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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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Theological Observer

Loss of the Lutheran Plane "St. Paul."—It was with a great deal of pleasure and pride that many Scandinavian Lutherans in the United States thought of a plane which had been furnished by them and was operated by their missionaries in China. It was a twin-engine ship and rendered a good deal of service. We are informed that when the evacuation of missionaries from certain areas became necessary last fall, this plane proved very valuable. Now comes the news that on Feb. 10, when the weather was bad, this plane crashed at Kweiyang. Fortunately no one was injured; the plane, however, is wrecked. It served the cause of missions for two and a half years. A.

Unwarranted Doctrinal Hospitality.—With some amazement we read an article in the *Christian Century* written by Professor Albert E. Suthers, professor of Religion at Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio, in which an act of hospitality on the part of a Methodist pastor and his church is questioned. The hospitality was accorded to a Christian Science lecturer. Since his own organization was not represented in the midwest town with which the article is concerned, he evidently requested that he be permitted to deliver his talk in the Methodist church, and this request was granted. Professor Suthers wonders how such a thing could be permitted. While he at first was willing to look upon the hospitality of the Methodist church as evincing a spirit of broad tolerance, upon second thought he said to himself that, since Christian Science stands for the very opposite of what the Christian religion teaches, it certainly was very improper that a Christian church should be placed at the disposal of this lecturer. We confess that we read the remarks of Professor Suthers with a smile. Is not this the very position that the conservative Lutherans always stood for and on account of which they have been criticized most severely and called narrow-minded and bigoted? And here the *Christian Century*, a magazine noted for its espousal of union endeavors and for its wide sympathies, carries an article condemning a policy which permits a Christian congregation to place its house of worship at the service of a lecturer who presents teachings inimical to the Christian faith. It is very true that Professor Suthers would not wish to have a church of the Methodist persuasion turn down the request, let us say, of a Presbyterian lecturer to use its auditorium; he would insist that he is protesting against the giving of aid to a Christian Science propagandist, not to spokesmen of evangelical communions. But is he, after all, not sanctioning a principle for which conservative Lutherans stand? Error must not be espoused. The difference between Professor Suthers and us is not one of kind, but of degree. There are certain errors whose proclamation in Christian churches he thinks should not be permitted. We go a step farther and say that errors

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in general should be excluded from Christian houses of worship. We are here dealing with a question of consistency. If Professor Suthers were more consistent, he would arrive at the same position as conservative Lutherans. He very properly complains about confusion in the ranks of Protestants. There is no doubt that he himself sees that the indifference concerning doctrine which prevails is largely responsible for the chaotic situation in Protestantism. It seems to us that those people who oppose this indifference in doctrine and are consistent in their attitude should not be chided, but be given the thanks of intelligent Christian observers. A.

Barth and Rome. — Karl Barth is a valiant soldier; he is carrying on warfare on several fronts. The papers report that recently he measured swords with a Roman Catholic, a French Jesuit, who complained that at Amsterdam Barth had spoken words "which deeply wounded the Catholic heart, words of which one can only say that they were not Christian." Barth, so his critic states, had expressed disappointment over the refusal of Roman Catholics to repudiate the Pope. In replying to this critic Barth said among other things, "What interest can your Church have in our ecumenical efforts except as it thinks that they offer a possibility that, after all, it can get us to Rome? You say that you and countless other Roman Catholics followed the Amsterdam Conference with your prayers. What could you pray for? I cannot examine the hearts of others, but even so, I know that a sincere Roman Christian, a priest and a member of an order, could pray only for the realization of this possibility or for some advance towards its realization. So you could not regret and bewail the fact that your Church was not represented at Amsterdam . . . Rome would not be Rome if it had sent us a representative, to say nothing of a cardinal. From your point of view—I am sure I am not telling you anything new—this was no cause for lament. On the contrary, from your point of view it was something to be approved with heart and tongue—and doubtless that is what you did. You suggest that we should lament what you yourself cannot lament, and could not lament without being disobedient to your Church. Permit us, Reverendissime, to be as sure of our position as you are of yours. On our side we could not lament the absence of your Church from Amsterdam because your Church, in consequence of what you yourself call her refusal to compromise, has shut herself off from the common search after unity in Jesus Christ which is the purpose of the ecumenical movement. At Amsterdam many a Church was represented which has a keen consciousness of its own reason for being, and I am glad to belong to such a Church myself. But none of these many Churches at Amsterdam confronted the others with the claim that it was the only salvation-bringing and infallible Church—that is, that in its own existence it had 'answered' the question which engaged our common concern. We face each other realistically as 'denominations.' This basic prin-

principle of our meeting and of our efforts must necessarily have been violated if representatives of your Church had been present—supposing that the principle itself had not been impossible from your point of view. You could not have sat down beside us; you could only have taken your place on some throne (visible or invisible) high above our heads. Well, there is no room among the starving for the rich, among the hungry for the sated, among the wandering for the man who already has sat down comfortably at his goal. To ask us to take seriously your unconditional claim to superiority and to yearn for your presence—to ask us to do both these things, and simultaneously—is asking too much! No, your co-operation at Amsterdam could only have meant that you thought you could induce us in some way or other to turn back to that 'only possible way.' At Amsterdam we sought after the kingdom and the task of God. But you could only have given us to understand that this meant we had to return to the human kingdom and the human task of your Church. We did not deal in that fashion either with the Lord of the Church or with each other. And therefore the fact that you were not in Amsterdam was not a matter of regret to us, but a good thing, clearly discernible as God's will. You could only have disturbed and hindered us in what, in obedience to our faith, we purposed there. Your absence saved us from scandal and temptation. This is what I thought I ought to state clearly at Amsterdam, in view of certain fundamental notions entertained by certain befuddled and uninstructed minds, of which there was no lack there either. Put yourself on our side for a moment! You have sufficient sagacity to admit that it is just as necessary for us to state our position as for Pius XII, and for you, to state your position. If we reach mutual understanding concerning these issues in all calmness and sobriety, then no harm has been done to the cause of which I spoke at the beginning [i. e., church unity], but it has been advanced. Why should it not be of benefit to us to realize anew, prompted by Amsterdam, that the struggle in which we are engaged continues to be a little more serious than it sometimes seems to be in certain enthusiastic moments? If there is any hope in this struggle, for you as for me, it can only consist in the hope of victory for the truth. But we must have the courage to see each other in the position where we really take our stand, because it is there that we must stand."

We are indebted to the *Christian Century* of April 6 for this English version of Barth's reply to the Roman Catholic priest in question, Father Jean Danielou. The editors obtained Barth's article in French and German papers. We ourselves have seen excerpts of it in the Italian paper of the Waldensians *La Luce*, published in Rome. It seems, then, that Barth's rejoinder is given wide circulation on the European continent. One must be grateful to him for resolutely refusing to be caught and held in the net of maudlin sentimentality.

A.

The Cleveland Conference. — In the first part of March a much-publicized meeting was held in Cleveland which constituted the Third National Study Conference of the Churches and World Order. From the point of view of the number and character of the people attending, it was a formidable gathering. 35 denominations were represented and about 400 prominent church men had come. The great task was to study the Atlantic Pact which is now before the country and which the Senate is supposed to debate and, if it finds it acceptable, to approve. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Department of International Justice and Good Will of the Federal Council of Churches. The chairman was the Rt. Rev. William Scarlett, Protestant Episcopal bishop of St. Louis. On the program appeared names that one sees frequently, John Foster Dulles, Walter M. Horton, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Bishop Oxnham. What was the result of the meeting? Did anything tangible and worth while emanate from it? As we read the account in the *Christian Century* submitted by its managing editor Harold E. Fey, we get the impression that the message which was issued as a result of the deliberations was merely a collection of common-places, of very obvious truths about the course that a Christian nation should pursue in its relation to other nations. The *Christian Century* in an editorial says of the outcome of the discussions, "Their actions in the conference and the statements with which they concluded and what they had to say on the floor were in most cases cautious and equivocal, secularistic and confused. The conference itself was groping, baffled, and herd-minded. If this is the best the churches can do, it is to be hoped that the Third National Conference will be the last." The analysis of the *Christian Century* is interesting. Speaking of the purposes of the conference it says, "These purposes apparently were 1) to prevent the conference from going on record in opposition to the Atlantic Pact; 2) to get the conference to endorse regionalism as the now necessary principle of organization in international affairs; 3) to set the stage for a Protestant-Roman Catholic alliance in opposition to Communism; and 4) generally to place the stamp of church approval on the bi-partisan foreign policy of our Government." The *Christian Century* adds, "Whether intended or not, these aims were achieved."

Is the barren result surprising? Men who have been given great prominence in Christian denominations gathered here to deliberate on matters that largely belong to the sphere of statesmanship and diplomacy. Should the Atlantic Pact be endorsed or not? The Bible has nothing to say on that question. Hence these Christian leaders could not base themselves on our divine Source Book in deciding this question. They could, of course, look at the general principles that are laid down in the Scriptures and then state what in their opinion, in the light of these principles, the course of our Government and nation should be. Did these men possess superior political, diplomatic insights so that they could

consider themselves particularly qualified for a scrutiny of the intricate issues involved? Very few of them, we are sure, would be able to qualify as experts in statesmanship and diplomacy. The whole proceeding strikes one as headed toward the cloud land of arrogance and presumption.

Let us see plainly what should be said concerning such a venture. That Christian people gather and discuss the questions that confront every government and every nation, and that they, knowing the principles laid down by God in His holy Word on the contacts between individuals and nations, should be eager to look at these principles jointly and apply them to the problems of the hour, is certainly not wrong. In fact, under our system of government, every citizen being himself a part of the government, such a course should be commended. But every proceeding of this nature should be carefully distinguished from the work which the Church as such has to do. Its province is not politics, statesmanship, diplomacy, treaties, trade agreements, international compacts of various natures. Its task is the preaching of the Gospel of salvation proclaimed by Jesus Himself and His Apostles and handed down to us in the holy Scriptures. "Preach the Gospel to every creature" — that's the marching orders we have. A.

Denying the Lord of Glory. — Under this heading the *Calvin Forum* (April, 1949) writes: "In the matter of preaching, worship, and church activities there can be no fellowship between those who honor the Word of God and the Christ of the Scriptures, and those who in word or deed repudiate that Word and deny the Christ of God. It would seem that this standpoint is simple to live up to and to apply to conditions of our day. Surely, for the Bible-believing Christian this means that he cannot co-operate with any modernist church or group of churches in worship or prayer or promotion of mission work. How anyone who is in earnest about the testimony of the Church before the world and over against apostate churches can vacillate on this point is hard to understand. Yet precisely that is being done even by members and leaders of some churches whose creed and testimony is clear and strong. Is it because some people live by emotion rather than by conviction that they fall for the blandishments of modernist churches and their leaders to join hands with them in religious and missionary projects?"

"An especially flagrant form of violation of this simple principle we witness almost every year in communities where orthodox and liberal churches are found together. Liberal churches of many such cities join hands to observe Good Friday in a three-hour service with the usual number of seven speakers — each assigned a word of the cross and forthwith they proceed to invite an orthodox minister or two to participate in such a service. This is entirely in harmony with the strategy of modernism, with the tactics of 'winning' the orthodox and of breaking down the wall which separates those who profess and those who do not profess

the divine Christ of the Scriptures. But it is beyond comprehension how ministers who glory in maintaining the Gospel of salvation according to the Scriptures can fall for the gag and seat themselves on the same platform with men who deny the very essence of the Gospel of Calvary. The claim that this offers them an opportunity to preach the true Gospel and that they thus bear testimony to the true Christ of Calvary is so specious that it is hard to see how thinking men can utter it without blushing. Does anyone believe that joining in a worship service in which the real significance of Calvary and the death of our Savior is to be the object of preaching and meditation—that joining in fellowship, preaching, and prayer in one and the same such service with those of whom it is known that they deny the very Lord who died on Calvary, can be pleasing to the Lord? The orthodox and the liberal preacher do not preach the same Lord. To the liberal preacher, Calvary is at best the place where our noble teacher died a martyr's death. Can one have any fellowship in preaching and meditating upon the Lord of Glory and His mediatorial work of atonement on Calvary with such people? Yet in some of the finest communities this very thing is being done and is being defended by men of unimpeachable orthodoxy. Those who fall for these invitations from the liberal camp are called broad-minded. I wonder what the Lord Jesus Christ would call them." While the writer does not use the term "unionism," he, nevertheless, witnesses against a gross form of unionism which, alas, is all too prevalent in many churches of our country.

J. T. M.

Doors Not Yet Closed in China.—Under this heading, the *Moody Monthly* (April, 1949) reports the following: "In the face of discouraging reports from China, Christian leaders say that the doors of this country are not yet closed to Christianity. Reasons, according to Andrew Gih of the "Evangelize China Fellowship" in Shanghai, are: 1. God has begun a good work there and will not close the door. 2. The country is so large that many vast areas will of necessity be left free for mission work. 3. In order to gain the good will of the people, the Communists are not—at least not for the moment—as intolerant of Christianity as might be expected. Encouraging words also come from the American Bible Society, which reports wide distribution of the Scriptures in China during 1946. In a year of civil war and the accompanying problems of inflation, transportation, hunger, and housing, 2,932,682 Bibles and portions of Scripture were placed in Chinese hands by the American Bible Society alone. Other encouragement is from the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. Although the situation is changing from week to week, a recent report from this organization said that the overwhelming majority of missionaries in China expect to remain in spite of Communist victories. After the Reds launched their offensive, some groups, including the China Inland Mission, Congregational-Christian, Baptist, Reformed, United Church of Canada, and the Free Methodist, increased mis-

sonary personnel. Meanwhile, faithful Christians all over the world are praying for the work in this area." The report reflects the hopeful, courageous attitude of those who are devoted to the cause of Christian mission work. In this spirit of faith lies its victory.

J. T. M.

The Witness of the Manuscripts. — The *Moody Monthly* (April, 1949), in discussing the recent discovery in Palestine of the oldest Bible manuscripts yet unearthed, most important of which is a scroll of the Book of Isaiah dating from about 100 B. C., adds a few comments which to the Bible student are of great importance. We read: "Although there are numerous minor differences between this scroll and the text used by scholars today, few are significant in meaning. Dr. Burrows says: "The remarkable fact is that there is nothing which can be called a major addition or omission comparable to the additions and omissions found in the Septuagint for example. There is no important dislocation or disarrangement of the text.' Sometimes when words or whole lines were omitted by the copyists, they were later inserted in another hand between lines or in the margin. Thus the Isaiah scroll stands as another testimony to the accuracy of the established text which is based on manuscripts copied more than a thousand years after the newly discovered scrolls were written. The Isaiah manuscript is also valuable to scholars who wish to know more about the Hebrew language. Other scrolls found at the same time include a commentary on the Book of Habakkuk, a sectarian document which might well be a book of discipline for the sect that lived in the wilderness of Judea near the Dead Sea, and a scroll that has not been unrolled, since it is in a bad state of preservation. Although the others are written in Hebrew, this one is apparently in Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke. . . . The Syrians carried the scrolls to a place of safety outside Palestine." The important sentence in the comment is that "the Isaiah scroll stands as another testimony to the accuracy of the established text copied more than a thousand years after the newly discovered scrolls were written." That proves that God has so carefully guarded His Book that the Holy Scriptures which we now have are His inerrant and reliable Word. About the way in which the scrolls were discovered the periodical says: "Bedouins (wandering Arabs) found the scrolls in a cave near the northwest end of the Dead Sea. They had been preserved in jars, which had been wrapped in yards of cloth and covered with pitch. The Bedouins took them to the Moslem sheik in Bethlehem, who suggested they see the Syrians. The Syrians bought them in St. Mark's Orthodox Convent in Jerusalem. No one knew of their significance. Finally, in February, 1948, a priest of the convent called the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem to say he had come upon some scrolls in the library about which their catalog had no information. The director of the school, Dr. Millar Burrows, was out of town at the time; but Dr. John C. Trever, acting director, examined the scrolls, copied

a few lines for study and set to work. He soon had the lines translated: 'I am inquired of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.' Recognizing these lines from Isaiah 65:1, he went back to the original manuscript and found the entire Isaiah scroll complete except for a few small breaks." Wonderful indeed are the ways of divine Providence!

J. T. M.

Legislatures Weigh Proposals to Curb Juvenile Delinquency.

—New York: Prominent among issues of church interest in current state legislative sessions throughout the country are proposals seeking to curb juvenile delinquency and provide more effective procedures for the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders.

A survey discloses widespread introduction of bills providing for the establishment of new state agencies and courts to handle juvenile delinquents; more stringent treatment of parents of delinquents; improved recreational facilities for juveniles and other measures to cope with the problem.

Creation of a Youth Conservation Board and an Advisory Committee on Youth Conservation was proposed by a bill introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature. The bill asked a \$500,000 appropriation to launch the program.

A bill introduced in the Nevada legislature would appropriate \$13,600 for creation and operation of a State Youth Council with a state director to serve as executive secretary. The director would be charged with conducting investigations of juvenile matters ordered by the council or other juvenile authorities.

Also pending in the Nevada legislature is a bill to create juvenile divisions of district courts and to establish procedures to be followed by courts handling criminal actions involving persons 18 years old or younger. It provides for court action in such cases, except capital offenses involving defendants 16 or older, to be conducted informally and privately.

An interim study group submitted recommendations to the New Hampshire legislature which would: create a Youth Service Commission; set up a survey team to help local communities fight delinquency; and create an advisory committee to help focus public attention on the needs of youth.

Establishment of a state-wide system of domestic relations courts was suggested to the Tennessee legislature by an interim study group. The proposed court would be given exclusive jurisdiction over cases involving custody or support of children under 16, criminal prosecutions involving abandonment and failure to provide for minors, contributing to delinquency, all cases involving truancy and child labor laws, and all cases pertaining to juvenile delinquency.

Florida's legislature, which convenes in April, will consider a recommendation by juvenile court judges for enactment of legislation to make it unlawful for any juvenile under 17 to be

confined in any city or county jail, or to be detained in any police detective bureau. The judges have made a number of other recommendations for changed handling of juvenile offenders.

A series of bills to overhaul the state's juvenile code was introduced in the Kansas legislature as a result of an interim study. The measures included proposals for the creation of juvenile courts in counties of more than 90,000 population, with the juvenile judge to act as referee on child custody in divorce suits; raising the juvenile age from 16 to 18 years; psychiatric study of the child before placement for adoption, and a tightening of child labor laws.

Gov. Earl Warren asked the California legislature to provide additional facilities for the State Youth Authority to avoid a "deplorable and demoralizing situation" in which hundreds of juvenile delinquents will be held in county jails and detention homes because the state has insufficient establishments to handle them.

Provision of additional special detention facilities for juvenile offenders also was recommended in Minnesota by Gov. Luther Youngdahl.

A bill introduced in the Wisconsin legislature would grant state aid of 50 per cent of the cost of community-operated youth recreation facilities, to a maximum of \$3,000 per facility.

Fines up to \$500 could be imposed on parents for failing to exercise reasonable diligence to prevent a child from becoming morally delinquent, under a bill introduced in the Texas legislature.

Legislation creating broad prosecutory powers in dealing with problems of juvenile delinquency has been proposed in Vermont.

An Oregon bill would make parents liable for their delinquent children, providing a maximum fine of \$200 and 100 days in jail for any person who causes a child to become delinquent, as well as for any parent who does not care properly for his delinquent children.

Legislation proposed in North Carolina would empower juvenile courts to bring into court and punish parents or other adults responsible for juvenile delinquency.

Additional study of possible legislative means of curbing juvenile delinquency and providing more effective methods of rehabilitating juvenile offenders has been proposed in a number of states.

RNS

"Outside the Roman Catholic Church There Is No Salvation."— There is a storm in the Roman Catholic teapot in Boston, Mass. In that city is located a Jesuit institution called Boston College. Recently four lay instructors were dismissed because they said that the institution in its religious teaching is unfaithful to the Roman Catholic doctrine that there is no salvation outside the Church, that is, the Roman Catholic Church. According to the newspaper account, the four lay teachers do not take an isolated stand. They have the backing of Father Feeney, the St. Benedict's Center at

Cambridge, Mass., and a quarterly which has the name *From the Housetops*. This Rev. Feeney, who likewise is a Jesuit, has been "silenced" by Archbishop Richard J. Cushing of Boston for defending the lay teachers mentioned in their complaint.

What is involved? The lay teachers and Father Feeney say that Boston College is putting a liberal construction on the Roman Catholic doctrine that there is no salvation outside of the Church. All parties to the dispute agree that the doctrine just stated is correct. The lay teachers and Father Feeney maintain that if you are not a member of the Roman Catholic Church there must be at least found the explicit desire in you to join the Catholic Church if you are to be saved. The Jesuits say that not an explicit desire to join the Catholic Church is required, but that the implicit desire is sufficient. It will be seen that here is an opportunity for making fine distinctions. What is the difference between an explicit and an implicit desire? To us it seems that what the Roman Catholic theologians have in mind in making this distinction is that, on the one hand, you can think of people who explicitly or expressly state that they would like to join the Roman Catholic Church; and, on the other hand, you can think of people who desire to belong to the true Christian Church, but being ignorant or prejudiced, have never stated that they would like to become members of the Roman Catholic Church. The Jesuits say that the latter desire is sufficient if membership in the Church cannot be obtained. The lay teachers and Father Feeney evidently are concerned to preserve the doctrine *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* in its full severity. The Jesuits, however, and other Roman Catholic theologians who agree with them have provided a door which can be swung aside when the accusation of coldhearted bigotry is voiced. We suppose that much depends on the localities where the Roman Catholic doctrine in question is proclaimed. Where Rome is in power, this teaching is maintained in all its terrifying aspects; but where Rome is not in power and people are intelligent and given to independence of judgment, the door is pointed to which Roman Catholic theology can open when the charge of fanaticism is raised and pressed.

A.

Arab Suffering in Palestine.—According to the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* the Archbishop of York addressed the House of Lord's on the woeful fate that has overtaken a large part of the Arab population in Palestine. As reported in this paper, he stated that the number of refugees is 800,000. This is really a staggering figure when one considers that the total Arab population of Palestine about January 1, 1947, was computed as 1,200,000. If the Archbishop's figures are correct, two thirds of the Arabs who formerly lived in Palestine have been deprived of their homes. When the United Nations recently voted 23 million dollars for relief, the number of refugees was put at 500,000. The British government, it might be added, voted one million pounds subsidy for these people. In *The Lutheran* for April 20 some more interesting facts

are submitted. We are told that the suffering in Jerusalem is intense on account of lack of food; nine people are said to have died of starvation. The figure for the United Nations fund for relief of suffering is given as 32 million. Roman Catholics have stated that they sent one million in cash and a half million in food and clothing for the sufferers. Dr. Edwin Moll, who mourns the death of his faithful wife, will soon return to Jerusalem to guard the Lutheran interests and to help in the administration of relief. Incidentally we note that the authorities of Israeli have issued an order that on all Jewish male children coming into Palestine that have not been circumcised, this rite will have to be performed. The papers state, however, that liberal Jews have raised a strong protest against this provision.

A.

Several State Legislatures Liberalize Divorce Laws.— Bills to both strengthen and liberalize divorce laws were introduced in many state legislatures throughout the country this year, but enactments thus far have been mostly on the liberal side, a survey reveals.

A state constitutional amendment permitting the granting of divorces on four grounds was ratified by the South Carolina legislature. Under its 1895 constitution, South Carolina had long been the only state in the nation in which a divorce could not be obtained for any reason. The new amendment, stipulating that divorces shall be granted for adultery, desertion, physical cruelty, and habitual drunkenness, was approved by the electorate last fall but required subsequent legislative ratification.

In Idaho, the time required for insanity as grounds in a divorce case was reduced by the legislature from six years to three. Wyoming's legislature reduced to 60 days the time of residence required for divorce when either the husband or wife is "incurably" insane. Approved by the Maryland legislature was a bill making imprisonment for a felony grounds for absolute divorce if the accused was sentenced to at least three years. A new law in Washington state will permit a final divorce within three months instead of at least seven. Another new Washington law, however, sets up a family court to attempt to effect reconciliations and head off divorces, especially where minor children are involved. Adultery remains the only ground for divorce in New York state, where the legislature rejected strong pressure to broaden the grounds for divorce. The New York legislature also killed a bill proposing the establishment of a commission to study operation of the state's divorce law. Proposals for change in the New York law followed disclosures of widespread collusion in connection with divorce cases in New York County under the state's present stringent law.

Colorado's House of Representatives defeated a bill proposing to make three years' continuous separation additional grounds for divorce. Rejected by the Delaware Senate was a bill to amend the state divorce law to make a decree nisi absolute in three months, instead of a year as at present. Several bills aimed at

"quickie" divorces were introduced in the Nevada legislature, but none were enacted. Featuring the unsuccessfully proposed legislation were measures aimed at providing efforts at conciliation before the granting of divorces. Killed in the Montana legislature was a resolution urging the enactment of a national uniform divorce law.

Proposed changes in divorce laws were still pending at this writing in many states. A bill in the Tennessee legislature would make "incurable" insanity a ground for divorce, and also would permit wives and husbands to testify against each other in divorce cases. Mental illness would be made grounds for divorce under a bill introduced in the Wisconsin legislature. Creation of a division of domestic relations in the probate courts and appointment of a board of probate judges to try for conciliation before a divorce and reconciliation after divorce were proposed in Massachusetts. All uncontested divorce actions would come under the proposed new division of domestic relations. A bill introduced in the Oregon legislature would not require remarriage for reconciled couples who wanted to make up after a divorce. The bill would provide that a judge who granted a divorce decree could set it aside on written application by both parties, providing neither party had remarried a third party in the interim. Several bills dealing with divorce on the grounds of insanity were introduced in California. One would strike out a legal provision on proof of the confinement of the insane spouse in a state mental institution, merely providing the person must have been adjudged insane for at least three years by proper authorities in California or some other state. A number of proposed divorce law changes were introduced in the North Carolina legislature. One proposed provision to reduce from 10 years to five the number of years an insane spouse must be confined to a mental institution before insanity can be used as a divorce ground was killed in committee. Gov. Frank J. Lausche suggested the enactment of Ohio legislation increasing from six weeks to six months the waiting period before divorces can be granted. Another Ohio bill would reduce from 10 to three the number of grounds upon which a divorce may be granted. Several divorce law changes were proposed in Rhode Island, including one which would increase from six months to a year the waiting period before the guilty party in a divorce may remarry.

RNS

States Weigh Bills for Stricter Marriage Regulations.—Proposals for changes in state marriage laws, most of them for more stringent requirements, have been widely introduced in state legislatures throughout the country this year, a survey discloses, but comparatively few such bills have been enacted thus far. Georgia has a new law requiring premarital examinations for venereal disease, but the Georgia lawmakers rejected another bill calling for a five-day waiting period between the application for and issuance of marriage licenses. The new premarital examination act requires that anybody getting married in Georgia after the effective date of

the act (six months from the time of the governor's signature) will have to present a doctor's certificate that he or she does not have syphilis. Georgia is the 45th state to approve legislation requiring health certificates for marriage. New Jersey's legislature enacted a bill restoring to municipal court jurists the right to perform marriages. Passed by the Tennessee legislature was a bill prohibiting any person under 18 years of age from performing a marriage ceremony in the state. A bill to raise from three days to five the waiting period between marriage license application and issuance was rejected by the South Dakota legislature. Unsuccessful efforts were made in New Mexico to obtain passage of bills to establish a three-day waiting period before marriages and requiring health certificates to obtain a license, while a premarital health test bill also was turned down by the Nevada legislature.

The performance of marriage ceremonies by child ministers would be outlawed by two California bills, both of which provide that the clergyman must be at least 21 years of age. Under another California bill, marriage license applicants would have to undergo cross-examination by the county clerk as to any claims, previous marriages and the like. The clerk, if in doubt, could demand sworn statements, divorce decree records, birth certificates, etc. Another California bill would permit the issuance of licenses for marriages of white persons to Negroes, Mongolians or members of the Malay race, now forbidden by state law. Also before the California legislature is a bill under which premarital physical examinations would have to be given through laboratories approved by the State Department of Public Health.

Bills introduced in the Texas legislature would stipulate a three-day wait before issuance of marriage licenses and would require both parties to present laboratory certificates showing each to be free of social disease before being granted a marriage license. A bill to tighten marriage license laws in Connecticut calls for a notarized affidavit of consent from parents when minors seek to be married. Proponents of the bill said that many times these certificates have later been shown to be forged. The bill also would limit the effective time of a marriage certificate to 60 days. Part of the point to a certificate is the health examination of prospective couples and the longer a certificate remains in force after the examination has been made, the more likely the information is to become outdated, the bill's proponents said.

Pending in South Carolina is a bill providing for a waiting period of three days before the issuance of a marriage license and requiring the filing of a certificate by both parties to the marriage that they have been examined by a physician and found free of venereal disease. Legislation to outlaw common-law marriages has been proposed in Oklahoma. An Ohio bill would abolish common-law marriages and extend from five to 30 days the waiting time between applications for and issuance of marriage licenses. Introduced in the Michigan legislature was a bill to outlaw "lonely hearts" clubs. It would ban publications printing or listing matri-

monial opportunities and would class them as obscene literature. Alabama's legislature, which convenes in May, is expected to receive a bill aimed at outlawing child marriages. The proposed legislation would require both parties to a proposed marriage to appear personally before the judge of probate. Present Alabama laws require neither to appear in person to apply for a license.

RNS

Home Missions Congress Planned in January.— A Home Missions Congress will be held in Columbus, Ohio, next January, according to plans being drawn up in New York by the Home Missions Council of North America. First of its kind in 20 years, the projected congress will have for its theme "Home Missions for a Christian World." Its scope will include agricultural migrants, American Indians, Negroes, and Southern sharecroppers. In announcing plans for the meeting, to be held January 24—27, the Council stated that Protestant leaders of the 23 denominations affiliated with it had issued a "statement of purpose," outlining the need for such a conference.

Addressed to 1,000 top church and mission leaders, the statement called upon mission forces to utilize the congress as a means for launching an attack on "the economic despair and spiritual futility" of modern life. Describing the postwar period as a time of opportunity, if home mission groups properly coordinate their efforts and chart a realistic course of Christian action, the statement said: "The intent is to develop a sound strategy of home missions for the next decade, and to launch a great forward movement for the fuller Christianization of America." A highlight of the conference will be a mass meeting where outstanding public figures will speak on human rights issues. Preparatory to the congress, it was announced, Protestant leaders will undertake special area surveys, including the Church's relation to cut-over timber lands, cotton areas of the South, the Rocky Mountain area, and the Great Plains. Another survey will be made of typical American cities to determine the Church's relation to minority groups and new housing developments, along with population increases and industrial expansion.

RNS

Brief Items from *Religious News Service*

At Home (incl. of Canada)

The Rev. David A. MacLennan has resigned his charge at Timothy Eaton Memorial Church in Toronto to become professor of Preaching and Pastoral Work at Yale Divinity School.

The Yukon Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., comprising churches and missions in the interior of Alaska, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in Fairbanks on March 24—27.

An original copy of the prayer book of the Church of England is on display at the Huntington Library in Pasadena, California, in honor of the 400th anniversary of its publication. It was considered

one of the important steps in the Reformation movement, and was the first book of prayer to substitute the English language for Latin. The book was abolished after the death of King Edward VI, restored by Queen Elizabeth, and again suppressed in 1645 for fifteen years.

Archbishop Richard J. Cushing of Boston blessed the cornerstone of the First Cistercian Convent of the Holy Cross in the United States at Wrentham, Massachusetts. The convent is scheduled to open in the fall, when twenty nuns will arrive from St. Mary's Abbey, Glencairn, County Waterford, Ireland. About half of the sisters expected from Ireland will actually be American women who went abroad to enter the Order because there was no foundation of the Cistercian Order of nuns in this country.

The United States ranks sixth in the resettlement of displaced persons, according to Dr. Clarence Krumbholz of New York, head of the Division of Welfare of the National Lutheran Council. Speaking before presidents of the thirty-two synods of the United Lutheran Church in America in Buck Hill Falls, Pa., Dr. Krumbholz said figures prepared by the National Refugee Organization showed that 80,000 refugees have found homes in the British Isles, 74,000 in Palestine, 50,000 in Canada, 24,000 in France, 21,702 in Belgium and 21,689 in the United States.

A Christian high school, sponsored by twenty Protestant churches, will open in Spokane, Washington, next fall. J. Wright Baylor, superintendent of Kahlotus, Washington, schools, will direct the school, according to the Rev. Clate Risley, president of the Inland Empire Association of Evangelicals.

At the annual dinner of the Jewish Publication Society of America, it was announced that the Society will publish a new Hebrew-English Bible soon.

By a vote of 13 to 12, the Montreal Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Canada asked the General Assembly "to take steps to make it plain" that the church "is not at the present time considering organic union with any other denomination." Closeness of the vote was due to the division over the necessity of such a statement this year. However, all who rose to oppose passage of the motion expressed their agreement with the principal statement. Dr. W. Stanford Reid, chairman of the Committee on Evangelism and Social Action, which drew up the resolution, contended that it was necessary for these reasons: 1) "Insidious rumors are being spread throughout Canada that the Presbyterian Church in Canada is moving toward organic union with other churches"; 2) events in the Maritimes — including the withdrawal of Westminster Church, North Sydney, N. S., and its minister, Dr. Alexander Murray, from the church, and statements by Dr. Murray that the church is on its way toward union; 3) the speech of Bishop Stephen Neil, an associate secretary of the World Council of

Churches, in Montreal on January 25th, in which he declared that Christians of the world must pool their resources immediately if the anti-Christian forces of Communism, anti-Westernism, and materialism are to be overcome.

Dr. H. Paul Douglas, of New York, director of the Committee for Co-operative Field Research of the Federal Council of Churches and the Home Missions Council, recently made a study of the Sunday school enrollment in Pittsburgh, Pa. His report covering a 17-year period showed a "spectacular and alarming drop." On summarizing the study Dr. Douglas said, "The most important immediate recommendation of the report is that Greater Pittsburgh Protestantism set up a permanent research agency, and that the present findings be vigorously followed up by administrative decisions and incorporated in the on-going life of the co-operating churches through the agency of the Council of Churches of Christ in Allegheny County. The Pittsburgh survey constitutes a highly important contribution to a new nation-wide study of city and suburban churches which will culminate in a national Convocation on the Urban Church in early 1950."

Florida's first negro priest—a convert to Catholicism—has been ordained a member of the Society of the Divine Word at Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and will return to Miami shortly for assignment.

The New York State Senate passed a bill legalizing football, basketball, and soccer on Sundays after 2:00 P. M. The measure amends the state's historic Sabbath Law, which, in general, prohibits any activities that cause "serious interruptions on the repose and religious liberty of the community." The only sports legal on Sundays had been baseball and bowling.

Abroad

A meeting of the National Bible Society of Scotland, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Netherlands Bible Society with leaders of the German Bible Society took place at Bunde, Germany, April 4—7.

A technicolor film of the life of Pope Boniface XIII, the proclaimer of the first Holy Year in 1300, is in production in Rome. It is being financed with funds provided by Swiss and German Catholics.

Aberdeen University in Scotland has announced it will confer an honorary Doctorate of Divinity on Mrs. Kathleen Bliss, editor of the *Christian News Letter* published in London. Formerly a member of the London Missionary Society's India staff, Mrs. Bliss is prominently identified with the ecumenical movement.

Dr. Heinz Brunotte, Hanover lawyer, has been elected director of the chancellery, or headquarters, of the United Evangelical

Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD). VELKD headquarters will be established at Hanover in the British Occupation Zone.

For the first time since its opening in 1925, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem has awarded Doctor of Philosophy degrees to two non-Jews. Winners of the doctorate were the Rev. Jean Bauchet, a Carmelite monk stationed in Jerusalem, and Martin Smith, an American theology graduate who was awarded a scholarship to the Hebrew University after completing post-graduate studies at Harvard University. Father Bauchet's Ph. D. thesis dealt with the Semitic languages, while Smith's thesis was devoted to parallels between the Gospels and Tannaitic literature.

Dr. Ivan Reok, 54-year-old physician and member of Parliament, was installed as Lay President, or General Inspector, of the Lutheran Church in Hungary at ceremonies in Budapest. Two high-ranking government leaders—Prime Minister Istvan Dobi and Minister of Cults Julius Ortutay—attended the ceremonies in Central Deak Square Lutheran Church when Dr. Reok swore upon the Bible to "uphold and guard" the liberty of the Lutheran Church. "The main principle of Lutheran Church polity," Dr. Reok declared, "is to keep church and worldly affairs separate. The sole, vital question that concerns us in Hungary is whether the church possesses unhampered the right to proclaim God's Word from the pulpit and to administer the sacraments. The whole Protestant world should hear our affirmative answer to that question." [The reality of religious freedom in Hungary is widely questioned. Ed.]

The Finnish Mission Society has assigned ten new missionaries to its territories. Part of the State Lutheran Church, the Society maintains eighty-five missionaries in Africa, China, and Palestine.

Plans are being promoted in Budapest for the creation of a Hungarian National Bible Society which will take over the work formerly done by agencies of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The Hungarian Reformed Church is expected to assume responsibility for the new society until other Protestant Churches join to make it an interdenominational group.

Plans for a federation of Protestant churches in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia will be discussed by church leaders in the congress in Zlin, Moravia, near the end of April. Listed among religious bodies expected to become affiliated with the federation are the Czech Brethren, the Polish Evangelical, the Slovak Lutheran, and the Slovak Reformed churches. Among the principal supporters of the plan is Dr. Joseph Hromadka, of the John Hus Theological Faculty in Prague.

A joint theological seminary for Romania's three historic Protestant Churches—the Reformed, Lutheran, and Unitarian, was formally opened in Cluj, capital of Transylvania, former Hungarian

province which is now Romania. The ceremonies were presided over by the Rev. Albert Maksay, rector of the faculty. Others present were Reformed bishop John Vasarhelyi, Unitarian bishop Alexis Kiss, bishop Frederic Muller of the Saxonian Lutheran Church, and the Greek Orthodox bishop of Cluj. Establishment of a joint seminary was made compulsory by the Romanian government. The seminary will give women equal rights with men in regard to receiving ministerial diplomas.

The Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID) embraces 27 affiliated Churches, with a total membership of 39,833,434, according to statistics released by church authorities in Berlin. A breakdown of EKID's constituency shows 13 Lutheran Land, or provincial, Churches, with 20,304,111 members; 12 "United" Churches, with 19,113,049 members; and 2 "Reformed" Churches, with 416,274 adherents. The Soviet Occupation Zone has 3 Lutheran and 5 United Churches, with a total of 17,408,932 members, equal to 43.7% of EKID's strength. In the three Western Zones there are 10 Lutheran Churches, 7 United, and 2 Reformed, with 22,424,502 members, equal to 56.3% of the total EKID membership.

Publication of the yearbook of the Evangelical Church in Germany is under way for the first time since 1933. The church annual is being produced by the Bertelsmann Publishing House at Guetersloh in the British Zone.

Dr. Wilhelm Heinbrok, oldest missionary director of the Evangelical Church in Germany, died in Bielefeld at the age of ninety-three. He was the last living assistant to the late Pastor Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, founder of Germany's "Colony of Mercy" at Bethel in Bielefeld, one of the largest mission institutions in the world.

Reconstruction of war-damaged church buildings in Saxony has been halted by officials of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in that area. The action was taken after Soviet Military Authorities issued an order forbidding the collection of church taxes through local government agencies. Church leaders said the cessation of reconstruction was forced by "the financial situation" resulting from "a heavy decrease in church taxes." They added that contributions at religious services were too small to pay for the rebuilding of the war-ruined churches.

