

Concordia Theological Monthly

Continuing

LEHRE UND WEHRE

MAGAZIN FUER EV.-LUTH. HOMILETIK

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY-THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Vol. X

April, 1939

No. 4

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Ein Prediger muss nicht allein weiden, also dass er die Schafe unterweise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen sein, sondern auch daneben den Wölfen wehren, dass sie die Schafe nicht angreifen und mit falscher Lehre verfuehren und Irrtum einfuehren.

Luther.

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute mehr bei der Kirche behaelt denn die gute Predigt. — *Apologie, Art. 24.*

If the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle? — 1 Cor. 14, 8.

Published for the
Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States
CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, St. Louis, Mo.



ARCHIVE

Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

A U. L. C. Layman Speaks.—In the *Lutheran* of January 18, 1939, the following letter is printed: "There has come to my desk a 'Declaration' adopted by the United Lutheran Church at its recent convention in Baltimore. I do not feel myself competent to criticize. I am not a theologian as were those who formulated the 'Declaration'; yet one or two things therein cause me to wonder and to inquire.

"In Section 1 it is declared: 'We believe the only rule and standard according to which all dogmas and teachers are to be esteemed and judged are nothing else than the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.' My question in that connection is: Why qualify the Scriptures with *prophetic* and *apostolic*? In other words, are we to gather from this statement that there are Scriptures which are neither prophetic nor apostolic; that there are portions thereof which may not be used as a standard by which to judge?

"In Section 5 this declaration: 'We therefore accept the Scriptures as the infallible truth of God in all matters that pertain to His revelation and our salvation.' What as to matters that do not pertain to His revelation and our salvation? Are some portions of the Scriptures not infallible? Is not that a plausible inference?

"It would appear to this writer that in Section 6 this position is contradicted when it is asserted: 'Therefore we believe that the whole body of Scripture in all its parts is the Word of God.' E. A. S."

The President of Augustana College (Augustana Synod Institution) Criticizes Missouri.—In reply to a letter Dr. Bergendoff, president of Augustana College, in Rock Island, Ill., wrote as follows (his answer was published in the *Bulletin* of his school and the part here given was reprinted in the *Lutheran* (U. L. C.): "You inquire whether the Augustana Synod could subscribe to doctrinal statements already drawn up by the Missouri Synod. I do not know if I can make myself clear in my reply without avoiding the issue, which is exactly what I do not intend. But (and I emphasize that I speak only as an individual, I have no right to speak for the synod) I must say that I question the method of attaining fellowship which consists in one party offering a document to the other to be signed on the dotted line. Indeed, it is just this method which will preclude our coming closer. It is my contention that we are to meet each other as Lutherans and not as suplicants asking for the right to be called Lutherans by others who have decided what Lutheranism is. The question is ultimately not an intellectual question and cannot be solved merely by formulae. For I believe I speak truly when I say that many Lutherans in America do not accept the Missouri Synod as the judge of their faith or of their Lutheranism. You treat us as non-Lutherans. We resent it. At once a gulf is created which now seems unbridgeable.

"I say this in no spirit of criticism. I say it rather from a wounded and anxious heart—wounded because brethren in the faith refuse to acknowledge their brethren, anxious lest any word I write widen

rather than help bridge the cleft that divides us. But I can see no other result than this, that, when Missouri has already judged all others as non-Lutherans, then she can only be left alone. And this is tragic, because we need each other.

“Insistent as the synod has always been on the faithfulness of the Church to her confessions, Augustana has wanted fellowship with other Lutherans in this country who also accept those confessions as basic to their ministry. We were members of the General Council for almost fifty years. When the United Lutheran Church was formed, we were invited to join the new body but decided to remain independent. The causes were practical and social, not doctrinal. We have for decades cooperated with the Lutherans of the General Council and, later, the U. L. C. A. in foreign missionary work. Our relationships in deaconess and educational work have been very close and cordial. Some of us have had as teachers the staunch conservatives of Mount Airy, such as Krauth, Schmauck, and Jacobs. Our life has been enriched and strengthened by these contacts. Since the dissolution of the General Council we have had organic relationship with the U. L. C. A. only indirectly, such as through the National Lutheran Council, but there is a growing friendship between many men and activities of that part of Lutheranism with our own.

“We have sprung from the Church of Sweden and for the greater part of our history have depended upon it for much of our life. Our worship, our doctrinal and devotional literature, our educational standards, our conception of the nature of the work of the Church, have been derived from this Church, whose history since the Reformation has been an inspiration for us even in this country. Edmund Burke once said that you cannot indict a nation. I would add, nor a nation’s Church. Therefore, when the Church of Sweden is attacked and criticized, I always feel that the accuser is using rather big words. The Church of Sweden contains many tendencies and elements, and I know from a year’s study in Sweden that some of the things which are said by Missouri Synod spokesmen regarding the Church of Sweden are neither true nor charitable. This disturbs me the more because we do not intend to cut ourselves off from a rich tradition and a living force which can stimulate our own thinking and deepen our own faith. The men with whom we enjoy relationships are among the leading Lutheran scholars and pastors of the present generation, and the Church of Sweden is one of the most potent parts of world Lutheranism. You mention your interest in our liturgy. The liturgy is but one of the many treasures we have received from the Church in Sweden. What Germany has meant to the Missouri Synod, Sweden has meant to the Augustana Synod, and in this sense Sweden and Lutheranism are more of a unit than Germany and Lutheranism. When, therefore, you hear it claimed that Augustana is too friendly with the Church of Sweden for fellowship with the Missouri Synod, I would ask you to remember that some one is not clear in his thinking and is asking us to commit a violation of the commandment which bids us honor father and mother if he asks us to forsake connections with that Church. There are men in Sweden with whom we have no theological sympathy; but there

are many more men in high and low positions whom we consider among the finest exponents of Lutheranism in the world today.

"I have written at considerable length, and yet I feel that I have only touched a few of the vital subjects that concern us both. Is this not in itself a token of what we are losing because we keep so aloof from each other? We are digging down our treasures and not allowing them to grow by circulation. I long for the day when we can meet, not in forums as opponents in debating societies, but as brethren who can rejoice in each other's fellowship because their fellowship is one of common faith and mutual love."

What are we to say? It grieves us to think that anybody should feel it necessary to write about us as the president of Augustana College did. His remarks were composed, we doubt not, with the evident desire of furthering the cause of the truth and should lead every Missourian to engage in a searching self-examination to see whether or not he or his church-body is guilty of the uncharitable conduct complained of. We are convinced that Missourians with practical unanimity will reply that their attitude is misunderstood. Their endeavor to express the truth which they believe in their hearts and in the possession of which they rejoice, with as much clarity as possible and their submitting such expression of their faith to others with the remark, This is where we stand; will you share our position? is regarded as "a method of attaining fellowship which consists in one party offering a document to the other to be signed on the dotted line." Their position, a self-evident one and acknowledged as correct in all other realms, that nomenclature, if it is to be recognized, must be based on facts, and that the mere name "Lutheran" does not suffice to make one a Lutheran is considered an attitude expecting others to come "as suppliants asking for the right to be called Lutherans." Their protest against uninterrupted fellowship between the State Church of Sweden and the Augustana Synod while the former tolerates much modernistic teaching in its midst, is looked upon as a call urging Augustana to transgress the commandment inculcating honoring one's parents and not rather as an admonition to heed the word of Jesus "If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple," Luke 14:26. If Dr. Bergendoff wishes to receive from us the confession that we Missourians are poor, fallible human beings, compelled to walk the way to heaven in constant watchfulness, lest thinking they stand they might fall, we shall give it to him at once. But we hope he believes us when we say that it is just this anxiety about our soul's salvation which impels us to practise loyalty to the Scriptures and to follow the course outlined in the Word of God for the disciples of Jesus Christ, even if such a course should mean isolation and conflict.

A.

A Wrong Way of Promoting Lutheran Unity.—In the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* of January, 1939, Rev. William P. Christy publishes an article having the heading "The Middle West and Lutheran Unity," from which the *Lutheran* quotes the following paragraphs:

"All self-respecting Lutherans should desire most sincerely to contribute the best that they have to a nation-wide Church; but at the

same time they should encourage one another to believe that what is best in any part cannot be lost in a merger that is prompted and guided by the Holy Ghost and that that which is inferior in any part cannot survive such a merger.

“There is a spirit of legalism that pervades many of the ranks of Mid-Western Lutherans, a kind of approach to the truth of God which insists on ‘book, chapter, and verse’ for all the ‘eye-blinks’ of life and must be undergirded by the authority of print on paper for every conscious breath in order to be assured of full salvation. In its last analysis this resolves itself into a conception of the Holy Scriptures as a mechanical work of the Holy Spirit, inerrant in every word and detail in their original form and held by some to be literally so even in the form which we now possess. This legalistic spirit may account for the rigid conditions that are laid down as prerequisites to full fellowship. Yet the evangelical spirit which characterized the early Church did not exclude those who combined remnants of the Law with interpretations of the Gospel. It was the Judaizing tendencies which caused divisions among the brethren. Yet the early Church was big enough to include them all. A shift of emphasis is needed by many today to a more evangelical approach to the truth of God, one that centers unconditionally on the Son of God and man’s Savior, Jesus Christ, by faith in whom all values are established and all problems solved. A more complete turn in that direction would hasten the day of better understanding.”

If Pastor Christy is truly concerned about Lutheran unity, he certainly follows the wrong method of bringing it about. Everybody will see at once that the attitude toward the Scriptures which he opposes is not fairly described by him but that what he depicts is a caricature. How often must confessional Lutherans repeat that their teaching of the doctrine of verbal inspiration does not imply a “mechanical” process! Furthermore, that insistence on loyalty to everything that the Scriptures say does not mean that a person is taking a legalistic attitude, is sufficiently evident from the course of our Savior Himself, who, in taking His stand on the Scriptures and saying, “It is written,” furnished us the great example which we endeavor to follow. A.

The Need of a Teaching Ministry. — Under this heading, Theodore R. Ludlow, in the *Anglican Theological Review* (Vol. XX, No. 4), appeals for better instruction of the adult church-membership for spiritual growth, a subject which certainly must interest also our own ministers, especially in view of the fact that at present many adult members come to us from other religious circles or from such as are entirely non-religious. We quote a number of statements which, we think, contain much food for thought. The author says among other things: “Little or no systematic effort is made to guide and continue the integration of the individual’s personality in the face of the constantly new problems which he has to meet in political, social, moral, and religious spheres. In the latent spiritual capacity of our adult members lies the greatest undeveloped resource of our Church. The ability of these members to solve their own problems as well as the problems of their fellow-men lies in their own hands in proportion to their understanding of

their function as necessary coworkers with God and their willingness to increase their spiritual capacity, so that they may become still more effective workers. The tragedy of the situation is that too few of our priests know how to teach their normal adult people the process of continuous spiritual growth. Too many of them presuppose an understanding of the spiritual self on the part of the laity. As a matter of fact our people do not understand their own spiritual capacity or how to develop it, and until the conflicts arising out of those facts are resolved in their own lives, they are incapable of adequately facing other human problems even when they have the will to do so. . . . The implication is that, if you know how to teach a child, you know how to teach an adult. The facts of the case are quite different. Adults have their own characteristics, interests, and motivations, which are radically different from those of childhood. . . . Christ did most of His work with normal adults and was able to increase the educability of grown people. Under His skilful teaching they had new spiritual experiences, received new insights into reality, and gave themselves to new loyalties. Having held them to an ideal, He put them to work to realize that ideal in their own lives by sending them out to teach still other people the character and purpose of God. . . . Ours is the privilege and the task of awakening our people to their own potentiality and of providing the nurturing means by which their latent powers may grow and express themselves by service. Ours is the responsibility for seeing to it that men are trained, so that as followers of the Master they may 'go about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogs.'—The few sentences which we could quote here nevertheless bring before us a problem which today is of prime importance. How to solve the problem must be every active pastor's concern. Here the sermon—the minister's rifle and bayonet, as some one has expressed it—must be relied upon to do its proper share; but the sermon alone will not suffice. There must be additional educational factors. In the past we have rightly given much emphasis to our Christian day-schools as means of indoctrinating our youthful members. Today indoctrination must be enlarged and carried on through the high-school and college ages. But even there it dare not stop; for then come the men and women in their prime of life who, too, must be vitalized for Christian growth in service. After that we must win for continued and yet greater service those faithful "older few" who have proved the backbone of our churches and their constant, willing burden-bearers. Certainly the problem is of immense importance and should be discussed by us in all circles where we have opportunity to urge it. Our greatest foe, after all, is spiritual decay in knowledge and service.

J. T. M.

Hall Caine and Emil Brunner Destructive Critics.—In *Christianity Today* (Vol. 9, No. 2) the Rev. Dr. Oswald T. Allis (scholarly orthodox Calvinist, affiliated with Machen's Westminster group after long and excellent service at Princeton Seminary) subjects Hall Caine's posthumous *Life of Christ* (Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1938) to a searching criticism. Caine's *Life of Christ* itself is a work of 1,300 pages, so that Allis's "appraisal" must needs become a rather lengthy article. Briefly expressed, what the "appraisal" shows is that Caine's belief concerning

Christ is closely Fosdickian; for, while he denies every distinctively Christian doctrine (belief in an inspired and infallible Word of God is "blasphemous"; the miracles "supposedly" performed by Christ are "unauthentic and impossible"; the stories of Christ's virgin birth and resurrection are like the "mirage in the desert, which dissolves at the next movement of the setting sun"; etc.), he nevertheless poses as a Christian, rejuvenating the ancient faith, yet leaving it intact. Dr. Allis says of him: "Caine subjects all of this glorious Gospel of the grace of God to a merciless, a truly devastating criticism, which leaves it in ruins and, if carried to a logical extreme, would end in utter skepticism. Yet he seems to believe that he can retain everything that is really vital to Christian faith; if not as fact, at least as an ideal which is truer than the truth." (P. 85.) But it is not on this account that we refer to Professor Allis's excellent article. At its close Dr. Allis compares Hall Caine's destructive criticism to that of the Theology of Crisis (Barth, Brunner, Otto, etc.) with its new category of the "superhistorical," of which he says: "If we have any understanding of the nature of this category, it is one to which such 'recorded facts' of Scripture as are considered valuable doctrinally, though indefensible historically, can be referred, instead of discarding them as worthless, denouncing them as false or relegating them to the realm of myth, legend, or allegory. For those who are prepared to accept the negative conclusions of naturalistic criticism and at the same time desire to retain a substantial content of the Christian faith, this category of the 'superhistorical' would seem to be almost ideal." To show how well Higher Critic Caine and Higher Critic Brunner seem to agree, he next quotes from the latter's book *The Mediator* (English translation, 1934), in particular from the chapter "The Christian Faith and Historical Research," in which Brunner declares: "Thus, even if we limit the formulation of our problem to the fact of the life of Jesus, here also, however, the general statement must be repeated: *Faith must neither be able to hold firm to everything, nor could it surrender everything without coming to an end of itself.* That is, faith may indeed be combined with criticism of the Biblical tradition about the life of Jesus, perhaps *even with a very radical form of criticism.* But it is not possible to combine faith with every kind of criticism; for instance, it cannot be combined with the kind of criticism which denies the existence of Jesus altogether or with that which represents Him as a psychopathic individual or as a proletarian revolutionary. Indeed, in principle the question can only be answered thus: Faith can be combined with all kinds of historical criticism which do not alter the historical image of the existence of Jesus to such an extent that—so far as faith is concerned—it would be impossible to understand the apostolic testimony to Christ." (P. 168.) Dr. Allis then asks: "How shall we estimate Caine's book in the light of this statement? Are we to infer that, according to the Crisis Theology as understood by Professor Brunner, Christian faith is to be regarded as compatible with such radical criticism as Hall Caine indulges in?" "Brunner and Caine," he goes on to say, "are both polemic against the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of Scripture. Brunner seems to regard such a doctrine as inimical to faith. And both regard the doctrine of the Virgin

Birth as a liability, a stumbling-block to faith today." He next requests Brunner to review Caine's book and to state in simple, non-technical language at what point he would part company with Hall Caine. In conclusion Dr. Allis declares: "Whatever may be the answer of the Crisis Theology to these questions, the answer of orthodoxy — that orthodoxy which both Caine and Brunner reject because it rests four-square on the plenary inspiration and divine authority of Holy Scriptures — is definite and clear. The Christ of the Scriptures is the Christ of the Christian faith. The incarnate Word is revealed in the written Word. The only real Christ is the Christ of the Bible. Skeptical criticism is therefore the arch-enemy of the Christian faith. An amicable understanding between them is impossible. A Christian faith which is willing to accept the conclusions of radical criticism has handed over the key of its castle to the enemy who aims at its destruction." All believing Christians, we think, should be grateful to Dr. Allis for his excellent "appraisal" of the radicalism of both Hall Caine and Emil Brunner. What both teach is Modernism, though they differ in degree.

J. T. M.

Southern Presbyteries Protest Against Dr. Brunner. — The *Christian Beacon*, official organ of the Faith Presbyterians (a group which separated from the Machen denomination [Westminster Seminary] on account of premillennialism and prohibition favored by them), in its issue of January 19, 1939, reports that two Southern presbyteries strongly objected to the lectures which Dr. Emil Brunner (liberal Barthian, now teaching at Princeton Seminary upon President Mackay's invitation) held at Union Theological Seminary (Presbyterian seminary, Richmond, Va., formerly Calvinistically orthodox, but infected with Liberalism like Princeton). Union Theological Seminary is sponsored by the Presbyterian Synod of North Carolina and the Synod of Virginia. To the Presbyterian Synod of North Carolina belong both protesting presbyteries, the Mecklenburg Presbytery (Greensboro, N. C.) and the Concord Presbytery. The protesting letter sent to Dr. B. R. Lacy of Union Theological Seminary by the Mecklenburg Presbytery (quoted in part) reads as follows: "Recently Dr. Emil Brunner of Zurich, Switzerland, addressed a group of ministers in Charlotte. In this address Dr. Brunner, among many other statements, while exalting Jesus Christ as the divine Son of God and the only Savior of the world, used the following language: 1. I do not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures; 2. I do not believe a thing just because I see it in the Bible; 3. The Bible is by no means free of errors, notably the story of creation, which science has proved to be erroneous. In view of many statements similar to the above and of other evidence which reveal the fact that this brother [?] is entirely out of sympathy with the historic position of our Church on inspiration and kindred subjects, we have heard with sorrow that Dr. Brunner is to visit Union Seminary at Richmond as the guest speaker of the seminary. We express to you as president our distress at bringing an outstanding man of this type into our seminary."

By the way, Dr. Brunner was to deliver only the auxiliary lectures, while Dr. John R. Mott (a mediating Modernist) was to deliver the main series. It may interest our readers to know that it was from liberal

Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, that last summer the Rev. Dr. J. Scherer, liberal U. L. C. A. pastor in that city, drew his supply pastor while on a lengthy vacation. Dr. Brunner's views on the Bible, set forth above, are very similar to those expressed for several years in official periodicals of the United Lutheran Church. They, too, deny the verbal inspiration of Scripture and hold that it contains errors. Are Barthian influences governing large areas and leading groups in the U. L. C. A.? But after all is said, Barthianism, especially in its Brunnerian type, is only a new form of modernistic rationalism, which in recent times has been rejected again and again by orthodox Calvinistic divines. It repudiates both the *sola Scriptura* and the *sola gratia* in the sense of the Reformation. J. T. M.

Pius XI Deceased.—When on February 10 Pope Pius XI died, eighty-one years old, the daily press was fulsome in its praise of the Pontiff as a great and good man. All will agree that in comparison with John XXIII, Alexander VI, and Julius II the late Pope stands before us as a model of sanctity. We are not surprised to see him differ markedly from the predecessors mentioned because it must be said that since the days of the Protestant Reformation the times are past when a Pope, pretending to be the head of Christendom, can conduct himself as an exponent of Epicureanism, if not in theory, then at any rate in practice. But has the Papacy changed so that we no longer have to declare its incumbent to possess all the features of the Antichrist as described in 2 Thess. 2? Let no one entertain such a delusion. The chief characteristics which have made the Roman See what it is, the anathematization of the doctrine of justification by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, and the arrogant assumption of power belonging to Christ alone, continue. Pope Pius XI did not renounce one iota of these deadly errors. While he interested himself much in social questions and made utterances which were widely hailed as establishing principles of justice and fairness in the relations of employers and employees, he did not recede one inch from those false teachings which our Confessions ascribe to the Papacy and condemn and which subvert the very foundation of Christianity. It is reported that upon being informed of his election he said, "I protest before the members of the Sacred College that I have at heart the safeguarding and defense of the rights of the Church and of the prerogatives of the Holy See." This promise, it must be admitted, he faithfully kept. That through him thirty-one "saints" were added to the list of people that have received canonization and 531 others were included among those declared "beatified" furnished an indication that he did not intend to leave the paths of the old doctrine.

America, the weekly of the Jesuits, says in an article by Edmund A. Walsh: "Pius XI, obviously, will take his place in history as the Pope of the Conciliation. He will likewise be distinguished as the Pope of Catholic Action and of great encyclicals such as *Quadragesimo Anno*, but in the opinion of the present writer his early recognition of the danger to the world inherent in Communism and Bolshevism will merit a high place among the greatest of Popes. As early as 1922 His Holiness took a definite stand by presenting to the powers assembled

at the Genoa Conference a memorandum on the menace to human liberty in Soviet Russia, together with a petition for guarantees from the Russian Government. Had the statesmen of Europe then heeded the warning and shown the same prudent foresight manifested by Pius XI, they would not today be faced by the ominous specter of Communism endangering the peace of the world."

In our opinion the *régime* of this Pope will be chiefly remembered for the restoration of temporal power to the Papacy, giving it a visible kingdom, which, though insignificant in size, nevertheless satisfies the Archimedean condition "Furnish me but a spot to stand on!" The bringing about of concordats with various states, the centralization of control in Rome over all the Roman Catholic theological seminaries throughout the world, the increase in the number of bishops, were means by which he furthered his plans. Shrewd, versatile, industrious, able to use reverses for the arousing of sympathy for himself and his Church, he advanced the interests of the gigantic machine of which he was the head. A.

Does This Make It Unanimous? — This is taken from an advertisement in *America* of December 10, 1938, signed by Father Bernard A. Cullen, Director-General of the Marquette League for Catholic Indian Missions, New York. The petition of the Rev. Abel Caillouet, heartily endorsed by the Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, Archbishop of New Orleans, for aid in erecting a combination chapel and school for his Terrebonne Indians is quoted:

"What good could we not accomplish among our Indians if we could only start a Catholic school and build a chapel for them! The non-Catholic sects have understood the importance of such work, and they have already entered into the fold of our Catholic Indians. . . . Under our very eyes we see our Catholic Indians drift away from the Church. Yet, how forbid them entirely from frequenting the Protestant school when it is a choice between that and continued illiteracy? Some parents say that their children attend the non-Catholic school merely to learn how to read and write and not to change their religion. How hard it is, however, to draw the line between instruction and influence! Other parents, with a faith well worthy of heroes, flatly refuse to send their children to the non-Catholic school and prefer to keep them home in their illiteracy rather than expose them to the danger of losing their faith. How can the Church fail them in their loyalty? The wolf is already in the fold; how can the shepherd stand by idly? Something *must* be done, and quickly, if the faith is to be preserved among these outcasts of all but Christ. . . . In spite of many drawbacks they have kept the faith for over a century through the zeal and efforts of tireless missionaries and by the grace of God. Many are about to lose it now; alas! some have already lost it. To remain indifferent to their plight would betray a lack of faith on our part."

A century of loyal membership in the Roman Catholic Church, a century of service by zealous and tireless Roman Catholic missionaries, — and still they are illiterate! And not because they want to remain so, not because they refuse an education; no, they desire it,

they plead for it; in a hundred years they do not get it. But now the wolf of Protestantism enters the field and offers to supply the want; and suddenly "the Church" recognizes the need of education! Are we right when we say: The Roman Catholic hierarchy prefers to keep the membership of the Church ignorant? Only to meet competition do they favor and promote public education.

T. H.

A Catholic Bishop in Denmark. — *America* reports: "For the first time since the Protestant Reformation Denmark will see a native Danish bishop exercising jurisdiction in his own land. The Most Rev. Theodore Suhr, O. S. B., Titular Bishop of Balecio and Vicar Apostolic of Denmark, was consecrated in Rome on January 16. He was born a Lutheran in 1896 and became a Catholic in 1926. On February 3, the Feast of St. Ansgar, Apostle of Scandinavia, he will take charge of his see."

T. H.

The "Living Church" reports: "Membership of churches in the United States is 64,156,895, according to figures released by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The great majority of the members, or 52,379,579, are more than thirteen years old. The total number of churches in the country is given as 248,410 and the number of different religious bodies as 200. Totals were assembled by the Rev. Dr. Herman C. Weber, editor of the *Year-book of American Churches*. Dr. Weber's figures show, according to the *New York Times*, that membership of churches in the United States has increased twice as fast as the population in 1937. Increase in churches was 1,743. 'Significant of the trend toward church unity,' the Federal Council's report points out, 'is the fact that 97.3 per cent. of the total membership is in the 50 largest bodies — all with a membership of 50,000 or over. The small bodies, approximately 160, account for only 2.7 per cent. of this great church population. Moreover, the former total of 212 bodies has been reduced by "mergers and disappearances" to 200. The membership thirteen years of age and over increased by 963,396 during the period covered.'"

F. E. M.

Brief Items. — The conditions of the Jews, spiritually, physically, morally, are deplorable and staggering. As typical of the Jews in the United States in general, the Jews of New York present a striking illustration; for the latest official figures show that the total number of contributing members of all the synagogues in the five boroughs of Greater New York is less than fifty thousand! And this includes Reformed as well as Orthodox synagogues! Where are the rest of the two million? Drifting into agnosticism, anarchy, Socialism, atheism, infidelity. No people in America are so desperately in need of the Gospel today as the Jews. (Quoted in the *Presbyterian*.)

Denmark has its first woman preacher. Miss Ruth Vermehren recently completed her course of theological training and has been called to serve as assistant pastor among the prisoners at Christianshavn. It was only a few months ago, after long consideration, that Norway finally approved of women in the ministry. Reports indicate that Sweden is discussing the topic with considerable heat. — *N. C. L. Bulletin*.

In the *Episcopal Recorder*, a monthly published in the interest of

the Reformed Episcopal Church, the editor, expressing a warning against Modernists, says: "They call the substitutionary atonement a religion of the shambles, a slaughter-house religion. They say, It makes no difference whether Christ was born of a virgin or not. They scoff at the idea of the verbal inspiration of the Word of God. They talk of all religions as a way to God. And, mark it well, this is within the Church." More power to such witness-bearing!

Dr. Schweitzer, noted missionary, musician, and New Testament scholar, was expected to be in Europe during January. Some of his friends in London hoped he would spend his sixty-fourth birthday (January 14) in that city.

As far as we know, the seminary property at Shekow has not been damaged at all by the war. (In *Lutheran Companion*.)

A writer in the *Lutheran Companion*, referring to conditions in Sweden, says: "At present there is quite a High-church movement among some of the Swedish clergy and among students of theology. In some instances this borders very closely on High-church Anglicanism. It might be noted also in this connection that Anglican theology is highly spoken of in Sweden today, and it is a question whether it might not to some degree even here [*i. e.*, in Sweden] replace that of Germany."

In the *Lutheran Companion* of February 9, 1939, an article appears written by Erich Floreen of St. Paul, Minn. The article is written against the new theology in Sweden, one of whose exponents is Bishop Gustav Aulén. The article is valuable; but what we find disconcerting in it is this sentence, "Dr. Aulén is within his rights in assailing the theory of the verbal inspiration of the Bible." It is with deep sorrow that we see this writer speak of the teaching of verbal inspiration as a theory which may be assailed with impunity.

More than two and a half million dollars have been raised of the ten-million-dollar Sesquicentennial Fund for Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., according to an announcement by Dr. Lewis S. Mudge, acting general secretary of the Board of Christian Education. The campaign will extend through 1939 and 1940.

At the divinity school of the University of Chicago Dr. Shirley J. Case retired as dean last July. His place has been taken by Dr. Ernest John Colwell, chairman of the department of the New Testament. Dr. Charles W. Gilkey of the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel has been made associate dean of the divinity school.

The New York correspondent of the *Christian Century* writes in a report on a lecture at Union Seminary by Dr. Emil Brunner, formerly of Zurich, now temporarily of Princeton Theological Seminary: "A few Presbyterian Fundamentalists have not been very happy that the neo-orthodox continental theologians who have been added to the staff at Princeton have not turned out to be the bulwark they were expected to be of the Fundamentalist brand of orthodoxy." Among the views ascribed to him is the one combating the idea that "all of the Bible was a revelation on a level with that part of it which leads to Christ." But on account of his evident Barthianism "old-fashioned Liberals were not happy with this neoorthodoxy either."

In Hyderabad, belonging to the Dornakal diocese (Anglican) of Southern India, there are now 220,000 Christians in a population numbering 17,877,000. Its bishop is a native, who is the first one of his countrymen to be so honored. From all over the world moneys are sent by Anglicans and Episcopalians supporting this work.

Lord Hugh Cecil is reported to have said a very true thing concerning the function of the Church and the Christian ministry: "The Church is not a study circle nor a theological college; it is rather an evangelist or a prophet." How well this agrees with the teaching of the Lutheran dogmaticians that theology is a *habitus practicus theosdotos!*

Dr. Alvin Johnson, director of the New School for Social Research, writing in the *Survey Graphic* of the more than eight hundred anti-Jewish organizations reported for this country, lists as the most important: Silver Shirts, Defenders of the Christian Faith, Industrial Defense Association, American Nationalist Confederation, James True Associates, Knights of the White Camellia, German-American Bund, and Father Coughlin's "one-man show." Dr. Johnson credits these organizations with about half of the six million adherents claimed by them. He warns: "We are dunces if we refuse to face the menace of anti-Semitism; weaklings, if we fail to supply our resources in combating it." — *Christian Century*.

The Union of American Hebrew Congregations is said to have planned a laymen's tour which will take a committee of one hundred eminent Jewish leaders into the various parts of the United States and Canada. The intention is to make this a propaganda for religious liberty and for acquainting people with "the truth about the Jew." The work is to be done in April and May.

According to press reports Dr. Charles W. Welch, the moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly, is very optimistic concerning the union of the Northern and Southern Presbyterians and the Episcopalians. He was so bold as to prophesy that these churches would become united within three years.

With respect to the Mission Conference in Madras held in December, 1938, we have not as yet seen comprehensive reports. One item which came to our notice says that fifty per cent. of the delegates came from the younger churches of Asia, Africa, South America, and the Pacific Islands.

How active Roman Catholic leaders are we can glean from a report in the *Christian Advocate*, which says that almost every one of the more than one hundred dioceses of Roman Catholicism in the United States has its own weekly religious journal. Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago thinks that his paper, *The New World*, may become a daily by the end of 1939. We are happy to note that the circulation of some of our own church-papers is not anemic but in a healthy condition.

One reads with sorrow that a meeting of Oregon ministers held in Portland went on record as urging the abolition of capital punishment, charging it to be "a work of barbarism, not a crime-deterrent, and sadistic in its influence." A.