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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Results of the Second Treysa Conference.—From Treysa, Germany, comes disquieting news. We submit it in the form in which it has been sent to America in an article by Prof. E. Theodore Bachmann, World Council of Churches representative in Germany.

"Significant developments have recently taken place in the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID). In their first plenary conference since August, 1945, representatives of the established Churches in the four zones of occupation met again at Treysa, June 4—6. According to post-conference samplings among Lutherans of various shades, as well as among those of broad evangelical sympathies, including the Reformed, there seems to be general agreement that 'Treysa II is a step in the right direction.'

"It now appears quite certain that the unity of the bulk of German Protestantism, omitting for the time being the small Free Church groups, is assured. Suspicions and tensions, often being proved groundless, were largely dispelled by frank discussion under the kindly chairmanship of Bishop Theophil Wurm of Wuerttemberg, president of the EKID Council of Twelve.

"As the conference progressed, one could sense a gradual meeting of minds. Among the nearly 200 men present were some who had long been dependent on correspondence and hearsay. At last they were able to clarify their respective positions and stop jumping at hasty conclusions.

"This growing accord was evident also in the discussion of relations between the new United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD) and the EKID as a whole. With Bishop Hanns Lilje of Hanover absent because of illness, and Bishop Meiser of Bavaria holding himself in the background, the more confessionally conscious Lutheran position was set forth by younger men. Drs. Brunotte of Hanover, Kuenneth of Erlangen, and Kinder of Neuendettelsau, Bavaria, were the chief spokesmen for closer co-operation between the more conservative Lutheranism which they represented and the sound Biblical realism which has permeated the rest of the EKID.

"With theological liberalism almost entirely vanished and a serious response to the living Word of God widely manifest, the fruit of the Church's struggle during the dozen years of Nazism is evident. This was illustrated in the stand taken on the Lord's Supper. There seems to be general acceptance of it in terms of the basic Lutheran understanding of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Even the Reformed, who in Germany do not follow Zwingli's interpretation of the Supper as a mere memorial, find that their own renewed adherence to Calvin's teaching on the spiritual presence of Christ brings them much closer to the Lutherans. Such convergence toward agreement is all the more noteworthy in that it rests on the best New Testament scholarship.

"Keeping these factors in mind, one can appreciate the Seven Points of Agreement drafted by a special committee and adopted without dissent by the conference. These points indicate both the character of recent German church life and the direction of subsequent developments. In summarized form they declare:

"1. The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD) desires to remain an integral part of the EKID. It acknowledges its duty to participate in the collective tasks of the EKID, and would regard a break in this fellowship as a decided loss.

"2. All are agreed that the EKID is a federation of Lutheran, Union, and Reformed Churches; that within this federation, through the common hearing of the Word of God as it is proclaimed, the New Testament Church is actualized.

"3. There is agreement that the EKID, as a federation, stands on the Barmen Declaration (which was drawn up and signed jointly in 1934 by Lutheran, Union, and Reformed representatives in their united opposition to national socialism, and which expresses in modern terms the Church's relation to the non-Christian world).

"4. There is agreement that evangelical church members are not to be excluded from the Lord's Supper if they belong to another confession within the EKID. (Probably the crucial point among the seven, and aimed particularly to guarantee spiritual ministrations to the millions of displaced German Protestants who now reside on territory of established churches other than their own.)

"5. It is agreed that unifying conversations on the Lord's Supper take place between selected representatives of the Lutheran constituency and of the other constituencies in the EKID.

"6. It is agreed that the constitution of the VELKD (which has already been adopted by two Churches) and the proposed constitution of the EKID be brought into harmony, in consultation with the latter's Council of Twelve.

"7. The conference agrees that the EKID is a federation of Churches bound in their respective confessions, and that (on that basis) the way is open for the calling of a synodical convention to prepare a constitution for this body.

"Lutherans in America will probably respond to these seven points with mingled reactions. In any case, these points indicate the main stream of development in German Protestantism both during the Nazi era and since the war. They are not the product of hasty action. They represent a powerful desire on the part of Christians to stand united against the mounting evils and grave problems in postwar society.

"No attempt, therefore, to gauge the nature of this intimate fellowship in terms of American denominational equivalents is adequate. It is not as though America's Lutherans, plus the

Evangelical and Reformed, and the Presbyterians, decided to form a special federation with officially recognized pulpit and altar fellowship. The extremes involved in this German situation are not as far apart as that. Nor are these seven points final and binding. Rather, they point the way.

"To an outsider the growing unity of the Church in Germany cannot be clear unless he seriously tries to understand the successive stages of development during the past fifteen years and to see the situation from within. In his closing words Bishop Wurm declared: 'Our fellowship here at Treysa has been deeper than we realize, for God has been with us.' In many quarters one hears grateful echoes of this same sentiment. As one of the younger leaders summed it up: 'God has given the Church something big. We must now be big enough to make use of it.'"

We regret that Point 4 in the above statement was adopted. Without debate we admit that conditions in the German churches today are in a state of flux, that in many places chaos rules, that an emergency of stupendous proportions has arisen, and that where such abnormal circumstances prevail, *summum ius* is likely to be *summa iniuria*. It is conceivable that facing a large congregation of strangers a minister will not be able, before administration of the Lord's Supper, to have a personal conversation with every communicant, and that all he can do is to make a general statement of the Lutheran position and say that those who hold this position, and those only, may approach the Lord's Table. We believe that there the principle would apply that a minister should be more horrified at the thought of having turned a worthy communicant away from the Lord's Table than at having unwittingly admitted an unworthy one. But to let people approach the Communion Table who confessedly do not accept the Scriptural teaching of the Lord's Supper cannot be justified. All of 1 Cor. 11:17-34 protests against such a course. It is our hope that in the discussions which are now going on the policy outlined in Point 4 will be repudiated.

Dr. F. E. Mayer, who a few days ago returned after a two months' sojourn in Germany, reports that in Lutheran circles of Bavaria much uneasiness obtains owing to the Treysa resolutions. He met Bavarian Lutheran pastors in conferences held in Munich, Nuremberg, Augsburg, Bayreuth, and Ansbach, and found that there is a strong feeling of dissatisfaction being voiced. Perhaps genuine Lutheran consciousness will definitely assert itself. A.

Philip Melancthon — 1947 and 1547. — Philip Melancthon, Luther's faithful Wittenberg colleague and co-worker, was born four hundred and fifty years ago, on February 16, 1497, in Bretten, Baden. His 450th anniversary has been observed with proper memorial services and ceremonies at Wittenberg, Germany, this past summer; and it is indeed fitting that this should be done, for as long as the Augsburg Confession and its Apology are treasured in the Lutheran Church, the memory of this great teacher and

writer should be held in high esteem, apart from the facts that to him the universities of Marburg, Koenigsberg, and Jena owe their origin and Leipzig, its reorganization, and that he was in the true sense of the term the father of the German *Gymnasium*, Germany's classic college, in which the classics and religion were to be inculcated upon the youth of his country. Very appositely Dr. P. Peters, in the *Quartalschrift* (July, 1947), discusses in connection with the 450th anniversary of Melanchthon's birth his decisive step taken in 1547, the fateful year when, on April 24, the Lutheran Smalcald League was defeated at Muehlberg and practically the whole of Southern Germany was subdued by the Catholic victors. The University of Wittenberg was closed, and Melanchthon was compelled to flee. But both Jena and Leipzig were eager to welcome the renowned *Praeceptor Germaniae* on their faculties. However, at the request of Saxony's new elector Maurice, he returned to Wittenberg on July 25, together with Bugenhagen, Cruciger, and Eber, and on October 16 he took up his lectures, expounding to the students St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians and Proverbs. This return of Melanchthon to Wittenberg, Dr. Peters holds, was of the most far-reaching importance both as to Melanchthon's and the Church's future, for Melanchthon was now led by Maurice to draw up in the following year the so-called Leipzig Interim, a unionistic document, which became the source of long and bitter disputes among Lutherans. Had Melanchthon accepted the call to Jena, an outspoken and confessing Lutheran university, or even to Leipzig, his entire work as a Lutheran theologian during the last years of his life might have been different. But be that as it may, there is no doubt that his great love for Wittenberg and his dependence on his colleagues, especially Cruciger and Eber, who stoutly supported him in his stand taken in the Leipzig Interim, did much to change his position which he held before Luther's death, and especially before and up to 1530. The change, of course, did not come about suddenly, for already in 1535, in his second edition of the *Loci*, Melanchthon had inclined to and taught synergistic views, as Dr. Peters correctly points out. But unfortunately it became much more pronounced after 1547, and the Melanchthon of 1548—1560, by his unfortunate concessions to Romanists and Calvinists, greatly injured the Lutheran cause and, besides, rendered himself extremely unhappy. Melanchthon thus stands out in the history of the Lutheran Church as a great theological paradox, for without him, humanly speaking, the pure doctrine of the Reformation could not have been so nobly confessed as it was at Augsburg, and yet, after Luther's death no one perhaps did more to undermine the foundation of the Lutheran fundamentals than did this great Lutheran teacher. Luther's pure Gospel doctrine in the end was saved for the Church, not by Melanchthon, but largely by those very theologians from whose fury Master Philip finally prayed God to deliver him by a blessed departure.

J. T. M.

The Function of Creeds and Confessions.—*The Lutheran Church Quarterly* (July, 1947), under this heading, publishes an article which very ably defends the four theses: Creeds and Confessions 1) express the common faith of the Church; 2) preserve the unity of the Church; 3) exhibit the continuity of the Church; and 4) safeguard the future of the Church, all of which are true and worthy of being kept in mind. But the article contains also statements which seem to weaken, if not contradict, its general thesis. We quote, for example, the following: "While exhibiting the continuity of the Church, therefore, creeds and confessions also reflect its development. When the ancient creeds are placed beside the Reformation confessions, for example, it becomes clear that the continuity is not static, but a developing one. And to acknowledge development between the fourth and the sixteenth centuries is to acknowledge that there has also been development since the last of the confessions was formulated. But this does not mean that they have no value for us today. It means only that, because they are historical documents, they must be interpreted historically. To accept them today does not require the climate of opinion or the method or argument or the mode of expression which were characteristic of bygone ages. Most of us cannot do so. But to embrace historical statements as our own means that, in view of the issues which were then involved and the alternatives which were then offered, we take our stand with those whose faith is there expressed. We declare that, in this historical context, the decisions were and are valid, and in so doing we place ourselves in the developing continuity of the Church of the ages." There are two statements in this paragraph which to us do not seem clear, namely, first: "Creeds and confessions also reflect its development"; and, second: "Because they are historical documents, they must be interpreted historically." Both may be rightly understood, but both also, in a sense, are ambiguous. Referring to the first declaration, namely, that "creeds and confessions also reflect its [the Church's] development," it is true that the Church, as it advances from century to century, forever meets with new errorists, so that it must expand its confessions to declare in plain speech what it regards as the divine truth over against such new heresies as arise from time to time. If that is development, then no objection can be raised against the use of the term in this connection. But if the term is to express what German theologians have called *Lehrfortbildung*, or doctrinal development, in the sense that the ancient formulation of the Christian doctrine must be altered to suit modern, unbiblical views (e. g., Fosdick's false view of the vicarious satisfaction, the resurrection of the flesh, etc.), then the expression is not justifiable, since there is no such *Fortbildung*. Again, when it is said that because confessions are "historical documents, they must be interpreted historically," that, too, may be understood correctly; for confessions are really and truly historical documents and must be studied against their historical and polemical background. It is generally conceded, for

example, that our Lutheran Confessions contain historical, exegetical, and other incidental features which need not be accepted, as, for instance, the reference to *Semper Virgo*, the remark concerning the magnet and garlic juice, and so forth. But while we thus declare our Confessions to be historical documents, we do not declare them to be historical in the sense of the Reformed Church, which views its creeds simply as statements that were formerly believed to be the truth, but which have no binding force for us today. While we reject the papistic view of the confessions, which makes the confessions of the Church practically the *norma normans* and thus elevates it above Scripture, we reject also the bare historic view of the confessions that makes them just so many historical scraps of paper, which indeed are of great historical interest, but which are not all obligatory for later generations. The Lutheran approach to its Confessions is this: We carefully scrutinize all our Confessions, no matter whether they are ecumenical or particular (Lutheran) and compare them with the Scriptures, and, as they agree with Holy Writ, we accept and teach them as declarations of the Lutheran faith, based upon and drawn from Holy Scripture. A confession to Lutherans is a *norma normata*, but a *norma*, nevertheless, because here is Scripture doctrine set forth and defended against errorists. Perhaps this is what the author means to say, for he concludes the paragraph thus: "We declare that, in this historical context, the decisions were and are valid, and in so doing we place ourselves in the developing continuity of the Church of the ages." If what we said is the meaning of the words, we fully agree with them; only the statement is lacking in precision and therefore also in clarity. To us it seems of the greatest importance that we Lutherans agree with regard to our Confessions in every respect, and this after all is not a difficult, but a very simple and easy matter. J. T. M.

A Contemporary Ring. Hugh Thompson Kerr, Jr., in *Theology Today* (July, 1947) reports that C. S. Lewis, the well-known Oxford don and religious apologist, has paid a debt to George Macdonald, an obscure Scottish writer, to whom he is greatly indebted for his "latest fantasy," *The Great Divorce*, by publishing *George Macdonald, an Anthology*, a "collection of his religious aphorisms and meditations." We are not concerned about the book, nor about what Dr. Kerr writes about it. But we are deeply interested in what Macdonald says of "The Word," which, as Dr. Kerr says, is a "sample with a contemporary ring." The selection reads as follows: "But herein is the Bible itself greatly wronged. It nowhere lays claim to be regarded as *the Word, the Way, the Truth* (*italics in original*). The Bible leads us to Jesus, the inexhaustible, the ever-unfolding Revelation of God. It is Christ 'in whom are hid all treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' not the Bible, save as leading to Him." This note indeed has a contemporary ring, for this very untruth is now being published time and again in periodicals that claim to be advocates of Biblical truth. But what

the selection says, is not only downright untrue (as every confirmand knows who has learned his Catechism), but it involves also a *contradictio in adiecto*, for how can the Bible lead us to Christ, if it is not *the Word of God, the Way to Salvation, and the Book of eternal life?* We concede, as it might be countered, that Christ Himself is indeed *the Word, the Way, and the Truth*, and we acknowledge that also this is true. But the very Christ who is the Word, the Way, and the Truth commands us to search the Scriptures as the divine Word, the divine Way teaching salvation, and the divine Truth. Men who publish such things as Macdonald here writes, do not speak the truth, but perpetrate a sophism, and indeed one that draws the Christian away, not merely from the Bible, but from Christ Himself; for he who dynamites the foundation of the divine Word destroys by this very fact also the Christ of the Word.

J. T. M.

A Challenge to Protestants.— Much alarm is being expressed by an increasing number of persons over the growing power of Roman Catholicism in the United States. Free bus transportation for parochial school children and free textbooks in parochial schools provided out of public tax funds in a number of States are causing much concern. The means for counteracting Rome are ably expressed in an editorial written by Bishop Howard D. Higgins and published in the *Episcopal Recorder*. Bishop Higgins wrote:

"There is considerable concern in many corners of Protestantism today about the growing influence of Roman Catholicism. With a high degree of organization and good publicity, the opinion and accomplishments of the Roman Catholic Church in many departments of life are constantly brought to public attention in the press of the nation. Much space has been given recently to persons of national reputation who have been received into the Roman Church. In education, labor relations, social welfare, the Roman Church has been making itself felt in a large way.

"All of this has brought a response from Protestants in the nature of a demand that something be done about it. Various are the suggestions. Some would find the solution in a high degree of Protestant organization which would include a lobby in Washington and even restrictive legislation. Of course, the guarantees of the Constitution of the United States puts limits upon such action. It is also suggested that the Protestant Church use the very methods which the Roman Catholic Church has often used and which have been so vigorously condemned, and rightly so, by Protestants. As citizens we have every right to make our desires and points of view known to our representatives in the Congress, and by our vote on election day. As a church we should be careful what we say and do in an effort to influence legislation.

"We suggest a positive approach to this problem. First, understand what it is that Protestantism stands for. Be intelligent and well-informed Christians. Knowing and believing the Word of God in its purity, we have a strong and positive faith ourselves.

Many are being drawn to Roman Catholicism today because the churches to which they have gone have given them no sure word of Truth. Seeking security they think they find it in the dogmas of Rome which, false though they be, are declared with certainty and lack of compromise that has its appeal. We need a strong faith ourselves. Many of those who are most outspokenly anti-Catholic, do not have a clear understanding of Protestantism nor a large Christian faith themselves.

"Not only do we need understanding and strong belief for ourselves, but we need a faithful and zealous teaching of the truth of the Gospel of Grace to the rising generation. Point out the errors and false teachings of Rome, but teach the children the Bible and lead them to a personal faith in Christ and to an understanding of the issues of their faith that they may easily detect error when they come into contact with it and oppose it because they love the truth. The churches of Protestantism are failing to teach the children the great doctrines of the Reformation, the sole authority of the Word of God, the priesthood of all believers in Christ, the forgiveness of sin and justification in the sight of God through the simple act of faith alone.

"Not only do we need to know the truth ourselves and teach it to our children with new vigor, but we need to be diligent in the support of the Protestant church. Again many of those who decry the growing power at Rome, weaken the cause of Protestantism by their own lack of interest in the church. They seldom attend the services. They contribute but niggardly to its support. They do not pray for the Lord's blessing upon it. A strong Protestantism, well-informed, served by devoted members who faithfully attend the services and give forth a good testimony, supplied with ample funds to carry on and expand the work, backed up by the consecrated lives of men, women, and children, is the mighty bulwark which Rome fears and which God will use."

A. W. C. G.

Mixed Marriages.—In the Bavarian *Landeskirche* the Lutheran pastor is not permitted to perform the marriage ceremony between an Evangelical Lutheran and a Catholic unless an official document is signed by both parties in which they pledge that all children born in the union will be baptized in the Evangelical Lutheran Church and be instructed and confirmed according to the Confessions of this Church. They, furthermore, must promise that even in the case of the death of one spouse this promise will remain valid. This measure seems legalistic to us, and we are wondering whether the best results are achieved in this manner. The pastor of St. Lorenz Church at Nuernberg told us that he had to decline to perform the nuptial rites because the Catholic party refused to sign, and since there is no other Protestant church, the couple was married in the Catholic Church. In the question of mixed marriages, we believe that the only method is the evangelical method which has always been used in our circles.

F. E. M.

An American's Observations on European Theological Discussion.—From January 5 to 9, 1947, twenty-five representatives of the Reformed, Lutheran, Anglican, and Orthodox churches from Denmark, Germany, England, France, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the United States met at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland, to consider in a five-day program a subtopic of the general theme "The Authority and Relevance of the Social and Political Message of the Bible for Today." A report of this important meeting is given by Dr. C. E. Schneider of Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Mo., in *Christendom* (Summer, 1947) under the heading quoted above. The report is interesting for various reasons. In the first place, Dr. Schneider was quite surprised to find that the European theologians frequently quoted not only Luther, Calvin, and Melancthon, but also "such ancient stalwarts as Heppe, Kohlbruegge, and Hengtsenberg," and that they frequently reverted to the testimony of the fathers and to the position of the Augustana and the Formula Concordiae. In other words, these European theologians still appreciated and knew theology. In the second place, this fact greatly amazed the American reporter, for he says: ". . . all of which [this going back to theology and theologians] has no direct or immediate relevance for American thinkers" (p. 342). Again he writes: "Whereas European theology will have difficulty with any approach to the Scriptures which is based on a static inspiration theory, American theologians, with their direct dynamic appeal to the Scriptures, sense a static quality in the persistent confessional qualifications characteristic in European theology" (p. 342). This means that American theologians do not care to concern themselves about Confessions, as theologians in Europe do. In the third place, in the course of the discussion it was discovered that the various Lutheran theologians did not agree among themselves, so that there came from Karl Barth the "sly plea" to the Lutherans, "for the sake of intelligent discussion of Lutheranism, [to] please get together amongst yourselves and give us a consistent picture of Luther so that we may know with whom we have to deal" (p. 344). There was, as Dr. Schneider reports, not only disagreement between German and Scandinavian Lutheranism, but even the Scandinavian theologians were not agreed amongst themselves. In the fourth place, Dr. Schneider says that "it was not the purpose of the conference to write a program of social action so much as to indicate the direction in which the thinking of the Church is moving" (p. 345). Much stress, it seems, was placed upon the "Lutheran teaching of the 'two realms'" (p. 342), and here it appears that either the reporter could not follow Lutheran abstract thinking or else that the disputants themselves were not clear in their expression. At any rate, the reporter speaks as if the "two realms" referred to the distinction between Law and Gospel and that this involved the "difference between the Old and New Testaments." Now, the

expression "two realms" in Lutheran theology is indeed applied to the Law and the Gospel, but not in such a way as if the Law constituted the essence of the Old Testament, while the Gospel is the exclusive preaching of the New Testament. Thus the Formula of Concord teaches expressly that as in the Old Testament Law and Gospel were taught side by side, so, too, in the New Testament these two doctrines should be taught side by side, but with proper distinction and application. When Lutheran theology speaks of the two realms of the Law and the Gospel, the reference certainly is not to time, but rather to the sphere, purpose, and application of each of these divine doctrines. The expression "two realms" has been applied also to the Church and the State, but not in such a way as if the Church were to deal with the Gospel exclusively, while it were the province of the State to employ the Law, as the report indicates. When speaking of Church and State, the Lutheran Confessions, describing the nature of these two realms, rather have in mind the *fundamentum dividendi* of the temporal and the spiritual. The State is to take care of the temporal, while the Church concerns itself with the spiritual needs of men. The report shows very clearly that American theologians dare not neglect the sacred theology of the Church taught in the past; above all, they must not overlook the sound theology of the Church's Confessions which are drawn from and based upon Holy Scripture. Dr. Schneider writes: "There seemed to be no gainsaying the necessity of approaching the religious problems of the day uninhibited by theological formulations of the past" (p. 345). To us such a course seems to be both impossible and fatal.—The same number of *Christendom*, by the way, contains an excellent article on "The *Una Sancta* in Luther's Theology" by Dr. F. E. Mayer.

J. T. M.

Enemy of the West—Birth Control.—Under this heading, *America* (August 9, 1947) offers a startling analysis of the population of various European countries, based on scientifically gathered and arranged statistics, showing that seven European countries are on a definite downward population trend, namely, Austria, Belgium, England and Wales, Estonia, France, Sweden, and Switzerland, while eleven, namely, Albania, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, North Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Scotland, show a population that is approximately stationary, and ten are increasing in population, though in many of them the increase is rather negligible, namely, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Spain, USSR, and Yugoslavia. In the article the problem is viewed mainly from its social and economic angle, but there is involved also one that is definitely theological and religious. After all is said concerning the difficulties and the high cost of raising large families, the fact remains that God has instituted holy matrimony in order that His foremost creatures, who rule this world in His place, should be fruitful and multiply. That is His universal command. It remains in force

as long as the divine institution of marriage remains in force. Those who reject God's Word, of course, misuse marriage for selfish and unmoral ends; but Christians are to live God's Word also in this respect. Birth control finds its explanation in lack of Christian faith and obedience, and both are unjustifiable and reprehensible. Here, then, is a problem and challenge for the pastor, who, despite serious difficulties, must not only himself set a good example to his parishioners, but also instruct and admonish them to do what God demands of them. The approach, of course, must be tactful and evangelical. Any legalistic procedure is bound to fail, as it has failed within Catholicism; for in Protestant countries Romanists are no less guilty on this point than are unduteful Protestants. There is a stewardship of marriage just as there is stewardship of everything else that God has given to men, and this stewardship must be inculcated on the basis of proper Gospel motivation. The matter is all the more serious since, as competent students of sociology agree, the "civilized, educated people are dying out no less in our own country than in England." So much is certain that social and economic security and well-being do not come from birth control. A nation that flouts the divine laws can never be a happy and strong nation.

J. T. M.

This Pagan Idolatry of Catholicism. In an article on "Roman Catholicism and the Second Commandment" in the *Presbyterian Guardian* (July 25, 1947) Leslie W. Sloat speaks also of the five-day Marian Congress held in Ottawa, Canada, during the past month of June. The writer says: "Supposedly the Congress was to be a meeting for prayer for world peace. Actually it was a combination of parades, speeches, and fireworks designed to impress the splendor of Catholicism upon the people of the Province, already largely Catholic, in the hope of extending the sway of the Roman pontiff over our northern neighbor." It then goes on to say: "The feature of the Congress was the visit of a four-foot gilded statue of 'Our Lady of the Cape,' to be perched atop a huge altar specially erected for the purpose in a ball park. As the statue made its way on a decorated truck through the country to Ottawa, and then about the city, it was received everywhere with all honor and adoration. Politicians and businessmen as well as the Catholic clergy spared no efforts to make it welcome. It received the keys of cities along the route. . . . People are said to have paid \$250 for front seats at ceremonies in its honor. . . . 65,000 people are said to have attended the midnight mass in Lansdowne Park, which marked the climax of the Congress. The fireworks display included a thirty-foot design of the Virgin, which was literally shot up into heaven, as representing the supposed Assumption of the Virgin, a dogma which may soon be declared by the Pope as mandatory for Catholics." After having described the pagan idolatry of Rome in further graphic paragraphs, the writer closes his article with the following striking words: "When one considers the blatant idolatry of the religion

of Rome, and then hears the talk that is being promoted in some circles of an ecumenical church which will eventually include Romanism and Protestantism in one organization, the tragedy and the danger of modern church union movement become even more clear. Likewise the validity and the necessity of that Reformation whereby the modern Protestant Church came into existence is made the more clear. And the supreme necessity, in our day, of maintaining with all our strength a faithful testimony to our only and great High Priest, to the sufficiency and finality of His sacrifice made once for all, and to the true Church as His body, impresses its inescapable demand upon us. The idea of an ecumenical church, as well as a four-foot wooden statue, can become an idol. 'Little children, keep yourselves from idols.'

J. T. M.

Brief Items from *Religious News Service*.—The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Western Canada was formed at the golden jubilee meeting in Winnipeg of the Manitoba Synod of the United Lutheran Church in Canada. The change in name came with a new constitution that was adopted.

Dr. Charles W. Gilkey, director of the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel of the University of Chicago for the last nineteen years, resigned from the university faculty on July 31. Dr. Gilkey has accepted a part-time professorship at Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, Newton, Mass.

Establishment of a world union for conservative Judaism was predicted at New York City by Rabbi Israel M. Goldman of Providence, R. I., president of the Rabbinical Assembly of America.

The Polish Evangelical Augsburg Church, Bydgoszcz, western Poland, recently celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of its foundation. Attended by Protestants from all parts of the country, the observance was highlighted by the unveiling of a memorial in honor of clergymen who were slain during the German occupation.

Larger libraries and improved staffs at seminaries were urged in an address by Dr. Kenneth Gapp, librarian of Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J., at the two-day meeting in Louisville, Ky., of a conference of theological librarians.

A Chair of Human Relations, believed to be the first of its kind, has been established at the University of Miami in Carl Gables. Starting with the fall term, courses will be given in the teaching and study of better relations between groups—racial, religious, cultural, and national.

Discussions on the tasks of the Christian faith brought 6,000 youths to Milwaukee, Wis., for the largest International Young People's Luther League and Choral Union meeting in the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Charges that the Roman Catholic Mass ritual was included in a new book of rubrics sanctioned by the Rt. Rev. Arnold Lomas Wyld, Anglican bishop of Bathurst, were made in a case brought before an ecclesiastical court in Sydney, Australia, in behalf of twenty-three communicants of the Bathurst diocese who are seeking a restraining order against Bishop Wyld.

Reaffirming its resolution of 1909 which declared that "mixed marriages are contrary to the tradition of the Jewish religion, and should, therefore, be discouraged by the American rabbinate," the annual convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis meeting in Montreal, Canada, voted down by a slim margin another resolution which would have completely prohibited marriages between Jews and unconverted Gentiles.

Attorney General Harry McMullan, in an advisory opinion just handed down in Raleigh, has ruled that there is no State law in North Carolina against using public school money to provide an optional course in Bible knowledge.

The National Council of Juvenile Court Judges, meeting in Chicago, declared it had found "a deplorable lack of religious training all over our land."

Senate Bill 26, authorizing trustees of all school districts, common or independent, to furnish transportation of pupils in parochial, denominational, or private schools, died when the Texas legislature adjourned in Austin.

The State board of education has banned distribution of Gideon Bibles in New Hampshire public elementary and secondary schools which come under the supervision of the State's teacher colleges. The board's action resulted from protests by some Christians and non-Christians against circulation of the Gideon Bible in public schools.

Augustana College and Augustana Seminary, both located at Rock Island, Ill., will hereafter be operated as separate legal identities, with separate boards and administrations.

The Lutheran Free Church has decided to give another year of study to a proposal that it join the World Council of Churches. This decision was made by the Church at its golden anniversary conference in Minneapolis, Minn. Similar action was taken in the Church's conference a year ago.

Revival of interest in the Lutheran diaconate was indicated at the 88th annual convention of the Augustana Synod in Kansas City, Mo., when seven young women were consecrated as deaconesses at a special service conducted by Dr. P. O. Bersell, president of the Synod. All were graduates of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute at Omaha, Nebr., where the Synod conducts an extensive colony of mercy.

Scores of young men and women dedicated themselves to Christian service in foreign fields as missionaries at a special service conducted at Winona Lake, Ind., during the 22d quadrennial session of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America voted at its 70th annual convention in Racine, Wis., to seek Government funds for expansion of its college facilities, if the Akién bill is passed by the current session of Congress. Under terms of the measure, now in Congressional committee, limited aid would be given by the Government to assist colleges and universities where war veterans are enrolled to erect nonhousing buildings, such as classrooms, laboratories, gymnasiums, etc.

The Catholic war veterans passed a resolution at their national convention in Cleveland, Ohio, demanding severance of America's relations with Yugoslavia until such time as the release of Archbishop Louis Stepinac is effected.

Churches, trade unions, business and other groups were urged in New York City to join in calling people of the world to three minutes of silent thought or prayer on Hiroshima Day, August 6. The proposal was made by the World Brotherhood Mobilization for the emergency World Peoples Congress. Professor Kirtley F. Mather of Harvard University is chairman of the executive council.

A baby bungalow, which will provide a place for children whose parents are attending church, will soon be completed in Memphis, Tenn., by the Bellevue Baptist congregation.

Francis Cardinal Spellman of New York, speaking in Ottawa, Can., in an open-air mass of the Marian Congress, attended by 125,000 persons, decried international tensions and assailed unnamed nations for "secretly girding themselves for a war of annihilation."

The Greek Government will shortly begin negotiations for establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican, according to authoritative sources in Athens.

The "low quality" of modern secular education was scored in Ottawa, Can., by James Charles Cardinal McGuigan, archbishop of Toronto, in an address to the convocation of the University of Ottawa which conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. Cardinal McGuigan assailed "the crude practicalness, the skeptic anti-intellectualism, and the moral irresponsibility of a good deal of present-day education."

A pamphlet describing the democratic organization and basic ideals of the labor movement in the United States and written by the Most Rev. Francis J. Haas, bishop of the Grand Rapids

Catholic diocese, has been translated into Japanese. Translation of the pamphlet, called "The American Labor Movement," was made by Rev. Peter Herzog, S. J., of the University of Tokyo.

A program of "religious interfiltration," launched on Okinawa by a handful of native Christians, may eventually result in the conversion to Christianity of most of the islands 58,000 population, according to the Rev. Garland E. Hopkins, associate secretary of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church.

Mount Carmel Catholic Church in Passaic, N. J., has started a drive for \$150,000 to build a recreational center for use by children of all races, colors, and creeds. The center will be erected in one of Passaic's most congested low-income neighborhoods, according to an announcement by the Rev. Joseph Custa, O. F. M., pastor.

The recent dismissal of four physicians from the courtesy staff of a Catholic hospital in Springfield, Mass., for their support of planned parenthood has spurred the local Planned Parenthood League to seek enactment of a State law making birth control legal.

The Brooklyn Sunday School Union observed its 118th anniversary with a parade in which 80,000 children from 300 Sunday schools participated. In addition, 40,000 children paraded in adjacent Queens County. Several of the marching groups wore sashes bearing the parade's 1947 theme: "Christ, Our Guide into All Truth." A police department band played a number of hymns, including three renditions of "Onward, Christian Soldiers."

More effective means of interfaith co-operation "in the common task of furthering world fellowship," was stressed by Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Buddhist leaders in a statement formulated at a recent UNESCO regional conference in Denver. The statement just made public in Washington, D. C., by the U. S. National Commission for UNESCO, listed the spiritual and religious principles "upon which UNESCO declares its success to depend." It was unanimously adopted by 1,800 leaders attending the regional conference.

More than a thousand pilgrims assembled at the Basilica of Covadonga, Spain, near Oviedo, took a solemn vow to defend the doctrine of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and joined in petitioning Pope Pius XII to define it as a dogma of faith.

The Egyptian Government has agreed to resume diplomatic relations with the Vatican, according to an official announcement in Cairo, after lengthy negotiations in which King Farouk and Bishop Arthur Hughes, regent of the Cairo nunciature, took an active part.

The World Council of Churches office announced in Geneva, Switzerland, it will shortly inaugurate an "assembly bulletin"

giving news of plans for the Council's first assembly at Amsterdam, Holland, in 1948.

In an address characterized by cryptic references to "perils" that must be overcome, Patriarch Alexei, supreme head of the Russian Orthodox Church, appealed in Bucharest for a union of all Eastern orthodox churches into "a common front that will be overcome by none."

Religion must be emphasized at all American Jewish community programs, Dr. Salo W. Baron, professor of Jewish history, literature, and institutions at Columbia University, New York, declared at the 36th annual meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Social Welfare at Baltimore, Md.

An immediate start on a million dollar new building at Ocean Grove, N. J., has been ordered by the board of trustees of the Methodist Home for the Aged of New Jersey.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern) voted at Montreat, N. C., to submit to presbyteries "the question of withdrawal" of the denomination from membership in the Federal Council of Churches.

The Presbyterian Program of Progress, a five-year evangelistic and financial drive, sponsored by the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern), was approved at the annual meeting of the General Assembly in Montreat, N. C. A total of \$7,250,000 will be sought during the next five years, \$4,000,000 of which will go toward strengthening of the Church's foreign missions program, especially in the Far East.

Brief Items.—The *Presbyterian* is a denominational weekly, published chiefly for Presbyterian laymen. A recent number in its special corner "Explain Please" offers more than two columns in reply to the question: "What is sanctification?" The term is explained, first, in its Biblical use and meaning, and then against its historico-theological background. The presentation reads like a page from Hodge's *Systematic Theology*. Here is the close: "Justification is an act of God's free grace by which He forgives the sinner (Luke 18:9-14). Sanctification is a synergistic, co-operative process, by which God works in the soul, supplying the energy which man needs to work out a Christian character (Phil. 3:12, 13). The fruits of sanctification are good works. Good works can never sanctify man. In fact, they are not possible until regeneration has taken place (Rom. 8:7-10). Then, in co-operation with the Spirit, we do good works, and sanctification progressively takes place." Truly, a gratifying revival of old-fashioned Christian dogmatics, and that outside the Lutheran Church.

Why Be an Ape? Observations on Evolution. So reads the title of a powerful testimony against evolution written by Newman Watts, a London journalist, which this year has appeared in a

revised edition. Mr. Watts gives the following six reasons why he believes evolution to be so widely accepted: 1) Evolution owes a large amount of its acceptance to its materialistic and atheistic basis; 2) It carries with it the idea of inevitable progress; 3) It champions the thought of something coming out of nothing; 4) It offers a new excuse for sin and a reasonable escape from guilt; 5) It proclaims selfishness in its slogan "the survival of the fittest"; 6) It spreads the cult of the superman. Order from the Sunday School Times Book Service, 1721 Spring Garden St., Philadelphia 30, Pa. Price, two shillings, sixpence. — *Sunday School Times*.

The Board of Education in San Diego, California, has decided that there should be no more released time for religious education. Of 2,257 pupils, eligible for released time each week, 760 Protestants, 478 Catholics, and 47 Christian Scientists, had been attending the classes — 57 per cent of the total. Thundered the Rev. C. F. Buddy, Roman Catholic bishop: "Your ill-advised decision is another victory for the atheistic Kremlin and its brutal Communistic doctrine, which rates the child as a mere creature of the State. Obviously shallow thinking and unbelief are responsible for your action." — *The Lutheran*.

Sunday, November 2, 1947, has been designated *Reformation Sunday* by the executive committee of the Federal Council of Churches. The shift was made to avoid conflict with the new date for World Order Sunday, which has been appointed for October 26, 1947. For the next three years Reformation Sunday will come as follows: October 31, 1948; October 30, 1949; October 29, 1950.

Lutheran Standard

To keep their children from what they regard as the worldly influence of the public schools, members of an Amish settlement near Berne, Ind., are selling their farms and moving to southern Tennessee, where their children will not be compelled to attend high school. — *Christian Century*.

The Northern Baptists are suffering from an *oversupply of ministers*, on account of which the denomination is "headed for general denominational deterioration," as said Dr. M. C. Froyd, director of the Church's program of study of theological education. "We may stave off this deterioration this year or next," he told the Northern Baptist Convention, "but sooner or later the crisis, unless some new factor appears on the scene, is bound to come."

Lutheran Companion

Preparations are being made by the Anglican Church in Belfast, Ireland, to observe the 100th anniversary of the death of Henry Francis Lyte, English-born hymnist who wrote the words of "Abide with Me." Lyte died in Nice, France, November 20, 1847.

Lutheran Companion

J. T. M.