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Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Luther Defended by a German Theologian. — According to the *National Lutheran* (Winter 1947—1948) Dr. Hans Asmussen, chancellor of the Evangelical Church in Germany, who visited in this country during December and January, took the field in defense of Luther against the charge that Luther was responsible for National Socialism, for the deification of the State, and for the downfall of the nation. He opposed statements made by Karl Barth, professor at Basel, Switzerland, who in a vicious way attacked Luther, maintaining that the Reformer divided the world into two realms, the State and the Church, and that the result was that the State came to dominate everything. According to the *National Lutheran* Dr. Asmussen stated: "On the surface, to counteract Barth and his accusation, this must at once be said: He overlooks the fact that the Hohenzollerns, who should also be mentioned in this connection, were not Lutheran, but Reformed; Frederick the Great received a Reformed education. Karl Barth conceals the fact that the root which gave strength and stability to National Socialism was not a taproot which climbs upward toward the strong trunk, but actually a confusion of roots. He who would disentangle them will find a strong root in Kant, who certainly cannot be considered a Lutheran. Another root is traceable to the French Revolution and its forces. A third takes us back to Karl Marx and to all Socialists. There was a reason why Hitler's movement was called National-Socialism. In other words, he who dares to bring accusations, whether against the living or the dead, dare not confine himself to but one genealogical line. The judge must point to the truly suspicious ones, regardless of the person."

Discussing more in detail Luther's view of the divine character of governments, Dr. Asmussen made these enlightening remarks: "Luther was fully convinced that all authority is established by God. This applies to the good as well as the bad. In our day he would have viewed Churchill, Stalin, Roosevelt, and Ramadier, Hitler and Mussolini, as being sent by God. But he would not have understood this in a sense in which the nineteenth century and almost all of us would have understood it. Just because something is of God and ordained by Him is for Luther no automatic guarantee that it must be acknowledged and praised as being good. Whatever concerns us in the special realm of grace and the Gospel is, according to Luther, good and worthy of our love, even though it be the bitter cross and a cruel death. But when God, as the hidden God, has dealing with us — and that always happens within the realm of the First Article, of the Creation — then the question still remains whether He is confronting us in His anger or in His grace." To put it in slightly different words, an evil, tyrannical government may be sent by

God as a punishment for our ingratitude and general disregard of His holy will. A.

Doctrinal Articles in the "Lutheran Outlook."—The *Lutheran Outlook*, now edited by Dr. J. A. Dell of the Capital University Theological Seminary, in its issue of December, 1947, offers an excellent article under the heading "The Lutheran Doctrine of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper" by Dr. P. H. Buehring, professor of theology at Capital University Seminary. Dr. Buehring unfolds, in a clear and simple way, all that which Article VII of the Formula of Concord has to say on the Lord's Supper, and so sets forth a declaration of the doctrine which is Scriptural, Lutheran, and opposed to the vagaries of Romanism and all forms of enthusiasm. As one reads the not-too-long article by Professor Buehring and thinks of the many inadequate, if not downright wrong presentations of the doctrine, one wonders if not the study of our Lutheran Confessions would solve the problems facing the Lutheran Church today. A thorough study of the Confessions, we believe, will show that they pretty well cover all doctrines in controversy; and if the Lutheran Confessions would be honestly and fully accepted by all Lutheran churches, there would be complete unity in doctrine. We hope that further studies along the lines of Dr. Buehring's article will follow in the *Outlook*, based with equal faithfulness on our Confessions.

There is much to be considered in what Rev. W. P. Sauer writes under the "Reader's Viewpoint," in the same number, concerning the six days of creation. An article on that subject, which had appeared in an earlier number of the *Outlook*, had denied that the Mosaic creation days are natural days. An editorial in the December issue leaves the question open. But Rev. W. P. Sauer argues correctly that Moses' "understanding of the extent of those days is really the Scripture's own interpretation of their length." He writes: "Moses employed the terminology of his day. And surely the Holy Spirit, who inspired him to use right words in every sentence, would have been very careful to give him a different term to use if we were to understand what Dr. Goman claims." If there should be left any doubts about the six creation days, because the first chapter in Genesis might not speak clearly (which, in fact, it does), then all doubts are certainly removed by Ex. 20:11: "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth . . . and rested the seventh day." The Sabbath commandment is based upon the understanding of "*yom*" in Genesis, chapter 1, as meaning a natural day. Pastor Sauer writes: "The use of reason in this interpretation should certainly show that, if those days were 'definite periods of time whose extent is not known to us,' then the age of 930 years of Adam, given by the Bible, is not accurate, but to those 930 years must be added that undetermined length of Dr. Goman's 6th day in which Adam was created and the 7th day in which God rested. 'The real question' . . . what is it? Is not the refusal to accept Scripture's own interpretation regarding

creation days and the making of their length subject to unreliable reason a step toward making the redemption also subject to reasonable interpretation with the final result as quoted from that heathen Fosdick's lips (quoted in the same issue)? Will not that which is undone in one part soon undo also what is built up in another part of the believing hearts of Lutheran Christians who have read this article?" This danger is not imagined, but very real. After all, the question concerning the length of the creation days is in itself of secondary importance. The days *per se* might be seconds or aeons. But what is of supreme importance is that we accept the words of Scripture as they stand; and, whether we like it or not, Moses speaks of natural days such as the Israelites reckoned with when they were told to labor six days and observe the Sabbath on the seventh. To make concessions to a naturalistic science which insists upon periods of evolutionary development, contrary to the clear words of Scripture, means to betray the Word of God and to be unfaithful to the Lord. That is the *punctum saliens*, the point which makes controversy on this point necessary. The seriousness of the situation appears from the fact that many no longer are satisfied with extending the six creation days to unlimited aeons, but they treat the whole Mosaic creation report as an allegory and, therefore, as historically untrue. That, however, means that also the creation of man in the image of God is historically untrue, and that the story of the fall of man is historically untrue. That again means that the whole doctrine which the Gospel presupposes, namely, the tragic fact of man's fall, must disappear, and in the end the Gospel itself must disappear with it. Anyone who has read *Dogmengeschichte*, in particular the lamentable account of the rise of Modernism, is reminded of the ancient warning, when seeing how men tamper with the apparently little things in Scripture: *Principiis obsta; sero medicina paratur.*"

J. T. M.

Synodical Jubilees in 1948.—The United Lutheran Church of America is making preparations to celebrate the organization of the Pennsylvania Ministerium, which took place in 1748, largely as the work of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg. The *Lutheran* writes: "During the coming months of 1948 we expect to read of local and synodical celebrations at times convenient to congregations and the constituent units of the ecclesiastical body which came into corporate being in November thirty years ago. These will be the contributing factors whose total product will be realized in the great meeting in Philadelphia, the city in which gathered the little group of pastors and invited laymen assembled at Muhlenberg's invitation in 1748. At that historic gathering, the radius of visible fellowship was less than 100 miles; Lancaster and York, Pa., approximately 60 miles from Philadelphia, were in common horseback and stagecoach contacts. The ULCA's delegations to its sixteenth convention will travel by ship, train and plane over distances extending to half the earth's circumference. 'What a change'

since Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, arriving at Philadelphia in 1742, borrowed a horse and rode to the Trappe, where a congregation was in the making." This year also the Augustana Synod will celebrate a most important event in its history, namely, the Centennial of its founding in 1848. The synod now numbers 415,000 members. Archbishop Erling Eidem of Sweden will be the honored guest at the Centennial. Its beginnings were small and primitive, just as were those of the ten Pennsylvania churches which formed the first Lutheran synod in America, known at first as "The United Congregations," then as "The Ministerium of North America," and finally as "The Pennsylvania Ministerium." The Presbyterians will observe this year the 250th anniversary of their first congregation in Philadelphia. As the *Lutheran* reports, they worshiped for the first time with the Baptists in the Barbadoes Warehouse in Philadelphia in 1698. Older still is St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in New York City, which dates from 1664, and still older is the settlement of the Swedish congregations in Delaware, for on March 29, 1638, the Swedish governor agreed with the five chiefs of the Minquas for land for his Swedish settlers, which reached up to what is now Greater Philadelphia. Gloria Dei, dedicated in 1700, though now belonging to the Episcopal Church, still stands as a witness to the faithfulness of those early Swedes to the Lutheran Confessions.

J. T. M.

Virile Protestantism Needed.—The *Protestant Voice* of December 26, 1947, writes editorially: "A theological professor, representing Protestantism in a three-faith forum, reached his climax thus: 'The supreme task of Protestantism is to protest against Protestantism.' What kind of jet-propelled tomfoolery is that? you ask. It was the utterance of a member of the University of Chicago Federated Theological Faculty.

"It was only one of a succession of similar numskull utterances contributed by representatives of Protestantism in the Institute of Social and Religious Fellowship, maintained jointly by the Jewish Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago.

"This institute met weekly for some eight weeks at lunch in the Bismarck Hotel. About 200 rabbis, priests, ministers, and interested lay members of the churches attended.

"Protestant listeners were ashamed and humiliated. Whereas Catholic and Jewish speakers uniformly had a clear, concise and well-thought-out standpoint, presented with clarity and conviction, Protestant speakers uniformly indulged in silly wisecracks at their own faith.

"They wandered around, trying to quote everybody, giving the impression of uncertainty as to what they are talking about, and of profound alarm lest somebody should disagree.

"What kind of Protestantism is that?"

"Luther, when he stood in imminent peril of condemnation to be burnt alive, said: 'Here I stand. God helping me, I can do no other!'

"Protestant reformers risked their lives to state what they believed. Even though they differed one from another, they held a common conviction of truth.

"A growing suspicion arose, on listening to these debates, that many mis-representatives of Protestantism confuse freedom OF thought with freedom FROM thought.

"No man can be said to have thought about a topic when he only spews forth a series of disconnected quotations from other men. He has not mastered his subject until he has digested it, assimilated it, and reached a conclusion upon it. The conclusion might be wrong, but at least it is his. But none of these miscalled 'Protestant' speakers showed any backbone of conviction.

"Protestantism means assertion. 'I testify FOR the truth'— 'I am a WITNESS of the Good Tidings' is its burden and its strength.

"Feeble, apologetic wisecracking, a vague twilight of intelligence in which men wander, bumping into convictions only by accident and oversight, is not Protestantism.

"An honest atheist, who disbelieves and says so boldly, is far preferable in the sight of God, as an open foe, to this sort of jelly-fish flatulence which mistakes gas on the stomach for thought in the brain.

"What says the Psalmist? 'I believe, and therefore will I speak.' What says St. Peter? 'Give a reason for the faith that is in you.' What says the Revelation: 'Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.'

"Battles are not won by floundering in the mire.

"Stand on the rock, Protestants, if you hope to be able to face the gathering storm!"

On the Word of God.— In a brief but important article published in the January, 1948, issue of the *Augustana Quarterly* and having the title "The Word of God," Dr. Eric H. Wahlstrom, professor of New Testament Language and Literature at Augustana Theological Seminary, Rock Island, Ill., discusses the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. He holds that one trouble in the consideration of the doctrine of inspiration is due to the wrong way in which the question pertaining to this subject often is put before us. It is unfortunate, he believes, if the question is given this formulation, "Is every word of the Bible divinely inspired?" Both answers possible, Yes and No, are beset by many difficulties and require modifications. If one answers No, there arises the necessity of distinguishing between what is inspired and what is not inspired in our Sacred Volume. And who is going to make the required decision? If the answer is Yes, the number of variant readings printed, for instance, in the *Critical Text of the Greek New Testament*, stare one in the face. Where is the text every word of which is divinely inspired? The difficulty, he avers, cannot be avoided by stating, as is usually done, that the assertion of verbal or plenary inspiration applies to the autographs only

of the Apostles and Prophets and not to the more or less imperfect copies which we possess. "Since no one now has access to these originals, there is no absolute certainty that even the portions in which most extant manuscripts agree represent an exact copy of the actual autographs." He is of the opinion that the position which is content to predicate verbal inspiration of the autographs is "a most serious and fatal capitulation." The position which is voiced often that our text of the Bible is *substantially* correct is said not to be satisfactory as an answer to the question before us because "we are not concerned here with what may be accepted for all practical purposes, but with a serious statement of principle and doctrine." In other words, the answer must be either Yes or No.

What does Dr. Wahlstrom propose as a way out of the difficulty? He suggests that the question should be given this form: "Does the living God speak to man in the present through the whole of Sacred Scripture? Or, in a similar form, Is the whole Bible the Word of the living God?" To this question, he says: "Faith gives an affirmative, unequivocal, and positive answer." In approaching the matter in this way, he holds, there are three advantages. In the first place: "This formulation enables faith to express its conviction that the Bible is the living and contemporaneous Word of God. The former question is concerned entirely with a past event. It concentrates attention on the point in the ancient past when these documents were originally written." In the second place: "This formulation of the question sets the Christian free from slavery to the letter. He need not be frightened by the loss of the originals, nor by the uncertain state of the text, not even by historical criticism. The Spirit of God has been present, not only at the time of writing, but continually through the whole history of the Church." In the third place: "This question makes Scripture in reality, 'the only rule of faith and life.' . . . It is no longer a word spoken in ancient times to certain select individuals, it is the voice of God speaking directly to men in the present."

To bring out more fully what he has in mind, Dr. Wahlstrom says, among other things, that the Christian, if he accepts the view given, will read the Bible as one who listens to God. He will use all his faculties to understand the divine message. "Every part and every word of the Scripture become of tremendous importance." "The whole Bible must be read and understood in 'the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'" Likewise must it be read to find the will of God expressed there touching our life. "Its authority and power is the authority and power of the living God."

There are many things in Dr. Wahlstrom's presentation which at once evoke one's warm assent. What he advocates is a functional, a practical use of the doctrine of inspiration, and certainly every one of us must strive to employ the Sacred Volume in the manner which he outlines. It may be that often we theologians treat the subject in a far too abstract, theoretical manner, and are

solely concerned about the correct form of our remarks without thinking of their relevancy for the spiritual life of ourselves and other people. Several things, however, should be stated. Is it not, after all, of the highest importance for me to know the nature of an ancient document that has to do with my salvation, even if it has reached me only in imperfect copies? The great question is whether the original is authentic. If a last will or testament exists only in copies, the original being lost, the character of the original is still the thing that matters. Fortunately we have such an abundance of manuscripts, versions, and Bible quotations that Christian scholarship can determine what, in a given case, was the original reading. It may be impossible for a theologian to convince everybody of the correctness of his conclusions, but for himself he can reach a position of certainty. Finally it should be said that the benefits which Dr. Wahlstrom visualizes as arising from the approach he advocates can all come to one who holds the position of Verbal Inspiration, provided he reads the Scriptures in the reverential attitude indicated by the words: "Speak, for Thy servant heareth."
A.

A Protestant Manifesto. — According to the *Christian Century*, January 21, 1948, a number of leading Protestant churchmen have formed an organization, *Protestants and Other Americans United*, to assure the maintenance of the American principle of separation of Church and State. The signers of the Manifesto plan "(1) to revive in the public mind a clear understanding of the constitutional basis upon which religious liberty has been guaranteed; (2) to redress the specific violations which have recently come into force; and (3) to resist further encroachments upon this constitutional principle." The avowed purpose is not to propagandize the Protestant faith, nor to criticize the Roman Catholic, except when they violate the principle of the separation of Church and State, particularly in seeking support for parochial schools and maintaining the ambassadorship to Rome. The organization will endeavor to correct this situation by carrying on a campaign of enlightenment and mobilization of public opinion throughout the nation until the vital issue raised by the current violations and the threat of further violations has been decided by the voice of the people. The stated purpose of the organization is not to increase intolerance and hatred among churches, but to preclude the resurgence of this evil spirit of intolerance in our body politic. "Our controversy is not with any church, Roman Catholic or any other. Our controversy is with those lawmakers and law administrators who would yield to the demand of any church for a relation to the State which the Constitution forbids." An appeal is made to Judaism, fraternal orders, and all citizens who, though professing no allegiance, believe in the American system of separation of Church and State. Roman Catholics are also invited.

The *Christian Century* summarizes the immediate objectives of Protestants and Other Americans United as follows:

"1. To enlighten and mobilize public opinion in support of religious liberty as this monumental principle of democracy has been embodied and implemented in the Constitution by the separation of church and state.

"2. To resist every attempt by law or the administration of law further to widen the breach in the wall of separation of church and state.

"3. To demand the immediate discontinuance of the ambassadorship to the papal head of the Roman Catholic Church.

"4. To work for the repeal of any law now on the statute books of any state which sanctions the granting of aid to church schools from the public school treasury.

"5. To invoke the aid of the courts in maintaining the integrity of the Constitution with respect to the separation of church and state, wherever and in whatever form the issue arises, and, specifically, to strive by appropriate constitutional means to secure a reconsideration of the two decisions of the Supreme Court upholding the use of tax funds (a) for providing the pupils of parochial schools with free textbooks, and (b) for the transportation of pupils to parochial schools.

"6. To call out and unite all patriotic citizens in a concerted effort to prevent the passage of any law by Congress which allots to church schools any portion of a federal appropriation for education, or which explicitly or implicitly permits the states to make such allotment of federal funds. This purpose in no wise prejudices pro or con the propriety of a federal grant in aid of public education.

"7. To give all possible aid to the citizens of any community or state who are seeking to protect their public schools from sectarian domination, or resisting any other assault upon the principle of separation of church and state.

"8. In seeking these objectives we are determined to pursue a course that cannot be justly characterized as anti-Catholic, or as motivated by anti-Catholic animus. As Protestants, we can be called anti-Catholic only in the sense in which every Roman Catholic is anti-Protestant. Profound differences separate us in the area of religious faith, but these differences have no relevancy in the pursuit of our objectives as clearly defined in this manifesto. The issue of separation of church and state has arisen in the political area and we propose to meet it there.

"Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State proposes to acquaint the representatives of government, all the way up from the local community through the states to Congress, the Supreme Court and the White House, with the fact that an overwhelming body of public opinion, led by the whole of Protestantism, is united in a common purpose to achieve the above objectives, and thus to assure the preservation of the cultural and religious democracy bequeathed by the fathers against

any act of government 'respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.'"

The safeguarding of the priceless boon of religious liberty requires that our American people are informed concerning the far-reaching implications of the Roman hierarchy's political theories as they are outlined in *Catholic Principles of Politics*, By Ryan and Boland, pp. 135, 315 ff., and *The Pope's New Order*, by Ph. Hughes. It is also necessary that steps be taken lest we lose our glorious heritage as American citizens. But withal we as Lutheran Christians dare never forget that the Lutheran Reformation gave us the glorious liberty from the Roman bondage of our souls and consciences, and that the characterization of the Papacy in the *Apology, Trigl.*, p. 319, and many other references, and in the *Smalcald Articles op. c.*, p. 475, is still applicable in every detail.
F. E. M.

Roman Catholic Reaction to New Organization. — Some time ago we reported that an organization was being formed having for its object the preservation of the jewel of religious liberty and the principle of separation of Church and State. (See preceding item!) In *America* (Jesuit weekly) for January 24 an editorial appeared which attacked the formation of this organization. We reprint the editorial here because it is a good illustration of how polemics should not be carried on. The reader will see that the case is not argued on its merits, but various factors are pointed to which may arouse the emotions; but let everybody judge for himself. The editorial has the heading: "Let us have reason."

"The group of Protestant clergymen who, with great display of publicity, have launched an organization for the purpose of depriving Catholic children of the public-welfare services to which, as Americans, they are entitled, must be remarkably indifferent to the evident consequence of their intemperate manifesto. Claiming not to be 'anti-Catholic,' they have produced what by even the kindest courtesy must certainly be called anti-American.

"If these men are, as they claim to be, solicitous about the destiny of the nation, they are taking a most singular method towards that end; for they are furnishing aid and comfort to subversive groups at home, and to hostile critics of American policy abroad. For nothing is dearer to the schemes of all such elements than the spectacle of bitterly wrangling Christians. Nothing fits their projects more closely than the discrediting of Christian education and Christian parish schools, under the claim that Catholics, in promoting such education and schools, are thereby lusting for political power. It is congenial to the totalitarians today, as it was to Hitler and his crew, to see division among the people of this country; and at no time is such division more effective than when the peace of the world is the responsibility of the citizens of a united America.

"On the other hand, if the protestors are sincerely concerned with the cause of civil liberties, they must be aware that nothing

is more injurious to such a cause than complaints which rest upon a fictitious or dubious foundation. Yet the entire case of the 'Protestants and Other Americans for the Separation of Church and State' is based upon an unwarranted and biased interpretation of the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution. How remote their assumptions lie from the truth has been repeatedly and ably exposed in the pages of this Review and in other Catholic statements, all of which they choose for their own good reasons to ignore.

"We are inclined to believe, with John E. Swift, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, that the new organization will fall by its own weight of intolerance. If a rational instead of an irrational method for determining the First-Amendment controversy is sought, why could this not be undertaken by a completely impartial and competent committee of six or eight U. S. historians? Then let us, for practical purposes, abide by their verdict. At any rate, before a night of strife and madness descend upon us, let us give reason a fair chance."

A.

The Christ of Albert Schweitzer. Albert Schweitzer, now 72 years old, is being given much publicity in a wondering world that is amazed at the heroic sacrifice which the great scholar, musician, and Bach student made when, about three decades ago, he left the European culture so dear to him to dedicate his life to the service of suffering humanity in Lambaréné, Africa. As *Time* (December 15, 1947) reports, there appeared recently two books about him, *Prophet in the Wilderness* and *Albert Schweitzer, the Man and His Mind*, both of which are enjoying large sales. To confessing Christians, however, it is distressing that the Christ whom Schweitzer preaches is not the Christ of the Bible. *Time* writes of this: "The Lord Jesus who told Schweitzer to come to the Ogowe was not the orthodox Christ that he had been taught about in Strasbourg. A determined rationalist, who insists that all religious truth must 'stand to reason,' Schweitzer came to the conclusion that the Jesus of history was not a God, but a man of his time with a limited mind and understanding. Schweitzer's chief point [is]: Jesus, like many Jews of his time, believed that God was momentarily about to end the physical world and inaugurate His Kingdom. In this expectation, reasoned Schweitzer, Christ sent out His disciples to announce the coming Kingdom, and preached an unworldly 'interim ethic' designed to prepare man for an imminent end of the world. Schweitzer recognizes another Jesus who transcends time altogether: 'The truth is, it is not Jesus as historically known, but Jesus as spiritually arisen within men, who is significant for our time and can help it. Not the historical Jesus, but the spirit which goes forth from Him and in the spirits of men strives for new influence and rule, is that which overcomes the world.' To Rationalist Schweitzer the phrase 'Reverence for Life' seems 'the ethic of Jesus brought to philosophical expression, extended into cosmical form, and conceived of as intellectually

necessary.'” What an opportunity this brilliant and kindhearted man misses to witness to the 420 patients of his Lambaréné hospital and the hundreds who come to listen to his preaching on Sundays, the historical Christ of the Gospels, who died for them to save them from sin and death!

J. T. M.

A Famous Doctor's Will. Under this heading the *Sunday School Times* (December 13, 1947) reports the departure of Dr. Le Grand Guerry of Columbia, S. C., on August 14 and the remarkable preface to his will, which reads, in part: “Believing with absolute and unshakable faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God incarnate, born of one earthly parent, the Virgin Mary, and that we have salvation through faith in His precious blood, which was shed for our redemption, I commit my soul into the hands of the ever living, altogether lovely, never failing, all sufficient Jesus.” Dr. R. McQuilkin, president of Columbia Bible College and intimate friend of Dr. Guerry, who submitted this unusual and striking sentence, writes in explanation of Dr. Guerry's career as a doctor and surgeon that “for many years Dr. Guerry was known throughout the nation as an outstanding surgeon. At one time he ranked Number Two in the United States in his appendicitis operations. He was noted for his hundreds of special operations after the First World War, and in many of these he stood near the top. Dr. Guerry was known also for his outstanding testimony to Christ; he witnessed constantly to the physicians with whom he worked and who honored him.” The *Sunday School Times* remarks editorially: “Twenty-two years ago the *Sunday School Times* (December 12, 19, 1925) published his inaugural address as president of the Southern Surgical Association. At that time he spoke on ‘Luke a Great Physician and Historian.’ Dr. Guerry ‘showed that Luke's Gospel and his history of the early Church as given in Acts meet every rigid test that can be made by science and scholarship, and then dared to assert his belief that the great need of the world is for God, as revealed in the person of His incarnate Son.’ What a contrast exists between the faith of Dr. Guerry and the unbelief of Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the great surgeon of Lambaréné, Africa, whose views of Jesus are so altogether negative and unbiblical. But despite the agnosticism and infidelity of today Is. 53:12 still stands: “Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great.”

J. T. M.

Mercy Killing. This matter again became a live subject of discussion when on December 5 the United States Circuit Court of Appeals handed down a decision that a father who allegedly in mercy had put to death his imbecile son was not a person “of good moral character.” The case seems to have hinged on the question whether the father should be given the status of an American citizen. In other words, he had applied for naturalization in our country. While we have not seen the complete opinion handed down by the court and have to rely on fragments submitted in the press, we nevertheless see that the court did not approve of

so-called mercy killings, although it stated that there are great numbers of people of the most unimpeachable virtue who hold that such killings are morally justifiable.

It is interesting to see how the opinion of the court was motivated. One sentence of it reads: "We feel reasonably sure in holding that only a minority of virtuous persons would deem the practice [that is, the practice of mercy killing] morally justifiable while it remains in private hands." The appeal, one readily sees, is to what the majority of virtuous people in our country today consider the right course with respect to such unfortunates. That this is not a misinterpretation of the reasoning of the court is apparent from another sentence. "The moral feelings now prevalent generally in this country would be outraged by the conduct in question." Here, too, it is very apparent that the judges take their stand on what they consider the present-day moral feelings of the majority of our citizens.

No one can criticize the court for making mention of what it considers to be the prevalent view in our country on this question of morality. But the impression should not be given that the decision is based on what is conceived to be the judgment of the majority. The court should have placed itself on the Moral Law, which says: "Thou shalt not kill" and which in many other passages forbids everybody except the Government to take anybody's life. It is a dangerous thing to make an important issue of this nature depend on popular opinion which, as we all know, is like a weather vane and may tomorrow be different from what it is today.

A.

Gambling Opposed. A pastoral letter opposing any form of gambling to raise church funds has been sent to Episcopal clergy of the Central New York Diocese by Bishop Malcolm E. Peabody. The letter, as reported by RNS, stated, in part:

"The first reason that gambling, from the Christian standpoint, is wrong hinges on the fact that as stewards of His bounty we are committed to account to God for every minute and every cent. When the Church encourages gambling it deliberately breaks with this principle.

"Gambling, however apparently harmless, leads almost inevitably to habitual indulgence and often to play for larger stakes. Once undertaken it is hard to control.

"Bingo, where money is paid to enter the game or is received for winning, is in fact gambling and like all games of chance, is prohibited by law in the State of New York. The police may overlook such lawbreaking, but is it not thoroughly improper for the Church to use her position of privilege to break the law at all, and particularly in her own interest?

"For these reasons it seems obvious to me that by permitting gambling on Church property (or wherever games may be held in the Church's interest), we are permitting a practice that will

tend to break down the moral standards which as Christ's followers we are trying to build up.

"Accordingly I appeal to you to put an end to gambling of all kinds in your congregation, either as a means of entertainment or as a device for raising money for the Church, on the ground that this is incompatible with our position as stewards of Christ in the world. This applies to Bingo or to games of similar nature by any name, to raffles, to "door prizes" so-called, and to every game of chance for which rewards are offered or received and for which corresponding services are not rendered." A. W. C. G.

The "British-Israel" Movement. The "British-Israel" movement, which from time to time has been referred to in this periodical, still finds defenders, and, as we are glad to note for the sake of sanity and truth, also such as demonstrate its basic falsehood. In the *Calvin Forum* (December, 1947) Prof. M. J. Wyngaarden, of Calvin Seminary, points out that all historical, philological, and archaeological evidence is against this fantastic theory. The defenders very childishly derive the word "British" from *berith*, covenant, and *ish*, man. "Such a philological theory," the writer argues, "is simply ridiculous and preposterous." He wonders what the "ish" means in *bluish*, *pinkish* and the like, if *ish* is always to mean "man." But these puerilities might yet be borne, were it not for the fact that British-Israelism declares that the promises made to King David concerning the Son of David are fulfilled in the Royal House of England. That is "contrary to the New Testament thought that the great promises to David find their fulfilment in Christ, our risen Lord." The author says: "We believe that this view is well-nigh blasphemous, when Peter at Pentecost interprets the session of the predicted Son of David upon David's throne as fulfilled in our Lord and Savior's session at the right hand of the Father." In view of this he lists the exponents of the British-Israel theory among the "false prophets and false shepherds" that are to come "in His name," or among the "false Messiahs," bringing unauthorized Messianic hopes." While the dream of British-Israelism does not belong to the major delusions of our time, it is, nevertheless, a dangerous outburst of modern enthusiasm and should, therefore, be exposed as such. J. T. M.

Unbelief and the Radio. The Rev. Dr. J. Darsow of Australia, writing in the *Australian Lutheran* (November 5, 1947), shows how in Australia the radio is being used to spread false doctrine. He says: "The writer recently listened to what purported to be a Sunday-school or Bible class of the air. The subject dealt with was 'The Miracle of Jesus.' But instead of a simple and Scriptural presentation of the sacred stories relating to our Savior's miracles, with an application to faith and life, there followed, in the form of a dialog between teacher or leader and pupils, a denial of the truth of these Bible stories. The session was nothing but rationalism, that is, unbelief, in a slightly veiled form, applied to the

miracles. The story, treated at some length, was that of the raising of the daughter of Jairus. The explanation was given that this was not actually a miraculous act at all, but only seemed like one to the people concerned. It was stated that the key to the story must be sought in the words of the Savior: 'She is not dead, but sleepeth.' You see, the leader said in effect, Jesus knew what the parents and the rest did not know, namely, that this maiden had not actually died, but was only sleeping. She had fallen into a comatose state, which they took to be death. So He took her by the hand to help to arouse her from that state and called to her: 'Maid, arise,' with the result that she awoke from her 'sleep.' The people and the parents, believing the girl to have been dead, were amazed to see her arise and move about and, quite naturally, imagined that a great miracle had been performed. More explanations of this order were promised for subsequent 'lessons' on the subject of the miracles of Jesus." The matter itself may not be of undue importance, but it may serve as a sample of how the radio is being misused the world over in the interest of spreading perversions of the Christian truth. Pastors will do well to warn their parishioners to be on their guard against religious programs which, frequently in very subtle and attractive ways, spread rationalism and enthusiasm also in our own country. J. T. M.

Erevna and "Anteckningar Till Nytestamentliga Texter."— In Sweden a society of Bible students is hard at work searching the Scriptures; it has chosen the beautiful name *Erevna* (cf. John 5:39). The spiritual father of the movement, which numbers thousands of pastors and students, is Professor Hugo Odeberg, head of the New Testament department at the University of Lund. Dr. Odeberg, who, having studied at the University of London, handles English very well, won renown as a Talmudic and Rabbinical scholar; it will be granted that acquaintance with this field has given him an enviable background for the interpretation of the New Testament. What is especially noteworthy is that this theologian is not afraid to champion the plenary and verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. The opinion which is often voiced that sound scholarship and wide learning are incompatible with the acceptance of the teaching of verbal inspiration collapses in view of this scholar's caliber and high attainments.

The society which has been referred to publishes a journal devoted to Scripture study, called *Erevna*. We should like to call the attention of all our readers who have some acquaintance with Swedish to this publication. It can be ordered from *Erevna*, Lund, Sweden, Box 91. Numerous meditations on Scripture texts from the pen of Dr. Odeberg have appeared in *Erevna*, and 63 of these, in keeping with requests, have been gathered in one volume called *Anteckningar Till Nytestamentliga Texter* (Notes on New Testament Texts). The texts selected are chiefly the old Gospel pericopes. With much delight one peruses these meditations. They are brief and devoid of all unnecessary display of scholar-

ship. But they concern themselves with the message of the text in its context and are remarkable for their deep insight into the meaning of Scripture passages. The price of the collection is Kr. 3:50. A.

Believing Scientist Deceased. — Some of the leading men of science spoken of in the newspapers are not believing Christians. But it has often been pointed out that among the top thinkers of the world there have been and are many humble disciples of Jesus Christ. The following paragraph from the *Christian Century*, issue of December 24, 1947, p. 1590, is apropos. "Professor Max Planck, Nobel prize winner who helped lay the foundation of modern atomic physics by his quantum theory, died October 4 in Goettingen, nearly 90 years of age. Planck was a confessing Christian whose activities were carried on under the motto 'Always toward God.' He often expressed his faith in these words, 'Science and religion run parallel and meet in infinity.' In 1944 when he learned that his son had been murdered by the Gestapo, he uttered this prayer, 'God's ways are not our ways.'" A.

Language the Layman Can Understand. — In the *Christian Century* of December 24, 1947, Professor Georgia Harkness published an article entitled "The Laymen's World." We quote this paragraph.

"My final observation is a plea for statement of the basic convictions of Christian faith in language that the layman can understand. He hears in church a great many platitudes and familiar moral exhortations which do not move him much, with now and then a sermon that gives great comfort and support to the inner life. He hears, at least in some churches, words about sin, repentance, forgiveness, atonement, incarnation, redemption, the kingdom of God, eternal life, the grace of God, and the saving power of the living Christ. What this has to do with him or with a world of sharp competition and rising prices he has only the vaguest notion. That such terms stand for ideas which have a bearing on the world in which he moves six days of the week and most of the seventh would be a startling discovery. It is a discovery that he is not likely to make unless we theologians do a much better job than we have done thus far in stating the eternal truths of the Christian faith in language both simple and relevant to the layman's world." A.

Partition of Palestine. — The trouble in Palestine is on. Partition was voted by the United Nations, and while the vote was greeted with enthusiasm by the Zionists, it is bitterly opposed by the Arabs in Palestine and their allies in the surrounding countries. The resolution to effect the partition was by no means adopted unanimously. The United States is credited with having been the chief factor in bringing about adoption by a majority vote. Russia sided with our country in this move. Its allies, Poland, the Ukraine, and White Russia, took the same stand. Australia,

Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa likewise favored the proposal. Cuba voted against it. A number of states abstained from voting, among which was Great Britain itself, which at present is in control of Palestine. As was to be expected, Pakistan and India opposed the project.

Already there has been much bloodshed in Palestine on account of the partition which has been decreed. What will happen when the British withdraw, as they intend to do next fall, is something that one does not like to think about. The whole country will probably be bathed in blood.

What does the attempt to establish a Jewish state in Palestine mean religiously? In Jerusalem there is a zealous missionary working among the Jews who looks upon the return of the Jews to Palestine with feelings of triumph. He himself has sacrificed a splendid business in America in order to become a messenger of the Gospel to the Jewish people in their homeland. His view is that the old prophecies are now fulfilled, the Jews are returning, God's promises are being redeemed. What he has in mind in particular is the prophecy of Ezekiel contained in chapter 39, which he says is now receiving its fulfillment. There are many devoted Bible students who share his view and who think that the Old Testament prophecies speaking of the return of Israel to Canaan are fulfilled in what is now going on in Palestine. In the *Lutheran Companion* of December 17 a similar view apparently is at least hinted at. In an editorial entitled "United Nations Votes for New Jewish State," the concluding sentence reads, "Certain it is that God has an unfulfilled destiny for His chosen people, and it may be that the event which we are witnessing today is the opening chapter of that divine plan." Any view of this nature certainly does not agree with the teaching of the New Testament. Yes, all Israel will be saved, Rom. 11:26, but as the context very clearly shows, all Israel here refers to the elect in Israel and by no means to the Jewish nation as a whole.

The thought is often expressed that the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine would be contrary to Luke 21:24, where the Savior says that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. The verse is explained as meaning that the time will never come that Jerusalem will again be in the hands of the Jews; on the contrary, Gentiles will be in control of it to the Judgment Day. But that is putting a meaning into the passage which cannot be proved to be contained in it. The significance of the words is very simple: Jerusalem will be in the hands of the Gentiles till the point of time fixed by God has been reached. It is not necessary to put a symbolical or mystical meaning into this passage. Everybody sympathizes with the suffering Jews. It may be, however, that the Zionists overreached themselves when they with great insistence worked for the establishment of a Jewish state in their old homeland.

A.

Dr. William B. Riley Deceased. — A picturesque character left the earthly scene when the Fundamentalist leader Dr. Riley passed on, December 5, 1947. He had an extraordinary career. His pastorate as the minister of First Baptist Church, Minneapolis, lasted forty-four years, that is, from 1897 to 1941. Though a busy pastor, he became the author of more than eighty books. In addition, he founded three conservative schools of learning, Northwestern Bible School, Seminary, and Liberal Arts College. For a number of years he served as president and executive secretary of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association. With insistence he fought Modernism in the Northern Baptist Convention, and when he saw that in spite of all testimony this Convention continued in its course of false liberalism, he last May severed his connections with it. It is mainly through his efforts that the organization of Baptists in Minnesota has become strongly conservative. One of the evils which he fought was the teaching of evolution. Perhaps it was his antagonism to this unscriptural theory more than anything else that made his name familiar to the American public. He attained the high age of 86 years. A.

"Ecumaniacs." — This is the term which Dr. S. C. Michelfelder uses to describe those people who have lost their sanity in thinking of the World Council of Churches and wish to use it as a means for merging all denominations. The *Lutheran* of January 14 submits the following report on this point.

"There will be some who want to make 'soup' out of the World Council of Churches, explains Dr. S. C. Michelfelder, executive secretary of the Lutheran World Federation. Dr. Michelfelder returned to the U. S. from Geneva last month for a brief furlough.

"He branded as 'ecumaniacs' those who want Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Greek Orthodox, and others to lose their identity in the World Council. 'One of the most important issues at stake at the Assembly in Amsterdam,' states Dr. Michelfelder, 'is confessional representation.'

"'The Lutheran Church,' says Dr. Michelfelder, 'is willing to become one of the pillars on which the World Council must stand if it is to be a real ecumenical council. . . . We do not teach or believe that salvation comes only through the Lutheran Church. On the other hand, we are not ready to join those who want to reduce all denominations to a least common denominator of doctrinal agreement and form a new church universal.

"'Such addled thinking would not produce a church but only another denomination. . . . The World Council of Churches would soon go the way of all "air castles" if it is to be suspended by such sky hooks.

"'Lutheran delegates to Amsterdam should come as Lutheran delegates, representing their churches officially, and not some nebulous, non-existent, invisible body of geographic sections,' said Dr. Michelfelder. 'Let the World Council of Churches be a coun-

cil of churches. As churches we can work together, study together, without sacrificing our identity or our confessions."

A.

Shall Government Subsidize Our Public Schools? — So reads the heading of a pamphlet, written by Dr. R. A. Millikan, "one of the world's very eminent scientists," and sent out, among the "American Affairs pamphlets," as a supplement to the Autumn, 1947, Number of *American Affairs*, by the Spiritual Mobilization Advisory Committee, in order that "the preachers of America should sound an alarm." The pamphlet describes the subject of the article as "the most vital problem in American education today." The pamphlet may be ordered from the National Industrial Conference Board, Inc., 247 Park Ave., New York 17, N. Y., for 25 cents a copy, or 10 copies for \$1.50. It treats the important question whether our public schools should be subsidized by our Federal Government. The matter may seem innocuous enough, as one views it casually. It seems to be warranted, too, since in many areas of our country public education is being grossly neglected. Nevertheless, it has far-reaching implications. For one thing, it means a break *in toto* with our past American tradition. Again, it would subject our schools and pupils to whatever departures from American democracy might occur in Washington, D. C. To show the danger in that eventuality is partly the purpose of Dr. Millikan's pamphlet. At any rate, no matter how one might view the proposition, it is well for us to read what the writer has to say on the question. He closes his article with the words: "For the sake of winning the war we had to become very largely, for the time being, a totalitarian state. We knew, as Edwin Gay said, that in war this was inevitable, but if we retain in peace this now highly centralized totalitarian government, if we do not combat at every opportunity this insidious, terrible centralizing tendency, and restore, insofar as present conditions make possible, the principle of local self-government, then if history means anything we shall quickly be destroyed by the inner vice of all totalitarian states, and our sons will have died in vain. The greatest and most insidious danger lies in my own field, the field of education, which must be kept as free as possible from further encroachment from the influence of the central government. All authorities are agreed upon that. Look at what within the last two decades the control of education by central governments has done in Europe. It has substituted for education the indoctrination of whole peoples in the ideologies of the group in power and in the interests of their retention of that power. It is that kind of indoctrination for world conquest that has destroyed the souls of great peoples and made two world wars. Our votes alone, and your influence, American citizens, can prevent that kind of catastrophe from happening in the United States. Let us remember this when we go to the polls and when we exert our influences in our local groups." We know today that it was largely the con-

fessing Christian groups in Germany that opposed the totalitarian acts of tyrannical oppression under the Nazis. For this they had to suffer, very often with their lives. We dare not, in our country, where our expression of opinion on the affairs of state has been made a special duty of our citizenship, neglect that constant watchfulness which in this time of social and political upheaval is necessary to preserve the prerogatives of our traditional American democracy.

J. T. M.

A Creed for the Church of Christ in Japan. — *The Presbyterian Guardian* (January 10, 1948) reports on recent doctrinal developments within the Kyodan, or the United Church of Christ in Japan. As was already reported, the United Lutheran Church of America, which for many years has done mission work in Japan and which intends to do yet more in the future, has separated from this Church when it became clear that the Kyodan was to be established as one united Church with one common creed rather than a fellowship of churches, allowing each denomination to assert its special tenets. The creed, as reported originally by the *Religious News Service*, reads as follows: "Believing that the Old and New Testaments, which are the Word of God, are the infallible basis of our faith and life, and accepting as a valuable heritage of the historic Church, since the days of the Apostles, the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, which, being based upon the Bible, the ancient Church confessed; and standing on the faith of the Gospel which the reformers and others clarified, we are united by the following confession: 1. We believe in God the Father, who is the Creator of all things. 2. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, His only Son, who, descending from heaven, became a man for our salvation, died on the cross for the redemption of our sins; He arose, ascended into heaven, and as the ever-living high priest intercedes for us. 3. We believe in the Holy Spirit who, emerging from the Father and the Son, testifies of the Son in us. 4. We believe the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, being three, are one God. 5. We believe that we are united with the Lord Jesus Christ by this faith, are forgiven and justified, sanctified and made partakers of eternal life. 6. We believe that, until the day when the Lord comes again and accomplishes his kingdom, the Church into which we are called by this faith, is the holy and only body of the Lord Jesus Christ and is present on earth as the visible Church, giving us fellowship through the Holy Spirit and executing the task of reconciling the world with God through the preaching of the Gospel and the observance of the Holy Sacraments." The reader notices at once the many inadequacies and obscurities of this confession, and if he remembers the various denominational bodies which it must satisfy, he can readily understand why it is what it is. The new creed, of which we do not know whether or not it will be adopted, shows the impossibility of trying to make church bodies not united in one faith bearers of a creed that is thorough, comprehensive, and in every way satisfactory.

J. T. M.

Romanists Advertise Their Faith. — As the *Christian Century* (January 21, 1948) reports, the Knights of Columbus will begin to advertise Catholicism on a large scale in secular magazines of national circulation. We read: "From *Columbia*, official magazine of the Knights of Columbus, we learn that a campaign to advertise Roman Catholic doctrines in secular magazines of national circulation will be launched this month. The first articles to carry these advertisements will be Hearst's *American Weekly* and the *Pathfinder*. Later, it is expected that the campaign will be greatly extended. In general, the copy will be much like that in the advertisements which have been running on Sunday in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* for the past three years. Local K. C. posts have reproduced these St. Louis advertisements in other newspapers. But the campaign now announced will be a national affair financed by the national K. of C. organization. It is possible that some non-Romanists may be tempted to object to such a campaign, but if they do, they will make a mistake. If the ads are competently written and contain a dependable exposition of Roman Catholic beliefs—and the hierarchy can be counted on to see to that—it will be a good thing to have them placed before the American people. If it is objected that untrained Protestants and numbers of the unchurched public will not be able to discern debatable assumptions and non sequiturs and thus may fall victims of their own ignorance, that but indicates the need for Protestantism to be doing adult education of the same sort. The Knights of Columbus are to be applauded for having 'hired a hall' in the advertising columns and there submitting the claims of their Church to the test of the open forum. If Protestantism is wise, it will hasten to subject its faith to the same scrutiny." In bringing this venture to the notice of its readers, *America* (January 17, 1948) writes (as quoted in part): "Fashions in popular misinformation on Catholicism change while a pathetic underlying ignorance of the purpose and premises of the Church persists. The ignorance is pathetic because, like all ignorance, it stunts the minds; more seriously, it fosters suspicions of the patriotism of every American who is a Catholic; most important of all, it forestalls access to God's ordinary means of salvation, the Church. So widespread is the ignorance that some generalized mode of enlightenment seems indicated. So at least the problem appears to the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus, which has authorized an advertising campaign in mass-circulation magazines to explain the Catholic faith and practice. Twenty-three million readers of the Sunday supplement, *American Weekly*, in twenty large cities, will see the first of six ads the Knights are sponsoring on January 25. Concurrently, the same series will run in the *Pathfinder* magazine, which has an estimated two and a half million readers. . . . The Knights, whose apostolic imagination in this present venture is to be highly commended, would surely want full credit given to the memory of Karl Rogers of Narberth, Pa., who initiated the work

of advertising the Church; they would undoubtedly endorse the slogan printed in the ads of the 'Narberth Plan' — 'if it's anything Catholic, ask a Catholic'; they would also recommend to their members a readiness to exploit opportunities to explain Catholic belief and practice to non-Catholic neighbors; and, as good Knights, they would insist that the most convincing refutation of error is the example of integral Catholic living." The last lines in the editorial in *America* might suggest important guidelines to Lutherans. If Lutherans would explain, intelligently and convincingly, the meaning of Lutheranism to their non-Lutheran neighbors and if they would insist upon "integral Lutheran living," much would be gained for the cause of the Lutheran Church. But that would presuppose also increased Lutheran indoctrination, for the slogan: "If it's anything Lutheran, ask a Lutheran," would require that Lutherans give a good account of themselves.

J. T. M.

Martin Dibelius Deceased. — On Nov. 11, 1947, Martin Dibelius, professor of the New Testament at the University of Heidelberg, passed on. He was undoubtedly one of the most prominent and renowned theologians of this generation. He became a public figure as an exponent of *Religionsgeschichte*; but among those who remain abreast of developments in the field of theology in Germany he is best known as an exponent of the so-called *Formgeschichte* with respect to New Testament studies, that is, the endeavor to ascertain by such critical means as are available the original documents which underlie, as it is assumed, the synoptic Gospels. In 1937 he visited in this country, and at that time he delivered a course of lectures at the Divinity School of Yale University, which later on were published. They had to do with the Sermon on the Mount, and the book in which the lectures are gathered has the title *The Sermon on the Mount*. Whoever wishes to inform himself on what the *Formgeschichte* theologians endeavor to do had best purchase this volume, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, in 1940.

Professor Dibelius was born September 14, 1883. In all probability *Formgeschichte*, which he and a few other theologians sponsored, will soon be a thing of the past. Its proponents were or are altogether too critical and negative, and whoever immerses himself in their writings does not feel that any spiritual benefit comes to him through such studies. Most of the props on which their theories were founded were entirely speculative, and hence careful scholarship could not become fond of the efforts that were put forth.

A.

Defections from Roman Catholicism. — On this subject a reporter in the *Christian Century*, writing from Atlanta, Ga., submits this paragraph:

"A study by Porter Routh, Southern Baptist statistician, which appears in the current Southern Baptist *Quarterly Review* reveals that there is no one-way street to the Roman Catholic Church in

the South. While there are some Baptist losses to the Roman Catholic Church, it appears that they are more than offset by nominal Roman Catholics who have sought membership in Baptist churches. An indication of the situation may be seen in reports from 65 churches from Maryland to New Mexico which show more than 500 former Roman Catholics baptized between 1942 and the present. M. E. Dodd of Shreveport, La., reports that during his 35-year pastorate he has baptized 500 former Roman Catholics, 75 of them within the past five years. No full record is kept in most Baptist churches of the former affiliation of those seeking membership, and so statistics are difficult to obtain. Mr. Routh points out that no special effort has been made by Southern Baptist pastors to proselyte members of the Roman Catholic Church."

Brief Items from *Religious News Service*. — More than 300 laymen attending the American Federation of Lutheran Brotherhoods' 20th anniversary convention in Milwaukee pledged themselves to promote a "just and lasting peace" and "necessary" displaced persons legislation. The laymen, mostly from the midwest states, represented the United, American, Augustana, Evangelical Lutheran, and United Evangelical Lutheran churches.

A 10-man commission, including five clergymen, has been appointed by Governor Luther W. Youngdahl to determine how many displaced persons from Europe might be resettled in Minnesota. Clergy members are Dr. T. F. Gullixson, president of Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul; the Rev. James Byrnes, Minneapolis Roman Catholic pastor; Dr. Richard C. Raines, Minneapolis Methodist minister; the Rev. Frank W. Curtin, director of St. Paul archdiocese bureau of Catholic charities; and the Rev. E. B. Glabe, Minneapolis, representing the Missouri Synod.

Bishop James C. Baker of the San Francisco Area of the Methodist Church consecrated a \$70,000 Chinese Methodist church, only Protestant house of worship in Chinatown in Los Angeles. Los Angeles also boasts Chinese Presbyterian and Chinese Congregational churches.

The *Christian Advocate*, national weekly organ of the Methodist Church published in Chicago, has called upon the House Committee on Un-American Activities to review Hollywood-produced movies whose "frank and unabashed propaganda" it charged is undermining and demoralizing the American way of life. The Methodist publication charged that in the movies: "Prostitutes are being glamorized, rakes are made to appear respectable, little or nothing can be undertaken without the aid of a cigarette, all social recreation must be saturated in alcohol, the marriage vow is nullified, domestic relations are made a mockery, nudity is applauded, inanity is glossed over with technicolor, jungle ethics are paraded before our children, decency is made to appear dull, Protestant clergymen almost without exception are represented as simpletons, sacred things are made common, and sobriety is ridiculed."

A dynamic program of evangelism geared to reach the un-churched masses of the American people was urged in Winston-Salem, N. C., by speakers before the House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church. A need for "deep personal examination" was emphasized by the Rt. Rev. Austin Pardue, Bishop of Pittsburgh, while the Rt. Rev. Angus Dun, Bishop of Washington, deplored the "utterly inarticulate" laity. Other speakers requested a catechism in modern language.

Copies of the Bible have been distributed to UN delegates and alternates at Lake Success, N. Y., by the New York Civic Camp of the Gideons. Nearly 400 Bibles, in the English, French, Spanish, and Russian languages, were given out. The name of each recipient was embossed in gold on the Bible he received.

A new opportunity for Protestantism in the Philippine Islands was envisioned in Grand Rapids, Mich., by Dr. T. T. Brumbaugh of New York, associate secretary of the Board of Missions, in a report on Far Eastern mission fields to the Methodist Conference on Christian Education. Dr. Brumbaugh said "the various Protestant denominations are striving to rebuild their schools and colleges and develop new ones, but the Roman Catholic Church, which suffered heavily in the war, may never be able to rebuild its once magnificent edifices."

An "alarming" decline in the educational level of the ministry was reported by the Rev. Harold W. Tribble in his inaugural address as new president at Andover Newton Theological School in Boston. The former head of the theological department of Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville, Ky., said that while the number of churches and ministers has increased, the number of college and seminary graduates entering the ministry has proportionately decreased.

Dr. Robert G. David, professor of English at Smith College, said at Springfield, Mass., that American writers "are now turning to a revival of religious ethics with an emphasis on individual freedom." He added, furthermore, that American writers have "rebelled," disillusioned, "from the political determinism of Marxism."

A broadcasting studio was dedicated at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., built with an anonymous gift of \$25,000 in appreciation of the services of Dr. Kyle M. Yates, a seminary professor for twenty-five years. Dr. Yates now holds a pulpit at Houston, Tex.

Georgia's "easy" divorce laws were condemned by 3,000 persons attending the 126th meeting of the Georgia Baptist Convention in Atlanta. The convention appointed a publicity committee to bring public sentiment on marriage into harmony with "the teachings of Christ."

The 110th annual convention of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky went on record in Owensboro, disapproving of "all the ways" in which separation of Church and State is being undermined in Kentucky and in the nation. Five points of the "undermining" process were set forth as follows: 1) Using public busses to carry children to parochial schools. 2) Supplying surplus buildings and equipment, paid for out of public funds, to non-public institutions. 3) Permitting teachers in religious garb to teach in public schools and carry on what is in fact a parochial education at public expense. 4) Making federal funds available to sectarian schools. 5) Keeping at the Vatican a personal representative of the President of the United States.

The Seventh-Day Adventists' radio program, "Voice of Prophecy," is now being broadcast over 500 stations in North America each week, according to Milton Carlson of Los Angeles, vice-president of the Western Advertising Agency.

A call for "all out" evangelistic efforts and deeper consecration by the Christian ministry throughout the world was voiced in Grand Rapids, Mich., by Elder J. L. McElhany of Washington, D. C., world president of Seventh-Day Adventists, in his opening address before the Autumn Council of the denomination.

Delegates to a conference on "Fostering a Dynamic Judaism in America" in Chicago drafted a national program for intensifying adherence to Judaism among Jews and for advancing public understanding of the Jewish faith and culture among all Americans. The conference approved a plan for strengthening the influence of the positive values of Judaism and for reinforcing inter-faith groups in America in four ways. They were: "1. Meeting the increasing need for adequately trained Jewish religious, educational, and communal leadership through the enlarged schools of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America." "2. Enriching Jewish life by restoring the synagog as the spiritual, cultural, and social center of the Jewish community." "3. Advancing the Jewish education of children and adults by aiding communities in achieving higher standards and increased enrollments." "4. Fostering American understanding of Jews and Judaism through the Seminary's comprehensive program of public education." A. W. C. G.

