way ever new confessions of faith are brought into existence, which, however, carry no weight. Lutheranism has avoided this mistake by permanently adopting the ancient ecumenical creeds and the particular Lutheran confessions which became necessary as a witness against the errors of Romanism, Calvinism, and enthusiasm in general, in connection with the Reformation. To Lutherans, fully aware of the issues involved, the Concordia of 1580 is exceedingly precious as a means of making for and preserving spiritual unity among the groups that claim the Reformer's name. While thus holding to definite permanent confessions, Lutheranism is wary of new confessions. Should such become necessary, it looks upon them as supplementing the already adopted confessions, in order that on matters in controversy, which have arisen since 1580, the various Lutheran groups may see eye to eye. Such supplementary confessions should therefore receive careful consideration and, if agreement can be reached, should be adopted. Doctrinal unity is certainly worth the most painstaking efforts on this score. The con-

fusion prevailing among Baptists, as pointed out in the article quoted in part, presents a warning that should not be ignored. The question underlying the entire problem is: "How greatly do we value the divine truth?" J. T. M.

**An Un-American Marriage.**—It is gratifying to Protestants that Benjamin Lotz in *The Christian Century* (Nov. 15, 1944), under the given heading, has added his protest to those of others against the "ante-nuptial agreement, to be signed by the non-Catholic party in a mixed marriage" before having the wedding solemnized by the priest. The matter is presented in a very clever, objective, and effective way. John Parkridge desires to marry a Catholic young lady, called Jane. She tells him that he must go to instruction before they can be married. He complies. Father Murphy is very diplomatic and discreet, but step by step he leads John into closer intimacy with the Catholic doctrine and finally asks him to sign the "ante-nuptial agreement." John, in great consternation, takes the document to his Protestant pastor, who points out to him some of the implications of the pledge which had escaped John's notice. "Jane is to work for your conversion. But there is no such reciprocal right accorded to you. The Roman Catholic Church denies you what it requires for Jane and demands that you acquiesce in this demand. This attitude is undemocratic and un-American because it is essentially unfair," and so forth. What John will do, is not reported; at any rate, he has been instructed, and that is the important thing. The solution which the writer suggests to solve the problem cannot be accepted by confessional Christians. What he advocates is the "building of a common faith through a better understanding of God's Word. It would be a religion born of God's spirit and God's truth." What that means seems to be the building of a syncretistic religion which ignores the doctrinal differences existing between Roman Catholics and Protestants. But what we can do is to follow the procedure outlined in a resolution adopted by the U. L. C. A. at its last convention, to wit: "The United Synod of New York has taken notice of the demand of the Roman Catholic Church that the children of mixed marriages shall be pledged to the Roman Catholic Church. It requested 'the U. L. C. A. to instruct its Executive Board of Social Missions to prepare and distribute a statement informing and advising our Lutheran youth as to the pre-marital, contractual requirements of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the upbringing of children resulting from mixed marriages between Roman Catholics and our youth.'" In fact, already many of our churches are acquainting their young people with the Roman Catholic "ante-nuptial agreement," informing them at the same time that if they sign the agreement, they thereby deny the Lutheran faith and their duty of confessing the truth of the Gospel. J. T. M.

**The Need for Theology.**—In *The Watchman-Examiner* (Sept. 7, 1944) Dr. C. S. Roddy points out that "we find in the churches today a growing interest in theology and with that interest an increasing demand that theology occupy a larger place in the content of the preacher's message." Throughout, the article is an urgent plea for more theology in the Church. He even pleads for creeds. He writes:

"In their denial [the creed-opposing groups' repudiation of creeds] they are compelled by logical necessity to announce a creed. 'I do not believe in creeds' is but an affirmation of belief — which is a creed — in a negative form. Creeds and theology will cease to be only when man ceases to be man." After a lengthy discussion of the essence of Christian theology, Dr. Roddy (who has just closed his ministry as pastor of the Baptist Temple, Brooklyn, N. Y., to join the faculty of the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, as professor of the English Bible) insists on *preaching* theology. He writes: "Having seen the necessity for theology and having found the heart of our Christian theology, the question arises—how shall we preach it? As to method, I would say that we can follow the example of Dr. Dale of England and deliberately preach doctrinal sermons. A series of doctrinal sermons on the great truths of the Church, such as sin, repentance, faith, God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, man, atonement, regeneration, sanctification, the second coming, heaven, and hell, cannot fail to bless both the preacher and the people. Such an orderly presentation is of much greater value than the hit or miss system, or rather lack of system, of just indirectly mentioning a subject in any kind of sermon. Such a preaching of theology is in harmony with the principle of teaching, conforming to the laws under which the mind operates. Also our people ought to know the Bible meaning of those great terms. Today we find altogether too loose a use of those great words. This is due to shallow thinking and a careless regard for the logical rules of definition. The result has been vagueness in thought, with resultant confusion in living. Positive living can only arise from positive preaching, which can only come from clear apprehension of truth, which in turn is the result of clear thinking. Therefore 'let us gird the loins of our minds,' as Peter puts it, meditate within the eternal truth, and preach doctrinal sermons. After all, for what else are we behind the sacred desk [pulpit]? Are we not prophets—those who speak the Word of God? The history of the Christian Church from Paul to Augustine, to Luther, to Calvin, to Wesley, to Edwards, to Finney, to Spurgeon, to Moody—is it not but the record of doctrinal preaching? Who follows in their train? Some may do what Phillips Brooks was master of—preach theology without labeling it for your people. 'Fill your sermons with theology and more theology' was his advice to young preachers. Personally, I cannot see how, if you preach at all, you can avoid preaching theology. The question really becomes: 'Is it good or bad theology; is it poorly or clearly presented?' There is another method which I am constrained to believe is the ideal—expository preaching. What a pity we have neglected it in our American pulpit. What a price we have paid. God bring us back. Try to expound the Word of God and not 'preach theology.' Let us have a generation of thoughtful expository preaching, and we will change the whole character of the Church." When Dr. Roddy says: "Try to expound the Word of God and not preach theology" (the single quotation marks are our own to bring out the import of his words), he means, of course, that if a minister rightly expounds the Word of God, he must of necessity "preach theology." For us Lutherans the subject has a very definite interest. In the past our

congregations were accustomed to the "preaching of theology." But has there not been a decided yielding on this point in recent years in our circles? Have not our sermons, in many cases at least, lacked both in depth and comprehensiveness of textual treatment? In stressing the central doctrines, have we made clear to our hearers their full meaning, and have we properly related them to the other doctrines with which they stand in close connection? Again, have we preached "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27)? Have we, for example, treated rightly and fully the so-called "forgotten doctrines," such as the personal union of the two natures in Christ, predestination, the importance of the means of grace, in particular, of the Sacraments, absolution, and the like? There has not been in recent years, we fear, that full and complete exposition of the Christian doctrines which we find in the sermons of our founding fathers. Times certainly change and with them methods and approaches. But the great commission of Christ always stands, and we are to teach men "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20). When Dr. Roddy writes: "Therefore, 'study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth'" (2 Tim. 2:15), this applies also to our ministry of witnessing Christ to the world.

J. T. M.

**Unionism Worse than Sectarianism.**—The unification plans of the Evangelical and Reformed Churches and the Christian and Congregational Churches seem to be progressing. The commission of these two groups has agreed upon a name if and when the merger is effected: The United Church of Christ. We are unable to understand how this merger can really eventuate in a real union. Not only is the historical and cultural background of the two groups vastly different, but it seems to us that the theological position would offer an unbridgeable barrier. The former Evangelical Synod accepted the Lutheran and the Heidelberg Catechisms, the Reformed Church only the latter. We feel that these two groups could unite without many conscience scruples. But the Christian Churches were Unitarian and thoroughly anti-creedal since their beginning around 1800, and in recent decades the Congregationalists took a similar position. What position will the United Church of Christ occupy? Walther: "The unionistic bodies imperil the Church more than the worst sect, for the worst sect at least acknowledges that nothing but the pure truth *ought* to be taught. But unionism stands for the pernicious principles that man can never find and possess the pure truth and that, consequently, contending for the truth is wrong." *Epistle Postille*, p. 77.

F. E. M.

**Another Interchurch Conference.**—Under the heading "Second Interchurch Conference" the *Living Church* publishes an editorial giving information on the planned conference. In order that our readers may be informed, we reprint the editorial.

"Non-Roman Christian Leaders of the United States will hold their second 'peace conference' in three years at Cleveland, January 16 to 19, 1945, to appraise the results of Dumbarton and other peace parleys and determine a course of action to achieve their goal of a just and durable peace based on spiritual principles.

"The guiding principles were adopted by the first conference, held at Delaware, Ohio, in March, 1942. These were supplemented by the political propositions, or Six Pillars of Peace, promulgated two years ago by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, sponsor of both conferences. The Commission was instituted three years ago by the Federal Council of Churches.

"In the light of these Church pronouncements the delegates to the Cleveland conference, representing most leading non-Roman communions, will study the developments of the last three years on the peace front. These include the pronouncements of the United Nations at Teheran, Moscow, Cairo, and Dumbarton, and the Connally and Fulbright resolutions passed by the two houses of the United States Congress.

"The leadership of the Churches has been concerned that the United States and other United Nations move in the direction of a world organization that will have both curative and creative, not merely repressive, responsibilities. Through the Commission they advised the government that in their judgment this is the only kind of peace the Christian forces of the nation can accept. At the same time they urged their people not to be discouraged by particular settlements, but to continue to press for world organization consonant with their ideals.

"The conference will study both the international situation and the basic peace strategy of the Churches. It is expected to adopt findings and recommendations for consideration of the Churches and public leaders. The recommendations of the conference will be submitted to the governing bodies of the Churches.

"To facilitate the work of the conference it was announced that two study commissions would be created. One will study the current international situation; the other, the basic problem of the peace strategy of the Churches. They will be urged to complete their work of drafting a statement and recommendations before December 15th, so that all delegates will have an opportunity to study them in advance of the convening date of the conference.

"The personnel of these two commissions will be announced soon.

"Between 350 and 400 delegates are expected to attend the conference, and two thirds of them will represent various communions, within and without the Federal Council of Churches, which, itself, has a constituency of 25,000,000. Other groups which will be represented are: Allied Christian bodies such as the Home Missions Council, Foreign Missions Conference, International Council of Religious Education, American Committee for the World Council of Churches and the United Stewardship Council; Christian bodies conducting educational programs for World Order, such as the Church Peace Union, YMCA, YWCA, United Council of Church Women, American Friends Service Committee, American Section of the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches, Laymen's Missionary Movement, Laymen's Movement for World Christianity, Interseminary Movement and the United Christian Youth Movement, City and State Councils of Churches, members of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, which includes more than 100 Church leaders, clergymen and laymen of various communions.

"The Associated Church Press will be invited to send a limited

number of delegates, and the representatives of the press, secular and religious, will be invited to the conference." Will true peace be promoted by the projected efforts? Will the cause of the saving Gospel be helped or hindered? These are some of the anxious questions we ask.

A.

**Hutchins vs. Dewey.**—In the *Christian Century* (Nov. 15, 1944) Pres. Robert M. Hutchins of the University of Chicago measures swords with Prof. John Dewey and attacks the latter's worship of science. We quote some of the salient paragraphs.

"The essence of Mr. Dewey's position is that only science is knowledge; everything else is out of date. History, philosophy, theology, religion, art, and literature—almost everything, in short, that makes life worth living—are irrelevant and have, so far as it appears, no place in modern education.

"Science has given us a world that is in many respects new. It has placed in our hands a control over nature of which our grandfathers could not have dreamed. The direction of this enormous power is the most pressing problem of modern man. This power has been used for the degradation, the enslavement and the mechanization of millions throughout the world. It is now being employed on the grandest scale in history for the extermination of mankind. The task of the subordination of science and technology to human ends is the great task before us. Why such subordination should be regarded as anti-scientific or reactionary must remain an impenetrable mystery. Man should have every instrument to achieve his ends; and the greatest of these is science. Man should have clear and humane ends; and to clarify his ends and make them appropriate to humanity he needs philosophy and religion." . . . "The faith of our fathers makes a place for philosophy and science. The faith of John Dewey leaves no place for philosophy or religion. And the remarkable part of it is that Mr. Dewey, in addition to his failure to show any reason why we should accept his revelation, fails to suggest why it should compel us to abolish philosophy and religion. We do not say you must give up science if you believe in God. Mr. Dewey says you must give up philosophy and religion or you cannot truly believe in science. He requires us not merely to have faith in science, but to have faith in nothing else.

"If we follow the road marked out by Mr. Dewey, we may increase our wealth; we may lengthen our lives; we may gain complete mastery over nature; we may ultimately reach that engineer's paradise which Francis Bacon dreamed of four hundred years ago. But we shall find that technology is not a substitute for justice; we shall not know what to do with our lives; we shall not know how to live with ourselves; and we shall discover at the last that the machine has enslaved us all."

A.

**The Roman Menace.**—In the *Lutheran* of October 4, on the page edited by G. Elson Ruff, we find the following paragraph:

"The watchful eyes of Protestants are rather constantly on the Roman Catholics lest some unfair advantage may be seized when no one is looking. There has been a good bit of talk among some of the Protestant chaplains that Roman Catholic clergymen have edged in

unduly in their work among servicemen. One event attracting considerable attention in church circles was the resignation of Lt. H. W. Van Delinder as a chaplain in the United States Maritime Service, 'in protest of the religious discrimination against Protestants made more and more evident in the chaplain corps of the merchant marine.' Mr. Van Delinder, a Presbyterian, claimed that a disproportionately large number of Roman Catholic chaplains had been appointed at the Cadet Basic School at San Mateo, Calif., more than fifty per cent to minister to a corps of which only approximately 25 per cent of the cadets were Roman Catholics. He further charged that Roman Catholic chaplains demanded rights for themselves which are not granted to Protestant chaplains, such as requiring the Protestant cadet-midshipmen to visit Roman Catholic chaplains when no Protestant chaplain is available, but protesting if Roman Catholic cadet-midshipmen visited a Protestant chaplain. Merchant marine authorities state that they find Mr. Van Delinder's charges to be largely false. However, the resigning chaplain has stated his grievance, saying that Senior Chaplain Madden at San Mateo had ordered that all Protestants must be addressed by a Catholic chaplain before interviewing a Protestant chaplain. *The Witness* (Episcopal weekly), which prints the story, says that the favored assignments and the superior publicity given the work of the Romanist chaplains creates the impression 'that the Roman Catholic Church is performing a more effective pastoral job than the Protestant chaplains. Four Episcopal clergymen of Missouri recently issued a similar statement, charging that 'the Roman Catholic Church is using every modern mechanism—publicity, political pressure, and aggressive missionary technique—to forward the cause of Roman Catholicism in the army forces.'

We add to the above another paragraph from the *Lutheran*, written by Julius F. Seebach, "The Baptists of Toronto think that Canada needs to organize a Protestant political party. Dr. T. T. Schields, their spokesman, asserts the proposal carries no significance of religious rancor, adding: 'I would oppose to the death any movement which would curtail a Roman Catholic's liberty as a religionist. I abhor his religion and believe him to be utterly wrong; but I would fight to the end to defend his right to be wrong, if he wants to be wrong.' However—'Cardinal Villeneuve is doing the work of Laval and Petain in Canada. Villeneuve rules Quebec, and Quebec rules Canada through Mackenzie King.' This is just one note sounding the alarm that makes Protestants conscious everywhere that all is not well for their faith in the political world."

A.

**Encouraging Our Five Million Dollar Postwar Service Collection.**—There is no need here to describe in detail the project of our Church to raise a peace offering of five million dollars for postwar service work, for already the informative literature is in the hands of our pastors and congregations. But it may encourage us in this blessed enterprise to know that other denominations have at the present juncture experienced an unusual willingness on the part of their members to contribute both for general and special church purposes. *The Christian Advocate* (Oct. 12, 1944), for example, has this to report on liberal giving for the

**Methodist Crusade for Christ:** "So far as *The Christian Advocate* is able to discover, Seth Painter, a local preacher of Monroeville, Ind., serving as the supply pastor of a two-point rural charge in the Fort Wayne District of the North Indiana Conference, has taken first place. When the plans for the Crusade for Christ first reached him, Seth Painter was profoundly stirred. The 218 members of his two churches, Pleasant Mills and Salem, did not have to be organized on an elaborate scale. About all that was necessary was to present the cause and take the collection. And he did just that. The result? On September 19 he sent his district superintendent, Rev. William W. Robinson, a check for \$915.60, payment in full. This is an average of \$4.20 per member. 'I just told the people about it, and they gave the money,' is Seth Painter's explanation." There is something strangely inspiring in the simple report: "I just told the people about it, and they gave the money." Just so, many another pastor of our own Church has simply told his people about the needs of the Lord, and they cheerfully and often far beyond expectations have supplied the necessary funds. The same paper reports of another Methodist church, with a membership of 660, all in the middle- and low-salary bracket, which during the last year contributed for others an average of \$26.22 per member and for their own local church expenses an average of \$19.05 per member, or a total of \$29,878.20. The editorial says: "The explanation of this remarkable record — \$45.27 per member — is the fact that this church makes a specialty of tithing, and a large percentage of the people bring one tenth of their income into the treasury of their own church." Fears have been expressed as to whether our people are ready to contribute the funds necessary for the planned church expansion; but, unless adverse conditions prevail, all that will be necessary is "to present the cause and take the collection." The very faith of Christian believers makes them cheerful givers.

J. T. M.

**Canada's Family Allowance Act.**—It may be well for our pastors to have knowledge of recent legislation in Canada, written about by a correspondent of the *Christian Century* for November 15, 1944. The correspondence is dated November 2.

"The Canadian Parliament before adjournment last summer passed the Family Allowance Act, which will begin operation July 1, 1945. This act provides for monthly allowances for all children up to the age of 16, according to the following scale: children under six years, \$5 a month; children six to ten, \$6 a month; children 11 to 13, \$7 a month; children 14 to 16, \$8 a month. These rates are to be reduced by \$1 a month for the fifth child in a family; by \$2 for the sixth and seventh children; by \$3 for the eighth child and any additional children.

"It is estimated that there are in Canada 3,450,000 children under 16 years of age and that the annual cost of the allowance plan will be \$200,000,000. The plan is designed to aid low-income families, particularly those below income-tax levels. Income-tax payers have been receiving a tax exemption of \$9 per month for each dependent child. This exemption remains, but the family allowance granted to such families will be reduced by the amount of the tax exemption



already allowed. It is further contended that the act will stabilize employment in postwar years by increasing the purchasing power of low-income families. While there had been considerable controversy, particularly in Progressive-Conservative quarters, the vote was unanimous." A.

**Brief Items.**—Dr. E. M. Jellinek, who is at the head of the department of alcoholic studies in Yale University, declares that alcoholism has become "America's public health problem number four." According to his statistics, there are three million excessive drinkers in the United States.

Statistics of British Churches, released by the British Information Service, credit the Church of England with 3,380,859 members; the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales with 1,975,489; the Church of Scotland with 1,278,297; the Methodist Church with 797,706; Baptist, 382,337; Congregational, 416,442; Presbyterian Church of England, 76,815; Presbyterian Church of Wales, 175,036; Unitarian, 30,000. This report appeared in the *Christian Century* of October 4. Is not the number of members of the Church of England far lower than most of us had imagined it to be?

In 1856 Swedish Lutheran missionaries were sent to Abyssinia and worked there with great success. After a sad interruption the work will be resumed; twenty missionaries will be sent into that territory, who will be joined by eight of their brethren who had been working in the region of Tanganyika. A.

