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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Professor Nygren Visits America.—Professor Anders Nygren, who is the head of the systematic department in the theological division of the Swedish University at Lund, has now arrived in our country and will stay here for one half year. He is one of the leading Lutheran theologians of Europe and the chief representative of the so-called Lundensian theology. His works that are best known are *Agape and Eros*, *Commentary on Romans*, *Atonement*, and *The Church Controversy in Germany*. At first he will be the guest of the theological seminary in Gettysburg, Pa. When the Augustana Synod in June observes its centennial, he is expected to attend. Archbishop Erling Eidem is another Swedish visitor who will be a guest at the Augustana Synod Convention. In his theological outlook Professor Nygren is remarkably conservative. It will be recalled that the theological declaration which was adopted at Lund was chiefly the product of his pen. By some Lutherans he is considered the only theological match for K. Barth.

A.

John C. Mattes.—Dr. John Caspar Mattes, 71, who was a pastor in the Ministerium of Pennsylvania for 37 years, died on January 27 at Dubuque, Iowa, where he had been a professor in Wartburg Theological Seminary (A. L. C.) since 1939.

Born in Easton, Pa., Dr. Mattes was graduated by Lafayette College in 1898 and the Philadelphia Seminary in 1901. Muhlenberg College conferred a doctorate of divinity in 1925. He was pastor of the Church of the Savior, Trenton, N. J., 1901—15; Holy Trinity Church, Scranton, Pa., 1915—27; and St. John's, Scranton, 1927—38.

Pastor Mattes was transferred to the American Lutheran Church when he assumed the professorship in Wartburg Seminary. An author and translator, he served on the intersynodical committee for revising the English translation of Luther's Small Catechism and on the Common Service Book Committee of the General Council and of the U. L. C.

In addition to his widow, Mrs. Caroline Niedt Mattes, he is survived by six children, Henry, Alfred, Dorothea, Olga, Emma, and Charles. Services were held at Dubuque and at Scranton, with interment in the latter city.—The above note appeared in the *Lutheran* of Feb. 11, 1948.

Dr. Mattes was known in the U. L. C. A. as a sturdy champion of confessional Lutheranism. Many a time he orally and in writing protested against doctrinal laxity and aberrations. In the contacts Missouri Synod theologians had with him it developed that his view of the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures did not exclude every possibility of error in them in matters lying outside the realm of revelation, for instance, in the field of history. Before discussions on this point could be concluded, he was

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summoned hence. He will be remembered as a scholar of great learning and a gracious personality. A.

The Death of Dr. Ralph H. Long.—The Lutheran press of our country and undoubtedly of Europe, too, dwells with sorrow on the sudden death of Dr. Ralph H. Long, which occurred on February 19. He had suffered a heart attack several weeks before. A few days before his death he returned to his office, and, apparently without any warning, while he was taking a drink of water, death seized him. He was buried in Columbus, Ohio, on February 23. He had become well known in Lutheran circles on account of his position as stewardship secretary of the Joint Synod of Ohio. In 1930 he was called to become the executive director of the National Lutheran Council. His efforts in behalf of famine-stricken Germany will never be forgotten. In Lund, Sweden, last summer he sounded the keynote, which was orthodox in its theology. A Polish ecclesiastic whom the present writer met a week or two after the Lund gathering characterized Dr. Long as "ultraconservative." When the election for Lutheran World Federation officials was held, Dr. Long was chosen treasurer. His sudden death reminds us

In the midst of earthly life
Snares of death surround us.

A.

Attacks on Luther Continue.—Writing in the *Australasian Theological Review* (September, 1947), Dr. H. H. Hamann directs attention to a recent attack made upon Dr. Martin Luther by Prof. L. A. Triebel of the University of Tasmania, in an article on "The Religious Basis of World Peace," which appeared in the *Australian Christian World* (Sept. 12, 1947). By way of introduction Professor Hamann remarks that to Mr. Triebel "religion" does not mean what it means to a believer in Jesus Christ and that his formula for world peace seems to boil down to this, that democracies can and will do no wrong. The distinction between Church and State does not exist for Mr. Triebel. But what we are interested in, writes Dr. Hamann, is, above all, Luther, who is mentioned by the author in the following connection: "It would be foolish to judge a religion by its feeblest exponents, but it must, to some extent, be judged by its historic, official representatives. The Spanish Inquisition, the massacre of the innocents, the record of Luther in the Peasants' Revolt and with regard to Jews, the temporizing of the German Churches with the forces that overwhelmed Europe — all are a part, for comparative scientific purposes, of history. The apologist must answer for Torquemada, for Popes like Innocent III and Alexander VI, as for some of the acts of Calvin. There are passages in Luther's pamphlets indistinguishable from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*." And again: "So with Luther — his magnificent, individual mysticism and his social heathenism, urging princes to kill the starving Saxon peasants and vilifying the Jews."

To this Dr. Hamann replies: "We do not know what chair is

held by Professor Triebel in the University of Tasmania. However, a scholar appealing to history should be more careful about historical facts. He should hesitate to lay himself open to the charge of uncritically repeating accusations that have long been commonplaces in the crusade against Luther, and that have been refuted again and again by competent historians, as they are refuted by plain facts. It was Luther, who, when trouble was brewing, appealed to both sides to keep the peace; it was Luther who remonstrated in vigorous terms with the lords and princes and soundly berated them for their inhuman treatment of the peasants; it was Luther who, at personal risk, sought to restrain the peasants from open rebellion; it was Luther who, after the rising had been put down, protested solemnly against excessive and vindictive punishment visited upon wretched, helpless men. It is true that Luther thought it necessary to reject some of the demands made by the peasants which seem just and reasonable to us today. Democracy, as we understand it, was not known to Luther; but neither was it known to Europe at large; certainly not in the England of Henry VIII. It is true that Luther urged the princes to put down the armed rising by force, and that he did so in the language, vehement at times, that is characteristic of his strong personality. But Luther did not urge the princes to kill 'the starving Saxon peasants.' He urged that measures be taken against men who had risen in rebellion against lawfully constituted government, and who, flushed with their initial success, had perpetrated arson, rapine, horrible butcheries. To advise differently would have been to advise anarchy. So much any man can find out for himself by taking the trouble to read the events of the Peasants' Revolt and the relevant writings of Luther, in their chronological order.

'To be just to Luther's attitude towards the Jews, one must consider the whole case instead of offering the reading public nothing but wholesale condemnation, as Professor Triebel does. Luther's first pamphlet on the subject dates from the year 1523 (*Dass Jesus Christus ein geborner Jude sei*). It contains an eloquent, heartfelt plea for better treatment of the Jews than was generally accorded them at the time. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that Luther was exaggerating when he wrote years later (1537) in a letter to a Jew, with reference to the pamphlet named: 'My pamphlet has been of great service to all Jewry' (St. Louis edition, XX, p. 1826). Luther's object in writing was purely religious, apart from the humanitarian plea that the Jews should be treated like human beings and not like dogs; his aim and his hope were — strange as it may seem to Professor Triebel — to convert the Jews to Christianity, i. e., to faith in Jesus Christ as their Messiah and Redeemer. Herein Luther was faithful to the Founder, as Mr. Triebel repeatedly calls our Lord, and to His plain, unmistakable directions. The later pamphlets, both published in 1543, reflect the author's disappointment and disillusionment. They are decidedly and primarily polemical in

character, as the very titles indicate; they were called forth by blasphemous and slanderous aspersions cast by certain Jewish writers upon our Lord and His religion. Luther's language is harsh, but no harsher than his language when dealing with Romanists, enthusiasts, and other confirmed enemies of true Christianity. Luther's polemical tone is that of the sixteenth century, and is to be judged by the standards of that century. We shall also do well to recall the fact that Luther, in common with most churchmen of his day, held the taking of interest ("*Wucher*") to be wicked and sinful. On the other hand, he admits that many Jews were moneylenders and bankers because other pursuits were denied to them. As to the conversion of Jews to Christianity, he voices a pessimism, in the later pamphlets, which subsequent experience has shown to be excessive. Yet he does not discriminate between Jew and Christian in this respect, for he writes: 'Let him who will entertain hopes concerning the great majority (i. e., of Jews); I have no such hope, neither do I know of any Scripture warranting it. We cannot even convert the great mass of our "Christians," but must be satisfied with a little flock; how much less is it possible to convert all these children of the devil!' (XX, p. 2030.) In the final phase of this quotation, Luther is, of course, speaking theologically and biblically; for those who are not in the kingdom of Christ are, according to the Scriptures, in the devil's kingdom. Finally, it must be admitted that Luther's advice to rulers how to deal with the Jews must be deprecated and deplored even by his friends and admirers. We must not forget that the Reformer was, necessarily, to some extent, a product of his age. Even in England, the idea of complete religious toleration and equality had to wait for full fruition until the second half of the nineteenth century. On Luther's advice to governments Prof. A. F. Hoppe, the editor of the St. Louis edition of Luther's works, has the interesting note: 'We rather think that this was merely a false alarm ("*ein Schreckschuss*") to curb the arrogance of the Jews; for there is nothing to show that this counsel was carried into execution while Luther lived, which would certainly have been done had he urged it seriously' (XX, p. 63, Note). For the rest, Luther would have Christians beware of being misled by Jewish teachings (XX, pp. 1860, 1996), but not curse them or do them harm (l. c., 1996); and he concludes both pamphlets with a prayer that God would mercifully convert them."

We could quote Professor Hamann's excellent article only in part, but what we have cited, concerns us most and deserves to be kept in mind for possible use in case similar false charges should be preferred against Luther also in our country. J. T. M.

Our Own Grub Street.—Under this heading, John Timmerman, associate professor of English at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., in the *Calvin Forum* (January, 1948), speaks of the difficulties that beset a writer who wishes to produce Christian literature today. He writes: "As every schoolboy no longer knows

(what does a schoolboy know?), Grub Street was the early eighteenth-century address of struggling writers, famous and infamous both." Here "men of undisputed genius like Johnson, Goldsmith, and Defoe elbowed their way up from its dismal recesses after knowing poverty and social odium." There is, as the writer points out, also a modern "Grub Street," not localized as it used to be in a certain part of London, but scattered throughout the land. "We often deplore," he says, "the lack of a distinctively Christian belles-lettres in our day." That lack, however, is not due, as he believes, to a lack of creative genius. If it is, "the comparative literary sterility of our group [Christian readers] is to a goodly extent our own fault; a young author who wants to live by his pen in our group has a street address perilously near Grub Street." . . . "It is hard to live by literature in America, and literature, of course, excludes pulp writing, textbooks, and most of journalism. It is harder to live by literature if one depends on a Reformed audience; and by literature I mean writing of distinction, intrinsically valuable. Such writing usually requires unremitting discipline and years of struggle before one achieves an individual medium. These have to be years of self-denial and probably of poverty." And yet, as Professor Timmerman points out, Christian literature is sorely needed. He, therefore, proposes a plan by which young writers of genuine gifts and pronounced promise can be helped to supply that literature which Christian readers are looking for. To such writers there should be made available a two-year grant that would release all their efforts for creative work. He says: "Such a policy would encourage the gifted to write, would assure them of our warm interest, would give them the lively encouragement important to creation. When the literary project is completed, it would have the prestige of the grant that made it possible and might thereby more readily gain publication." We are personally in sympathy with every encouragement, as also every support, that can be given to younger or older Lutheran writers to produce Christian literature of lasting value. That there are able writers among us is proved by the fact that from time to time Concordia Publishing House through Synod's Young People's Literature Board is receiving manuscripts that are definitely superior and that are widely sold also outside our Lutheran circles after they are published. But far too many manuscripts are still submitted to Synod's Young People's Literature Board that must be barred from publication because of mechanical and other defects. Here evidently are writers who show promise, though they need instruction and training in the art of writing. Just now the general book market is looking for religious books, which are being published in relatively great number. What can we do to train writers to produce such books as will supply the need and at the same time be a credit to our Lutheran Church? Here, we believe, is a problem which deserves consideration also by the intelligent laity of our Church.

J. T. M.

Catholics Urge Bible Reading. Under the heading "Season For Scripture Reading," *America* (December 13, 1947) writes: "The distribution of leaflets by the American Bible Society, announcing the opening of their annual Bible-reading crusade, should remind Catholics anew of the treasures of Holy Writ which Holy Mother Church continually recommends for daily reading and meditation. 'To ignore the Scripture is to ignore Christ', St. Jerome wrote more than fifteen hundred years ago in words the present Holy Father recalled in his Encyclical *Divino Afflatu*. In this great document, Pope Pius XII added his voice to the insistent urging of each of his predecessors, back to Leo XIII, for daily reading of the Word of God. The phrase 'daily reading' suggests the prayer-book of selections from the New Testament edited by the late Father Stedman of the Confraternity of the Precious Blood (5300 Ft. Hamilton Parkway, Brooklyn 19, N. Y.) as a companion to his prodigiously circulated *My Sunday Missal*. His successor as Director of the Confraternity, Father Joseph B. Frey, has recently published *My Daily Psalm Book* in a pocket edition that follows the arrangement of the priest's breviary. During the season of Advent, Catholics may prefer to follow prayerfully the thought of the Church as she reads the prophecies and anticipations of Christ's coming in words the Holy Spirit spoke through Isaias. But whatever pages of Holy Writ we turn to, we are furnished spiritual food 'to the commemoration of faith, the consolation of hope, the exhortation of charity,' as St. Augustine assures us; and if our reading be for at least fifteen minutes each day it wins us, we know, a plenary indulgence once a month." Protestants may be inclined to read such admonitions to read the Bible, coming from Romanist authorities, with their tongue in the cheek. "In an encyclical of Leo XIII, *Officiorum et Munerum*, published on January 25, 1897, the rule is laid down (ch. 3:7) that all versions in the vernacular, even by Catholics, are altogether prohibited, unless approved by the Holy See, or published under the vigilant care of the bishops, with annotations from the Fathers of the Church and learned Catholic writers." (Cf. *Concordia Cyclopaedia*, p. 76.) But even before that, Rome forbade the translation and popular reading of the Bible (*ibid.*). However, the zealous publication of Bible translations by Protestants has made it necessary for Rome not only to present the Bible to the faithful, in well-guarded and annotated versions, but also to urge the Catholic laity to read Holy Writ. In inculcating this duty, the Catholic Church today is very serious. It remains for us who are the direct heirs of the Reformation's greatest treasure, to set a good example to all non-Lutherans in daily and intelligent Bible study. There is reason to believe that in this sacred privilege we do not let our lights shine before men. Just what can be done to make Bible study among Lutherans more popular?

J. T. M.

Cardinal Stritch on Protestant Miracles. The *Protestant Voice* of December 12, 1947, carries this editorial:

"Spokesmen of the Roman Catholic Church recently have characterized Protestant opposition to use of tax funds for parochial school children as 'black bigotry.' Cardinal Spellman of New York, in a speech in Syracuse, referred to the 'inferno of hatreds and bigotries of peace fomented by men in the clothing of shepherds.' Whom did he mean? The *New World*, official paper of Cardinal Stritch of Chicago, in its issue of June 27, 1947, on the editorial page, printed a question in regard to miraculous healings. The reply states: 'With regard to miracles wrought by or for a non-Catholic, and in confirmation of a non-Catholic religion: — Such a thing does not and cannot come from God. Either it did not happen, or it can be explained naturally, or it is due to the devil.' This is an exact quotation. Any miracle performed by or for a Protestant is performed by the devil, and not by God. This is the official statement of Cardinal Stritch's official paper. Bigotry was never blacker, blasphemy never more damnable, than this horrible statement. If Protestant Christians of America intend to preserve their self-respect they should — and must — demand a retraction of this bigoted blasphemy. Cardinal Spellman refers to 'bigotries of peace fomented by men in the clothing of shepherds.' Could he have been referring to his fellow Cardinal, Stritch? Certainly the garment fits."

So writes the *Protestant Voice*. The writer is not entirely fair. The Cardinal did not simply say, "Any miracle performed by or for a Protestant is performed by the devil and not by God." He undoubtedly would insist that the additional phrase "and in confirmation of a non-Catholic religion" must not be overlooked. His reasoning is patent and familiar. "God is the source of all truth; He will not countenance error; it is impossible that He would perform a miracle in support of heretical views. Since every non-Catholic religion teaches one or more errors God would not perform a miracle which would give confirmation to such a religion." The reasoning of the Cardinal is correct up to a certain point. That God is the Source of all truth and that He, our great, loving, heavenly Father, will not by a miracle endorse or sanction error, we all admit. But, of course, we do not admit that every non-Catholic religion is based on error. Besides, our God can well be conceived of as having miracles performed for the benefit of true children of His who are beset by errors, intellectually. We recall how the disciples of Jesus were afforded miraculous aid on various occasions in spite of erroneous notions which still befogged their minds. The pivotal point is not so much orthodoxy or dogmatically correct propositions as membership in the *Una Sancta*. A.

Lutheran Church of Italy. — R. N. S. carries the following item: An Evangelical Lutheran Church of Italy is expected to be formed in Rome shortly and will apply for membership in the Lutheran World Federation.

There are about six thousand Lutherans in Italy today. The largest Lutheran populations are in Rome; Milan, where the Lu-

theran group is part of the Reformed Church; Naples; Capri; Florence; Turin; Genoa; and the neighboring Riviera, Trieste, Bozen, and Merano.

A Lutheran pastor is stationed in each of the following cities: Rome, Milan, Genoa, Trieste, Bozen, and Merano. The clergymen receive \$50 each month from American and Swedish Lutherans.

About one-third of the Lutherans in Italy are German, Scandinavian, Swiss, Rumanian, and Hungarian. The others are native Italians or foreign women who have been naturalized since their marriage. Among the Lutherans in Italy are also a few who are converts from Catholicism.

Until the present time Lutherans in Italy have been affiliated with the Evangelical Church in Germany because most of their churches are sustained by German and Austrian foundations. Since the war, however, Italian Lutheranism can no longer identify itself with the German Church because of the great number of non-German adherents and because German foundations have had to withdraw their financial support.

Italian Lutheran churches are therefore seeking autonomy in order to join the Lutheran World Federation and the Federal Council of Italian Evangelical Churches. They have already asked for juridical dissolution of ties with the German Church and are awaiting an answer from Pastor Martin Niemoeller, head of the German Evangelical Church's foreign office.

The first Lutheran Church in Italy was established in Venice by German merchants during the sixteenth century. In the following century a small Dutch colony founded a church in Leghorn, but this was later dissolved.

In 1819 the first permanent Lutheran pastor was assigned to Rome. Since Rome was a pontifical state, Protestants were not allowed to hold services publicly. Worship meetings were held in the Prussian legation and British embassy with the primary purpose of preventing the flourishing colony of artists from Germany, Hungary, and Scandinavia from changing their faith.

After the unification of Italy and the abolition of the pontifical state in 1870 Lutheran worship meetings were held publicly and small Lutheran communities began to form, growing gradually into today's Lutheran population in Italy. A. W. C. G.

Appalling Divorce Rate. — Almost unbelievable are the figures which are submitted with respect to divorces in the city of Denver. Before us lies a report which says that in the county in which Denver is located last November was a very dark month in this respect; the records show that there were 447 marriages in that month and 219 divorces. It will be recalled that the national rate for divorces is distressingly high too, there being one divorce for three marriages. But the figures for the Colorado county in question are still worse. A person might contrast with these figures the reports from Denmark. According to the religious press, in 1945 there were six divorces for one thousand marriages. One can-

not avoid the impression that even among Christian people in the United States the views concerning divorce must be very lax if compared with those that obtain in Denmark. A.

Plans of the American Bible Society. — R. N. S. reports: The American Bible Society will operate this year on \$2,981,645, the largest budget in the 131-year history of the organization. Of the record-breaking total, \$1,200,000 will be devoted to world emergency work arising out of World War II, while \$1,781,645 will be used for the regular outgoing activity of the society in the United States and 40 other countries.

Mr. Frank H. Mann, general secretary of the society, revealed that the Bible Society plans to ship thousands of Scriptures to Russia. The Philippines will receive 78,000 Bibles in eight dialects and 36,000 Testaments in four dialects. Thirty tons of paper each have been allocated to Hungary and India, with 25 tons to Indonesia, to publish Bibles and Testaments.

The Bible Society's program for Japan calls for the distribution of 125,000 Bibles, 600,000 Testaments and one million Gospels. By arrangement with the Toyohawa Printing Company at Nagoya, the plant will be given 300 tons of paper and large quantities of cloth, thread, board, and glue in order to publish these Scriptures in Japan.

Other allocations planned by the Bible Society in 1948 include the following: Bulgaria — 130,000 Bibles, 130,000 Testaments, 690,000 Gospels; Czechoslovakia — 10,000 Bibles, 10,000 Testaments, 25,000 Gospels; France — 10,000 Bibles, 50,000 Testaments, 50,000 Gospels; Greece — 150,000 modern Greek Testaments and 50,000 ancient Greek Testaments, plus 20 tons of paper for 100,000 ancient Greek Testaments; Germany — 700,000 Bibles, 1,155,000 Testaments, 20,000 Greek New Testaments; Korea — 250,000 Bibles, 200,000 Testaments; Romania — 10,000 Bibles, 10,000 Testaments, 10,000 Gospels; Serbia and Yugoslavia — 10,000 Bibles, 25,000 Testaments, 100,000 Gospels; Ukraine — 10,000 Bibles. A. W. C. G.

The Presbyterian Church U. S. A. — Its leaders say that 1946 was a banner year for their denomination inasmuch as in it they gained 111,552 new members, which is an all-time record. The membership of the Church now totals 2,234,798. In the 241 years of organized Presbyterianism in America this is the largest figure that was ever attained by one of its groups. The Sunday school enrollment is impressive: it amounts to 1,312,034, which means a gain of 50,000. The per capita giving rose from \$31.76 to \$36.15; the increase in giving for benevolences is indicated by the figures from \$5.65 to \$8.73.

Majoring in Minor Things. — The president of a synod of the United Lutheran Church is in the habit of sending to his pastors, from time to time, "Guide Lines," in which he gives them pastoral advice. The following seems to us important enough to assign to it a wider circle of readers. Under the heading given the president writes: "The writings of Dr. Martin Luther give us

the following ten qualifications which a pastor ought to have: 1) He should be able to teach and preach logically and plainly; 2) He should have a level head; 3) He should have a good, if not extensive vocabulary; 4) His voice should be good; 5) He should possess an excellent memory; 6) He should know when to terminate his discourse; 7) He should know his subject well and be certain of what he intends to say; 8) He should be willing and ready to stake his body and soul, his goods and reputation, on the truth which he preaches; 9) He should study diligently and spend much time in prayer; 10) He should expect to be vexed and criticized by everyone." To this the president adds: "As you read and think of the above requirements, you fail to note anything about the maze of detail which occupies a pastor's time and energy in this modern age. The 'Gospel Message,' mentioning the 'Minister's Sevenfold Office,' says that he must be an ambassador, preacher, teacher, servant, overseer, shepherd, and watchman. But it also says nothing about his being a planner of parties, a good organizer, an expert financier, and other items which a congregation expects of a pastor in these days, characteristics which very often are given precedence over more essential matters. In my files I have a record of the following advice given to a young man who was to enter the active ministry: 'I want you to play with your parishioners, literally play with them, not preach at them. Play golf, have tea with them; drop theology.' How sad! That almost places the minister in the class with the play boy, and makes him a sort of ecclesiastical entertainer and companion. And — let it be said in all seriousness — *too many pastors major in such minor things.*

"'First things first!' That ought to be our motto, and this be followed by the advice to attend to important matters. This thought was expressed editorially in the *American Lutheran* some years ago. Under the heading: 'Making Better Preachers' the writer said: 'A church that makes provision to relieve the pastor of the ever multiplying practical details of his office is thereby instrumental in making him a better preacher. The modern church, particularly in the larger towns and cities, has, with the introduction of proper efficiency methods, become a rather complicated institution. The institution of more systematic financial methods and of organized mission endeavors have naturally immeasurably increased the detail work connected with church management. Many a pastor is today dissipating his energies by attention to countless little tasks which really are foreign to the spiritual aspects of his calling and which could easily be performed by a group of willing workers in the church. The prime factor of the pastor's calling is the preaching of the Gospel. Naturally, his *sermon work must take precedence* over all other congregational duties. Unfortunately, many a pastor is compelled to consume his time and energy in the performance of the petty details of various congregational projects and finds himself hampered for lack of time in the preparation of his Sunday message. The time which

he sets aside for meditation is everlastingly interrupted by such as impose upon him some new petty task which they could perform just as well themselves.'

"The church which makes adequate provision to free the pastor for the work for which he has been principally called, will naturally by its action make him a better preacher. The contention is being made that the pulpit art is in a state of decline. If the contention is true, it is no doubt due in a large measure to the endless routine of detail duty to which the average pastor is subjected. A church which expects its pastor to carry all the burdens of congregational management and to carry out all the details of congregational projects, is acting in contravention of its own interests. Set your pastor free for the unhampered performance of the spiritual phases of his office. The effect of such liberation will be better sermons and, incidentally, better audiences." J. T. M.

Gordon College of Theology and Missions Moves into a New Home. — This well-known Fundamentalist school was founded fifty-eight years ago, as Ernest Gordon points out in the *Sunday School Times* (Feb. 21, 1948), "to train believing ministers and missionaries." With its present enrollment of 340 students, it is now the largest theological college in New England and one of the largest in the United States. Its fifteen hundred alumni have gone to all parts of the world as ministers and missionaries. Mr. Gordon writes: "The Board of Trustees officially records the absolute loyalty of the college to the great evangelical doctrines of the deity of Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, His miraculous birth, His sinless life, His vicarious death, His bodily resurrection, His triumphal return, the Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity, and the Bible as the supernaturally inspired Word of God. 'In accepting the gifts of evangelical Christians they [the trustees] hereby pledge the college to such loyalty as its permanent policy and agree that the trustees will now and hereafter engage or retain as regular officers, professors, or instructors only such persons as affirm genuine loyalty to these doctrines.' Now comes news of the purchase of the great Princemere estate of one thousand acres in Beverley, Hamilton, and other North Shore townships, valued at two millions, at a reported price of \$1.00 and other considerations. It is forty miles north of Boston. Mr. F. H. Prince, its owner, had offered it to the United Nations and also to Harvard University. Now he turns it over at this nominal price to Gordon College and, in addition, has started the construction at his own expense of a chapel on the estate to seat seven hundred. Gordon College will be moved thither, and a Christian college also erected to serve a thousand students. Princemere will provide facilities for summer camps (there are four ponds in its ample girth) and for Bible conferences. Let us hope that it will be in the future what Northfield was in its great evangelical days." This proves that there are still many in our country who value the fundamentals of the Christian faith and that the Word of God has not lost its divine power to triumph in a world of unbelief. J. T. M.

Items from Religious News Service. — Delegates to the national convention on a basis of union between the Northern Baptist Convention and Disciples of Christ decided in Cleveland to submit the question to their separate conventions in the spring of 1950. Meanwhile, committees will work to cultivate a spirit of union in the two denominations and seek to iron out differences in theology and organization.

A total of \$10,177,558 was appropriated for the missionaries service of the Methodist Church in the United States and overseas in 1948—49 at the closing session of the Board of Missions and Church Extension meeting in Buck Hill Falls, Pa. The sum was described as the largest set aside for missionary work in the history of the Methodist Church. Approval also was given by the Board of Missions for the establishment of a Christian university in Japan as "a voluntary gift and a gesture of good will from the Christian people of America to the people of Japan." Americans will be asked to give \$15,000,000 to secure a campus, for the erection of several schools of the projected university, and for partial endowment of the institution.

A Solemn High Mass, celebrated in the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia, was televised with the approval of Dennis Cardinal Dougherty. It was the first time a Mass had been telecast in the eastern United States. Previously, a Pontifical High Mass was televised from St. John's Church, St. Louis, Mo., on November 9, 1947.

A hundred inmates of San Quentin prison and 750 of Indiana State Penitentiary are among 5,500 people who have enrolled in the "Correspondence School of Religion" sponsored by the International Lutheran Hour.

More than one hundred missionaries, prospective missionaries, and ministers have studied flying under the Rev. Paul C. ("flying-Paul") Hartford, head of Victory Sky Pilots, Inc., an aviation school in Winona Lake, Indiana. Twenty-six graduates are now flying over foreign fields.

Bible instruction in public schools was disapproved by the Atlanta Baptist Association at its annual meeting in Atlanta, Ga. The group took the action in approving a report of its committee appointed last year to study the subject of religious instruction in the schools.

The Rev. Merrill D. Moore of Nashville, Tenn., has accepted leadership of a Southern Baptist Convention campaign to enlist the denomination's six million members as tithers. "Every Baptist a Tither" was the slogan adopted by the Convention's executive committee. This is an enlargement in a permanent form of a special three months' campaign conducted last fall in which the denomination enlisted more than a million tithers.

A special booth at the German Press Exhibit in Duesseldorf, Germany, revealed that the present circulation of Protestant periodicals in Germany is only one ninth as great as in 1929. In that year there were 1,928 different Protestant papers with a total circulation of 17,000,000. Today there are only 64 periodicals with an edition of 1,800,000. The United States zone with 30 licensed Protestant papers having a circulation of 642,000, leads the way so far as the number of different papers is concerned. In the British zone there are 16 periodicals with an edition of 900,000. The French zone has eight with an edition of 137,000, and the Soviet zone has ten with a circulation of 112,000.

For the first time since the war, word has been received at headquarters of the Waldensian Church in Torre Pellice, Italy, regarding a group of about thirty Waldensian communities in Germany, located in the provinces of Wuerttemberg and Baden. Ties between the Italian and German Waldensians have never been strong and relations were further weakened during the Fascist regime in Italy and the rise of Nazism in Germany. The Italian Waldensians were active opponents of Fascism, but the German Waldensians adopted a somewhat conformist attitude toward the Nazi regime. Waldensian spokesmen, however, have announced their willingness to resume cordial relations with their German co-religionists "inspired by Christian charity."

Lack of competent professors to fill vacant posts, a dearth of theological literature, isolation of students from those in other countries were cited at Geneva as primary common problems facing their seminaries in reports from delegates representing theological faculties in Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, and Poland. The reports were presented at a four-day conference on theological education attended by theological professors from 14 European countries at Chateau de Bossey, near Geneva. Theological students in all countries were lauded by delegates for their commitment to the ministry in spite of difficult financial obstacles, and their maturity resulting partially from their experiences during the war which brought them into closer contact with all social classes. It was reported that in England and in Scotland, as well as in Germany, Hungary, and other countries, many more capable clergymen are needed to fill vacancies.

Plans for the first Roman Catholic seminary in the Russian occupation zone of Germany are nearing completion. The seminary will be located at Neuzelle in Kreis Guben, in what remains of the archdiocese of Breslau, and will replace the Breslau seminary lost by the Polish occupation of Silesia. The formal opening was expected to take place near Easter.

Four books written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, New York City, are being translated into Japanese and will shortly be published in Tokyo by the United Church of Christ in Japan.

Bethel Seminary in Bielefeld, Germany, has opened its doors to 75 Protestant theological students from the Russian zone of Germany where they were barred from professional training by quota restrictions. At the six Protestant theological schools in the eastern zone a quota of only 350 students is permitted. Church authorities hope that other schools in western Germany will follow the example of Bethel in extending an opportunity for many eastern students to study theology.

A series of motion pictures to be called "In the Eyes of the Church," designed "to encourage the application of religious principles to great contemporary problems," was announced in New York by the Motion Picture Association of America. The first two pictures in the 16 mm. series are now complete and are being made available to all churches and discussion groups. The films are: "The Nuremberg Trials, the Churches, and International Justice," with a running time of 29 minutes; and "The People in the Atomic Age," with a running time of 18 minutes. Each film is accompanied by a leader's manual with suggested outlines and questions to promote discussion.

A start of a 10-year \$100,000 project to publish 30 volumes of a new translation and commentary on the non-Biblical scriptural writings known as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, was announced in Philadelphia by Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning. A special 16-man board of directors, headed by Dr. Solomon Zeitlin, professor of Rabbinical Literature at Dropsie College, is being formed by Dr. Abraham A. Newman, president of the college, to accomplish the translations. Others on the board include Dr. Julian Morgenstern, president emeritus of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati; Dr. Harry A. Wolfson of Harvard; Dr. Ralph Marcus of the University of Chicago; and Dr. Saul Lieberman and Dr. Robert Gordis of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Rabbi Meyer Berlin, president of the World Mizrahi Organization, Orthodox Zionist group, has left Jerusalem for the United States to enlist support for a proposed new edition of the Talmud. The new edition, Mizrahi officials stated, will be undertaken by their organization with the aid of eminent Jewish scholars. It will contain a critical text, with numerous commentaries and heretofore unpublished annotations by the late Chief Rabbi Abraham Kook of Palestine.

Bishop Bela Kapi, president of the Hungarian Lutheran Synod, issued a statement in Budapest endorsing the declaration drawn up by the International Emergency Conference to Combat Anti-Semitism held at Seelisberg, Switzerland, last August which called upon churches to dispel anti-Jewish attitudes among their members. The full text of the Seelisberg declaration was made public only recently by the International Council of Christians and Jews.

Bishop Alexander Raffay, formerly head of the Hungary Lutheran Church, died in Budapest at the age of 82. Dr. Raffay, who retired in 1944, was engaged on a translation of the New Testament at the time of his death.

Special Bible study courses have been inaugurated by Protestant churches in Madrid, Spain. Correspondence courses will also be available to Protestant believers throughout the provinces through the use of moderately-priced textbooks.

A memorial tablet to Henry Francis Lyte, author of the hymn "Abide With Me," was unveiled in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey by Major J. M. Maxwell Lyte, oldest male member of the family.

Greek Protestants thronged the Second Evangelical Church in Athens, Greece, to participate in a Reformation Day service. The Rev. G. Hadjiantonious, moderator of the General Synod of the Greek Evangelical Church, was the principal speaker. He discussed the life and work of the Greek reformer, Cyril Loucaris, Ecumenical Patriarch of the sixteenth century.

An official decree has been issued by the Prefect of the Naples province prohibiting members of the Italian Pentecostal sect from holding worship meetings in Pompeii. The decree asserted that the Pentecostal gatherings are offensive to the predominantly Roman Catholic population and tend to create public disorder.

Roman Catholic bishops throughout Spain approved the observance of a Bible day on Sunday, Nov. 23, to promote more widespread study and reading of the Scriptures. During a similar observance last year, 25,000 copies of the Bible were distributed in various dioceses.

Roman Catholics throughout Mexico have been urged by the hierarchy to contribute to a fund for the completion of a 114-foot statue of Christ the King to be erected on Cubilete Mountain in the state of Guanajuato, approximately the geographical center of the nation. Work on the monument, which will be located atop the 8,500-foot mountain in the Leon Diocese, was first begun in 1923.

A. W. C. G.

