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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

An Important "Evangelical Church in Germany" Meeting.— January 9—13 Bethel in Westphalia, Germany, saw the dignitaries of the EKID (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland) assembled for an important session. The first convention of the body which had been called into existence last summer in Eisenach was to be held, officers had to be elected and the course had to be charted. There were two conflicting views as to the character which the new body should be given. One party, led by Pastor M. Niemoeller, was in favor of making the organization a Church, a denomination with all the functions and activities that belong to a Church in the accepted sense of the term. The other party, led by Bishop Meiser, sponsored the idea that the new body should be regarded and organized as a federation, in which the various churches forming the union would retain their independence and their character as separate churches, so that Lutherans would be and remain Lutherans and the Reformed, Reformed, and the bond connecting them would be a slender one, somewhat like the one that binds a number of denominations together in the Federal Council of Churches in America.

It is very difficult from this distance and as outsiders to obtain an absolutely clear and adequate view of what happened at Bethel. The reports say that Pastor Niemoeller was defeated in his efforts and that Bishop Meiser was successful. Dr. E. Theodore Bachmann, who is at present residing in Germany, states in *The Lutheran* of February 9 that Bishop Dibelius of Berlin was elected president over Dr. Niemoeller, whose present position is that of head of the Church of Hessen-Nassau. When the voting for the vice-presidency ensued, Bishop Lilje and Dr. Niemoeller were the prominent candidates, and Pastor Lilje was elected by a big majority. According to Dr. Bachmann's report, Dr. Niemoeller, whose group he terms as the non-confessional one, had as his supporters people who formerly spearheaded the struggle in Prussia against Hitler, and the so-called theological society which is described as a "radical Barthian organization." There were others who were in favor of electing Niemoeller, namely, people who desired to have EKID established as a Church and not merely as a federation. Most of the Lutheran churches in the various zones, the Russian, the British, and the American, took the opposite view. They did not wish to lose their identity as Lutherans, and hence, we are told, they voted as they did. In his endeavor to interpret the debates that were held in Bethel, Dr. Bachmann says that the question which demands an answer is: Is the EKID a Church or a federation? At the constitutional convention in Eisenach in the summer of 1948 the statement had been adopted "The Evangelical Church in Germany is a federation." This was not to the liking of many people following Dr. Niemoeller, who rather wished to see a grand ecumenical move-

ment started, uniting Lutherans and Reformed in one church body. But Dr. Bachmann says, "The confessional trend is re-asserting itself in Germany as elsewhere." It seems, then, if the reporter's view is correct, that the effort to wipe out the denominational lines was not successful. Dr. Bachmann holds that the organization of Lutherans called "Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Landeskirchen of Bavaria, Hannover, Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, Brunswick, Thuringia, Mecklenburg, Hamburg," etc., won an important victory. It at least, so it seems, averted absorption of the Lutherans in a common Church which would be neither Lutheran nor Reformed. What the discussions will mean for sound confessional Lutheranism is a question that is asked with deep interest by all who love the Lutheran Zion.

Elsewhere in this issue of our journal, mention is made of the organization of the United Ev. Luth. Church of Germany (VELKD), at which Bishop H. Meiser of Bavaria was elected president. Are we here dealing with a Church? In this case one can at least speak of the bond of a common confession. A.

Bishop Aulen's Criticism of Harnack.—If anybody regards Harnack's negative conclusions propounded in his famous *Dogmengeschichte* unanswerable, let him read what Bishop Aulen of Sweden says concerning Harnack's positions. In 1932 the bishop wrote a treatise entitled *Die Dogmengeschichte im Lichte der Lutherforschung*, which appeared as the first volume in *Studien der Lutherakademie*, edited by Carl Stange of Goettingen (published by C. Bertelsmann of Guetersloh). Two students at Yale University now have translated this treatise into English, and their translation is given to the Church in the *Augustana Quarterly*; the October, 1948, issue brings the first two parts.

Our readers will be grateful for a brief report on the section that deals with Harnack. This historian, says the bishop, started out with contradictory principles. His *History of Doctrine*, to begin with, marked the end of a period and still belonged to it, the period of enlightenment. The liberal theology of which Harnack was an exponent was demolished by the religious-historical school, which was far away from the truth itself, but at least showed that Harnack's position lacked a true historical foundation. Another factor which helped to prove Harnack's views wrong was the Luther research of the last decades.

In his well-known book *Das Wesen des Christentums* Harnack indicates that the fundamental thesis for his history of doctrine was the view that the Gospel proclaimed by Jesus chiefly teaches the love of God, the eternal value of the human soul, and brotherly love of one person for the other—a position which essentially had been held by the old and long-ago-deposed Rationalists. But while Harnack ascribed this message to Jesus, he could not help seeing that the Apostles taught another Gospel, that of Christ the Redeemer and salvation by Him. Harnack had to notice that these two gospels were contradictory. Being loathe to admit this, he

began to vacillate and lost himself in ambiguities. He maintained that Christianity unfortunately by and by became Hellenized, and at the same time he praised this Hellenization of the Gospel as proclaimed by the Apostles. What on the one page he deplored, he eulogized on the other and called it an aid to Christianity. In other words, he was confused and did not clearly behold the difference between *agape* and *eros*, to use the terms of Nygren in regard to the Christian and the idealistic (or Greek) doctrines of redemption.

How this error operated to lead Harnack astray can be exemplified by his view of the Christological dogma of the ancient Church. He held that this dogma had been formulated not by Christ, but by the Greek spirit. But he overlooked that this dogma, with its teaching of the incarnation of the Son of God, was the direct antithesis of what the Greek spirit taught about God and what it held as to man's salvation, which it conceived as a movement from man up to God.

Another example one can find in Harnack's view of Luther, whom he regarded as having a dual character, on the one hand modern, on the other firmly clinging to the old "catholic" doctrines, especially in the field of Christology. It is not a very complimentary picture of the Reformer that results. But Harnack was wrong in evaluating Luther's position. The latter had grasped the significance of Christianity, that its chief feature is what it teaches on the unique relationship to God, and that this relationship is brought out in the doctrine of justification by faith. Modern Luther research shows that Harnack did not penetrate fully to Luther's understanding of Christianity—a finding which is not surprising when one considers that Harnack lacked insight into the real nature of the Gospel.

What we have briefly summarized is found in the first part of Bishop Aulen's treatise. The second part deals with the positions of the ancient Church (that is, the Church of the church fathers) and of the Church of the Middle Ages. A.

A Sane View Concerning the Union of Churches.—In the *Lutheran Outlook* for January the editor, Dr. J. A. Dell of the Theological Seminary of Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, writing in an editorial, acquaints his readers with some of the issues discussed in the Town Meeting of the Air of December 7, 1948. It will be recalled, on that occasion a public debate on the union of Christian churches was held in which the speakers were Doctors E. Stanley Jones, Truman Douglass, Walter A. Maier, and Governor L. Youngdahl of Minnesota. Dr. Jones, a missionary of the Methodist Church in India, is chief sponsor of the so-called Federal Union of Churches, advocating that the churches, without giving up their identity, form a union similar to that of the forty-eight States in our Republic; Governor Youngdahl seconded this project. Dr. Douglass, an official of the Congregational Christian

Churches, was in favor of merging the denominations, while Dr. Maier, member of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, on leave of absence and regular speaker on the Lutheran Hour, took the position that according to the Scriptures a God-pleasing union must rest on unity of doctrine and should be striven for by a joint study of the teachings of God's Word. Dr. Dell in his editorial examines in particular the plan proposed by Dr. Jones and finds that it is not very realistic. He concludes his discussion with this paragraph, which agrees with the position of Dr. Maier and voices our own convictions: "For us Lutherans it still seems that attempts to bridge over stark differences by ignoring those differences is the wrong way to go at it. Let us sit down and talk over our differences freely, with our Bibles in our hands, and pray over those differences, and try honestly to get somewhere. Pretending they do not exist will get us nowhere. And pretending that they do not matter is no better. A 'greatest-common-factor' religion would produce a big church maybe, but a mighty weak one. The strength of a church lies not in the number of adherents, but in the intensity of its devotion to its spiritual Foundation. As between one big weak church and a number of smaller strong churches, I would prefer the latter." A.

Continental vs. Anglo-Saxon Theology.— Under this heading the *Christian Century* (February 16, 1949) publishes a "preliminary reply to Reinhold Niebuhr" by Karl Barth, in which the Swiss theologian points out that the primary difference between European and American theology lies in their "divided view of the Bible." Barth writes: "I experienced at Amsterdam the opposition between 'Anglo-Saxon' and 'Continental' theology at a quite different point from that which Niebuhr has raised. After his exposition I certainly might very well have got excited about all the various manifestations of 'Anglo-Saxon' Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism that I encountered there. That, however, did not happen. It was something quite different, apparently quite remote from the other complex of problems that struck me as dividing us. To put it quite simply, it was the different attitude to the Bible, from which we each take our start. That the Bible is, and must remain, the authority of the first rank was agreed, so far as I could see, on all hands. It seemed to me, however, that there was not agreement that the involved and exegetical attention [no doubt, this should read: there was no agreement that involved an exegetical attention] to the Bible as determinative of all theological thinking. I was struck by finding in our Anglo-Saxon friends a remarkable unconcern in this matter. They preferred to theologize on their own account, that is to say, without asking on what biblical grounds one put forward as it appeared to them to strengthen their own view, and without feeling any need to ask whether the words quoted really have in their context the meaning attributed to them (e. g., in Section I whether it was permissible to speak of certain encouraging movements and ad-

vances in the life of the churches as 'signs of the times'); or without regard to other passages in the same biblical writer which might, perhaps, limit or define more precisely the words quoted (e. g., in the Commission of the Work of Women in the Church the quotation of Galatians 3:28 without reference to I Corinthians 11, Ephesians 5, etc.).

"Lack of interest and disregard of biblical context were shown, even when these were of the first importance (e. g., to Romans 9—11 on the Jewish question, about which I had a conversation with an American professor of New Testament, in which I was told that it was a 'race' question in the same sense as the question of the Negro). It seemed to be a quite unfamiliar demand that in the church one must not simply speak in general terms of the 'mind of Jesus,' but must always fundamentally think and argue also from definite biblical texts and contexts, and when one put forward this demand, one had to be prepared to be written off as a 'biblicist' or 'legalist' or 'literalist'—a charge which Niebuhr has repeated once again in *Christianity and Crisis* in the issue of November 15, 1948. In this irresponsible attitude to the Bible, I find the explanation of the fact that I seemed to detect at Amsterdam in the thinking of the 'Anglo-Saxons' the absence of a whole dimension."

The reference of Karl Barth to the "text-context" method for determining ecclesiastical doctrine is all the more remarkable since in his *dogmatics* he himself does not follow the simple Scripture approach of orthodox theologians, but rather regards church dogma as rooted in the corporate experience of the Church. Does Barth's reproof of liberal Anglo-Saxon theology, which completely ignores Scripture as the sole *principium cognoscendi*, imply at least a tacit admission that the *Schriftprinzip* of the orthodox church teachers is fundamentally correct? Reinhold Niebuhr, in his reply to Barth (*Christian Century*, Feb. 23, 1949), readily admits the wide gulf between the two attitudes toward the Bible when he writes: "He [Barth] thinks that the Anglo-Saxon world does not take the authority of the Bible seriously enough, spinning its theologies and theories without reference to biblical texts and their context. We on the other hand charge the Continent with biblical literalism. . . . Continental thought, particularly as influenced by Barth, seeks to establish biblical authority over the mind and conscience of the Christian with as little recourse as possible to any norms of truth or right which may come to us out of the broad sweep of a classical, European or modern cultural history. In Anglo-Saxon thought there is a greater degree of commerce between culture in general and biblical faith." While Barth thus seems to be moving in the direction of orthodoxy, Niebuhr's attitude toward the Bible remains essentially Modernistic. Against Modernism, however, Continental theology can witness effectively only in case it fully acknowledges and employs the Bible as the sole source and rule of faith.

J. T. M.

Nicknames.—Under this heading, Dr. H. Hamann, in the *Australasian Theological Review* of September, 1948, which just now has come to our desk, writes a lengthy and timely editorial in which he emphasizes the deleterious effects of applying nicknames in the realms of politics and statecraft. The topic was occasioned by the frequent and unjust employment of nicknames by Russian Soviet officials to stir up hatred against the opposing democracies. But the western peoples themselves have not kept themselves free from offensive nicknames which in many cases were decidedly unfair. Even the name "Lutheran" has recently been drawn into the reprehensible strategy of fomenting strife. Dr. Hamann writes: "The word 'Lutheran,' we know, was first employed to classify adherents of the Reformation as heretics. In the course of the last war there was a perceptible tendency to make the name Lutheran, though on altogether different grounds, a name to arouse dislike and suspicion." He then quotes from the essay "On Nicknames" by the English essayist and critic William Hazlitt some very fitting statements, as, for example, the following: "Nicknames are the talismans and spells that collect and set in motion all the combustible part of men's passions and prejudices, which have hitherto played so much more successful a game, and done their work so much more effectually than reason, in all the grand concerns and petty details of human life, and do not yet seem tired of the task assigned to them. Nicknames are the convenient, portable tools by which they simplify the process of mischief, and get through their job with the least time and trouble. These worthless, unmeaning, irritating, envenomed words of reproach are the established signs by which the different compartments of society are ticketed, labelled, and marked out for each other's hatred and contempt. . . . A nickname carries the weight of the pride, the indolence, the cowardice, the ignorance, and the ill nature of mankind on its side. . . . 'Give a dog an ill name and hang him,' is a proverb. 'A nickname is the heaviest stone that the devil can throw at a man.' . . . Let a nickname be industriously applied to our dearest friend, and let us know that it is ever so false and malicious, yet it will answer its end; it connects the person's name and idea with an ugly association; you think of them with pain together, or it requires an effort of indignation or magnanimity on your part to disconnect them; it becomes an uneasy subject, a sore point, and you will sooner desert your friend, or join in the conspiracy against him, than be constantly forced to repel charges without truth or meaning, and have your penetration or character called in question by a rascal."

As we read these striking lines, we thought of the theological tensions now existing among many fellow believers who are unable to see eye to eye on moot points of doctrine and Christian practice. Under these circumstances nothing is more convenient and also more pleasing to the flesh than to apply the terms "conservative" and "liberal." Very often the conservative is even styled an "extremist," a "radical," an "ultra-confessional," an "isolationist,"

and the like, while the opponent comes in for such invectives as a "modernist," "Barthian," "collaborationist," and so forth. If, of course, a person proves himself to be a fanatic or a radical or a unionist, he should be dealt with according to the directions of God's Word. But to apply nicknames such as those just mentioned quickly and indiscriminately means not only to offend against the law of Christian love, but also to load down a brother with infamy and derision, and thus widen the gulf already existing. "Give a dog a nickname, and hang him." How true that is! Dr. Hamann begins his editorial with a note of apology for treating the subject in a theological journal. But the article is well placed; for nicknames applied unjustly and lovelessly in spite and hatred "form a dark and sinister group," as he very truly says. "They have an almost infinite capacity for mischief. They are liars, deceivers, assassins. It may be doubted whether any other words in human vocabularies have such great power for evil in the political, social, economic [and we may add, religious], life of man." J. T. M.

Roman Catholic Voices About Amsterdam.—*The Ecumenical Review*, a quarterly published by the World Council of Churches, succeeding *Christendom*, in its second number (Winter, 1949) devotes a number of articles to Amsterdam and its meaning for the Church. Not the least in importance is one reflecting by fitting quotations the Roman Catholic reaction to Amsterdam. Much of the comment is favorable, though the Catholic view of the Church is frankly stressed in many of the periodicals. The *Courrier de Genève* (August 21) remarks: "These Christians, according to the traditional Catholic doctrine, so often recalled by Monseigneur Besson, are part, in an unseen but still a genuine fashion, of the Church, the one Church of Christ. True, this unseen union does not appear to the outward eye, since they think themselves obliged to reject several of the signs by which it manifests itself; it is imperfect. . . . But it is a true and a profound union." *La France Catholique* (September 3) says: "The Holy Office has refused all authorisations. . . . Yet in a very large Catholic church in Paris a mass was said this very Sunday to pray for the grace and the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon the labors of Amsterdam. . . . The Church is not neglecting the doings in Amsterdam, and certainly her theologians will follow with close attention the labors of the Congress. She calls down upon it grace and illumination; she prays that its members may work ever nearer to the truth." In *Unitas* Father Charles Boyer published two articles about Amsterdam. In the first he said: "The infallible Church believes in Papal infallibility. What has been defined by the Councils and by the Popes is sacrosanct. A delegate from the Catholic Church to Amsterdam could only say, 'The universal Church, the Church of Christ you are looking for, does not need to be constituted, it is in existence; it is the Church of Rome, from which your fathers broke away, and which like a mother stands waiting for you!' . . . But does this mean that Catholics regard with indifference the

coming of Amsterdam? On the contrary, they devote to it their most brotherly attention. They are delighted to see non-Catholics taking up the question of union." *L'Alsace* (September 14) writes: "What use is a cheap unity that obscures the essential problems? And unity could not be the work of men; it must be the work of God. Karl Barth reminded the Assembly of this more than once." The Mexican monthly *Christus* has this to say: "If we show ourselves hostile and distrustful, that would be unjust and an assault against the designs of the Holy Spirit, who gives them life. . . . Our attitude must be to unite ourselves with them by invisible bonds of understanding, of mutual hope, and above all of confident prayer. They will wish to know the right road, and we who are already on the right road must procure for them the mercy of finding it." *La Croix*, after quoting Father Boyer's article in *Unitas*, adds this conclusion: "And since all roads lead to Rome, why should that of Amsterdam not put so many Christians 'on their way'? If they in humble prayer beseech the light of Heaven . . . beyond a doubt they will recognize the one true Church of Christ Jesus, and come at the last to join themselves with us in the bonds of a perfect love." These are only a few of the many quotations in the article, but they show that Rome is vitally interested in the World Council of Churches and explain also why this interest exists.

J. T. M.

Fame Not Measured by the Size of the Funeral Procession. In *The Church Builder* (November, 1948), which is issued bi-monthly, the Rev. F. R. Webber directs attention to the fact that the fame of great men is not always to be measured by the size of the funeral procession. He writes: "Two more men have been taken by death from the fast dwindling group of fine architects and craftsmen. They were Mr. Ernest W. Lakeman and Mr. John T. Austin. . . . He [Mr. Lakeman] came to America many years ago, and he became one of the group of high-class stained-glass men of our country. The gorgeous windows in the first bay of St. John the Divine, just inside the entrance of the cathedral, are his. These are the side windows. Many other noted churches contain his work. Mr. Lakeman died at the age of 65 in a hospital in Mount Vernon [New York]. Mr. John T. Austin died on September 17 at the age of 79. In 1889 he worked for the Farrand & Votey Co., successors to Hilborne and Frank Roosevelt, organ builders. In 1893 he became associated with Clugh & Warren, and in 1898 he organized the Austin Organ Co., Hartford, Conn. For fully half a century he built organs of high quality, and he was long recognized as one of the three top men of his calling. It was almost tragic that Mr. Lakeman's funeral was attended by only 14 people. It merely proves that the worth of a man is not to be judged by numbers. The funeral of Sir Wilfred T. Grenfell, the great medical missionary to Labrador, was attended by but a handful, while that of Gipsy Smith, whose perfervid pulpit oratory stirred congregations that numbered as many as 30,000,

was attended by even fewer. The things that these men accomplished speak for them, *and their fame is not to be measured by the size of the funeral procession*" [italics our own]. The paragraph has perhaps little theological value if we take theology in the sense of something intellectual or academic. Nevertheless, since the Lutheran Church has always appreciated the merit of church art, it may be fitting for us to note the passing of the great artists, of whom the editorial speaks, in this theological journal. But there is a special lesson, too, in the final statement of Editor Webber. As we read it, we were made to think of the many small funeral processions which we have witnessed in connection with the burial of aged pastors who for many years had been cut loose from the parishes which they had served and who, having lived in large cities after retiring, were followed to their last resting place by only a sprinkling of friends. Fame can certainly not be measured by the size of funeral processions! The comfort that God's Word gives to His saints lies not in large funeral processions, but in the fact that "their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). J. T. M.

Nebraska Legislative Committee Seeks Church Property Interpretation.—A committee of the Nebraska legislature has recommended a new interpretation of State laws covering methods by which religious groups may acquire, hold, and convey property. The committee listed four types of religious societies for legal purposes: (1) The unincorporated church, parish, congregation, or association which may not recognize some superior church authority. (2) The single church, parish, or congregation which is incorporated as an entity which is legally independent of any superior denominational organization or authority. (3) The single church, parish, or congregation which is incorporated as a part of, and subject to the authority of, some denominational organization having general supervision over it. (4) The synod, conference, diocese, presbytery, or other ecclesiastical court of body which is incorporated and which exercises jurisdiction over any two or more local churches, parishes, or congregations.

"Since churches are organized under the laws of the state, and since disputes over property rights frequently arise," the legislative committee said, "it is sometimes necessary for the courts to inquire into church affairs." Lack of clear understanding of the different types of religious societies was blamed by the committee for many irregularities involving property ownership. Committeemen predicted that if their recommendations were followed, much present confusion over laws affecting religious groups would be avoided.

R. N. S.

Religious Conditions in France.—France has a population of about forty million people. How many of them go to church? This question is discussed in an interesting article appearing in the winter number of *Religion in Life*, a "Christian quarterly." The writer is Rev. Howard Schomer, who is described as a "resident delegate" of the American Congregational churches in the

French mountain village of Chambon-sur-Lignon. The picture which he draws is rather alarming. He states that a least 32 million of the French people are not active church members in any denomination. Most of the people we suppose were baptized, and probably confirmed in the Roman Catholic Church, but they do not show any interest in the services and the work of any particular religious group. But while the great majority of the people do not manifest an interest in religion, they cannot be said to be open opponents of the work the churches are doing. We draw the conclusion that the French people, as far as the majority is concerned, are apathetic or indifferent with respect to religious beliefs. Wherever one travels in France, Pastor Schomer says, one meets statues of saints and shrines; the people have these religious memorials before their eyes constantly, but they are not influenced by them. He lists four main reasons why he thinks French people would rather see God pass out of existence. One is that they are given to heavy drinking, the second refers to the life of sensuality they either lead or would like to lead, the third one can be summarized as a love of money, the fourth is intellectual opposition to the Roman Catholic Church, which all too many people identify with the Christian religion itself.

Submitting statistics, Rev. Schomer states that a certain Roman Catholic estimated that the number of Catholics who are loyal to their Church is not more than seven million at present. The number of live and active Protestants is said to be 700,000. Another writer interested in statistics stated that in France there are not more than three million loyal Catholics. There are 15,000 active priests and 700 active Protestant pastors. There is no doubt that paganism is flourishing in France, which is usually regarded as a Christian country.

The remainder of the article speaks of an approach between Protestants and Catholics, which, however, is very tenuous, and of work in which Calvinistic churches are engaged. A.

"America" (Roman Catholic) Replies to Bishop Oxnam.—To acquaint our readers with the reasoning of the Roman Catholic hierarchy when attacked by the group of Protestants whose chief spokesman is Bishop Oxnam, we reprint a page from *America* of February 12:

"In Washington, D. C., on January 27, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of the Methodist Church delivered himself of one of his characteristic 'blasts' at the Catholic Church in America.

"All these fulminations were stirred up in the Bishop's mind (or imagination) by the debate over the Supreme Court's *McColum* decision of March 8, 1948. The Court declared unconstitutional the practice of letting religious groups hold classes for public-school children on a voluntary basis once a week, on school property and during the regular school day. The Court decided that this practice, going on since 1914, 'breached' the 'wall of separation' between Church and State and hence violated the First

Amendment—although nothing is said therein about 'separation of Church and State.'

"We will summarize Bishop Oxnham's charges and deal with each:

"1) *Protestants believe in the separation of Church and State in America; Catholics do not.*

"A great many Protestants, as well as Catholics, reject the absolute separation of Church and State as being neither Christian nor American. Twenty-four nationally known Protestant bishops, ministers and theologians signed a protest against the McCollum decision, including these five bishops: James C. Baker, president of the Council of Bishops of the Methodist (Oxnham's) Church, Francis J. McConnell, a predecessor of Oxnham in N. Y., and Edward L. Parsons of California, William Scarlett of Missouri and Angus Dun of Washington, D. C., Episcopalians. Ten nationally eminent Protestant theologians, the secretary of the General Council of the Congregationalist Christian Churches and the executive secretary of the American Committee for the World Council of Churches also protested the decision. Many others could be named. When Bishop Oxnham pretends that 'Protestants' are fighting 'Catholics' on this issue he is being less than honest.

"2) *This separation is the 'bastion' of religious liberty.*

"This is not true. Canada and Great Britain give considerable financial help to all sectarian schools. Switzerland lets religious groups run classes in public schools. Other democratic countries have a similar system. It doesn't 'rob' them of 'religious liberty,' does it? Since 1945, our Federal Government has allotted tens of millions of dollars to sectarian colleges for the education of World War II veterans. Have we 'lost' religious liberty since 1945? Only Russia has absolute separation—and it has no religious liberty.

"3) *American culture is at stake in this struggle.*

"Bishop Oxnham means his concept of American culture is at stake. He is fighting to establish by law a form of anti-Catholic bigotry which all Protestant countries have had in the past (see 'Election in Northern Ireland,' p. 503 this issue), including America. We have overcome it, but the Bishop doesn't like the idea of Catholics in the United States getting a fair deal, especially in the field of education.

"4) *The November statement of the American Catholic hierarchy attacking secularism in American life and education is a 'smokescreen behind which the hierarchy forms its forces to secure public funds for the support of parochial schools.'*

"Catholics don't need a 'smokescreen.' When they think they have a just claim to public funds they say so, like all other Americans. We are saying so now in Washington (Am. 1/29, pp. 455 to 457). The Bishop's imagination is getting the better of him.

"5) *The assault on religious liberty stems from Catholic clerics*

(millions of the laity 'must' disagree with the stand of the hierarchy).

"Extremely unlikely. Our laity do not like paying twice for the education of their children, any more than any Americans like to pay double. This is an old game, trying to split the clergy and the laity. But the Bishop has chosen a mighty poor issue on which to do it. Our laity know the score on this one. The cost of sustaining our schools falls entirely on them.

"6) *Our bishops must be following a strategy dictated in a 'foreign capital,' because ' . . . it is inconceivable that the hierarchy would have risked such an ill-conceived attack upon the principle of the separation of Church and State if the decision had been made by men trained in the American tradition of freedom.'*

"Amazing. Where did the twenty-four Protestants mentioned above get their notion of objecting to the McCollum decision — from the Vatican? Where did the Illinois Supreme Court get its ideas, which the Supreme Court reversed? Where did the editor of the *Journal of the American Bar Association* get his legal objections? And Dr. Edward S. Corwin of Princeton? And Justice Reed of the Supreme Court? It just happens that some Catholic priests and laymen know enough American history, political science and law to see that the McCollum decision is full of holes. As Bishop Oxnam seems to be quite innocent of such knowledge he very wisely dodges the historical and legal issues.

"7) *'The Roman Catholic Church is opposed to our system of public education.'*

"A chestnut. Rev. Robert I. Gannon, S. J., in his *After Black Coffee*, and Rev. Allan P. Farrell, S. J. (*Am.* 10/5/46, p. 15), show a proper appreciation of the American public school system. Thousands of Protestants criticize it as we do, on religious grounds, for example, a great number of Protestant teachers in the Religious Education Association.

"8) *Our bishops are trying to foist on America a 'culture alien to the traditions of a free people,' a 'totalitarian' system like that of the Middle Ages.*

"It's very 'old hat' to end up a diatribe on the Catholic Church in America by harking back to the Middle Ages. Catholics don't idealize them, by a long shot. But calling them 'totalitarian' must seem amateurish to historians. Catholics, and Protestants, too, want neither a revival of medievalism, which had not yet developed a mature concept of the State, nor Bishop Oxnam's version of a Protestant-dominated culture."

The writer in *America* is very careful not to state what the attitude of the Pope and the Roman Catholic hierarchy really is toward religious liberty. A.

Nevada Bill Would Make Courts Reconciliation Agency. — A bill introduced in the Nevada assembly at Carson City, Nevada, would require State courts to make strong efforts to effect a reconciliation between couples seeking a divorce.

The measure, in addition to requiring judges to attempt reconciliations by conferences with plaintiff and defendant—either singly or jointly—would also obligate the jurists to read the following statement to the man or woman or both:

“You have asked that in due process of law your marriage be ended. You have asked in effect that surgery be performed on you. Not surgery of the body, but surgery nevertheless. For some it is social or financial surgery. For others it is emotional surgery, and for them there is no anesthetic.

“Perhaps you need this surgery. For those who do, the State of Nevada has laws which are among the most liberal in the nation. However, it is not the intention of this State to grant divorce unless such action is for the good of the individuals concerned. For that reason we presume to address you.

“The old saying, ‘marry in haste and repent at leisure,’ may be turned around and applied to divorce. Many who obtain divorces live to regret it, especially those who make their decisions in haste or anger, or under the compulsion of physical desire.

“Even if you think your marriage was a mistake, remember that a divorce may also be a mistake. A divorce does not erase the effects of a marriage. If you do not believe that, just try to unscramble an egg.

“You are a different person now from the person you were before you married. For one thing, you are older. Let us hope that you are also more mature emotionally. Pleasures and people who appealed to you years ago might quite likely bore you now.

“Most persons who obtain divorces either marry again or wish to. But do not forget that the ‘old gang’ you used to go around with is different now.

“Even if you could get them together again, things would no longer be the same. That is especially true if you have been married a long time. The sweetheart you might have married may not be either willing or able to marry you now.

“If you are a woman, you should be aware of the man who would lure you away from a good home and desert you later. It has happened many times. You may not think it could happen to you, but if he is the sort of man who would court you when you were married to somebody else, how do you know he would not court somebody else when and if he is married to you?

“In spite of all these objections, we recognize that divorce is sometimes necessary. That is what our laws and courts are for. But before you take the final step, may we suggest that you talk your problems over with someone who is especially trained to help you?

“Usually a professional person, who can look at your problems dispassionately, is better able to advise you than one of your friends or relatives who may be emotionally involved through affection for you.

"A psychologist, psychiatrist or psychotherapist who specializes in marriage counselling can sometimes work wonders. There are institutes of marriage relations devoted entirely to solution of problems such as yours.

"The services of any of these people are seldom more, and usually less, than the legal costs of a divorce. Your attorney, if he follows the ethics of his profession, will prefer to earn his fee by effecting a reconciliation rather than a divorce."—RNS.

Tulsa Builds Modernistic Churches to Escape Gothic Influence.—Realizing the trend of the times, the houses of worship in Tulsa, Okla., the nation's oil capital, are rapidly becoming studies in contemporary architecture. To a few it is radical and "unfitting," but to the vast majority of congregations, true dignity and beauty can be found in the 20th-century churches they are building. Gone are vaulted ceilings and drafty floors, along with the hard, wooden pews and stained-glass windows. Believing that houses of God must be constructed and equipped for the needs of all people, Tulsa's churches have substituted air-conditioning, sponge-rubber theater seats, block-glass windows and even audiophone equipment for the hard-of-hearing.

The movement to pull church architecture from the doldrums of the Gothic period was first begun in Tulsa in 1929 with the construction of the nationally famous \$1,500,000 Boston Avenue Methodist Church. The "Oilmen's Church" attracts thousands of tourists yearly and was organized in 1893 by a young circuit-riding preacher, the Rev. E. B. Chenoweth. Arriving on the overland stage from Colorado, the minister moved his family to a dugout home a few miles from "Tulseytown" and then began organizing a congregation that very day. Today, the fabulous cathedral, built 36 years later on the exact location of the Chenoweth dugout, is considered by experts to be one of the most perfect examples of American architecture. Recently, another Tulsa church has attracted considerable attention throughout the State because of the modernity in its design. The Cincinnati Avenue Christian Church is unique among churches in the Southwest in that there are no windows.

Architect Frederick Vance Kershner reports that the edifice will be thoroughly American in character and realistic in its rigid economy. Termed a "simple mass of masonry," the architect explained, "the church has been stripped of luxurious trappings and ornate embellishments once believed to be necessary to proper ecclesiastical design." True to line and honest in the use of its materials, the building creates a calm spiritual atmosphere. It is a large rectangular block of masonry, embraced by a low, one-story wing. Pastor James Rutherford, who organized the church 13 years ago, believes the entire building is "indicative of the strength and solidity of Christianity." Constructed to shut out street noises, the church front is a 25-foot solid white concrete wall. The building has solid glass doors, air-conditioning, a glass

room for mothers with crying babies, and a special section in the auditorium equipped with audiophones for the hard-of-hearing. An unusual feature of the church is a baptistry constructed entirely of glass, with under-water lights to add to the beauty of the baptismal service. Cincinnati Avenue's attendance is over 1,000 each Sunday. The Bible school ranks among the first 20 Christian churches of the nation in attendance, with 550 reporting weekly for instruction.

Another departure from traditional church design can be found in Tulsa's East Side Christian Church. Fast becoming a point of civic pride, the church is a study in brick and glass. The entire plant is built along low, curving lines. The entrance is completely round and is tasteful as well as exceptional in appearance. Termed the largest church dedication in State history, East Side Christian was officially opened Jan. 9, after week-long services brought approximately 10,000 persons from the city and Northeastern Oklahoma to view it. The Rev. Paul McBride announced that the building, which cost more than \$255,000, embodies modern principles found in few churches in this region. A sound-proof broadcasting studio, a projection room for the showing of films and a rare three-dimensional photograph of Christ are but a few of the church's possessions. Construction is scheduled to start soon on a \$100,000 "Chapel of Chimes," to be built adjacent to the church. The chapel will be used for weddings, silent meditation, and funerals.

Modern architecture has not been confined solely to the Methodist and Christian (Disciples) churches of Tulsa. To the amazement of many the city's newest Catholic convent called on California when it decided to build a home for the sisters of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene. Low-slung, rambling, and splashed with color and sunlight, the convent is recognized as the most modern west of the Mississippi River. A two-story, nine-room structure of brick and wood, the convent boasts picture windows, a sun-deck, screened porch and drying yard. The living room is decorated in colors of chartreuse and red, with blond mahogany wood prevailing throughout the house. The convent entrance is flanked by glass bricks. Father James McNamee lives in a rectory similar to the convent in style, design and materials. His living room contains a fireplace that extends across an entire wall. "My opinion is that the Catholic Church is going to move into more modern building trends for the very simple reason that it is about one-half the cost of old-style Gothic cathedrals," Father McNamee said. The rectory, convent, and church at present make up three legs of a future triangular plant. A school will be erected soon to connect the three buildings into one unit. The school will be one-story high. Each classroom will be an individual unit and the walls will be constructed chiefly of glass to allow the greatest possible amount of sunlight to enter the rooms. — *RNS*.

Turkish Government Pledges Liberty of Conscience.—Turkey's new government has issued a statement of policy on the religious issue pledging that it will hold liberty of conscience "sacred." The statement added, however, "we shall not tolerate religion to be made the instrument of politics or private interest." In this connection, the statement indicated the government would submit measures to parliament to prevent religion from becoming such an instrument. "The inviolability of liberty of conscience and thought is a basic principle," the policy statement said. "But if convictions and thoughts take the character of instigation and propaganda forbidden by law, this will be considered as the gravest crime." In another part of the statement the government said it would "remain faithful" to the principle that the teaching of religion is optional. "We shall duly prepare the means and possibilities," it said, "that will allow citizens to make use of their right to give religious instruction to their children." "But one should in no case imagine that we are going to part from the principle of secularism." The new government is headed by Shemsettin Gunaltay, who was named premier by President Ismet Inonu following the resignation of Premier Hasan Saka.

RNS

Lutherans **Brief Items from Religious News Service**

Forty-two new missions were established in the United States last year by eight church bodies participating in the National Lutheran Council. The Division of American Missions revealed that its thirty regional home mission committees had investigated 312 potential mission fields and had assigned 106 fields for occupancy, of which forty-two were actually established. In addition, fifteen fields were cleared for relocation of congregations.

Miss Rachel K. McDowell, who retired on January 1 from her post as religious news editor of the *New York Times*, received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Valparaiso University.

More than 1,146,000 volumes have been sent overseas during the past five years by the Lutheran Book Depository operated by the National Lutheran Council.

The Rev. John Simmons, United Lutheran Church pastor who believes that politics "is everybody's business," has resigned his pulpit to become a candidate for mayor of Minneapolis.

Bishop Hans Meiser of Bavaria was elected "*Leitender Bischof*" of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany at its general synod in Leipzig. The executive leadership of the United Church will consist of five elected members, including Bishop Meiser. Others named were Bishop Hugo Hahn of Land, Saxony, who was also chosen as deputy to the presiding bishop; Dr. Bloetz of Hamburg, chairman of the general synod; Dr. Ido Herntrick, high church councilor of Hamburg; and Dr. Lotz, high church

councilor of Eisenach. Discussing the reorganization of the church, Bishop Meiser asserted that "not all traditions should be sanctioned" and that "reforms are needed." He called for efforts to establish better relations with Lutheran Free Churches and for "honest and straightforward relations with EKID." The general synod opened with a reception at which the newly elected president of EKID, Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin, brought greetings. Other speakers included representatives of the Soviet Military Administration, the Roman Catholic Church, the World Council of Churches, and Christian Democratic Union of Saxony. In response, Bishop Meiser stated that the formal organization of VELKD "fulfills the dream of all Lutheran Christians."

The Inner Mission, a strong Pietistic group within the Danish Lutheran State Church, will boycott the three women ministers ordained last year by Bishop Hans Ollgaard of Odense. Pastor Christian Bartholdy, chairman of the Inner Mission, announced the group's position in an article published in *Inner Mission Tidings*.

Employment in the United States for more than 200 professors who are now living in displaced-persons camps in Europe is being sought under a co-operative project of the National Lutheran Council and the National Lutheran Educational Conference. At the closing session of the Educational Conference's 35th annual convention in New York, its 45 member schools—28 four-year colleges, 12 seminaries, and 5 junior colleges—were urged, if they can, to provide academic positions for the refugees.

Other Protestants in America

Protestant churches of Omaha gained 6 per cent in membership last year. The Rev. W. Bruce Hadley, executive secretary of the Omaha Council of Churches, said that during the same period the city's population had increased by about 2 per cent.

Members of the Glendale Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Glendale, Calif., contributed more than one quarter of a million dollars in tithes and offerings in 1948, with an average per capita donation of \$190. The year's funds reached \$257,478.

Creation of a constitution for the establishment of local "United Protestant Churches" has been announced by the Washington and Northern Idaho Council of Churches. District leaders of seventeen denominations are now engaged in final editing of a charter of faith which is believed to be unique for Protestants.

A general evangelistic campaign in the Sunday schools of the Methodist Church has been planned for the pre-Easter season. The campaign will include home visitation, training classes for church membership, and preparation on the part of Sunday school officers and teachers for bringing pupils into church membership. The drive is part of an effort to win one million church members through the Sunday school by 1952.

A program of religious instruction from grammar school through college, to be given by educators "with large sympathy for the churches" but not by clergymen, was urged in New York at the annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges. Dr. Kenneth I. Brown, president, speaking before 600 college presidents and other educators, denounced "nationalistic secularism" as America's worst enemy and asked that the public schools teach religion as "a part of the American heritage."

Disciples of Christ in the United States and Canada number 1,724,905, a gain over last year of 21,895, according to the 1948 yearbook. At present there are 7,877 Disciples churches in the United States and Canada and 8,157 ministers. Offerings last year totaled \$13,124,288.87, a gain of \$2,747,744.52 over the previous year.

Boston University's proposed new chapel will have windows containing representations of four historic doorways connected with religion. The doorways are those of: Solomon's Temple, Jerusalem; St. Peter's Basilica, Rome; Wittenberg Cathedral, to which Luther nailed his Theses; and City Road Chapel, London, built by John Wesley.

Formation of a Vacation Religious Education Fellowship, through which leaders of vacation church schools of different denominations and areas will exchange ideas and materials, was announced in Columbus, Ohio, by Ruth Elizabeth Murphy of Chicago, director of vacation religious education for the International Council of Religious Education. Coaching conferences and community institutes on a State-wide basis will be held throughout the country this spring to train leaders for the nation's 5,000,000 boys and girls who will attend vacation schools this summer.

Dr. Irving Shaver, director of weekday religious education for the International Council of Religious Education, said in a speech before the council in Columbus, Ohio, that divorcing religion from education may lead to the development of a "religion of the state increasingly official, plainly sectarian, and a dangerous competitor of religion as interpreted and propagated by the churches," and warned that separation of religion from education might result in the creation of an "all competent" state that would ultimately destroy individual rights and freedoms.

Addressing the International Council of Religious Education in Columbus, Ohio, Dr. Elbert M. Conover, director of the Interdenominational Bureau of Church Architecture, stated that one of the biggest booms in Protestant church building is now in progress in the United States. A total of \$65,000,000 in church building is under way and construction amounting to \$700,000,000 is scheduled to start in the near future.

A total of 2,932,682 Bibles, New Testaments, and Scripture portions were distributed in China during 1948. During the coming year the American Bible Society faces a need in China for 2,080,000 Scripture volumes.

EKiD

Dr. Martin Niemoeller has agreed to serve as representative from the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKiD) to the World Council of Churches, and he has also accepted the post of director of EKiD's foreign office.

Delegates to the general synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKiD) applauded addresses calling upon the church to be "a living witness of its own teachings" in order to enlist the sympathy and support of the people. A leading lay delegate, Socialist Mayor Metzger of Darmstadt, declared that "the churches made many mistakes during the proletarian movement of the past one hundred years," thus giving rise to "an anti-religious attitude among workers, based on the belief that the churches were living in a ghetto of well-fed bourgeois self-complacency." Pastor Eugen Gerstenmaier, chairman of *Hilfswerk*, called attention to "the terrible increase of egotism and debauchery," which he said, prevails among Western Zone Germans and which "foreigners regard with helpless astonishment."

Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin was elected chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKiD). He succeeds Bishop Theophil Wurm of Wuerttemberg. The EKiD was formed at Treysa shortly after the war and comprises Lutheran, Reformed, and United Churches in Germany.

Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin said that he would work toward making the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKiD) a more influential factor in the nation's life. "Bishop Wurm's greatest achievement," Bishop Dibelius said, "was to lead the church out of a narrow privacy into active participation in public life. My intention is to strengthen this tendency, and use the EKiD as an instrument to exert influence in political, social, and public affairs generally."

Roman Catholics

More than 240 new missionaries have been assigned to foreign mission territories by the Society of the Divine Word during the last three and one half years. According to general headquarters of the Roman Catholic missionary order in Rome, the missionaries were sent to replace losses in personnel caused by the war, especially in New Guinea and the Dutch East Indies.

Osservatore Romano, official Vatican newspaper, denounced the newly formed Christian Progressive Movement in Italy as a Communist attempt to "weaken Italian Catholicism." The move-

ment, which includes the Christian Social Party, the Christian Peace Movement, the Movement of Independent Catholics, and smaller groups, claims to seek freedom of conscience, tolerance for all creeds, and radical reforms for the attainment of justice and charity.

According to 1948 figures there are about 396 Catholic publications with a circulation of 13,495,580. Included in the list are weekly diocesan newspapers, several daily papers, national circulation magazines for special groups and organizations, magazines of individual religious orders, mission publications, and some non-diocesan weeklies.

The Roman Catholic population of England and Wales has increased by 120,000 from 1946 to 1947, according to the 1949 Catholic directory. The estimated total Catholic population of England and Wales is given as 2,000,648.

Archbishop J. Francis A. McIntyre of Los Angeles has begun a campaign to raise \$3,500,000 for the construction of fifteen new Roman Catholic elementary and high schools in his archdiocese. Archbishop McIntyre hopes the money will be raised by March 5.

Others

Dr. Frantisek Linhart, newly appointed dean of the John Hus Theological Faculty of Charles University in Prague, is a Communist as well as a member of the Church of the Czech Brethren. In his inaugural address, Dr. Linhart, a party member since November, 1947, asserted that the teachings of Christ were in accord with the materialistic desire for better social conditions and that Marxists are not at odds with the Church over fundamental precepts.

A group of twenty-seven Japanese war criminals who recently sailed from Shanghai for Tokyo were baptized as Christians shortly before they left. Among them were ten former high-ranking officers in the Imperial Army.

A \$50,000 mosque, under construction since July, 1947, is nearing completion in Sacramento, Calif. The mosque, which will accommodate more than 1,000 persons, is being built by a number of Sacramento Valley residents who came to the United States from Pakistan.

Major philanthropic agencies in this country will seek contributions amounting to \$2,633,926,057 during 1949.

