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Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

J. T. Mueller

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

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Theological Observer

A Milestone in American Lutheranism.—Dr. R. H. Long, executive director of the National Lutheran Council, writes under this heading in the *Lutheran* of January 17, 1945, among other things: "Lutheran co-operation will enter a new era when the reorganization of the National Lutheran Council takes place, January 23—26, 1945. The new constitution which has been approved by all the participating bodies in their 1944 conventions will become effective with the formal vote of the Council. It envisions a much larger sphere of co-operation in the future and makes the necessary provisions to enable such developments. Definite requests are before the Council to create a Division of Student Work, which will be a consolidation of the student service now being performed by the Board of Education of the United Lutheran Church and the Commission on Student Service of the American Lutheran Conference. [There will be] two areas for teamwork. For years desultory attempts have been made to evangelize the Jews. Perhaps the most successful work in this field is that conducted by the Zion Society for Israel. Now it is proposed to consolidate all these efforts in a department of Jewish Missions under the Division of American Missions, which will throw the united influence of the National Lutheran Council churches back of the enterprise. Still another proposal which will come up for consideration is the establishment of a department of Rural Church Life to meet the problems confronting the rural churches. Obviously the time has arrived when greater teamwork is necessary if the critical situation which threatens many of our country churches is to be met adequately. These are preliminary steps in the direction of greater Lutheran co-operation and will contribute much toward solidarity. *It is quite generally agreed in National Lutheran Council circles that Lutheran union will be delayed indefinitely if it is made dependent on statements and theses alone. Even where there is agreement in substance, it is difficult to formulate statements that are acceptable to all.* The reorganization of the National Lutheran Council with wider opportunity and larger responsibility in the field of co-operative church work will, however, foster and promote Lutheran unity. The success of our war emergency co-operative services has given a great impetus to further consolidation of effort. *There will be no turning back once we learn to work together in the Lord's vineyard.* For the National Lutheran Council it is a time of great opportunity and of grave responsibility" [italics our own].

One thing which might be appreciated in the report is its absolute frankness. The writer is almost bluntly frank in stating that in National Lutheran Council circles men are of the opinion that Lutheran union will be delayed indefinitely if it is made dependent on statements and theses alone, while co-operative church work will foster and promote Lutheran unity. This frankness deserves commendation. But very regrettable in the report is its spirit of impatience, not to speak of other questionable and objectionable matters. Lutheran union, for

example, need not be delayed by "statements and theses," that is, by seeking full agreement in doctrine and practice, since the perfect standard is already given in Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Again, where there is agreement in substance, it ought not to be so very difficult to formulate theses acceptable to all Lutherans. The hoped-for acceptance of the Affirmation by the American Lutheran Church, we believe, will prove this to be true. But there is one declaration in the report which is yet more misleading than are these. Is it really true that co-operative church work fosters and promotes Lutheran unity? Such co-operative work may promote external union, which allows the doctrinal differences that exist to stand; but such an external union is not a true, inward unity, nor will it mean real spiritual strength, since that is derived alone from the Word of God, believingly received, applied, and confessed. We believe that the report does not represent the sentiment of the majority in the two areas of Lutheranism which are referred to. In fact, there have been so many expressions from pastors and laymen of these two groups to whom unity in doctrine and practice is indeed precious that we believe intersynodical conferences should be continued by all means, because they have proved themselves so great a blessing to American Lutheranism in many ways. In the meanwhile co-operation in externals may go on as it has been carried on in the past, while the discussion of Christian doctrine, which is the greatest privilege Christians may enjoy, should proceed not merely until unity has been achieved, but even after that; for what could be more fruitful to Lutheranism in America than constant systematic study of its precious heritage? Just now conservative Calvinism is re-studying its fundamental principles with a view to applying them to the present-day needs of the world for the cure of its many ills. Lutheranism certainly has a mission in the world of today; but we can fulfill its mission only if we perfectly understand and unitedly confess the paramount message of the Reformation. Let therefore the study of Christian doctrine by way of intersynodical conferences be regarded as a joyous privilege rather than as a disagreeable task which it is best to avoid.

J. T. M.

A Call for "Holiday on Double Talk" Concerning the Inspiration of the Scriptures.—A heartening, vigorous blast is sounded by H. A. P. (Prof. H. A. Preus of the Seminary of the Norwegian Lutheran Church at St. Paul, Minn.) in a review of Dr. Reu's posthumous volume, *Luther and the Scriptures*, published in the *Lutheran Outlook* of December, 1944. Everybody who has an opportunity to read this number of the *Outlook* should peruse the review. It is a challenge to all who deny the teaching of Verbal Inspiration and, in an attempt to preserve the appearance of orthodoxy, glibly identify Verbal Inspiration with mechanical inspiration. There is much loose and ambiguous talk indulged in when this subject is discussed, and the demand that everybody show his true colors is certainly justified. From the subjects of conversion and predestination the controversy in the Lutheran Church of America has moved to the topic of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the character of our Sacred Volume is being studied anew. Forty years ago the "analogy of faith" was debated; now the debate has to do with the

question whether the Scriptures which furnish us the analogy, or rule, of faith are reliable in everything they say. A few paragraphs of Dr. Preus' review are here quoted.

"While this review was being prepared, there appeared a most astounding book review in the *Lutheran Outlook* for October, 1944. It covered *Toward Lutheran Union* by Graebner and Kretzmann, and was written by the Rev. Emmer Engberg. A sizzling diatribe throughout, it closes with this amazing statement: 'Missouri believes in the dogma of verbal inspiration. We do not! And until we can have "agreement" on this question, any further talk of union is both unnecessary and nonsense.' It appears from this paragraph that we have here a violent attack on the Missouri Synod. That is not so surprising. They must have become used to that by now. More surprising and much more serious is the fact that here is an attack on the dogma of verbal inspiration. For whom, pray tell, is the Rev. Mr. Engberg speaking when he says, 'WE do not?' Who is 'WE?' It would appear to even a casual reader that it means the rest of the Lutherans. But surely he must know that all intersynodical documents, in so far as they deal with the question, are against him. Could it be that he is raising the old bogey man of 'dictation?'

"On that background it seems timely to announce the appearance off the press of Dr. Reu's book on *Luther and the Scriptures*. When Dr. Reu died last year, America lost her greatest Luther scholar. This seems to be the almost unanimous verdict of Luther scholars, not only in America, but in the land of the Reformation. How thankful the Lutheran Church in America can be for the writings he left behind him! Because of his superb scholarship and exhaustive research, students of Luther turn again to Dr. Reu for the last word as to Luther's position on a given question.

"Out of the shuffle of questions that affect Lutheran union there is one that seems to have become pre-eminent. It is the question of the inspiration of the Bible. If our various synodical opinions on that doctrine are looming now as the greatest obstacle to union, it is time for the discussion to come out into the open. It is time we all talk frankly and clearly, and that we call a holiday on all double talk.

"No one questions that our final answer to the problem lies in the testimony of Scripture itself. But when it comes to defining the historic Lutheran position in the matter, we shall probably all agree that our two pre-eminent sources are Luther and the Lutheran Confessions. Dr. Reu's book gives us Luther's position. And it would be very sensible if those who so quickly give snap judgments on the position of Luther would first examine this little book of Dr. Reu to get 'the evidence.' The evidence is all there, at least all that is necessary to get at the Reformer's position on this problem.

"Tremendously important is the statement in the Preface: 'If only this would be recognized that one can maintain "verbal inspiration" and at the same time reject the theory of dictation, not a little would be accomplished, because the assumption that these two are identical seems to be nearly ineradicable. Luther maintained the first and rejected the second.'"

The rest of the review describes Dr. Reu's book. We close with the wish that Dr. Preus' remarks be considered and studied throughout the Lutheran Church of our country. A.

U. L. C. A. Church in India Now "of Age."—According to the *Lutheran* (U. L. C. A.) of January 17, 1945, the Executive Board of the U. L. C. A. has taken an important step concerning its Mission in India. The story is told in an article by J. Roy Strock, from which we quote the significant sentences.

"A few years ago discussion concerning a fitting celebration of the founding of our Mission in India brought forth the suggestion that the transfer of administrative responsibility from the Mission to the Church would be the most significant kind of celebration of a century of progress. On the basis of a blueprint, carefully prepared and thoroughly considered in India by both missionaries and Indians, the Board adopted the principle of transfer, and instructed India to present a detailed plan. This was submitted by the India Mission and Church in time for the Board's consideration at its meeting of February, 1944. After very careful consideration of the entire plan, the Board submitted it, with recommendation for approval, to the Executive Board of the U. L. C. A. The cablegram advising India that the Executive Board had sanctioned the implementation of the new plan was a message of the greatest possible importance. It said to our Lutheran Church in India, 'You are now of age. Go forward, and may the Lord bless you richly on your way.' As a matter of historical record, the mother Church in America should know and remember that her daughter Church in India assumed responsibility for the administration of all our work in that land November 1, 1944. Ten boards of the Church are now functioning, namely, the Board of Finance, Intersynodical Relations, Evangelism and Missions, Theological and Religious Education, Andhra Christian College, Secondary Education, Elementary Education, Publication, Medical Work, and Industrial Work. Although a number of missionaries are members of these boards, the Indian members are likely in all cases to outnumber the missionary members, while for some of the boards the constitutions provide for only a small minority of missionary members. Such a re-organization could not have been effected ten years ago. That it is now possible and advisable is the best sort of evidence of the progress of the work. The membership of the Church has grown in knowledge, in stewardship and service, in experience; the pastoral and lay leadership of the Church has developed to such a degree as to justify its being called upon to assume this new and weighty responsibility. We should not fail to thank God frequently for the progress achieved and to pray for our Indian Church as she faces the task God has given her."

It was indeed an important step when the status of an independent Church was given to the U. L. C. A. Mission in India. The progress of the Church on this new basis will be watched with much interest. A.

God's Work in Tanganyika.—From time to time *The Lutheran Companion*, official organ of the Augustana Synod, has reported on the former German missions in Tanganyika, which after the outbreak of the war were turned over to the Augustana Synod. Under the heading given, we

find a new report of these missions in the issue of the periodical of January 17, 1945. Before the war, in 1939, three German mission societies operated in five widely scattered areas in Tanganyika. Over 130,000 souls, including 30,000 school children, were ministered to by 172 missionaries. All save two were promptly interned by local authorities. Funds were cut off, and adequate supervision in religious leadership, medical activities, and education dwindled to the vanishing point. The Christian labors of decades were in jeopardy. An American mission operated by the Augustana Synod offered to step into the breach, and the final upshot was that the Augustana Synod took over the missions as the agent of the Lutheran World Convention. The result of the stirring struggle to preserve the orphaned missions, as reported by Missionary E. R. Danielson, who writes as an eyewitness, has been generally satisfactory. The missions are not only still there, but they have increased their membership nearly twenty per cent in the four-year period. However, the momentum is slowing down. Reports from the field declare that unless more missionaries are supplied, churches are bound to die. The Lutheran World Action appropriation accordingly has been increased for this field for 1945 from \$34,000 to \$65,000, while Dr. S. H. Swanson and Dr. G. N. Anderson of the Augustana Foreign Mission have sailed for Tanganyika to bolster up their forces there. Missionary Danielson, in his report, gives some very interesting details, both good and otherwise. Had the Lutheran World Action not been ready to help, he believes, the five fields would have been divided among various non-Lutheran missions. Nor could there have been this one Church, which now exists, growing in unity and mutual helpfulness and bringing together more and more closely over 100,000 African Christians. On the other hand, some of the work, particularly the educational, is so inadequately supervised or equipped that it is slipping from the hands of the missionaries. Of seven Christian primary schools, for instance, in Usaramo only four remain. Secularism and Islam have taken the other three. But there is hope that more help will be available for these missions in the near future. There exists on the field in Tanganyika a General Committee, representing the five orphaned missions. This committee has a comprehensive understanding of the Lutheran position in Tanganyika as a whole and of the needs of the work as a whole, and its efforts are to contribute toward the building up of *one, strong, united African Church* with a strong, united, effectively trained African leadership. In the closing paragraphs of the article we read the following appeal: "Much more indeed is required by God of the Lutheran Church in the United States. God knows that our American Lutheran Church is wealthy — in money and in potential missionaries. God offers no apology to the Lutheran Church if He eventually requires 50 American missionaries in Tanganyika and a yearly fund of \$200,000 for His work. We are doing our assigned task in Tanganyika for the sake of Jesus Christ only and for the sake of the 1,500,000 Africans on those fields, whom God has entrusted to us at this time."

J. T. M.

The Inspired Word and the Incarnate Word. — Unfortunately, in recent theological publications there is found a wrong antithesis of the inspired Word and the incarnate Word, and the suggestion is implied

that it matters little if Christians do not accept the inspired Word as long as they hold to the incarnate Word. But this antithesis is neither Lutheran nor Christian. In a well-written, popular article on the subject the *Australian Lutheran* (Oct. 11, 1944) points out the interrelation between the two and the necessity of accepting both with equal reverence. We read (in part):

"The foundation of Christian faith is, on the one hand, the inspired Word and, on the other, the incarnate Word. On both we rest our assurance of salvation. If anyone asks us for the reason of the hope that is within us, we point first to the inspired Word, the Holy Bible, and then to the incarnate Word, the Son of God, crucified. In both God reveals Himself to us. In both He shows us His grace and good will. In the inspired Word, the Holy Scriptures, God tells us of His love and compassion for sinful man; but just these are also revealed to us through Him who is the Word made flesh, the Son of God sent forth, made of a woman, through Him who is God manifest in the flesh. Both the inspired Word and the incarnate Word are given us for our salvation. As it is said of the inspired Word, 'And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation,' so also we are told of the incarnate Word, 'Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.' There is no contradiction when, on the one hand, the Holy Scriptures are described as the foundation of our salvation and, on the other hand, the Son of God, our Redeemer, is made such a foundation. All our knowledge of salvation is based on the Scriptures. Jesus called those fools who were slow of heart to believe all that the Scriptures have spoken. And so we can bring men to Jesus in no other way than by leading them into the Scriptures and showing them what is written concerning the fall of man, the redemption of mankind, the conversion and the salvation of men. We live in Christ in no other way than by living in the Word. Our daily contemplation of the Word of God is our daily intercourse with our Savior. Whatever a man's attitude is toward the Bible, that also is his attitude toward the Redeemer. To defend our Christian faith means to defend the teachings of the Bible. On the other hand, the Bible would be of little value and profit to us if we failed to find our Savior therein. Only in this way is the Word of God the power of God unto salvation that it reveals to us Him on whom the Lord cast the iniquity of us all and who died and rose again. The Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation only in this way that they impart to us the knowledge of salvation in Christ Jesus. It matters not how extensive and deep a man's knowledge of the Bible may be, and though he spent hours every day in reading the Bible, if by the Bible he has not been brought to faith in Christ Jesus; if in defiance of the Bible he treads the blood of His redemption under foot, he is not a child of God. There are also those who claim to honor the incarnate Word, but show little respect for the inspired Word. Theirs, too, is an untenable position. The inspired Word and the incarnate Word belong so closely together that he who accepts the one cannot reasonably reject the other. And yet we find many who call themselves Christians, believers in Christ, picking and

choosing as to how much of the Scriptures they will accept. Those who reject the inspired Word and the incarnate Word are at least consistent. But when men say that they accept Jesus as their Savior, but do not believe that the Bible is a book of divine origin and do not accept as truth all that is written on its pages, they are building on a foundation of shifting sand. The Prophets foretold the coming of Jesus Christ. How could they have done that if they had not spoken the truth when they claimed, as they did, that all their utterances were a message from God? So also those whom Jesus sent out as His Apostles to carry the good news of salvation into all the world, declared that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Whosoever, therefore, would honor the incarnate Word must accept in full the teachings of the inspired Word."

Those who wrongly distinguish between the inspired Word and the incarnate Word to defend in this way their rejection of the divine inspiration and the inerrance and sole authority of the Scriptures often refer to Luther as supporting their false view. As faithfully as Luther defended the *solus Christus*, so also the *sola Scriptura*; and no one has more clearly and decisively shown the right relation between the inspired Word and the incarnate Word than the great Reformer, whose entire theology was rooted in the written Word of God, the Scriptures of the Prophets and the Apostles.

J. T. M.

Adolph Keller on the Political Activities of Churches.—With surprise a person reads that Prof. Adolph Keller, a well-known Swiss theologian, urges European churches to follow the example of American churches "in playing a prominent role in political, economic, and social questions." At a conference in Lucerne Dr. Keller "stressed the need to 'bring the mind of the Church' before powers legislating on political and social matters." According to the report in the *Religious News Service* "he suggested that parliaments, governments, advisory councils, and peace conferences should select outstanding Christian leaders to make contact between ecclesiastical and secular organs. 'If need be,' he added, 'the Church can mobilize the political strength of its own press, as American churches have done extensively.' In the past, Continental churches have adhered strictly to a 'hands off' policy on such questions, holding that their principal function was to pursue a spiritual ministry. To bring about 'a correct attitude' on these questions, Dr. Keller declared that intensive education of parishes is of 'paramount importance.' Such a program, he said, would require study circles, suitable literature, and access to the public press. The Church's relationship to the economic life of nations, he declared, 'can be discovered only through scientific investigation, and should be carried out not only in ecumenical centers, but in individual churches.' 'On the basis of such research,' Dr. Keller said, 'the Church finds the necessary equipment for pronouncements on concrete questions of national and international life, whether through central ecumenical organs or individual churches.'"

How utterly naive! We are reminded of what Dr. Hocking, the famous Harvard philosopher, in a recent article on World Peace and a League of Nations said concerning public opinion, which statement, *mutatis mutandis*, has its application to the mind of the Church on purely

social and political questions: "What is the public opinion of the world on world matters? Where will you find it? Sagacious editors, even if they were unanimous in their slant, do not constitute a world opinion. Nor do they, plus their sagacious readers, offer a basis which can move statesmen. The simple fact was, in the interval between 1918 and 1938, that most regions of the world were too ignorant of most other regions of the world to have strong views, as distinct from impressions. Sir Willmot Lewis has recently remarked, 'I know of no world opinion.' He has his eye on the facts, at least as they have been, and without a world opinion no league, old or new, could have a firm democratic basis for action against any powerful state." (*Christian Century*, Nov. 22, 1944.) Similarly, one may say, there is no universal church opinion on the high or low tariff issue, the monarchy-or-republic debate, the gold-or-silver-standard question, etc. The Church has enough to do if it seriously occupies itself with preaching the Gospel to every creature.

A.

History and Religious Instruction.— In *The Australasian Theological Review* (Sept. 30, 1944) Dr. H. Hamann of Concordia College, Unley, S. A., presents a brief article which shows that education in Australia, so far as religion is concerned, does not produce favorable fruits in those who attend the state schools. He writes: "Among the books set for the Intermediate examination in history (South Australia) there is one that bears the high-sounding title *March of Civilization*. We do not consider it a good or suitable book for pupils at the Intermediate stage. Certain glaring faults can easily be corrected by the teacher; but how is the pupil of youthful age to assimilate, and how is the teacher to help him to assimilate, a book that begins so and so many thousand years B. C., and that touches on all the great civilizations, past and present, in an effort to make the pupil understand the material, intellectual, and moral progress and development of mankind? Naturally, the textbook mentioned has something to say about the Christian religion. That either pupils or teachers — or both — were singularly unsuccessful in dealing with that chapter is plain from the Notes by Examiners in the University of Adelaide *Manual of the Public Examinations*, 1944, p. 326. The comment of the examiners is as follows: 'Of all the answers those purporting to explain the rise of Christianity were probably the most disappointing. The name of Jesus was mentioned in probably less than half the answers; references to His disciples and crucifixion were rare. This was bad enough, but when candidates declared: Mohammed was the founder of Christianity; Christianity really began with Zoroaster; the beliefs of the early Christians were written in the Koran; Christianity began in Italy; the Pope strenuously resisted the coming of Christians to Italy; Christianity began in 150 B. C.; there have been Christians ever since the beginning of the world; Christianity began with the Reformation, etc., the examiner wondered on what historical foundation religious instruction was given in our schools, whether a little history might not be harmful, and whether Mohammedan children would ever declare that Jesus of Nazareth was the founder of their religion. In striking contrast to these halting and

faulty answers were those on the American Civil War. Here the facts came out easily and correctly. Few failed to gain high marks. Possibly the recent screen version of *Gone with the Wind* had reinforced the efforts of the teachers. At any rate, the facts in the textbook were generally known here.'—Are we a Christian nation in any sense of the term?"

Similar, if not worse, religious-examination results have been reported from time to time in our country. The cure, of course, lies in the Christian day school together with the most painstaking efforts in all the other religious educational agencies that are sponsored by the Church. Unfortunately, Modernism, the great destroyer of spiritual values, has done much to make the churches indifferent to genuine religious instruction; but also other causes have led to the weakening of the church school both in numerical and educative strength. The matter concerns also the Lutheran Church. As the *News Bulletin Special* of the News Bureau of the National Lutheran Council (Nov. 27, 1944) reports, there has been a decrease in the number of Lutheran schools in our country (including Sunday schools, Christian day schools, vacation and weekday Bible schools, etc.) amounting to 2,438 or 9.5 per cent. In other words, from 25,473 the number of Lutheran schools had gone down to 23,035; and certainly, this is no time for us to be indifferent toward the Christian training of our youth.

J. T. M.

The Growth of Modernism.—Writing in the *World Wide Christian Conservative*, Dan Gilbert states some alarming experiences and observations on the increase and development in the field of Modernism. Reporting on a conference in Washington, D. C., which he addressed on the subject "The Faith of the Fathers," he relates, "When I had concluded, a well-known Methodist minister spoke up. He said, 'We liberal clergymen are no longer interested in the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy. We do not believe we should even waste our time engaging in it. So far as we are concerned, it makes no difference whether Christ was born of a virgin or not. We do not even bother to formulate an opinion on the subject.' A few years ago, Modernists were eager and zealous to set forth their opinions. Now they seem to have lapsed into a general indifference. In Arlington, Va., I spoke to another group of ministers. One of them commented at the conclusion, 'We have closed our minds to such trivial considerations as the question of the resurrection of Christ. If you Fundamentalists wish to believe in that nonsense or argue about it, we have no objection. But we have more important things to preach about than the presence or absence of an empty tomb some twenty centuries ago.' What are the more important things which these liberal ministers are concerning themselves with? One of the Virginia ministers gave the answer, 'We are interested in human life and human destiny on earth. We do not know or care whether there is a life beyond the grave. We presume there is a God, but we know that He will ever be a mystery to us. We do not know or care whether God possesses personality or not. He may be just an impersonal force.' I commented in these words, 'Well, just what does religion mean to you then?' He answered, 'Religion means very little—if anything. In

the modern world, religion has no vital place. The function of the modern minister is to guide the thinking of the people—along social and economic lines.”

And these people say they are Christian ministers! A.

“In the Jaws of the Antichrist.”—Our missionary in Mexico, the Rev. B. J. Pankow, has sent us the translation of an article that appeared in *El Evangelista Mexicano*, the official organ of the Methodist Church in Mexico, in which four Methodist ministers relate an experience they met with. The article appeared in the section of the paper called “Echoes of the Field,” and the date of the issue was Nov. 15, 1944.

“We left for said village the 26th of October in the morning, reaching Huajapan de Leon in the afternoon of the same day. There the brethren who had requested a visit from the presiding elder of the district, the brother E. M. Villasana, awaited us. It was the said brother’s wish that Sr. Zorobabel Montiel, who had been in contact with the brethren of San Pedro for more than a year, should accompany him; and he extended an invitation also to T. Sanchez O. (undersigned), pastor of Apizaco, Tlax., and to Saul Aguilar of Matamoros, Puebla.

“Having arrived at Huajapan, we began the journey to San Pedro, located some 15 kilometers away. We were gentlemen on lusty horses, bent upon carrying the message to said brethren (of San Pedro), who represented some 15 families and were members who were disposed to adhere to our church, offering to comply with whatever might be required of them.

“The outlook, indeed, was not very favorable; for we knew that the inhabitants of the little town had already been advised of our coming and had previously been incited against us by the local priest, one Mauro Perez, or similar name.

“After partaking of a light lunch, we prepared to celebrate the services, when we received an order from the municipal officer to the effect that one of us should appear immediately in his office. I offered to go, but brother Villasana insisted on accompanying me; and a few moments later we were in the officer’s home. We proceeded to the municipal hall, and our retinue, which at the beginning was scarcely four men, had already increased to about 60; and when we arrived, there were more than 100 people in front of the hall, the majority with machete in hand. It was now too late to go back. We entered (the municipal hall) and began to defend ourselves before the officer, but all to no avail. The more we attempted to impress him with the fact that the municipal president of Huajapan had permitted us to make the visit, the more he, spurred on by uninterrupted curses and threats of his fellow villagers, insisted that we immediately abandon the town.

“It was a wall of machetes that we traversed, machetes waving menacingly over our heads. Once in the open, we moved forward; but hardly had we gone some 10 meters, when stones were showered upon us, namely, upon Sr. Villasana and myself. We did not to any degree increase our pace; and naturally our backs were bruised by innumerable stones. Fortunately none struck our heads. Thus we walked some 5 blocks until we reached the place where Z. Montiel and Saul Aguilar

were. We desired to see them, but the mob impeded us, cursing and eager to make an end of us. After some time, being free of the mob, it was possible for us to reach the aforesaid brethren, who, especially Z. Montiel, had suffered blows. Aware of the fact that all the exits of the town were being patrolled by bands who without a doubt were preparing an ambush for us, we preferred to make for the woods and thus to reach Huajapan. This we did after innumerable sacrifices, crossing brooks, rivers, and deep ravines. On the following day we returned to Matamoros (Puebla)."

Apologetics for Which Christians Apologize.—Professor John De Vries, instructor in chemistry, Calvin College, in the *Calvin Forum* (December, 1944), describes and repudiates a certain kind of apologetics with which "we [Christians] make ourselves appear ludicrous." He remarks by way of introduction: "Too much of the material which is appearing of late in an attempt to harmonize the pronouncements of science with the Bible is scientifically inaccurate. Men try to popularize science, and in so doing they frequently sacrifice truth for sensationalism. Much of the writing of Rimmer belongs in this category. We believe that their books cause unbelieving scientists to ridicule us more than they would normally do." As an example he takes up the Totten-Rimmer calculations relative to Joshua's command to the sun and the moon (Josh. 10:12-14). He writes: "This material appeared in pamphlet form and also as a chapter in one of his [Rimmer's] books which deals with the general problem of harmonizing the Bible with science. He [Rimmer] points out that a certain Professor Totten of Yale University calculated that twenty-four hours have been lost out of solar time. Totten calculated that twenty-three hours and twenty minutes could be accounted for by the story of Joshua and that the other forty minutes can be accounted for by the request of Hezekia as a sign that the Lord heard his prayers. Rimmer's whole argument is based on these statements." From the *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (Vol. X, p. 237) De Vries next quotes that Totten was a man "who was interested in spiritualism, materialism, transcendentalism, supernaturalism, Swedenborgianism, Freemasonry, and chronology, the latter especially in its relation to Biblical questions. He manifested a leaning toward the occult and symbolical. He believed that the 'lost tribes' of Israel could be traced back to the Anglo-Saxons, and he tried to work out his theory with the aid of mathematics. To put it bluntly, one is left with the feeling that he was somewhat of a nut." Regarding the book from which Rimmer drew his source material, Professor De Vries says: "It is entitled *Our Race* and is a hodgepodge of many things. One of the things Totten points out is that on the basis of his calculations the antichrist was to come in 1892 and reign seven years and that March, 1899, was to mark the end of the age. It is interesting to note, however, that Totten was not caught up in the air in 1892, but died in 1908."—"In examining Totten's calculations," the writer proceeds, "one soon discovers that Totten knew the exact day of the earth's creation. Starting from there, he calculated that Joshua's command to the sun took place on a Tuesday the 933,285th day of the world's duration, and the days thus covered

between the sunsets of the day in question were the 24th and the 25th days of the fourth civil month of 2555 A. M. He also calculated backward from the solar eclipsing new moon of Tuesday, June 17, 1890 (although Rimmer claims it was 1896), and then arrives at a Wednesday. His point is that the intercalation, or 'silence,' covered a part of both Tuesday and Wednesday, and that the next sunset was the beginning of Thursday, the 933,287th day of the world. One of the things which is true relative to these calculations is that if one calculates back from the latest eclipse data available, it can be shown that the sun and the moon had the relative positions ascribed to them at the time that Joshua spoke to them. The sun was upon Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, and the calculations square exactly with the Biblical account. This, of course, is something every believer expects. But to assume that one knows the exact date of the first eclipse taxes the imagination of most believers, particularly when you note that Totten followed Ussher's chronology. In other words, Totten's basic assumption is wrong."—Professor De Vries further shows what use Rimmer makes of the material presented in Totten's book. Essentially Rimmer has copied his material, though with Maunder, *The Astronomy of the Bible* (1905), he claims that the date of the miracle was the 21st of the fourth month and not between the 24th and the 25th, as Totten states. Still, with Totten he agrees that the event took place between a Tuesday and Wednesday. Rimmer regards these calculations as a simple problem, while Totten refers to them as tedious steps of the original complex operation. Rimmer claims that he made these calculations beginning with the Chaldean records and going to the time of Joshua and also that he checked back from 1936, whereas Totten claimed that he had to start with a date which he set for the beginning of the world. There are further data which Professor De Vries supplies, and his final verdict is: "One begins to wonder at the veracity of Rimmer's calculations, if he made them at all." More important still are the closing sentences of the article: "A system of apologetics that proceeds from the idea that we must be able to defend all questions which may be hurled at us, is doomed to a miserable existence. Miracles cannot and need not be explained. But a God who made the universe and still controls it by His providence has power to do everything. If, for example, you made a machine and set it in motion and then stopped it for a short time before starting it again, you would smile at anyone who would tell you that you would be unable to do so. Is God any less powerful? Let us beware of defending our Bible in such a way that will bring ridicule upon it and us. If a man refuses to believe this portion of Holy Writ to be inspired, he will disbelieve others also."

J. T. M.

Brief Items.—Men's groups in the Southern Presbyterian Church are planning to sponsor radio programs in their areas during the early months of 1945. A library of six fifteen-minute "Presbyterian broadcasts" on records will be available, with speeches by ministers of the Church. Plans are being made, too, for a later series on religious drama and a children's hour.—*Christian Century*.

Belonging to the Church of God, Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Williams of Memphis, Tenn., refused to call a physician for their sick child. They relied, so they said, on prayer, and prayed all night. When the child had died, an autopsy showed that death was due to "emaciation and pneumonia." A sheriff announced, according to the *Christian Century*, "It was sheer neglect, but because of their religious beliefs, no court charge can be placed against them."

According to Jesse Bader, Secretary of the Department of Evangelism of the Federal Council of Churches, the attendance at church schools is decreasing. He mentions a certain community in which the population had increased 34 per cent, the membership of the churches, 11 per cent, while the membership of the church schools had gone down 10 per cent. The report speaks of conferences which were held to ascertain the facts and through which it has become apparent that 50 per cent of the young people of America are receiving no religious instruction. Appalling!

The report of President Hutchins to the alumni of the University of Chicago shows that the school no longer is or pretends to be under Baptist control. While it was founded as a Baptist school, "The only formal requirement now remaining is that the Baptist Theological Union shall always be represented on the university board," that is, there must be at least one Baptist on the board of the school.

"The death of Sir Arthur Eddington removes from us, before his work was done, a very great scientist. When he was thirty years of age, he was appointed Pluman Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge. There he remained until his death; he lived at the observatory and with that as his center made himself one of the masters in the new revolutionary study of physics. The relations between science and religion were of supreme interest to Eddington, and he found evidence to believe that the reconciliation between these two estranged studies was in sight. He was himself a member of the Society of Friends."—Dr. Shilito in the *Christian Century*.

The alumni of Union Seminary, New York, number about 3,000 and are serving in 47 States and 48 foreign countries. Of the younger alumni, one fourth have become chaplains.

"What the country needs is a good liberal education. And then it needs to have everybody have it. The obstacle to everybody's having it has hitherto been financial. Now this obstacle is to be removed as far as the returning veteran is concerned. The temptation to give him what he thinks he wants is likely to be so compelling that the opportunity to give him the liberal education he ought to have may be thrown away. From the standpoint of the country this will be a calamity. Although it is important that the returning veteran fit into the economic system and be able to support himself, it is far more important that he be able as a citizen to contribute to the solution of the great problems which the country will face in the next generation. This is the object of liberal education."—Robert M. Hutchins, President of the University of Chicago, in the *Alumni Bulletin*.—Note this wholesome blast against the tendency to make education purely utilitarian. A.