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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Indescribable Misery in Central Europe.—Was there ever suffering on a scale like that which is witnessed in Europe at present? The Nazi atrocities have ceased, but now there is the woe caused by hunger, nakedness, lack of shelter, the total dearth of medical supplies, the coming winter, unemployment, absolute destitution, separation from one's family, and, if some reports can be credited, shocking mistreatment here and there of the inhabitants by the Russian troops of occupation. One report says that seven million refugees are now endeavoring to reach their former home, traveling in whatever way they can. The reports that reach Geneva on conditions in Hungary, Austria, and Eastern Germany contain these tragic words: "Critical food situation—disease spreading—many suicides—hundreds of thousands of refugees left starving—churches trying to help but completely overwhelmed." Conditions are simply too sad for words. What are we doing? What can we do? Are we all giving serious thought to the question how aid may be furnished to those caught in this huge net of unparalleled distress? Whoever has a profitable suggestion or can point to an avenue of help which may be utilized should share his insight or information with the brethren. A.

The Pronouncement of the Wisconsin Synod on the Doctrinal Affirmation and Related Subjects.—At its recent biennial meeting, held August 1—8 in New Ulm, Minn., our sister synod, the honorable Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, passed resolutions of which the other synods of the Synodical Conference will have to take cognizance. We believe it best to reprint the paragraphs on "Church Union" written by the Rev. A. P. Voss, one of the editors of the *Northwestern Lutheran*, the official organ of our brethren, in the account of the convention (see *Northwestern Lutheran* for September 2):

"While our pastors generally are familiar with church union matters, the laymen may not be too well informed. The matter of church union involves the question whether a union—altar and pulpit fellowship—between our sister synod of Missouri and the American Lutheran Church (a merger of the Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo Synods) and subsequently a union between the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church can be established now or later without compromising the truth of God's inspired Word. The question is whether true unity in doctrine and practice exists between the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church, for a union without this unity is impossible.

"Our synod has a standing committee which serves as a 'watchman unto the house of Israel' in church union matters. This standing committee presented a brief report to the convention at New Ulm in which it called attention to the 'Doctrinal Affirmation,' a document prepared by 'The Committee on Doctrinal Unity in the Lutheran Church of America' (Missouri Synod Committee) and 'The Committee on Intersynodical Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church.' Our standing committee

declared that it is not satisfied that the truth of God's Word is adequately safeguarded by the 'Doctrinal Affirmation,' and that our committee stands ready to present its misgivings to our sister synod of Missouri. Our committee further reported that the problem of church union has become more difficult because of a number of incidents which anticipate a union between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church which does not yet exist. Official protest in these matters has been filed with the Synodical Conference, and the protest is now before a Committee on Intersynodical Relations which has been appointed by that body.—Upon recommendation of the floor committee of the convention, the report of our standing committee was adopted by unanimous vote.

"The protest referred to above was presented to the convention of the Synodical Conference at Cleveland in 1944 by President John Brenner. It reads in part, 'We feel constrained to state at this time that we have been seriously perturbed by numerous instances of an anticipation of a union (between the Missouri and the American Lutheran Church) not yet existing. . . . It will suffice to adduce only a few: Co-operation with the National Lutheran Council in the work among the prisoners of war, participation with others in the dedication of Service Centers, a Synodical Conference pastor serving as a guest essayist at the convention of a District of the American Lutheran Church, etc.—It is our firm conviction that the cause of true unity is not furthered by such actions, which can only put undue pressure behind the "union movement" and cause confusion in the Church.'—The convention at New Ulm endorsed this protest.

"The question of 'co-operation in externals,' is one phase of the church union matter. The convention adopted as Scripturally correct an expression of President John Brenner which states in part, 'We realize clearly and deeply deplore the harm that is being done by the division in the Lutheran Church, but we are firmly convinced that the welfare of our Lutheran Church and of the Christian Church as a whole will be truly served only when we frankly acknowledge these differences in doctrine and practice as actually existing and as being divisive of fellowship, and when we then by prayerful searching of the Holy Scriptures endeavor to arrive at the unity that is the work of the Holy Ghost. You will always find us most willing to take part in doctrinal discussions which have this purpose. "Co-operation in externals" (what in church work can truly be said to be purely external?) may hide our wounds, but it will not heal them. Joint endeavors will not remove the existing differences, but it may lead us to forget them and to grow indifferent to the authority of the inspired Word.'

"A complete transcript of the report on church union matters will appear in the synodical report.

"The spirit of our standing committee and of the Wisconsin Synod in these matters is expressed in a letter addressed to our sister synod of Missouri, 'We sincerely cherish and desire to preserve the fellowship which we enjoy in our Synodical Conference.—Hoping and praying to God that we come to a favorable understanding and agreement.'"

The convention essay dealt with the question of church union.

Its fourth part is thus summarized in the *Northwestern Lutheran*: "In the fourth part, what might be called modern back doors through which Unionism would surreptitiously enter our church were briefly discussed. As such were mentioned: co-operation in so-called externals; allocation of mission fields, and other co-ordination of church work; joint service centers with a joint dedicatory service; combining of eleemosynary undertakings; 'selective fellowship'; Scoutism, and the like."

In the sections quoted are enumerated some of the issues that are pending between our sister synod and our own body. It is not our intention to argue here the matters in debate. Our brethren of the Wisconsin Synod know as well as we that merely affirming that a certain act is wrong does not make it wrong. The issues will have to be studied in the light of the Word of God and in the spirit of Christian love. We join the brethren in the hope that through such study full agreement on the questions mentioned can be reached. A.

Luther's Dream Coming True.— Under this heading the *Lutheran Standard* (Sept. 22, 1945) states editorially that the "latest word about the Evangelical Church in Germany is that the leaders in it hope within the next decade to see the Church entirely supported by voluntary offerings instead of through State-collected taxes. This new development in the separation of Church and State in Germany is in line with Martin Luther's ideas on the subject. One might say it is a fulfillment of Luther's dream. Luther's own personal preference was for a congregational form of government rather than for a State Church. However, political and social conditions at Luther's time were not ripe for the full translation into action of the Reformer's convictions regarding the distinctive spheres of Church and State. In the free air and on the free soil of America Luther's principles flowered and fruited into full separation of Church and State and now, over four centuries after Luther lived and wrought, those same principles seem about to bear similar fruit in Luther's homeland." Editor Schramm's declarations rest upon well-documented historic proof, as every student of Luther's works knows, even such as have merely studied Articles XVI and XXVIII of the Augsburg Confession, which, as Luther said, contains his theology. But now comes Prof. E. G. Schwiebert of Valparaiso University and shows in a neat little monograph, "The Medieval Pattern in Luther's Views of the State," "that Luther's views of the State accepted the medieval pattern of a *Welchristentum*. By changing the Church, however, from a visible, corporate, legal personality to an invisible kingdom, making all Christians priests before God, he also changed the functions of the State. In this changed picture the German princes were also morally responsible for the religious conditions in their lands. In drawing a clear-cut line of demarcation between man's body, property, and outward possessions on the one side, and his soul, conscience, and the things of the spirit on the other, Luther also definitely clarified the scope of the State in the old medieval pattern. Perhaps, in this we have another source of our Bill of Rights" (p. 21). Both Editor Schramm and Professor Schwiebert emphasize important elements in Luther's view-

point of the relation of the State to the Church. What the two writers say is not contradictory, but supplementary. Luther perceived that a so-called State Church is indeed possible, though perhaps not preferable. His contribution to the philosophy of the problem was his clear-cut line of demarcation between the earthly and the spiritual, or between what belongs to the body and what belongs to the spirit. In this, as Professor Schwiebert remarks, we have another source of our Bill of Rights. This clear-cut line of demarcation between the earthly and the heavenly ultimately had to result in separation of Church and State where there was "free air and free soil" for "Luther's principles to flower and fruit" into reality.

J. T. M.

Regarding the Doctrine of the Real Presence.—In the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* (October, 1944), Dr. Gohdes published an article in which he queried the traditional Lutheran doctrine concerning the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper. The article caused considerable discussion and has led W. O. Doescher, a colleague of Dr. Gohdes, in the same periodical (July, 1945) to defend his viewpoint. In the first place, Dr. Doescher declares that Dr. Gohdes' article does not question the Real Presence, for he asserts this presence in such statements and expressions as: "Christ Himself is present in the Supper"; "The central feature of the doctrine is communion between the believer and the Christ of the Cross, present in the Sacrament"; [the elements] "convey Christ Himself as the life of our life"; "The essence of the Sacrament is the presence of Christ imparting Himself to the recipient"; "The reception of Himself with the blessings He wrought for us"; "The interpenetration of our life with that of Christ"; "Jesus gives Himself to us in the Holy Supper." Finally (as the writer says), Dr. Gohdes himself states in so many words that he does not wish to question the Real Presence. However, as Dr. Doescher goes on to say, despite our protestations (so Dr. Gohdes contends) historians can hardly be blamed for holding that Lutheranism teaches consubstantiation and a material eating and drinking of that for which, according to the intent of the Divine Founder, the bread and wine are intended to serve as vehicles, that is, the body and blood of Christ. Dr. Doescher, moreover, declares that (according to Dr. Gohdes) the Confessional concepts are not free from residual Romanist presuppositions, that is, from the view that the essence of the Sacrament consists in an *ex opere operato* absorption of inanimate, impersonal, supernatural substances, rather than in a personal transaction with the living, personal, and exalted Redeemer. Again, Dr. Doescher says that Dr. Gohdes' conception, perhaps, absorbs into a more integral view the substance of the Confessional doctrine while it dissents from some of the terminology and the concepts by which it is set forth. Dr. Doescher calls his colleague's view of the Real Presence the "personal conception" and that of the Confessions the "celestial substance conception" of the Real Presence. For the first view, "body and blood" means the incarnate life of the living and ascended Savior which He gave into suffering and death for our redemption, which view assimilates Christ's "body and blood" to the whole Christ, who gives Himself to us in the Holy Supper in agreement with His promise. The other view (as Dr. Doescher says)

interprets the Real Presence as the presence of the substance "body" and "blood" *per se* in abstraction from the "whole Christ." Then he goes on to defend Dr. Gohdes' "personal conception" of the real presence over against the "celestial substance conception," and he suggests that while the dogma of the Holy Communion is not a controversial issue among Lutherans, its doctrinal formulation has become so excessively rigid in our circles that this very fact is an excellent reason for re-examining the doctrine. He says: "The time is ripe for a modern statement of the Lutheran faith in terms less dependent on scholastic terms and modes of thought, but in conformity with modern insights and oriented to the specific issues of our days and age." Lastly, he writes: "The final reason is that such a discussion is a contribution to the ecumenical movement. Some of us entertain the conviction that the breach that divided the Reformers is not final and irrevocable. If a re-examination of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper does not demonstrate 'another spirit,' of which Luther complained, but if a deeper view suggests the possibility that modern Reformed and Lutheran positions may ultimately be reconcilable, should not such a proposal be eagerly welcomed and examined with great care and with Christian hope and patience?"

If it is true that to Lutherans the Real Presence means no more than that "Christ Himself is present in the Supper," or that "the essence of the Sacrament is the presence of Christ," or what the other statements quoted from Dr. Gohdes' article declare, then indeed the fundamental difference between Lutheranism and Calvinism is eliminated, but in such a way that the doctrine of Luther and of the Lutheran Confessions is discarded. No Reformed theologian has ever objected to such statements as Dr. Doescher quotes from the article of Dr. Gohdes, but what they all with one accord objected to is the doctrine of Scripture that in the Sacrament Christ's true body and blood are received in, with, and under the bread and wine, including the *manducatio oralis* and the *manducatio indignorum*. To Calvinists and Lutheran crypto-Calvinists that doctrine has always been a stumbling block and foolishness. But just that is the teaching of Scripture, and therefore nothing else can be substituted for that doctrine. The offense does not lie in the Lutheran formulation of the doctrine, but in Christ's own teaching of the Lord's Supper. It is, of course, impossible for us to enter upon all the misinterpretations of the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence put forth outside and within the Lutheran Church. But let it be said that the Lutheran Church has never taught what Dr. Doescher implies in his so-called "celestial substance conception" of the Real Presence. Nor has the Lutheran Church ever taught any *ex opere operato* absorption of supernatural substances, nor any consubstantiation, nor any material [Capernaïtic] eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood. Nor is it true that Dr. Gohdes' conception absorbs into a more integral view the substance of the Confessional doctrine while it merely dissents from some of its terminology; Dr. Gohdes' presentation is rather a departure *in toto* from Luther's doctrine of the Real Presence. Nor is it true that the Lutherans have ever interpreted the Real Presence as the presence of the substance "body" and "blood" *per se* in abstraction from

the whole Christ. As a matter of fact, Luther and the Lutheran Confession have never endeavored to explain the mystery of the Real Presence beyond Christ's clear words of institution. The undersigned certainly deprecates a controversy in Lutheran churches on the Lord's Supper, but he does desire a re-study of the doctrine in the light of Scripture, Article VII of the Formula of Concord, one of the greatest documents ever produced on the Lord's Supper, and Luther's four great writings against the Sacramentarians ("Against the Heavenly Prophets," 1525; "That These Words of Christ: 'This Is My Body,' etc., Still Stand Against the Enthusiasts," 1527; "Luther's Confession Concerning the Lord's Supper," 1528; "Luther's Brief Confession Against the Enthusiasts," 1544). When writing these immortal monographs, Luther was largely dealing with the most erudite theologians, the most subtle thinkers, of his age, who opposed the Scripture doctrine of the Real Presence with every possible substitute that human reason might invent. But with overwhelming power Luther demonstrated from Holy Scripture that no such human substitute (e. g., the whole Christ for: "This is My body; this is My blood") is permissible without violation of the clear words of Scripture. Let Lutherans, then, not depart from the doctrine of the Lutheran Confessions; in particular, let them not make concessions on this point to Calvinists in the interest of the ecumenical movement (union between Lutherans and Calvinists), for that would amount to a downright denial of the plain Scripture truth. Let them rather hold in sincere faith to the plain words of institution, following the explanation of the doctrine as given in the closing paragraph of Article VII (Epitome) of the Formula of Concord: "We maintain and believe, according to the simple words of the testament of Christ, the true, yet supernatural eating of the body of Christ, as also the drinking of His blood, which human senses and reason do not comprehend, but as in all other articles of faith our reason is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and this mystery is not apprehended otherwise than by faith alone, and revealed in the Word alone" (*Triglot*, p. 817). By the way, just now also other churches are taking up the doctrine of the Lord's Supper for study. The *Living Church*, for example (Episcopalian), has published a series of articles on the subject, which manifest much reading and much thinking on the dogma, though, of course, they run along Catholic and Reformed lines. Very interesting is the discussion of the problem of concomitance and of intinction in the issue of May 6, 1945. Lutherans certainly cannot afford to neglect the study of this tremendously important doctrine.

J. T. M.

Some Expressions on the Atomic Bomb.—As was to be expected, the church papers, as well as other publications, have written extensively on the atomic bomb, which was the center of interest during the last days of the war. We here list some of the statements that have appeared on this subject. A number of clergymen in New York, among them George A. Buttrick and Rufus M. Jones, have called the atomic bomb "an atrocity of a new magnitude." Bernard Shaw, the well-known playwright, issued this statement, "Like the sorcerer's apprentice [Cf. Goethe's *Zauberlehrling*, A.], we may practice our magic without knowing how

to stop it, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Prospero. In view of our behavior recently, I cannot pretend to deprecate such a possibility; but I think it worth mentioning." Jacques Errera, professor of chemophysics of the University of Brussels, says, "If this war were not the last world war, it would be one before last anyway, for, henceforth, with the utilization of the atomic bombs and the V-2 weapons, war would mean the destruction of the earth." This statement is found in a weekly publication called *News from Belgium*. In the *Lutheran Companion* an editorial contains these paragraphs: "Frederick Kuh, writing from London to an American newspaper, declares that the satisfaction experienced by the atomic bomb's part in dictating Japan's surrender offer has been 'overshadowed by a sense of helpless terror at the limitless implications of this scientific apocalypse.'

"The English,' he continues, 'so commonly branded as hypocrites, have been among the first to apply self-criticism toward their own moral attitude.' British writers in London papers have recalled the outburst of indignation among their own people when the Germans started indiscriminate bombing with flying robots and rockets last year and how they demanded that the scientists who invented these weapons should be branded as war criminals and brought to trial for their lives, and they are asking if the same attitude should now be assumed toward the scientists who perfected a weapon 'a thousand times more barbarous.'

"The Britishers admit that it would not be difficult to imagine the outburst of morally furious headlines in England had the Germans dropped atomic bombs on Manchester, London, Chicago, or New York.

"To have withheld the atomic bomb,' declares one writer, 'would have been a greater act than to use it.'"

A.

Dr. C. E. Macartney on the Theological Chaos in Northern Presbyterianism.—Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney is a singularly able and influential minister of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (Northern Presbyterian), who has always sponsored adherence to a conservative course in theology. He is the author of many books and pamphlets, and for a number of years has been pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, Pa. In a recent article appearing in the *Presbyterian* of August 16, 1945, he speaks of the endeavors made soon after the Civil War to heal the breach caused by the secession of Southern Presbyterians from the mother church in 1861. The article is worth careful study. The Southerners, when (in 1871) invited to return to the former fellowship, pointed to various barriers that would have to be removed, some of them having to do with the slavery question, one, however, with the union of the Old and New School Assemblies in Northern Presbyterianism, a union (effected in 1869) on a very slender platform, viz., "the doctrinal and ecclesiastical basis of our Common Standards." In other words, the two schools united by merely saying that both parties were willing to be loyal to the Presbyterian confessions, without clarifying the points of doctrine which had separated them several decades before. The Southern Presbyterians declared that the methods of the union involved "a total surrender of all the great testimonies of the Church for the fundamental

doctrines of grace," and that the Northern Assembly "must come at length to embrace nearly all shades of doctrinal belief." Dr. Macartney's final paragraph states that this mournful prophecy has been fulfilled. He writes:

"Today, I take it, there are few, if any, in the Southern Church who oppose the union on the ground so strongly urged by their Assembly of 1870, viz., the attitude of the Northern Church with regard to matters of social and political significance. But there are many in the Southern Church, and not a few, too, in the Northern Church, who are convinced that when the Southern Assembly of 1870, in answer to the union overtures from the Northern Church, declared that the Northern Church had united in a way which would bring it in time to 'embrace nearly all shades of doctrinal belief,' it was a true prophet of what has taken place in the Northern Church. Nothing could be easier than to show, from sermons, lectures, books, and united testimonies by ministers of the Northern Church today that that Church now 'embraces nearly all shades of doctrinal belief.'"

Let those Lutherans who hold that the mere unfurling of the Lutheran flag suffices as a basis for union of Lutheran bodies take notice!

A.

Catholics and Religious Liberty.—It has often been pointed out how unwilling Romanists are in predominantly Roman Catholic countries to accord to Protestants the boon of religious freedom which they avidly claim as their right in countries where Protestants are more numerous. One of the ways in which Romanists in the United States endeavor to justify this attitude of their Church can be seen in an editorial of *America* (Jesuit weekly) for Sept. 1, having the caption "Religious Liberty for Catholics." It reads thus:

"Religious liberty is being kept a piping-hot issue by our Protestant brethren — religious liberty at least for themselves and especially, at the moment, religious liberty without limit on the South American front. But on the home front, for Catholics! Well, there are penalties attached and well-defined limits. This we gather from comments in prominent Protestant journals, like the *Christian Century*, which are highly exercised over the possibility that Federal aid may be given to non-public schools. In effect they maintain that if Catholics want their own schools, let them pay the bill in full. It makes no difference that this means double taxation. It makes no difference that this means paying a heavy penalty for the religious liberty guaranteed by the Constitution and vindicated by the Supreme Court. No, there must be no State or Federal aid to non-public schools because this would violate our sacred principle of separation of Church and State. The real 'because' is that such aid would go principally to Catholic schools, which happen to be the most numerous in the non-public-school category. When there were many Protestant schools a few generations ago, the 'separation of Church and State' principle did not hinder their fervent bid for State and Federal aid. They know perfectly well that separation of Church and State is not the real issue now either. If they don't know it, let them read the First Amendment of the Constitution, which is the supposed classic statement of the principle of separation.

To erect the principle out of that Amendment would be to perform a piece of sleight of hand worthy of awed acclaim. If they do know it, then in the name of honesty why not say outright that full religious liberty in the United States is reserved to them alone by force of their numbers. But that, of course, would be to throw a whole bucketful of cold water on the issue of religious liberty in South America."

This is flimsy argumentation, as no one knows better than those numerous Lutherans who gladly pay their public school taxes while they, in addition, maintain their Christian day school. We doubt very much that the chief reason of Protestants, generally speaking, for opposing State support of private religious schools is that if such aid were granted the Roman Catholic Church would be the chief beneficiary. And if this were the motive, could Rome complain? Its own record of intolerance and bloody persecution of dissenters has been such that no state can be blamed for being very cautious before adopting a course which would be particularly advantageous to Romanism.

A.

The Late Bishop Edwin H. Hughes of the Methodist Episcopal Church on His Attitude to the Lodge.—A friend handed us an excerpt from the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* of September 10, 1925, in which a visit of the late Bishop Hughes in St. Louis is described. A few of his remarks addressed to the Conference on that occasion should be quoted. The reporter says that the bishop asked the ministers candidly if they were sure they were attending the Conference "in the spirit of Jesus Christ," and he counseled them not to let "sociability" interfere with the devotions. "You may wonder why your congregation is not more religious. It is because you are not more religious. I belong to a lodge. I expect to die in that lodge. I pay my dues and go when I can. But when I die, that lodge is not going to have any part in my funeral. I am going to be buried by the Gospel of Christ and nothing else. And there are not going to be any symbols on my tombstone that cannot be shared by my two little children that are in heaven today." Some darkness—and some light.

A.

The "Calvin Forum" Celebrates Its Tenth Anniversary.—The latest issue of the *Calvin Forum* (August-September, 1945; Vol. XI, No. 1-2) appears as the "tenth-birthday" number of this interesting, instructive, and stimulating Calvinistic monthly. Its editor in chief, Dr. Clarence Bouma, writes editorially: "The magazine was born from the deep conviction that Calvinism is the need of the age because it is the highest and richest formulation of the truth of God. Our journal is the embodiment of the conviction that we must propagate the God-centered view of the Scriptures in its application to every phase of scholarly endeavor and to the solution of every problem of Christian living." These are excellent words from the viewpoint of Calvinistic conviction, though here immediately begins the conflict between Lutheranism and Calvinism with regard to their different views of Scripture and the world. Yet Calvinism must speak as it does because it is moved by deep-rooted convictions just as confessing Lutheranism is. While the *Calvin Forum* is not the official periodical of Calvin College and Calvin Seminary

(Grand Rapids, Mich.), the faculties of these two educational institutions have largely supported it by their influence and literary contributions. The *Calvin Forum* is not a Fundamentalist periodical, but orthodoxly Calvinistic, though it appreciates the contributions of Fundamentalism to the cause of evangelization in our country. The magazine pursues a different aim, namely, the moral and intellectual appeal to the believing intelligentsia in our land. The anniversary number emphasizes the "great need for sound, scholarly literature that is true to the Word of God and thoroughly abreast of the times in which we live." "This need," it says, "must be met. Liberalism has failed to meet it. It has offered an avalanche of religious and scholarly books in recent decades, but these have served not to build up, but to tear down the truth as it is in Christ. Fundamentalism is beginning to produce an abundance of books of late, but most of them are of a devotional nature and do not command the attention of the informed and scholarly mind. One of the reasons our colleges have in the past succumbed so readily to the onslaughts of an ungodly philosophy and science, is found in the influence of textbooks that were the very opposite of being biblical and theistic. Even now there is a growing demand for a scholarly presentation of the Christian Faith from quarters which until recently compromised that faith with anti-Christian theories and ideologies. Here Calvinism has a great opportunity and is meeting a real challenge. Would that Christian people understood how important it is to set men to work to produce such scholarly works. Many such works are the incidental by-products of classroom teaching and have come into existence in that way. But what we need is men who are given time and opportunity to concentrate on such writing. Some liberal universities and seminaries have appointed a few faculty members with the proper equipment and enthusiasm to devote themselves exclusively or largely to research and writing rather than to teaching. If Calvinism is to be propagated, it must be done both in popular and in scholarly form. The latter is by far the most difficult and exacting. We need a body of up-to-date scholarly works written from the biblical, God-centered point of view that can command the respectful attention of scholars, of those who are searching, and of the students in our higher educational institutions." Certainly, most true! The *Calvin Forum* combines in an admirable way theological and non-theological articles. Its forte seems to be Christian Apologetics. A commendable feature of the magazine is the department "From Our Correspondents," which offers detailed and well-written letters by representative, well-informed Calvinists from all over the world. Its book reviews are thorough, honest, and reliable. There is much we Lutherans can learn from this monthly.

J. T. M.

Fosdick Still a Radical Modernist. — Replying to a letter of inquiry as to his present religious status, Dr. Fosdick wrote as follows:

"I have received your letter. I am constantly astonished at the things people say about me, and never much more so than by the report that you sent me of the strange statement in your recent discussion group. He never read any statement from me publicly announcing my change of thought. I am a liberal in theology, and have been so

ever since I was a young man. Far from changing, I have gone straight ahead with it, and I should say again just what I said to you in the letter that I wrote you on January 4, 1937.

"Of course, I do not believe in the Virgin Birth, or in that old fashioned substitutionary doctrine of the Atonement; and I do not know any intelligent Christian minister who does. The trouble with these fundamentalists is that they suppose that unless one agrees with them in their doctrinal set-up, he cannot believe in the profound, substantial, everlasting truths of the Christian gospel that transform men's lives, and are the only hope of Christ's saviorhood in this world. When, then, they hear me proclaiming these everlasting truths, they think I must believe in their fundamentalism. As a matter of fact, I regard it as a perversion of the Christian gospel." (Cf. *Christian Beacon*, Sept. 13, 1945.)

The Role of Bishop Dibelius in Germany and the Relations of the Church to the State. — The *Religious News Service* publishes a statement by Stuart W. Herman which may not have been read by all of our subscribers and which hence we insert here.

"Within the next decade the Evangelical Church in Germany hopes to dispense with all financial assistance from the State, according to Bishop D. Otto Dibelius, head of the new Church government in Berlin.

"Bishop Dibelius revealed that 'every effort' is being made to teach Church members to support the Evangelical Church with voluntary offerings instead of through State-collected taxes.

"Principal reason for abolishing the old system gradually, he explained, is that the average loyal Church member is in desperate financial straits and cannot assume immediately the entire burden which otherwise is spread thinly over the whole nominally Christian population.

"When Bishop Dibelius preached his first sermon since Germany's surrender, over 10,000 marks were laid on offering plates where the average collection never amounted to more than 250 marks.

"Bishop Dibelius also disclosed that during the war the Confessional Churches secretly raised more than 2,000,000 marks annually to pay the salaries of 1,000 young ministers trained in forbidden seminaries and refused ordination by Hitlerite Church authorities.

"In Southern Germany, 77-year-old Bishop Theophilus Wurm of Wuerttemberg, who throughout the war was German Protestantism's most outspoken anti-Nazi champion, is stressing the slogan, 'not restoration but regeneration.'

"Calling for a thorough cleansing of the entire Church 'from the bottom up,' Bishop Wurm suggested the election of anti-Nazi councils in every local congregation and election of delegates to a National Synod to be held next year. In between these lowest and highest councils, he would have provincial synods or assemblies.

"Pastor Eberhard Roehricht, successor to Pastor Martin Niemoeller at the famous Jesus Christ Church in Berlin, has been preaching 'repentance' to his congregation without mincing words.

"Recently, as rain dripped steadily through a gaping hole in the ceiling of the beautiful main church, and with the congregation crowded

into a suffocatingly small room or standing in the hall, he declared that 'a brand-new beginning must be made with God.'

"Speaking on the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, he told the congregation that the Christians of Germany were Pharisees, praying, 'I thank Thee that I am not as this man,' if they thought they didn't belong among sinners of the Third Reich.

"Pastor Roehricht's sermon was in line with the official declaration of Bishop Dibelius, which stated: 'I say bluntly that authorities of our Church who permitted themselves to become tools of un-Christian ambitions these last ten years have burdened themselves with great guilt. This guilt must be acknowledged and expiated by disappearance from Church administration positions.'

"Spiritual rehabilitation, however, isn't easy under present restrictions. No religious matter may be published, and radio services cannot be held. But in the American and British sectors of Berlin, religious instruction is proceeding. German Communists are blamed for impeding religious activity in the Russian sector.

"Pastor Heinrich Grueber and Fr. Buchold, Protestant and Catholic clergymen who conduct the Berlin City Council's office for Church Affairs, said that 90 per cent of parents support religious training where it is available.

"At a recent meeting of the Confessional Church's Synod in Berlin, an integrated plan for educating German youth was approved and has already been put into effect." A.

Brief Items.—A Protestant Episcopal Church (Calvary) of Philadelphia, a white congregation, has decided to call a colored minister as its pastor. He has been invited to bring the congregation which he has served thus far, St. Michael's Mission, into the membership of Calvary. The *Living Church* quotes these words of the vestry of Calvary Congregation, "The coming of Father Logan means, therefore, that the services of Calvary will remain as they have been for more than forty years, during which period several Negro families have been regular and honored members of the parish family. Consequently, except for the presence of a greater number of Negroes than before and filled pews instead of empty ones, you will find everything as usual."

"There is no commentary on 'the Revelation.' Do not try to explain it, but preach its Gospel." Dr. Roswell D. Hitchcock quoted in the *Presbyterian*. This is advice one would like to pass on to the chiliastic commentators on the last book of the Bible.

Before William Henry Hoover died in 1931, he set aside \$50,000 as a trust fund for the promotion of Christian unity. The proceeds will be used by the men entrusted with the management of the fund to provide an annual series of lectures on the subject of Christian unity. The lectures, which are to be delivered in the Disciples Divinity House adjacent to the campus of the University of Chicago, will be published in book form.

Eleven missionaries of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Women's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society were put to death by the Japanese in the Philippine Islands. A story of their

martyrdom has been issued and may be obtained from the secretary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, Dr. Jesse R. Wilson, 152 Madison Ave., New York 16, N. Y. The book costs 25 cents.

According to Vatican regulations the College of Cardinals may have as high as 70 members. At present there are 39. Some observers believe that soon a large number will be added, perhaps 27. America may receive 6 or 7, one of them in all probability Archbishop Francis J. Spellman. American pastures must look rather inviting when most of Europe has become a desert.

From Pasadena, Calif., word was sent around the world that the universe would end Friday, September 21. The authority for that statement was a former missionary, Rev. Charles G. Long, and his source of information a vision in which three times the number 610 was written for addition purpose beneath 1260, 1290, and 1335. Mr. Long explains the sums as follows: 1870 ended (?) papal supremacy; 1900 brought the twentieth century; and 1945 will write "finis" for our globe. Believe it or not, the man has (or had) 50 followers.

According to the *Protestant Voice* more than 1,500,000 boys and girls in our country will receive religious instruction in our public schools under the weekday religious education program. This means that there is an increase of 50 per cent in the number of communities that participate. 1,800 cities and towns in 46 States will hold released-time classes.

Oslo University of Norway, closed by Nazi decree in November, 1943, has been re-opened. *News of Norway* states that never before have classrooms and corridors been so crowded. "About three times as many students are now applying for admission to these colleges and universities as can be cared for by the existing facilities." The sentence implies that there are other colleges and universities in Norway besides the one at Oslo.

The *Lutheran Messenger*, English language organ of the Lutheran Free Church, now has a full-time editor, Rev. Sverre Torgerson.

"In days in which we talk much about getting man's relationship with his fellow man right and about the brotherhood of nations, we must be careful never to lose sight of the thing that is even more important, and that is man's relationship with God."—Sir William Dobbie, the celebrated Defender of Malta.

Church membership in the United States has reached an all-time high of 72,492,669, more than 52 per cent of the population, according to the 1945 edition of the *Year Book of the American Churches*. The figure represents a gain of 3,991,483 in two years. (Associated Press Dispatch.) In this connection it might be stated that Northern Presbyterians report that their church membership is now the largest in the history of the denomination—2,161,872.

Two bodies of Mennonites are considering a merger, namely, the Central Conference of Mennonites and the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America. The former body has three thousand members, the latter is the second largest Mennonite group, consisting of 36,000 members.

What is the status of religious liberty in Spain? The so-called Bill of Rights states that the Catholic Church is the State Church of Spain and it is the only one whose religion may be practiced publicly. The religious liberty granted consists in this, that other church bodies may exist privately and people belonging to them may conduct worship in their homes, but they must not do so publicly.

According to a report from Mexico, Roman Catholic persecutions of Protestants continue. Recently the corpse of a Protestant child was dug up by Catholic vandals and thrown away. This action followed an exciting speech by a Roman priest who had declared that a Protestant child did not deserve burial in a Christian cemetery. A number of stories of beatings and of other forms of cruel mistreatment against Protestants are submitted. (See *Christian Century* for September 19, p. 1069.)

Concerning psychiatric quacks: "The ideal client is one who has some money, not much sense, and a real or imaginary trouble—and an imaginary trouble is real for the person who has it if he believes it is real. Since these specifications describe a very large per cent of the total population, the field for exploitation is immense."—From a review in the *Christian Century*.

At Vellore in Southern India a hospital is located which has frequently been used by our missionaries. At its head, until recently, was Dr. Ida S. Scudder, belonging to the famous Scudder family, four generations of which have been serving as physicians and medical missionaries in the Orient. She founded a college at Vellore in 1918, and with that college is connected the hospital spoken of. The college is a co-educational Christian medical school.

Clifford P. Smith, who twice served as president of the Christian Science Society and who for a number of years edited one of its papers, died on August 8, thus helping to demonstrate the falsity of the Christian Science religion.

After hearing a group of children sing over KFUE, a St. Louis woman, who was born in the town of Brinnana in Mount Liban Libonaise Republic, Syria, about one-half day carriage drive from Briouth, Syria, wrote: "It took my mind to my childhood days back in Syria when I used to sing all those songs your children's class sing in English. I sang them the same tune, only in the Arabic language."

A modern version of Philip and the Eunuch, Acts 8:26 ff.: "Enclosed find check for \$2.50. I just recently installed a radio in my automobile, as I am a traveling salesman. I now realize what I have missed by not being able to travel with the Word of God. Heretofore I have traveled with Christ in mind, but hearing the beautiful hymns and the Word of God makes traveling more pleasant now. Just this past week I enjoyed the KFUE programs at a distance of 150 miles."—H. H. H. A.