

5-1-1954

## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

J. T. Mueller

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Mueller, J. T. (1954) "Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 25, Article 28.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol25/iss1/28>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### UNHISTORICAL, UNBIBLICAL, UNFAIR

With these epithets the Romanist Lon Francis characterizes the "Martin Luther Motion Picture" in an article, published by "Our Sunday Visitor Press." The tract was prompted by "many inquiries . . . concerning the historical accuracy of the film." According to the writer the motion picture is unhistorical from many points of view, among them, "that Luther or any other 'Reformer' helped the cause of morality any;" that it conveys the thought "that the Catholic Church occupied herself throughout the preceding centuries chiefly with the selling of indulgences and with worshipping relics," and that it "represents the brief period of Luther's day and the century preceding as typical of the entire life of the Church." The picture, moreover, is unfair because it "offends more by silence." It is silent, for example, about the causes leading up to the laxity of morals, for which civil rulers, kings and emperors, who tried to control the Church, are "most blameable." It is unbiblical because it condemns the "worship of relics" whereas "reverence for sacred things is certainly upheld by the Bible" (Acts 5:15; 19:12, and others). The writer next quotes leading Protestant writers who declare that, to put it in the words of Dr. Schaff, in *Political Ecclesiastical Conferences*, U. S. (p. 230), "the Roman Catholic Church is bemired from day to day with all possible calumnies," or in those of Dean Stanley in his *Life and Letters* (Vol. 1, p. 151) "that Protestantism in general treats Catholics with shameful ignorance and unfairness." After that the article presents the "real causes of the Reformation," such as the control of the papacy by kings and emperors, "prosperous times," "'humanist' influence," and the like. "But it was not long after Luther's death until the wrong persons in office were put out, or at their death were superseded by men of strong faith and deep piety." The "effects of the Reformation," however, were generally disastrous, as is shown by a number of quotations from Protestant historians. Dr. Cram, for instance, writes in *The Sins of the Fathers* (p. 9): "Politically and socially the inevitable outcome of the Renaissance and Reformation was absolutism and tyranny, with force as the one recognized arbiter of action." The writer does not presume to defend "the Catholic Church during Luther's time," but step by step he takes up the points which the film condemns and endeavors to point out that Luther was wrong and that Romanism is right. "Luther placed himself above the Bible instead of with it when he rejected that

Epistle [of James] because it went counter to what he wanted to teach." "Luther's salvation theory" was caused by his "scrupulosity," which "usually is very difficult to cure." His "doctrine of justification by faith" was "built up by tampering with a few texts from St. Paul." Luther's teaching concerning Christ as the only Savior is supported by Catholics. "Protestants falsely charge Catholics with *worshipping* (italics in original) Christ's Mother." Since Luther's time "Lutheranism has changed." Thus *Religious Denominations of the World* declares that "some of the doctrines which were warmly maintained by Luther have been, of late, abandoned by his followers." "The Missouri Synod . . . is the strictest [of Lutheran denominations] and does not fraternize with most of the others. It claims, on its own fallible authority, that it is the *only true Church of Christ* [italics in original]." "Every priest knows, from Lutheran people whom he has instructed in the Catholic religion, that there is more anti-Catholicism taught in Lutheran parochial schools than Lutheranism, and that several times a year the people of the congregation must listen to anti-Catholic sermons, especially on Confirmation Day and Reformation Sunday." "Lutherans go to 'Mass,' for "while claiming to repudiate the Mass, Lutheran services, Sunday after Sunday, comprise what the Catholic Church named, in the first century, 'The Mass of the Catechumens.'" In fact, "what has Protestantism which it did not inherit from Catholicism?" The last part of the tract is devoted to show that "Luther admits that the Reformation failed." This assertion is supported by twenty-four quotations from Luther's works.

From beginning to end the tract offers clever distortions of the historical facts. Will it keep people from seeing the picture? One of our pastors, who lives in a "Catholic city," writes: "The Catholics are really advertising our Luther film. I have no doubt that many of their people have gone or will go to see it because of all the publicity our film is given by their Church." May the film serve to publish anew the glorious Gospel teachings of the Lutheran Reformation.

J. T. MUELLER

#### IS MASONRY A RELIGION?

This is the title of a brief article by Max Agress, 32°, published in *The Texas Grand Lodge Magazine, Official Publication of the Grand Lodge of Texas Ancient Free and Accepted Masons* (Vol. XXIII, April, 1953, No. 5, p. 151). Because of its significance, we are submitting the article in full.

Masonry is a system of ethics based on the principles of true religion. The principles of Masonry are so natural to men that as soon as they

are put before them, they are acceptable as quite familiar and self-evident.

The basic principles of a true religion agree with the basic principles of all true religions, such as Brahmanism, Confucianism, Hebraism, and Christianity. The basic principles of all these religions are very simple, intelligent, and clear.

These principles are: That there is a God, the origin of all things; that in man dwells a spark of the Divine which man, by his way of living, can increase or decrease in himself. Masonry teaches that to increase the Divine spark man must "circumscribe his desires and keep his passions within due bounds." The practical means to attain these results is to live by the Golden Rule and practice brotherly love, relief and truth. All these principles are common to Brahmanism, Confucianism, Hebraism, and Christianity.

A Brahman understands himself to be a manifestation of the Infinite Brahma, and considers that he ought to strive towards union with that Highest Being; that by living a pure and honorable life his spirit will ascend and join Brahma, whence it came.

The Buddhist considers his relation to the Infinite to be as born from that Being; that passing from one life to another he must invariably suffer, and that these sufferings proceed from his passions and desires. Therefore, his duty is to annihilate all passions and evil desires so that he may be enabled to pass into Nirvana.

The Hebrew understands that his relationship to the one Almighty God, Author and Creator of life and death, to be that of one chosen by Him, therefore he must observe His laws and fit himself by clean living, by being charitable, by subduing his natural propensities for evil, to make himself acceptable in the sight of God so as to merit the promise of eternal life.

A Christian understands that he died to the sinful world by accepting Jesus as his Savior, that Jesus will remit his sins, and that by the rite of baptism he arose from the water to a new and eternal life in Jesus, and that henceforth his life must conform to the "New Law of Love."

The word "religion," as commonly accepted, comes from the word "religare" (to bind). The oldest and most common definition of religion is that religion is the link between man and God. Religion is a particular means by which man acknowledges his relation with the Superhuman, the Divine.

Masonry is not a religion, but it embraces the basic principles of all true religions. Masonry teaches that reason is the power which enables men to define their relationship to the universe. The high and the low, the rich and the poor, are created by one Almighty Parent, and, as all men are in the same relationship to the universe, it follows that brotherly love, relief and truth must be the measure of man's conduct

which alone can unite men. Union among men gives them the highest level of human relationship, both physical and spiritual, the prerequisite to complete human welfare. Masonry is not a religion, but it emanates in man the highest zeal and fervor to labor for the improvement of the human race, to remove the beastly passions from the heart of man which dims the Godly spark in man. Masonry strives to unite all peoples by supplying identical dignity to all good men of any society or creed so they may stand on the same level, and together labor for the attainment of the Brotherhood of Man the final realization of Peace on Earth and Good Will among Men.

Our comments are as follows:

1. The author maintains that "Masonry is not a religion," but immediately adds that "it embraces the basic principles of all true religions." One's reason fades out at such logic. For if Masonry "embraces the basic principles of all true religions"—and the author makes a serious effort to define these basic principles—then, surely, Masonry is a religion. It is a composite of beliefs held by the religions which he attempts to summarize.

2. The author regards Brahmanism, Confucianism, Hebraism, and Christianity to be "true" religions. "True," so one must conclude, in the sense that they are satisfactory interpretations of man's relation to God, to man, and to the universe. For the author, Christianity is no better and no worse than any other established religion. It is merely one of the "true" religions.

3. For the author, the heart of every religion is its anthropocentric, not its theocentric, emphasis. Therefore he believes that every established religion has some form of the Golden Rule. He fails completely to understand that Christianity is fundamentally theocentric and that the Golden Rule is for Christians, not a legalistic requirement, but merely the divine norm to which they seek to respond out of love and gratitude to God and their Savior. For the author, Christianity, too, is a religion of works.

4. The author believes that there dwells in man "a spark of the Divine which man, by his way of living, can increase or decrease in himself. Masonry teaches that to increase the Divine spark man must 'circumscribe his desires and keep his passions within due bounds.' . . . Masonry is not a religion, but it emanates in man the highest zeal and fervor to labor for the improvement of the human race, to remove the beastly passions from the heart of man which dims the Godly spark in man." Christianity asserts that there is no such "divine spark" in man. Man has, indeed, a "dim spark" of the knowledge of God and of His Law, and man can, in a very minor degree, conquer his lusts

and, at least outwardly, live a life of service to society. But Christianity also maintains that fallen man is an enemy of God, that in this state of enmity he daily transgresses not only the First Table of the Law, but also the Second, and that unless God recreates him through the Spirit and the Word, he will continue to live his egocentric life in utter disregard for the true welfare of his fellow men.

5. Masonry is what Dr. Francis Pieper called a *Diesseitsreligion*. Its utopian ideal is "to unite all peoples by supplying identical dignity to all good [question: who are the good?] men of any society or creed so they may stand on the same level, and together labor for the attainment of the Brotherhood of Man the final realization of Peace on Earth and Good Will among Men."

Conclusion: We can understand why people who are not informed Christians find satisfaction in the program of Masonry. But Christians, who have learned to know God's revelation in Christ, who are guided by the Spirit of God in their attitude to God and their fellow men, and who have learned that God has prepared a heaven of eternal bliss for His believing children, will not affiliate with Masonry or continue their affiliation with this naturalistic form of religion.

P. M. B.

#### THE "COLT" OF PALM SUNDAY

Under this heading the *Journal of Biblical Literature* (December, 1953) offers in English an article which Prof. Walter Bauer of Goettingen, in 1952, contributed to the *Festschrift* for Max Pohlenz on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. The translation was made by Prof. F. W. Gingrich and is in every way excellent. Professor Bauer purposes to answer the question what animal Mark, as also Luke, had in mind when, four times in a row (Mark 11:2,4,5,7), he tells us that it was a *πῶλος* that carried Jesus into Jerusalem. Neither Mark nor Luke (19:30,33) refers to Zech. 9:9, as do Matthew (21:2 f.) and John (12:14 f.). Now, as the article shows, *πῶλος* may indeed denote a "young animal," but it is applied not merely to the "colts" of donkeys and horses, but also to young elephants, camels, gazelles, dogs, and other young animals. The word gains its precise meaning only by an exact description of the kind of young animal in question. But the word *πῶλος* is used also without any more specific zoological designation. In that case it no longer means a young animal in general, but it is applied to a particular kind of animal. In such cases *πῶλος* is *horse* throughout. In individual cases it means a "young horse," but in most cases the equation of *πῶλος* with "horse" without any modification will give exactly the right sense. To prove this assump-

tion, the writer quotes numerous passages from secular Greek writers as also from the LXX. From these he concludes that the word πῶλος in Mark and Luke can be understood only as *horse*, and it was nothing else either for these Evangelists or for their readers. Matthew, however, cherished the desire to bring a penetrating Scripture quotation to bear upon this scene in the life of Jesus. So he was glad to find in the πῶλος of Mark's Gospel the πῶλος υἱὸς ὑποζυγίου of Zech. 9:9. Therefore he changed from the meaning *horse* to the other one, *young animal*, made possible by the nearness of ὑποζυγίου, donkey, and thereby founded a tradition that exerted its influence as early as in the Fourth Gospel. And at once the unambiguous word ὄνος enters the scene (Matt. 21:2 ff.; John 12:14 f.) though the LXX does not have it at all. Since that time the animal of Palm Sunday has been a donkey (*der Palmesel*). So far the article.—Is this assumption justified? Despite the many quoted examples showing that πῶλος, standing by itself, denotes a horse, the author's premise is hardly convincing, especially not in view of the fact that it ignores divine inspiration and the essential agreement of Scripture with itself. The early Christians certainly knew from oral tradition how Christ entered into Jerusalem for the last time, and since they were diligent readers of the LXX, or also of the Hebrew text, they knew also from Zech. 9:9 what kind of animal the πῶλος was that carried our Lord into the Holy City.

J. T. MUELLER

#### MELANCHTHON'S PRIVATE LECTURES ON SUNDAY

It is well known that Luther for many years preached to the members of his family and students and friends who wished to participate in his Sunday home worship, as his famous *Hauspostille*, a precious fruit of this worship, attests. But it is less known that Melanchthon from 1549 until a few days before his death in 1560 lectured each Sunday on the Gospel of the day, first in his own home and afterwards, when the attendance became too large, in one of the University lecture halls. An interesting account of these Sunday lectures is given in the *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* (December 15, 1953). A few thoughts gleaned from the article may be of interest to our readers.

Melanchthon's lectures, delivered during these Sunday worship hours, were later collected by his friend Christoph Pezel and published in 1594 in four octavo volumes. From there they passed into volumes 24 and 25 of the *Corpus Reformatorum*. Reviewing these lectures, the writer of the article, Prof. Otto Clemen, says that one hardly knows what to admire most in the great *praeceptor Germaniae*, for here he

reveals his amazing versatility, his wealth of wide information which he could readily use at all times, his original method of teaching, which never permitted his students to be bored, his sober, robust, and inspiring piety, and his fatherly concern for the bodily and spiritual welfare of his students.

Usually Melanchthon began his lectures with grammatical and stylistic comments. To these he added explanations of words and special studies in etymology. Next he explained the historical and geographical background of the pericope, and finally he expounded its theological content, emphasizing less the doctrinal element than the ethical or hortative values which he applied to the special needs of his auditors. He never followed the dictation method, then in vogue in academic circles, but spoke freely, often interrupting his lectures to ask questions. In his later years Melanchthon put questions also in his regular academic courses, but only at the beginning of the lectures and for the sake of review. In the informal Sunday lectures his questions formed an important part of his didactic method. Often his questions were to mystify his students, while at other times they were put by way of reproof or to expose the ignorance of inattentive students. Becoming angry at times, he even slapped his hearers. This rather severe procedure finds its explanation in the fact that many of the auditors were young boys (*pueri*), some of whom were not older than twelve years. But such rebuke and punishment were exceptional; for, on the whole, Melanchthon proved himself a lovable teacher, filled with sympathy for his students and also possessing a sense of humor.

The students who attended Melanchthon's Sunday lectures ranged in age from young boys to aged men. The majority were from Germany, but some came also from foreign countries, such as England, Bohemia, and Hungary. Since the lectures were informal, Melanchthon related many incidents from his life, especially from his student years in Heidelberg and Tübingen, his frequent travels, his experiences at conventions and theological conferences, his acquaintance with electors and princes, frivolous priests and obnoxious monks, businessmen and artisans, and the like. In these Sunday lectures Melanchthon never stood on his dignity, but proved himself a humble and congenial friend of his students, who, of course, attended his lectures of their own accord.

The article offers some of the anecdotes which Melanchthon told his students, and we quote two of them, because they present a picture entirely different from the distant and dignified preceptor that we know from his usual biographies. There is, for example, the story of the young lad, kneeling before his pastor, as he recites the Catechism.

In his trembling hands he carefully holds his finest blue Sunday hat. He has just finished the Third Commandment when the minister, following Luther's Small Catechism, asks: "*Was ist das?*" ("What does this mean?") Noticing that the pastor's eyes were resting on his hat, the boy replied: "Why, Pastor, don't you see? That is my little blue hat." Or, there is the story of the peasant lad who comes to town for the first time. Everywhere he sees young girls, and such indeed as he had never seen in the country. "Father," he asks, "what are these living creatures (*Lebewesen*)?" Resenting the fact that his son was observing the town girls, the parent answered: "Those are geese." "Ah," sighed the lad: "I wish we had such geese at home." "And that," commented Melancthon, "was the beginning of the boy's love emotions (*Liebesregung*)."

J. T. MUELLER

## BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

**Indianapolis.**—The board of managers of the United Christian Missionary Society (Disciples of Christ) acted here to transfer control of the denomination's missionary work to nationals overseas.

The action must be approved by the Society's member congregations and confirmed by the board at a later session.

**Rome.**—Italy's Supreme Court ruled here that police decrees dating back to Fascist days which restrict freedom of worship were "automatically abrogated" by adoption of the new Constitution in 1948, which contains religious freedom guarantees.

The decision was hailed by Protestant leaders in Italy, who had been seeking a definitive ruling to prevent local police officials in various parts of the country from invoking the old regulations to prevent non-Catholic religious gatherings.

**New York.**—The American Bible Society will seek a record amount of \$3,271,250 in 1954 for its 138th year of activity in the publication and distribution of the Scriptures to all parts of the world.

Under its ongoing activity, the Society is planning to produce 365,000 Bibles, 474,500 Testaments, 13,227,000 Portions, and 30,000 volumes for the blind.

**Albany, N. Y.**—The New York State Court of Appeals has upheld the merger of the Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

In a 4-2 decision, the State's highest tribunal affirmed a decision by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of New York that civil courts have no jurisdiction in the proposed merger because no property rights were involved.

The appeal had been filed by the Cadman Memorial Congregational Society and the Cadman Memorial Church of Brooklyn, N. Y., in a move to prevent the merger, which would create The United Church of Christ with over 2,000,000 members.

*Atlantic City, N. J.*—Lutherans in the U. S. and Canada have contributed nearly \$6,000,000 since 1939 to aid younger churches and mission fields "orphaned" from their parent societies in Europe when World War II began.

This was reported to the National Lutheran Council's 36th annual meeting here by Dr. Frederik A. Schiotz, executive secretary of the council's Commission on Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions.

He said that more than \$900,000 had gone last year alone to administer "something in the nature of a religious Marshall Plan," providing for the emergency needs of such churches and missions.

About one third of this amount went to support three former German mission fields in Tanganyika, East Africa, comprising 97,888 Christians, Dr. Schiotz said. He estimated that 1,346,000 Christians in young churches and orphaned missions over the world are being supported by the N. L. C.

*Chicago.*—The first manuscript of a new Service Book and Hymnal for Lutheran churches in the U. S. will go to the printers within three or four months.

According to Dr. Luther D. Reed, chairman of the Editorial Committee, the first copies will not come off the presses, however, for two more years.

*New York.*—Grants totaling \$86,000 for four new Lutheran mission stations in New Guinea and a new missionary hospital building in Tanganyika, East Africa, were approved here by the National Lutheran Council's Commission on Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions.

Dr. Frederik A. Schiotz, the Commission's executive secretary, said the new mission stations were necessary as bases from which to work among the natives in recently opened areas adjoining those in which the Lutheran Mission of New Guinea has been active.

He cited reports from the field which said "we are compelled to seize opportunities as quickly as they become available, or see eager Holiness groups take over the work in such places."

Societies co-operating in the Lutheran Mission of New Guinea under the general auspices of the National Lutheran Council Commission include the American Lutheran Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia, and the German Neuendettelsau Mission Society.

*Bonn.*—West Germany's first ambassador to the Vatican will be a Protestant, according to informed circles here, and his nomination is expected to be announced shortly.

*Bogota, Colombia.*—The Colombian Interior Ministry has forbidden non-Catholics in this country to proselytize or propagandize outside their places of worship.

Protestant missionaries are specifically barred from performing any public missionary or education work except for children of non-Catholic foreigners.

The Ministry's ruling was contained in a circular letter sent to provincial governors and other authorities. The Ministry said the brief circular constituted the government's "final instructions" on the subject of non-Catholic religious activity.

*Atlantic City, N. J.*—A special grant of \$25,000 is being made this year to the American Bible Society by the National Lutheran Council in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the beginning of Bible Society work.

The Bible Society also will receive an additional \$10,000 from this year's Lutheran World Action appeal, the annual financial campaign conducted by the council for emergency activities at home and abroad.

The grants were reported at the council's 36th annual meeting here. They will bring to \$684,500 the total amount contributed to the Bible Society in the past twelve years from funds contributed to Lutheran World Action by members of the eight church bodies associated in the NLC.

*Atlantic City, N. J.*—The National Lutheran Council decided at its 36th annual meeting here to institute a resettlement program under the terms of the 1953 Refugee Relief Act although it severely criticized the law as "restrictive."

It voted to establish 36 local immigration committees in "areas of high Lutheran population" and allocated a special fund of \$203,200 to finance their operations.

*Atlantic City, N. J.*—Reopening of direct conversations between the Arab nations and Israel to attain peace in the Middle East was urged here by the National Lutheran Council.

A resolution adopted at its 36th annual meeting called upon the State Department to encourage the United Nations to issue a "new appeal" for Arab-Israeli talks that would lead to peace.

"No peace," the council said, "can be found apart from such direct conversations."

*New York.*—The right of a 12-year-old child to choose his own religion despite a premarital pact by his now separated parents was affirmed by the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court in a 3—2 decision here.

The decision upheld a ruling handed down in Brooklyn last February by Supreme Court Official Referee Meier Steinbrink in the case of Malcolm Jr., son of Malcolm Martin, a Roman Catholic, and his wife Clara, a Christian Scientist.

The referee held then that the boy could attend Christian Science Sunday school and public school if he so desired, although Mrs. Martin, prior to her marriage in a Catholic church in 1938, had agreed that any children of the union would be reared as Catholics.

Malcolm Jr. was born Oct. 17, 1940, and baptized a Catholic shortly afterward. But in 1947 Mr. Martin sued for annulment of the marriage, charging that his wife had refused to honor their agreement and was bringing the boy up as a Christian Scientist.

Mrs. Martin then filed a cross complaint for separation in the Brooklyn Supreme Court which was granted in 1949 by the late Justice William T. Powers, who stipulated, however, that Mrs. Martin abide by her agreement.

On Feb. 9, 1953, Referee Steinbrink modified this separation order, on a motion by the mother, holding that inasmuch as Malcolm Jr. had been attending Christian Science Sunday school for several years, he could not support "a decree that would strip the boy of his independent judgment in matters of this kind."

In the Appellate Division's affirmation, Acting Presiding Justice Frank F. Adel and Justices Frederick G. Schmidt and George J. Beldock upheld the referee's ruling without issuing an opinion.

In a dissenting opinion, however, Justices Henry G. Wenzel, Jr., and Charles E. Murphy said that the mother should be required to fulfill her promise.

"The tenets of all religions, as well as the law, require the observance of a solemn obligation," they said. "In the formative years of a child's life, it must be guided in its religious and secular education by the parents until its mind is sufficiently mature to make its own judgments. That degree of maturity is not reached at the age of 12."

*New York.*—Treatment of Protestants in Colombia was sharply condemned here by the General Board of the National Council of Churches.

The General Board charged that a recent Colombian decree forbidding Protestant activity in three fourths of the country violated the

UN Human Rights Declaration, which Colombia signed, and the 1948 charter of the Organization of American States.

The decree, issued last September 3, "contravenes the principles of religious liberty maintained by most governments outside the territories under Communist rule," the General Board said.

*Istanbul.*—Legal title to properties of Greek Orthodox churches and communities throughout Turkey will be restored to them after nearly 30 years of State custody, according to a government decision announced here.

Since the early 1920's, when the Turkish Republic was established under Kemal Ataturk, title to non-Moslem religious institutions was held by the State, although they were permitted to continue functioning under the general control of the Moslem Administration of Pious Foundations.

*Madrid.*—An "overwhelming majority" of Spanish workers are not practicing Catholics, according to a survey published in the current issue *Ecclesia*, official organ of Spanish Catholic Action.

The investigation was carried out by priests who serve as spiritual advisers to the official National Trade Union, which represents millions of Spanish workers. A report on the survey was written by Father Villalobas, O. F. M.

Besides finding widespread religious apathy and ignorance among working men, *Ecclesia* said, the priests learned that workers generally:

Believed the Church favored the moneyed classes.

Preferred to have priests keep out of politics.

Preferred that Church and State remain independent of each other.

Among the reasons given by the inquiring priests for the workers' attitude were poverty and the presence of a "Marxist virus."

*Chicago.*—Protestant ministers were warned here that the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held at Evanston, Ill., in August may do church unity more harm than good.

Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, editor emeritus of the *Christian Century*, said the assembly may result in a resurgence of "evil denominationalism" if it does not try to solve the problems that separate American churches.

Dr. Morrison, 80, spoke at the Union Ministers' Meeting, sponsored by the Church Federation of Greater Chicago.

"Not one hour of deliberate consideration to the crucial problems that separate American churches has been scheduled at the assembly," he said.

These problems, such as different interpretations of baptism and

other sacraments, the independence of the local congregation and the role of the ministry, should boldly be brought to the world church sessions, Dr. Morrison contended.

*Melbourne, Australia.*—Roman Catholic Church membership in Australia and New Zealand increased 30,043 during the past year, bringing the total to 1,784,707, according to the official *Catholic Directory* for 1954.

There are now 2,429 Catholic churches in Australia, 30 more than last year. New Zealand churches increased by four to a total of 475.

*Minneapolis, Minn.*—One out of every 10 Lutherans in the world today is a refugee, Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist, executive secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, said here.

The number of Lutherans who have disappeared in Eastern Europe exceeds the entire Lutheran population of the United States, he said.

Twenty-two to twenty-five million Lutherans are still behind the Iron Curtain, he added.

*Cincinnati, Ohio.*—The United Lutheran Church in America will step up its religious training of youth this year by introducing a new textbook series and study program in its weekday instruction classes.

All the Church's synodical directors of parish education and the chairman of the 34 synodical parish education units attended a two-day conference here on the best methods of using the new textbooks.

The series, edited by the Rev. W. Kent Gilbert of Philadelphia, is a collection of scientifically-tested textbooks, workbooks and teachers' guides, designed to appeal to the interests and understanding of various age levels from six to eighteen.

*New York.*—A world conference of Buddhists will be held in Burma beginning next November, it was reported here by Dr. Frank T. Cartwright, administrative secretary of the Methodist Board of Missions, who recently returned from a trip to Southeast Asia.

"Thousands of Buddhists from all over Asia and some from Europe and the United States are expected to attend," Dr. Cartwright said.

He added that some Buddhist leaders "predict the gathering will give 'a new and powerful surge' to Buddhist evangelization and greatly affect the work of Christianity in Buddhist countries."

*Rome.*—Pope Pius XII, in a letter addressed to Italy's Roman Catholic bishops, called for the setting up of a central office to advise on television programs.

Purpose of the central body, the Pontiff said, would be to see that the programs fully satisfy Christian morality.

Pope Pius also expressed the wish that every diocese equipped with transmission facilities appoint committees of one or more laymen and priests to advise on television programs of a purely religious nature. He said that their efforts should be co-ordinated by the central office, which would insure uniformity on essential points "for the general benefit of the faithful."

The letter, sent on the eve of the inauguration of regular television in Italy, stressed both the dangers and potentialities for good of TV.

Praising the "brilliant conquest of science," Pope Pius warned against the danger television contains if its use is "abused and profaned by human weakness and malice."

The Pope emphasized that by entering the home "television becomes available to the entire family group made up of persons of all ages, of different sexes, and with different cultural and moral preparations."

Observing that "we have before us the sorrowful vision of the wicked and devastating power of motion pictures," he added: "How can we but be horrified at the thought that the same atmosphere poisoned by materialism and fatuousness which too often is breathed in cinemas will penetrate through the walls of every home?"

Pope Pius said it is impossible to imagine anything "more fatal to the spiritual forces of the nation than showing the innocent souls inside the family those stark scenes of sinful pleasure, passion and wickedness which are capable of undermining and ruining forever the whole edifice of chastity, goodness, and healthy education."

*Belfast, Northern Ireland.*—Belfast Presbyterian College, divinity school of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, marked its centenary with special observances here.

The college was founded in December, 1853, as the theological division of Queen's University, by Dr. Merle d'Aubigné, a distinguished historian and theologian from Geneva, Switzerland. However, classes did not begin until January, 1854.

Before this, the Church's ministers were trained mostly in Scotland. Former students of the college include many Presbyterian ministers now in the United States and Canada.

*Madrid.*—The Holy Year of Santiago de Compostela opened at Santiago Cathedral in the presence of Generalissimo Francisco Franco, head of the Spanish State, and members of his government.

Celebration of the Holy Year, which dates back to the 14th century, is held each time that July 25, the feast of St. James the Greater, patron of Spain, falls on a Sunday. The saint's feast day comes on Sunday, July 25, this year.

The observance is opened at Santiago de Compostela because the body of St. James is traditionally believed to be enshrined in the Cathedral there.

The ceremony was presided over by Fernando Cardinal Quiroga y Palacios, Archbishop of Santiago de Compostela, who opened a "Holy Door" at the Cathedral and led a procession of Church and government dignitaries for a Solemn High Mass.

St. James the Greater, brother of St. John the Evangelist, was the first of the Twelve Apostles to be martyred (Acts 12:2) under King Herod Agrippa. According to tradition, St. James preached the Christian religion in Spain and founded an episcopal see on the site of present-day Compostela.

Because of the enshrinement of the saint's relics in Compostela Cathedral, the city was for many centuries a major place of international pilgrimage. St. James' feast day is celebrated as a national holiday throughout Spain.

*Nashville, Tenn.*—Special gifts to Methodist colleges and universities reached a record high of more than \$10,000,000 in 1953, it was announced here by the denomination's Board of Education.

Dr. John O. Gross, executive secretary of the board's Division of Educational Institutions, said a survey of 117 Methodist-related schools showed that 15 institutions had received gifts and grants from individual donors in excess of \$100,000 each.

The largest single contribution during the year, he said, was \$6,000,000, bequeathed to Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn., by the late George W. Davison, Greenwich, Conn., who was president of the school's board of trustees for 41 years.

Anonymous gifts accounted for more than \$1,500,000, including \$750,000 to Mount Union College, Alliance; \$300,000 to Pfeiffer Junior College, Misenheimer, N.C., and \$132,000 to the University of Chattanooga. Dillard University, New Orleans, and Drew University, Madison, N.J., also received anonymous gifts of \$100,000 or more.

The College of the Pacific, Stockton, Calif., received \$225,000 from the estate of the late Everett Archer, Salinas, Calif., and \$125,000 left by Ophir Ore Shroeder of Oakland.

Dr. Stephen H. Watts, for many years dean of the University of Virginia's School of Medicine, willed \$235,000 to Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, Va., for special studies in physics and biology.

Adrian (Mich.) College received \$104,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Davis, Adrian, to support a chair of English literature.

The survey showed several large gifts from foundations and groups. The Washington Star Broadcasting Co. gave \$250,000 for a new radio-television workshop building at American University in the nation's capital, and the school received \$400,000 from the Housing and Home Finance Agency for two new dormitories.

Dr. Gross said the special gifts were separate from several million-dollar fund campaigns sponsored by Methodist Annual Conferences across the country.

He said the new Church-wide annual goal of at least 50 cents per member in support of higher education, and 15 cents for Wesley Foundation campus centers, is being oversubscribed in several Conferences.

*Minneapolis, Minn.*—The American people are spending twice as much per minute for liquor as they are for religious, charitable, and educational institutions.

This was one of the findings reported here by the family economics bureau of Northwestern National Life Insurance Company.

During 1953, according to the bureau, the American people contributed \$8,500 a minute in religious, charitable and educational donations and spent \$17,000 a minute for alcoholic beverages.

Other national per minute expenditures by the American people last year were:

Federal taxes, \$135,000.

State and local taxes, \$38,000.

National defense, \$85,000.

Foreign aid, \$11,000.

The bureau calculated American income at \$600,000 a minute.

*Chicago.*—Leaders of the Gideons International voted here to appeal the recent New Jersey Supreme Court decision barring distribution of King James Bibles in the public schools.

Raymond R. Lindsey, Gideon president, said his organization would join the Rutherford (N. J.) Board of Education in planning an appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

*Cambridge, Mass.*—John D. Rockefeller, Jr., has made a gift of \$1,000,000 in securities toward revitalizing Harvard University's Divinity School.

The gift was announced by Dr. Nathan M. Pusey, president of the university, who said that Mr. Rockefeller stressed "the underlying importance of the spiritual life" at Harvard, which "promises to have far-reaching influence on education in this country." L. W. SPITZ