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Lund

By W. ARNDT

THE TOWN

During the first week of July all eyes were focused on the little town of Lund, Sweden, entertaining the World Convention of Lutherans. It is a town that is entitled to honorable mention in its own rights. Pleasantly situated in the maritime plain of southwestern Sweden and twenty miles distant from the port of Malmoe, it is the seat of one of the two Swedish universities and can justly claim to be an important center of scholarship and learning. It numbers about 30,000 inhabitants, who, if they are not directly connected with the university as professors or students, nevertheless realize that the school is the city's chief asset and the pillar of their own prosperity. As a prominent and friendly Danish educator informed me, the southern tip of Sweden, with Lund as one of its chief ornaments, up till 1658 was a part of the Danish Kingdom and, like the other Swedish towns of this section, in the construction of its houses and in other ways, still reveals its Danish affinities. The University of Lund is not nearly as old as that of Uppsala; the latter was founded before the Reformation, in 1477, while the former was established in 1668, when the Swedish crown had gained control of this section of the country. The two universities, if the information given me is correct, have about the same number of students, several thousand each. Among the buildings of the University of Lund the spacious library attracts special attention, both on account of its impressive architecture and the

ivy covering the walls in grand profusion. The chief pride of the town as well as of the university, however, is the cathedral, a venerable edifice completed in 1145, its site adjoining the campus of the university and its appearance reminding one of the old English abbeys.

FORMER MEETINGS

The first meeting of the Lutheran World Convention, to use the old name, was held in Eisenach in 1923. At that time Dr. M. Reu, a theological professor of the Iowa Synod, made an important statement on what he considered the essentials of Lutheran teaching, which statement, for the sake of younger readers who do not have access to the historical documents, is here reprinted.

"We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that the Lutheran Church can be held together only by the bond of a common confession. It is equally important, however, that we understand the content and compass of this confession. For me and for the Lutheran Synod of Iowa, which I am here representing, the Book of Concord of 1580 is the Confession upon which, because of its agreement with Scripture, our union is founded. We not only consider that Confession a historic testimony of the faith of our fathers, but we find in it, accepting it in its entirety, an expression of our own faith. Therefore we condemn *secus docentes* and have no pulpit or altar fellowship, that closest form of church fellowship, with those who refuse to take seriously this part of the Confession. This restriction, which may appear as a fetter, we consider in no wise an undesirable restraint, but rather a most appropriate limit within which our conscience, bound by the Word of God, forces us to do our work. I should like especially to mention three points which we find in the Confessions, the basis of the Lutheran Church.

"The first is the absolute recognition of the Scriptural doctrine of original sin and original guilt, of the complete inability of the natural man to accomplish anything that is truly good, of his inclination to all that is evil, of his being subject to divine wrath and judgment, even from birth. This teaching of both Jesus and Paul, of both the Old and the New Testaments, is not a 'dark delusion,' but a basic fact of Scripture and of our own experience, the denial or modification

of which makes impossible the understanding of the Gospel and of the Reformation. We German Lutherans of America in recent years have had the bitter experience that even in purely secular matters the guilt of an individual, especially when he is the leader and representative of the people, is the guilt of all, and how all on his account have become subject to the judgment of God. We are more convinced of this today after the war, as we see the increase of our guilt.

"The second point which in our opinion stands out in the Lutheran Confessions is the fact of the substitutionary satisfaction and atonement of Jesus Christ. I thank God when He leads me into contact with a person who confesses with me that Christ has died and risen for our salvation; and yet that does not exhaust the doctrine of atonement as expressed in Scripture and in the Confessions. The idea of substitution is essential. I used to say with Frank, if the idea of substitution is not in the prepositions *peri*, *anti*, and *hyper*, surely it is [in] the whole of Matthew 20 and Galatians 3. I still maintain this today and think also of the Scriptural conception of sacrifice, of the high priest, and of the second Adam, but I now add on the basis of Deissmann's studies in the *Koine* that the idea of substitution is expressed at least in the preposition *hyper*. Christ, true God and man, has borne in my stead the fullness of God's wrath, has wrought in my stead satisfaction to the justice of God, and at the same time has made atonement for my sins and for the sins of the whole world. He has 'covered' them before God, and so we, the many, through Him, the One, are made righteous and blessed. In Him all mankind has died; in Him it has been quickened and justified. How Luther lived in this thought and on this thought! The war has helped us again to understand the idea of substitution in natural life. May this experience help to open our eyes again to the fact of Christ's substitution. This is not a 'crying injustice,' as someone has said, but it is the blessed analogy to the truth of the doctrine of original sin, the *imputatio peccati Adamitici in genus humanum*.

"The third point which I would stress today is our attitude toward Scripture, as this is expressly stated in the Confessions of our Church and as it is presupposed by the way Scripture is employed in the Confessions. In the Introduction to the Formula of Concord stands the great word that the

Holy Scriptures are the pure fountain of Israel, that we have in them the purest sources, *purissimi et limpidissimi fontes*, of divine saving truth. If Scripture is the source and therefore the norm and standard of saving truth, then it is presupposed that it has originated under a peculiar influence of God. The fact of inspiration belongs therefore to the Confessions, which must be the foundation of the truly Lutheran Church. We are not committed to a definite theory of inspiration, for this must always remain a mystery, but surely to the fact itself. However, we must accept it in the sense in which the Bible, particularly the New Testament, testifies to it. I may appear to be old-fashioned if I adhere to the threefold basis of inspiration: *impulsus ad scribendum*, the *suggestio rerum*, and the *suggestio verborum* (the impulse to write, the suggestion of the facts and of the words). I may think as much as I please of a different psychological process, a process differing from that of the old dogmatics, in that it admits in the second and third points the mental co-operation of the sacred writers, yet my conscience is so bound to God's Word that I cannot give up these points. The Holy Scriptures are for me in their totality the authoritative, sufficient, absolutely dependable, sure and vital presentation of the revelation of God once given for our salvation as they were formed through a peculiar operation of the Holy Spirit upon the writers. And this fact — I repeat it — belongs to the content of the Confessions, which are the foundation of the true Lutheran Church. It is in my opinion the duty of the Lutheran Church in particular inwardly to master this fact and to make it help to clear the thought of our time. How Luther stood by the Scriptures! They were the foundation of his faith and life; upon them he fought his battles. Witness the Wartburg! The common assertion that it was at the Wartburg rather than at Worms that Luther finally set aside reason and turned to the Scriptures as the only source of saving knowledge, is not true; yet it is true that here he became rooted in the Scriptures as never before. Only that Church has a future which with Luther wholeheartedly and unreservedly yields itself to the Scriptures, the Scriptures as a whole." Cf. The Lutheran World Convention, Eisenach, 1923, p. 87 ff.

In 1929 the World Convention met in Copenhagen. In our circles there was hailed with joy the declaration of Dr. C.

Hein, president of the Ohio Synod, made at that meeting on the heart of the Lutheran message, a declaration reprinted and pointed to with high approval by Dr. F. Pieper in *C. T. M.*, Vol. I (1930), p. 338 ff. Having dwelt on the fact that Lutheranism bases its teaching solely on the Scriptures, Dr. Hein, whose words I here give in English, continued: "Why this attitude toward the Scriptures? Because for Lutheranism Holy Scripture in its totality as well as in all its parts is the Word of God, given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and hence pure and infallible. For Lutheranism the Holy Spirit is the Author (Urheber) of Scripture; the Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles are for it the instruments which the Holy Spirit employed in the composition of Scripture. According to content and form the Holy Spirit supplied to the holy writers what they wrote. While the manner of inspiration, as we acknowledge, has not been revealed in Scripture and hence is an insoluble mystery for our reason and for theological science, Lutheranism believes the miracle of inspiration testified to in the Scriptures; and everything that Scripture says, both in matters of salvation and in so-called subordinate things, is to Lutherans the infallible Word of God. That was the position of Luther, that was the position of the fathers who wrote the Lutheran Confessions. The fact that in the latter no special article deals with Scripture has its explanation in the circumstance that the doctrine of inspiration did not belong to the controversial questions of the day. The Confessions presuppose both the inspiration and the inerrancy of the Scriptures as self-evident," etc.

Equally definite is Dr. Hein's exposition on the subject of *sola gratia*. "On the basis of the righteousness earned by Christ for all, the gracious and merciful, the holy and just God acquits humanity, redeemed by Christ, and pronounces it in Christ perfectly holy and righteous. This judicial sentence of God takes place outside of man, in the heart of God. In the Gospel it is announced to the world of sinners and offered for acceptance, and through the same means in which God offers this gift He works faith, that is, the confidence of the heart which seizes the offer of forgiveness so that a poor sinner, whom the Law assigns to hell, now, in spite of all his sins, in Christ's righteousness stands before God perfectly holy and righteous; indeed, he is a child of the Father in

heaven and an heir to eternal life. By grace alone — without any merit on the part of man; solely for the sake of Christ, that is, for the sake of the righteousness which He earned as man's Substitute, which is perfect and sufficient and in no wise requires any completion on the part of man; solely through faith, which here functions not as an ethical act, but only as the means of appropriating the gift of God's grace — that is the inscription which Lutheranism has put on its banner. The expression 'by grace alone' pertains to everything that concerns man's salvation: the preparation and offering as well as the acceptance, giving, and completion of salvation. Just as Lutheranism on the one hand is certain that unbelief, non-conversion, and final damnation in every sense are solely and exclusively man's own fault, so it is certain on the other that conversion, faith, and salvation in every sense are the work and gift of God's grace. Here we are confronted with a mystery." Dr. Hein then quotes some well-known words from Guericke's *Symbolik* in which the true Lutheran position on this point is given clear expression. The whole address of Dr. Hein is as soundly Lutheran as it is definite and clear and should be given new circulation in our days.

Another conference of the Lutheran World Convention took place in Paris in 1935. When at that meeting the plan of joint Communion of all the delegates was advocated, Dr. Reu and other conservative Lutherans raised their voice against it, and the idea was dropped. It had been resolved to meet in Philadelphia in 1940, but owing to the outbreak of World War II the project had to be abandoned.

ORIGIN OF THE LUND MEETING

As soon as the armistice had been arranged in 1945, the Lutherans who had been joined in the World Convention sought to re-establish contact with one another. The matter of physical relief for the Lutherans in Central Europe was given much prominence, and in this respect Missouri was eager to make as big a contribution as it was capable of doing. It was felt, however, by the members of the World Convention that the old ideals of spiritual fellowship should not be neglected. In July, 1946, Archbishop Erling Eidem of Sweden, acting president of the executive committee of the Lutheran World Convention, called a meeting of this com-

mittee. The following were present: Archbishop Eidem, Dr. Alfred Joergensen of Denmark, Bishop Max von Bonsdorff of Finland, Professor Olaf Moe of Norway, Dr. J. Aasgaard, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, Dr. Ralph H. Long, and Dr. Abdell Ross Wentz from America and Bishop Hans Meiser of Bavaria, Germany. Two other members of the committee arrived too late for the meeting, but approved the action taken: Professor Ernst Sommerlath and Professor Carl Ihmels from Germany. Dr. S. C. Michelfelder, who since July, 1945, has served as Lutheran representative to the Reconstruction Department of the World Council of Churches at Geneva, Switzerland, served as secretary of the committee and was appointed executive secretary to serve to the end of the meeting at Lund. It was resolved to hold a meeting of the World Convention in the summer of 1947. The date that was ultimately fixed was June 30 to July 6. The theme of the convention was to be "The Lutheran Church in the World Today."

THE EXTERNALS OF THE MEETING

It was quite a large assembly which gathered June 30. One hundred and seventy-five accredited delegates were present and several hundred visitors. Some of the delegates had come from far-distant countries, for instance, from China, India, South Africa, Madagascar, Argentina. Among the people attending one saw martyrs of the faith, people who have to live in exile, and some who have lost all their earthly belongings and still feel immeasurably rich because they possess the pearl of great price. Here there were men like Bishops Berggrav and Lilje, whom the Nazis had imprisoned but did not dare to execute. The committee on arrangements had made excellent provision for the physical needs of the delegates and those of the visitors who had announced their coming. Not being a member of the Lutheran World Convention, the Missouri Synod was not entitled to participation in the conference. However, President Behnken had requested Doctors F. E. Mayer, Walter A. Maier, Martin Graebner, and the author of this article to attend the meeting as official observers. Gratefully I wish to acknowledge here that we were cordially welcomed and hospitably treated.

The convention was divided into three sections, of which the first one concerned itself with doctrine, the second with

missions, the third with social questions. The sections met in the afternoon and at times in the evening. In the morning the plenary sessions were held, at which among other things the reports of the sections were submitted, adopted, amended, and approved.

Various official services were held. At the opening service Archbishop Eidem preached and Holy Communion was celebrated. One asks: Has the situation changed sufficiently since 1935 to warrant this innovation? Or have the ideals of the leaders changed? Many conservative Lutherans are perplexed and worried.

It goes without saying that the distress and misery of displaced persons and refugees were given much attention. I trust this journal can soon print a report on the deliberations pertaining to this sad subject.

THE CONSTITUTION

One important item of business was the adoption of a constitution. The document had been drafted by the executive committee and was submitted for approval. Its acceptance implied the adoption of a new name, the Lutheran World Federation. The document is here reprinted from *The Lutheran* of July 23. I must add the caution that what is here given is not as yet the final form; a few minor changes were introduced, which will be reported as soon as the official text has arrived.

I. NAME.—The name and title of the body organized under this constitution shall be The Lutheran World Federation.

II. DOCTRINAL BASIS.—The Lutheran World Federation acknowledges the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the only source and the infallible norm of all church doctrine and practice and sees in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Catechism, a pure exposition of the Word of God.

III. NATURE AND PURPOSES.—1. The Lutheran World Federation shall be a free association of Lutheran churches. It shall have no power to legislate for the churches belonging to it or to interfere with their complete autonomy, but shall act as their agent in such matters as they assign to it.

2. The purposes of the Lutheran World Federation are: a) To bear united witness before the world to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of God for salvation. b) To cultivate unity of faith and confession among the Lutheran churches of the world. c) To promote fellowship and cooperation in study among Lutherans. d) To achieve a united Lutheran approach to ecumenical Christian movements and groups in need of spiritual or material aid.

3. The Lutheran World Federation may take action on behalf of member churches in such matters as one or more of them may commit to it.

IV. MEMBERSHIP. — All Lutheran churches previously affiliated with the Lutheran World Convention which through their representatives participate in the adoption of this constitution shall continue to be members of the Lutheran World Federation. Other Lutheran churches which declare their acceptance of this constitution shall be eligible to membership in the Lutheran World Federation. Their acceptance into membership shall be decided by the Lutheran World Federation in assembly, or in the interim, if no fundamental objection is raised, by the Executive Committee.

V. ORGANIZATION. — The Lutheran World Federation shall exercise its functions through the following: 1) The Assembly; 2) The Executive Committee; 3) National Committees; 4) Special Commissions. In all the functions of the Federation both clerical and lay persons shall be eligible to participate.

VI. THE ASSEMBLY. — 1. An assembly of the Federation shall be held every five years at the call of the president. The time and place and program of each Assembly shall be determined by the Executive Committee. Special meetings of the Assembly may be called by the Executive Committee.

2. The number of representatives in the Assembly shall be allocated as follows: Denmark 10, Finland 10, Germany 40, Iceland 5, Norway 10, Sweden 10, United States of America 40, other Countries 5 each. Within each of these groups detailed allocations shall be made by the National Committee. The representatives shall be chosen by the churches themselves. Whenever in any country there are several Lutheran churches completely independent of one another, each shall be entitled

to at least one representative. Whenever Lutheran congregations in union church bodies combine to ask for representation in the Assembly, the Executive Committee may invite them to send representatives to the Assembly in a consultative capacity. Lutheran associations and organizations designated by the Executive Committee may be invited to send representatives to the Assembly in a consultative capacity in such numbers as the Executive Committee may determine.

3. The Assembly shall be the principal authority in the Federation. It shall elect the President of the Federation and the other members of the Executive Committee, shall receive reports from National Committees, shall appoint Special Commissions, and shall determine the fundamental lines of the Federation's work.

VII. OFFICERS. — The President of the Federation shall be chosen by ballot of the Assembly, and a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for an election. He shall assume office immediately after the close of the Assembly which has elected him and before the organization of the new Executive Committee. He shall be the chief official representative of the Federation. He shall hold office until the close of the following Assembly, and he shall be ineligible to succeed himself. Other officers of the Federation shall be chosen by the Executive Committee.

VIII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. — 1. At each Assembly the Federation shall elect 15 persons who with the President shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Federation. Membership on the Executive Committee shall be allocated as follows: Denmark 1, Finland 1, Germany 4, Norway 1, North America 4, Sweden 1, all other countries a total of 4. In the choice of members from "other countries" an effort shall be made to effect changes at each Assembly in order to make possible a rotation among all of them.

2. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once annually. It shall choose from its own membership two Vice-Presidents and a Treasurer as officers of the Federation. The duties of these officers shall be those usually assigned to those offices.

3. The Executive Committee shall conduct the business of the Lutheran World Federation in the interim between As-

semblies, shall supervise the appointment of National Committees and receive annual reports from them, shall elect an Executive Secretary and assign him his duties, shall make a full annual report (including complete financial statements) to all member churches, shall appoint all committees and Special Commissions not otherwise provided for, and shall represent the Federation in all external relations.

4. Vacancies in the Executive Committee ad interim shall be filled by that Committee.

5. The expenses of a member of the Executive Committee in attending meetings of that committee shall be borne by the church to which the member belongs or arranged by the National Committee in which his church is represented.

IX. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY.—Immediately following the close of each Assembly the Executive Committee shall elect an Executive Secretary who shall devote his full time to his office and who shall serve until the close of the next Assembly. The Executive Secretary shall be responsible to the Executive Committee for his work. It shall be his duty to carry out the decisions of the Assembly and of the Executive Committee under the general supervision of the President. He shall report through the Executive Committee to the Assembly of the Federation.

X. NATIONAL COMMITTEES.—The member churches in each country shall select a group of persons who together with the member or members of the Executive Committee in that country shall constitute a National Committee for the Lutheran World Federation. Each National Committee shall be asked to present to the Executive Committee an annual statement concerning the interests of the Lutheran World Federation in its country.

XI. SPECIAL COMMISSIONS.—Special Commissions shall be established under the authority of the Federation and shall be appointed either by the Assembly or by the Executive Committee. It shall be the purpose of these Commissions to discharge designated functions of the Federation. They shall report annually to the Executive Committee, which shall exercise general supervision over them.

XII. FINANCE.—The Executive Committee shall prepare annually a detailed budget for the Federation, designate the

allocation of funds to particular needs, and assign to each National Committee its responsibility for specific portions of the budget. The Treasurer shall be authorized to establish depositories in various countries.

XIII. AMENDMENTS. — Amendments to this constitution may be made by a two-thirds vote of those present at any regularly called Assembly, provided notice of intention to amend shall have been given the preceding day. Amendments so made shall become effective one year after their adoption by the Assembly unless objection has been filed with the Executive Committee by churches embracing in aggregate one third of the constituency of the Federation.

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CONSTITUTION

Generally speaking, the constitution will receive the approval of conservative Lutherans. The Scriptures and the Confessions are made the doctrinal basis of the Federation, and where could one find a better foundation? The Confessions are said to be a pure exposition of the Word of God — an expression which admirably describes their character and their glory. That the Federation is to be a free association of Lutheran churches is likewise commendable. A thought intolerable to most of us would be that a superchurch was called into being with powers to legislate for its constituent bodies.

In a notable address before the plenary convention Dr. Ralph H. Long discussed the purposes of the Lutheran World Federation. Speaking of the purpose "to bear united witness before the world to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of God for salvation," he stated: "Can there be any doubt that this is a convention of the most urgent importance? The world is desperately in need of such witness to lead it out of confusion and chaos. It is a time for bold and daring testimony to the eternal truth that Jesus is Lord and Savior of all. The hour has struck for the Christian Church to take its stand with Christ and bring the evangel of His life and love to a disintegrating and discouraged world. No measures will save the world unless they are derived from the eternal principles of God as enunciated and lived by Jesus Christ while on earth. God must be placed in the center of life, in the center of national and international affairs. For the sake of the Gospel, which has been divinely committed to the Church, and

for the sake of the world, which is reeling on the brink of spiritual emptiness, it is imperative that we unite the witness of the Church to the Gospel. If it is important to emphasize evangelism for the world situation today, it is equally important to pay special attention to the fundamental truths of God as expressed in the cardinal principles of the Reformation. There is great need for definite direction and positive principles in this witness. Over against those who would substitute the wisdom of man for the wisdom of God, we must proclaim the eternal authority of the Word as the revelation of God's will for mankind. One of the cherished heritages of the Reformation is the estimate which it places on the Word of God. The witness of the Lutheran Church must emphasize that the Holy Scriptures are the only source and the infallible norm of all church teaching and practice. We must not falter in this testimony, but make it unforgettable by unanimous witness as though coming from a single voice. Another witness that is sorely needed is that Jesus is the Savior of all mankind. His redemption is complete. It is not a synergetic work, partly His and partly the believer's; it is not a patch-work, but a seamless robe of righteousness. Christ did not come to subsidize the sinners, that is, to make up for a few deficiencies, but He came to save to the uttermost. That message is exceedingly important because it is true and because there is a strong tendency to believe that man can save himself or at least contribute a major portion to his salvation. The doctrine of justification by faith through the grace of God is the most important truth for the world to learn today. Obviously it implies that man is a sinner and that it is necessary for him to confess his sin and guilt, but nothing less will avail to heal the world's ills and save men from their own follies."

Among the purposes mentioned in the constitution is the objective to cultivate unity of faith and confession among the Lutherans of the world. This is a declaration acknowledging the importance of doctrine. The curse of the age is doctrinal indifference, and here there is a note which opposes the prevalent attitude.

But there are weaknesses too. In the paragraph on the doctrinal basis, a conservative Lutheran would much wish to see the belief expressed that the Scriptures are the inerrant

Word of God. Most people, I believe, will look upon the paragraph as having that significance, but some will not. With respect to the purposes, it would have been more realistic and correct to say "to achieve and cultivate unity of faith and confession among Lutherans" than merely to state "to cultivate unity of faith and confession." Whoever observes conditions in the Lutheran world knows that in the bodies united in the Lutheran World Federation there are great differences of opinion on doctrinal matters, even on some vital points of faith, for instance, on the article of the Lord's Supper. Perhaps somebody will say that the word "cultivate" is broad enough in its meaning to include the idea of "achieving"; most people, I reply, will not give it that interpretation. Perhaps the subject will have to be dwelt on once more when the authentic text of the document has been published.

Here I should like to add the paragraphs in which Dr. Ralph H. Long dwelt on the purpose pertaining to doctrinal unity.

"Unity of faith and confession is in itself a desired end, for without it there is confusion and controversy which militate against the life of the Church. While there is a fundamental unity of faith among the Lutherans of the world, there is need for its further cultivation. In order to bear a united witness, it is prerequisite to have unity of faith and confession in fact as well as in profession. To attain these ends will take time and patience. Such unity cannot be achieved by resolution or decree. As a matter of fact, the future existence and usefulness of the Lutheran churches depend very largely upon being knit together by a common faith rather than by a common organization. Without this unity the future of the Lutheran World Federation is in jeopardy, and all its other purposes will fail. It is necessary constantly to cultivate a deeper unity of faith, not so much for the sake of self-preservation, but rather for the sake of the faith itself and for the sake of the witness thereby to all the world.

"Especially at this time, when there are so many forces that would divide and destroy the unity of the Church, every effort should be made to cultivate and preserve that unity. The forces at work in the world are centrifugal, tending to distract and disjoin those things which belong together. Such dangers are very imminent for the Lutherans. No doubt the

unity which exists is due in large measure to the oneness of confession, one Catechism, and the treasure of Lutheran hymns which find universal use. Nevertheless, this cannot be counted on to preserve that unity against the divisive factors that have been introduced into the world, which are also felt by the Lutheran churches. Through the Lutheran World Federation it will be possible to cultivate greater unity by the meeting of minds and hearts in assemblies such as this, through the exchange of theological literature, and through frequent intercourse of church leaders. No other avenue is at hand for the cultivation of unity at present. Unless the unity of the Lutheran faith and confession is cultivated, it is certain to suffer. Co-ordinating influences will destroy it unless it is carefully nurtured. It is not an overstatement to say that the preservation of the Lutheran faith demands that its unity be maintained."

DOCTRINAL DISCUSSIONS AT THE CONVENTION

We of the Missouri Synod naturally are most interested in what the theologians assembled at Lund had to say on the doctrines revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. The discussions carried on in the section which had to do with doctrinal matters were usually interesting and stimulating. The committee of which Prof. Anders Nygren of the theological department of the Lund University was chairman, had drafted a paper which had the title "Confessing the Truth in a Confused World," which was made the basis of the discussions. There are many golden sentences in that paper, and in its amended form I cannot find any fault with it, though in certain places I should like to see different terminology employed and some amplification. The paper is a truly important document and is intended to give a brief survey of the Lutheran message as it is needed today, and hence, after introductory remarks on the message of atonement, it dealt with the "Word," "Law and Gospel," the "Sacraments," and the "Church." I hope it can soon be printed in its completeness. At this time merely a few excerpts can be submitted. On the Word of God the document says: "Our Lutheran Church derives her preaching of the Gospel from the witness of the Scriptures. The sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the sole source and standard (*unica regula et norma*) of the message which the Church has to proclaim. The proc-

lamation of the Gospel can retain its Christian purity only through unswerving fidelity to the divine Word." (Here we Missourians would have seen a good opportunity of asserting the plenary inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures). . . . "Since Scripture is the message of something that has actually happened in our time and space, the message of a deed actually done by God for our salvation, it is of paramount importance that this message should retain its genuine significance and reach us in an uncorrupted form. When our Lutheran Church, following Luther's example, lays such very great stress upon doctrine, it does not do this in an intellectualistic sense, as though the Gospel were merely a theoretical doctrine. On the contrary, it does this precisely because of its' consciousness that the Gospel is a message of vital importance for us and because of its concern that this message should not be distorted. When God speaks to us, it is important that we should listen to what He has to say and do not confuse His Word with our own human thoughts. When God in Christ offers us His covenant of peace, we must receive it just as it is offered to us, and we must not turn it into something other than itself, derived from our own thoughts and desires." Other excellent and gripping passages could be quoted.

When the section of Baptism was before the meeting and infant baptism was spoken of, Dr. Nygren reported on an encounter which he had with Dr. Karl Barth at a conference in Switzerland. Barth challenged him to name a single passage in the New Testament which teaches infant baptism, to which Nygren replied that he adheres to infant baptism because he finds it taught everywhere in the New Testament. Then he enumerated the passages in the Gospels which contain this teaching, and in the writings of St. Paul he drew attention especially to the parallel drawn by the Apostle between circumcision and Baptism, Colossians 2. This discussion was one of the high spots of the deliberations on doctrine. In the paragraph of the paper dealing with the Lord's Supper as originally submitted, one failed to find a sufficiently clear presentation of the Lutheran position. The defect was pointed out on the floor, and the matter was re-committed. There was an honest attempt to preserve the Lutheran heritage, which was considered a treasure resting on the divine Word.

THE RELATION TO THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The Lutheran World Federation favors co-operation with the World Council of Churches. The argument is that since the World Council now permits churches to come in as a confessional group, there need be no hesitation on the part of Lutheran churches to establish such membership. I personally fear that joining the World Council of Churches will not strengthen the Lutheran consciousness of the Federation, since in the World Council of Churches the dominant influence is Reformed. While defending membership in the World Council of Churches, the secretary of the organization, Dr. S. C. Michelfelder, in his report to the convention makes a strong plea for confessional loyalty. I shall quote the two paragraphs of his paper devoted to this topic.

"Ours is a great heritage as a Lutheran Church, and therefore it carries a great responsibility. Since our great Lutheran Church embraces almost the half of Protestant Christianity, we must assume the largest share of duty. Our provincialism must come to an end. 'All one body we' must witness and work as 'one body,' and when one member of this body suffers, then all must suffer and come to the rescue. Our 'demonstration' of unity in action will be more forceful proof than any 'remonstration' of mere words. As our one world seems to be falling apart, we of the Lutheran Church must witness to 'the truth' as never before. We dare not allow Satan to divide and rule and thus ruin. We have held to our common Confessions. We will not surrender them now for any temporary advantages, no matter how tempting they may be. Unity must be the watchword. United in 'faith, hope, and love.' But as a Lutheran Church we no longer live an isolated life with regard to our fellow believers in other great Christian church bodies. God has worked wonders of regeneration through other church bodies as well as through our own. If the World Council of Churches, now 'in process of formation,' is to become under the guidance of God a real council of all 'non-Roman' churches, then the Lutheran Church must make its proper contribution to the formation and existence of that World Council of Churches. Here we must insist that our Lutheran Church be represented confessionally, so that our birthright be not lost. This is no

time for a 'watered-down' or 'least-common-denominator' compromise to be attempted confessionally, pretending that there is a unity of confessions. Such a Church is only a house of sand. It is my opinion, after two years in the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, that the success of the World Council of Churches lies in this, that it remain a council of 'churches' (plural), with each church body maintaining its full autonomy. Co-ordination and not elimination will assure life to this healthy ecumenical movement." Whether the cause of loyalty to the Lutheran Confessions will suffer a serious setback through the affiliation of the Lutheran World Federation with the World Council of Churches will undoubtedly soon become apparent. Our prayer is that whatever may be the fortunes of the new Federation, the message of *sola Scriptura*, *sola gratia*, and *sola fide* will not be obscured in Lutheran teaching.

OFFICERS OF THE FEDERATION

Since Archbishop Eidem declined re-election, Professor Anders Nygren of Lund was chosen to be the head of the organization during the next five years. Dr. S. C. Michelfelder was chosen for the post of executive secretary.

St. Louis, Mo.



Recent Studies in the Chronology of the Period of the Kings

By WALTER R. ROEHR'S

It is only natural that the period of the monarchy should hold a prominent place in Old Testament chronological studies. Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find such a mass of chronological data as in the Books of Kings and Chronicles. In fact, the history of the kings of Judah and Israel stands unique among ancient records. Nowhere else is such a complete and detailed system of computation employed; nowhere else do we find such an intricate and exact system of relating events chronologically to other events in the same country and to happenings in foreign lands.

Every Bible reader remembers how the year of accession of a given king in Judah is given in terms of the contemporary