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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Nygren, Lilje, and the Eisenach Meetings. — It will be convenient to discuss these topics under one heading. The last week of May Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, was visited by Professor and Mrs. Anders Nygren of Lund, Sweden. Dr. Nygren is the president of the Lutheran World Federation. His visit was of particular interest because by many he is considered the ablest champion of Lutheranism in the conflict which is caused by the rise and progress of Barthianism. To understand the debates now going on, one must not forget that Karl Barth basically is Reformed in his theology, and on that account opposes genuine Lutheran teaching in a number of points. Dr. Nygren delivered an address in St. Louis in which he spoke on "Revelation and the Scriptures." It was a faith-strengthening address. The most striking thought in it had to do with what the New Testament calls God's revelation. The term, so the speaker pointed out, frequently is understood as designating simply a religious proclamation or announcement. The correlative term "faith" in that case is thought of merely as the assent which is given to the message on religious matters brought by revelation and the Gospel. This amounts to a total misunderstanding of what the New Testament means. Revelation, according to St. Paul, is not something static and simply intellectual, but dynamic. The Gospel is the power of God, Rom. 1:16. Hence it is a serious error to place it into the same category with other statements announcing facts to us, be they ever so true. What Professor Nygren developed is, of course, nothing new; the Lutheran teaching on the means of grace has always stressed that the Holy Spirit is active in and through the Gospel; but under the influence of Modernism many theologians had put this teaching on the shelf. It was refreshing to hear Dr. Nygren emphasize the importance of the study of Luther for the true understanding of the Gospel. That we cannot endorse in its full extent the Lundenian theology of which Dr. Nygren is the chief exponent, is true and to be regretted, but we are happy to see vital aspects of the Christian message stressed in such a forceful way and Father Luther put at the head of the interpreters of Holy Scripture.

On June 1 and 2 *Landesbischof* Hanns Lilje of Hannover, Germany, was a visitor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. In a meeting with the faculty he described the sad economic and social conditions in occupied Germany and the efforts made by the Church to bring the message of the Gospel to the harassed people. His task as *Landesbischof*, so he said, consists at present largely in making the ministers willing and courageous again to preach the Word of God, with the message of Christ at its center. "It is the Word that has to do it," is one of his slogans. A matter of deep concern to him is the question whether Lutheranism will be able to maintain itself as a Church amid the strong efforts that

are being made to deprive Lutheranism of its identity in the new alignments that are being formed.

By the time these paragraphs are placed on the desk of our readers two important meetings will have been held in Eisenach, Germany. On July 6, 7, and 8, at a conference in this historic city, the attempt was to be made to establish a United Lutheran Church in Germany. The Lutheran churches of Germany which were represented at the meeting are those of Bavaria, Hannover, Schaumburg-Lippe, Brunswick, Mecklenburg, Thuringia, and Schleswig-Holstein. We understand that the constitution of this new body had been drawn up and had even been adopted by the various member churches; hence the organizational meeting was probably not confronted with great difficulties. It was predicted that Bishop Meiser of Bavaria would be elected president of the new organization.

From July 9 to 14 Eisenach had a meeting of the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* (EKiD). It is held that at least 125 delegates gathered for this occasion, while the ULCG meeting was attended by between 40 and 50 delegates. At the EKiD conference three denominations were represented, the Lutheran, the Reformed, and the "Unierte." Some people would like to weld these three denominations into one Church. If we understood Bishop Hanns Lilje correctly, he and his group were strongly opposing every tendency of this kind. According to his view the EKiD will serve simply as an agency for joint work in more or less external matters. The outcome of all these deliberations and conferences was eagerly awaited. It is our prayer that genuine Lutheranism, which represents the teaching of the divine Word, will be strengthened in the severe testing which confronts it. A.

[NOTE.—It can now (middle of August) be reported that the Eisenach meeting of the EKiD resulted in a federation, and not in a Church.—A.]

Some More Information on Amsterdam.—In the *Christian Century* of May 26 Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, the general secretary of the Federal Council of Churches, published an important article on various aspects of the approaching organization meeting of the World Council of Churches, from which we take over the following paragraphs.—

The most far-reaching change which is proposed concerns the basis of representation. In the provisional constitution as drafted at Utrecht in 1938, the 450 seats in the Assembly are distributed on a geographical basis. Ninety, for example, go to North America, to be allocated to the member churches in this area in such a way as they may themselves determine. In practice this arrangement works unsatisfactorily, since in several of the areas there is no interdenominational organization, or even conference, through which the specific allocations can be made. Moreover, the principle of geographical representation has been challenged. As early as the Utrecht meeting it was suggested as an alternative that the seats be distributed among the several world-wide confessional

families, such as the Lutheran World Federation and the Baptist World Alliance, leaving it to them to make more detailed allocations to their national members. But this, again, could hardly prove satisfactory, since most of the world-wide confessional bodies are very slight structures designed only for consultation, and some of the churches do not even belong to such bodies.

A simpler procedure than either of these is therefore now recommended by the provisional committee. It proposes an amendment which, if adopted, will provide for the allocation of seats in the Assembly directly to the member churches, "due regard being given to such factors as numerical size, adequate confessional representation and adequate geographical distribution." The allocation will be made by the Central Committee, which is the governing body between meetings of the Assembly. This Central Committee, which will meet at least once a year, consists of not more than ninety members. Under the new plan, it will be appointed by the Assembly, again with due regard to such factors as the numerical size of the churches, adequate confessional representation, and adequate geographical distribution.

One of the main advantages of the new procedure is its flexibility. Instead of designating rigid quotas in the constitution, whether on a geographical or a confessional basis, it permits a restudy of the distribution of seats from time to time as changing circumstances may make advisable. Another merit of the proposed amendment is that it emphasizes the direct relation of each member church to the Assembly without any intervening machinery.

A more incidental amendment proposed by the provisional committee would remove the limit of 450 upon the membership of the Assembly and permit its size to be modified from time to time in the light of experience. At Utrecht it was not anticipated that there would be as many as 130 member churches, which is now the case, and it now appears probable that an Assembly of only 450 representatives will be too small for so great a constituency. The provision for a somewhat larger number of representatives will be likely to result also in the appointment of more lay members, which, it is agreed, is urgently desirable.

Another minor change, likewise in the interest of flexibility, removes the restriction of five years as the period during which members of the Assembly shall serve. This restriction had been made at Utrecht on the assumption that the Assembly would meet at five-year intervals. This time schedule is still held as a general guide, but it is realized that the interval may sometimes prove to be longer or shorter than five years. It is therefore proposed that the term of service of members "shall begin within the year before the Assembly meets, and they shall serve until their successors are appointed."

In addition to these amendments concerning structure, there is one that registers a fresh emphasis on function. This is the proposal to add to the Utrecht definition of objectives the following: "to support the churches in their task of evangelization."

In general, this reflects the growing conviction that since the primary task of every church is evangelistic, the World Council ought to devote much of its effort to stimulating the spirit of evangelism. More specifically, the explicit reference to evangelistic outreach is an expression of the World Council's desire to collaborate fully with the International Missionary Council in furthering the proclamation of the Christian Gospel to all men everywhere and in interpreting its meaning for the whole of man's life, personal and social.

It now seems probable that if this amendment is adopted, a department of evangelism will be created. If so, the five major departments of work of the World Council, as it settles down to its permanent service after the provisional period, are likely to be as follows: (1) a study department continuing the co-operation of Christian thinkers in all lands in exploring great issues confronting all the churches today; (2) a youth department, seeking to develop the vision of the ecumenical Church in each new generation as illustrated by the World Conference of Christian Youth at Oslo in 1947; (3) a department of reconstruction and interchurch aid, devoted to assisting churches in special need and helping refugees and displaced persons; (4) a faith and order department, continuing the process of study and conference exemplified at Lausanne in 1927 and at Edinburgh in 1937; (5) a department of evangelism, as indicated above.

There will probably be three other strategic enterprises which, though not described as "departments," may be expected to have equivalent status. They are likely to be: (1) the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs established jointly by the World Council and the International Missionary Council; (2) the Ecumenical Institute, with its center at Bossey on Lake Geneva, for the training of laymen and laywomen in Christian witness; and (3) the Ecumenical Press Service and the proposed new ecumenical journal.

Property of German Lutheran Missions in Palestine.—In the fall of 1946 Dr. Edwin Moll of the U. L. C. A. took up his residence in Jerusalem, Palestine, to look after the interests of the German Lutheran missions which had been active there up to 1939 and whose property was being administered by the British custodian of the property of alien enemies. Some time ago Dr. Moll returned to the United States for a brief visit to report on the work he has been doing. When he went to Palestine in 1946, it was as the representative of the U. S. A. Committee for the Lutheran World Federation. Early in 1948 he "negotiated an agreement with the British Government by which the National Lutheran Council, as the U. S. A. Committee for the Lutheran World Federation, assumed complete control of German Lutheran Missions in Palestine, involving properties valued at seventeen to twenty million dollars." In a few weeks he intends to return to Jerusalem. Since the withdrawal of the British from Palestine conditions have

changed. Dr. Moll will seek the recovery of mission properties which are now in the hands of the Jews or Arabs. The property in question consists chiefly of the Syrian Orphanage in Jerusalem, often referred to as the Schneller Institution, and its 1200-acre orange grove at Bir-Salem, both held by the Jews, and the Kaiserin Augusta Victoria Foundation on the Mount of Olives, which is in the hands of the Arabs. Since peace has not yet been declared between Germany and its enemies of World War II, and since the British have withdrawn their protecting influence in Palestine, it strikes one that the property of German Missions is, as it were, a football which Jews and Arabs might kick about at will. We hope that Dr. Moll will succeed in his efforts to preserve the property in question for the devoted people who acquired and developed it with an immense expense of energy, money, and devotion. A.

The Hopelessness of Modern Humanism.—Dr. H. T. Kerr, Jr., in *Theology Today* (April, 1948), publishes, under the heading "A Humanist View of Death," an announcement and description of a recently issued brochure, *A Humanist Funeral Service*, by Corliss Lamont. The author proceeds from the premise that "rituals concerned with death are a form of art and should embody the quality of beauty." So, as Dr. Kerr writes, "this ritual is rich in poetry, musical selections, and meditations. The humanist point of view which informs the selections "rejects the idea of personal immortality and interprets death as the final end of the individual conscious personality." This does not exclude some passages from Scripture, such as Phil. 4:8; 1 Cor. 13:1-8, 13; and there are verses from the poets whose own convictions were doubtless quite different from the humanist point of view. But, writes Dr. Kerr: "The impressive thing about this manual is the evident lack of faith and hope which humanism has always prided itself on possessing in great measure. The humanist view of man and the world is full of optimism and promise. In another recent publication of the Beacon Press, *Religious Liberals Reply*, one of the contributors, Jay William Hudson, gives a brief *credo* which most humanists would accept. Among the items listed here are such as the following: 'We believe that the universe is such that righteousness has at least a chance to triumph. . . . We believe that we are free; that, in the last resort, we ourselves are responsible for our lives; that included in the determinism of science is our own self-determination.' The humanist funeral service does its best to include this optimistic note, but where is the hope in the affirmation that 'we accept as inevitable the eventual extinction of human individuals'? The fact of death lays bare a strange inconsistency in humanism, for here there is no hope, and neither poetry nor song fills the void. The author tells us that 'there has long been a widely felt need for a funeral service centering around a non-supernatural, humanist philosophy of existence.' Do those who reject the humanist philosophy of existence and accept a supernatural position also feel a need for this sort of thing? One occasionally meets a minister who is expressly advised by some mem-

ber of the deceased's family to avoid any supernatural allusions, and perhaps under such circumstances help could be had from this collection. But such a minister will surely feel it strange to preface his remarks with such phrases as: 'We think of the words of Socrates . . .'; 'We now give back the body of our friend and say with the poet Shelley . . .'; 'We shall read a sonnet by George Santayana.' Socrates, Shelley, and Santayana may sometimes speak to our needs, but when confronted with death it is the words of a Greater Comforter we need: 'I am the resurrection and the life'; 'Let not your heart be troubled . . .'; 'I go to prepare a place for you.'" It is the Christian minister's privilege and duty to confess the crucified and risen Christ at every burial service. Where he cannot do so, he has no right to officiate. The folly of relinquishing the Christian faith for the vain thing known as humanism appears especially when one compares the Christian burial service with a humanist funeral service. Human reason has no comfort for the grave.

J. T. M.

The Methodist Quadrennial General Conference.—A lengthy report on this meeting, held early in May in Boston, Mass., was written by Harold E. Fey, managing editor of the *Christian Century*, and was published in the May 26 issue of his paper. We cull from it some of the salient facts. The Methodist Church, it must not be forgotten, is the largest Protestant denomination of our country; the Baptists have more adherents, but they are divided into groups which are not united (Northern Baptists, Southern Baptists, etc.). The Methodist Church numbers about nine million members. The Conference always is opened with the so-called episcopal address, that is, a statement, drawn up by the bishops of the Church, in which the great issues that are to engage the attention of the Assembly are discussed. The address this year was a document of 24,000 words and was presented by Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of New York. There were 758 domestic and 92 foreign delegates. The chairmanship of the Assembly falls to one of the bishops, a different one presiding over each session. One half of the delegates are ministers, the other half laymen. The colored race was represented by 52 delegates. That the color line was ignored became evident in another striking way, too; twice the position of chairman was filled by a Negro bishop.

A report on the state of the Church, which was adopted without amendment, spoke of the sinfulness of war. While, generally speaking, Bible Christians could subscribe to the sentiments expressed there, one missed a recognition of the truth that at least in the abstract there is such a thing as a just war which a country may be compelled to wage. The "need of national defense" was mentioned and not questioned; to what extent a person should participate in it was left to the conscience of the individual Christian, who must make the decision "prayerfully before God." Peacetime universal military training was condemned. Whether this action rested entirely on moral and spiritual considerations, or in part on grounds of economic and political expediency, the report

does not say. — A commission was appointed, of which Bishop Baker was made the head, which is to pave the way, if possible, for union with other church bodies. Denominations that are prominently mentioned as bodies with which negotiations will be carried on are the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Evangelical United Brethren. The Assembly expressed willingness to discuss the proposal of the Congregational Christian and Disciple Churches that "Churches which accept the validity of each other's ministries and Sacraments shall unite." — On the race issue important resolutions were passed. Heretofore colored churches in most instances belonged to the "central jurisdiction" of the Church, that is, if our understanding is correct, they held membership in the Methodist Church, but not in the local conference in whose territory they were located. It was voted that Negro churches in the northeast and in the west should join the conferences to which they geographically belong. "Complete equality of accommodations for all races . . . in national and international meetings of the Church" was recommended and adopted, likewise the principle of equality "in church schools and institutions, in political franchise and economic and educational opportunities." The opposition to this course voiced by representatives from the South was defeated. The question arises whether the Assembly here confined itself to what the Scriptures teach or went into fields which lie beyond the jurisdiction of church meetings. The line admittedly is difficult to draw, but it should never be overlooked that the Church as such has no authority to go farther than the Word of God does. — To another item of interest attention may be drawn — to the financial progress which is planned. It was resolved to ask the constituent churches to increase their contributions for all causes by 33 per cent and to give an additional four million dollars a year above apportionments. Instead of lowering the educational standards to be met by candidates for the ministry, it was voted to strengthen the theological seminaries so that they can do more effective work. A serious drain on resources caused by an increase in the Church's direct employees from 839 in 1944 to 1,518 in 1948 will be given careful study. It may be characteristic of the Methodist attitude toward doctrine that the Assembly resolved to advocate the teaching of religious knowledge as a cultural subject in the public schools.

A.

Christ's Passion and Resurrection, at Home and Abroad. — Ernest Gordon, in the *Sunday School Times* (May 8, 1948), points out very strikingly how the festivals of the Passion and resurrection of our Lord were observed in Boston and Bavaria, both showing the unbelief and enthusiasm of our modern age. He writes: "The First Church in Boston fell to Unitarianism when Unitarianism plundered the Congregationalism of Eastern Massachusetts a century and a half ago. On Easter Sunday, 1948, there was a Communion service, and the cup used was one once belonging to Governor John Winthrop, dated 1610, together with other pieces of old Puritan Communion silver. Certainly, the Puritans who organized

the first Boston church would never have loaned their Communion silver to those who denied the efficacy of Christ's blood to cleanse from all sin.

"Another spoil of Unitarianism was the First Parish Church of Dorchester on Meeting House Hill. The special feature of its Easter was 'a rhythmic flower procession by a motion choir of girls, in colorful robes and carrying spring flowers.' So do they reduce Resurrection Day to a spring festival!

"At the Community Church, Unitarian John Haynes Holmes, minister, 'the Easter morning service' was led by Rabbi Brickner of Cleveland, who spoke on 'Moses, Jesus, Karl Marx, and Gandhi — a Comparison of Their Social Teachings in the Light of the World's Present Need to Rebuild the Social Order.'

"The Paulists of New York, who feel their mission is to convert Protestants, have established themselves halfway up Park Street in Boston, and on Good Friday there was broadcast a three-hour service over the Common. The *Boston Herald* wrote of it: 'There was a hush over the area. Taxis and autos seemed quieter as they ascended the hill. The pigeons quit begging. Men and women prayed and listened to the quiet voice of the Rev. John T. McGinn, a Paulist priest from New York.'

"On the steps of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (Episcopal) the hands of a large clock were moved each hour to commemorate a particular episode in the Passion. 'This is a traditional observance in monasteries.'

"In Konnersreuth, in Bavaria, an estimated crowd of 5,000 gathered to see Therese Neumann bleed on Good Friday — among them large numbers of American army men from Munich, Nuremberg, Bayreuth, Regensburg, and Wuerzburg. Therese occupies a little village cottage, and a few minutes after noon the blood began to ooze from wounds in hands and feet, imitating those of Christ. Visitors slowly passed by the bed in which she sat almost upright, occasionally groaning as if in unendurable suffering. These stigmata are reported to appear in about thirty-five Fridays during the year. Therese is a practical nurse, and apart from this and one other phenomenon, leads a normal life." All of which proves that at home and abroad there still is a huge mission field with ever-increasing opportunities to preach the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

J. T. M.

British Theologians to Aid Old Testament Revision. — Eighteen British theologians will work with the American Standard Bible Committee, whose headquarters are at Yale University here, to complete the Revised Standard Version of the Old Testament and joint publication of Revised Standard Versions of the Old and New Testaments.

Prof. Theodore H. Robinson of the University of London will head the British Old Testament Committee. Members include Prof. H. Danby, Christ's Church, Oxford; Prof. G. R. Driver, Oxford; Prof. A. R. Johnson, Cardiff; Prof. F. S. Marsh, Cambridge; Prof. C. R. North, North Wales; Prof. N. W. Porteous, Edin-

burgh; Prof. H. H. Rowley, Manchester; and Prof. D. Winton Thomas, Cambridge.

Heading the New Testament group is Prof. C. H. Dodd of Cambridge University. This committee includes Principal G. S. Duncan, St. Mary's College, Fife; the Rev. Dr. W. F. Howard, Birmingham; Prof. T. W. Mason, King's College, London; Prof. R. V. G. Tasker, London; the Very Rev. S. C. Carpenter, Exeter; and the Rev. C. F. D. Moule, Cambridge.

Dean Luther A. Weigle of the Yale Divinity School, chairman of the American Standard Bible Committee, said the committee has now finished more than three quarters of its work on the Revised Old Testament and expects its completion by 1950. The two Revised Testament Versions are to be bound together and published in 1951.

R. N. S.

Earliest Known Manuscript of Isaiah Discovered. — Discovery in Palestine of the earliest known manuscript of the entire Biblical book of Isaiah from the Old Testament was announced by Professor Millar Burrows of Yale University, Director of the American School of Oriental Research at Jerusalem.

This discovery is of particular significance since its origin is dated about the first century B. C. Other complete texts of Isaiah are known to exist only as recently as the 9th century A. D.

Found in a well-preserved scroll of parchment, the book of the Prophet Isaiah was examined by Dr. John C. Trever, a Fellow of the School, who recognized the similarity of the script to that of the Nash Papyrus — believed by many scholars to be the oldest known copy of any part of the Hebrew Bible.

Three other unpublished ancient Hebrew manuscripts have been brought to light by scholars in the Holy Land. One scroll is part of a commentary on the Book of Habakkuk.

The second appears to be the manual of discipline of a comparatively unknown little sect or monastic order, possibly the Essenes. Both of these are being translated. The third still challenges recognition.

All these ancient scrolls, two in leather and the others in parchment, have been preserved for many centuries in the library of the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark in Jerusalem. Metropolitan Athanasius Yeshue Samuel and Father Butros Sowmy of the Monastery submitted them to the American School of Oriental Research for study and identification.

The American Schools of Oriental Research have branches in Jerusalem and Baghdad.

R. N. S.

The Recent North Dakota Vote. — Through the daily press our readers undoubtedly have been informed on the outcome of the campaign that was waged in North Dakota on the question whether Roman Catholic nuns should be permitted to wear their distinctive religious garb when teaching in the public schools of the State. The citizens of North Dakota decided not to grant nuns the permission in question. It was a somewhat close vote, 93,469 casting

their ballot against granting this permission and 83,038 for it. It was a wise decision that was reached by the voters of the State. We trust that the great majority of those that voted against the permission were actuated not by religious prejudice, but by the desire to keep Church and State separate. In addition, there must have been the consideration in the minds of many of those who voted "No" that Rome is not simply a religious organization, but a political power, and that it will not grant religious freedom to others where it is fully entrenched, a freedom which it itself is very willing to accept in countries where it is in the minority. In Spain, for instance, Protestants at present are much harassed by Roman Catholics. The freedom which they would like to enjoy, that of conducting services in the manner in which it is done in our own country, is withheld from them. They are not permitted to engage in any religious manifestations. The Spanish Law of 1945 says: "No one will be molested for his religious beliefs or in the private practice of his religion." While the unsophisticated reader will assume that this means that Spain grants religious liberty, a careful scrutiny will show that what is granted is merely the right to believe as a person wishes to and to practice his religion in private. The holding of public services is something that is not included in what is here permitted. Protestant churches in Spain are demolished, and the Government furnishes no protection. The hierarchy when appealed to states that according to the Church Law "external manifestations" of adherence to a religion other than that of Roman Catholicism are not allowed. For this reason extreme caution is necessary when the question arises whether Roman Catholicism may be granted special favors.

A.

Sects Multiply in Germany.—What a student of history and an intelligent observer of religious trends could expect to happen in Germany after the total collapse of the country has come to pass. Religious fanatics have become numerous, millennial sects are springing up, and the guileless, simple-hearted people are led astray. A report written in Bremen, Germany, June 19, and printed in the *Christian Century* of July 28 says: "Leaders of established churches in Germany are disturbed by the great increase in the number of religious sects throughout the country. However, they recall that a similar sectarian growth took place after the last war and attribute the present situation to the prevailing economic, political, and spiritual chaos, together with the universal quest for security. Among the new groups, which seem to run into the hundreds, are several imported from the United States. Typical of sectarian psychology, each group claims to be the sole custodian of salvation. The moral and material destruction of Germany provides a vivid backdrop for the sectarian drama, which is apocalyptic in imagery. Some of the sects focus their attention on the next world, while others emphasize obedience to a certain moral code. All methods, including house-to-house canvassing, the use of street posters, mass meetings, and speaking in tongues are employed.

Beyond a doubt the Jehovah's Witnesses are the most active and influential of the growing sects."

Is it surprising? The words of St. Paul (2 Tim. 4:3-4) come to mind: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables." A.

Freethinkers Oppose Released Time in New York.— Writing in the *Christian Century*, Dr. J. Henry Carpenter submits this report on an attack made on the use of school time for religious instruction. "The opening gun has been fired in New York State's battle on the question of released time for religious education as raised by the Supreme Court's decision in the 'Champaign Case.' Joseph Lewis, president of the Freethinkers Society, has entered in the State courts a mandamus proceeding to force the New York City Superintendent of Schools and the State Commissioner of Education to end all religious programs for which children are excused from public school time. Arthur Garfield Hayes is representing the plaintiff. The Greater New York Co-ordinating Committee on Released Time of Jews, Protestants, and Roman Catholics has come into the case by court agreement. Charles H. Tuttle, former United States District Attorney, in co-operation with lawyers representing the Catholic Diocese of New York and the Jewish Education Association has filed a comprehensive brief upholding the State law and the practice in New York City. The case will undoubtedly go through the Court of Appeals and the State Supreme Court before it reaches the United States Supreme Court. Thus a year or more will probably elapse before a final decision is handed down. In the meantime public school and religious officials have already conferred on plans to continue the usual religious education classes on dismissed time." The conditions involved in the New York released-time program undoubtedly are not the same as those which were before the Supreme Court in the Champaign case. The decisions of the courts will be awaited with deep interest. A.

A Briton's View of American Theology.— Writing for the *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, Dr. William Robinson, principal of Overdale College, Birmingham, England, furnishes an interesting article on "The American Scene." Dr. Robinson, who paid our country an extended visit, evidently was an open-eyed observer. He spent most of his time in Fort Worth, Tex., and there became especially acquainted with Reformed Fundamentalism. Europeans, so he says, have been plagued a good deal by weird American sects such as Mormonism, Christian Science, Christadelphianism, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses; and many think that these sects represent American Christianity. It is undoubtedly on account of the activity which the latter display in Europe that such a view has grown up. Among the theologians of America, Europeans give first place to Reinhold Niebuhr. The

religious journals of America have their best representative, according to European judgment, in the *Christian Century*.— Dr. Robinson finds that American Christianity is to a far greater extent the religion of the "middle classes" than European Christianity. He thinks, furthermore, that our churches are rather class-conscious, that is, that wealthy people belong to one church in a city, while the laboring class of the population attends in another church. Besides, he thinks that America in its religion as well as otherwise is very nation-conscious. He felt surprised "at the honor paid to the national flag in churches and in worship." In Europe this intense nationalism apparently does not enter the church services.— Biblical scholarship here in America, according to the judgment of Europeans, is not of a high rank. Dr. Robinson does not agree with the critics in this respect. A few paragraphs of his might here be quoted. The European critics are "also influenced by the fact that in America the churches of any one communion are much more often staffed in their ministry by men of extreme types, either the die-hard Fundamentalist or an extreme Liberal. It is true that in America there is greater divergence in theological seminaries across any one communion in this respect than in England or in Scotland, and that it is more easily possible to find seminaries where Biblical criticism has been resisted (though those from whom they draw their inspiration are thoroughly scholarly men, like Machen or Van Til), and others where the extreme radical criticism of forty years ago reigns supreme in sublime oblivion of the work that has since been done, as sublime oblivion as that of our own Bishop Barnes in his recent book *The Rise of Christianity*. The words 'conservative' and 'liberal' mean much more to the American Christian than they do to the European Christian, and they carry different connotations."

As to acquaintance with theology on the part of the clergy in America, the writer says: "It would be true that in America there is a far larger proportion of working ministers who are wholly ignorant of theology than in Europe." He was amused to see, when he picked up a book written by a Baptist theological professor, that this man vehemently rejected all forms of sacramentalism, while he favored introduction of "high altars bedecked with candelabra and crucifixes." We have to say that what struck him as strange may not be so incongruous after all. The writer of the book in question, it seems, knew how to distinguish between doctrinal truths and things that belong to the adiaphora. Finally, the writer states that the European "notices a lack of any real theology of the Church and of the Holy Spirit." He thinks that America "seems to have experienced nothing like the revolution which has appeared in European Protestant churches, a movement away from nineteenth century individualism to the corporate and church conception of Christianity which characterized classical Protestantism." According to his view "the theologies of Barth, Brunner, and Heim are uncompromisingly Church theologies."

Having mentioned a number of books in which the doctrine of the Church is set forth, books that appeared in England and in Sweden, Dr. Robinson says: "This vital interest in the Church as the divine society, the Israel of God, the body of Christ, which is everywhere present in the European scene, strikes the visitor to America as significantly lacking. He generally puts it down to the more strident individualism of America, to the much more vigorous congregationalism (independency) and parochialism he finds present, and to the fact that the local church is often not unlike, and little other than, a kind of religious club. In those parts of the States which have been longer settled, these features are less apparent, and this makes me wonder if another factor which has contributed to the lack of the serious doctrine of the Church, is not the fact that America has never known any medieval Church." The writer evidently has not had much contact, if any, with Lutheran pastors and congregations in America. If he had visited Lutheran church services and listened to the sermons, he would have observed that the doctrine of the Church is by no means neglected in at least our branch of American Christianity. It may be that the visible Church, outward Christianity, is not spoken of so much in Lutheran churches as is the case in Anglican churches. But the doctrine of the true Christian Apostolic Church is definitely stressed in Lutheran preaching and teaching. However, one is grateful to a visitor for his frank appraisal of religious conditions as he sees them. A.

Greek Orthodox Church to Elect a New Patriarch.—Several months ago Patriarch Maximos resigned. As yet no successor has been elected. It has been proposed that metropolitan Athanagaros of New York be chosen for the position. To be able to serve as patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church with headquarters in Constantinople, the incumbent has to be a Turkish citizen. Such citizenship is now being granted to metropolitan Athanagaros. The Greek clergy are said to be in favor of this churchman, and the Greek Government, too, would welcome his election, because he appears to be a friend of Greece and of Turkey. One observes that political considerations enter into the discussion of the availability of men for this position. A.

The Roman Catholic Church in Colombia.—In an article in the *Christian Century* of May 12, 1948, an American who is principal of the American School for Boys conducted by the Presbyterian Church, Mr. Alvin Schutmatt, discusses "Catholicism in Colombia." He states that the Roman Catholic Church suffered greatly in the recent and much publicized disturbances in Colombia; for instance, numerous churches, convents, and Catholic schools were destroyed, and the palace of the Archbishop of Bogotá and the residence of the Papal Nuncio were "burned to the ground." The reason for this animosity is said to have been the support which the Roman Catholic clergy gave to the Conservative Government. The people had the feeling that "the clergy

is allied with the most reactionary political elements." Mr. Schuttmatt says that on the day the revolution broke out "some members of the clergy engaged in armed warfare." One of the leading newspapers is said to have reported the arrest of more than a hundred priests. "The writer personally saw six priests firing from the cathedral towers." Mr. Schuttmatt adds: "The Archbishop of Bogotá now insists that all these priests were laymen in disguise. That is possible, but not very credible." While the attacks on church institutions are now attributed to Communist elements, most Liberals, in spite of the fact that they are Catholics, and many Conservatives state that the Church brought these disasters upon itself through "too zealous clerical participation in politics." Speaking of the role of the Catholic Church, Mr. Schuttmatt says: "The great majority of Colombians are Catholics. Roman Catholicism has frequently boasted that it is the most important source of cultural unity in Latin America, and has denounced Protestant missions because of their supposed tendency to cause disunity. But the Colombian Catholic Church is in no position to view itself as a source of unity. References to the clergy only call forth cynical comments from Liberals and perhaps a half-hearted defense from a few Conservatives." We are not surprised at these observations. They agree with reports on conditions in Mexico and other southern countries. A.

Sectarianism in Extreme Form.— We cannot forbear quoting this paragraph from the page of Dr. J. A. Dell in the *Lutheran Standard* of May 8, 1948.

"Four bishops of the Peachey Brethren Amish near Lewistown, Pa., recently decided that their members could use electricity for lighting purposes, but not for power. That precipitated a 'Modernist-Fundamentalist' controversy in the group, which includes about a hundred families. Those who are in favor of electricity are the Modernists. The Fundamentalists are moving out of the area in protest. About thirty families and one bishop are included in the protesting group.— Thus a new denomination is born. Henceforth there will, no doubt, be Peachey Brethren Amish, Old Style, and Peachey Brethren Amish, New Style."

This is division-making of the kind that makes the Christian religion ridiculous in the eyes of the world. Undoubtedly the dissenters base their action on the dictates of their conscience. Conscience, of course, has to be followed, but how often one wishes that it were more enlightened! A.

Report Russians Plan New Religious Policy.— Soviet authorities are reported to be planning a new and far-reaching strategy toward the churches.

First inkling of the new policy came after the arrival of a mysterious "political and ideological adviser" from Moscow, to serve as mentor to Marshal V. Sokolovsky, commander in chief of the Russian occupation forces.

Known among high-ranking Russians simply as "Comrade

Sharnov," the real name of Marshal Sokolovsky's adviser remains a secret. His headquarters in Niederschoenhausen are a heavily guarded yellow-painted villa in one of the prohibited areas.

Over-all aim of the revised Russian policy, it was believed here, is to exploit the so-called revolutionary tendencies in Christ's teachings for Soviet propaganda and to use church organizations as a means of influencing the masses.

Comrade Sharnov's first action was to consolidate divergent policies of Marshal Sokolovsky and the NKVD (Soviet secret police) toward the churches.

Another move by Sharnov has been to permit the publication of more new religious books and to authorize an increase in the circulation of religious periodicals. In line with this decision, Sharnov has requested religious publishers to submit estimates of their newsprint needs for the next three months.

Under Sharnov's policy, churches are to be given full freedom of action within the limits of Soviet aims, but a strict secret supervision will be exercised over all religious activities. The same close check will be kept on all church personnel.

The long-range expectation, it is thought, is that the churches will "disintegrate by inner contradiction." Among tactical steps believed planned is the "equalization of the clerical order."

R. N. S.

Unchristian Ideological Groups Reviving in Germany. — Germans are not finding their way back to the churches as easily as was expected right after the war, according to some evidence.

In the Berlin crematory on the Gerichtsstrasse more than half the funeral ceremonies are performed without a priest or pastor. Laymen, who call themselves "seer," "prophet," or "spiritual guide," make the funeral talk.

At one such typical ceremony there was no mention of Jesus Christ, the Bible, or God. The "seer" in his talk stated that though there is no proof of an individual existence after death, the deceased would in a sense continue to live on in his physical atoms, in his children, and in the spiritual impression he made on his friends and relatives.

A large number of unchristian religious or philosophical groups are springing up all over Germany under various names and ideological colorings.

A Berlin group called "The Society for Spiritual Freedom" claims 4,000 dues-paying members and a youth movement of 2,400 members. It is only permitted in the American sector. The Russians did not desire to license it, as they did not want to give the impression that they were favoring anti-clerical movements.

This club sponsors talks on general cultural subjects. Recently there have been talks on Buddhism by the "German Buddhist" Dr. Kurt Schmidt, on Goethe by a university professor, and on astrology by a well-known astrologist.

Since the war 400 small unchristian religious groups called "Free Religious Communities" have formed over the country.

They combine the ethical teachings of many religions and a worship of nature and modern science.

The "German Freethinkers Union," which had two million members before it was banned by the Nazis, is seeking re-admission from the military governments.

Former followers of General Ludendorff and his wife, who advocated a Germanic, "scientific," and strongly anticlerical religion, are seeking contact with various unchristian religious groups.

A frequent element in many of these religious groups are the youth initiation ceremonies or "*Jugendweihe*," which are a substitute for Christian confirmation.

These initiation ceremonies for young people between 14 and 16 years of age are accompanied by songs, recitation of poetry, readings from German philosophical works, and a talk by the "seer" or "guide." There is no mention of Christian teachings.

R. N. S.

Turks Being Urged to Read Judeo-Christian Testaments (R. N. S.).—A growing number of religious thinkers in this country are urging that Moslems read the Old and New Testaments and draw inspiration from them.

This stand is directly opposed to that of orthodox Islam leaders, who maintain that the Bible and the Torah have been corrupted by changes made in their contents and should not be read by faithful Moslems.

At the same time, there is a growing tendency in Turkey to reinterpret the Islam belief in predestination to mean simply that God gave man the power to do good and evil and that man is responsible for the choice he makes.

In line with this movement the head of the government Bureau of Religious Affairs, writing in a leading religious review, referred to a tradition interpreted as meaning Mohammed taught that every hundred years God would send to his people a person or several persons who would renew religion.

This signifies, the government leader explained, that the religion of Islam is, in the most exact meaning of the term, a religion of progress and renewal.

Baptists and Disciples Talking Union.—An article in the *Protestant Voice* of June, 1948, speaks of efforts made to bring the Northern Baptists and the Disciples of Christ together in one body. On account of the historical information contained in the article we reprint it here.—

"Baptists and Disciples have much in common. Whether they have the essentials which may make them one is the question that was explored by a joint committee of Northern Baptists and Disciples of Christ at Cleveland on April 12. It was the second meeting of a Commission on Relations with Disciples of Christ appointed by the Northern Baptist convention last May to 'explore again the possibilities of union.'

"Both Have Committees

"In the past few years the question has become more vocal amongst leaders of both groups. Northern Baptists last year decided to give the matter another look-see. The joint commission, with representative leaders from both bodies, came together on December 12, 1947, in the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church, Cleveland, Ohio. After separate and joint deliberations, they distributed the work of exploration to five sub-committees: Cultivation; Agencies; History and Theology; Convention Structure; and Result of Mergers of Other Christian Bodies. These five committees have given detailed study to their respective problems and their findings were discussed at the joint commission meeting on April 12.

"To many Baptists' surprise, the Disciples of Christ comprise a few more churches and constituent members than are represented in the Northern Baptist Convention. The thought of an amalgamation which might effect a denomination of twice the size, with resultant advantages and economics in the administration of home and foreign missions, Christian education, church extension, publishing, and other activities, is a thrilling one; but every commission member would agree that bigness, however desirable, must not be achieved at the expense of Christian principle.

"Believe in Same Principles

"Each group believes in the fundamental unity of the church of Christ. In each group the local church is completely autonomous. With each group conventions, associations, and other organizations of wider than local scope bear a purely advisory relation to the congregations. With each body the separation of church and state is a cherished principle. Church membership is considered by each to belong to all those who have faith in Christ and seek to do his will, and it has been the historic practice of both to receive into membership only immersed believers.

"Behind both bodies, according to Hillyer H. Straton, chairman of the Baptist commission of fifteen members, stand these cardinal principles: the authority of the Bible; insistence on believer's baptism and a regenerate church membership; and the priesthood of the believer, or what he calls 'democracy in religion.'

"Historical differences in regard to the function and design of baptism have held some Baptists and Disciples at arm's length. The founders of the Disciples have written that 'faith, repentance and baptism are regeneration.' To at least one member of the Baptist commission — who polled a number of Disciple ministers — many of the Disciples are 'sacramentalists.' The joint committee on History and Theology believes that most of the misunderstanding has arisen over the meaning of words; that Disciples who stress 'baptism for the remission of sins' do not regard the institution as a regenerating act, but rather as completing the act of regeneration. Neither Disciples nor Baptists would declare that the unimmersed are necessarily unsaved.

"Disciples Were Baptists

"It will be news to some that the Christians now called Disciples were once part of the Baptist ranks. Thomas Campbell, a Seceder Presbyterian from Ireland, came to America in 1807 and settled in Washington, Pennsylvania, then a frontier town. Disturbed by the disunited, ineffective churches with their dividing creeds, he appealed for 'one God, one Book,' and formed the 'Christian Association of Washington'—with no idea of starting a church or a denomination. They wanted no further division, but unity among the people of God.

"In 1809, their Association a year old, they attempted a union with the Presbyterians and were spurned. Very well, they would have their own church! They became 'The First Church of the Christian Association of Washington.' Twenty-nine members. And a denomination! Thomas Campbell was elected elder; his son, Alexander, licensed to preach. Communion was served each Sunday.

- "Alexander carried the ball. He was well educated. He could think, and speak, and write. And he did. What were the admission requirements of the New Testament Church? Simply belief in Jesus Christ the Messiah, he said, and submission to the institution of baptism—*adult* baptism by *immersion!* In 1812 he sought and received such baptism at the hands of a Baptist elder. His family and his Brush Run congregation followed him into the Baptist fold.

"They joined the Redstone Baptist Association. No longer called 'Campbellites'—they remained in the Baptist fellowship until 1830. Then a break came—not without encouragement from certain Baptist brethren—because of disagreement over church ordinances.

"'Campbellites' again, and 12,000 in number, they were joined in 1832 by Barton W. Stone and 10,000 members of 'The Christian Church,' which name the 'Stonites' had selected at Cane Ridge in 1804.

"The Disciples have come a long way since then—to be the sixth or seventh largest Protestant group in America, with extensive establishments, for home and foreign missions, Christian and theological education, church extension, and publishing.

"Northern Baptists and Disciples of Christ together might become the fourth largest Protestant grouping and conceivably could exert a far greater influence for liberty of soul and the redemption of mankind in a world that is lost and knows it."

A.

Brief Items from Religious News Service**Lutherans in America**

Appointment of the Rev. S. E. Engstrom as a special commissioner to visit Finland on behalf of the Lutheran World Federation has been announced by the United States Administrative Committee of the Federation. Mr. Engstrom, who is executive

director of the Home Missions Board of the Augustana Synod, will leave July 1 for Finland. During a three-month visit there he will confer on the administration of Lutheran World Action relief and advise on new developments in the fields of stewardship, evangelism, and church administration.

Bishop Hans Fuglsang-Damgaard, primate of the Danish Lutheran Church, has accepted an invitation to visit the United States in September. His trip will be co-sponsored by the Danish Lutheran Church in America and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Dr. J. A. Aasgaard, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church [formerly the Norwegian Lutheran Church], reported that membership in the body has grown to 700,650 with the addition of 87,000 the past two years.

Archbishop Erling Eidem, primate of the Swedish State Lutheran Church, who came to the United States to attend the centennial of the Augustana Lutheran Synod at Rock Island, Ill., brought along a number of gifts donated by almost all of Sweden's Lutheran churches. The gifts include a collection of the works of leading Swedish church artists, including Prof. Olle Hjortzberg, Nils Aron Berge, Thor Thurfagerkvist, Mollie Faustman, Tor Horklin, Ture Jerkeman, Ivar Johansson, John Lundquist, and Gunner Torhamn. Special gifts for the Augustana College Chapel include an antependium made by the "Licium," Sweden's renowned textile workshop which specializes in church textiles, and a Holy Communion chalice with paten and wafer case.

Lutherans Abroad

Steps toward a "final and lasting" agreement with the Hungarian government were authorized by the national assembly of the Hungarian Lutheran Church at the meeting in Budapest. Albert Radvanszky, lay president of the church, was empowered to continue negotiations already begun with the Ministries of Cults and Education to regulate Church-State relationships.

Forty Protestant missionaries were flown out of Communist-menaced Laohokow, Central China, in a plane known as the St. Paul, operated by Dr. Daniel Nelson, director of the China relief mission of the Lutheran World Federation. The missionaries, some of whom are Americans, were taken to Hankow.

Dr. Stewart Herman, former official of the World Council of Churches, has been named executive secretary of the newly established Lutheran World Federation Immigration Service. In his new post, Dr. Herman will supervise the resettlement of Lutheran refugees from Europe. His headquarters will be at Geneva, Switzerland. Dr. Herman, who comes from Harrisburg, Pa., served as assistant director of the Department of Reconstruction and Interchurch Aid of the World Council of Churches from 1945 to 1947. Prior to that, he was pastor of the American Church in

Berlin. During the last year of the war he was associated with the Allies' Office of Strategic Service in London.

Lutheran pastors in Czechoslovakia are being forced to join the Communist party, and free evangelism is forbidden, delegates to the twentieth annual convention of the United Lutheran Synod of New York were told in Albany. Dr. Paul C. Empie, executive secretary of the National Lutheran Council, made the report and stated that the number of Lutheran parishes and theological students in Poland has increased in late years and that the spirit of Lutherans "now living behind the iron curtain" remains at a high level.

Other Protestants in America

The convention of the Southern Baptists approved a committee recommendation calling upon all 6,000,000 Southern Baptists to tithe. Official estimates are that this plan, if fully applied, would increase the Church's total income from a present \$132,000,000 a year to \$588,000,000.

A plan of union with the United Presbyterian Church was accepted in Buck Hills Falls, Pennsylvania, by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America for study by its local churches and groups. At the 1949 sessions of the General Synod the plan, with possible revisions, will again come up for discussion. If it is approved, then it will be returned to the local churches for a vote. Meanwhile, the General Synod voted to hold its 1949 meeting at Buck Hill Falls and invited the United Presbyterian Church to hold its sessions next year at the same place. While the two conventions would be held separately, certain joint activities were proposed: the publication of two new hymnals, the expansion of a joint project for the publication of Sunday school literature, and the study of a possible co-operation with the United Presbyterian Church in the establishment of a college in Los Angeles.

The Reformed Church in America will continue its membership in the Federal Council of Churches for the next year "with the avowed purpose of getting the Council to take positions doctrinally more consonant with a Biblical Christianity." The synod took this action at Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania, after four hours of debate on a report prepared by a special committee which recommended by a 5-to-1 vote that the church continue its affiliation.

A World Missionary Aviation Conference was organized in Washington, D. C., at a two-day meeting of church representatives interested in the use of the airplane in advancing the cause of world missions. Delegates from Shanghai, London, Stockholm, Los Angeles, Chicago, Minneapolis, Springfield, Mo., and Winona Lake, Ind., representing missionary flying in China, India, Africa, Mexico, South America, Australia, and Alaska attended the sessions. A tentative constitution was drafted and an interim executive committee was elected. Dr. Daniel Nelson, China relief director for the Lutheran World Federation, was named president,

with the Rev. Noel Perkin of the Assemblies of God as vice-president, and the Rev. Paul C. Hartford of Victory Sky Pilots, Inc., as executive secretary. The purpose of the conference was to share experiences and find ways and means to co-ordinate activities and planning for world-wide co-operation in transporting missionaries internationally, operating missionary aircraft locally, and training missionaries adequately.

A total of \$30,472,267 was contributed by members of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern) during the 1947-48 church year. This amount is an increase of \$4,200,908 over the previous year, according to Dr. E. C. Scott, clerk and treasurer of the assembly who gave the report. He placed per capita giving at \$47.71, an increase of \$5.00 over last year and a \$20 gain over 1943-44. The report set the church membership at 638,650, a gain of 24,949 over the previous year. The net gain in the last five years was 72,797.

Per capita giving for Seventh-Day Adventist Church work at home and abroad during 1947 totaled \$130.21. Contributions from members throughout North America exceeded \$29,700,000, an increase of nearly \$375,000 over the preceding year. Church membership, now 228,000 among 2,750 congregations in the United States and Canada, increased 8,057 during the past year. The denomination's world membership stands at 616,000.

The quadrennial general conference of the Methodist Church, meeting at Boston, voted unanimously that J. Ernest Wilkins, Negro lawyer from St. Louis, should serve on the Judicial Council of the Methodist Church, the supreme court of the Church. The Council is composed of five ministers and four laymen. The action making inclusion of a Negro certain called for representation of all jurisdictions of the Church on the Council. Negro Methodists are grouped in the central jurisdiction.

The Rt. Rev. Angus Dun, Episcopal bishop of Washington, was named president of the Federation of Churches in Washington, D. C., at its 28th annual meeting, held in Constitution Hall. He succeeds Dr. Arthur S. Flemming, prominent Methodist layman and United States Civil Service Commissioner.

Presbyterian clergymen without "proper ministerial employment" will be assigned by their presbyteries "to suitable spheres of labor" within the Church, according to a resolution adopted in Seattle, Washington, by the 160th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. "If any of the men are unwilling to accept such spiritual responsibility in accordance with their ordination vows," the resolution stated, "the presbyteries shall proceed by the regular exercise of their administrative and judicial discipline to take such constitutional steps as appear to be wise to the end that all ministers should either share in the work of the church or be no longer listed as ordained ministers of the church."

"Outstanding progress" in exploring the possibilities of union between the Northern Baptist Convention and the Disciples of Christ was reported to the Baptist body in Milwaukee by one of its commissions. The proposed merger, which would heal a century-old break between the two groups, would unite more than 14,000 churches and 3,000,000 church members in the United States.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern) turned down a proposal to withdraw from the Federal Council of Churches by a vote of 274 to 108 at the eighty-eighth session of the Assembly in Atlanta, Ga. Dr. Frank Brown of Dallas, Texas, led the successful fight for continued membership in the Council. In a two-hour debate he and others defending membership contended the Council was the only agency which presented a common front of Protestantism. Dr. H. B. Dendy of Weaverville, N. C., headed the minority group favoring withdrawal. Members of this group charged the Council was pacifist and anti-business.

Dr. Sanford Fleming, head of the Berkeley (California) Divinity School, was elected president of the Northern Baptist Convention at the denomination's annual sessions in Milwaukee. He succeeds Dr. Edwin H. Dahlberg of Syracuse, New York.

A record-breaking benevolence budget of \$18,960,086 for 1949 was adopted in Seattle, Washington, by the 160th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The church at large was asked to raise \$14,359,886, a million dollars more than it was called upon to supply last year. Women's organizations were asked to furnish \$2,600,000 as compared with \$2,080,000 this year.

Without a dissenting voice the Northern Baptist Convention, in annual session in Milwaukee, adopted a \$7,500,000 unified budget, largest in the history of the Convention. The budget is \$1,400,000 larger than last year's unified budget. A "cost of living" bonus of eight per cent to 10 per cent has been allowed several of the societies and groups to which funds are allocated.

Women will be permitted to become ordained local deacons according to a bill adopted by delegates to the Thirty-Third Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, which met in Kansas City, Kansas. Under the terms of the measure, women will be authorized to administer Communion, perform marriage ceremonies, and bury the dead. Higher ordination is expected to be authorized by a later quadrennium.

Formation of a national Pentecostal association was approved at a meeting in Chicago of twenty-four representatives of major Pentecostal denominations in this country. Delegates set up a temporary steering committee, composed of three representatives from each of the participating denominations, which will meet in Chicago on August 3. At that time the committee will draw up preliminary articles for the proposed association. A constitutional

convention is expected to follow within the year. Among the Pentecostal denominations represented at the meeting were the Church of God, the Assemblies of God, the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Open Bible Standard Churches, the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, Elim Missionary Assemblies, and the International Pentecostal Assemblies.

Clergymen attending the Rhode Island Episcopal Convention in Providence were urged to impress their parishioners with "the gravity of the problems which attend upon mixed marriages." A resolution to this effect pointed to "the fact of the invalidity of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church with respect to such marriages, the significance of the challenge which such teachings constitute to this church, and the position of the church as herein expressed."

The North Carolina Episcopal Diocese meeting at Charlotte, N. C., adopted by a more than two-thirds majority a recommendation that not less than two Negroes, a layman and a minister, always should be members of the diocese's executive council. Dr. Robert J. Johnson of Rocky Mount and Dr. J. W. Black of Charlotte were elected to the two posts.

Miss Margaret Dukes, believed to be the first woman ever licensed to preach by the Methodist Church in South Carolina, was granted a license by the Charleston district.

The fight of a group of Methodist church members to obtain equal rights for ordained women ministers was lost at the denomination's quadrennial General Conference in Boston. Women ministers may officiate at marriages and baptisms, but other activities are limited. Mrs. Howard Le Sourd of Boston offered an amendment limiting the equal rights status to unmarried women or widows, but that was also voted down.

10,000 lay employees of the Methodist Church will benefit by a pension plan approved at the denomination's quadrennial General Conference held in Boston. The plan, which becomes effective June 1, provides that employees of the church's agencies may retire at sixty on pensions provided by church and employee contributions. Employees will give three per cent of their pay, and the church agencies will contribute six per cent.

Methodist missionaries will be educated in Communist ideology and then sent abroad to counteract this ideology with Christianity, according to a plan adopted by the denomination's quadrennial General Conference held in Boston. The sponsor of the plan was Dr. Ralph Diffendorfer of New York, executive secretary of the Church's Division of Foreign Missions. He told the delegates that his department was planning to send 200 highly trained young married couples into every area now threatened by Communist infiltration.

A strategy for evangelical education was mapped at the sixth annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Chicago. It includes programs for elementary and secondary Christian day schools, Sunday schools, Bible institutes, colleges, seminaries, and universities. Dr. James De Forest Murch, editor of *United Evangelical Action*, the Association's official publication, told the sessions that the Supreme Court decision in the Champaign, Ill., case was "a challenge to all Christian Americans to build Christian day schools and guarantee the perpetuation of those principles which have made America great in the past and without which she is doomed to destruction." A. W. C. G.

Other Protestants Abroad

A total of 142 church bodies in 42 countries will be represented at the first assembly of the World Council of Churches, to be held in Amsterdam, Holland, from August 22 to September 5. Churches in Japan, Siam, and Formosa are among the latest to accept membership in the World Council. World Council officials disclosed that Russia is the only major nation still unrepresented by churches in the Council.

Plans are under way to widen the scope of the newly established United Church of Christ in the Philippines. The Rev. Stephen L. Smith, general secretary and administrative officer in Manila, said the new Church would seek a larger fellowship with other denominations and indicated that negotiations were going forward with the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches and the United Evangelical Church of Christ. Negotiations are also under way with the Methodist Church of the Philippines. If the negotiations were successful, the United Church would have a membership of close to 300,000 persons. At present the new Church has a combined membership of nearly 130,000 and includes the United Evangelical Church of the Philippines, composed of Presbyterians and Congregationalists; the Evangelical Church of the Philippines, composed of United Brethren and Ilocono Disciples; and the Philippine Methodist Church, which is the independent Methodist Church in that country as distinguished from the Philippine branch of the Methodist Church.

Church and State leaders attended celebrations in Brussels, Belgium, marking the 70th anniversary of the establishment of Protestant missionary work in the Belgian Congo. Prominent among those present was the Rev. H. Wakelin Coxill, secretary general of the office of Protestant missionaries in the Belgian Congo. The principal address was delivered by C. C. Chesterman of the Baptist Missionary Society, who declared that Belgium "can be proud of the thousands of Negro Protestants in the Congo who are taking part in the great task of spreading civilization and are loyal subjects of the crown."

Bishop Eivind Berggrav of Oslo, primate of the Norwegian State Lutheran Church, presided at opening sessions of the United

Bible Societies' Conference at Dunblane, near Sterling, Scotland. The delegates, representing Bible groups in various parts of the world, voted to admit German and Swiss societies to membership in the organization. Delegates included Dr. Martin Niemoeller, a leader of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland voted at final sessions in Edinburgh to add two women to a special committee previously formed to consider the problem of the remarriage of divorced persons in the Church. The action was taken in response to an objection by the Very Rev. Matthew Stewart, who said it was "regrettable" that while all the suggested members of the committee were men of great eminence, churchwomen were not represented.

Establishment of a United Church in the Philippines was announced in a cablegram received in New York from Manila by the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. The message said the new church has a combined membership of 123,000 Protestants and comprises the Presbyterian, Congregational, United Brethren, Disciples, and Philippine Methodist denominations. This figure is about one third of the total number of Protestants in the islands.

Addressing the second postwar Conference of Protestant Journalists in Goslar, Germany, Dr. Carl Dyrssen, head of the newly formed Association of Protestant Writers and Journalists, declared that Martin Luther was the first real publicist and even today is the outstanding model for Christian journalists. Attended by 150 Protestant writers, editors, and other churchmen, the conference in the British Zone included American, British, French, Swiss, and Danish participants.

Government leaders have approved the draft of a bill for the liquidation of the German Evangelical Church in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, and the confiscation of its properties by the state. The proposed legislation, drawn up by Minister of Education Zdenek Nejedly, calls for distributing the funds and properties of the German church among Czech Protestant churches, chief of which are the Czech Brethren and the Czechoslovak Church. Distribution will be carried out by the Ministries of Education and Interior after the bill is approved by parliament.

Protestant leaders from all parts of Italy gathered at Ferrara for a series of meetings to discuss religious problems "as free men and women." Attending the sessions were Waldensians, Methodists, Baptists, Quakers, Swedenborgians, ex-Catholic priests, and several who described themselves as atheists. Among the chief topics discussed was the situation of former Catholic priests who, under the terms of the Vatican-Italy concordat, are forbidden to teach or occupy any other public post in Italy. It was announced that a meeting would be held at Florence to consider the possibility of obtaining employment for such persons in special fields.

Other Items

The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Founded in 1898 under the leadership of Rabbi H. Pereira Mendes, minister of New York's historic Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue (Congregation Shearith Israel), the Union is composed of orthodox synagogues throughout the United States and Canada. Estimates place the number of orthodox congregations in this country at between 2,500 and 3,500 and the number of persons of orthodox Jewish allegiance at 3,500,000. Each orthodox congregation has its own religious school, in which children are taught the basic tenets of Judaism and are given a knowledge of Jewish history and the Hebrew language. Many communities have a communal school known as the "Talmud Torah." Both types require attendance several afternoons each week as well as on Sunday morning.

An institute on racial and cultural relations was held at Lincoln (Pa.) University from June 28 to July 2. The aim of the institute was to outline a course of action to bring about a non-segregated Church and a non-segregated society. Similar conferences will be held regionally throughout the year and will be directed by the Rev. William H. McConaghy of the division of social education and action of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

A total of 9,310,439 volumes of Scripture were distributed at home and abroad during 1947 by the American Bible Society. The distribution included 785,767 Bibles, 2,220,614 Testaments, and 6,304,058 Portions, published in 167 different languages. The Society also produced 150,000 Japanese Bibles, an undertaking which required the largest amount of paper ever used in publishing a single edition of any Bible or Testament in the history of Bible production. It printed the first edition of the Russian Bible in this country, using the new orthography; exceeded all former years in its distribution of Scriptures to the blind; and brought the total of its publication of German Scriptures since 1941 to 4,902,091, nearly all of which have been donated to the German people.

The Nursery Foundation of St. Louis, composed of a group of Protestants, Jews, and Negroes, opened an interracial nursery school June 1 for children of working mothers. The school will be primarily for Negro children. Mrs. Herbert S. Schiele, president of the foundation, said the school would also promote better interracial relations, since all races and all faiths will be welcome.

Publication of the first book of a 13-volume commentary on the Old Testament by Dr. Solomon Goldman of Chicago was announced by Harper and Brothers. Called *The Book of Books*, the first volume serves as an introduction to the series. Dr. Goldman, who has been rabbi of the Anshe Emet Synagogue in Chicago since 1929, said his work would offer a chapter-by-chapter summary

of the Old Testament and extended excerpts in a new translation, together with annotations and a study of each book's background.

A preliminary survey of war-hit Protestant church buildings in Germany shows that 43 per cent of 14 Land and Province Churches were damaged or destroyed. Compiled by the church statistics office of the Evangelical Church in Germany, the survey covered churches, chapels, prayer halls, parsonages, hospitals, institutions, retreats, schools, and various buildings and offices used for religious purposes. Although not yet completed for the whole of Germany, the survey disclosed that of 22,212 ecclesiastical buildings belonging to 14 Land and Province Churches, 9,614 were damaged or destroyed. The Churches reporting included those in Westphalia, Bavaria, the Rhine Province, Saxony (Land), Hanover (Lutheran), Wurttemberg, Thuringia, Hamburg, Kurhessen-Waldeck, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Lippe, Schaumburg-Lippe, Eutin.

Officials of the Bible Students' Free Tract Society in Minneapolis plan literally to shower Minnesota communities with their message. Paraphrasing Air Force terminology, three self-styled "sky pilots" will sound the cry: "On target! Tracts away!" as they spread the Gospel over Minnesota communities this spring and summer. Karl E. Pelton, district supervisor of the Society, said his organization plans to drop one million Bible tracts before the snow begins to fly again. 150 different titles are included in the million leaflets to be dropped. Many of the tracts are supplied by Good News Publishing Company of Chicago, operated by Clyde Dennis, a former Minneapolis printer. Dennis also is president of the Tract Club of America.

People in more than 30 European and Asiatic countries received over 16,000,000 pounds of relief and reconstruction supplies through Church World Service during the first three months of 1948. The supplies were valued at \$5,500,000. During the three months, about 500 shipments of food, clothing, and medicines were sent. The shipments included 11,000,000 pounds of foodstuffs and 4,000,000 pounds of clothing.

Three prominent German Protestant and Catholic leaders were invited to participate in the congress for a United Europe which was held at the Hague, Holland, May 7-10, under the chairmanship of former British prime minister Churchill. They were Jerome Cardinal Frings, archbishop of Cologne; Dr. Konrad Adenauer, president of the Christian Democratic Union in the British zone of occupation; and the Evangelical bishop Hanns Lilje.

A 50-man lobby is being organized in Baltimore, Maryland, for "active, intense opposition" to three gambling bills up for consideration by a special session of the State legislature. The three bills would (1) permit raffles by fraternal, civic, veterans, religious, and charitable organizations, or by volunteer firemen's group; (2) remove a \$10.00 limit on bingo games in Baltimore city; (3) legalize and license slot machines in Calvert County.

American G. I.'s and civilian personnel in Europe rate religion last in "listener interest," according to surveys made by the American Force network in Germany. As a result, the network has allotted religious type programs 1.7 per cent of its total air time. Other allotments include: popular music, 43 per cent; information and education, 11.6 per cent; classical music, 10 per cent; comedy, 7.5 per cent; variety, 7.5 per cent; news, 7 per cent; western music, 5 per cent; and drama, 2.7 per cent.

More than 5,000,000 children will attend a vacation Bible and religious schools this summer, according to an estimate by Ruth Elizabeth Murphy, director of vacation religious education for the International Council of Religious Education in Chicago.

Christian and Jewish symbols are combined in a stained-glass window dedicated at St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church in Detroit. The Judeo-Christian window was dedicated to the spirit represented by the National Conference of Christians and Jews and the Detroit Round Table of Catholics, Jews, and Protestants.

During 1947 the Seventh-Day Adventists sent 545 missionaries out to 73 different countries and islands. Of these, 262 went from North America. Other workers were sent from Australia, Europe, South Africa, and South America. New appointees during this period numbered 359, the remainder representing missionaries returning from furloughs or extended leaves due to unsettled conditions in mission fields. This group included teachers, doctors, nurses, evangelists, builders, administrators, accountants, and other workers.

