

8-1-1945

Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Recommended Citation

Mueller, J. T. (1945) "Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 16 , Article 54.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol16/iss1/54>

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Theological Observer

Establishment of the Buffalo Synod One Hundred Years Ago.—Two years before the Missouri Synod was founded the Buffalo Synod was established. Its leader, as is well known, was Pastor J. A. A. Grabau. On account of the erroneous teachings which he held concerning the Church and the Ministry, a violent controversy ensued between him and the founders of the Missouri Synod. The views he advocated are no longer held. As we think of him, it is proper that we should recall the sufferings which in Europe he willingly bore as a witness of the truth. On his history the late Dr. E. Denef has written interestingly, and his remarks are now published in the *Lutheran Standard* for June 16, 1945. We take over some of the pertinent statements.

"The Buffalo Synod had its origin in the confessional struggle between the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches of the former Kingdom of Prussia. King Frederick William III insisted on a union between the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches in his realm, although there existed no unity as to the Confessions. This union was consummated in 1834. Now a Lutheran consciousness awoke. Lutheran pastors and congregations opposed the union and insisted on clinging to their Confessions. Then the Prussian State began to persecute these Lutherans: pastors were cast into prison, congregations were punished with respect to their property, and Lutheran services were interdicted. When the persecution grew in severity, many Lutherans emigrated to Australia. Among the emigrating Lutherans were the fathers of the Buffalo Synod, Pastors J. A. A. Grabau, A. Kindermann, and Captain H. von Rohr of Magdeburg. The congregations of these pastors favored emigration to America, where they could live in peace according to their Confessions. When the king declared that he would tolerate the Lutheran Church in the Union, but never outside the Union, Pastor Grabau declared himself ready for emigration.

"In the year 1839 one section, under the leadership of Pastor Grabau and Captain von Rohr, left for America and arrived there safely in October of the same year. They settled at first in Buffalo and there founded Trinity Lutheran Church. Part of the group, under the leadership of H. von Rohr, went to Wisconsin and settled in Milwaukee and vicinity and there founded Freistadt. In the year 1843 a second section arrived with Pastor Kindermann at the head. This group settled in part in places between Buffalo and Niagara Falls, while others came to Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota. In June, 1845, delegates of these various Lutheran congregations congregated in Milwaukee and Freistadt in order to attend the first Synodical meeting. The founding of the Synod occurred in Milwaukee on the 25th day of June, the memorial date of the Augsburg Confession."

On the controversy between the synods, Dr. Denef wrote: "At the time of the Synod's founding the doctrinal dispute with the Missouri Synod, founded in 1847, was already under way. This gradually became a bitter contention about the church and the pastoral office. The con-

troversy lasted for decades. We shall not enter upon this dispute, for the Buffalo Synod, at its last convention, in 1929, accepted the Chicago Theses; after this acceptance we regard as closed the old dispute between Buffalo and Missouri."

Buffalo Synod ceased to exist as a separate body in 1930, when it merged with the Iowa and Ohio Synods to form the American Lutheran Church. A.

Meeting of the Augustana Synod.—In June the Augustana Synod held its 86th annual convention. President Bersell submitted a lengthy report in which he surveyed conditions in Europe, visited by him in the company of Dr. Lawrence Meyer and Dr. Ralph Long. Concerning the work to be done he favors more co-operation not only between Lutherans, but between Lutheran and Reformed bodies. We shall quote this section of his report:

"Our Synod has also taken a leading part in establishing relations with other Christian churches. The United Lutheran Church and our Synod are the only two Lutheran bodies in America that have joined the World Council of Churches. At the last meeting of the Federal Council of Churches our Synod was represented by a fraternal visitor, as noted in another part of this message. We are also associated with a number of interdenominational agencies in the field of foreign missions, home missions, parish and education, stewardship, eleemosynary institutions, etc. I believe that the time has come for our Synod to take under serious consideration the question of this relationship to the Federal Council. The voice of Lutheranism must be heard in the general councils of evangelical Christians in this land and throughout the world. This voice will be welcomed, and it will be helpful. I would much prefer a united approach through the National Lutheran Council, but if that is not possible, let us take independent action. I realize full well the 'pitfalls' of unionism and syncretism that may be involved, but I also believe that a 'golden mean,' without compromise of confessional loyalty, can be found."

The president is not afraid to go into the lion's den, as it were, and to take his Synod with him. It is very well to speak of the importance of the voice of Lutheranism in the meetings of the Federal Council of Churches and similar organizations, but it must not be overlooked that the voice of Lutheranism speaks, too, through refusal to join an indifferent body like the Federal Council of Churches. Our journal has often pointed out the heterogeneous character of this Federal Council. Not only are Fundamentalist organizations found in it, but Modernistic bodies hold membership, in fact, modernists are at the helm. How can one who abhors the teachings of Modernism desire membership in an organization in which Modernism is in the ascendant! Denial of the truth is not intended, we confidently believe, but can it be avoided? Let that question be seriously pondered. On the convention resolutions the *Lutheran Companion* reports:

"Among the important decisions for which the 1945 convention will undoubtedly be characterized in coming years as an extraordinary assembly may be mentioned the following:

"A memorial to the National Lutheran Council proposing consultative membership in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

"Establishment of a Canadian Seminary for the purpose of training all future Canadian pastors in their own country.

"Fixing church headquarters at Minneapolis, Minn., and the acquisition of a property in that city for synodical offices.

"Preliminary adoption of a new budget plan known as 'Fair Share Plan' by which synodical and conference assessments will be based on contributions for local purposes in congregations.

"Granting of larger control of Augustana College to the three central conferences—Illinois, Iowa, and Superior.

"Declaration of opposition to peace-time military training.

"Ordination of sixty-two candidates for the holy ministry." A.

So This Is Good Will.—Since June 18, 1944, large display advertisements appeared in St. Louis and other dailies, glorifying the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. In the *Christian Century* (April 4, 1945) Charles M. Crowe subjects these apologetic efforts of Mr. Charles S. Kelly, state publicity chairman of the Knights of Columbus, to a very severe, though just, critical scrutiny. The article is worth reading by every Protestant in our country, for it brings home to the reader important fundamentals of present-day Roman Catholic activism. The closing section especially is of interest. The writer says: "It [this Catholic propaganda] frankly utilizes the appeal to fear and ignorance. The Roman Catholic Church tells you what to do. If you do not do as we tell you, you will go to hell. We as a church tell you all you need to know for your salvation, and we warn you at the peril of losing your soul against any free inquiry in religious thinking. It magnifies the appeal of dogma and authority. The entire theological argument is traced to and dependent upon a fundamental premise, that Christ established the Roman Church as the only church. When that major premise is not allowed, the entire argument falls to pieces. A half-dozen verses of Scripture are repeated over and over as the Scriptural basis for the entire Catholic position. Take these verses out of the New Testament—which could be done without altering the essential Gospel message—and the Catholic argument would have nothing to stand on. These verses, as students of the New Testament text know, are widely regarded by scholars as glosses on the original manuscripts [sic?]. The tone and attitude of the advertisements are arrogant, belligerent, controversial, intolerant, inviting rather than allaying criticism. It would seem as if the writers were trying to excite opposition. The Catholic position in almost every ad is set against a subtly perverted statement of the position of the Protestant faith and is designed to create antagonism and distrust. The advertisements deal exclusively with theological, ecclesiastical, and historical dogmas, and with expositions and defenses of the Catholic ritual. There is no evidence in them of any desire to co-operate with other bodies of believers in the great social problems and evils of the day. There is no expressed concern for the preservation of the ideals of American democracy. . . . There is nothing except a truculent and unabashed effort to establish the position of the Roman Catholic Church at the expense of other faiths and by

means of belittling other theological and historical positions." The Lutheran Publicity Organization of St. Louis has taken notice of the articles and in an objective, impersonal way has set forth the fundamental Gospel truths which have always caused Rome to stumble and fall. The attack on the evangelical faith was thus utilized as an opportunity to make known the truth of salvation to the same readers who perused the Roman Catholic misrepresentations. The response, we are told, has been gratifying.

J. T. M.

What of Foxhole Religion? — Dr. C. Umhau Wolf, pastor of the Ohio District of the American Lutheran Church, for three years chaplain in the First Infantry Division of the U. S. Army and as such participant in the Tunisian campaign (released from service because of his health), writes under this heading in the *Lutheran Outlook* (May, 1945) a stirring article in which he challenges the Lutheran Church to recognize its divinely appointed task and preach the Gospel to the thousands who are now seeking the truth. Of "foxhole religion," he says: "It has been praised as the beginning of a religious revival that will sweep the country when the men return. Even if they were not coming back in little dribbles, we dare not forget that 'foxhole religion' is not Christian religion. On the other hand, it has been reviled as 'fear psychosis.' The truth is probably somewhere in between." In the "foxhole religion" of the uncounted thousands of men brought face to face with terror and destruction he sees an opportunity for the Church to bring to men the saving truth of the Gospel. The Church "must plan that the next generation be not ignorant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." The article closes with this stirring appeal: "Men have died in faith and have been buried under white crosses. Thousands have been wounded and returned home, crippled but thankful for life. Millions have suffered in heat and cold. They have lived together as brothers of necessity. They have worshiped in their own ways, often led by fearless chaplains. They have seen the needs of the world. They have known the peace of Christ. The Church must not merely canonize the dead and glorify the hero; it must seize the vision, follow the sacrifice, spread the Gospel, increase the faith. By the grace of God the Church shall go forward in faith, serving the Lord." To the praise of the Lutheran Church it may be said that during the War it has made heroic efforts to bring to its own men and to others the saving truth of Christ. Let it be said of her also that after peace has come she may continue, first, in seeing the divine truth in ever clearer and fuller light, and then in making it known to the millions who are yet without God and without hope in the world. That will require much ardent prayer, much diligent study of God's Word, and much self-sacrifice. God surely has appointed us to do great things for Him and His elect in this last season when the ripening harvest is to be brought in.

J. T. M.

Unashamed Fundamentalists. — In a "review of the recent history of Fundamentalism" Philip E. Howard, in the *Sunday School Times* (May 26, 1945) points out that while to the man of the world the Fundamentalist is old-fashioned and to the Liberal he is an obscurantist and to some professing Christians he is a contentious spirit, these ideas

are all wrong. According to Webster's New International Dictionary (1934) Fundamentalism is a) "a recent movement in American Protestantism in opposition to modernistic tendencies, re-emphasizing as fundamental to Christianity the inerrancy of the Scriptures, Biblical miracles, especially the Virgin Birth and the physical resurrection of Christ and the substitutional atonement. b) The beliefs so emphasized. c) The state or fact of being an adherent of Fundamentalism." Mr. Howard then traces the name back to the publication, from 1909 to 1915, of twelve paper-bound, small volumes called "The Fundamentals." These (as he says) are a perfect mine of masterly articles, fulfilling Jude's exhortation to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The "two intelligent, consecrated Christian laymen were Milton and Lyman Stewart of Los Angeles. The small books, containing about 125 pages each, were issued by the Testimony Publishing Company (not Inc.), 808 La Salle Street, Chicago. Among the editors of "The Fundamentals" are noted Rev. A. C. Dixon, who in 1911 became pastor of The Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, founded by C. H. Spurgeon, Louis Meyer, a Christian Jew, Dr. R. A. Torrey, then dean of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, and others, all outstanding preachers and teachers. It may be of interest to state that over 2,500,000 copies of the twelve volumes were published and circulated, and that the call for back volumes has been so insistent as to make necessary the reprinting of over a quarter of a million additional copies of the earlier issues, thus bringing the total output up to nearly 3,000,000 copies. Approximately one third of these 3,000,000 copies have gone to countries outside the United States. About one half of the latter have been sent to various parts of Great Britain, and the rest to other foreign countries. The great majority of Protestant missionaries of the world have received them. Dr. Howard remarks on this: "It is regrettable that these little volumes are out of print, but their influence in holding back the tide of Modernism and defending the Faith is incalculable." Among the writers of the articles were James Orr, Benjamin Warfield, R. A. Torrey, A. T. Pierson, Howard A. Kelly, M. G. Kyle, H. C. G. Moule, James M. Gray, F. Bettex, A. C. Dixon, Lord Lyttleton, and others of equal fame. Out of the testimony of the twelve small volumes grew the various Fundamentalist associations in different countries which continue the witness to the truth that was so bravely made some thirty years ago. It has been said that Fundamentalism broke the neck of Modernism, for while colleges, universities, seminaries, church periodicals, and the like, advocated Modernistic unbelief, the large middle class of Christians, forming the bulk of the churches at home and abroad, adhered to the simple Christian faith of sin and grace as published by the Fundamentalists. Lutheranism is not Fundamentalism, for it goes far beyond Fundamentalism in demanding faithfulness to all the teachings of Holy Scripture. But Lutheranism, just because it is Biblical Christianity, appreciates the value of the Fundamentalist movement in pointing out to millions of men the basic articles of the Christian faith, without which no one can be a Christian.

J. T. M.

Word from Dr. Schweitzer.—*The Christian Century* (May 30, 1945) publishes a letter from Dr. Schweitzer, medical missionary in Lambaréné, French Equatorial Africa, which shows in a remarkable way the heroic fortitude of this amazing scholar-missionary. He writes: "I have just read the lines which *The Christian Century* devoted to me on the occasion of my seventieth birthday. It was most kind of you thus to evince your sympathy. Alas, for the work I have to do I ought to be thirty years old, not seventy! Nevertheless, I thank God that my health is still good enough to allow me to fill my post at my hospital. Naturally I have been put to something of a strain by the considerable efforts I have had to make day after day for many years. I have not left the hospital even for a day over a very long time. But I am still on my feet. You wonder how I spent my seventieth birthday. That day—a Sunday—I had even more to do than ordinarily. In the afternoon my colleague and I operated a strangulated hernia which had arrived that morning. And I had several heart cases which worried me greatly. Moreover, the heat was excessive even for people accustomed to the torridity of equatorial regions. The hospital is full of patients, white and black. With our staff reduced as it is, we are barely able to keep up our regular work. But fortunately the end of the war is near, and then I shall be able to get fresh help from Europe. I myself shall be obliged to stay on here for several months after peace comes until the hospital is restaffed and the new personnel is familiarized with the work. I am deeply grateful for the aid the friends in the U.S.A. are sending the hospital. I do not know how to express to them my thanks and the thanks of my fellow-workers. Excuse me for not writing in English. It is so much easier for me to write in French. My wife and I send you and the members of your editorial staff our best wishes." J. T. M.

Treatment in Germany of American Prisoners of War.—The following editorial in the *Christian Century* should not be overlooked:

"American Red Cross authorities reported last week that more than 99 per cent of the American prisoners taken by the Germans have survived their hardships and are now gradually returning home. Think about that a minute. It is an amazing record. When account is taken of the number who were severely wounded when captured, and of the state of wild disorder inside Germany during the closing weeks of the war when many Americans were taken prisoner, such figures must be accepted as proof that, in the main, the German army treated its captives 'correctly.' Moreover, the Red Cross says that when Hitler ordered the execution of Allied airmen in retaliation for the bombing of German cities, his generals, pointing to the 'correct' treatment of prisoners in England and the United States under the terms of the Geneva convention, refused to carry out his orders. Of course, such a record as this does not wipe out that of Buchenwald and the other concentration camps. But it does indicate that not all Germany was swept by sadistic frenzy, and that the spirit of the Nazi Black Shirts did not poison the entire nation. Perhaps this Red Cross report will also help to get it through some American heads that most of the torture victims in the concentration camps were themselves Germans or slave laborers who had no status as war prisoners but were Gestapo victims."

Resolutions of the Bible Presbyterians on Separation.—At their meeting in Harvey Cedars, N.J., held May 24—29, the so-called Bible Presbyterians passed several resolutions concerning separation from manifestations of worldliness and from false teachers which should be studied by the Church. We do not quote all of the resolutions, some of them having reference to special problems of the Bible Presbyterians. It is Resolutions 1 and 2 with which we are concerned. They read as follows:

"Resolution 1. In conformity to the Word of God, and without adding thereto any rules binding the conscience, we do hereby urge our membership to lead a holy life separated from worldly sin. We hold that participation in games commonly used for gambling sets a snare for our young people, introducing them to gambling associates and leading them in this evil practice. We hold that the patronage of the commercial theater is not conducive to the development of the spiritual life. We hold that the promiscuous familiarity between the sexes in modern society in the modern dance and in other modern social customs sets dangerous temptations before the young. We also desire to declare that we deem it wise to pursue the course of total abstinence with regard to alcoholic beverages, and also tobacco; and furthermore we are unalterably opposed to the modern saloon and the liquor traffic in general. We urge all ministers and Christian leaders among us to discourage these and other worldly practices among the Lord's people, and to give their testimony uncompromisingly against all forms of sin.

"Resolution 2. 1) We hold that it is a Christian's duty to separate himself from all co-operation in religious activities with those who deny the full authority and dependability of the Word of God, and that no consideration of expediency could ever warrant such co-operation.

"2) As concerns co-operation with those people who, while themselves believing in the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, continue in membership in denominations which include known unbelievers, and fail to see clearly and to observe fully the Scriptural injunction to separate themselves from such organizations, we hold that this is a sphere of expediency, that is, one in which no man's conscience may be bound by other men; however, we as a Synod feel that great harm is done in many cases by such co-operation, and hence that it is unwise to enter upon or continue in them without careful consideration.

"3) Regarding such individuals as are described in paragraph one, we should seek by every possible means to win them to Christ; regarding such individuals as are described in paragraph two we urge that they be dealt with in a spirit of brotherly love, seeking by every proper means to win them to the Scriptural position of separation rather than to drive them from us, and yet not violating our conscience."

In view of the Puritanic ancestry of these Bible Presbyterians it is with some amazement that one reads these resolutions. With respect to worldliness we notice that they are careful, and in some instances where formerly they would have spoken of sins, they now use the word "dangerous." For instance, total abstinence from alcoholic beverages is not declared something necessary, but merely wise. We observe a

definite retreat from the Calvinistic position which holds that everything is sinful which God has not declared permissible, and a quasi-acceptance of the Lutheran position, which says that everything is at our disposal except things that God has declared to be wrong. The resolutions pertaining to separation in religious matters from people who deny the fundamentals of the Christian faith have a true Scriptural ring. These people correctly see that one cannot be for a truth and against a truth at the same time. The case of Christian people who hold membership in churches to which known unbelievers belong is dealt with carefully. Here, however, one feels there is a certain lack. The resolution should have stated that in such instances testimony has to be borne by the believers and that if witness bearing is ineffective, finally separation from such churches becomes the duty of Christians. It is difficult, of course, to draw the line indicating when the withdrawal has to come. Point 3 under Resolution 2 has an evangelical tone. In Resolution 2 one other point should have been mentioned, and that is the duty of Christians to adhere to *everything* that the Scriptures teach regardless of whether the particular teaching is fundamental or not. Where God has spoken, we human beings dare not assume an attitude of indifference. That such a position does not imply that a person necessarily has to separate from everyone who holds an error in a non-fundamental point, and that in such cases the attitude of the erring brother toward the Scriptures is of prime importance, has often been pointed out. A.

The American Lutheran Church and the Federal Council of Churches.—The National Lutheran Council Bulletin carries the following informing item:

"Rumors persist that 'The American Lutheran Church has withdrawn from the Federal Council of Churches,' and inquiries concerning such 'action' are received at the National Lutheran Council News Bureau offices at intervals of every few weeks. These reports seem to trace back to an article carried by *Liberty*, a religious quarterly published in Washington, D. C., which reported a four-point resolution concerning the Federal Council, voted last year at a convention of the Ohio District of the American Lutheran Church.

"That resolution, according to Dr. James W. Schillinger, president of the Ohio District, was as follows:

"Be it resolved that the Ohio District go on record as disfavoring the suggestion that we consider even a consultative membership in the Federal Council of Churches.

"We deeply regret that conditions within the Federal Council of Churches make it impossible for the American Lutheran Church to enter into a consultative relationship at the present time.

"However the Ohio District takes prayerful and thankful note of the presence of new Evangelical Brethren in the Federal Council of Churches, and the Councils of constituent denominations and congregations.

"We urge our American Lutheran Church to encourage these Evangelical Brethren to maintain their Evangelical convictions, said encouragement to be offered in conformity with Lutheran ideals and

convictions as to the nature of the Church of Jesus Christ, the common Lord of all true believers.'

"The resolution was adopted as the result of a discussion as to whether it would be advisable for the American Lutheran Church to establish a consultative relationship with the Federal Council.

"In order to keep the record clear it should be noted that no Lutheran body has full membership in the Federal Council of Churches, and but one has any official connection. The United Lutheran Church in America has a 'consultative relationship' which allows it to appoint its own representatives to a number of the Federal Council committees and commissions, to sit in at discussions and to present the viewpoint of the Lutheran Church. Other bodies, boards or agencies, have relationship or affiliation with various interdenominational agencies which in turn bear relationship to the Federal Council of Churches.

"The resolution of the Ohio District of the American Lutheran Church did not constitute 'divorce,' but rather advice to the parent body not to marry!" A.

New Guinea Lutheran Missionaries Exonerated.—Not with feelings of satisfied vengeance, but because we like to see justice and fairness prevail and the good name of the Lutheran Church upheld, we are happy to reprint an editorial from the *Christian Century*, which brings the information pointed to in our caption. The Missouri Synod missionaries pointed to must be the representatives of our sister Synod in Australia.

"Early in the war in the south Pacific, George H. Johnson, an Australian newspaper correspondent, charged that Lutheran missionaries acted as guides for the Japanese invaders of New Guinea. Later he repeated the charges in *New Guinea Diary*, a book published in Australia, saying that 'certain Lutheran missionaries of Australian, British, and American nationalities have been acting as guides for the Japs.' The accusation was reprinted in American papers, and probably girdled the globe. Australian Lutherans thereupon initiated an investigation and insisted that military authorities do the same. They discovered that there was not the slightest vestige of truth in the report. Thereupon the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod Lutherans in this country, whose missionaries were involved, decided to bring suit under Australian libel laws against the publisher of the Johnson book. The publisher realized that his case would not stand up in court and offered an apology and whatever redress was possible. The plaintiffs accepted the offer. Thereafter the publisher carried advertisements in eight Australian and New Zealand newspapers expressing his regret and declaring that 'the allegations . . . were without foundation.' He sent correction slips to all libraries, to all bookstores stocking the volume and to all known purchasers of the book. He agreed that all subsequent editions would delete the offending passages. Just to make certainty doubly sure, he agreed 'not to reprint them in any shape or form.' Now the Lutherans' lawyers are going after the newspapers which originally printed the story. Libel laws being what they are in Australia, it appears that the truth can catch up with and demolish a wartime lie.

Now we would like to inquire who were the 'representatives of other missions' who the National Lutheran Council says started rumors which were the basis of the original charges." A.

Luther Maligned by a Writer in the *Watchman-Examiner*.—It seems that old lies and errors, though cut down effectually, are bound to be resurrected again and again. In the *Watchman-Examiner* of May 17, 1945, a writer by the name of Frederick Eby, submitting an article on the subject "The German Apostasy and Kultur," makes a nasty attack on Luther, asserting that Luther was partly responsible for the rise of Nazism. He writes thus: "There can be no doubt that Luther experienced a great spiritual inspiration in the hour when it dawned upon his mind that 'the just shall live by faith.' He was a courageous Christian when he appeared before the Diet of Worms and defied the all-powerful Papacy. 'I neither can nor will revoke anything, seeing that it is neither safe nor right to act against conscience. God help me,' was the utterance of as brave a spirit as walked the earth. Had things taken their logical course under the circumstances, Luther would have gone to the martyr's stake, like Huss before him. But that was not to be.

"Leaving Worms abruptly and alone, Luther was suddenly seized and kidnaped by the Elector of Saxony and secretly spirited away to the castle at Wartburg, where he was held incommunicado for a lengthy period. How proudly the keepers of the castle point out the spot on the wall made by the bottle of ink which Luther hurled at the devil. But only the careful historian knows what traffic Luther had with his Satanic majesty and recognizes the transformation wrought in Luther's character while at Wartburg. Up to this, he had been the intrepid reformer who had placed his trust in God alone and salvation by grace. He proclaimed the liberty of the individual to choose his own relation to God, and he had opened the Bible without reservation to all men. He had become the popular leader of the fast-spreading revolt against Rome, the deliverer of all who sat in spiritual bondage.

"Then a tremendous change took place in this leader whom the people trusted. The Peasants' Revolt, which was the only genuine threat against German feudalistic government, shocked Luther to the core of his being. In a rage he commanded the magistracy 'to fire, stab, smite, and strangle' the poor peasants, 'just as one would beat to death a mad dog.' This ruthless fury is certainly not the spirit of Christ.

"This was followed by the horrible tragedy of the fanatics of Muenster. Naturally, the freedom of religion that Luther proclaimed had been seized upon and exaggerated by various groups. Now he reversed himself quite completely. In place of the free access to the Scriptures, he substituted his *Smaller* and *Larger Catechisms* 'as the right Bible of the laity.' In place of freedom of belief, he instituted a strict indoctrination and control by the state. *Cuius regio, eius religio* was the new order. He damned the quietistic Anabaptists as violently as did Zwingle, Calvin, or the Roman Curia. The appeal to reason infuriated him. Reason he distrusted and declared she was a harlot so beautiful that she ought to have dirt thrown in her face so that she would not be so seductive. All this sums up to just one thing:

Luther had fallen victim to the dread power of Germanic civil authority, which he identified with the will of God. Deeper than his confidence in a personal God and salvation by grace was his abject submission to princely power and state authority. It was not so much New Testament Christianity that furnished the basis of his views of government, but Old Testament theocracy."

One is horrified reading such misrepresentations. The writer evidently has but little understanding of what Luther stood for and what constituted the heart of his theology. Some of the very things that Luther fought are here ascribed to him. We should not be surprised. A man who can say "Luther had fallen victim to the dread power of Germanic civil authority" is capable of anything in the line of historical writing. A.

Charity Work Done by the Swedish People.—Dr. Ralph H. Long, executive director of the National Lutheran Council, has submitted the following facts which show the great extent to which Sweden is engaged in relief work.

"Sweden has become a place of refuge for thousands of homeless and helpless people of whom the great majority are of the Lutheran faith. There are in all about 200,000, made up largely of Norwegians, Danes, Finns, Esthonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. The Swedish Committee for International Help, which is a co-ordinating agency for all the various relief activities, reports that about one billion Swedish crowns will be expended. Already voluntary gifts amount to 300 million crowns. Men and women are being trained for medical and social work in the postwar period.

"There are, for instance, 40,000 refugees from Norway. Their spiritual care is looked after by the sixteen Norwegian pastors who are in Sweden. They need not only bread for their bodies, but there is a real desire for the Bread of Life. Because of an insufficient supply of Bibles in their language they cannot all be provided with them. These refugees actually 'queue up,' that is, stand in line, for New Testaments.

"A new appreciation of the Word and of the Lutheran Confessions has been gained by these 20th century martyrs and refugees. Differences of opinion have vanished with respect to the faith, and they now present a common evangelical front.

"Similar conditions exist in the other groups, who are not only fighting for their freedom, but also for their faith. The Archbishop of Sweden has opened his home to give shelter to Bishop Kopp of Esthonia, who is a refugee.

"Truly Sweden is an oasis where thirsty souls from countries laid waste by war receive nourishment for their bodies and souls. This spring of life is of such strength that it flows out into adjoining lands. Thousands of children in Finland are being helped, and aid has been granted to the Church in Finland by our Swedish brothers.

"In Norway alone 137,000 children, 80,000 old people, and 23,000 office boys and school children are being fed. A hospital has been established by the Swedish Committee which accommodates 125 patients. Eight thousand couples in Sweden are acting as foster parents for as many

children in Norway. Six convalescent homes are being operated. Already about thirteen million dollars has been collected by freewill offering for this ministry. The requirement on the present scale is about \$500,000 per month for this work in Norway, and it is far too inadequate.

"The problems of relief after peace comes will be stupendous. Our Lutheran Church in America must prepare now to meet the most urgent needs of their suffering brethren." A.

"Doctrinal Agreement a Luxury."—Stanley High, well-known man of letters and adviser of politicians (e.g. the late Wendell Willkie), has this to say in the *Christian Century*, in an article entitled "Let's Have More 'Clevelands'!" referring to a recent conference in that city:

"Twenty years ago I would have been greatly stirred by the recent plea of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., for a 'reborn church' which 'would pronounce ordinance, ritual, creed all non-essential for admission into the Kingdom of God or His Church.' Granted that that may still be important. Granted, also, the wide areas of Protestantism still unreclaimed from sterility. Nonetheless, his words did not make a prophetic ring in my ears. On the contrary, they sounded more like a call to return to a crumbling milestone which has long since been passed by those elements of Protestantism from which a reborn Church must come. In a world like ours, nothing seems to me to be less important than agreement about our theology and the ritual by which we implement it. Struggling to get such an agreement is a luxury which, perhaps, we can return to when the times are less desperate.

"What is now at stake is basic Christian principles which antedate Christian theology and to which, regardless of their theology, most Protestants—as Cleveland proved, are deeply committed. What is now required of us is to declare and activate those principles. If we do, then something more important—to Protestants—than a reborn Church will result. That result will be a resumption, in Western society, of the growth of those standards of human relationship which, across most doctrinal and ecclesiastical lines, we call New Testament standards.

"We can save our own souls in the privacy of our separate theologies. But we can save society only together. Cleveland seemed to me to indicate no tendency to surrender the former privilege, but a hopeful sign that we are accepting the latter responsibility.

"But why is it, with the precedent so well and so productively established in the field of international relationships and peace, that we seem to move so slowly and so inauspiciously elsewhere? It can hardly be because, having gone at least to the borders of prophecy on this one issue, Protestants conclude that their prophetic duty has been done.

"Take, for example, the problem of labor-management relations. Protestantism here is not only way behind the Roman Catholics. It is way behind the times. Yet as much of the shape of things to come—Christian or non-Christian—will be fashioned in this area as in any other, including the area of international politics. I do not believe that that fashioning can be Christian, in the democratic sense in which Americans have traditionally defined that word, without a much greater contribution from Protestantism than Protestants now are making.

"Why is it that we cannot have in this field a Federal Council commission of comparable stature and eventually of comparable standing with the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace? Is it because we have no comparable leadership—no John Foster Dulles, for example—on which to draw? I am inclined to think, rather, that it is because the comparable leadership which is available for use has not been used."

What shocking sentiments! No "agreement about our theology" needed! Objective truth does not count. The view espoused is that of secularism. There is one objective—making this world a more pleasant place to live in. May God have mercy on such a type of Christianity!

A.

Brief Items.—According to press reports the Reformed Episcopal Church, a member of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America since 1909, resolved at its meeting on May 24 to sever its connection with the Federal Council. It is stated that a number of churches of this small body had held special prayer meetings in which withdrawal from the Council was discussed. The withdrawal was first advocated in 1939.

"To my mind the anti-God youth of Germany are no more of a world problem than the anti-God youth of Russia and her Soviet Republics. And there is the possibility of the growth of an anti-God movement in the United States. Earl Browder has served notice that Communism in our land is about to return to the 'party line,' working for revolution in our form of government. That this means an increasing number of those who are antagonistic to the Church does not admit of doubt. The way to combat radical Communism is to convert the Communist; and the Church must get at it."—*The Presbyterian*.

Race tracks have been re-opened, we are told, and according to observers the windows where \$50.00 bets could be placed were almost as well patronized as those where bets amounting to \$10.00 were received. "Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint," Is. 1:5.

In spite of transportation difficulties the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (Northern Presbyterians) held its annual convention at Minneapolis. It chose as its Moderator Dr. William Blakeman Lampe, pastor of the West Presbyterian Church of St. Louis. He became somewhat prominent through participation in negotiations with the Presbyterian Church U.S. (Southern Presbyterians) in an attempt to unite these two Presbyterian bodies.

"The Army, which has about 7,800 chaplains, reports at latest count that 46 of their chaplains have been killed in action, 49 have died while in line of duty, 144 have been wounded in action, one has died of disease while being detained by the enemy, 38 are being detained by the enemy, and 12 are missing in action. The Navy, which has about 2,600 chaplains, reports that at last count 5 chaplains have been killed in action, 4 have died in line of duty, one has been killed in operational accidents, 4 are being detained by the enemy, and 25 have been wounded in action."

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In London died May 17 a man whose preaching made him well known throughout the English-speaking world, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan. He reached the age of eighty-one. His work was characterized by a firm adherence to the inspiration of the Scriptures. In 1889 he was ordained as a Congregationalist minister.

Dr. Oxnam, president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, in his book *Preaching in a Revolutionary Age*, wrote the following blasphemous paragraph: "Hugh Walpole in *Wintersmoon* tells of a father and son at church. The aged rector read from the Old Testament, and the boy learned of the terrible God who sent plagues upon the people and created fiery serpents to assault them. That night when the father passed the boy's bedroom, the boy called him, put his arms around his father's neck, and drawing him close, said: 'Father, you hate Jehovah. So do I. I loathe him, dirty bully!' We have long since rejected a conception of reconciliation associated historically with an ideal of a deity that is loathsome. God for us cannot be thought of as an angry, awful, avenging Being, who because of Adam's sin must have his Shylockian pound of flesh. No wonder the honest boy in justifiable repugnance could say, 'Dirty bully!'"—No comment needed!

"The body of Bishop Challoner, famous for his revision of the Douay Bible, is soon to be transferred to the crypt of Westminster Cathedral. At present it lies in the Protestant churchyard at Milton, Berkshire, England, where it has remained since his death in 1781. After the transfer the possibility of beginning a diocesan process for the bishop's beatification will be considered."—*America* (R. C. weekly). So the old superstition continues!

Concerning Roman Catholic Seminaries in Germany: "According to figures given in the *London Universe* for March 29, 97 per cent of all seminarists were compelled to give up their ecclesiastical studies and were forced into the army. Hundreds died on the battlefield or were captured. Many of the seminaries were closed, and even those that remained open were empty during the last years of the war. The number of the newly ordained in the Munich Diocese alone dropped from an average 150 in 1933 to 3 in 1944."—*America* (R. C. weekly).

Where is Beth Yearah located? It is mentioned in Talmudic literature. Dr. William Foxwell Albright says its site has now been identified in Galilee. The belief is expressed that the city is as old, if not older than, Damascus and that Abraham passed through it. It seems to have been a flourishing city two thousand years before Christ.

According to press notices the famous Basilica of San Lorenzo, a fifteen-hundred-year-old church in Rome, which attracts visitors especially on account of its thirteenth century frescoes, was severely damaged during an air raid. The same thing is true of the fifth-century church of Santa Chiara in Naples, likewise famous for its frescoes of the thirteenth century. In Benevento the cathedral with its famous twelfth century Byzantine door was destroyed.

The Navy has a new chief of chaplains, William N. Thomas, who takes the place of Rear Admiral Robert D. Workman. The new chief of chaplains is a Methodist. A.