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Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

HABENT FATA SUA LIBELLI

We like to see our friends receive favorable mention in the news of the day — and so, too, their writings. A recent issue of the *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* (Berlin: April 30) brings a review of a reprint of Walther's *Die rechte Unterscheidung von Gesetz und Evangelium*, published by the Lutheraner-Verlag of Frankfurt a. M. and priced at only 4,80 DM. The reviewer (O. Perels) says: "This book is a precious gift to our Church. Its theme is once more in the center of discussion in our days. Leading into Scripture and following Luther as counselor, this book treats the subject in a very lively and practical manner. Today we might formulate the answers to some of the questions that are raised in a different way, but the great truths proclaimed by this eminent teacher of the Church must be received in their entirety. The book is not above the heads of non-theologians. Its teaching is anything but dead and irrelevant doctrine; it is proclamation of the living Word that molds our spiritual life." — Hardly had this observer finished reading this review when, perusing the *Christian Beacon* (*Bible Presbyterian*) of May 15, he found an editorial headed "The Church at War" and composed almost entirely of a reprint of pp. 265-266 of Dr. Dau's translation of Walther's book (*The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, Concordia Publ. House. See their Catalog, and read again Dr. A. Hult's appreciation of this distinguished book of our great teacher).

Some of our readers will be glad to learn that the Lutheraner-Verlag has also put back on the book market the collection of studies on the Standard Gospels edited by the late Dr. L. Fuerbringer (*Die Evangelischen Perikopen*. Price, 8 DM.) as well as the thirty sermons on free-texts written by Dr. W. Arndt under the title *Siehe, ich stehe vor der Tuer* (Price, 4 DM.) At various times younger preachers who must on occasion preach in German have inquired about published sermons in German that could be used as models in the present day for sermons intelligible to, and fruitful for, the kind of German audiences that our preachers here and there still address. We have pointed to this Arndt collection. It has been unobtainable in recent years, and we are happy to announce that it is again available.

Donald Gray Barnhouse, Presbyterian preacher widely known through

his religious broadcasts, is publishing the monthly magazine *Eternity*, now in its third volume. In the current issue (July, 1952) the editor writes a lengthy article entitled "Lutheran Contribution," in which he discusses no less than ten recent Concordia publications. He says: "During the past several months I have tried to spend at least an hour a day with the Luther theologians whose works I have described in the present paper." Some of us might profitably follow this Presbyterian's example. — E. G. Schwiebert's *Luther and His Times* gets this accolade from Barnhouse: "I believe that it is safe to say that this is the definitive biography of Luther." — The two volumes of centennial essays published under the title, *The Abiding Word*, get this praise: "Let me say right here that no other denomination in America could have produced such a series of essays, so uniformly fundamental, scholarly, clear, and simple, and Biblical throughout." One essay, however, proved a *skandalon* to the critic, the one entitled "The Evangelical Lutheran Church, the True Visible Church of Christ." Barnhouse writes: "While the essay does begin with the clear teaching that the real Church of Christ is invisible, it proceeds, with a psychology that is almost Roman Catholic, to declare a doctrine of an outward, visible church that is a true church, and then to equate that church with a single denomination which exists largely in the Mississippi Valley." Such "equation", of course, is made by the critic. The thesis of that objectionable essay is concerned with the problem of confessionalism. The Lutheran Church — a small segment of which is found in the Mississippi Valley — is the Church which is loyal to the Lutheran Confessions and is loyal because it holds that the doctrinal truths confessed in them before all the world for four centuries square with the clear teachings of Scripture. The Lutheran Church finds aberrations from these teachings of Scripture in the confessions of other church bodies. What right has a church to exist without confessional certainty and confessional loyalty? Charles P. Krauth put it this way: "No particular Church has, on its own showing, a right to existence except it believe itself to be the most perfect form of Christianity, the form which of right should be universal." Is that bigotry, or is it a question of faith's humble but cheerful Amen to God's voice in His holy Word? — Barnhouse has good words concerning Fahling's *Life of Christ*, deeming the historical part of the work well done, also concerning the first two volumes (covering the Four Gospels) of *The Devotional Bible*. "For a family that wishes to have a consecutive family worship subject, these volumes could be a very excellent guide." — As to C. H. Little's *An Explanation of the Book of Revelation*, the Philadelphia reviewer ex-

presses the wish that Concordia "had kept it off their list." This wish is understandable under Barnhouse's own "dispensational" and "pre-millennial" presuppositions. We, in turn, wish that he could find his way back to the position of Little, which, essentially, corresponds to that of his noted Princeton professor B. Warfield (briefly but adequately set forth in his essay "The Millennium and the Apocalypse," reprinted from the *Princeton Theological Review*, 1904, in *Biblical Doctrines*, New York, 1929). — Glowing words greet Dr. Behnken's Lutheran Hour sermons, *Mercies Manifold*. "I was delighted," says the reviewer, "to make the acquaintance of the mind of Dr. Behnken, and to see how true he is to the Word of God." Next, two paragraphs are given to Dr. J. Pelikan's *From Luther to Kierkegaard*, "a scintillating bit of philosophical writing." Finally, unstinted praise is awarded to the first volume in English of Dr. F. Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*. Barnhouse says: "In this first volume, given largely to the doctrine of God and Man, I have had my soul refreshed and my mind stimulated at every turn. . . . It will be worth anyone's reading if he has a mind that does not shun the task of thinking." To which your observer says "Amen."

V. B.

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE WORD OF GOD

The attention of the readers of the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY has before this been drawn to the Intervarsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions in the British world. The aim of this Fellowship is to bring the Word of God to the students at the various universities of countries flying the British flag. It is a noble work, upholding the authority of the Scriptures in circles where all too often ridicule and contempt of the divine Word are uttered. This Fellowship issues a little magazine called *Inter-Varsity*, having the subtitle "A Christian Magazine for Students." In the issue for the Summer Term of 1952 the Rev. Alan M. Stibbs, vice-principal of Oak Hill College, London, submits an interesting little article having the title "The Infallibility of the Word of God." A few remarks on, and quotations from, this article will be welcomed.

The writer, in the first place, discusses the meaning of the word "infallible." When used of persons, as in the case of the Pope since 1870, the meaning, so Mr. Stibbs points out, is "incapable of erring." When used of things or statements, like the Bible and its words, the meaning is "not liable to fail," "sure," "certain." The authority cited for these definitions is *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*.

The writer next points out that from the historical point of view the second of these two uses is the earlier. He maintains that when some of the Protestant Confessions in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries use the word "infallible" with reference to the Bible, the meaning to be conveyed by the word "infallible" was that what the Bible says is certain and will undoubtedly come to pass. In that way, we are told, the word is used Acts 1:3, where, according to the King James Version, it is written that Jesus "showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs." He quotes Archbishop Cramer's treatise *On the Lord's Supper*, where this scholar in speaking of Holy Scripture uses the words "wherein whatsoever is found must be taken for a sure ground and an infallible truth." He maintains that the Westminster Confession of the seventeenth century uses the word in the same meaning in the expression "the infallible truth and divine authority of Holy Scripture" (chap. 1).

Next our writer looks at the word in its fundamental sense. The parallel Greek forms for infallibility and infallible are ἀσφάλεια and ἀσφαλής, and the English translation which is employed is "certainty" and "certain." The passages where these words occur are Luke 1:4; Acts 21:34; 22:30; 25:26; Heb. 6:19. In the last-named passage the Authorized Version translates "sure."—In the following paragraph the writer looks at the concept from the theological point of view. The whole Bible teaches that God is reliable, that He can be trusted. Of human beings we say that they are changing and changeable, but the very opposite is true of our great God. Just as He does not change, so His Word cannot become antiquated or obsolete; "it cannot lose its worth and become valueless; it lives and abides (see 1 Pet. 1:23-25), it is always true and trustworthy." That is what is expressed in the word "infallible."

Continuing his discussion, our writer says that because God's Word has this quality, we can say of it that it will "never deceive or disappoint those who trust" in it. These words, however, must not be understood to mean that the Bible will in every case lead men to appropriate divine truth. We call the Bible "an infallible guide," but that must not be understood as saying that everybody who uses the Bible will arrive at the proper goal. "The Bible may be and has been misquoted to support error, and misused to mislead men. For there is nothing in the Bible taken by itself, to prevent men from using or understanding it wrongly." What the writer has in mind is the truth that Luther points to when he says that the Word of God is like a

beautiful flower, a rose, from which the bee extracts pure honey while the spider obtains poison from it. If the Bible is to be our guide leading us to the desired goal, then we actually have to use it as our guide in the true sense of the word, and that can be done only if the Holy Spirit enters our hearts, opens our eyes, and leads us to see the wonders of God's revelation. Our writer expresses it in this fashion: "In this connection its [that is, the Bible's] inherent and essential worth as the infallible Word of God only fully functions when it is the present means of communication between the illuminating Spirit and the responsive soul. Whether the understanding and the guidance actually gained by its use are true and trustworthy depends, not on the Bible alone, but on the Holy Spirit as the promised infallible Guide into all truth, and on the believing and conscientious obedience of the hearer to what the Spirit thus says to him."

Mr. Stibbs, however, must not be understood as if he intended to rob the Scriptures of their character as objective witnesses of divine truth. He does not belong to the theologians who say that the Bible is the Word of God only in a subjective sense, getting to be the divine Word when it is trustfully accepted by an individual. Speaking of his caution referred to a second ago, he says: "This admission, however, does not alter the fundamental fact that rightly understood the written Word of God has its own inherent and independent infallibility; and the concern of our evangelical forefathers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in speaking of the infallible truth of Holy Scripture was to assert their conviction that these writings afford a sure and unassailable — because God-given — ground of confidence, a ground which will never become insecure or let the believer down."

There is another remark which we have to quote. "Just as there are given facts of history in the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ, which are finished and incontrovertible, and to which we must look for salvation, because they have an unfailing or infallible value which is present and eternal, so there are once-for-all given Scriptures, similarly made ours by the special intervention and providence of God in history, to which we must turn for the only sure and certain light and understanding, promise, and hope." The confirmation of the infallibility of the Word, says Mr. Stibbs, comes through its fulfillment. Its prophecies will not fail. That is why St. Peter (2 Pet. 1:19) refers to the Scriptures as "the more sure word of prophecy." The final caution of Mr. Stibbs is very important: "Of this 'infallibility' we cannot

be assured by scientific investigation or logical demonstration. Ultimate faith in the reliability of Scripture is entirely a matter of knowing whom we have believed, and of resting on the faithfulness of God whose Word it is. It is entirely a matter of being assured by the witness of the Spirit of God that God has said it, and that because He has said it, it is sure of fulfillment, it cannot fail, it is, and always will be, true; it is in fact 'infallible.'" This last point cannot be emphasized too much. In apologetics we demonstrate that the arguments brought against the divine character of the Scriptures are not tenable. But such demonstrations do not as yet make a person accept the Bible as God's Word, for such acceptance the proper personal relationship between the Savior and us mortals is an absolute requisite. In speaking to us in the Scriptures God does not intend to acquaint us with abstract philosophical truth, but with the way of salvation. W. F. ARNDT

CALVIN, AN EXPOSITOR OF SCRIPTURE RATHER THAN A DOGMATICIAN

This is the thesis which Prof. Paul Traugott Fuhrmann, instructor in Church History, Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Ga., elaborates very interestingly and capably in *Interpretation, a Journal of Bible and Theology* (April, 1952). Of the first edition of Calvin's *Institutes*, published in 1536, he says: "Its essential aim was to unfold the teaching of Scripture" (p.205).^a Of the last (1559) he writes: "In Calvin's intention it was what moderns call an Introduction to the Bible and Guide to its understanding" (p.206). In his *Preface* to this edition Calvin writes: "The purpose of this final edition is to prepare theological students for the reading of the Word of God and so to instruct them that they may have an easy entry into Scripture" (*ibid.*).

Of Calvin's *Institutes* the essayist writes, in particular: "Calvin was not so set on the *Institutio* as one may imagine. . . . Calvin's *Institutio* was simply an aspect of his activity as a servant of the Word of God. This book, however, is a convenient point of reference for tracing the development of Calvin's thought and character. The 1536 *Institutio* is bare. Its inspiration and pattern are Luther's. It sets forth Calvin as a prophet in the raw. The early Calvin shows a sense of the love of God and speaks of ardent charity toward one's neighbor. He is hopeful, sustained, positive. The second edition (*Institutio* of 1539) differs by way of additions. Calvin has been in Strassburg, learned much from

Bucer and other Reformers, found a way between Luther and Zwingli, moderate and firm. His *Institutio* of 1541 further emphasizes the role of the Spirit, is more exact, always constructive and hopeful. Some of its pages are full of a mystic fervor for Jesus Christ, but we are unable to find some of these pages in the final edition. In 1559 we are in a different world and book. After the Peace of Augsburg, 1555, Calvin has to give up his hopes in the possibility of a Protestant victory in Europe as a whole. Calvin's friend Farel, the great warrior of the Lord, has hung his big sword on the wall and settled down to the point of getting married at the lively age of sixty-nine, in 1558. Calvin is now secure in Geneva, but he is opposed here and there, irritated by coarse men, and much abused by superficial minds unable to grasp the subtlety of his positions. Calvin is oppressed by all sorts of cares and consumed by illness. His last *Institutes* are therefore encumbered by polemical materials and bitter tirades. They no longer refer to the psalms as 'the prophets' but as 'the psalmist' or David. They evidence a greater appreciation of the earlier schoolmen. Rather than obedience to God, they now speak of 'piety' in a new sense."

In a concluding paragraph Professor Fuhrmann writes: "Ultimately Calvin means to gather us around a divine Person, not around a book. For, as he himself says, 'doctrine freezes unless vivified by God.' If Calvin expounds Scripture, it is to call us to mind the Word of God. We are gathered in God's presence — *coram Deo*. The imminence of the coming of the transcendent 'Son of Man at the Last Day is never forgotten. Full of eschatological grandeur, it forbids us to live as if Judgment were already past instead of yet to come. The actual presence of Christ as our Lord is full of present majesty and power. Christ is actually in our midst, invisible yet real, dominating the whole life of His church, which is His body and complement on earth. . . . Calvin's dream was the spiritual *imperium* of Scripture, that is, its universal sovereignty and dominion in the passing empires of this world" (208f.). Here, we believe, is a new and illuminating aspect of Calvin's foremost reformatory objective which is worth considering. Compared with his *Institutes*, Calvin's exposition of Scripture certainly stands out as his major theological accomplishment.

J. T. MUELLER

JOHN DEWEY

The *Christian Century* (June 18, 1952) offers a helpful appraisal of John Dewey and his work. Perhaps the last paragraph is the most important.

"The spiritual life of America has suffered because the net effect of Dewey's influence was to strengthen secularism and to weaken real Christianity. One can still be grateful to him for freeing education by shattering ancient dogmas[?] and setting the child in the center for emphasizing the social mission of education and of citizenship. But there can now be little doubt that he strengthened the already strong tendency of a prosperous country to make temporal welfare the standard of success for both the individual and society. The result was the secularization of church as well as society, a loss of certainty and sense of mission, a creeping paralysis of hope, a decay of faith.

"Dewey's spiritual *laissez faire*, his limitation to the here and now of endless and aimless process, is simply not good enough for a generation which lives under the threat of communist aggression and atomic war. We have got to choose whom we will serve. We must decide on the goals of growth, the objects of expression, the meaning of existence. We know our decision must be made on faith, in obedient love to God, whom we know through Christ. We cannot face the future with the view Dewey expressed in 1928: 'I have no beliefs on the subject of personal immortality. It seems to be a subject, being one of continued existence, for science rather than philosophy, or a matter of physical evidence. If it can be proved, it would have to be along the lines of the psychical researches, and so far I haven't been much impressed with their results.'"

America (June 14, 1952) editorialized on his work, in a brief death notice, rather moderately, as a few statements may show: "Despite his pernicious pragmatism in philosophy and his one-sided exaltation of 'freedom' and 'doing' in educational theory, Dewey made some valuable contributions to the American—and indeed, to the world's—educational practices. Pope Pius XII in *Humani Generis* (1950) suggested that 'whatever new truth the sincere human mind is able to find' should be freed from error and incorporated into our heritage of Christian truth. . . . It is up to them [the people of America]—including all of us—to take the gloss off his pearly phrases and see what atoms of truth they might still contain." J. T. MUELLER

REGARDING PREDESTINATION

In the *Lutheran Outlook* (May, 1952) we find under the heading *Videant Consules*, a fascinating article on the doctrine of eternal election to salvation. What the writer says, is essentially correct. His is the *posteriori* view of predestination, which he describes in the follow-

ing words: "There stands a cross on a hill: Golgotha. God placed it there for me. Yea, the Bible takes me farther back. It was even in eternity that God took me, even me, lovingly to His heart and planned in detail what He would do for me and to me and in me. I owe it to this predetermined divine plan that I am a Christian today. And the same gracious God will, without any question, perfect and complete what He has begun, even in eternity. . . . Nothing can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus!"

The writer very emphatically rejects the Calvinistic bifurcate election. He repudiates also the theory of election in view of foreseen faith. He finally directs himself against those who ask: "Why are the ones predestinated in preference to the others?" This question he rightly rejects as unscriptural. At this point, however, he introduces an explanation which does not clarify the matter and, besides, which is not true to fact. He says we ask: "Why some before others?" because "we Occidentals do not think and speak as the Bible does. We must by all means adapt our thinking to that of the Bible, to that of Paul, who was no Occidental, but an Oriental. The Oriental would not ask at all from what men are chosen, but to what. . . . Oh that we could get away from the Occidental 'choice, choosing' idea and what it includes, and learn to think as the Bible does. But then you have no real 'Wahl,' we were often reminded. Indeed, there is no 'Wahl' in the Occidental interpretation — Paul was an Oriental! We must needs adapt ourselves to the the Oriental language of the Bible!"

One deeply appreciates the writer's admonition to his readers to think and speak as the Bible does. But the mystery of predestination, which he wishes to clarify, cannot be explained by saying that Paul was an Oriental, and not an Occidental, so that he presented the doctrine of predestination from the Oriental point of view. As a matter of fact, St. Paul, because of his Greco-Roman cultural and educational background, was definitely Occidental, as also his Epistles with their real Occidental approach, their logical organization and orderly presentation of the subject matter, prove. Again, although the Bible does not teach an election in the sense of the predestination of some in preference to others — as in a political assembly where one candidate is elected and the other rejected — which, as the writer correctly says, is a Calvinistic way of looking at it, there nevertheless has been a definite election to salvation, a "Wahl" in the truest sense of the word, as the author himself says that every believer can and should say: "I owe it to this predetermined divine plan that I am a Christian today."

J. T. MUELLER

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

The Norwegian Bible Society delivered the 5,000,000th copy of the Scriptures. 1,000,000 Bibles were distributed in the first 86 years of the Society's existence—1816 to 1902. During the 50 years since 1902, 4,000,000 copies were distributed. . . . The population of Norway is only 3,000,000. * * *

Evangelist Billy Graham who was holding revival services in Houston, Tex., was asked to speak at the Council of Motion Picture Organizations Conference, a national convention which attracted almost 1,000 movie executives and theater managers. He began his talk by saying, "I don't know why you invited a minister to speak unless your conscience is bothering you." He appealed to them to raise the moral standards of the movie industry since a large share of the responsibility for what happens to America rested on their shoulders. "Motion pictures are the biggest single factor in shaping American life," he said. "Our country is going to go almost the way you want it to go." He called on the film executives to expose Communism, continue to put "old-fashioned Americanism" on the screen, emphasize racial tolerance, dramatize this country's democratic processes, and de-emphasize sex and crime. * * *

The 75th German "Katholikentag" will be held in the East and West sectors of Berlin from August 19 to 24. For the first time a woman will be the chairman of the observances, Mrs. Hedwig Klausener, widow of the prominent Berlin Catholic Action leader, Dr. Erich Klausener, who was killed by the Gestapo in 1934. Some 200,000 German Catholics are expected to attend. * * *

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (Southern), meeting in Charleston, W. Va., adopted a resolution condemning lowered national morals and emphasizing that moral recovery in this country must begin in the home. Parents must "transmit high religious and moral standards" to their children by Christian example and training; children so trained will have integrity in later life, while playing basketball, taking college examinations, or functioning as government employees. The report said: "Disregard of the basic standards of honesty and integrity and the loss of a clear distinction between right and wrong have come because many citizens of our country, although nominally believing in God, actually do not have a sufficient sense of God's reality to affect their lives. The problem is basically spiritual. The Church has a tremendous responsibility in this

matter. If the Church does not accept leadership in reawakening men's faith in God, it need expect no one else to do it."—How much greater the guilt of a Church when through its ministers it even helps to undermine Christian consciousness in their members by their liberal, material teaching!

* * *

The Synod of the Old Prussian Union Church (including the regional State Churches of Berlin-Brandenburg, Province Saxony, Pommerania, Silesia, Rhineland, and Westphalia) adopted a new order approving and regulating the ordination of women as pastors. The order stipulates that women, after their ordination, will have the same rights as their male colleagues and will be authorized in principle to preach and to administer the Sacraments. In practice, however, women will normally be restricted to positions for which they are particularly fitted, such as leadership of women's, youth and children's work, Sunday schools, Bible reading groups, and pastoral care of women in prisons and hospitals. They will be appointed pastors of churches only in special cases to be decided upon by the Church management.

* * *

During the 93d annual convention of the Augustana Lutheran Church at Des Moines, Iowa, a special anniversary service was held in recognition of the eleventh anniversary of the "Day of Mourning" for the three Baltic nations—Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania—now under Soviet rule. . . . It was the night of June 13—14 in 1941 when Russian occupation authorities launched a mass deportation that sent more than 100,000 Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians to the arctic regions of the Soviet Union, to Siberia, and to Central Asia. . . . By request of the Latvian members of the host congregation, First Lutheran Church, prayers were said for those who "are suffering the tortures of slavery in labor camps behind the Iron Curtain," also memorializing "those who have broken down under Communist power and have found their eternal rest in unknown and widely scattered graves." . . . After the anniversary service, a delegation representing most of the 300 Latvian displaced persons who have been resettled in Des Moines presented the president of the Augustana Church, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, with a copy of *A History of Latvia*. Another copy of the book was given to the Rev. Ernest A. Lack, pastor of the local congregation, and to Dr. Paul C. Empie of New York, executive director of the National Lutheran Council, who was the speaker at the service.

The convention unanimously went on record in favor of amending

the Social Security Act to make clergymen eligible for Federal old age insurance. While exclusion of ministers from the provisions of the Act was based on "the pretext that including them would violate the principle of the separation of Church and State," in reality the denial to ministers of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance "would seem to be both discrimination against them as citizens and actually a refutation of the principle of separation of Church and State."

* * *

A member of the medical staff of Washington (D.C.) Sanitarium, Dr. Clifford R. Anderson, speaking to the clergymen attending the annual Potomac Conference camp meeting of the Seventh-Day Adventists, warned ministers to guard their health, because far too many of them are breaking under the strain to which modern pastors are subjected. "Many ministers of the Gospel are wearing out too soon," he said. "People in these uncertain times are depending more than ever for counsel upon their clergymen. Broken homes, marital difficulties, adolescent problems, all are increasing, and from early morning until late at night the minister's telephone is ringing for appointments. . . . Not only overwork, but poor diet also is contributing to the physical breakdown of those in places of responsibility in our churches." Ministers should eat a hearty breakfast because of the uncertainty of their meal hours later in the day and the need for physical strength; they should take more regular exercises; and when illness strikes, they should not struggle back into harness without an adequate period for full convalescence. They should make certain to get enough rest, and to lengthen their periods of rest, as the strains of age come on. . . . "If ministers follow these common sense rules," Dr. Anderson said, "they will greatly lengthen their period of usefulness and avoid the premature breakdowns which are blighting many clerical careers."

* * *

Last November the City Council of Montreal, Canada, passed a by-law requiring stores to close on Roman Catholic holy days, providing a maximum fine of \$40 for each offense or a maximum of two months in jail for proprietors of stores remaining open on Christmas, New Year's, Epiphany, Ascension, All Saints' and Immaculate Conception Days. More than 500 summonses were issued against stores which remained open on Immaculate Conception Day last December 8, and over 200 were charged with remaining open on Ascension Day, May 22. Protestant groups, notably the United Church and the Presbyterian Church, protested. Seven large department stores initiated court action

to have the ordinance declared illegal. Now the Montreal Superior Court has done so, but on the ground that the statute "is of exactly the same nature as if it had related to Sunday observance" and that such laws fall within the legislative powers of the Federal parliament rather than of the province. The city will appeal the case, and the court battles may eventually lead to the Supreme Court of Canada. Judge Arthur I. Smith of the Montreal Superior Court did, however, note that the by-law was directed solely at six holy days of obligation for Roman Catholics, and this convinced the court that its object was to compel the observance of these days (against the contention of the lawyers for the city who denied this, stating that the by-law was meant to secure additional days of rest for store employees). The Judge also cited letters addressed to the Mayor of Montreal by the Archbishop of Montreal and other Catholic leaders which further underscored the religious purpose of the city in passing the by-law.

* * *

The Moscow newspaper *Pravda* reports that the Movement of Atheists in Bulgaria gained 200,000 new members last year, bringing total membership to 1,600,000. The movement arranged 90,000 lectures during the year, which were attended by more than 2,000,000 people. In addition, it sponsored a number of antireligious exhibitions. "Truly good work," said *Pravda*.

* * *

The Board of Education of San Diego, Calif., has decided that public schools of that city shall begin instruction in morals and spiritual values when classes resume in September; this to replace released-time programs previously conducted, but discontinued after court decisions had cast a shadow over the legality of religious training in any way connected with public schools. . . . The program is to embrace: Teaching the importance of religion and of church life in American society; study in the elementary schools of how religious institutions contribute to community life; a 10th-grade experimental course, including one unit designated "Man's Search for Religion"; use of books on comparative religion, with the idea of developing spiritual values, a good character and ethics, and the effectiveness of church and religion in human life; use of a calendar on holy days; use of the Biblical account of the Ten Commandments and simple inspirational Psalms; simple non-sectarian exercises to be held at appropriate times to develop reverence, to include non-sectarian prayers, prayerful songs, inspirational poems and quotations. Children are to be encouraged to maintain

close affiliation with church or synagog.—While it is encouraging to see the growing conviction that it is most difficult to teach morals without religion, we want to see a program constructed on these lines that is satisfactory both to the churches and to the synagog.

* * *

A proposal for a traveling professor in stewardship to teach at the 10 seminaries of the United Lutheran Church in America was advanced at the eighth annual stewardship conference of the Church, meeting in Minneapolis, Minn. Under the plan, the professor would teach a course in stewardship at each of the seminaries once every three years. This would enable all their ministers to receive special stewardship training. The Lutheran Laymen's Movement for Stewardship, an organization of some 1,100 ULCA laymen who contribute from \$100 to \$1,000 a year, in addition to regular church giving, will be asked to finance the cost of the traveling professor. . . . Speakers at the conference emphasized that stewardship is not just a technique to separate people from their money, but rather a way of life—a man's recognition "that God, besides creating him, has called him to be a priest of his faith, even where he works."

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The chief of Navy chaplains, Rear Adm. Stanton W. Salisbury, told a national convention of Navy Mothers Clubs of America that half again as many persons are "graduated" into civilian society each year from military services as are graduated from universities and similar institutions, and it is one of the big jobs of military chaplains to help prepare servicemen and women "to be able to fight the war of civic righteousness" when they return to civilian life. He pointed out that often the recruits have thrown off restraints, leaving behind the influences that conditioned their lives, and Navy chaplains try to link home and Navy, to "revive in the hearts and minds of the young men and women those things you gave them." He stressed the need for character, "moral firmness that makes you discipline yourself in the terrible moral morass of 1952."

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The Louisiana House of Representatives has unanimously approved a bill which would require all ministers who perform marriage ceremonies to register with parish clerks of courts. The State Health Board asked for the law because it receives over 100 marriage certificates a month with the names of the officiating clergymen illegible, and the Board does not know how to locate them.

A report to the North American Assembly on African Affairs brought by Dr. Ried F. Shields, United Presbyterian Church missionary in Khartoum, the Sudan, said that a modern revival of Islam had resulted from aroused nationalism and political activity, and as a result a clash between Mohammedanism and Christianity is developing all the way across Africa in a strip that extends from Eritrea to Nigeria. Islam, he said, may seem a romantic sleeping giant to movie-conscious Americans, but in reality it is a political-social system of tremendous importance in world affairs, because of its strategic position in an area between the East and the West. "Though Islam's spiritual influence is very little, the system can call forth a blind, fanatical, intolerant devotion from people who know nothing of what it stands for, who ignore its teachings and who are indifferent to its rites." Mission schools and other Christian activities might therefore suffer criticism, opposition, and even vilification; and while the common people would remain friendly to Christians, they would be forced, out of loyalty to Islam, to sever relations with Christian institutions. It is an easy matter to become a Mohammedan, the missionary pointed out. When young North Africans go to Moslem cities to work or attend school, they suffer discrimination and abuse; but if they turn Mohammedan, "the great brotherhood enfolds them," although no change of convictions is involved, no moral precepts are enjoined. Christian work in the Sudan is made difficult by the fact that some pagan tribal chiefs have been "converted" to Mohammedanism and then all their people are thereby claimed as Moslems.

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The Archbishop of Sidney, Australia, Norman Cardinal Gilroy, in an interview in New York, discussed, among other matters, the demands of Australian Catholics for state subsidies for their schools; the reason for that demand was, however, not chiefly a question of economics, that Catholics suffer from double taxation for schools and, as a result, a great financial burden has been placed on them, but primarily because "in justice the nation owes to the Catholic people recognition for their contribution to education and citizenship—a repayment for services rendered to the nation."—If that were granted, what a long list of claimants for state support that would open!

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A high-ranking Communist functionary of Jena University, Mrs. Sonja Eichhofer, has made the demand that Evangelical student groups be banned from East German universities.

A law exempting parochial and other private, non-profit schools from property taxation will go into effect in California on September 22, unless a pending referendum on the matter reverses it. The California and Nevada District of our Synod, at its annual convention in Oakland, went on record in favor of the new law. In the adopted resolution, the delegates declared that the new law is "consistent with Lutheran principles." They said that Lutherans do not demand tax exemption or tax support, but, at the same time, do not consider such exemption or support a violation of the principle of Church-State separation.

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According to a report by the diocese of Muenster, Germany, Roman Catholic parishes in Germany need 2,900 priests. The shortage of priests is said to be due largely to losses in clergy during World War II and to the decreasing number of theology students as a result of the war. Of the 3,496 theology students presently enrolled at West German universities, three fourths come from workers' and farmers' families and only one fourth from upper social levels.

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A rosary device which automatically keeps count of prayers said has been invented by a St. Cloud, Minn., Roman Catholic. He has taken out eight patents on the device; a company has been formed, the Queen of the Rosary foundation, which will see to it that all profits from sales are used for the advancement of Catholic and charitable institutions. They hope to produce 2,400 recorders a day, selling them at \$2.00 each. A religious order has requested 500 of the devices to be smuggled behind the Iron Curtain into Poland.—A new racket for money-raising, and about the ultimate in making prayer mechanical.