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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

A Bouquet to Our Statistical Bureau.—The *Christian Century* (April, 23), commenting on the fact that Rome publicizes the "conversion" of prominent persons to Catholicism, states that for every well-publicized convert, hundreds of persons quietly fall away; many to become religiously indifferent, some turning to Protestantism. The editor continues: "How numerous that proportion is will continue to be a mystery, so far as the public is concerned, until other denominations begin to keep the kind of records kept by the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church. That most conservative of Lutheran denominations reported a total of 1,280 converts from Roman Catholicism in 1945. According to the *Lutheran*, which quoted this figure, the *Catholic Register* tried to prove from it that not more than 25,600 Roman Catholics became Protestants in that year. That was a considerable admission for a Catholic paper to make, but the truth is that the figure is probably three or four times as high. The Missouri Synod contains about one-fortieth of all the Protestant church members in this country. Multiply the number of converts received into that church by 40, and the total is a little over 50,000. But that assumes that no other Protestant church is more attractive to Catholics than this rigorously fundamentalist body. This is possible but unlikely. So the figure of Missouri Synod converts still has validity as a basis for comparison, but it would have to be multiplied by a larger factor. In any event, this Lutheran statistic proves that conversion is a two-way street."—Excepting for the statement that Missouri is "rigorously fundamentalist" (Missouri is conservative, orthodox, but not fundamentalist as the term is used today) the editorial is factual. F. E. M.

Prayer Program for Pious Pagans.—By resolution of the United Council of Church Women in conjunction with the Federal Council of Churches, Feb. 21, 1947, was observed as a "World's Day of Prayer." From the special program prepared for this "World's Day of Prayer" the *Presbyterian Guardian*, April 10, 1947, quotes a number of paragraphs to point out the pagan character of that service. The article says: "A spirit of blindness and strong delusion permeated the worship service. Confession of sins which are no sins stained the early part of program, which included this confession of sins: 'Leader: For our sin of intolerance which has closed our eyes and our hearts to fine contributions which might have made us all richer and happier, we pray. We have not remembered that a wealth of philosophy and literature could have reached us from India; that song in its loftiest cadence was the gift of Africa; that from China and Japan come the most delicate forms of art; that Europe has its form of organized industry and America her vigor and youth. In our enthusiasm for the growth of our own little systems we have

failed miserably, each one of us, to realize that each culture and each religion might have its own gift for the enrichment of the whole. We have imagined that devotion, sincerity, holiness, and humility are the exclusive possessions of our own group. For this our sin of intolerance, *People: Our Father, forgive us.*" On this the writer comments: "The philosophy of India of which the United Council of Church Women confess their neglect, is religious through and through, and can be found on the ecstatic lips of cult leaders in the cities of America. The gift of Africa to the world can hardly be described in terms of loftiest cadence. It had better be called 'Boogiewoogie.' And one may doubt that American women have turned up their noses at the delicate art of China and Japan. But if they did, it would only reflect their taste, not their sin. The 'organized industry' of Europe has taught a few tricks to American labor agitators, such as the sit-down strike. Perhaps the women want more of this. America's 'vigor of youth' is evidently something which the women have neglected and for which neglect they pray God's forgiveness. But the attack presses on against the exclusiveness of Christianity: 'Each religion might have its own gift for the enrichment of the whole.' This confession explains why, on page 9 of the program, John 14:6 is cut in half, with the last half omitted—'No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.'" Another paragraph from the worship program reads as follows: "*People: Though the earth is dark and the stars are bright, this is my faith: there is a hidden light in man. . . . Though all men have different faces, different minds, this is my faith: one heart moves them all. Though atoms, forces, lives, fates, graces, times, each from the other differs, each fighting for supremacy—this is my faith: all are traveling under the cloud of unknowingness, to the all-soul's temple of rest.*" And here is the comment of the writer: "In reciting these words the women do obeisance to the pantheism of Christian Science. Jesus is not necessary to such a faith. None needs to be saved, for all are traveling, willy-nilly, the road to Nirvana." The comment is well expressed. It was a pagan worship which the United Council of Church Women performed on the World's Day of Prayer, involving a total denial of Christ and His vicarious atonement. And is that the type of worship which the Federal Council will spread wherever it is given authority?

J. T. M.

Roman Work-Righteousness in 1530 and 1947.—Melancthon says in the Apology that the Papacy places the "works of the lousy monks" on a par with the work of Christ, and in the German translation Justus Jonas expresses his disgust at such a doctrine by adding: "*Pfui des leidigen Teufels!*" But what of this contribution to the correspondence page of *America*, February 22, 1947: "During Lent the nibbling of a candy bar, or anything with a food content between permitted meals, is a violation of the Church's law on fasting: and is therefore a sin. In this day and age, as the

world seems heading for the abyss, the Catholic laity should feel a profound obligation to make some reparation to God for the sins of humanity. In the Old Dispensation, prayer and fasting were the divine prescriptions for penance; so the Church in the New gives us a similar code. Why do we not joyfully embrace it?"

F. E. M.

Dispensation from Canon 1102. — According to this canon all sacred rites are forbidden in connection with a mixed marriage. Only in the event that great harm would come to the Catholic Church are mixed marriages performed in the church. In recent years this rule has been somewhat relaxed and more freely interpreted, so that today in 30 out of the 110 American dioceses mixed marriages may be performed in the church. When the archbishop of South Carolina granted a similar dispensation from Canon 1102 he specifically stated that other former stipulations are not modified, such as, "that there must be a *just condition* (italics our own) asking that the marriage take place in the Catholic church; both parties must have pre-nuptial instructions given by a priest; and the marriages may not be performed on Sundays or after 6 P.M. on any day." In spite of the dispensation, *To Sign or Not to Sign*, p. 16, states correctly that the Roman Church *ordinarily* does not "bless" mixed marriages.

F. E. M.

Budenz' Story. — According to a review of Mr. Louis F. Budenz' "This Is My Story," in *America*, March 29, 1947, Mr. Budenz was raised in the Roman Catholic Church and received all of his schooling in Roman Catholic schools. However, "very early in his life he married himself out of the Catholic Church. Considering the devout household in which he grew up, the breadth of his Catholic reading and schooling, and his early zeal for the lay apostolate, this impossible step seems out of character. If one may hazard an explanation of this *mesalliance* and the subsequent lapse into Communism, it might be found in a highly emotional temperament." The review states that Msgr. Sheen unnerved Budenz by launching into a portrayal of the role of the blessed Virgin Mary in Catholic life and that Budenz was unable to find rest for his conscience unless he broke with Moscow and returned again to Rome. The much publicized conversion of Budenz to the Roman Catholic Church appears in a slightly different light when one considers his early religious training.

F. E. M.

The "Presbyterian" and Roman Catholicism. — The *Presbyterian* devoted a large part of its issue of April 12, 1947, to the study of Roman Catholicism in its various expressions and aspirations. Its purpose in doing this is described in an editorial as follows: "The object of this special issue is certainly not to stir up a bit of the old venom [Rome's hatred against and persecution of Protestantism]. On the contrary, our hope is that this issue presenting the good and bad of Catholicism, as we see it, will give our readers a better understanding, a greater alertness,

and a deeper longing to work with Catholics for advancement." In an article on "An Evangelical Attitude Toward Catholicism" the editor says: "We would propose a formula for Protestant-Catholic relations. On moral and civil questions, in fact, on all points in which we are in substantial agreement, we should have fine, free co-operation. On points of disagreement where principle is involved, we should offer vigorous, open, and frank opposition, using all the public mediums of expression available. On points of disagreement of a minor nature, we should show toleration, and in all things we should practice Christian charity and winsomeness." The *Presbyterian's* discussion of "Protestant-Catholic Marriages" was both frank and vigorous. After having shown the three demands which Romanism makes on the Protestant entering into marriage with a Catholic, namely, that marriage to be lawful must be of the Church; that to be married by the Church, the Protestant party must pledge to rear all children in the Roman Catholic faith; and that the Catholic party must pledge himself or herself to do everything possible to win the others to the Romanist faith, the writer goes on to say: "Such a stand at the very outset gets mixed marriages off to a bad start. Of course, Protestant parents, relatives, and friends oppose them. Of course, the Protestant party resents being forced to make such pledges. If Evangelical Churches should set up any comparable regulations, the Roman Catholics would cry out that it was intolerance and persecution . . . and it would be. Why cannot they see that their regulations are intolerant and injurious to the very thing they are holding most sacred? Every year the Roman Church loses thousands of adherents who refuse to be forced to be unfair to the Evangelicals they love. It probably gains an equal number of converts by force. Its attitude is absolutely consistent with its teaching that Romanism is the only true Christianity and that all others are heretics. By refusing, however, to admit that anyone but a Roman Catholic may be a true Christian, the Church widens the gulf between itself and those it seeks to win. It drives the Evangelical bodies in self-defense to do all possible to prevent their young people from marrying Roman Catholics. . . . Rome will continue to lose by being unfair and intolerant, but the worst part of it all is that people are being hurt and marriages are being blighted by the attitude of the Church that is far from catholic in spirit and practice in this matter." An interesting bit of reading we find in the same issue under the heading "A Church of Contrasts," in which some of Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen's grandiloquent pronouncements are interlarded with statements from advertisements on novenas published by the Association of the Miraculous Medal. A strange contrast indeed! What Msgr. Sheen says is to win Protestants. The superstition and idolatry of Romanism is manifested in the worship of "Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal."

J. T. M.

Revival in England? — Reports concerning the religious situation in England are conflicting. Some observers say that England has reached a low in its religious interest. Others report that there is a revival of religion in Great Britain. The so-called "Commando campaign" is hailed as a harbinger of a religious re-awakening by the masses of Great Britain. According to one report the Christian Commando campaign is the greatest evangelization effort in the history of London and has enlisted 3,000 persons to preach the Gospel to Londoners. Preachers, businessmen, even members of Parliament, formed 34 evangelistic teams, who are reported to have brought the Gospel into night clubs, canteens, railway stations, and factories all over London. During the campaign over one thousand separate meetings were held each day. However, one of the best-informed Free Church leaders in England suggests that the favorable reports on the Commando campaign are to be taken with a grain of salt. According to the *Christian Century*, this observer reports: "Whether the Commando campaign has broken through the crust of London's apathy and indifference to the Christian religion is doubtful. Methods and phraseology were those of the nineteenth century evangelism, and both are meaningless to the secular masses. The campaign at least showed that organized religion here is able to plan and attack vigorously, to publicize itself effectively, and to claim attention by the press in a manner unknown for a long time in Britain. The campaign also showed that the churches can act unitedly, and this impressed many. Another fact which reveals the deep interest in religion in Britain lies in the repeated invitations to the campaigners to come back and answer more questions. But the campaign was also a painful revelation to the churches of the divorce between the Christian religion and the common life, and of the tragic ignorance of Christian truth and doctrine."

An Episcopal-Methodist Church? — In an article appearing in the *Christian Century*, March 5, 1947, C. Stanley Lowell, a leading Methodist minister in Dover, Delaware, predicts union between the Methodists and the Episcopalians within twelve years. He believes that union between Methodism and Episcopalianism is simpler than the proposed Presbyterian-Episcopal Merger, because in the former no union but only a re-union is required. Lowell maintains that the reason for the separation of the Wesleyans from the Anglican Church was only concerning ordination, when the Anglican Church refused to grant orders to the Wesleyan pastors. Lowell believes that the Methodists should be willing to assume a "humbling responsibility" which, however, must not be "confused with self-betitlement." In this spirit he believes that the Methodists can gracefully receive Episcopal orders and Episcopalians can gratefully confer them, and by receiving the Episcopalian orders they will only deepen their experience of God. He concludes his article by stating: "Will the Methodist clergy be ready to receive the orders denied them in 1780 if and when offered? I believe

they will." Both denominations are known for their indifference to doctrine. In the Episcopal Church latitudinarianism is considered a desirable characteristic of the Church. Methodism has been notoriously indifferent to doctrine, for, as one bishop put it epigrammatically: "The distinctive doctrine of Methodism is that it has no distinctive doctrine." Both denominations have been promoting the social gospel with a great degree of vigor. The only thing that at the present time is keeping them apart is a man-made rule, the principle of ordination by apostolic succession.

F. E. M.

An Atheist Heads Unesco. — The *Calvin Forum* (February, 1947) has the following report which indeed deserves study by all whose interest in Christian education is genuine. We read: "Unesco stands for the 'United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.' Called into existence by the UNO, it is intended to be an international agency to educate humanity into the ways of peace. Fichte's ideal of the education of the human race is to be achieved through this new agency. Peace and security will be the inevitable product of education, science, and culture. Here we have the typically modern belief that the enlightenment of the mind, furnishing man informational knowledge about the universe in which he lives, will inevitably make man good. Education, science, and culture are an omnipotent trio of forces to banish evil and bring in happiness. It is the old liberal humanist dream of improving the race by classroom lectures and moral (perhaps more correctly: unmoral) pep talks. The man who has been selected to head up this organization is none other than Professor Julian Huxley, the well-known British zoologist. The religious views held by this scholar can be found in his book *Religion Without Revelation*. In this book, written already back in 1927, he advances a consistent scientific naturalism. There is no supernatural. All is Nature, and that Nature is unified and continuous reality. There is no personal God. There is no revelation. Science is the ultimate unity of Nature. Religion is reduced to a sense of reverence for this ultimate unity of Nature. Here are Huxley's own words: 'Had the word God not come, almost universally, to have the connotation of supernatural personality, it would be properly employed to denote this unity. . . . What has been called God by men has been precisely this reality, or various aspects of it, but obscured by symbolic vestures.' What estimate this naturalistic pantheist places upon the Word of God and the Christian faith will be clear from the following paragraph taken from the same work. Says he: 'The *Origin of Species* is today a good deal more profitable as theology than the first chapter of Genesis, and William James' *Principles of Psychology* will be a better commentary on the Decalogue than any hortatory sermon. The poetry of Herbert or Donne or Vaughan, of Francis Thompson or Walt Whitman, will introduce you to new ways of mystic feelings. Trevelyan's *History of England* is likely to be a more salutary history lesson, because nearer home, than the historical

books of the Old Testament. Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* is more likely to help the perplexed mind of a twentieth-century Englishman than the apocalyptic visions of Revelation or the Neo-Platonic philosophy of the Fourth Gospel. To sacrifice a score of Sundays to making acquaintance with the ideas of other great religions like Buddhism would be very much preferable, even from the purely religious point of view, to continuance in the familiar round and the familiar narrowness of one's own church.' A man of such views is the newly designated head of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization!" Let the reader contemplate what the religious views of such an outspoken enemy of the Gospel must mean for this new "international agency to educate humanity into the ways of peace."

J. T. M.

Why Religion Helps Mess Up the World. — Under this heading Dr. H. E. Fosdick has published in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, April, 1947, a plea for the adoption of religious "universals" by the various religions, in order that the barrier of creedal prejudice may be removed and religious unification of the nations of the world may be secured. It is a brief for universal religious syncretism. In his captivating manner Fosdick will mislead the unwary, for at first glance it may appear as if he inveighed merely against the shifting of emphasis from the Christian fundamentals to "local peculiarities" of denominations that "have become sectarian, partisan, provincial, cooped up in the confines of [their] isolated cultures." But the article sets forth a most insidious demand for a world religion, in which the specific Christian Gospel doctrines of redemption and salvation can have no place. It is ultimately directed against the very core of Christianity, the doctrine of the vicarious atonement. It is an appeal to discard the crucified Christ as the world's only Hope so that the foolishness of the Cross, the world's universal stumbling block, may be abrogated. There is in the article nothing new in the field of modern religious thought, but what is said is cunningly and enticingly stated, and that at a time when not only a false ecumenicity threatens to disregard Christian fundamentals, but when also Modernism, asserting itself in ever-changing forms, seeks to relegate to oblivion whatever is distinctively Christian. It is wise for pastors to expose Fosdick's appeal for universal religious liberalism in particular to such groups in their churches as have contacts with syncretistic intellectuals, especially in colleges and universities, in order that they may be warned against what is wrong and pernicious in religious liberalism. Fosdick suggests that our trivial sectarian differences have turned religion into a babel language which makes man a suspicious builder of walls, and he charges Christianity with helping mess up the world, for it is that against which he really raises his objections. But what messes up the world religiously is the very unbelief which he advocates, and the only truly unifying dynamic in the world is

the regenerating and sanctifying Gospel of Jesus Christ, which believing churches must proclaim all the more clearly and forcibly as its enemies are trying to bring about its abolition. J. T. M.

The Least Common Denominator in Religion.—No further comment seems necessary on the following item taken from the *Presbyterian*, April 3, 1947: "There are three major divisions of opinion on religion in our country, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish. All three believe in the same God, the God of our own national constitution. All three believe the Old Testament to be the Word of God. All three believe in the moral law, the sinfulness of man and the need for repentance; all teach truth, honor, monogamy, honesty, and all possess the storehouse of religious and moral literature of the Psalms and Proverbs, the law and the prophets, and the stories from Adam to Malachi.

"We see no reason why Protestants, Catholics, and Jews cannot put aside their differences and build a curriculum for the public schools that would teach those doctrines and moral precepts that are common to all three. Those few unique and precious truths that each faith holds could be emphasized in the church, synagogue, or parochial school, but the common elements could be taught with enthusiasm by laymen of any faith in the public schools."

F. E. M.

Rationalism in the Anglican Church.—Dr. E. W. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham, England, in a book, *The Rise of Christianity*, just published, restates the old rationalistic position that the Christian religion should be stripped of myth and romanticism so that it will square with scientific facts. Though a bishop of the Anglican Church, he questions the Immaculate Conception, Christ's resurrection, His miracles, and infant baptism. He claims that the Virgin Birth must be rejected because it is based on the mistranslation of the Hebrew *almah*, which means, a young woman, rather than a virgin. With such men as leaders in the Church, it is no small wonder that interest in the Church in England has waned to an alarming degree. It is indeed deplorable that a high-ranking churchman can publish such rationalism with impunity.

F. E. M.

Brief Items from Religious News Service.—More than 1,500 Protestant ministers in Wisconsin have been urged to make known their opposition to congressional bills which would include parochial as well as public schools in the Federal-aid-to-education program.

Rep. Joseph R. Bryson, a lay leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, introduced in the House of Representatives a joint resolution which would amend the Constitution to provide that neither Congress nor the States shall give aid to any educational institution under sectarian control.

Reformation Sunday this year will be observed on November 2, it was announced in New York by the Federal Council

of Churches. Selection of this day, it was stated, will avoid conflict with the new date for World Order Sunday: October 26, 1947. Henceforth, World Order Sunday will always fall on the Sunday nearest October 24, date of the formation of the United Nations.

The House of Representatives has passed and sent to the Senate a \$5,000 appropriation to help defray expenses of the 17th triennial convention of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union, to be held in the U. S. next month, although members of the House pointed out that this measure sets a dangerous precedent.

By a vote of 19 to 11, the Wisconsin Senate killed a bill to require local school boards to release public school pupils up to three hours each week for religious instruction off school premises. Arguments against the measure were that it would promote sectarianism among school children, reduce an already shortened schedule of regular school instruction, and threaten the separation of Church and State.

Pious Catholics throughout the world are intensifying demands for a definition of the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, according to Vatican authorities. This doctrine asserts that the Virgin's body was preserved from corruption and assumed into heaven shortly after her death. While not yet proclaimed as an article of faith, the doctrine is nevertheless held by Catholics everywhere.

Robert P. Patterson, Secretary of War, has authorized a tour of observation in Germany, Austria, and Italy by a group of 12 representative American clergymen "for the purpose of studying conditions in those areas and reporting their interpretations to the public after their return."

Martin Fischer, a young anti-Nazi Christian youth leader in Germany during Hitler's most successful days, has emerged in recent months as one of the most influential men in the training of young Protestant ministers for the postwar German Church. He is responsible for reorganizing a widely known theological school in Berlin, the Kirchliche Hochschule (similar to the independent seminary at Bethel), which is now the largest Protestant seminary in Germany, with more than 200 students.

Influx of displaced persons into the American occupation zone of Germany has greatly changed the proportion of Protestants and Roman Catholics in the population. Bavaria, Germany's chief Catholic stronghold, now has a population which is 26 per cent Protestant. In Greater Hesse, historically a leading Protestant center, Catholics at present comprise 33 per cent of the population. Wuerttemberg shows: Protestants, 58 per cent; Catholics, 38 per cent; other faiths, 4 per cent.

A new issue of the calendar of the Christian year has been published in New York by the Commission on Worship of the Federal Council of Churches. The calendar, which begins on Advent Sunday of the current year and continues through Advent Sunday 1953, includes all the important church festivals and seasons for the next six years. It is arranged according to the seven seasons of the Christian year: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Whitsuntide, and Kingdomtide.

Increased lobbying by church groups in the nation's capital is indicated by the list of registered lobbyists published in the *Congressional Record*. Among the lobbyists who have officially registered is Eugene J. Butler, representing the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, agency of the American hierarchy; Rev. James Clarence Olden, Sr., of Washington, representing the "militant church movement"; Elsie Dorothy Harper, New York, who represents the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association.

Reliable sources disclosed in Jerusalem that an agreement has been reached between the Palestine government and the Soviet Union for transfer of church property formerly controlled by the Czarist government to the Russian Orthodox Church. The property in question—said to be worth about \$4,000,000—was held by the Czarist government prior to the Russian Revolution of 1917, but subsequently remained in the possession of local Orthodox leaders who have refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate outside Russia.

A "National Youth Lobby," which includes a number of church-related youth organizations, will be held in Washington, D. C., June 15—16, under auspices of the Young Progressive Citizens of America. Sponsors of the "lobby" include Jack McMichael of the Methodist Federation for Social Action; William Spofford of the Church League for Industrial Democracy; Edward Carroll of the National Inter-Christian Council; Leonard Friedman of the American Unitarian Youth; and John Darr of the United Christian Council for Democracy.

The National Council of Community Churches, representing 1,200 white non-sectarian community churches, and the National Council of Community Churches in North America, representing 300 Negro and interracial churches, voted in Chicago to merge into one group. The new association will not compete with any of the nation's Protestant denominations by setting up independent missionary and educational programs, but will contribute its missionary budget to the Home Missions Council, the Foreign Missions Conferences of North America, and the World Council of Churches.

An estimated 5,000,000 young people, from kindergarten age through high school, will attend more than 45,000 vacation Bible schools this summer, according to Ruth Elizabeth Murphy, director

of summer church-school activities for the International Council of Religious Education in Chicago. The 50-year vacation church-school movement of the country has now become a full-time project of the International Council of Religious Education. The Council has published a lengthy list of study and visual aid materials to bring modern educational practice into the teaching of the Bible.

A movement to establish Christian day schools throughout the country was set in motion in Omaha by the National Association of Evangelicals, organization of conservative Protestants. The Association, at its fifth annual convention, voted to open a national office, with full-time workers, to aid local community groups in organizing Christian elementary and secondary schools. Association officials explained, however, that evangelicals will co-operate with public schools "where a Christian atmosphere prevails" or where the released-time system of religious instruction is permitted.

Requests for "enormous" numbers of Bibles have been received from Germany, Dr. John Temple, secretary, told the British and Foreign Bible Society at its annual meeting here. He said one district has asked for 500,000 copies and another for 300,000. The Society is preparing an edition of 200,000 Bibles to meet German needs. Sale of Bibles in Britain is beginning to mount, Dr. Temple reported, and orders on hand will take ten months to complete. Daniel Burke, president of the American Bible Society, reported that 11,394,200 volumes of Scriptures were distributed during the past year. Nearly 3,000,000 were sent to European areas. Publication of the first Braille concordance for use of the blind was also reported.

Leaders of ten major Protestant denominations in Kansas have issued a "compact of interdenominational co-operation."

"We should instill into the minds of our people the inherent unity of the Church," the joint statement declared. "We should give every possible encouragement to those forms of inter-church co-operation in which our members can work together for social, moral and religious progress."

"The differences which separate us are relatively minor; the basically important elements of our faith are held by all Christians. We believe that it is highly important that the New Testament concept of the oneness of the Body of Christ should be given definite and dramatic emphasis in the reception of members, in the administration of the ordinances and in the promotion of fellowship across denominational lines."

Public school education has failed in its responsibility to create an awareness of religion in the minds of youth, it was charged in New York in a report of the Committee on Religion and Education of the American Council on Education. "The ex-

clusion of religious subject matter which so largely prevails," it declared, "is neither required on grounds of public policy nor consistent with sound educational principles." It was also suggested that other fields, such as history, psychology, economics, philosophy, music, and the fine arts, have religious aspects that call for study in proportion to their significance in the culture. A current proposal to abstract from the various faiths a "common core" for religious instruction was scored by the group as "objectionable from the religious points of view as well as a violation of the liberties of those who stand outside all religious groups."

Brief Items.—Youth for Christ International reports that it is conducting an aggressive campaign in Germany, Great Britain, and Holland. Meetings were held in Frankfurt, Nuernberg, Munich, Berlin.

Among the 76 professors and instructors at the University of Erlangen who were dismissed for political reasons, four theological professors are included: Paul Althaus, Hans Preus, Hermann Strathmann, and Friedrich Hauck, according to a report in *Die Kirche*, diocesan paper published in Berlin.

The chancellery of the EKID reports that the Privilegierte Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt will have 400,000 New Testaments ready for distribution within the coming months. According to an agreement with the Hilfswerk the Testaments will be distributed through the Bible Societies, Hilfswerk, the regular trade, the Free Churches, and also the various Christian Associations. The price of the New Testament will be RM 1.20 (12 cents). The 17th edition of the famous Nestle text of the Greek New Testament has been printed in 4,000 copies, and the Society hopes that the printing of the 18th edition can be carried through during the summer.

Confessional representation in the World Council of Churches, as requested by the Lutherans, is provided for in a constitutional amendment approved by the World Council's Provisional Committee at its recent meeting in Buck Hill Falls, Pa. Under the new system, confessional groups (such as the Lutheran) would be able to transfer seats to the World Council assembly among themselves or pool all seats for appointment by a central agency (such as the Lutheran World Federation). Such readjustments, if made, would be subject to approval by the Central Committee of the World Council. The amendment will be submitted to the first assembly of the World Council at Amsterdam, Holland, next year. A petition for confessional representation in the World Council was made by the American Section of the Lutheran World Federation and was unanimously endorsed by the Federation's executive committee when it met at Uppsala, Sweden, last July. It was then approved by the Administrative Committee of the World Council at its meeting near London last August.—*Lutheran Standard*, May 24, 1947.