

6-1-1948

Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

John Theodore Mueller
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mueller, John Theodore (1948) "Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 19, Article 42.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol19/iss1/42>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

Theological Observer

Doctrine: A Scriptural Evaluation.—In the *Calvin Forum* (March, 1948), Dr. H. R. van Til, associate professor of the Bible, Calvin College, under the given heading, makes a strong plea for a new consideration of the importance of Christian doctrine. Beginning with the thought, expressed recently: "The disease in our Church is indifference to doctrine," he proceeds to show that the truth of this statement is proved by the Auburn Affirmation in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., by the unjust condemnation of Dr. Machen, when several years ago he testified on behalf of the ancient Reformed doctrine in an age of widespread liberalism, and by the liberals in the Southern Presbyterian Church who at this very moment are trying to consummate an ecclesiastical union with the Northern Presbyterians with total disregard of the doctrinal issues involved. But there is the same spirit of unconcern for matters of doctrinal issues, the same listless complacency, also in the Christian Reformed Church. Dr. van Til says: "Its members no longer welcome and appreciate doctrinal preaching when it is controversial. By the latter term I refer to the type of preaching in which some form of the modern denial of the truth is scored, or the positive principle is concretized by the simple expedient of pointing out the ecclesiastical heresies that must be avoided. Another evidence is the fact that our men's societies, which have been organized to study the doctrines of Scripture, no longer attract more than a fraction of the male membership of the church. Bowling is far more popular. Besides, one never hears our members discussing doctrine; we are interested in methods and programs and campaigns, but to implicate ourselves into the truth, to grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus has very little appeal today." Again: "Doctrine and its study is often deprecated as being of the letter whereas the spirit maketh alive. More often an invidious comparison is made between doctrine and life, and preference is stated for the latter as though one can live without the truth or without having a doctrine. Over against these modern-day tendencies stands the fact that Scripture presents its teachings (doctrines) in a concrete, vibrant way. Jesus made His doctrine relevant and vital by identifying Himself with it. Surely, it is impossible, then, to make a disjunction between the person of Christ and accepting His doctrine. The one implies the other." Or: "The importance of the study of doctrine in Christianity follows from the fact that here we are dealing with the heart of the matter. For Christian doctrine is simply the teaching of the truth. The great supposition, of course, that truth is absolute, and that it has been revealed, and that it can be taught is part of the total picture. Doctrine is not an addendum that comes as an afterthought; neither is it the condiment which depends upon personal tastes. Rather it is the pith and essence, the core of

Christianity; it constitutes the main course of the dinner, so to speak. In the New Testament this emphasis constantly comes to the fore. Jesus Himself, for example, is constantly comparing His teachings with those of His opponents and warns His disciples that they must not be taken in by the doctrines of the Pharisees. Continuing with the testimony of the New Testament record, we find that the disciples are approved because they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine. The Bereans receive special mention because they searched the Scriptures to see whether those things were so. Paul also is very insistent that Timothy must be very careful to watch his doctrine as well as his person. One of the finest testimonies is found in the letter to the Hebrew Christians who were in danger of falling away and had already fallen behind in the Christian race. The Apostle admonishes them to leave the beginnings of the doctrine (teaching) of Christ and to press on to perfection. The point of the entire passage is that God is not satisfied with spiritual infants, that they must become mature, and that this maturity consists in growing in the knowledge of the Lord and of His Word. The very life of the Christian Church depends upon proper indoctrination of its youth. If they do not learn the correct interpretation, they will imbibe heresy. The solution for the chilling effects of intellectualism and dead orthodoxism is not less doctrine, but rather more doctrine that has been impregnated with the fire of conviction and the zeal of devotion to Him who said: 'If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:31, 32).'"

J. T. M.

Gandhi and Christ.—The *St. Louis Lutheran* (Feb. 21, 1948), under this heading, publishes an editorial which, because of its timeliness and importance, deserves a far wider distribution than it can receive in the limited area of the readers of the *St. Louis paper*. Rev. Gerhardt Mahler, the managing editor of the periodical, writes: "In taking note of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination, the American press manifested a jarring disregard of the real meaning of Christianity by associating his murder with the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. No comparison could be more odious. Who was Gandhi and what was his significance? The little spectacled man in loincloth squatting in the lap of Mother India may have been a 'saint in politics,' but first and last he was in politics. His purpose of effecting India's freedom was a worthy one, and methods were unusually peaceable. Goat, salt bag, spinning wheel, and 'fastings unto death,' Gandhi's political weapons, appealed to the mysticism and symbolism of the East and bothered the conscience of the West. But only a people bred in caste and poverty could have taken kindly to his 'hashy' gospel that consisted of a few crusts of Christianity, buttered with Buddhism and spiced with Hinduism. Who is Christ and what is His significance? Christ is the eternal Son of God made man, who restored mankind to the grace of God through His own blood-reparations. Gandhi's death

was social-political. The bullet that laid him low was of the same kind that struck down Abraham Lincoln. Christ's death was religious. His cross enabled the arms of God to be extended in a forgiving welcome to every evildoer—a term that fits all persons." One of the "odious comparisons" came from liberal E. Stanley Jones, who wrote (*Christian Century*, Feb. 18, 1948): "I came near witnessing a tragedy second only to the crucifixion of the Son of God." Blasphemy, indeed!
J. T. M.

Mergers Developing.—An informative editorial in *America* (R. C. weekly) of April 24 has the heading "Protestant Merger Moves." On account of its objective character we reprint it here.

"Accelerated, doubtless, by the approaching assembly of the World Council of Churches, which will convene at Amsterdam on August 22, the movement toward corporate union among Protestant church groups in America progresses. Early voting returns indicate that the Congregational Christian Churches will soon merge with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The Joint Commission on Approaches to Unity of the Protestant Episcopal Church recently completed its assignment of preparing an authoritative statement on Faith and Order upon which the Episcopal Church 'is prepared to enter intercommunion and to proceed toward organic federation with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. or with any other interested Christian body.' The Statement is an exposition of the Lambeth Quadrilateral, the four-point platform on the bases of unity first drafted at Chicago in 1886. The four points are declared to be: the Holy Scriptures as containing all things necessary to salvation, the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, the two sacraments of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, and the Historic Episcopate. While the merger of the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches would not seem to be complicated or delayed by the need of an over-precise understanding of exactly what the 'unfailing use of Christ's words of Institution' actually effect in the sacrament of the Supper of the Lord, the question of the episcopate would seem more difficult of compromise. Is the episcopate the sole source of Orders or is it merely an administrative function? While the Catholic Church cannot, without denying its essential nature, participate as an equal in such unity conferences, Catholics look on all such efforts to recover one of the fundamental notes of the Church with interest and sympathy. As for the Amsterdam meeting, where a federation of 134 Protestant and Orthodox Churches will gather, Pope Benedict XV manifested the abiding Catholic attitude when, declining an invitation to a similar ecumenical conference in 1919, he expressed the wish and promised his prayers that its efforts might be crowned by success."

Thus attempts of Protestant bodies to unite continue. They should continue, of course, but one is grieved to see that frequently the main factor to be considered is left out of consideration, the full revelation of God in the Holy Scriptures.
A.

The Coming Amsterdam Meeting.—Since the papers will carry many news items on this conference, the chief facts pertaining to it should be known to theologians. In Utrecht, Holland, a meeting was held in 1938 at which 130 denominations were represented. The aim was to form an organization which in some manner would connect the various church bodies of the world. A constitution was adopted and a provisional committee was appointed which should carry out the plans that had been evolved. The war made suspension of the project necessary. Now it is resumed, and at Amsterdam, in a conference to be held August 22 to September 5, the ship is to be launched. The organization is not to be a superchurch, a body that can legislate for, and dictate to, its constituent bodies; it will not be a sister to Rome, whose head and church councils possess absolute authority over all the various dioceses composing her communion. Its powers will be advisory; it is described as a consultative body. The *R. N. S.* report on its nature says it will have duties, but no rights. To join it, a denomination must be willing to be classed as a Church which accepts "our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior."

The number of church bodies that hold membership to date is 135, located in 39 countries. Twenty-six of these denominations, representing 25 million people, are found in the United States. It is expected that a number of churches not yet affiliated will join before the Amsterdam meeting. According to information furnished by Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, the general secretary of the council, the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church at Moscow is considering whether his Church should participate, while the Greek and other orthodox churches in the Mediterranean world have declared they wish to be members from the very start. Enrollment of some of the so-called younger churches of Asia is expected.

During the war the provisional committee endeavored to keep the churches of the various countries in contact with one another. According to our authority (*R. N. S.*), it helped refugees find a home, it aided persecuted people in escaping from Hitler's grasp; working together with the *Y. M. C. A.*, it made it possible for prisoners of war to hold religious services; it distributed Bibles and Testaments; it spread news about the churches in the war-harassed countries, especially Germany; it led churches, almost submerged in a sea of woe, to co-operate; it saw to it that material relief was provided for starving millions. What is sought now in particular is rehabilitation of the churches in the devastated countries and sufficient influence on the leadership of the nations so that world peace will be established.

The meeting at Amsterdam will look back on several precursors, the first one being a missionary conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1910. Three endeavors resulted from this first meeting: The International Missionary Council, the Conference of Faith and Order, and the Conference on Life and Work. In 1925 the Conference on Life and Work met in Stockholm, the Conference on Faith and Order met in Lausanne in 1927; in 1937 the

former convened in Oxford, the latter in Edinburgh. It was agreed to merge these two conferences in a World Council of Churches. The Utrecht meeting of 1938 was the result. Thinking of the grand plans that are taking shape, a conservative Lutheran asks: Will the heterogeneous gathering in Amsterdam promote the frightful doctrinal indifference which is now engulfing the world? Will the social gospel triumph? Will Calvinism with its rationalizing tendencies gain new victories? Lord, sanctify Thy children through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth!

A.

What Are the Implications of the McCollum Case Decision? —

Much bewilderment exists on account of the McCollum Case decision. One question asked frequently is, What are its implications? It will be helpful to read some remarks written by Dr. Oscar Blackwelder (U. L. C. A.) in the *Lutheran* of April 7 on the decision. Dr. Blackwelder points out that there is no rigid separation of Church and State in our country. He relates that on March 11 the Federal Council of Churches and the Washington Federation of Churches, through their representatives, met in the Protestant Episcopal cathedral in Washington to discuss the subject "The Churches and the European Recovery Program." The chief speaker was not a minister, but the Secretary of State General George C. Marshall. In the front pew sat President Harry S. Truman. Here we then have the strange phenomenon of the discussion of a political or civic and national question by a top-ranking official of the Government before a religious gathering. The writer then continues:

"What shall we say of the Congress itself? If the Court decision becomes the enforced policy of the land, Peter Marshall and James Shera Montgomery should be fired from their positions as chaplains of the Senate and House. Their posts should be abolished and never again should the Congress be opened with prayer. The present practice of daily prayer for God's guidance by ordained ministers of the church is the commingling of church and state.

"Come with me to the Veterans' Administration. Every informed person knows that along with doctors, competent chaplains do more for the recovery and rehabilitation of disabled veterans than anyone else on the staff — but chaplains must go if this sharp interpretation of church-state relationship stands as the enforced policy.

"The remarkable chapel at the Naval Academy in Annapolis should be converted into another type of building, all chaplaincy service discontinued if this decision of the Supreme Court becomes the enforced policy of the nation. The Naval Academy stands for the commingling of church and state as no small city public school in Illinois possibly could do. And what is true at Annapolis is also true at West Point.

"And once more, look with me at the Army and Navy. If this decision is the enforced law of the land, every chaplain should be removed from the armed services. They are ordained ministers

of the churches they represent. They are not ordained by the government. Their chaplaincy service is a commingling of church and state more intimate than in any public school.

"If this decision becomes the enforced policy of the land, the government mint should be forbidden to use 'In God We Trust' on our coins. It might offend some atheist. Never again can a minister of the church pray at the inauguration of a president of the United States. That is a commingling of church and state on a national scale such as a little obscure school building holding some religious exercises never could be.

"Ministers of religion serving as chaplains in jails, penitentiaries, reform schools, Federal and State hospitals should be removed, for they violate the principle of this decision. If it only applies to school buildings, it's trivial and unfair." A.

Estonian Refugees Welcomed in Canada. — According to the *Canadian Lutheran*, the paper of our brethren published in Winnipeg (see issue of March 15), an interesting event occurred in Kitchener, Ontario, on January 16. A group of twenty-four Estonian refugees arrived after a hazardous journey of six thousand miles by land and sea. "These people are truly political refugees and have the real fear of returning to their former homeland, which is now occupied by Soviet Russia. Since 1944 they have been living in Sweden, which has since been forced, under the pressure of power politics, to recognize the Russian annexation and occupation of Estonia. Not only that, but Russia has been bringing pressure to bear upon Sweden to send Estonians back to Russia as Russian citizens, since technically there is no longer any country known as Estonia. Now, the Estonians are loath to return to the homeland, since they left it, in the first place, to get away from Russian domination. In view of what has happened to thousands of their fellow countrymen, they believe that a return can only mean Siberia or a slow, agonizing death in one of the slave-labor camps of Russia." Fortunately for these people the annexation of Estonia by Russia has not been recognized by the United States; so these people decided to come to America. "Twenty-four of them fled in a sailboat only 43 feet long, and for seventy-five days they risked their lives on the waters of the Atlantic." On their arrival in New York they learned to their consternation that they were not permitted to enter the United States. They did not have the necessary papers, and since entry is possible only under the quota system, these people had to be refused admission in fairness to those who were seeking admission along legitimate channels. "When efforts of the National Lutheran Council to obtain entrance permission for these people failed in Washington, Canadian Lutheran World Relief was appealed to." The Canadian government granted the required entrance permission. The refugees, all of them Lutherans, were settled in and around Kitchener. A Lutheran layman placed a large vacant house at the disposal of the respective committee, and thus these homeless people were given shelter. A.

With Schweitzer in Africa.— Under this heading Mrs. Helene Schweitzer, in the *Christian Century* (April 21, 1948), publishes an interesting article which, besides offering a number of important news items, shows a fine grasp of the methods, needs, and objectives of modern missionary work in foreign lands. Mission work in the Ogowe River region of Africa (French Equatorial Africa), where Dr. Schweitzer has won fame as a medical missionary, was begun almost seventy-five years ago by the Northern Presbyterian Mission Board, which founded two stations in this district in 1874: one at Kangwe (now called Andende) on the site of the Lambarene, and the other at Talagouga, near N'Djole, the terminus for navigation on the river. The stations developed well, but since they were situated in a French colony, Gaboon, the Board found it difficult to provide a French-speaking staff. It therefore asked the Paris Evangelical Mission Society to take over the work and in 1892 withdrew its representatives to make way for French missionaries. The writer says: "When Dr. Schweitzer and I arrived here thirty-five years ago to establish our hospital at Lambarene, we met quite a number of native Christians—some of them very distinguished personalities—who had had their first instruction from the Americans."

Helene Schweitzer was a trained nurse when, in 1912, she married Albert Schweitzer. All these years she has shared in her husband's work and thus writes as a firsthand authority on the needs of the African mission field. About the willingness of the evangelized natives she writes: "The people's devotion to the Church is expressed in many touching ways. Here at Lambarene the members and catechumens make their offering three times a year, according to their means. The very poor bring produce from their little plantations. Those who do not possess even a yard go to the forest to collect resin for torches and make their contribution in this form. When a special fund is needed—perhaps to erect a new chapel or a school—the people evince an equal readiness to make sacrifices."

Mrs. Schweitzer believes that in all likelihood there will be two kinds of ecclesiastical arrangements in the future: independent, self-supporting native churches, and missionary churches, which are founded, supported, and served by mission boards or societies, though what the growing African Church will one day be is difficult to foresee. While there are undoubtedly many natives who have the capacity to serve as teachers or evangelists or even as ordained ministers, white teachers are indispensable for training them. Uneducated native ministers are a danger to the Church. They will attempt to cut loose from the missionary's authority and by their immaturity and lack of realism will bring the Church into conflicts prejudicial to its development.

The missionary, as a rule, she thinks, does not consider that he is making sacrifices. He feels joy in his work, and the consciousness that he is obeying Christ's command to teach all nations gives him strength. His field becomes home to him. It is only

when ill health intervenes to separate man and wife who have been laboring together in the Lord's vineyard that the missionary feels he has chosen a hard life. Nor is it easy for missionary parents to renounce the joy of having their children with them. Of course, they know in advance that this is a price they will have to pay, and they have before them the heartening example of other missionary parents.

About the qualifications for missionaries to Africa she writes: "It goes without saying that they must be men and women of faith. They should also possess many skills. The ordained missionary needs not only a sound theological education, but likewise a good general education and, if possible, some understanding of agriculture and handicrafts. Here the person who grew up in a rural community is at a great advantage, for he is not unaccustomed to being his own artisan. The most urgent and difficult task facing the newcomer to the field is mastery of the native language. Unfortunately these African languages are unrelated to any European tongue and, moreover, are highly complex. But without a thorough knowledge of the speech of his people the missionary cannot win their confidence. Every mission station ought to have, besides evangelists and teachers, an industrial missionary who has a knowledge of engineering and is trained in agriculture and in such skills as carpentry, masonry, and metal work. The industrial missionary is also needed to train young natives in these practical branches. He is the true pioneer of culture among the primitive tribes, for material progress must go hand in hand with spiritual and moral development."

Mrs. Schweitzer closes her fine article with the words: "So long as there are Christians in the world, missions will continue. Christ's command admits of no exceptions: 'Go ye and teach all nations.' But the command carries a promise, and those who hear it will obey, confident that over this Dark Continent, too, the Light of the World will one day break."

It is understood, of course, that the Gospel which is to be proclaimed to the heathen is the saving Gospel, as set forth in the Holy Scriptures, not the substitute "gospel" of Unitarians and Modernists, with whom, unfortunately, Dr. Schweitzer is identified.

J. T. M.

Huge Bible Shipment. — *The Watchman-Examiner* of April 15, 1948, carries this item:

"A shipment of 25,000 Bibles, one of the largest single shipments ever made, left the National Bible Press, Philadelphia, on April 5, for Miami Beach, Fla., where the Florida camp of the Gideons International will soon begin their distribution to 57 hotels at the famous resort. Persistent effort extending over several years has finally succeeded in unanimous approval for the complete Bibling of the hotels' rooms. Because of the importance of the occasion, members of the Gideon cabinet, made up of leading businessmen from all parts of the country, will gather in Miami Beach between April 16 and 21 to assist in the dedication of the

approximately 25 tons of Bibles. With this huge gift of Bibles, the Gideons will have completed virtual coverage of all the better hotels throughout this country and Canada. In addition to providing Bibles without charge for hotel rooms, their activities now extend to similar distribution to hospitals, penal institutions, and on shipboard, plus the providing each year of several million Testaments for youth in the public school systems throughout this country and Canada."

Notes and News from Australia.—The *Australian Lutheran* (February 18 and March 3, 1948) reports some notes and news which might interest also readers in our country. The New Zealand District was the first to send in complete statistical returns for 1947. These returns show an increase of twelve preaching stations. Dr. John Darsow has been appointed synodical editor and Lutheran Hour director.—During his visit in Australia, the Rev. George Kuechle of Cleveland, Ohio, addressed forty-six meetings, at which he spoke to approximately nine thousand people on the value of the Lutheran Hour. Collections at rallies amounted to more than \$4,000.—In a special service at Concordia College, Adelaide, on Sunday, February 22, 1948, Rev. R. H. Altus, until last December the pioneer principal of Concordia College, Toowoomba, Queensland, was installed as teacher and lecturer at the Unley seminary. Candidate Ian Kleinig, a graduate of last year's class from Concordia Seminary, has accepted a call as fourth missionary in New Guinea from the Board of Foreign Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia.—The Intersynodical Committees of the E. L. C. A. and the U. E. L. C. A. have held six joint meetings during the past two years, namely, three in 1946 and three in 1947. At the meetings much time was devoted to the discussion of the papers by Dr. Hamann on "Church Fellowship Presupposes the Common Acceptance and Confession of All Doctrines Revealed in Holy Scripture" and by Dr. Hebart on "Principles Governing Church Fellowship." The report says: "The discussions were conducted in a friendly atmosphere and, we trust, have removed a number of misunderstandings and helped to clear up some difficulties. At each of these meetings the pamphlet on the differences between the two Lutheran Churches was also discussed. Efforts are being made to define the differences clearly and correctly, so that any statement published will present them true to fact and free from any misrepresentation."—The Lutheran Laymen's League in Australia is gratifyingly active in the service of the Church. Welcome and helpful legacies were bequeathed to the L. L. L. in the wills of the late Mrs. Hirschfeld, Miss Minna Koch, and Miss Esther Jericho. But also the brothers show willingness to give. Recently one of the Church's loan depositors requested that his present balance of over £1,200 should be transferred from an interest-bearing to an interest-free loan-deposit account. Another brother sent a check of £1,000 as an interest-free deposit for twelve months. A brother in Victoria sent in a donation of

£100. — The Australian Luther League, corresponding to our Walther League, plans to sponsor a fellowship tour to New Zealand early in 1950, the trip to cost about \$250 a person. — To oppose and counteract the claims of unbelieving scientists who uphold the evolution theory, a movement was begun in Britain some years ago which is known as the Evolution Protest Movement. It was founded under the leadership of Sir Ambrose Fleming, whose scientific attainments cannot be questioned. A branch of this movement has now been formed in Australia. The objects of the movement are: 1. To expose the methods by which people are led to believe that the theory of evolution has been proved to be true; 2. To demonstrate that Christian belief in Creation is both scientific and rational; 3. To show the dangers threatening humanity through the undermining of faith in the Bible by materialistic and evolutionary dogmatism; 4. To supply scientific data and information, through the distribution of pamphlets, supporting the Christian conception of Creation as opposed to the widely accepted theory of evolution; 5. To secure that biology be taught in universities and schools as a science, instead of in the form of evolutionary propaganda, and to take steps necessary to effect this end. The annual subscription is 5/- and entitles members to a copy of the pamphlets as they are issued.

J. T. M.

The Place of Women in the Church. — The *Lutheran Standard* (April 24, 1948) reports the following: "More than 50 women, representing 10,000,000 Protestant women, met in Greenwich, Connecticut, to discuss 'The Life and Work of Women in the Church.' Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, executive secretary of the Federal Council of Churches, told the meeting that one of four special topics suggested for discussion at the first assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam next August was 'The Place of Women in the Church.' A survey of 'The Life and Work of Women in the Church,' now being conducted by the World Council's study department, will be presented in final form to the Amsterdam Assembly. It is expected to include a detailed analysis of women's relation to the Church in 58 countries. Mrs. S. M. Cavert, of the study department of the World Council of Churches, told the group that women are puzzled by job restrictions imposed by their churches and would like to be judged on the basis of their ability, experience, and education rather than by their sex. Discussing various forms of discrimination against women clergy, Mrs. Cavert emphasized that women were not seeking to launch a 'suffragette movement' for the ordination of women, but were simply 'trying to find the best means of serving the Church in whatever capacity their abilities and skills would merit.' Meanwhile, in Denmark, Miss Johanne Anderson is soon to become the first ordained minister in the Lutheran State Church of Denmark. Her ordination has been made possible by a newly enacted law which permits women to be given holy orders in the State Church. This action of the Danish Parliament in sanctioning the ordination

of women has created a virtual crisis in the Church. Six of Denmark's nine Lutheran bishops, acting in agreement with Bishop Hans Fuglsang-Damgaard of Copenhagen, Primate of the Church, have issued a declaration opposing women ministers and 'deploring' the law passed by Parliament. They charged that the law was enacted despite disapproval by a majority of the bishops and 'many ministers' and without ascertaining whether precedent for such action existed in foreign countries." Anyone who accepts 1 Cor. 14:34-40 and 1 Tim. 2:11-15 as God's clearly declared will in His inspired Word, must heartily support the action of the six courageous bishops in opposing the new Danish law on women ministers. Incidentally, too, the report shows that it does not do the Church any good to be tied to the apron strings of the State. Statutory law must not take the place of Holy Scripture in determining what should be ecclesiastical teaching and practice. J. T. M.

Lutheran Church Items.—The *Lutheran* (April 21, 1948) reports that the "American Lutheran Church is in good condition. Its records for 10 years showed a gain of more than 100,000 in membership: from 544,437 in 1937 to 646,700 in 1947. In total benevolences it had advanced from \$933,963 (1937) to \$3,740,289 (1947). ALC home missions established in 1947 numbered 30. Most notable church-planting program in the past decade had been in California. There were 17 ALC churches there in 1939, but 53 in 1948. Most of them were becoming self-supporting in less than 10 years."

"Unity of Lutherans," writes the same number of the *Lutheran*, "moved forward a notch when on February 29 the president of a ULC synod ordained to the ministry a member of the American Lutheran Church. Ordination was in an ALC church—Zion, in Sandusky, Ohio—and the ALC pastors of Zion Church helped conduct the service. Earl T. Knaus, a member of Zion Church, was ordained by Dr. J. J. Scherer, who until recently was president of the ULC Synod of Virginia. Pastors Theodore J. C. Stelhorn, Sr. and Jr., were participants in the service. Dr. Emmanuel Poppen, president of the American Lutheran Church, and also Dr. Franklin Clark Fry of the United Lutheran Church, expressed approval." J. T. M.

Java Native Minister Converts 2,000 Moslems.—Sjamsjoeddin Denso is a man who started out to study Christianity so he could "fight it with its own weapons" and who wound up by leading 2,000 Moslems to the Christian faith.

The story starts in Batangmata, a small town on Salajar, an island south of the Celebes, when Denso, born of Moslem parents, was urged by his mother to learn Christianity in order to be able to fight it better.

As a young man Denso went to the Balewyoto, a theological school operated by the Netherlands Missionary Society at Malang, Java. Rector of the school was Dr. B. M. Schuurman, a deeply religious man, whose abiding faith and patient instruction even-

tually made a true convert of Denso, who was subsequently sent to Celebes as a missionary.

Then the war came. The Japanese overran the Indies. They took Dr. Schuurman prisoner and tortured him to death. Denso, fortified by the rector's courageous death, defied the Japanese and tried heroically to keep his small congregation going.

Imprisoned by the enemy, Denso was brought to trial and allowed to defend himself. He told his judges that the Japanese constitution itself acknowledged that the Christian religion was a testimony to Jesus Christ, who "is not only the Christ of the Dutch, but of all the world." The Japanese let him go.

Denso's fearless conduct throughout the trial made a deep impression among the natives, many of whom were Moslems. Some supported him and his congregation by contributing money and food. Others became converts. The surrender of Japan came and later the nationalist uprisings enveloped the islands.

Denso made a number of enemies by repeated declarations that freedom was unalterably bound up with the Cross of Christ. His stand was erroneously interpreted by some of his enemies as an endorsement of Dutch rule. But his example — which indicated he fervently desired freedom without bloodshed or race hatred — gained him wide respect. That's how Pendita (Reverend) Sjamsoeddin Denso was instrumental in eventually leading the way to the conversion of 2,000 Moslems.

This is the account of R. N. S. on Denso's activities. He may have confused earthly and spiritual freedom, but the impression he made on Mohammedans is noteworthy. A.

Lutherakademie. — This venture, which was conducted annually at Sondershausen, will again be held during the coming summer. Since the facilities at Sondershausen, where the Academy had its annual meetings until 1945, are no longer available, the Academy will meet in Eisenach May 18—23. Dr. Karl Stange, the indefatigable worker for this Academy, has arranged the program, which is to include lectures by Professors Brennovd, Ihlen, Hauge, and Godal of Norway, Professor Rudolph Hermann of Greifswald, and Professor F. K. Krueger of Valparaiso, Ind. F. E. M.

Religious Intolerance in Spain. — Members of the Roman Catholic Church, whose representatives in our country are posing as champions of religious liberty, are trampling this precious boon underfoot in old Spain. According to *La Luce* (*The Light*), the Waldensian paper published in Rome, several religious outrages were committed in Spain in the last months of 1947. On November 12 the new Protestant British chapel, dedicated fifteen days before, was pillaged by a number of youths belonging to a Catholic organization "of the extreme right." The vandals disfigured the interior with scribbles exalting Mother Mary and made their collective identity known through bits of a pastoral letter evidently strewn about, a letter written by Cardinal Segura of Seville, who attacked Franco for permitting the erection of this Protestant church and demanded prohibition of evangelical churches and

their propaganda. Another Protestant chapel was pillaged at Granoleras. Here the outrage occurred during the church services; the pastor was compelled to descend from the pulpit and was beaten. In Barcelona, on October 11, a group of fanatics entered a Methodist church and destroyed all the furniture, the pulpit, organ, pews, books, the large pulpit Bible, etc. At Villafranca stones were thrown against the windows of the Protestant church during the services. At Villanueva y Geltru in Catalogna a prayer meeting was interrupted by two small bombs that were hurled into the room. According to *La Luce*, a violent campaign of intolerance is being waged by the cardinal mentioned against all non-Catholics in Spain. Quotations from the public announcements of the cardinal state his conviction that the enemies of the Catholic religion are likewise enemies of Spain and should not be tolerated by the State. In view of such happenings and declarations the vehement protestations of the Roman Catholic clergy in our country, asserting that their Church favors religious liberty, have to be discounted to such a degree that not much of them remains.

A.

Items from Religious News Service.— In ceremonies resplendent with ecclesiastical pageantry, the Most Rev. Patrick O'Boyle was enthroned in Washington, D. C., as the first archbishop of Washington. A Pontifical High Mass in St. Matthew's Cathedral was attended by more than 300 ranking Catholic clergymen, 21 diplomats, and 23 Senators and Representatives as the new archbishop was installed by the Most Rev. Amleto G. Cicognani, apostolic delegate to the United States. Supreme Court Justice Frank Murphy was present in the cathedral as the personal representative of President Truman. Others in attendance included Justices Stanley F. Reed and Wiley B. Rutledge.

The Most Rev. James Mangers, Roman Catholic Vicar Apostolic in Norway, has threatened to institute civil proceedings, if necessary, to prevent the distribution of a newly published book which Catholic authorities have denounced as "a shameless insult" to the Church. Entitled "Jeg Horer Livet Til" (I Belong to Life), the book tells the story of a young man who was converted to the Catholic Church and became a monk, but after some difficulties deserted the cloister. It was written by S. Anker Goli, a Sunday school manager, and published by a Lutheran publishing society in Bergen.

Private institutions are excluded from a vast program of Federal aid to American colleges and universities proposed in Washington, D. C., by the President's Commission on Higher Education. Church schools would, however, be permitted to benefit from a multi-million dollar scholarship and fellowship project recommended by the Commission. The program—calling for federal appropriations to start at \$450,000,000 and reach \$850,000,000 by 1960—would permit doubling the existing enrollments in higher educational institutions.

Church schools and colleges are the "one ray of hope" in our modern educational system, the very Rev. Robert Gibson, dean of the theological seminary at the University of the South, said at Jacksonville, Florida. Such institutions, he continued, are making a "last ditch stand against the disease of secularism. They are a key to the continuance of a nominal degree of Christian education."

The church in Wales (Anglican) has announced it will set up a Council to deal with problems of religious education in the province arising from enactment of the 1944 education act. The Council will include five departments dealing specifically with: (1) children at home and at Sunday school, (2) primary and secondary schools, (3) the Youth Service, (4) adult education, and (5) the University and training colleges.

Conversions to Roman Catholicism have increased in England and Wales for the fourth successive year. According to the latest issue of the Catholic directory published in London there were 10,363 conversions in 1946, an increase of 596 over the previous year. The estimated Catholic population of England and Wales was put at 2,528,200, as against 2,443,600 in 1945.

Porter Routh, denominational statistician, has announced that Southern Baptist churches in 1947 reported more baptisms, enrolled more people in Sunday school, Training Union, Women's Missionary Societies, and Brotherhoods, and gave more money to all causes than any other year in history. Churches reported 285,152 baptisms in 1947 to exceed a previous high of 269,155 as recorded in 1939. However, Routh said, since the membership has grown since 1939 the ratio of membership to baptism is not so favorable. In 1939, one baptism was reported for 18.3 members, while the 1947 ratio was one baptism for each 22 members. Total membership of 26,764 churches co-operating with the Southern Baptist Convention is 6,270,819, a gain of 191,514 (3.1%) over 1946.

180 new churches were established from 1942—1947 by the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern) in the sixteen states comprising the denomination's area. From a charter membership of 8,565 in these new churches, membership increased to 14,783, as of January 1, 1948. During the same period 385 Sunday schools were organized, 233 new church edifices were erected, and 44 educational plants were built. The report issued by Rev. G. A. Nickles, Charleston, S. C., stressed the need for widespread continued expansion and urged that 277 clergymen be recruited to fill vacant pastorates.

Shorter work weeks and weekend holidays are seriously threatening the total Sunday program of the church, Dr. Erwin L. Shaver, director of weekday religious education for the International Council of Religious Education, warned at the Council's annual meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Discussing sociological

factors the church must consider in planning its strategy for Christian education, Dr. Shaver said, "America has struck its tents and is once more on the march. Our people are traveling more and more. Recreation has become big business and will challenge our best planning."

Of the twenty-eight candidates for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the field of Semitics at The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning in Philadelphia, fourteen, or 50%, are Protestant clergymen. The Christian theological seminaries represented in the Dropsie student body are: Princeton Theological Seminary, Westminster Seminary, Wagner Memorial Lutheran Seminary, Graduate School of the Lutheran Seminary [Mt. Airy], Faith Theological Seminary, Philadelphia Divinity School, Evangelical School of Theology, Crozier Seminary, Eastern Baptist Seminary, American Theological Seminary, and Calvin Theological Seminary.

A School for Christian Service, designed for laymen and women who are interested in church work on a full or part-time basis, will be held this summer at Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary at Maywood, Illinois. The school will be conducted for three weeks, beginning July 19. The purpose of the school will be to provide graduate courses in Bible, theology, church history, and functional subjects for lay persons wanting a bachelor's degree. The course is planned especially for student workers, home mission and foreign mission workers, parochial school teachers, and Sunday school leaders.

The decline in diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the Russian satellite states of Eastern Europe is reflected in the 1948 Vatican yearbook. Nine nations which formerly had a full papal nuncio now have an internuncio (who ranks lower than a nuncio), or no Vatican representative at all. Not a single country back of the iron curtain has a full nuncio. The Vatican is represented only by a regent in both Yugoslavia and Romania. Among the countries which now have no Vatican representative are Hungary, Albania, and Poland.

Dr. Forrest L. Knapp, general secretary of the World Council of Christian Education, left New York by plane for a two-month visit to the Far East, where he will work with Christian leaders in Hawaii, the Philippines, China, Japan, and Korea in planning a comprehensive interdenominational program in Christian education for these countries. In the Philippines and China, Dr. Knapp will promote youth programs undertaken by the Philippine Committee on Christian Education and the National Committee for Christian Religious Education in China. In Japan, he will meet with Japanese leaders and missionaries to plan curriculum materials, teacher training, and a national fellowship of Christian youth.

The Rev. Joseph Szabo, of Komaron, West Hungary, has been elected Lutheran bishop of Balassagyarmato succeeding Bishop Desider Kuthy, who resigned recently.

A. W. C. G.