

# Concordia Theological Monthly



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# THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

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## RAUSCHENBUSCH AFTER FIFTY YEARS

The *Christian Century* (April 17, 1957), under this heading, scrutinizes the work and value of Walter Rauschenbusch, whose *Christianity and the Social Gospel* appeared in 1907. As Prof. D. E. Smucker of Bethany Biblical Seminary, Chicago, remarks, Rauschenbusch published the book with considerable misgivings and was greatly surprised when its appearance was "like lightning striking a haystack" and it became "the publishing sensation of that year." Finding his "social gospel theology" so very popular, Rauschenbusch published several other books on the subject, of which *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, placed on the market a year before his death, "is considered by many his most lasting contribution." Rauschenbusch died in 1918 in his early fifties "with heart broken by tragedy and body poisoned by cancer." The writer says *inter alia*: "Rauschenbusch was nurtured on a combination of Lutheran and Baptist pietism. Pietism itself favored welfare institutions for the orphan and the widow. Thus pietistic perspectives merged with a more complex institutional analysis and a prophetic concern for people to make Rauschenbusch what he was. He was a sectarian in the sense in which Ernst Troeltsch used the term. The most controversial aspect of Rauschenbusch's thought and attitude is his relation to liberal theology. In many ways he appears to be a child of the Enlightenment through Kant, Ritschl, and Schleiermacher. Enlightenment also influenced his institutional social analysis: characteristic themes of progress, skepticism of dogma, emphasis on the religious value of socialism and on the economic interpretation of ethics are frequent in his writings." JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

## ADOLF VON HARLESS

Under this brief heading *Nachrichten der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche in Bayern* (February 1957) recalls to the memory of its readers, on the occasion of his 150th birthday, the work of Professor Harless in behalf of sound Lutheranism in Germany. Dr. Harless was born at Nuremberg in 1806 and died at Munich in 1879. After having studied philology, law, and philosophy, especially Spinoza and Hegel, he came under the influence of Tholuck at Halle. In Luther's writings and the Lutheran Confessions he found gradually the truth for which he craved. In 1828 he became professor of theology at Erlangen, where in 1834 he wrote his valuable *Commentary on Ephesians*, his *Theological*

*Encyclopedia*, and his *Christian Ethics*. In 1845 he became professor at Leipzig, in 1850 court preacher at Dresden, and in 1852 president of the *Oberkonsistorialrat* at Munich, where he exerted a great and wholesome influence on the spread of the true Lutheran doctrine. Harless lived at a time when such prominent theologians as Vilmar, Kliefoth, Hoefling, Theodosius Harnack, and Johannes von Hofmann were trying to direct theological thought back into Lutheran channels. They did not always succeed, nor were they themselves consistently in accord with Scripture, Luther, and the Lutheran Confessions. But their influence, on the whole, and especially that of Harless, for Lutheran doctrine was decisive and extensive. The writer of the article, Dean Heckel of Munich, believes that the work of Harless led to the founding of the *Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche* under Bishop Meiser. His tombstone, erected by his friends, bears his name "Harless" and beneath this the inscription: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ" (Phil. 3:7). Toward the end of his life Harless voiced but one wish: "*Wenn ich nur selig werde*", "if only I shall be saved."

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

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

*Williamsburg, Va.*—Spiritual hunger is the "sign of the times," and it has resulted in a virtual mass movement of Americans in search of religious faith. This conclusion was reached by a group of Protestant leaders and theologians in a major report to a meeting of the National Council of Churches' General Board here. The report, two years in preparation, cited the trend as a phenomenon of "impressive magnitude" and "a remarkable manifestation of the need for effective evangelism today."

Drafted by Prof. Robert L. Calhoun of Yale Divinity School, it was presented here as the findings of a 24-member General Board commission to study evangelism. Noting "the widely recognized resurgence of conscious concern for religion," the report said that "an almost startling number" of business and professional men, white collar workers, teachers and students, journalists, authors, and men in public office are listening to spokesmen for Christianity in the hope of finding some security or satisfaction they have not found elsewhere."

"Newspapers, popular magazines, religious broadcasts, vast popular assemblies, public discussions, and private conversations," the report said, "all bear witness to the impressive magnitude of this 'sign of the times.'"

Behind the drive toward religious faith, the report said, is a complex

of personal motives. "Like other mass movements," it declared, "this one moves on many levels, from superficial quest of new emotional satisfactions or ways of escape from hard reality to the profound discontents of honest, vigorous, penitent men and women in revolt against shams and half realities, truly crying out for the living God."

Christian evangelism, the report continued, must show concern for both the mature and the immature, the clear-sighted and the confused seekers. "All alike need to find themselves face to face with the God and Father of Jesus Christ in His unyielding judgment and infinite mercy—both those who already know the depth of their need for healing and those who are trying to settle for something less than the radical surgery of redemption," the report declared.

Asserting that the nation's spiritual hunger exists against a backdrop of a "world in turmoil," the commission warned that "the driving forces of history . . . are now racing at high speed . . . long-repressed emotions and explosive desires—for freedom, prestige, power, vengeance—are breaking through old restraints, and disrupting familiar ways and accepted standards of right." Modern technology, it added, is suddenly supplying "in dizzy profusion" for both good and ill tools "that make men giants in speed and strength" without making them gentle and wise. As a result, the report said, individuals, interest groups, whole peoples are haunted by loneliness, "corroding" anxieties, bewilderment, and mistrust.

"Pagan gospels of race, national aggrandizement," it said, "propagated through the mass media of controlled press and radio, military displays, party-line school systems, police networks, and political pressures, are decrying gentleness as weakness, fomenting distrust and conflict, and appealing all too effectively to men's self-interest, and to their deep cravings for companionship, emotional security, self-respect, and some higher power to serve."

The cure for the sickness of such a time, according to the commission, is not to be found in more technical prowess, factual knowledge, economic or political realignments, but in "effective proclamation of the Gospel." "In our time, as in earlier times," the group said, "effective proclamation of the Gospel is needed to make these other resources, duly ordered . . . under God, ministers of life and not death. Evangelism in our time must speak to the deep needs of men for radical healing—deeper than any conscious desire for comfort and success."

The document was presented to the General Board by Dr. F. Eppling Reinartz of New York, secretary of the United Lutheran Church in

America, and a commission member. It is expected to have a major influence on many of the "present and developing" program activities of the National Council of Churches.

*Washington, D. C.*—Once fierce head-hunters of the Western Solomon Islands now have a Bible version of their own. Three European and three native Seventh-Day Adventist pastors have completed a translation of the Bible into the Marovo language, denominational officials here reported. They said 3,000 copies of the 1,360-page volume have been printed as the initial run.

The Marovo people today are mostly Christians. There are 17 Adventist churches on their islands. Kata Ragozo, one of the Bible translators, is president of the Adventist's Western Solomon Islands Missions. "Some linguists believe production of the Bible in Marovo will have a considerable influence on the language of the Solomons," the announcement here said, "and that Marovo could become the standard language for the 100,000 people of that area."

*Washington, D. C.*—Juvenile delinquency increased nearly 20 per cent in 1956 over the previous year, Director J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation reported here. He said 1956 was the worst year for juvenile crime in the 26 years the FBI has been compiling national reports on police arrests.

Mr. Hoover gave these figures in the annual FBI "Uniform Crime Report": A total of 234,474 children under 18 were arrested in 1956. They were charged with crimes ranging from murder to petty larceny. There were nearly 39,000 more arrests last year than in 1955. Of juveniles who came into contact with the police more than 40 per cent had not yet reached their 15th birthday. More than 3,000 of these young people were arrested for homicide, rape, or assault with a deadly weapon. Youths under 18 represented almost two thirds of all offenders arrested for auto theft, 50 per cent of those arrested for larceny, 53 per cent of those arrested for burglary, and 24 per cent of those arrested for armed robbery. Some 139 juveniles were charged with murder in 1956, compared with 94 in 1955. A total of 840 were arrested for rape, 1,971 for aggravated assault, and 5,580 for other assaults. Two hundred and ninety-seven were arrested for narcotics law violations, compared with 249 the previous year.

The FBI report showed that 46,477 children were taken into custody for theft, as against 38,750 the previous year. Those who got in trouble with the authorities for auto theft totaled 18,672, compared with 14,621 the previous year. Liquor law violations brought about the arrest of 5,728 juveniles, an increase of 1,525 over the previous

year. In addition, drunken driving resulted in 631 teen-age arrests, gambling in 516, and drunkenness in 6,489. The latter figure was a rise of almost 20 per cent over teen-age drunkenness arrests in 1955.

The report noted one reduction in juvenile delinquency. It said 155 teen-age girls were arrested for prostitution in 1956, compared with 221 in 1955. Other sex offenses, however, resulted in the arrest of 3,038 teen-agers in 1956, as against 2,774 in 1955.

There were 581 teen-age arrests on charges of forgery or counterfeiting, while 311 were booked for embezzlement or fraud. Disorderly conduct, the charge which embraces most teen-age "pranks," resulted in 25,444 arrests or only a little more than 10 per cent of all juvenile detentions.

#### BRIEF ITEMS FROM THE NEWS BUREAU OF THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

*Geneva.*—An increase of more than one million members during the past year brings the total number of Lutherans in the world to nearly 71 million, it was reported here by the Lutheran World Federation. The figure represents about 33 per cent of world Protestantism. Statistics gathered by the LWF in the preparation of its newly published directory show 70,770,355 Lutherans in 150 churches, missions, and groups in 69 countries, an increase of 1,373,144 over a year ago.

The total, it was emphasized by federation officials, is a conservative estimate, since Lutherans in countries without organized churches or missions were not included. For example, the small German Lutheran congregations outside Germany were not counted, and in several countries, among them China, Lithuania, and Russia, membership figures were not available.

Of the total, 48,977,258 Lutherans are members of the 57 churches in 29 countries that are affiliated with the LWF, or 69 per cent of all Lutherans; 16,165,000 are members of Union Churches in Germany, and 5,628,097 belong to other Lutheran churches and groups.

The three largest centers of Lutheranism in the world are found in Germany, with 37.6 million; Scandinavia, with 19 million; and the United States, with 7.4 million.

The largest Lutheran Church in the world is the Church of Sweden, with 7,290,112 members. It reported the greatest increase in membership during the past year, with 700,000 additions. Second largest of the Lutheran Churches is the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony, with 4,413,699 members. Third is the Church of Denmark, with 4,304,000 members. The largest Lutheran Church outside the mem-

bership of the LWF is The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in the United States, with 2,076,379 members.

The second-largest Protestant Church in the world, according to the *World Christian Handbook* of 1952, is the Presbyterian and Reformed, with more than 41 million members.

*Philadelphia.*—A progress report on the new *Service Book and Hymnal* of the Lutheran Church in America indicates that the book may be in use in congregations late this year or early in 1958. A joint venture of the eight church bodies participating in the National Lutheran Council, with nearly five million members, the *Service Book* will contain more than 600 hymns and a new and uniform order of services representing the best in Lutheran liturgical traditions.

Accompanying the *Service Book's* appearance will be a *Lectionary* containing the Old Testament lessons and the Epistles and Gospels appointed for the festivals and holy days of the church year. The *Lectionary* will contain either the Authorized King James Version text or the Revised Standard Version text of the lessons from the Bible.

After the music edition and the lectionaries are published, work will begin on additional volumes which will follow in this order: The *Altar Service Book*, the *Occasional Services*, a pastor's handbook of the minor orders; the text edition of the *Service Book and Hymnal*, a handbook of the hymnal containing an annotated commentary on the hymns, their texts, authors, tunes, and composers, and finally a companion to the liturgy which will provide the pastors with a commentary on the rubrics of the book.

To help local congregations to an understanding and appreciation of the book and the proper use of its several features, a program of introduction has been planned to begin next fall. A national assembly has been set for September 25 to 26, probably in Chicago, to which representatives of the jurisdictional divisions of the participating churches would come for a two-day period of instruction. At this assembly, using preprint booklets containing the three musical settings of the liturgy, plus matins and vespers, as well as prepared recordings of these services, the representatives will be trained to carry the program of instruction to their respective divisions.

A continent-wide schedule of area meetings will follow, with pastors, choir directors, organists, choristers, and interested lay people invited to attend. The final phase of the program will continue in the local parishes to familiarize members with the services in anticipation of the book's appearance.

Plans are also being made to introduce the services from the book at the third assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Minneapolis next August.

*New York.*—The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the largest Lutheran body which is not a member of the Lutheran World Federation, has appointed fifteen official visitors to the federation's third assembly at Minneapolis this summer. The international conclave is scheduled for August 15 to 25. Heading the Missouri Synod delegation will be Dr. John W. Behnken, President of the two-million-member denomination; Dr. Arnold H. Grumm, First Vice-President; Dr. Herman Harms, Second Vice-President; and Dr. Oliver R. Harms, Fourth Vice-President.

Other visitors appointed by Missouri are Rev. Arthur C. Nitz, President of the California-Nevada District; the Rev. William H. Kohn, President of the Southeastern District; and the Rev. Hugo A. Gamber, President of the Minnesota District; Dr. Alfred O. Fuerbringer, president of Concordia Theological Seminary at St. Louis, Mo., and Dr. Walter A. Baepfer, president of Concordia Theological Seminary at Springfield, Ill.; Dr. Lawrence Meyer, Planning Counselor of Synod; Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, Director of Public Relations; Dr. Clarence Peters, chairman of the Board for Young People's Work; Dr. O. H. Schmidt, Secretary of Foreign Missions; Mr. Henry W. Buck, member of the Synod's Board of Directors; and Dr. Otto A. Dorn, general manager of Concordia Publishing House.

The LWF has sent invitations to all nonmember Lutheran Churches and groups in the world to appoint representatives to attend the assembly as official visitors. Only federation members may send voting delegates.

In addition to the Missouri Synod appointees from America, its mission groups in Japan, Nigeria, Uruguay, and Venezuela have accepted invitations to send representatives to the 11-day meeting.

To date 85 official visitors have been named by nonmember Lutheran Churches and groups from 23 countries.

*New York.*—The question of discussions with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on matters pertaining to its possible membership in the Lutheran World Federation will be discussed by the federation's executive committee when it meets at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., this summer. The committee will hold a four-day session, August 11—14, to prepare the agenda for the business sessions of the LWF's third assembly in Minneapolis, August 15—25.



At its 43d triennial convention last year the Missouri Synod declined an invitation to join the federation. It did so on the grounds that membership in the international church organization would "involve us in a union in spiritual matters with groups not in doctrinal agreement with us." At the same time the Synod expressed its "willingness to meet with official representatives of the Lutheran World Federation to discuss all points in question."

A special Committee on Doctrinal Unity in the Lutheran Church was appointed to represent Missouri in future meetings with LWF officials. These future meetings will be discussed by the federation's executive committee in Northfield.

The Missouri Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia, and three Lutheran Free Churches in Germany received invitations to join the federation after its second assembly in Hannover, Germany, in 1952. All five declined membership on doctrinal grounds.