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## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### MESSAGE TO LUTHERAN CHURCHES AND CONGREGATIONS

In its plenary session on August 1 the Lutheran World Federation approved of the following message addressed to Lutherans throughout the world. Our translation is based on the German version which appeared in the *Informationsblatt fuer die Gemeinden in den nieder-deutschen lutherischen Landeskirchen* (Hamburg, August 14, 1952). The message reads:

"At the assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Hanover we again rejoiced in the truth which Luther's Reformation brought to light: We have forgiveness of sins and peace with God only in the crucified and resurrected Christ. He is present in His Church and offers Himself to us in His Word and Sacrament. This Church has the promise: 'I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord' (Ps. 118:17).

"This word of Holy Scripture was often cited in the age of Luther. It was sincerely believed and confessed with unshaken confidence. We are bringing it to the attention of the Lutheran churches and congregations in the entire world.

"It is the Lord's will that we proclaim His works. We all have this responsibility. It is the greatest task commanded us. For 'faith cometh by hearing.' We are at no time and in no situation relieved of the responsibility to proclaim the works of the Lord. We are living in a world full of perplexity, of insolent unbelief, and of obtuse indifference. In this world we are especially called upon to bear witness to God's great deeds in Christ.

"This witness is borne not only by the called servants of the Word. God has many ways whereby He brings His Word to the world. He even today employs the mouths of babes to utter His praise. We must not hesitate therefore to be tools of His proclamation — at home and at work, in school and in public life, and wherever God has placed us.

"Every living word produces life. Our witness has this promise. But we are to bear witness not only with the spoken word. In an age which is full of words and in which words are often forged, we are to witness also through our deeds. God daily provides many opportunities for such witness. He daily confronts us with the searching questions: How do you overcome hate? How do you meet lies and temptation? What is your attitude to your neighbor who is in need? —



Let us *do* deeds of love. No sacrifice, no gift, no comforting word, remains unblest. Make the ministry of mercy a matter both of your hearts and your hands. Provide the means and, above all, the men who are ready to dedicate their life to the ministry of mercy.

"To proclaim the works of the Lord is the duty not only of the individual, but also of the entire congregation. God has made us members of a congregation. It is His will that we help build it. God's will applies equally to both old and young, but in particular to the youth of the church. The congregation is in need of various types of service. Here no power is too weak and no gift too small that it might not be employed. Even the smallest and most external service is necessary if it is done in love for Christ. Those who expect our help are the aged and ill whom we should visit; the children whom we should tell about the good news of the Gospel; the imprisoned and the missing and their relatives whom we should remember in our supplications; the forsaken, the homeless, and the erring whom we should receive into our fellowship. A living congregation is a light in the world. The power of faith which it radiates attracts also unbelievers and prepares for them the way to Christ.

"We, the churches of the Lutheran World Federation, wish to grow into a large, world-wide communion which is grounded in our common Lutheran faith and which expresses itself in brotherly love. In our supplications we remember, in particular, the forsaken and scattered who are bearing very heavy burdens and the churches which are oppressed. Be of good cheer; the Lord is especially near those who are forsaken and oppressed, and He blesses their faith. We are united with you in special love, and no power of the world can separate us from you.

"God has commanded us that we strive after a just peace which assures to all peoples regardless of race and nationality a life in freedom and truthfulness. We thank our heavenly Father that He has preserved us to this day from another world war. In deep humility we beseech Him through our Lord Jesus Christ that the relations between nations might be pacified so that everyone might live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

"To us the message has been entrusted in which the salvation of the world is comprehended. How can we be silent and bury this message for which our fathers fought and suffered and which God has entrusted to our hands? Let us bear witness and proclaim the works of the Lord in every way possible until He comes. To Him be glory and honor and praise now and forever!"

P. M. B.



# **POST-HANOVER DEVELOPMENTS**

It is not the purpose of this brief article to describe and interpret the quinquennial assembly of the Lutheran World Federation which met in Hanover from July 25 to August 3. Though many of the essays and reports read and discussed at Hanover are available, the official proceedings of the assembly have not yet appeared in print. We shall therefore postpone a critical review of the Hanover assembly until these proceedings are accessible. We are informed that these proceedings will appear in both English and German and that they will contain the minutes of the plenary sessions, the reports of the six sections, the five principal essays, the sermon preached by Bishop Hanns Lilje in the opening service, the messages of the plenary sessions, the list of participants, and the names of the personnel of the several committees. We are also informed that the German National Committee which was in charge of the external arrangements of the Hanover assembly will publish, in six small volumes, the theological findings of the various sections. These volumes will also contain the chief essays read in the sectional meetings and a summary of the discussions which followed the presentation of the essays. Other materials in preparation are intended to make available to the lay people in the Lutheran Church throughout the world the most significant aspects and resolutions of the Hanover assembly.

It is possible, however, at this time to spell out the names of the chief executives of the Lutheran World Federation who will serve in the period of 1952 to 1957. Bishop Hanns Lilje of Hanover succeeds Bishop Anders Nygren of Sweden as president of the L. W. F. The two vice-presidents are Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the ULCA, and Bishop Johannes Smemo (Norway). A third vice-president will be elected next year. The executive secretary is Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist (Geneva), successor to Dr. S. C. Michelfelder, who died in September, 1951. The new treasurer is Mr. Charles Delbruck (France). The new Board of Trustees are Bishop Lilje, Dr. Fry, Dr. Prenter (Denmark), and Mr. Delbruck. The Membership Committee consists of Bishop Hans Meiser (Germany), President Dohms (Brazil), Dr. Aasgaard, president of the Ev. Luth. Church in our country, and Bishop Malmestroem (Sweden).

The members of the new Executive Committee of the L. W. F. are Dr. Aasgaard, Dr. Benson (U. S., president of the Augustana Lutheran Church), Bishop Beste (Germany), Mr. Charles Delbruck, President Dohms, President Fry, Dr. Gopal (India), Bishop May (Austria), Bishop Malmestroem, Bishop Meiser, Professor Prenter, Bishop Smemo,



Dr. Schuh (U.S. president of the American Lutheran Church), Supt. Eva Lyngby (Denmark), Mr. James Henninger (U.S., member of ULCA), Mr. Johannes van Heest (Holland), and Director Rudolph Weeber (Germany).

An important question which the Executive Committee of the L. W. F. will consider and decide is the suggestion made by Dr. Stolz (president of the United Ev. Lutheran Church of Australia) that the L. W. F. make provision for a consultative membership. According to President Stolz, such an arrangement would make it possible for Lutheran groups not affiliated with the L. W. F. to co-ordinate some of their work with the program of the L. W. F. In one of its plenary meetings the L. W. F. acted favorably upon the suggestion made by President Stolz and referred it for consideration and study to the Executive Committee.

P. M. B.

#### A MESSAGE TO THE CHURCHES

The *Australian Lutheran* (May 21, 1952), writing under this heading, reports a weighty message sent by the "Council and Conference of the United Bible Societies," held at Ootacamund, India, in February, 1952. This was the first meeting of the Council in India. The "United Bible Societies Council" was organized at the end of World War II, not as "another Bible Society," nor as "a super Bible Society," but "as a fellowship of twenty-three Bible Societies working together to secure maximum efficiency in supplying the world's need for Scripture—and doing it speedily." The message is signed by the officers of the United Bible Societies as also by the four leaders of Christian Churches in India, namely: "The Church of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon," "The Mar Thoma Syrian Church," "The Orthodox Syrian Church," and "The United Church of Northern India." It is indeed, as President Hoopmann of Australia remarks, significant that this "Message" should come from Asia. It reads:

"We, the members of the Council and Conferences of the United Bible Societies, met at Ootacamund, South India, in February, 1952, have it laid upon us to share the sense of urgency, and some of the insights, which have come to us in our meeting.

"Our membership has been drawn from representatives of twenty-five nations and from almost every branch of the Church of Christ. In spite of many differences of race, culture, and doctrine, we have received the blessing of fellowship and oneness in our Lord and His Word. We believe that this experience has profound significance for the fulfillment of our task in the present age.



"In the course of surveying the work of the Bible Societies in many lands, the fact that the work and witness of the Church is being challenged in an unprecedented way, by forces throughout the world working against the will of God, has come to us with a new reality, and has brought us under a compelling conviction of God's command to do our part in meeting the crisis.

"We have been confronted, as never before, with the knowledge that nothing but the incarnate Word of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, will suffice. We cannot, however, escape the conclusion that we Christians are not availing ourselves of all the riches of the written Word.

"We are constrained, therefore, to impart to you the sense of urgency which the Holy Spirit has laid upon us that everything should be done to restore the Bible to its rightful place in the preaching, teaching, and fellowship of the Church, and in the life of the family and of the individual believer.

"Furthermore, we believe that God is challenging us in these difficult days with new opportunities to use the Bible for the spreading of the Gospel. The bankruptcy of so much of merely human achievement and endeavor has created a void in countless souls which only the Word of God can fill. We have evidence of a new readiness in the non-Christian world to listen to what the Bible has to say. We can rejoice that the advance of literacy among the unprivileged has greatly increased the number of potential readers of the Bible.

"In 1954 we shall celebrate the 150th anniversary of God's gift to the world of the Bible Society Movement. We appeal to you to use this occasion by taking immediate steps to recover, through exposition, preaching, private and corporate study, the understanding of the relevance of the Bible to the whole range of human life, and to make it an opportunity for fuller co-operation with the Societies in distributing the Bible throughout the world."

J. T. MUELLER

#### THE SCANDAL OF DOGMATISM

Under this heading William H. Hudnut, Jr., in the *Christian Century* (July 9, 1952) takes issue with some of Brunner's statements in *The Scandal of Christianity*: "The central fact of human existence is that sin separates us from the holy God"; "Sin is the destruction of communion with God. . . . Man is incapable of healing the breach between himself and the Creator"; "The right relation to God cannot be established from our side; the breach between God and us is of such a nature that we can do nothing about it"; "The tie of communion



with God is torn and cannot, so far as we are concerned, be retied"; "We do not live together with God in a democracy of heaven and earth. We are not living in a democracy [with God] in this world, but in an absolute monarchy." Incidentally, he opposes also a statement made by Brunner in the *Christian Century* (July 11, 1951): "We have today come to understand again that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not a program of world betterment and social reform." Of this statement he says that it "was discounted by many as exaggeration."

Against Brunner Dr. Hudnut holds that "we may be disabled, but we are not disowned. God in Christ stands at the door of every life and knocks, seeking entrance; that is the divine initiative. But his entry is conditioned by man's response; opening the door is up to us." As a further commentary of this declaration we may quote the following words: "We are disabled because of sin, but never rendered completely unable; if we were, passages like 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden,' would be meaningless. . . . Of course we are dependent on God, but let us not overemphasize this truth to the point of excluding our high duty as responsible persons to co-operate with God in working out his purposes for our lives and the world. God is dependent on us too! Let no confession of our own relative impotence blind us to the fact that there are many things in this world that God does not do, cannot do, without our help."

All who know the theology of neo-orthodoxy and are mindful of the contents of Articles I and II of the Formula of Concord will see without much trouble where lies the fault both with Brunner and Hudnut. Brunner theology overemphasizes God's sovereignty and fails to approach Him from the viewpoint of His grace and love, mingles Law and Gospel, while Hudnut wrongly opposes Brunner's determinism with semi-Pelagianism and denies the *sola gratia*, using for his synergistic assumptions the same unscriptural arguments which on this point have been employed time and again. The errors that faced the writers of the Formula of Concord face us also today, and we must still fall back on the direction and guidance of this great Confession, as we study Scripture in the light which it sheds both on man's total corruption and spiritual helplessness and God's free grace for all sinners in Christ Jesus.

J. T. MUELLER

#### ESCHATOLOGY AT THE NEXT W. C. C. MEETING

As previously announced in these pages, the theological discussions at the next meeting of the World Council of Churches will center in eschatology. Various committees are currently studying the general



theme for the proposed Evanston meeting. A large number of problems confront the planning committees, due in part to the divergent theological orientation of the various member churches (Calvinists, Arminians, Lutherans), and chiefly to the fact that during the past decades European theologians have lived in an atmosphere far different from that of American theologians, so that, e. g., their eschatological outlooks are so far apart that the two groups talk past each other. To make confusion worse confounded, the Americans are almost hopelessly divided in the field of eschatology. Some, especially the Neo-Orthodox theologians, believe that the Biblical accounts of the "last things" must not be understood literally but merely symbolically, and that the New Testament description of eschatology must be demythologized; others are literalistic Premillenarians, and even Dispensationalists; others Amillennialists. The thought has recently been expressed in W. C. C. circles that the differences between European apocalypticism and American optimism, as well as the conflicting American concepts on the coming of the Kingdom of God, could probably be solved best if Biblical scholars would study the "meaning of hope in the Bible." A committee composed of representative scholars of America and the various continental countries from Lutheran, Calvinistic, Arminian, and Anglican denominations met in Zetten, Holland, in April of this year, to study this topic. The committee submitted its report to the member-churches through the *Ecumenical Review*, July, 1952, 419 ff. Though the report is quite lengthy, we believe it to be of great interest, indicating the direction in which eschatological thinking may be moving at Evanston next year. We realize full well that liberal theologians of the Bultmann school can emasculate the Scriptural concept of hope; but we also realize that the large segment of Protestantism is through with Liberalism. The report follows:

### *1. Hope in the New Testament*

1. Hope in the New Testament is expressed in different ways and under different aspects. Within this variety there is a unity arising from the fact that everything is focused in Christ. As all faith centers in the crucified and risen Christ, so all hope centers in Him. Where Christ is, there is hope (1 Tim. 1:1). To be without Christ is to be without hope (Eph. 2:12; 1 Thess. 4:13).

2. At His coming Christ brought righteousness and life (John 10:10) into the world, and His victory over unrighteousness and death will be made manifest at His final coming in glory (Rom. 5:2, 18; 8:10). Thus Christ is the hope of the world in two senses. He has



fulfilled and is fulfilling the world's hopes while transforming them, and He will redeem creation while judging it (Rom. 8:19 f. and John 5:27; 12:48).

3. We are agreed that this double aspect of present realization and hope for the future is an integral part of the New Testament *Kerygma*. These two aspects are closely interrelated: only if we are sure of the present realization can we confidently look forward to the future fulfillment, and only in so far as we hope for the future fulfillment do we rightly apprehend the meaning of Christ's victory here and now.

## *II. Hope in the Old Testament*

1. Hope, which is an integral part of the Old Testament, is here also expressed in different ways and under different aspects, but is focused in the hope of the Kingdom of God. All hope is based upon faith in the living God, who has revealed Himself as He who is and who has established fellowship between Himself and Israel by means of His saving acts in history. As the God of history He commands the future as well as the present.

2. The Old Testament shows how the people of God is led through its history from hope to hope. Some of these hopes, such as those containing political aspirations, were already transformed in the Old Testament; some remain unfulfilled in the Old Testament, but are especially significant for the New Testament. These include the hope of a new world (Isaiah 2), the hope for the coming of God's righteousness and of the knowledge of God (Isaiah 11; Jer. 31), and the hope for the victory of God through His Suffering Servant, on whom is laid the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 52:13 and 53). And at the end we find the hope of world salvation through the giving of all power and majesty to the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13).

## *III. Biblical Hope and Its Fulfillment*

1. Jesus Christ fulfills these hopes in a new and unexpected way. God reveals the majestic Son of Man of Daniel 7 in the lowly form of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. He reveals the victorious King of Israel as the Meek and Lowly One who died on the Cross and Israel's Deliverer as the Saviour of the world. The salvation expected of God is found in the Man Jesus of Nazareth, who is Emmanuel.

2. Such fulfillments themselves point forward to an ultimate fulfillment at the end of the age. As Christ fulfilled the hopes of Israel in unexpected ways, so will He accomplish what He has promised in His Word, but in a manner which transcends our power to appre-



hend or to express (1 Cor. 13:12; 1 John 3:2). We can speak of these matters, as the New Testament itself does, only in images, metaphors, or symbols; when these are interpreted in a crudely literalistic way, they lead to error.

3. While the New Testament *Kerygma* directs the eyes of faith to the fulfillment of God's promises and of man's hope in God's action in Christ, and likewise the eyes of hope to its definite fulfillment in the future, it inspires men with hope for the present period between Christ's resurrection and His final coming in glory.

#### IV. *The Church's Life in Hope*

1. The foundation of the Church's hope is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and the gift of His living presence through the Holy Spirit. She proclaims that the crucified Christ reigns as Lord of the world; His kingdom is extended by the preaching of the Cross, which is His throne on earth. Christ conquers by sending His witnesses into all the world, making disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19 f.; John 10:16; 11:52). The message first proclaimed by the Apostles builds up through the power of the Holy Spirit a new humanity incorporated into the Church, which is Christ's body. This new humanity is already the first-fruits of the new creation (James 1:18), and thus the source of hope for the whole of the old creation, which earnestly awaits the revelation of the sons of God (Rom. 8:23).

2. The life of the new humanity is life in Christ. As the old humanity lives under the rule of sin and death without hope, the new humanity lives in Christ under His rule of righteousness and life in hope (1 Cor. 15:22). Being in Christ implies fellowship with Him and His sufferings in His resurrection and in His final glory, and therefore a fervent looking-forward toward the complete revelation of His power and glory.

3. The Church's hope of the end is nourished in this present time by the Eucharist, which Christ has given to her, in which both what has been done for the world in Christ and what will be done for the world in Him is here and now set forth and set forward. Christ's presence in the Word and Sacraments and the fellowship of the Church is our assurance of our future triumph in Him.

#### V. *The Church's Hope for the World*

1. In the crucified and risen Lord a new situation has begun, in which there is a true ground of hope for the world and a promise of redemption for the whole creation. The Church is charged by her



Lord to proclaim this hope by being the conscience of the world, by summoning the world to repentance, and by constantly reminding individuals and authorities alike of their responsibilities under the will of God, and of the retribution that awaits those who disobey His will. . . .

2. In obedience to her Lord the Church is called to show forth the power of His new creation, serving men in every realm of human life in the pursuit of justice, love, and mercy. In so doing, the Church brings to men an assurance that their labours will not be in vain, although in history only partial realizations of their hopes are possible. As servants of their Lord, Christians are called to prove their hope in Christ by suffering in His service, remembering that they must give account of their stewardship. Accepting this call, they possess and bring to the world the one true joy and the one true freedom, which belong to the children of God.

3. The Church awaits in awe and hope the final judgment and consummation, when all evil shall be purged away and all true hopes fulfilled.

F. E. M.

#### CONCLUDING POSTSCRIPTS

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, began its 115th school year on September 17. According to Dean Wuerffel's latest releases, the grand total of registered students is 809. Of these, 641 are undergraduates, 50 graduates, and 118 vicars. The total does not include some 150 pastors who are enrolled in the Seminary's correspondence school or are taking courses in the Seminary's extension division.— President Louis J. Sieck has orders from his physicians to withdraw, for the time being, from all administrative work. We commend him as well as Dr. F. E. Mayer and Professor Paul J. Reith, who are also under the care of physicians, to the grace of God and the prayerful concern of our entire Church.— On September 24 and 25 the Seminary was host to Dr. Wilhelm Hahn of the University of Heidelberg. Dr. Hahn is the Bishop-elect of the Ev. Lutheran Church of Oldenburg. He is the son of Professor Traugott Hahn, who was professor in the theological faculty at the University of Dorpat in Estonia. In 1919, when the Russians occupied Estonia, Professor Traugott Hahn was brutally murdered by the Russians and became the first Lutheran martyr under the onslaught of a vicious atheistic movement.

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This year Lutherans are being reminded of the 200th anniversary of the passing of Johann Albrecht Bengel, foremost theologian of the



post-Reformation period in Wuerttemberg and author of *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (1724). Bengel lived in the century in which Freemasonry as we know it today was firmly establishing itself in England and in other European countries. He was one of the few in the Age of Enlightenment who clearly recognized the dangers of Freemasonry. In his *Reden ueber die Offenbarung* (1748, pp. 812 and 830. Quoted in *die Freimaurerei und das Evangelische Pfarramt*. Berlin, 1854, p. 6.) he wrote: "In our day societies such as Freemasonry are organized which are said to promote virtue and brotherly love. But no one is ever asked whether he loves the Lord Jesus and wishes to be saved by His righteousness and whether he believes in God and a retribution in yonder life.... According to Freemasonry, the heart of religion is the recognition of a Creator and Architect of all things. Freemasonry thus unites Christians with Turks, Jews, and heathen. Whatever lies outside the area of natural knowledge, whatever is distinctive in the life of a Christian, the great importance which Christians attach to the life of sanctification, all this Freemasonry regards as bigotry and outmoded forms of religious worship. Freemasons aim to achieve perfection in virtue, but it is not necessary for a brother to be a Christian. They pride themselves in promoting the semblance of love, but they reject faith and hope." The religion of Freemasonry, which has now been on trial for 250 years, is essentially the same as Bengel characterized it back in 1748.

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*Igreja Luterana* is the name of the theological journal published by our Brazil District and edited by Dr. P. W. Schelp, professor at our Seminary in Porto Alegre. It contains articles in Portuguese and German. Professor H. Rottmann appears to be the chief contributor. Recent issues contain solid articles on the language of the New Testament, the purpose and significance of congregation meetings, a translation into Portuguese of that delightful dialog by Hans Sachs known as "Disputation zwischen einem Chorherrn und Schuhmacher," and penetrating critiques of conditions in the Lutheran Church. Having formed direct contact with President R. Hasse of the Brazil District this past summer, this writer gained the impression that our Brazil District is making significant progress in many areas of church work. This District is on the way to becoming, under God, a strong and mighty Church, just as Brazil has the potentials of becoming in the course of the next decades one of the most powerful nations in the Western Hemisphere.

Recently a pastor inquired about high school fraternities and soror-



ities. With the help of our Fellow, our Commission on Fraternal Organizations has assembled recent and reliable information on this development in our country's educational system. If we can be of service, please write us.

P. M. B.

#### BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

Applications of all organizations asking for tax-free status will henceforth be made public. Criticism has been voiced in Congress of business activities and commercial enterprises conducted on a tax-free basis by a number of religious or charitable foundations. Commissioner John B. Dunlap of the Bureau of Internal Revenue announced that it had been decided by a committee of experts in the Bureau that publication of applications for tax exemption by religious, charitable, educational, and scientific groups is permissible under the law. The new policy has been adopted to give greater publicity to the business of the Bureau and to tighten up tax loopholes.

On a grant from the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs an extensive study of Federal aid to church-affiliated institutions was made by the director of press relations for Baylor University, Waco, Tex., C. E. Bryant. Under the Hill-Burton Federal aid-to-hospitals act a total of \$87,476,000 has been dispensed, 78 per cent, or \$68,143,000 to Roman Catholic hospitals, the remaining \$19,333,000 to Protestant and Jewish hospitals. This ratio, he said, "is not evidence of discrimination by the Government, but rather of the hesitancy of Protestant groups to accept Government aid." . . . Church-affiliated colleges have obtained more than one billion dollars in Government aid under the G. I. Bill of Rights, providing for veterans' education; this was mostly tuition payments from the Veterans' Administration. Church institutions enrolled 19 per cent of all veterans attending college under the G. I. bill. In addition, church colleges received more than 4,000,000 square feet of classroom space and housing facilities from war surplus at a transfer cost to the government of \$26,000,000. . . . An additional \$1,823,597 was given to church-related medical schools and hospitals in research and fellowship awards by the U. S. Public Health Service in 1951. . . . Relatively little Federal aid is given to parochial elementary and secondary schools. This is largely a local or State matter. Federal programs aiding parochial schools are the Department of Agriculture's school lunch program and, in a few instances, tuition and study grants for American Indian children by the Indian Affairs Bureau, which also in some cases pays parochial school tuition fees for its charges.



Immediate start on the construction of a model leprosy research sanatorium and training center in India will be made possible by a grant of \$60,000 by the American Leprosy Missions. The center will be located on a 250-acre tract at Karigeri, 70 miles west of Madras, and comprise a 150-bed hospital, a research laboratory, staff houses and cottages for patients. It is expected to be in full operation within a year, under the joint sponsorship of A. L. M. and two other Protestant mission groups, Vellore Christian Medical College of India and Mission to Lepers in London. . . . The general secretary of A. L. M., Dr. Eugene R. Kellersberger, said that one of the main purposes of the center is to demonstrate that leprosy treatment is not just the responsibility of leprosy colonies, but the duty of every general dispensary and hospital and of every physician in private practice. "The old idea of the leprosy colony where a patient enters already resigned to the idea of staying the rest of his life, is outmoded. Now, with modern methods of treatment, the emphasis is to fit the patient to go back into the world able to make his own living." . . . Dr. Kellersberger said that India has about 1,000,000 of the estimated 7,000,000 leprosy victims in the world today.

. . .

Nearly three out of every five Americans are members of a church or other religious body according to the 1952 *Yearbook of American Churches*, published under the auspices of the National Council of Churches. It reports a church membership of 88,673,000 in 252 religious bodies—an increase of 1,842,515 over the previous year. Church membership again outstripped the nation's growth in population. Church members now constitute 58 per cent of the population, compared with 49 per cent in 1940 and 47 per cent in 1930. . . . Protestants form the largest group in the country, 52,000,000; Roman Catholics 29,000,000. (Very appropriately, R. N. S. inserts this memorandum: "No precise comparison is possible between Protestant and Roman Catholic figures. Most Protestant churches enumerate as members persons who have attained full membership, usually at age 13. Probably 90 to 95 per cent of Protestant members are over 13 years of age. Roman Catholics regard all baptized persons, including children, as members." In other words: Take all Roman Catholic figures with a grain of salt; much of their claimed membership is fictitious.) . . . Other figures: Judaism 5,000,000; Eastern Orthodox 1,858,000; Old Catholic and Polish National Catholic 337,000; Buddhism 73,000. . . . The larger Protestant denominations report the following figures: Methodist over 9,000,000; Southern Baptist Convention 7,373,000; National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., Inc., 4,467,000; the others in



the first ten (no figures given): the National Baptist Convention of America, the Protestant Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., United Lutheran Church in America, International Convention of the Disciples of Christ, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and the American Baptist Convention. . . .

Pedro Cardinal Segua y Saenz, Archbishop of Seville, is rapidly becoming a thorn in the flesh to the Vatican.—In his latest pastoral letter he called upon the Spanish government to clarify the juridical position of non-Catholics in Spain. He complained that his previous warnings of the spread of non-Catholic religions in Spain had not found much response. "It causes one real pain," he said, "to see the tolerance shown toward non-Catholic sects among us and the indifference of the Catholics toward this question and even the sympathy they are displaying for it." . . . The Cardinal's complaint is that Article Six of the Bill of Rights promulgated by General Franco in July, 1945, was contrary to the agreement of June, 1941, between the Vatican and Spain regulating Church-State relations. The 1941 agreement contained a pledge by the Spanish government that it would give every assistance to the bishops, "especially when they are compelled to oppose the evilness of men who are attempting to pervert the souls of the faithful and to corrupt their morals, or when it is necessary to prevent the publication, dissemination, or circulation of evil and harmful books." Article Six of the Bill of Rights, while it confirmed Roman Catholicism as the State religion, guaranteed that "no one will be molested for his religious belief and the private exercise of his worship," and does not clearly exclude proselytizing by non-Catholic groups. This Article Six, the Spanish prelate says, has never been officially approved by the Vatican, even though it might have privately agreed to the terms. If such was the case, the Spanish hierarchy were never informed. . . . The Cardinal's letter has been received with reserve in Vatican circles; they said that "today it is necessary to show a certain amount of tolerance in order to avoid conflicts which are always harmful to national interests." They expressed the hope, however, that non-Catholic groups in Spain would "not harm the rights of the Church." The same spirit of tolerance toward non-Catholics that was found in other major Catholic countries must be practiced in Spain. . . .

Delegates to the 75th annual convention of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, meeting in Omaha, Nebr., voted to change their name to the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. This change,



however, cannot become effective until it has been approved by the next convention. . . . The Danish group numbers more than 19,000 members. Nearly 800 delegates and pastors from 22 States and parts of Canada attended the convention.

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A Japanese Christian Evangelist, Hideo Aoki, reports that Buddhism, hitherto a songless religion, is "borrowing" Christian hymns. They convert such hymns as "Jesus Loves Me" into "Buddha Loves Me." "Unfortunately," he adds, "their religion prevents them from adding the rest of the sentence: 'For the Bible tells me so.'"

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Abolition of Evangelical theological faculties from State universities in East Germany was "suggested" by East German Premier Otto Grotewohl in a letter to Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin, head of the Evangelical Church in Germany. He proposed that, in place of these faculties, the Church set up a separate theological seminary for the training of clergymen in the Soviet Zone and asked Dr. Dibelius to take up this plan with the "competent Church authorities." The East German government would transfer to such a seminary the subsidies it now provides to Evangelical faculties at the universities and would help the Church to find a "proper" site for it. The Church would be free to determine the seminary training program "so long as it does not conflict with the constitution and laws of the East German (Communist) Republic." As reason for the proposal, the Soviet Zone premier stated that, under the East German constitution, religious denominations manage their own affairs; the existence of theological faculties at State universities is thus not in accord with the constitution. . . . A few days later Bishop Dibelius presented this "suggestion" of the premier to a meeting of Evangelical Church leaders in Berlin. They agreed that "everything must be done to preserve theological faculties as part of East German universities."

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A warning to church administrators to set their financial houses in order was sounded by the world treasurer of the Seventh-day Adventists at the two-week Annual Council of the denomination in Takoma Park, Md. Treasurer C. L. Torrey said that the world economy has reached a "leveling-off" point and "soft spots" are developing which are hidden only by the vast spending for armaments. "The Church has had a long period of good times financially," he said. "It has been easy for us to forget the difficulties of depression days. But the economic and political future is badly disjointed, and for the first time since the Korean War



there have been real signs of a world economic depression." He urged careful planning and spending in the denomination's program around the world and cautioned administrators to work hard to liquidate local church and college indebtedness and consolidate capital reserves. . . . The council meeting was attended by some 1,000 delegates from more than 30 countries.

Harking back to a previous item of *RNS* that the Episcopal Cathedral of Washington, D. C., has offered the use of its Bethlehem Chapel to Temple Sinai, a Reform Jewish group, it is now reported that the announcement "drew fire from conservative Episcopalians in church journals and in letters to Bishop Angus Dun of Washington" against the plan of removing the altar cross during the Jewish services, replacing it with the Ark of the Covenant. A new arrangement was therefore adopted under which the cross remains, but "a screen is placed in front of the chapel altar and the Ark and its sacred Torah are placed on a table in front of the screen." — It would seem that hiding the cross is not much better than removing the cross.

According to a report by Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, Jr., attendance at religious services in U. S. Army chapels is increased more than 50 per cent during the year ended June 30, 1952. . . . The Army now has a total of 1,400 chaplains. . . . Army chaplains reported 2,541,993 visits to the wounded in military hospitals during the 12-month period.

A former German navy vessel has been rebuilt and launched at Hamburg Germany, as a church and youth club by the Lutheran congregation of river boatmen. The floating church was reconditioned at a cost of 50,000 marks (\$11,900), nearly half of which was contributed by Lutherans in other countries. Hamburg shipowners, shipbuilders, businessmen and sailors provided the rest. . . . Refugees from East Germany make up the majority of the river boatmen's congregation. It is estimated that some 80 per cent of the 6,000 boatmen plying small craft in and around Hamburg harbor are refugees, many of whom fled East Germany in their boats and now use them as living quarters.

THEO. HOYER