

2-1-1947

Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

J. T. Mueller

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mueller, J. T. (1947) "Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 18, Article 12.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol18/iss1/12>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

Theological Observer

Can a Preacher Throw Light on Inspiration?—The *Lutheran Outlook* (November, 1946) continues its discussion of the question of Biblical inspiration with an article contributed by a Lutheran pastor (U. L. C. A.) who evidently means to unite the two wings in Lutheranism in America, one of which affirms verbal inspiration, while the other denies it. He "cannot make the manner of Inspiration a question of controversy," as he writes; for "in a sense, it is a *Verbal Inspiration* [italics in the original], as God's message has come to me in words." However, he goes on to say: "But I know that often words are weak instruments, earthen vessels, indeed." We regard this second statement as irrelevant to the question, for certainly, as used by God Himself, the divine words are not weak instruments, but very clear and powerful means of conveying God's thoughts to men. If that is denied, then the whole doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture must be denied. Again, we have no right to deny the divine inspiration of the Bible on the ground that words in general are "earthen vessels." The doctrine of verbal inspiration is a Scripture doctrine and should be taught and confessed as all the other doctrines of God's sacred Book. In his conclusion the writer says: "The wise Lutheran preacher knows that it is necessary to agree not upon the theory of Inspiration, but on the purity of the Gospel message and the right administration of the Sacraments. That emphasis will help to bring the factions and fractions of the body of Christ together." We regard this attempt to heal the breach in Zion as futile. The suggestion really means that Lutherans should skip the doctrine of the divine inspiration of the Bible and emphasize the purity of the Gospel message and the right administration of the Sacraments. But how can Lutheran theologians agree on the purity of the Gospel message and the administration of the Sacraments if the Bible is not divinely inspired? If the Bible is partly human and so fallible, then also the "Gospel message" may be partly human and fallible, and the doctrine of the Sacraments may be partly human and fallible, so that we must allow for a wide leeway in the whole range of Christian theology in general. No, indeed, the *sola Scriptura*, and that includes the teaching of divine inspiration, is as essential for sound doctrine as is the *sola gratia*. The latter cannot exist without the former. In a way, the undersigned is glad that the controversy was renewed in the *Lutheran Outlook*, for thus it has become manifest that after all there is not that full agreement in doctrine among the various Lutheran churches which has been claimed. J. T. M.

The Need for Bible Institutes.—Ernest Gordon under this heading editorially comments in the *Sunday School Times* (Nov. 30, 1946) on an article in the *Christian Century* in which the editor seems very much perturbed at the growth of Bible training schools.

[141]

Mr. Gordon quotes him as writing: "Among the Baptists and the Disciples they [the Bible Institutes] actually enroll more candidates for the ministry than all their educationally responsible seminaries combined, and the Presbyterians are threatened in the same way. Thousands of half-orphaned local churches have become victims of this invasion." But Mr. Gordon believes that there is reason why so many churches are turning away from the seminaries, securing for themselves as pastors graduates of Bible schools. One reason is the "mercenary spirit" present in some seminaries about which the *Presbyterian Tribune* (April, 1946) writes: "I have heard story after story of men fresh from the seminary, untested and unknown quantities, laughing at calls of \$2,100. What will be the eventual outcome in terms of small churches, of new fields? The questions answer themselves. . . . The faculty adviser of seniors in a large seminary privately confessed his dismay at the demands and attitudes of those he sought to advise. So the Presbyterian Church faces a critical condition in terms of its ministry." Continuing his account, Mr. Gordon relates how Colgate-Rochester in its Bulletin in May, 1943, has sought to attract students by pointing out to candidates that Colgate-Rochester graduates receive an annual income of \$2,818.00 while that of the Southern Baptist Convention amounts to only \$474.51, that of "all denominations," to \$672.29, and that of the Northern Baptist Convention, to \$1,037.75. But that is not all. Gordon says: "In his inaugural address as fourth president of Crozer, October 31, 1944, Dr. Edwin Aubrey gave this picture of life in a typical 'Modernist' seminary: 'Once in the seminary, the theological student should work intensively at his studies. When they are as heavily subsidized as our ministerial students are, we should be able to command their full time. Too many are working long hours on outside tasks that make no contribution to their training. Too many are actually making money out of a seminary course while they are beneficiaries of funds given to make their studies possible. Too many students are marrying before, or during, their seminary training not in order to share their preparation with their wives, but either to exploit their wives as homemakers and even as bread-winners, while they enjoy their intellectual development, or else to have the comforts denied to other professional trainees, while the school foots the bill. . . . A radical review of our scholarship program and of our students' outside work is called for. When a student can boast of clearing a thousand dollars in his seminary course, to quote an instance once reported to me, the administration may well examine its own trusteeship of its funds. . . .'" But there is a still more sinister note. In his address Dr. Aubrey said: "A seminary is itself a community, and in its life are built up the attitudes, good and bad, that shape a man's career. Much that passes for personal freedom in the academic community is simply irresponsibility. . . . More definite cultivation of the devotional life is desirable. *Where is it harder to conduct*

a service of worship than in a theological school? [Italics in the original.] Surely here, if anywhere, men and women should find it possible to live as a little Christian community." Students, however, not only neglect their studies, but are also given courses which do not help them become able ministers. Dr. Gordon quotes Professor Donovan of Andover Newton, writing in the *Crozer Quarterly* (July, 1943), as saying: "Courses undreamed of fifty years ago deal with philosophy in its bearings on religion, with various aspects of psychology, with social relations, with the study of other religions, with pedagogy, music, literature, drama, and pageantry," while they are not at all encouraged to an intensive study of the Bible for expository preaching and pastoral help. Former President Palmer of Chicago Seminary says that Greek and Hebrew may be studied, but are not required. "This makes room for studies in social and psychological fields which we consider as far more useful for the modern minister. We also emphasize courses in religious education, church administration, religious drama and literature, speech, music, missions, and even provide optional training in arts and crafts." There is much in Dr. Gordon's article that we must omit, but the reader may bear with us as we quote a few more of his statements. He says: "Our quotations from the official bulletins of these seminaries display the moral results that have followed this "newer day," which day is, after all, essentially the darkness of eighteenth century deism. One consequence of all this has been the extraordinary upsurging of the Bible institute movement. The institutes teach the Bible and believe the Bible and saturate their students with the Bible. They are winning away from apostate seminaries the interest and affection of thousands of churches. This is as true of the major ones, as the Moody Bible Institute, the National Bible Institute (New York), and Biola in Southern California, as of the little ones that are coming into existence constantly. Some indeed carry on mission work directly. The Prairie Bible Institute in Alberta has 700 registered students, besides 340 in its high school and 90 in its grammar school. Also an outgrowth [exists] in the West Indies, with little training schools in Cuba, San Domingo, Haiti, and Jamaica. In its Cuban churches are some 7,000 members; in the Haitian ones, 30,000. One is astonished that these many Bible schools can find support. Only the good hand of God upon them can explain it. The Providence Bible Institute in Rhode Island has 321 students and many buildings. A Far Eastern Bible institute and seminary has just been opened in Manila." Mr. Gordon then mentions other prominent Bible institutes and their large attendances in our country. He closes his article with the words: "This is God's answer, or at least some answer, to the theologians' scheme of bringing the Church's seminaries over to the outstanding postulates of near-Unitarianism. These schools may indeed have shortcomings, but they reverence the Bible and teach the Bible, and this fact carries with it the blessing of God for their

future."—What Mr. Gordon here writes is certainly deserving of careful consideration. The Bible institute may indeed be the solution of the problem confronting Christians in the liberal Reformed areas of our land; but they are not the solution which we Lutherans can accept. We demand for ourselves continuation of our orthodox seminaries with primary emphasis on the study of the Bible in the original and especially, on the Christian doctrine, based upon the Bible. But the ruinous trends of our errant theological world may also influence our seminaries and afflict us with the blight of Modernism, of a mercenary spirit, and, in general, of worldly attitudes. So constant watchfulness on the part of our whole Church is necessary and, more than this even, perpetual intercession and, where it becomes necessary, helpful criticism offered with brotherly love.

J. T. M.

Recent German Publications.—A number of internationally known German publishing houses are again in operation. Though it is still impossible to obtain German publications through the mails, our readers will be interested in knowing the type of theological material which is being disseminated among the German clergy. The Christian Kaiser Verlag in Munich has published the following in recent months:

Evangelische Theologie, a quarterly established in 1934 and suspended from 1938 to 1946, editor Prof. D. Ernst Wolf, contributing editors Profs. H. Iwand and W. Trillhaas. RM. 3.20. The editor has been professor at Goettingen for some time, while the contributing editors joined the faculty at Goettingen during the past summer. The first number contains three interesting articles: "Menschwerdung des Menschen," in which Professor Wolf sketches the antithesis between Christianity and Humanism; "*Sed originale per hominem unum*," by Professor Iwand, who shows the distinction between original and actual sin, using Luther's classic expression as his thesis: *actualia (peccata) enim omnia per diabolum inrant et intraverunt in mundum, sed originale (peccatum) per hominem unum*; "Wahrheit und Wissenschaft," by Karl Stoevesandt.

Theologische Existenz Heute. The first number in the new series of this well-known collection of theological studies brings an article by Goetz Harbsmeier, "Die Verantwortlichkeit der Kirche in der Gegenwart." RM. 1.20.

In addition to these two journals we list the following books:

Martin Niemoeller, *Zu verkuendigen ein gnaediges Jahr des Herrn* (six sermons preached at Dachau Concentration Camp). RM. 1.30, 64 S. — Paul Schempp, *Geschichte und Predigt vom Sundenfall*, 144 S., RM. 3.60. — Gerhard Schmidt, *Katechetische Anleitung*, 118 S. — Gerhard Schmidt, *Handwerkliches zum kirchlichen Unterricht*, 4. Aufl., RM. 1.10. — Friedrich Loy, *Glaube und Leben, eine evangelische Ethik*. — Wolfgang Trillhaas, *Grundzuege der Religionspsychologie*, 168 S., RM. 4.00. — Edmund Schlinck, *Die Theologie der Lutherischen Bekenntnisse*, 2te Aufl., 432 S. The

second printing of this work was under way last summer, and it is assumed that it is now completed. This splendid text grew out of Dr. Schlinck's lectures on dogmatics while professor at Bethel-Bielefeld. The author, now at Heidelberg, is conservative and has taken an active part in the work of the Bekennende Kirche.

Among the many tracts and pamphlets on current problems in theology and ethics the following may be listed: Edmund Schlinck, *Die Gnade Gottes im Gericht*. Bertelsmann-Verlag, Gutersloh. Based on sermons preached at Bielefeld in 1945, while the author was professor at Bethel. Except for a slight departure in the doctrine of Church and State, the author sharply distinguishes between Law and Gospel. — W. Jannasch, *Hat die Kirche geschwiegen?* A discussion of the position of the Confessing Church toward the Third Reich. — Karl Jaspers, *Die Schuldfrage*. A Heidelberg professor of philosophy discusses the question so uppermost in the minds of many theological and cultural leaders in Germany. — Herman Diem, *Restauration oder Neuanfang in der Evangelischen Kirche?* The author comes to grips with the organizational problems confronting the Church in the program of reconstruction. — Christian Stoll, *Jahrbuch des Lutherbundes 1946*. This is a collection of eighteen articles by such members of the Lutherbund as Sasse, ("Luthers Vermaechtnis an die Christenheit"); Preuss ("Martin Luther — Gipfel und Abgrund"); v. Boltenstern ("Gottes Barmherzigkeit in grossen Katastrophen"); Kuenneth ("Fragen und Gedanken um das Altarsakrament"); Heuer ("Die liturgische Bewegung in unserer Kirche"); Kressel ("Luther und die Liturgie"). It will be noted that the liturgy receives considerable attention. Not only among the Berneuchen school adherents in Northern Germany, but also in Bavaria and Wuerttemberg the liturgy is frequently discussed. There are several reasons for this, the chief factor being, that the Communion attendance in many provinces had reached an unbelievably low level. As a result the theologians have given much thought to the question of the Lord's Supper and to the liturgy in general. In fact, the term "liturgical movement" frequently denotes no more than the renewed interest in the Lord's Supper. (On Dec. 6 Christian Stoll and J. V. Bogner of the Bavarian Church lost their lives in an auto accident.)

Karl Barth, *Die Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland nach dem Zusammenbruch*. Like most of Barth's writings, this little brochure contains many fundamental truths. But the Reformed view becomes evident in several instances, particularly concerning the doctrine of Church and State. He states: "Die Erkenntnis der Gewalt Jesu Christi ueber alle Gewalten ruft nach dem Nachsatz, dass auch der Staat als oeffentliche Rechtsordnung zu seinem [Christi] und nicht zu einem anderen Reich gehoert. Und die Erkenntnis der unmittelbaren und totalen Zugehoerigkeit jedes einzelnen Menschen zu diesem Herrn [this reminds one very strongly of Calvin's common grace] ruft nach dem Nach-

satz, dass der rechte Staat jedenfalls auf der Linie zu suchen ist, die irgend einmal zur freien Verantwortlichkeit jedes einzelnen Buergers und also des ganzen Volkes und also zur Demokratie fuehren muss, und sicher nicht auf einer anderen Linie." (P. 27.) There is much praise for the members of the Confessing Church and severe denunciation of the German Christians. There is also a most unfortunate attack upon the bishops of Hannover, Bavaria, and Wuerttemberg. Barth condemns them as "middle-of-the-road" men, as standing between the Confessing Church and the German Christians, and thus proving themselves to be abettors of Naziism. He writes: "Es waren, merkwuerdig genug, hier (Marahens und Meiser) der lutherische, dort (Wurm) der reformierte Konfessionalismus, die sich in dieser 'Mitte' die Hand reichten. Und waren gleichzeitig die autoritaer-legitimistischen Instinkte und Tendenzen einer bischoeflich-konsistorialen Kirchlichkeit und politisch nun eben doch die Gesinnung der Deutschnationalen, die man hier zu einem Bremsklotz zusammenwachsen sah, der bestimmt das schwerste Hindernis gewesen ist, dass die protestantische Widerstandsbewegung [the Confessing Church] in der Hitlerzeit nicht zu voller Entfaltung kommen liess. Man sollte sich das gerade in der Schweiz und auch in den Kreisen der Oekumene wohl vor Augen halten: Wer heute nun ausgerechnet diese 'Kraefte' des deutschen Protestantismus hochschaeetzt und unterstuetzt, der lobt damit, was die Vergangenheit betrifft, diejenigen, die die ernstlich und entschieden Kaempfernden dauernd im Stich gelassen haben, ihnen dauernd in den Ruecken gefallen sind—und der foerdert, was die Zukunft betrifft, die Restauration, um nicht zu sagen die Reaktion in der deutschen Kirche, den Konfessionalismus, den bischoeflich-konsistorialen Bureaukratismus 'and last but not least' den deutschen Nationalismus, der, wenn irgendwo in der Kirche, dann eben in diesen 'Kraeften' seinen gefaehrlichen Rueckhalt haben wird." (P. 19.) Barth hates confessionalism. He considers the Barmen Theses, largely his work, a sufficient basis for church fellowship and the confessions of the Reformation as unnecessary and antiquated. His shibboleth is: "Wir muessen die Bekenntnisschriften aufrollen." Barth does not like the Lutheran episcopal form of church government and prefers the representative form as it is found in the Reformed provinces of Western Germany. We, too, have much fault to find with the form of church government in the Lutheran provinces, but the charges preferred by Barth against the Lutheran bishops are unwarranted and in our opinion emanate from his Reformed view, which advocates an aggressive policy toward a godless government. Lutheran theology takes a different position. It renders obedience also to evil governments as long as one is not compelled to do something contrary to the Word of God. The Lutheran bishops repeatedly protested against Hitler's interference in church affairs and were given house arrest by the Nazis.

F. E. MAYER

The Problem of Germany's Youth.—According to information sent by Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, Germany's youth are eager to understand, and re-establish contact with, those of other countries from whom they have been cut off for many years. Having visited a number of German youth centers, the general secretary stated: "There is a disposition toward hopelessness throughout Germany, especially among the youth. This is based not only on material needs, but especially upon the fact that no one as yet sees a sign that there will be a newer, better time coming." The Germans, so he pointed out, are kept in a state of isolation and do not realize that there is need and distress in other countries, too. In Tuebingen he addressed a gathering of eleven hundred students, who were eager to know what the youth of other lands believe and hope. He has suggested to the military authorities in Germany to allow large numbers of students to study abroad. According to his statement, plans have been made to permit German students to attend the World Christian Youth Conference to be held in Oslo. A.

Church Work in Sweden.—In an interesting article having the caption "What Does Sweden Expect of a Pastor?" Prof. Carl E. Rasmussen of Gettysburg, who recently visited in Europe, describes vividly the work that is done by Lutheran pastors in the State Church of Sweden. We quote a few paragraphs from his article which appeared in the *Lutheran* of December 11.

"The pastor has to give little time to winning new members. More than ninety-five per cent of the people in his parish are already members of his congregation. Confirmation classes take care of the additions to the membership. All but a few will in early adolescence enter the adult roll by that route. The pastor has very limited responsibility in the field of Christian education. The children are taught the Lutheran view of Christianity in the State's school system. The pastor will each year conduct his catechetical class, to prepare the children for confirmation. The pastor does not have to give any thought to the annual every-member canvass and its attendant pledges for church support. For the church is supported by taxes, which the church does not have to collect. The pastor may feel heavyhearted if the parishioners do not attend church; but the bills will not pile up if the people do not come. No church council will hint to the pastor that he had better preach more to the liking of the contributors, or lay a glad hand on their shoulders. The pastor has no responsibility for the keeping of the Communion roll. For there is no such roll at all. The only record kept merely reports the total number communing at each service. There are neither weekly envelopes nor quarterly statements. For in addition to the taxes for church expenses, benevolence contributions are spontaneously and unanimously dropped into the offering boxes or—on certain occasions—laid on the altar by the donors.

"Nobody remarks that it is a long time since the pastor has called on him; for the pastor is not expected to call. How could he, with parishes of thousands? One parish in Stockholm has 80,000 members! Many of the pastors in the large parishes preach less than one sermon per week. Being a large parish, it will likely have a staff of pastors. If a pastor nevertheless chooses to build into his program some of the unexpected activities—which are almost taken for granted in America—the fact is reported as news! . . ."

Continuing, Dr. Rasmussen points out that "one must not conclude that the life of a pastor in Sweden is an easy one. On the contrary, he says, the pastor has to work hard. Particularly in the cities, practically every church has a prescribed hour every weekday when one or more of the pastors will be available in his office. The church keeps all vital statistics for Sweden. That makes an astonishing amount of work for the pastor. Imagine what it does to the pastor's time just to conduct the funerals in parishes of such magnitude! Civil marriages are legal in Sweden, but nearly all choose to be married by the pastors. One is startled to think of the size of catechetical classes. He who has called on the sick in a congregation of 1,200 or 1,500 trembles a bit to think what it means to call on the sick in a Swedish parish. In Sweden, too, the pastor has his society and organization meetings. The great majority of the Church's benevolent works are carried on by voluntary societies. So the effectiveness of the work depends much on aggressive local promotion. And finally, there is a higher tradition of scholarship in the ministry in Sweden than in America. The very preparation of the ministerial candidate is illustrative. In the American church up to 50 per cent of the student's time may be given to the practical department. In Sweden the course for ministerial candidates takes seven or eight years after high school. Of this time only a half year is devoted to practical studies. The stress is on the scholarly. The result is a surprising output of all kinds of serious literature from pastoral pens. 'How do you find time for all your writing?' I asked a Stockholm pastor. 'By sleeping only five or six hours per night, and making up a bit with a short afternoon nap,' he replied."

A.

How Can Our National and International Difficulties be Solved?—On this subject the *Presbyterian* of December 19 prints a letter written by a gentleman in Pittsburgh, which should be carefully read and pondered. We reprint the greater part of it.

"In view of the present crisis featured by the United Nations negotiations now in progress in our midst and the critical coal strike, all Christians individually and through their respective churches should be praying and working for the Christian solution of these and like problems.

"There should be immediately inaugurated an all-out Christian revival throughout the nation and the world beginning at

Jerusalem (that is, at home). Such a revival should be instructive, inspirational, and practical. No new organization or machinery is needed but rather lighting the Christian spark under each Christian individually and under each existing Christian organization, with the purpose of having the Christians in each community individually and through their respective churches not only pray and preach but practice in home, business, and political life Christ's teachings and program.

"Obviously, Christians should tackle with confidence and persistence such current problems as the conflict between capital and labor and the demoralization caused by liquor and the crime wave which is prevailing at home and abroad. By united effort Christians can successfully cope with these baffling problems. At the start a nation-wide or, better, a world-wide revival should be undertaken but with the avowed purpose of following such revival effort with a continuing program."

It would seem practical for various communities throughout the nation to join in Sunday evening services which would be a combination of evangelism and practical application of Christianity to the existing personal and community problems. Such a united Christian program could include Christians of all churches, including the Catholics. Or such unity as could be secured at the start would be adequate especially if other Christian groups and churches would simultaneously conduct a similar program in their own way. Such a comprehensive and adequate effort would command the support of the secular press and many citizens who now are not affiliated with any church. Many of the latter, including millions of young people, have no confidence in the effectiveness of the Church's present activity and program.

"At the present moment, instead of trying to cure our labor troubles with court injunctions and our crime problems by having the Protestant ministers in Steubenville asking police powers and the United Nations being left to the godless environment of our great metropolis, we should be seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit in using the Christian ounce of preventive against the pound of punitive cure."

Let us all admit that the writer in the *Presbyterian* is on the right road. What he advocates in the line of unionistic vagaries we naturally do not endorse. But that there should be a resurgence of true, that is, Apostolic Christianity, the Christianity which in the dreadful days of persecution overcame the world, who can deny it? And that such a resurgence, if it were world-wide, would produce profound results, is there anybody disposed to doubt it? The old evil triple alliance, it is true, will not abdicate, but its sphere of influence can be greatly reduced.

The last days are upon us, nothing can be done, says somebody in the spirit of defeatism. That sentiment is only half right. Yes, the last days are upon us, and that is the very reason why the means of rescue at our disposal should be used with greater zeal and diligence than ever before. In the Lutheran

Church we do not like the word revival, undoubtedly on account of the excesses that have been perpetrated under that name. But if the term is meant to signify obedience to the call of repentance issued by the heavenly Master to the church at Laodicea (Rev. 3), we can have no quarrel with its meaning. The season of Lent, let us not overlook the fact, beckons us ministers to preach repentance to our congregations. A.

The Methodist and Episcopalian Rapprochement.—The religious press is giving a good deal of discussion to the suggestion that has been made in view of the failure of Presbyterians and Episcopalians to achieve union, that two Churches which are related as mother and daughter, the Protestant Episcopal and the Methodist Churches, should resolve their differences and form one body. A writer in the *Christian Century*, a former Methodist lay reader and now an Episcopalian rector, tries to analyze the difficulties and possibilities (see the issue of December 25). He is opposed to what some advocate—"a whirlwind courtship and a swift marriage." According to our authority, the schism between the two Churches has a deep social background: the Episcopalians, generally speaking, were inclined to side with Great Britain, and the Methodists with the Thirteen Colonies when the War of Independence was fought. Methodism got to be the religion of the frontiers, with their rough-and-tumble tactics; Episcopalianism remained reserved, staid, formally correct.

Furthermore, the opinions in the two bodies on Wesley differ, and this difference in evaluation is a mighty factor in keeping the bodies apart, says our author, more even than the problem "of orders, succession, and sacramental theory." Next, one must consider the difference in the conduct of services, Methodists believing in spontaneity, Episcopalians in following their Book of Common Prayer. The differences are, however, continually becoming less marked, each side taking over some features from the work and ideals of the other. Both churches have the Episcopal system, which, surprisingly, is more like that of the Roman Catholics with the Methodists than with the Episcopalians, the latter leaning somewhat more toward Congregationalism.

But there are other difficulties, difficulties caused not by interchurch relations, but by conditions within each one of the two denominations. A severe struggle is on in both, the controversy between Fundamentalism and Modernism. To the superficial observer it may seem that Episcopalians are seriously at odds among themselves on what is called churchmanship, the issue between the High Church and the Low Church parties. This is an erroneous view. There is a perturbing clash, but both opposing sides have their representatives in the High Church and the Low Church parties; it is the struggle between the Liberals and the Fundamentalists. The same thing is true of Methodism. "In every annual Conference there are liberal and fundamental blocs, clerical and lay." The author thinks that when the spirit which prompts

Modernists and Conservatives to live together as brethren in one and the same denomination begins to assert itself in the relations between the church bodies, "then there will be hope for union." The problem, says he, must be tackled at the grass roots; the work of commissions has often merely caused embarrassment. There have to be local discussions; let the theological leaders confer; let the opinions of the laity be ascertained; and by all means let there be prayer for unity. So ends the article in the *Christian Century*.

A few comments will have to suffice. The article is symptomatic of Reformed theology. A Lutheran divine would have written differently. He would have classified the differences as belonging either to a group of issues decided in the Scriptures or to a group on which the Scriptures are silent, and every Church has the right to follow what it considers most expedient and proper. The writer of the article lets matters of doctrine fade out of the picture. He, unconsciously, we trust, adopts the view of pragmatism: that course is to be chosen which will bring the desired results. He does not find it contrary to loyalty to the truth that people who adhere to the old standards of doctrine have fellowship with others who deny practically every one of the specifically Christian teachings. That is a stand which the Lutheran Church always has condemned and will continue to condemn. A.

Brief Items.—The Army chief of chaplains, Luther D. Miller, has issued a call for 600 former chaplains to re-enlist. Both in our own country and abroad the Army needs more chaplains.

In November, 1946, Kirsopp Lake, well-known N. T. scholar, departed this life. According to a report in the *Christian Century*, he of late had been living in South Pasadena, Calif. His specialty was the field of textual criticism; and he will always be remembered for the penetrating work he did with respect to the so-called Caesarean text of the Gospels. To him we owe the photostatic reproduction of Codex Sinaiticus, of which the Pritzlaff Library of our St. Louis Concordia Seminary is fortunate enough to own a copy.

Brief Items from *Religious News Service*.—There is an organization in our country called the Lord's Day Alliance. It recently, in New York, held its 58th annual meeting. Among its resolutions was one criticizing UN committees for holding sessions on Sundays.

In Canada a Presbyterian pastor, according to a Dec. 3 dispatch, complained that "non-denominational Bible missionaries are to some degree causing disintegration among the denominations and giving rise to numerous independent groups." There you have the result of Modernism, destructive higher criticism, and naturalistic philosophy. The common man does not care for learned speculations and doubts; he wants the Word of God.

At the meeting of the Federal Council of Churches held the early part of December in Seattle, Wash., it was announced that the Washington, D. C., office of the Federal Council would continue to function as an information bureau.

At Bloomfield, N. J., there is a school known as the Bloomfield College and Seminary belonging to the Presbyterian Church. In November and December more than forty active labor union members took a seven weeks' course there designed to help them counteract communistic influences in their organizations. Among the subjects treated were labor's right and responsibilities under the Wagner Act.

Presbyterians are endeavoring to organize their young people. The first national meeting of young people in the history of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (Northern Presbyterians) will be held in Grinnell, Iowa, June 30 to July 4. Each presbytery has been asked to send three delegates. The meeting will represent 500,000 young people between the ages of 12 and 23. From 10 to 15 foreign countries will send participants.

Methodists have announced their mission budget for 1947-1948. The total is \$9,381,319. Of this amount, foreign missions, carried on in forty countries, are to receive \$3,371,393. Home missions were allotted \$2,010,475, and for the women's division of Christian service the sum of \$3,999,451 was appropriated.

The Columbians are an anti-Jewish and anti-Negro group with headquarters in Atlanta, Ga. It is said to be responsible for a tense situation in the city mentioned.

The State of Wisconsin voted against public bus transportation for pupils of parochial schools. The majority against the measure was quite formidable; it had 107,658 votes more than the other side. In Milwaukee County the idea received approval with a majority of 2,012. Lutherans opposed free transportation, although they maintain parochial schools.

In spite of vigorous Protestant protests, Myron C. Taylor, the President's personal representative to the Vatican, has again left for Rome to assume his so-called "mission in behalf of peace."

In Shanghai there is a Christian school called St. John's University, which is one of the thirteen Christian colleges supported by American Protestants through the Associated Boards. For the first time in the history of the institution a Chinese has been chosen to be its president, Dr. Y. C. Tu.

Over seven million units of insulin donated by American Lutherans have been received by *Hilfswerk*, welfare agency of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKiD).

At Winona Lake, Ind., well known for its church meetings in summertime, the institutions that are devoted to commercial purposes will have to pay taxes. The properties were assessed for the first time this year after a group of taxpayers protested against the granting of exemptions.

Mrs. Harriet C. Stevens, the widow of a Baptist missionary, who with her husband worked in Burma, recently celebrated her 105th birthday. She was graduated from Bucknell University in 1858 and is the oldest living alumna of that school. She won fame as a translator of the Bible into Burmese and founder of a school for girls. Of her seven children five are living.

When the General Council (Sobor) of the Russian Orthodox Church in America recently met in Cleveland, it resolved to recognize Moscow leadership of the Church on condition that the American body be granted complete autonomy and may elect its own ruling head. More than 300 lay and clerical delegates from 275 Russian Orthodox parishes in this country formed the gathering.

Seventh-Day Adventists in all major countries will receive the denomination's paper *The Review and Herald* in their respective tongues, beginning with the first of the year. The languages in question are French, German, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese, and Afrikaans. A condensed English version will be sent to Australia, Great Britain, South Africa, and the English-speaking West Indies.

In view of our mission venture in the Philippine Islands one reads with interest that four Presbyterian church officials, who arrived in this country after a three months' survey of religious conditions in the Philippines and Siam, speak of an urgent need of facilities for recruiting and training clergymen in the Philippine Islands.

In New York the question of a municipal lottery is being discussed. The Protestant Council of the City of New York very correctly called the proposed method of raising money a scheme which is "in reality one of the most cruel forms of taxation." It is pointed out that those who would participate would be individuals in the lowest income brackets. The people that would be exploited would be the underprivileged.

The Hearst Foundation, Inc., has turned over \$500,000 to four Catholic bishops of California for the restoration of the early Catholic missions in that State. These missions, founded by Spanish Franciscans between 1769 and 1777, extend from San Diego to San Francisco and consist of picturesque structures.

In Chicago, the Broadway Methodist Church has added a full-time psychologist and a new counseling clinic to its resources. It is announced that Paul Fruhling, a psychologist with psychiatric and psychotherapy training, will conduct the clinic, with the Rev. Robert E. Tinker, minister of the church, as his assistant.

Cardinal Griffin, archbishop of Westminster, states that his church will establish four centers in Great Britain where nuns and religious brothers will be trained in child-care methods. Rome does not fail to see the strategic importance of this kind of endeavor.