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Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

The Word of God.—Under this heading, William C. Berke-
meyer, in the *Lutheran* (Oct. 9, 1946), in a rather confusing article,
writes of the (supposed) difficulty which God has to cope with in
revealing Himself to us and which we have in understanding Him.
Beginning with the thought that if it is hard for men to make
themselves intelligible to other men, he argues that it is even much
harder for God to make Himself understood by men. He says:
"We have all listened so fitfully and responded so frivolously that
it is little wonder when God fails to get through." He next sug-
gests that "the only kind of words we have a right to expect God
to utter are like those our loving parents used when we were
children: 'Don't be afraid. . . . I am here. . . . Go ahead. . . .
Try again! . . . Be fair, be honest, be patient! . . . Remember he
is your brother. . . . Forgive him, as I do. . . . Don't worry! . . .
Think it through again. . . . Are you not sorry? . . . Do not
despair. I love you.'" He then says: "These are the only words
God does speak to us." Again: "All this may seem a rather
strange and roundabout way to express what Lutherans mean by
'The Word of God.' Yet I think this approach is sound and sug-
gestive. We talk at cross purposes about the Bible and Christ,
revelation and inspiration, and the Word of God unless we keep
constantly in mind that it is hard for God to reveal Himself to us,
hard for us to recognize His voice and understand His language.
It is difficult, first, because He is God and we are men; and, sec-
ondly, because sin has dulled and distorted, and all but deafened,
the organ of our spiritual hearing, which is often roughly but not
mistakenly referred to as man's conscience."—We do not know
whether or not the reader has caught the drift of the writer's
argument. To the undersigned the writer's statements seem entirely
irrelevant as an attempt to make clear what "Lutherans mean by
'The Word of God.'" But not only irrelevant, but also misleading
and downright false. For one thing, it is not for man to decide
what kind of words he has a right to expect God to utter. That is
God's business, not ours. Again, it is simply not true that "we
talk at cross purposes about the Bible and Christ, revelation and
inspiration, and the Word of God unless we keep constantly in
mind that it is hard for God to reveal Himself to us, hard for us
to recognize His voice and understand His language." The Bible
is a very simple Book indeed, in which the doctrines of salvation
are very plainly presented to us. Nor are the concepts "Bible" and
"Christ," "revelation" and "inspiration," as also "the Word of God"
hard to grasp as long as we adhere to the Bible's own explanation
of them and do not confuse them by letting perverse reason distort
or misinterpret them. Of course, *essentially*, as our dogmaticians
put it, the Bible is not clear to us, which is to say, that we cannot
in this life understand the mysteries of faith, such as the Holy

Trinity, the personal union of the two natures in Christ, and the like. But *grammatically* or *externally* (to borrow other terms from our Lutheran dogmatics) the Bible is clear, in its essential parts, even to children. *Spiritually* clear, however, the Bible is only to those whose minds the Holy Spirit has in conversion enlightened, so that they really believe the testimony of the Bible about itself. Sin has indeed dulled, distorted, and made deaf the organ of man's spiritual hearing, so that by nature man cannot understand one iota of the Gospel but regards it as utter foolishness. So much for the first part of the editorial, which, by way of introduction, leads to a still more serious theme.

The author's real thesis is propounded in the words: "A third difficulty [to recognize God's voice and understand His language] arises out of the fact that we often interpret the idea "the Word of God" too narrowly. God speaks to men in many tongues: the language of the Bible, the language of nature, the language of the Church, the language of the Sacraments, the language of Jesus Christ. No one language is correctly understood, save by comparison with all the others." To this the writer adds that the "clearest, warmest, surest language — the key to all the others" — is the "life and person and words and deeds and suffering and death and resurrection of Jesus." The author then says: "The Church of today encourages a comparative study of all the languages of God, scriptural and nonscriptural, in order that we may be able to distinguish correctly between what God said and meant and the imperfect, partial way men, even inspired men [*sic?*], understood Him." His conclusion is: "When we thus study God's languages, we recognize that the biggest error we keep making in our thinking about the Word of God is in looking for the wrong kind of revelation. God in His Word does not reveal to us 'heavenly secrets' of any kind. He does not even tell us how He created His world or when it will end, or why the righteous suffer and the evil seem to prosper, or what the mysterious relationship was between Jesus and His mother, or even between Jesus and Himself. God speaks to us about three relationships only: His to us, ours to Him, and ours to our fellows. That is why the Word of God is fundamentally an imperative: 'Fear not! . . . Only believe! . . . Seek the kingdom of righteousness! . . . Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with Thy God! . . . Come unto me!' . . . Who can understand this language? The Word of God speaks directly to us, right where we are." As the reader recognizes, the writer's fundamental error is that of rejecting the Lutheran *principium cognoscendi*, the *sola Scriptura*, the Bible as the only source and rule of faith and life because it is the revealed Word of God, given by inspiration. According to the writer, manifestly the Bible only *contains* the Word of God, just as the book of nature contains the Word of God, but it is not the inspired, infallible Word of God in the sense in which the Christian Church has always regarded the Bible. Having therefore no absolute source and rule of faith,

the writer seeks other *principia cognoscendi*, e. g., "the language of nature," whatever that may mean, or "the language of the Church, the language of the Sacraments, the language of Jesus Christ." But this means to make confusion worse confounded. There is indeed a natural knowledge of God, but that embraces only the Law, not the Gospel; and the Church, the Sacraments, and even Jesus Christ, offer us no other Word of God than that which the Bible sets forth. Apart from the Bible the Church dare not speak. The Sacraments offer us no other Word than that which we have in the Bible, and Christ certainly does not speak to us outside or beyond the Bible. Again, the Bible *does* reveal to us "heavenly secrets," namely, all the mysteries of the faith. It does tell how the world was created. It does tell us that the world will end, though, of course, not the precise moment when it will end, because "it is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1:7). And it does tell us of the mysterious relationship between Jesus and His mother (Luke 1:32, 35); yes, and it does tell us about the relationship "between Jesus and Himself," namely, that of the God-Man — "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary." If the writer denies this, he simply does not tell his readers the truth. Again, when the writer says that fundamentally the Word of God is an imperative, that too is not true in an absolute sense. The divine Law is the *proclamation* of God's will, and the divine Gospel is the *proclamation* of God's grace in Christ Jesus. Even such Gospel imperatives as "Fear not!" "Only believe!" are no more than pure Gospel preaching, and not a command given to men to merit salvation by doing some command of God. The writer quotes a large number of Bible imperatives, but in doing so mingles Law imperatives and Gospel imperatives, proving by this that he does not clearly understand the fundamental distinction between Law and Gospel. Lastly, when the writer says: "The Word of God speaks directly to us, right where we are," he seems to champion the Reformed principle of the Holy Spirit's immediate operation in the hearts of men, for his "Word of God" is not the Holy Bible, but some immediate divine imperative apart from Scripture. If the undersigned has misunderstood the language of the article, the writer has only himself to blame for writing so confusingly and so differently from the orthodox Lutheran Church teachers. What he offers his readers is Barthian teaching, and the pity of it is that this un-Lutheran neo-orthodoxy is offered to the common Lutheran Christians, whose faith in Scripture certainly is not strengthened by what is said in the article.

J. T. M.

The U. L. C. A. Cleveland Convention. — The biennial convention of the U. L. C. A. met in the city mentioned in the first half of October. From the report in the *Lutheran* we cull what appears most important to us. The budget adopted for 1948 was \$2,750,000; for 1949, \$3,000,000. It was resolved, however, that in

view of the thirtieth anniversary of the U. L. C. A., which will be observed in 1948, the congregations are called upon to aim for the attainment of 200 per cent of the apportionment in that year. The resolution is motivated by a reference to the growing needs of the day. The place of Dr. Walton H. Greever, who has served as secretary since 1932, was taken by Dr. Frederick Eppling Reinartz. The 1,800,000 members of the U. L. C. A. are called on "to unite daily at 7 P. M. in a fellowship of prayer for divine guidance and help in the achievement of goals, the maintenance of standards, and the attainment of objectives." Suggestions will be published each week in the *Lutheran* to give guidance and unity of intention to the enterprise. The 32 synods composing the United Lutheran Church are requested to vote on an amendment to the constitution providing that no one over 68 years of age can be elected to a U. L. C. A. office. One of the missions of the U. L. C. A. is in Japan. The convention was informed that the Lutheran Church in Japan is now being reorganized. A theological seminary had been conducted at Tokyo. "During the war all Protestant groups in Japan were combined into one National Church. Occupation authorities have now granted permission for the re-establishment of former church bodies." Developments are now in progress to achieve this goal. A.

A Brief Description of the New Episcopal Marriage Canon.—R. N. S. submits this brief dispatch on the much-publicized new Protestant Episcopal marriage canon (inadvertently omitted last time):

"A new Protestant Episcopal marriage canon was officially voted into church law here by unanimous action of the denomination's House of Deputies. The new canon, which had previously been approved by the House of Bishops, permits remarriage of communicants in cases of divorce or annulment, provided evidence is presented through a bishop confirming the existence prior to the original marriage of certain impediments to matrimony. The old canon permitted remarriage only if the divorced person was the innocent party to adultery. The impediments include: marriage between certain categories of blood relatives, mistaken identity, mental deficiency, insanity, failure of either party to reach the age of puberty, impotence, sexual perversion, existence of venereal diseases, bigamy, and 'such defects of personality as to make free consent impossible.' Responsibility for final decision rests solely with the diocesan bishop. The new canon does not liberalize the Church's attitude toward divorce and remarriage as has been commonly stated, Bishop Cameron J. Davis of Western New York, chairman of the Church's joint commission on holy matrimony, told Religious News Service.

" 'Rather it spiritualizes or Christianizes our attitude,' he said. 'The word liberalization has an unfortunate connotation. We are not abandoning any of our standards of Christian marriage.' "

The editor of the *Living Church*, Mr. Clifford P. Morehouse,

writes concerning the recently adopted marriage regulation: "The new canon worked out in the House of Bishops and accepted without change by the House of Deputies is a considerable improvement on the former one. Although the newspapers referred to it as a 'liberalizing' measure, it is actually a conservative one, upholding the Christian standard of marriage as an indissoluble union, by which a man and a woman contract themselves to be true to each other 'as long as they both shall live.' As such, it is in entire harmony with the Prayer Book, as the old canon, with its exception for the innocent party in a divorce for adultery, was not. But it is recognized that not every legal ceremony is a true marriage, and it provides a means whereby the bishop may permit a new marriage if the previous one was actually not a valid one because of conditions existing at the time it was contracted." To us this is mystifying. Does not the New Testament permit divorce and remarriage of the innocent party when adultery has been committed? It seems this item in the teaching of our Lord is entirely ignored in the new marriage canon. A.

Reformed in Germany Eager to See the Present Federation Maintained. — From Frankfurt comes this wireless dispatch (R. N. S.): "German Lutherans were urged by the Chief Assembly of the Reformed League in Germany at a meeting in Detmold to avoid moves that tend to destroy 'the unity previously achieved in the Evangelical Church in Germany.' The League, which is the highest body of Germany's Reformed churches, obviously was referring to recent attempts by Bavarian Lutherans to create a united Lutheran Church.

"The Reformed group asked Lutherans to 'co-operate with us in doing everything to promote this unity even at the Lord's Table.' The League said churches have neither the time nor the strength for strife when God commands them to preach repentance and forgiveness.

"Warning against 'Confessionalism which tries to secure or save its own cause,' the Reformed League urged that conversations toward union of all Confessional elements be continued. The present plight of Germany must not lead to greater division, but rather to more unity, the League added."

This is fully in agreement with the tendencies cultivated by the Reformed Churches in the past: doctrine is not given the emphasis which it receives in the Lutheran Church. A.

Reports in *Christianity Today*. — *Christianity Today*, which is published "from time to time" by the Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia 6, Pa. (its editors being Samuel G. Craig, Oswald T. Allis, and Loraine Boettner), in the interest of conservative Presbyterian doctrine, offers in its November issue (1946) a number of reports and studies which are as timely as they are important. Much of the space is devoted to an "interpretative report" on the "158th Assembly," which met in May, 1946, and from which we select the following items. The union with

the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (Northern) is vigorously opposed by a group of pastors and laymen in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern), which submitted the following statement: "1. We remain opposed at present to organic union with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., because doctrinal differences present a serious obstacle. So far as the creedal statements are concerned, the differences do not appear to be significant, but there is manifestly a radical difference in viewpoint in the two churches as to the interpretation and administering of the standards." The group also reaffirmed their loyalty to the following convictions: "1. The entire trustworthiness of the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. 2. The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures. 3. The fact of the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, His substitutionary atonement to satisfy divine justice, His mighty works and miracles as recorded in the New Testament, His bodily resurrection, and His sure return in power and glory." The General Council of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. had submitted a somewhat lengthy overture proposing women ministers, which finally was sent to the presbyteries for either approval or rejection. *Christianity Today* opposes the overture on the ground that the ordination of women is neither Scriptural nor advisable in view of 2 Tim. 2:12; Tit. 2:5; 1 Cor. 14:34-35; Eph. 5:22. ("Its tendency would be to effeminize the ministry somewhat, as teaching in our public schools has been effeminized.") With regard to the "marriage of divorced persons," all ministers are asked to exercise great care lest they join together persons whose marriage the Church cannot approve. Upon satisfactory evidence of the facts in the case, they may remarry the innocent party to whom a divorce has been granted on Scriptural grounds, but not until [they are] assured that a period of one year has elapsed from the date of the decision allowing the divorce. They should also refuse to unite in marriage any member of any other denomination whose remarriage is known to the minister to be prohibited by the laws of the church in which such person holds membership, unless the minister believes that in the peculiar circumstances of a given case his refusal would do injustice to an innocent person who has been divorced for Scriptural reasons."—An editorial on the "Reorganization of the *Presbyterian*" holds that the "new company [publishing the new *Presbyterian*] not only operates under a new charter and a new Board of Control, but is committed to a somewhat different aim." It concludes with the remarks: "We hazard the prediction that the new *Presbyterian* resembles the old somewhat as the new Princeton Seminary resembles the old. If such proves to be the case, it may have many excellences, may even be the best periodical in the Presbyterian Church, but neither in what it commends nor what it condemns will it be all that such a paper should be." The verdict is based on the policy of the new *Presbyterian* described in the

following statement: "It [the *Presbyterian*] shall aim to unfold the everlasting truths of the Gospel and shall strive at all times to deal with contemporary issues in church, society, and state from the viewpoint of God's revelation of Himself in the Bible and in Jesus Christ." This takes the place of the policy statement in the old *Presbyterian*: "The policy and influence, both direct and indirect, of the paper shall always be to emphasize what are known as the fundamental doctrines of Evangelical Christianity, such as the integrity of the Bible as the Word of God, the true humanity and true deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit, the necessity and validity of the Atonement as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, the resurrection and personal return of our Lord, and salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ." — The objections of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. to union with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. are nicely set forth in an article by Dr. Wm. Childs Robinson: "The Liberal Attack Upon the Supernatural Christ," which shows that ever since the Auburn Affirmation has been adopted, the deity of Christ has been questioned, if not downright denied. — Finally, the issue offers a very careful examination and review of the Revised Standard Version of 1946 by Dr. Oswald T. Allis, perhaps the best the undersigned has read so far, which closes with the words: "We could easily point out renderings which we regard as a definite improvement on the Authorized Version and the Revised Version. But we cannot devote space to pointing out the merits of a version of which, considered as a whole, we cannot approve, when the space at our disposal is inadequate for the discussion of its very serious defects. We believe, and we think we have proved, that the Revised Standard Version represents a radical departure from the high standard of accuracy in translation which was set by the Authorized Version more than 300 years ago and which the English Revised Version and the American Revised Version felt called upon to maintain. We cannot escape the conclusion that the standard of accuracy represented by the Revised Standard Version is quite a different one. 'New manuscripts,' 'papyri,' 'better understanding of vernacular Greek,' 'necessity of modern diction,' and the like may be responsible for many of the changes to be noted here. But most influential of all in determining the character of the version has been, we believe, the determination of the revisers to establish their right to exercise a freedom in the rendering of Holy Scripture which might be tolerated in dealing with many books of merely human origin, but which is quite incompatible with the divine origin and authority of the Bible. Plenary inspiration, an inspiration which extends to the *words* of Scripture [italics in the original] — this is the only inspiration which gives the Bible real authority as the very Word of God — has accuracy of translation as its necessary corollary. The freedom with which the Revised Standard Version treats the text of Scripture indicates the low conception of its inspiration entertained by the revisers. It is this more than anything else which makes the Revised Standard

Version 'important.' It represents a type of translation which, certainly in the case of a 'standard' revision of the Authorized Version, would have aroused a storm of protest fifty years ago. Should the Revised Standard Version attain to anything like the popularity which its publishers anticipate, this will be indeed an *important* event [italics in the original]. It will be a signal triumph for Modern Liberalism."

J. T. M.

A New Theological Journal Coming.—The *Lutheran* (Oct. 9, 1946) announces a new publication, which is to take the place of the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* and the *Augustana Quarterly*. We read: "January, 1948, may see the first issue of a new quarterly publication supported by more than a dozen Lutheran theological seminaries in America. It will be the first co-operative publishing venture of its kind in the Church. Lutheran theologians of the world would be invited to contribute articles in the new periodical. The *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, now published by the Gettysburg and Philadelphia seminaries, and the *Augustana Quarterly* of the Augsburg Seminary would be merged in the new journal. Tentative approval has been given by these seminaries. Aims of the journal would be to provide a forum for discussion of Christian faith and life on the basis of the Lutheran confession; to present the principles of the Lutheran Church in their relation to changing problems of religion and society; to preserve and foster world Lutheranism; to promote understanding between Lutherans and other Christians. The committee undertaking the project is led by Dr. Theodore G. Tappert, Philadelphia. Other members are: Drs. J. A. Dell, Iver Iverson, John C. Mattes, Eric H. Wahlstrom, Abdel Ross Wentz."

J. T. M.

Difficulties for Christians in Travancore, India.—A correspondent of the *Christian Century* writes under date of August 1 from India, "Christians in this state (Travancore) who number two million in a population of six million are greatly disturbed by a law issued by the ruling Maharajah, which provides that no permission will be granted for the erection or utilization of a place of public worship unless it is approved by the government as being 'for the benefit of a majority of the people in the locality who belong to the denomination for whose use it is desired, with at least one hundred families being benefited by its existence.' Further, any such place of worship may not be located within one mile of any other temple, mosque, or church. The law also provides that no cemetery may be established within two miles of any church, school, or public institution, or within 300 feet of any dwelling house. Since there are now 14,332 residences per 100 square miles in Travancore, it will be almost impossible to comply with the latter restriction. Infringement of the law will be punishable by a heavy fine. Bishops and laymen of the various churches in Travancore are preparing a memorial asking for removal of the restrictions." This is a heavy blow. Let us hope that through the representations which are being made it will be averted.

After writing the above, *America* (R. C.) of September 7 came to our desk, in which further pertinent information on conditions in Travancore are submitted. The Travancore census report for 1941 is quoted, which on account of its interesting historical references we reprint: "Christianity was introduced into Travancore straight from the land of Jesus Christ, not long after His crucifixion. Tradition associates its introduction with the name of St. Thomas (52—68 A. D.), one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ and the pioneer of evangelization in India. Through all the thick mist that shrouds the traditional accounts, one fact stands out clear, viz., that the earliest conversions must have been effected by a person of great spiritual influence and magnetic personality, for among the converts to the new faith there appear to have been several who did not suffer any disabilities imposed by the Hindu religion, but occupied positions of authority and influence in Hindu society. The tolerant attitude of the rulers facilitated the success of the early Christian missionary enterprise."

The writer in *America* says concerning the early Christians in India and their successors, "Little is known of their history until the advent of the Portuguese at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The number of Christians in 1820 was 112,158, or 12.4 per cent of the general population, Hindus being 83 per cent. In 1875, when the regular census was taken for the first time, the number of Christians of all denominations was 469,023. Since then each decennial census revealed successively a higher rate of increase among Christians than among the adherents of other creeds. The census figures of 1941 estimate the total population of Travancore at 6,070,018, of whom 1,963,808 are Christians, including 1,014,054 Catholics. The ecclesiastical statistics of 1945 reckon the Catholic population of Travancore at 1,222,681, divided into these three groups according to liturgical rites: Syro-Malabar, Latin, and Syro-Malankara. Christians now form one third of the population, whereas in 1901 they were only one fifth." Continuing, the *America* article points out that Christians have been a definite asset to the state, and in the general fields of human endeavor have occupied foremost positions. The eminence which Travancore holds in the field of education, ranking higher than any other territory in India, is said to be due to Christian influence. The complaint is voiced that the Dewan (prime minister) is manifesting a distinctly hostile attitude. He has declared himself "a Hindu, firmly entrenched in the Hindu faith." It seems clear that Christianity in this state is facing a serious crisis. A.

Dr. Ned B. Stonehouse to Edit International Commentary.—Under this heading the *Presbyterian Guardian* (Sept. 10, 1946) announces a new commentary on the New Testament to be published by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. The venture comes in response to a recent appeal for "new evangelical literature" made by Dr. Wilbur M. Smith of the Moody Bible Institute. While Professor Stonehouse will serve as editor

in chief, Prof. Louis Berkhof, well known for his manuals of Reformed theology, will be the consulting editor. Professor Stonehouse is professor of the New Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary and Professor Berkhof, president emeritus of Calvin Seminary. The co-operation of scholars in America, Europe, and South Africa is being sought, the contributors being recruited from the ranks of Reformed scholars. The plan of the new commentary calls for approximately seventeen volumes. A first edition of 5,000 copies of each volume is contemplated. In bringing the new commentary to the notice of its readers, the *Presbyterian Guardian* writes: "In days when the Christian doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture is being attacked as the curse of Protestantism, such a publication is a vigorous affirmation of the historic Christian position. . . . A threat to the spread of the knowledge of the Word of God that is perhaps even greater than the attacks of Modernistic unbelief is the shallow bombast which passes for the preaching of the Word in some fundamentalist circles. The new Commentary will not carry a guarantee to make scholars out of triflers, but for sincere students of Divine Revelation it is designed to provide the searching guidance of the best modern believing scholarship in expounding the New Testament text. . . . Most of the reliable commentaries in the minister's library were published at least half a century ago. Since then a vast amount of new information has accumulated, throwing light on the meaning of the language of the Greek New Testament, supplying a more accurate text, and providing insights into the historical background of the books. In recent years of study and discussion, numerous problems of interpretation have been solved. Competent scholars will incorporate these advances in the Commentary. . . . The format of the books is designed particularly to appeal to the untrained student of the Bible. The exposition proper will avoid Greek or Hebrew characters, and it will not be cumbered by technical discussions. Ministers and scholars will find the more technical matters treated in the footnotes at the bottom of each page."

J. T. M.

Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Issue a Statement on Economic Questions.—From New York comes a report saying that 122 Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders joined in issuing a statement having to do with economic problems. The statement did not confine itself to so-called economic questions, but touched on related issues as well. On the Moral Law these sentences were promulgated: "Economic problems are admittedly technical problems, but they are also theological and ethical. Ultimately they depend for their solution upon our concept of the nature of man—his origin and his destiny, his rights and his duties, his relationship to God and to his fellow men." With respect to material resources the signers say: "The right to private property is limited by moral obligations and is subject to social restrictions for the common good. Certain types of property, because of their importance to the com-

munity, ought properly to be under state or other forms of public ownership. But in general the aim of economic life should be the widest possible diffusion of protective and consumptive property among the great masses of the people." The pronouncement on social justice reads: "Stable and full employment cannot be achieved without a proper balance among prices, profits, wages, and incomes generally. Wages must be maintained at that level which will most effectively contribute to full employment. In many cases this will mean that wages must be raised above the standard family living wage, which is only the minimum requirement of justice. The common good further requires that special efforts be made to raise the earnings of substandard-income groups, not only in justice to them, but also in the interest of continuous employment." On the profit motive these men say: "To make the profit motive the guiding principle in economic life is to violate the order which God Himself has established. The profit motive, while useful within reasonable limits, must be subordinated to the motive of the service of human needs and the dictates of social justice." On free association the statement says: "It is the duty of the free organizations of workers, farmers, employers, and professional people to govern themselves democratically and to assume their full responsibility for the ethical conduct of their own industry or profession and for the economic welfare of the community and all its parts. It is also their moral duty to admit to their membership all qualified persons without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin." On organized co-operation these thoughts are uttered: "Economic life is meant to be an organized and democratic partnership for the general welfare rather than a competitive struggle for an individual or group advantage. Accordingly, the industries, agriculture, and the professions must voluntarily enter into an organized system of co-operation among themselves and with the government to establish a rational and a moral economic order. The only alternatives to this are competitive economic individualism, private monopoly, or excessive government intervention, all of which are unacceptable under the Moral Law." The attitude of the State is spoken of in these terms: "Government, as representative of the whole community, has an obligation to enact legislation and to do whatever else is necessary for the protection of individuals and groups and for the advancement of the general economic welfare. The amount of Government action on Federal, State, and local levels will be determined by the extent to which the common good is not achieved by the efforts of the functional economic groups. As far as possible, however, these functional groups should be encouraged to participate responsibly in the formulation of governmental programs and in their administration. But the Government, while performing through various types of agencies those functions which it alone can perform, has as its chief responsibility the encouragement of a system in which the major economic decisions will be

carried out by the organized co-operation of the functional economic groups with the assistance and encouragement of the Government, but free from its domination." On international economic life the statement says: "Organized international economic collaboration of groups and national Government to assist all States to provide an adequate standard of living for their citizens must replace the present economic monopoly and exploitation of natural resources by privileged groups and States."

Among the signers are prominent churchmen like Bishop Oxnam, president of the Federal Council of Churches, a number of other presidents of church bodies, for instance, the Rev. L. W. Goebel, president of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, various prominent Roman Catholic leaders, among them Dean Paul J. Fitzpatrick of the Catholic University of America, and a number of rabbis.

We are printing this item on account of the interest manifested in social studies nowadays, trusting that some of our readers will gladly evaluate for themselves the various positions sponsored in the statement.

A.

Fundamentalists Form a Sunday School Association.—From Chicago the interesting news has come that a National Sunday School Association has been formed whose avowed intention is to stand firmly and fearlessly on the good old foundation of the Holy Scriptures, accepting them as the Word of God in every particular. The first convention of this body, meeting in Chicago, was attended by more than 500 Sunday school teachers. It is the opinion of these people that the Federal Council of Churches and the International Council of Religious Education have gone far to the left in their attitude toward the Scriptures. The delegates who assembled in Chicago represented all parts of the United States and Canada. The meeting was held in the Moody church. According to the constitution which was adopted the organization will work for "greater Bible study, more Sunday school conventions, publication of more Bible-centered Sunday school literature, and the establishment of a central bureau." The doctrinal statement to which the organization pledges its adherence is the one which is found in the constitution of the National Association of Evangelicals. The president of the Association, Dr. Archer E. Anderson, of the First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minn., made an address in which he stated that one of the reasons why this organization had been founded was that the people of the left wing "had substituted character education for the Bible and conversion." Dr. Anderson is not the first person who raises the cry that in many of the sectarian Sunday schools today the Word of God is no longer taught. Even in Modernist circles the impotence of the Sunday school as it is conducted in their midst is lamented, but the true remedy, the teaching of the everlasting Gospel, is not advocated.

A.

Religious Work Among Gypsies in France.— That gypsies are not yet extinct is brought to our attention by an *R. N. S.* dispatch from Paris.

“Roman Catholic authorities have formed an organization to meet the educational and spiritual needs of gypsies throughout France, it was announced here. Plans include sending priests as missionaries among the roving Romanies, maintaining contacts with them, and setting up an orphanage and boarding school for gypsy children. One of the first steps of the new organization will be to appoint a Chief of Chaplains who will supervise the work of priests among the Romany tribes wherever they may be situated. The gypsies of France are numerous and are of mixed races. Many can only speak a limited amount of French. Until the war they roamed the country at will and very little was done to help them. During the war the Nazis considered gypsies to be potential spies and liaison agents for the resistance movement, and forced them to remain in concentration camps. During this period priests were permitted to make contacts with the gypsies and begin a program to educate both adults and children. The ‘missionaries’ were particularly successful in their spiritual efforts. Great numbers of Romanies were baptized, made their First Communion, and were confirmed. The gypsies now complain that although they are free once again to resume their nomadic mode of living, they cannot continue their children’s education or give them religious instruction. It is hoped to gather sufficient funds and recruit enough volunteers to meet this need on an extensive scale.”

Is Christianity Entering upon a Period of Remarkable Growth? Prof. Kenneth Scott Latourette, of the chair of missions at Yale University, answers this question affirmatively. In a lecture delivered at Montreat, N. C., he pointed out that while the Church has lost in Europe and Great Britain during the last thirty years, it has doubled its membership in many places, such as Africa, India, China, Japan, the Netherlands, Mexico, and Brazil. He is quoted as saying that Christianity is “more deeply rooted among more peoples than ever before.” As proof he referred to the fact that in 1910, at the World Missions Conference, only five nations other than those representing Western civilization were in attendance while in 1938, when the Conference met at Madras, India, more than half the representatives were from nonwhite races, and the delegates, he says, were young, vigorous Christians. According to his view the Christian Church is exerting more influence on mankind than ever before, although it is still a “minority movement.” Sun Yat-Sen and Gandhi, he thinks, have been deeply influenced by Christianity. One evidence of the increase of Christianity’s power he finds in the “unprecedented growth of co-operation among Protestant Christians,” to which category, he says, belong “the establishment of the International Missionary Council, the World Council of Churches, the World Student Federation, and similar bodies.” The difference between a Christianity which is

such in name only and that Christianity which finds its hope in the cross of Jesus Christ is not pointed out by the Professor. An interesting remark of his may here be quoted: "The stream of Christianity is more and more flowing through the Protestant rather than the Roman Catholic Church. The reason for this is that the main strength of the Roman Catholic Church is in western Europe. But western Europe is in a state of decay from which it will never fully recover." A.

British Methodists and Divorce.—The following item sent out by R. N. S. is of general interest.—Regulations governing divorced church members were approved here by the Methodist Conference of Great Britain. The regulations were embodied in a report by the Committee on Divorce and Remarriage, which was adopted with slight modifications. The regulations provide that action on church members who have appeared in divorce proceedings as petitioners or correspondents must be referred first to a meeting of church leaders and then to an appropriate district discipline committee. A similar rule was made in the case of divorced persons wishing to be re-instated to membership, provided the district committee is satisfied that the man or woman is sincerely repentant and has made, or is prepared to make, "such reparation as may be possible." The regulations specify that the question of remarriage in the Methodist Church of divorced persons must be referred to the proper district committee, which will decide the issue after hearing all available evidence. It was stressed that under no circumstances does the Conference require a minister to officiate at the marriage of a divorced person if it is contrary to his conscience.

The Mixed Marriage.—Under this heading *Theology Today* (October, 1946) issues a serious warning against mixed marriages, especially such as involve Protestants and Romanists. The subject, of course, is not new, nor can many arguments be advanced which have not been stated before. The importance of the matter, nevertheless, justifies, we believe, the quotation of a few sentences from the editorial. We read: "Many a Protestant minister has come to realize the problems involved in the mixed marriage. He wishes to exercise his responsibility as a minister whose privilege and responsibility it is to unite couples according to the law of God. First of all, we must admit that many mixed marriages seem to be happy. However, in most instances, the children are all being reared in the Roman Catholic faith. In Cronin's *The Keys of the Kingdom* Father Chisholm's parents lived happily together, but his Protestant mother allowed him to be reared a Catholic priest. It is the Protestant, who may remain a Protestant and not join the Catholic Church, who makes the concession. While some mixed marriages do not result in an advantage to the Catholic Church, they usually result in a lukewarm relation to the Church. The children may be reared Catholics, but the parents fail to take any Church relationship seriously. The Catholics are not winning any

more proselytes from the Protestants than the Protestants are winning from the Catholics through mixed marriages. Both lose! There are other reasons why a mixed marriage is to be discouraged. A Protestant should know that if he becomes Catholic, he will not have much to do with the administrative affairs of the Church. In Roman Catholicism the priesthood rules, teaches, and disciplines. Catholics do not become members of their churches in the evangelical sense. The whole sacrificial system of worship subordinates the sermon and the intellectual challenge it offers. The Catholic parishioner has access to his priest through the confessional and even in personal conversation, but the priest, by right of his ordination, is in a different class of humanity from the parishioner. The worst feature of the mixed marriage is its effect upon helpless children. We can all agree with the Roman Church in its desire to safeguard the sacred nature of marriage and in its jealous concern for the children that issue from it. It is wrong to bring children into the world to have them put at the mercy of two individuals who are not united about religious matters. It may be that more education as well as a firmer discipline can overcome the evils in mixed marriages. It is not a matter of resisting Protestant marriages with Catholics, but of achieving a clearer view of the nature of marriage and family life from the Christian point of view." The last sentence, it seems, means to emphasize the thought that the problem of mixed marriages between Protestants and Romanists must be studied from the viewpoint of the larger scope that is involved; and this, above all, embraces the question of the children's salvation through faith in Christ, which is endangered if they join a Church which inculcates, as its first principle and dogma, salvation by human merit. J. T. M.

Christianity in India.—The managing editor of the *Christian Century*, Dr. Paul Hutchinson, recently traveled in the Orient. His reports published weekly in the *Christian Century* made interesting reading. We shall here submit some of the observations which he penned when visiting India. It is well known that India at present is seething with nationalistic ardor, resulting from the status of independence which has been granted it. Many people anxiously inquire, What is going to happen to the Christian Church? Will it be barred? Will the nationalistic feeling become so strong that foreign missions will be suppressed? Dr. Hutchinson says: "One thing seems clear. The Christian community in India is under attack as it has not been for years past. Sometimes this attack takes such forms as the restrictions recently placed on Christian churches and schools in the native state of Travancore. Far more important for the future, however, is the growing tendency in Nationalist quarters to hold the Christians disloyal to the Nationalist cause. The students, who are noisy about everything, tend to be noisiest in spreading this assertion of the ineradicably 'foreign' character of Christianity. But it is also coming from Congress leaders, who are prominent in the Constituent

Assembly and very influential individuals who might be expected to have a more tolerant outlook. One of these is Gandhi. Not long ago a delegation of eminent Indian Christians visited Gandhi at his Warda settlement. Knowing his views on the importance of Hindustani as a national language to bind the new India together, they were careful to carry on their side of the conversation in that language. Gandhi, however, persistently replied to their questions in English. Finally one of them commented on that fact and asked him why he was doing so. 'I always,' replied Gandhi, 'talk to foreigners in English.' That reply has sunk deeply into the consciousness of the Indian Christian leaders. Its implications appall them, and they know India too well to dismiss Gandhi's influence. They set his attitude down as sure indication of trouble to come, and I have found impatience among them at what they regard as missionary blindness or indifference to this coming trouble." Continuing, Dr. Hutchinson admits that one must not overlook that Nehru has promised complete religious liberty and that many people think that on account of that promise no fear need be entertained as to the permission for Christian missionaries to do their work. But Dr. Hutchinson reminds us that there are many kinds of religious liberty, as the cases of Spain and Russia amply prove. It is imperative that Christians implore the heavenly Lord with great fervor, "Thy kingdom come," and that in doing so, they by all means think of India and of the missions Christians are conducting there." A.

The First Reformed Ecumenical Synod.—The *Calvin Forum* (November, 1946) offers a detailed report on the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod, which convened in Grand Rapids, Mich., from August 14 to 30, by Professor Louis Berkhof, president emeritus of Calvin Seminary and first synodical president. The Ecumenical Synod was first suggested by Dr. H. H. Kuyper of the Free University in the Netherlands, in 1924, in an address delivered before the synodical convention of the Reformed Church of South Africa in Rustenberg, Transvaal. In 1927 the Reformed Church of South Africa took the first steps toward the organization of the synod by an appeal to this effect to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. In 1939, at the Synod of Sneek, delegates from the Reformed Church in South Africa, the Christian Reformed Church in America, and the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands made tentative plans for an Ecumenical Synod which was to convene at Amsterdam, but was prevented by World War II. It was not until this year that the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod could convene. As the "basis of future ecumenical synods" the following was adopted: "1. The foundation for the Ecumenical Synod of Reformed Churches shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, as interpreted by the Confessions of the Reformed faith, namely, Helvetica Prior, Heidelberg Catechism, Confession Gallicana, Confession Belgica, Confession Scotica, Prior and Posterior, Westminster Confession, Canons of Dort, and the

Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. It should be understood that the Scriptures in their entirety, as well as in every part thereof, are the infallible and ever-abiding Word of the living Triune God, absolutely authoritative in all matters of creed and conduct; and that the Confessions of the Reformed faith are accepted because they represent the divine, revealed truth, the forsaking of which has caused the deplorable decline of modern life. It must be emphasized that only a wholehearted and consistent return to this Scriptural truth, of which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the core and apex, can bring salvation to mankind and effectuate the so sorely needed renewal of the world. 2. Because of the diversity in the forms of government of the Reformed Churches, uniformity of Church Polity cannot be stressed as a fundamental requisite, except in so far as the principles of this Polity are contained in the Reformed Confessions, as, for example, the headship of Christ and the marks of the true Church: the pure preaching of the Gospel and the Scriptural administration of the Sacraments, and the faithful exercise of discipline. 3. All Churches which, in the judgment of Synod, profess and maintain the Reformed faith will be invited to participate in the Ecumenical Synod, on the basis mentioned above. Moreover, they will be kindly requested to express their explicit agreement with it, and all delegates to the Synod will have to express their adherence to the Confessions of the Reformed faith and to the aforesaid statement. 4. A statement with regard to the history and the organization of this Synod as well as the character, authority, and purpose of future Ecumenical Synods should accompany the invitation to the various Churches." (Such a statement was drawn up and adopted by later session.) In order to study and disseminate Reformed principles of missions and consultations in matters concerning mission policy, the *International Reformed Mission Council* was elected. This consists of two delegates of each Synod and is to be constituted for consultative purposes only. To make the Reformed Confession more effective, Synod decided to encourage "the Christian press and Reformed organizations to set themselves the task of propagating our Reformed faith in every sphere of life." The synod, moreover, expressed its appreciation of the work done by such organizations as the *Calvinistic Action Committee*, *Evangelie en Wereld*, *Federasie van Calvinistiese Studenteverenigin in Suid Afrika*, and *Calvinistiese Studiekringe*. It also encouraged these organizations as well as College, University, and Theological Faculties to study and set forth the truths of the Reformed faith. The next Ecumenical Synod will convene at Amsterdam in 1948. Dr. Berkhof concludes his report with the words: "Naturally, its [Synod's] work was largely foundational and preparatory for greater things to come. Much of its time was spent in committee work and in free and open discussions of the problems with which it was confronted. There was an evident and earnest desire that the venture thus begun should move along the lines of the Reformed truth"; and he closes

with expressing the hope that "this small beginning may lead to a Second Reformed Ecumenical Synod, more inclusive, more representative, and therefore also more truly ecumenical."

J. T. M.

Protestant Church Temple Planned. — It is reported that plans are being drafted for a huge national Protestant Church temple, which will cost in excess of twelve million dollars; the building is to be located in Columbus, Ohio, and the body that has formulated the project is the Ohio Council of Churches. The structure is designed to house national offices of all Protestant churches and is to be known as the Temple of Good Will. Originally the intention was to have headquarters for Ohio Protestantism; but now the attempt is made to receive approval and support from all Protestant organizations in the country. "The preliminary architect's drawings, designed by John Quincy Adams of Columbus, were worked out on the basis of 370,000 square feet of office space, plus an auditorium to seat 3,000 persons for conventions, a banquet room seating 1,200, several small conference rooms accommodating 100 to 200 each, a small chapel, and a large chapel for 700 or 800 persons, and broadcasting studios." The executive secretary of the Ohio Council of Churches is Dr. B. F. Lamb, who is the spokesman for the promoters. He pointed out in the first public announcement of plans for the Temple of Good Will that various headquarters of national Protestant church organizations now utilize 670,000 square feet of office space and that plans will have to be enlarged to provide plenty of space for everyone. Moving of the national headquarters of the Christian Endeavor Society to Columbus in the past three months has given added impetus to the proposal. The Christian Endeavor moved from Boston "in order to be nearer the center of population and the center of its membership." The main purpose, according to Dr. Lamb, is to furnish office space so that all denominational and interdenominational organizations might be housed under one roof to make it easy for them to co-operate in program building and development, and also to facilitate growth toward unity and Christian spirit of action. To us it seems that here there is an attempt of ushering in the Kingdom of God through impressive external machinery. What is required is not grandiose plans that will captivate the imagination of the worldly-minded, but the preaching of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. A.

The Church, Alcoholism, and Temperance Education. — It is gratifying to note that *Theology Today* (October, 1946) takes a rather sensible view of the problem suggested by the heading, far different from that of the enthusiastic temperance agitator and quite in accord with that which Lutherans, holding to the Biblical solution, have always championed. The editorial (quoted in part) says: "Two . . . factors of importance have emerged to make this subject pertinent, namely, Alcoholics Anonymous, and the Yale School of Studies in Alcohol with its National Committee for Education

on Alcoholism, whose purpose is to change public opinion regarding alcoholism by way of clinics throughout the nation. The former now has a membership of over 15,000 in over 400 local chapters. This organization works quietly but effectively with the alcoholic who has reached the end of his tether and is willing to be helped. It does not engage in temperance education, nor does it crusade for legislative control of alcoholic beverages. It does not regard alcohol as a poison, nor does it have a holy horror of liquor as though it were something to be fought. The A. A. feels that there are some who can drink and others who cannot. Through honesty in the fact of complete collapse, the alcoholic is helped by fellowship, confession, prayer, other interests, and faith in God. The A. A. is not a reform movement. The Yale Studies are intended primarily to investigate the problem of alcohol and its relation to life from a scientific point of view. The study project is supported by Yale University, together with other educational and church groups. Its findings may shock many a staunch campaigner for prohibition. It has found that people drink not to be bad or because they are sinners, but to be sociable, to escape worry and the difficult realities of life, to be able to work better, or just to get a 'kick' out of it. [This, of course, is not true, for also the sin of drunkenness is a result of man's hereditary corruption and so, as Scripture teaches, a direct transgression of the divine Law.] Alcoholism is 'the result not of sin but of mental sickness — not a sign of moral degradation, but the pathological expression of an inner need, a deep-lying mental trouble, which requires professional treatment like any physical disease.' In short, the cause for alcoholism is much deeper than alcohol itself! The Yale Studies even say that in a limited sense alcohol is a food. It is a narcotic and not a stimulant; it is habit-forming; it does not shorten life; it does not affect the germ cells; it does not seem to cause cirrhosis of the liver; it does not cause arteriosclerosis; it does not warm you up; it does not stimulate thought; it does not seem to cause crime, but, on the other hand, many criminals drink. These new trends in attitude toward alcoholic beverages and their use are forcing the churches to reconsider their whole program of temperance education. Surely, the churches can wish the A. A. well in its program, but they can hardly support its indifference toward a more aggressive program of preventing alcoholism. The churches are supporting the Yale Studies, but many an old-time church member feels that there is something lacking in these scientific findings. There is much to learn from these newer findings about alcohol which is of real value in dealing with the potential and actual alcoholic. But while this sophisticated approach to the problem has its merits, it also has its limitations, and even its dangers." Scripture, of course, does not forbid the rightful use, but only the dangerous and harmful misuse of alcoholic beverages. This is a truth which churches that wish to solve the problem of alcoholism must recognize and bear in mind above everything else.

J. T. M.

Religious Conditions in Czechoslovakia.—In *News Flashes from Czechoslovakia* this subject is treated authoritatively. We reprint the greater part of the article.

The first thing to be borne in mind is that Czechoslovakia is the home of two very closely related and yet distinct nations, the Czechs and the Slovaks. Their mutual relation may be illustrated by comparing it to that of the English and the Scots in Great Britain. As is the case in this illustrative parallel, in no other department of life are both the similarities and the differences of the Czechs and the Slovaks as clearly apparent as they are in the realm of religion.

This will be seen even in the bare statistical figures. About the Czech nation, living in the lands of Bohemia, Moravia, and Czechoslovakian Silesia and numbering some 8,000,000, it can be roughly said that a little under 75% profess a closer or looser adherence to the Roman Catholic Church, something above 10% to the Czechoslovak Church, about 6% to various Protestant Churches, and some 9% to no Church at all. Of the Slovakian nation, amounting to some 2,500,000, about 75% are Roman Catholic, about 17% are Lutherans, about 6% are Reformed, some few are Greek Catholics, and practically none is an adherent of the Czechoslovak Church in Slovakia; nor is there any considerable number of persons who do not profess an adherence to some Church. As to the Jews, their number, never very considerable in the Czech lands, has been drastically reduced by the Nazi policy of extermination; Jews in Slovakia, always numerically stronger, have survived their ordeal in greater numbers, but no reliable figures are available as yet.

All the figures given above are merely estimates not pretending to be absolutely exact. In Czechoslovakia the religious profession or adherence is being ascertained at every census, but the last census was taken as far back as 1930, and there are no means whereby to estimate exactly the changes which may have taken place since that time. Still, we are convinced that the estimates given above are reasonably correct.

Even more revealing is another fact: if the proportional figures given above for Slovakia would be compared with those of 1900 or 1910, no striking difference would be found; the religious situation, as seen in the light of mere statistical figures, is as static there as in most European countries. And if a future census reveals any considerable change in the religious structure of the population of Slovakia, it will be only because the Slovaks in Hungary, Jugoslavia, and Roumania, who are being repatriated in large numbers to Slovakia, are Protestant to a far larger proportion than the Slovaks in the homeland. In the Czech lands the situation appears to be very much different. In 1910 some 96% of the Czechs professed to be Roman Catholics, 2% Protestants, and 2% Jews. Since that time the Roman Church has lost more than 20% of her fold, the proportion of Protestants among the population has more than doubled, and a certain part of the nation

has expressly and formally severed all connections with any Church. It is true that most of these changes have taken place in a few years immediately following the First World War and that the statistical figures have again tended to become static since that time. Nevertheless, the general situation with regard to religion, of which the statistical figures can, of course, give only a very rough and inadequate picture, has in the Czech lands up to now preserved a certain fluidity not easily to be found elsewhere, certainly not in Slovakia, a fluidity which along with undeniable shadows has some undoubted advantages, because it presents the churches with some special opportunities and with a particular challenge to their spiritual alertness and missionary zeal.

A.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church.—At Johnstown, Pa., a new Protestant denomination was formed at the United General Conference of the Evangelical Church and the Church of the United Brethren. This action formed the culmination of thirteen years of negotiations between the two groups. The new body has 714,000 members. The Evangelical Church was formerly known widely as the Albright Brethren. Both denominations were formed by German immigrants in the first part of the nineteenth century. Their theology has always been of the Methodist type.

A.

Mr. Egemeier on Perils for Children (R. N. S.).—Communism and other un-American philosophies are being funneled into the public school curricula through textbooks now used in some schools, it was charged at Cleveland by C. V. Egemeier of Chicago, executive secretary of the newly formed National Sunday School Association, conservative group affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals.

Speaking before a rally of church-school teachers and officers held in conjunction with the four-day meeting of the Cleveland Sunday School Convention, Mr. Egemeier challenged the "complacency of some church people" toward what he called the anti-democratic theories advanced by some textbooks.

"Investigate for yourselves the textbooks foisted on your children at school," he urged. "Study the texts, and see how many things recommended in some of these books are directly contrary to our ideals of freedom and liberty and the teachings of Jesus."

Sunday school programs must be revitalized to discourage crime and immorality, Mr. Egemeier declared.

"J. Edgar Hoover and other leaders in this fight keep pleading that the Church step out and take some definite and constructive action to reverse the nation's demoralized attitudes," he added.

"We are abetting the raising of our boys and girls on a diet of bloodthirsty crime programs on the radio and in books. The motion picture industry, too, is allowed by us to be not only a channel for communism but also a means to enhance the allure and popularity of a lowering morality."

Mr. Egemeier offered a four-point plan to make the Sunday schools more effective in social regeneration:

1. Replace moral confusion with a revitalized church-school program reaching young people.
2. Encourage a sweeping revival to reach young people outside the Church.
3. Co-ordinate Sunday school work with other organizations, such as laymen's and youth movements.
4. Establish a fresh approach to orient parents to the needs of their children.

Reading Mr. Egemeier's remarks, one wonders how some Lutherans can fail to be interested in the Christian day school.

A.

Indians in Brooklyn.—It may be news to most of our readers that in Brooklyn there is a congregation a large number of whose members are American Indians. *R. N. S.* contains this news item on this subject.—The Rev. David Monroe Cory, pastor of Cuyler Presbyterian Church here, did not go to the Indians as a missionary; the Indians came to him—in Brooklyn. Dr. Cory, who was born in Manhattan 43 years ago, never saw an Iroquois until 1938. Then he suddenly found that one tenth of his congregation were real, honest-to-goodness American Indians, and almost overnight Cuyler Presbyterian became known as the "Church of the Iroquois." The red men, who by virtue of an old treaty may live anywhere on the North American continent, came to Brooklyn from their reservation at Caughnawaga (The Rapids) in Canada, to find jobs as steelworkers. Their people had first learned the trade when a bridge was built across the St. Lawrence after World War I. As soon as he learned that the red men were about to become a permanent part of his flock, Dr. Cory began to study the Iroquois tongue. Today he can read, write, and speak it, though he professes not to have "real fluency." However, he must know it pretty well, because in 1942 the American Bible Society published his translation of the New Testament into that difficult language. Dr. Cory undertook the work with Mrs. Louise Diabo, herself a Mohawk. He also has edited an Iroquois hymnbook. "The New Testament is used not only in my congregation, but also by tribal groups throughout the United States," Dr. Cory said. "It's a considerably revised version of an old Iroquois translation. We modernized and simplified the spelling and omitted obsolete words. The average Iroquois word, you know, runs to about 18 letters. Sometimes as many as 30." Dr. Cory is proud of his Indian parishioners, whom he regards as a devout people. "When an Indian becomes a church member," he said, "you can be assured that he will be a good member. An Indian who isn't living up to the tenets of Christianity will never go near a church. His outward behavior is a good index of his interior life." As a race the Iroquois may disappear in a few generations, the minister fears. "Intermarriage has been prevalent for some time,"

he said. "Recently I married an Indian girl to a white boy. Next day it was an Indian boy to a white girl. The mixed marriages seem to work out very well, but it all means that a small minority group is rapidly being absorbed. The older folk are greatly concerned at the way the language is dying out and how pale of face the newest generation is." "The old neighborhood won't be the same when the Indians are gone," Dr. Cory said.

Dr. Van Dusen's Inaugural Address.—When on November 15, 1945, Dr. Henry Pitney Van Dusen was installed as president of Union Theological Seminary, New York, he delivered an address which now has been made available in a beautiful pamphlet and which deserves comment. It is a virile, forceful message. The baffled perplexities and dark fears which mark today's outlook here have found eloquent expression. We quote a section in which our generation's attitude toward religion is pictured:

"This anomalous position of God in contemporary education truly reflects the gradual dissolution of the spiritual foundations of American culture. The influence of religion in the education of their children accurately mirrors the place which most Americans concede to God in their own lives and the life of their nation.

"Consider the position which religion actually holds in the life of today. There is an aphorism, first coined, I think, by one of my colleagues and now threadbare through repetition just because it so aptly portrays the facts: 'Religion has become an elective in the university of life.' Many ask of the Church only an occasional gesture of blessing. 'Sprinklers,' they have been called, who come to church to be sprinkled with water at birth, with rice at marriage, and with earth at death. That is, religion is one among innumerable matters in which one may be interested if he chooses, but to which he need feel no obligation of concern. Its place is secondary, incidental, peripheral; not primary, foundational, central.

"But religion which is an elective, whether in the halls of learning or in the school of living, is *not religion* but a specious counterfeit. And for this clear reason: Religion, by its very nature, is concerned with that which is ultimate, therefore foundational and primary. It has to do with God. And when, consciously or casually, God (or the institution which represents Him among men) is thought of as secondary, optional, peripheral—it is not *God* with whom men have to do, but some cheap man-made substitute. Let us put the point sharply: When a man turns his thought toward God as one among the many interests of life, when a church tolerates in its worship the casual or condescending patronage of its people—it is not worship which is taking place, for it is not the True and Living God to whom thought is directed. That is false religion. It is atheism.

"Here, again, the contrast to earlier generations requires no proof. It is safe to hazard that, had the most radical of the Founding Fathers foreseen the position which Christian Faith occupies in

the America of today, they would have feared for the nation's continuance more than because of foreign invaders or atomic bombs. However perfunctory men's practice of the Faith, they knew its true position to be central and pivotal—the foundation and completion of all which human hands might attempt."

When after the diagnosis the Doctor feels called upon to suggest a remedy, he is disappointing. A person fails to find the emphasis on the inspired Scriptures and the Gospel of the atonement which one is looking for. The speaker stresses "unity and revival." It is true when he says: "The greatest single danger threatening the churches of Christ in our time is not contagion from the diseases of secular society or even the perpetuation of piddling divided ineffectiveness, but internal sterility through lack of indispensable spiritual renewal." The exact nature of this spiritual renewal, however, is not indicated except in very vague terms. What we need is emphasis on *sola Scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide.*

A.

The Worship of Science.—An interesting article in the *Christian Century* of September 18, written by W. F. Luder, has the heading "Science—Idol or Method?" A few of the paragraphs are so challenging that we reprint them here.

"The worship of science is a nobler religion than the worship of the state or of mammon. Nevertheless it is worship of a false god. What do its worshipers mean by 'science'? It is difficult to say, but obviously they invest the term with a mystical and inscrutable meaning. One dictionary defines science as 'knowledge gained by exact observation and correct thinking.' Disregarding the fact that the observations are never exact and the thinking is infrequently 'correct' (whatever that may mean), we find such a definition inadequate. Is science a collection of books in libraries? No; the knowledge in the books is the result of science. The aim of science is to describe and classify the facts of experience, but description and classification do not constitute science.

"Science is an *activity* pursued by means of a certain method. The aim of this activity is knowledge of the universe. The contemporary method of carrying on the activity involves the investigation of facts and collection of data about them; the classification of these facts into laws; the 'explanation' of laws in terms of something with which we are already familiar; and the testing of this explanation or theory by temporarily assuming it to be adequate and trying it out on newly accumulated data. Testing may confirm, modify, or lead to rejection of the theory.

"As a consequence of this semantic analysis, 'science' loses its mystical meaning. There is nothing in science to worship except what we ourselves put into it. This is true of every kind of mysticism, ancient or modern. The mystic resorts to words which have no real meaning, except possibly to the mystic himself—and there is no way of checking such completely subjective meanings. A typical semantic absurdity uttered by a mystical worshiper of

science is the following: "Truth is reality incarnated in humanly apprehensible terms."

"The worship of science is a false religion, but the scientific method is a useful tool in all phases of life. In fact, Jesus was the first to apply it to life as a whole. He anticipated by fifteen hundred years our discovery of it." On the last two sentences we enter a demurrer: the Son of God should not have been referred to in this fashion.

Discussing the changes that come about in the views of scientists, Dr. Luder says: "The theory of heat has been modified many times and is still the cause of considerable confusion in thermodynamics. The phlogiston theory was completely abandoned after many years' service as a satisfactory explanation of the observed facts of combustion. The theory of light is in disorder at the present time. Newton thought of a beam of light as a stream of particles. Later physicists were positive that they had demonstrated that Newton was wrong and that light is a wave motion. Now we find that light sometimes behaves like waves and at other times like a stream of particles. As yet no theory adequately explains both aspects of the behavior of light. Thus either the scientific method or the human mentality has limitations at any given point in history." How true! A.

Niebuhr on Palestine and Great Britain. — Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Seminary, who attended the recent Conference on World Order in Cambridge, England, convened by the World Council of Churches, sent an informative communication to R. N. S. on the subject mentioned, which we here reprint:

"A visit to Britain makes one realize how difficult the problem of mutual understanding between nations remains despite all the modern means of communication. Here we are two nations bound together by many ties of common heritage and only recently comrades-in-arms in a great struggle. Yet almost every problem has a somewhat different appearance from this side than from our side.

"At the moment the Palestinian issue is uppermost as a point of contention between us. The British feel that we do not understand the dangers which they face in the Middle East and that we are inclined to offer a great deal of advice without assuming our full share of responsibility. They claim they would be only too ready to share full responsibility with us for a Palestinian solution, if only we would come in.

"I am not altogether sure that this is the case. I am also not certain whether very well-meaning Britishers do not hide the strategic considerations which partly determine Palestinian policy and falsely assume that Britain is merely carrying a burden in the Middle East.

"From the American perspective, on the other hand, the British policy seems to suffer from some hysteria. The antisemitism of British troops in Palestine has become obvious; British officials in the Middle East are, from all accounts, too partial to the Arab

cause, and the reactions to the King David Hotel disaster are generally too emotional. British reactions seem to me to play into the hands of the extremists who contrived the hotel outrage.

"It is also disappointing to find a labor government so little interested in the creative democratic power which Jewish life would introduce into the Middle East. This is a consideration quite apart from the necessity of offering the homeless Jews of Europe a haven and a chance to live a sane life.

"Furthermore, the partition plan which has been proposed unfortunately is less generous than the one projected by the Peel commission in 1937. It does not offer the Jews a chance to build a home large enough to receive the homeless people who want to come to Palestine and it does not settle the issues with sufficient finality to prevent further friction in Palestine.

"The policy of the British government is, in other words, not sufficiently generous to satisfy even that part of American opinion which is not particularly devoted to Zionism. It is regrettable that this new source of friction should have arisen between the two nations, because there are so many other aspects of British policy, both domestic and foreign, which command the respect of progressive opinion in America.

"It is not likely that any satisfactory solution will be found unless American and British policy becomes much more inter-related even to the point of having a joint mandate. It is intolerable both for the British and for us that we should be in a situation of making demands without having a full share of the responsibility and the burden of carrying out the policy and of facing the consequences.

"The British seem to think that we are reluctant to assume such responsibilities. I do not know whether they are right. But I think this is another of many cases where American power impinges upon a situation but the instruments for continuing responsibility are inadequate."

Items from *Religious News Service*. — A Roman Catholic clergyman, Msgr. Luigi G. Ligutti, recently declared at a meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, that fifty per cent of the people in rural America are unchurched and pagan. According to his figures 80 per cent of Roman Catholics live in cities. Rural America, so he stated, historically should be Protestant, but the country population has been drifting away from the churches. We may add that the many vacant churches which the traveler meets are mute witnesses to the correctness of this clergyman's statement.

In Chester County, Pa., Roman Catholics made the attempt to obtain bus transportation for their children attending the Roman Catholic parish school. The court had been asked to oust twenty directors of the Kennett Square Consolidated School because these men had canceled public school bus transportation for parochial school students. Judge Ernest Harvey dismissed the petition stating that there was no evidence that the directors had not acted

in good faith. The fundamental question whether such bus transportation involved an infringement of the principle of separation of Church and State apparently did not enter into the argument.

The American section of the Lutheran World Federation released an important statement, calling for a "clear and constructive policy" with respect to attempts to re-educate and rehabilitate the German people. The statement concerns itself especially with prisoners of war. If the Allied governments fail to follow a just course, the German people may rather unanimously arrive at the conclusion that the justice for which the United Nations fought was "but an empty word, a propoganda device." The Allied governments are requested to accelerate the release of prisoners of war and to improve the material conditions of these unfortunate people.

Dr. Julius Bodensieck of the American Lutheran Church, now sojourning in Germany, recently expressed the opinion that "Germany's Protestant churches are turning more and more from religious liberalism to the fundamental teachings of the Bible for inspiration and guidance." The type of sermons which he heard, sermons that are positive testimonies to the all-sufficiency of God's grace and to the great need of forgiveness for sins, are the basis for his remarks. The people, so he avers, listen to these Biblical sermons with evident interest.

Northern Baptists in California number 138,724, while there are 15,000 Southern Baptists in 130 churches. California formerly was regarded as Northern Baptist territory, but now Southern Baptists, who, generally speaking, are more conservative, are becoming numerous and prominent.

In Kansas City, Mo., pastors of about 20 Methodist churches met and adopted a constitution and by-laws for the Evangelical Methodist Churches of America, inviting other congregations within the Methodist Church to join with them. About 100 congregations of Primitive Methodists in Illinois and Wisconsin are expected to become members. The intention is, as the president, Dr. J. H. Hamblen of Abilene, Tex., said, "to continue work for fundamental truth and old-fashioned beliefs."

Some time ago a Government official made the offhand remark that the War Assets Administration had a million Bibles to dispose of and only a few requests. As a result an avalanche of letters came requesting more than three million copies of the Scripture, so that the supply now is entirely gone. Let us hope that this is a sign that a true hunger for the Word of Life still exists.

How many Christians are there living in Palestine? A Roman Catholic speaker, the Rev. Thomas J. McMahon, national secretary of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, stated recently that there are only 125,000 Christians in that country. He pleaded for freedom of religion and of religious organizations in the Holy Land.

"Europe today is torn between the communist myth and spiritual faith. Man's desire is like two buckets on a rope. As the bucket of Utopia goes up the bucket of religious faith goes down. Stalin's bucket of Utopia seems to have reached its highest level. A revulsion of feeling may be expected in Russia when the people realize that all the promises of material well-being do not materialize. It is possible that the Russians may become fanatically religious before this century ends." — *Will Durant*.

According to an announcement made by Samuel S. Schneirson, chairman of the Board of Overseers of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, plans are on foot to raise during the next three years fifteen million dollars to establish a university of Judaism in New York. Ultimately it will include a school of Jewish education, a school of Jewish communal service, a center of Jewish music, arts, and letters, an expanded rabbinical school, and a school for advanced Jewish studies.

The Y. M. C. A. no longer is an all-male organization. There are now 151,933 women and girls who hold membership in it. The total membership at present is 1,411,341.

In Boston, during the closing session of the ninth triennial convention of the Greek Orthodox Church of North and South America, a resolution was approved to the effect that priests may marry after their ordination if they have permission from the Patriarch of Constantinople. According to former regulations, the marriage of priests was forbidden after the ordination had taken place.

In Germany Dr. J. W. E. Sommer, director of the Methodist Theological School at Frankfurt, was elected bishop of the Central Germany Methodist Conference. When he was installed 36 Methodist U. S. Army chaplains were present. Bishop Raymond J. Wade of Detroit presided. The latter announced that the outlook for Methodism in Germany "is extremely hopeful."

A lecturer from India recently stated that the non-Christian status of Mahatma Gandhi may be due to the treatment he received when he was a young man in Africa. On one occasion he desired to hear a famous English preacher and endeavored to enter the church where this man was delivering a sermon. At the door he was refused admission and told that the church was for white people only. The lecturer from India says that on account of that treatment Gandhi never again entered a Christian church. Sad from various points of view!

At the American Lutheran Church convention held in October in Appleton, Wis., it was resolved to give Negro pastors full status of District membership in the District in which they reside. Formerly they were not granted such membership nor permitted to vote at District conventions.