

Concordia Theological Monthly

Continuing

LEHRE UND WEHRE

MAGAZIN FUER EV.-LUTH. HOMILETIK

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY-THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Vol. IX

April, 1938

No. 4

CONTENTS

	Page
A Course in Lutheran Theology. Th. Engelder.....	241
Professional Growth in the Study of the Confessions J. Theodore Mueller.....	257
Kleine Danielstudien. L. Fuerbringer.....	268
Sermon Study on 1 Pet. 1:3-9. Th. Laetsch.....	279
Miscellanea	291
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	296
Book Review. — Literatur	313

Ein Prediger muss nicht allein *wei-*
den, also dass er die Schafe unter-
weise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen
sein, sondern auch daneben den Woel-
fen *wehren*, dass sie die Schafe nicht
angreifen und mit falscher Lehre ver-
fuehren 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.



ARCHIVES

Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

I. Amerika

New Testament Commentary, Herbert C. Alleman, Editor. — The *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*, February, 1938, prints a review of this United Lutheran Church publication, by Dr. M. Reu. The original appeared in the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*. The translation is by Dr. E. H. Rausch. The concluding paragraphs of Dr. Reu's review read: "We took the commentary in happy anticipation and read it with the sincere desire to do justice to it. Much of it has filled us with joy and thanksgiving; other things also, it is true, caused us much heartache. If this were the work of a private individual, we could expect that the official representation would disavow the offending sections and see to it that these could have no influence on the whole of the Church. But the commentary as a whole goes out with the sanction of the Board of Publication, hence has an official character. We fear it may be a milestone in the history of the Lutheran Church in our country and retard for decades what many believed to be of the immediate future. What stands between a Church with such an official commentary and many other Lutheran churches as a separating wall is now no more only the question of verbal inspiration, which now — without being more closely defined — is disavowed at every opportunity; it is now the question of the authority of Scripture itself, not only in antiquarian things and matters of natural science, but even in religious things. The exposition of Prof. R. T. Stamm (Gettysburg) reaches deeply into the picture of Christ. If teachers of theology go to such lengths, where will their pupils land? To sow wind is to reap whirlwind.

"We write this in deep sorrow. We belong to those who hoped for the mutual recognition of the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church in America. We are united with strong bonds of friendship with many members of the United Lutheran Church. I will never forget how leading men of the same came to my assistance in the very moment when they heard of my difficulties. I know that many of their members will continue to teach and preach as true Lutherans and will never recognize a Bible that has first passed through a critical interpretation and purification as the norm for doctrine and life. But all this dare not deter from bearing witness against a current whose critical attitude towards Scripture, if it prevail, can only result in loss for the Church."

The liberal, modernistic attitude of some of the contributors to this book appears from the following excerpts from Dr. Reu's review. "The chapter on 'The Historical Relationships of Christianity,' by R. T. Stamm, is replete with many single surprising statements. We note just a few: 'The Book of Daniel was a tract written for these troubled times when King Antiochus, enraged by the failure of his plans to conquer Egypt, determined to punish the Jews for the trouble they had been making him.' 'Antiochus Epiphanes was the Darius of the Book of Daniel. He was also the Nebuchadnezzar with the golden image and the fiery fur-

nace, the king whose very fury to compel the Jews to abandon their religion was self-defeating.' 'As we have already seen in our study of the Book of Daniel, apocalyptic is essentially past history written in the future tense. The apocalypticist wrote history in the form of prediction. This does not mean that he deceived his readers by writing under the assumed name of some ancient worthy such as Daniel or Enoch or Ezra. The writers of the apocalypses and their first readers understood the literary device. It was only the succeeding generations, for whom their works were not immediately intended, who began to misunderstand them.' All this is presented not as the opinion of many present-day expositors, but as an actuality, and this in spite of the fact that then Jesus also (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14) and Paul (2 Thess. 2) and John made the 'mistake' that they transformed the apocalypse of Daniel with its 'dreams' from a book of history into a book of predictions! . . . We read on page 56: 'It [the New Testament apocalypse], too, is mainly past history written in the future tense, and like its predecessor it has suffered such misinterpretation. Its readers have treated it just as its author himself treated the Book of Daniel and the other apocalyptic material upon which he drew so heavily.'

"Now we understand why afterwards (p. 292) Mark 13 this 'little apocalypse' is not a reproduction of a speech of Jesus for the author of this chapter, but the interpolation of 'some teaching about the future which had long been current in the churches.' Now we understand why at the close of his exposition of Mark 13 concerning the second coming of Christ he writes (p. 295): 'As time passed, less stress was laid on the visible and temporal aspects of the Second Coming. The writer of the gospel of John, while recording the older form of the hope for the benefit of the more conservative Christians of his church, taught his readers that, strictly speaking, judgment is a present process and that for Christians there is no death: 'Whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die,' John 11:26. 'Jesus had come again as the "Comforter," the Holy Spirit, whom the Father had sent in His name to be resident in the hearts of believers, John 20: 21, 22; 14: 26.' In this same way liberal theology began in Germany during the 19th century; so also liberal theology round about us in our own land often maintains in the present day. But while there as here a strong reaction against it has begun, now, *post festum*, comes a Lutheran of America and carries these destructive thoughts as the result of his 'scientific' work into the circles of teachers in Sunday-school! 'For the benefit of the more conservative Christians' we can even today, following the example of John, speak of 'the older form of hope' and permit the passage 'From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead' to remain in the Apostles' Creed, knowing at the same time that, 'strictly speaking, judgment is a present process' and the coming of Christ is an inner coming, which perfects itself in the coming of the Spirit into the heart.

"The second section of the volume brings the exposition of the individual books. Here also most collaborators have done excellent work. Dr. Offermann's exposition of the Gospel according to Matthew is especially worthy of mention. . . . But this second section also includes articles of a different kind. A person is surprised, for instance, to find

statements like the following in the exposition of the Gospel according to Luke by Dr. H. C. Alleman and Dr. John Aberly: 'The story [of the Gergesene demoniac] is told in the psychology of the day. Delusional insanity was a demoniacal possession which might well seem to be the presence of ten thousand devils.' . . . We are still more surprised over statements like the following: 'The restoration of Jairus' daughter is regarded by Luke as a rising from the dead ("knowing that she was," v. 53).'

"The sorriest production in this field has again been achieved by Stamm and after him by Berkenmeyer. . . . Stamm on Mark 4:12: 'For the modern man, however, such an interpretation (i. e., Mark's interpretation) of the purpose of Jesus' teaching raises great ethical difficulties.' On Mark 5:22 ff: 'There can be little doubt that Mark meant to narrate an actual raising from the dead. It would have been inconceivable to the Christians of his day that Jesus had not done as great things as they read in the Scriptures about Elijah and Elisha. Similar stories are told of Jesus' contemporaries and followers. In Acts 9:36-42 Peter is reported to have raised Tabitha from the dead, and according to Acts 20:8-10 Paul was thought to have restored the life of Eutychus. Was the servant greater than the Lord?' Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane can only be so understood 'that even to the last he had clung to the hope that the Kingdom could be established without His actual dying.'

"W. C. Berkenmeyer of the faculty of the Philadelphia seminary writes: 'The speeches of Peter and Paul are far from verbatim. In fact, to many fine scholars (Holtzmann, Von Soden, R. Scott) the author of Acts is regarded as a possible redactor, if not the author of the Pastorals' (p. 581). . . . On 1 Tim. 2:9-15: 'We ought to regard such an allegorical exegesis of Genesis, with the belief in the literal historicity of the Biblical account of the creation of man and woman, which is implied, as part of the intellectual-philosophical *milieu* of the writer, which we need neither accept nor consider as the testimony of his religious consciousness as the inspired Christian prophet any more than we would his command of Attic Greek, his science of astronomy, or his apocalyptic interpretation of history.'" (Cf. CONC. THEOL. MTHLY., 1937, pp. 869, 393; 1935, p. 553.)

E.

Fiftieth Anniversary of the Common Service.—On this topic the Rev. George J. Muller writes thus in the *Lutheran*:

Is an anniversary worth celebrating, especially an anniversary of fifty years? Usually we make quite a big event out of such a golden anniversary, and yet here we are in 1938, the fiftieth year of the issuance of the Common Service and no plans have been publicized for the celebration of this important event in the history of our Lutheran Church in America. All Lutheran congregations in America can today be divided into two groups, liturgically; one uses the Service and the other does not. Perhaps we might make even another division, between those that use, and those that abuse, the Service.

Important as have been the various developments of our Church on American soil, none has equaled the value and importance in the life of our people of the proper use of the proper liturgy. Here is the one

way in which a measure of American Lutheran unity has been attained. We have learned to treasure the same liturgical expression of our faith and in a certain measure have achieved the possibility of singing it together. The three bodies that later formed the United Lutheran Church first cooperated in the preparation of the Common Service. Then they published it. Next they learned to use it, and finally they united their forces in one Church organization.

Though the Common Service originated outside of the Missouri Synod, it has been adopted by them, also by Augustana, and is found complete with the same music as is in the Common Service Book in the new hymnal of the American Lutheran Church. So it seems to me that in 1938 some recognition should be shown to the liturgy which has achieved the only complete unity of acceptance of any item in the practical life of the Lutheran synods of America.

What can be done about it? How can we in a measure celebrate this truly vital part of our present-day American Lutheran life in all synods?

My first suggestion would be that every pastor and every interested Lutheran should first read and study the "Preface of 1888." I know it is in the Common Service Book, but I also regret to believe that there are thousands of our pastors and more of our church-workers who have never read it at all. Unfortunately this preface is not in the hymnals of the other synods; so the only possible way that it could be brought to them would be by way of their own church-papers. And to the editors of these papers I offer this as a gentle hint.

Professor Graebner in his book on *Problems of Lutheran Unity* has a chapter on "Our Liturgical Chaos." I read it with mingled shivers of shame and despair. Not because I rejoiced in the iniquity of the Missouri Synod but because of the shame I felt that any of the pastors of our Church would thus mangle and despise their Lutheran heritage. And then I thought, too, Is our liturgical chaos in parts of our United Lutheran Church any less fearful and disgraceful than it is in other synods?

I can vividly remember the meetings of the old New York and New England Synod, when we could not even sing the Communion Service, because there were five different musical settings in use and none of us knew all five. We are gradually increasing the number of congregations that are adopting the Common Service. But how many are there that still butcher, mangle, and disfigure it beyond computation?

Let more light be shed on the inner structure of the liturgy and its proper use by papers and discussions in local ministerial associations as well as by the formation of congregational study groups. We have the literature available if we are ready to use it.

Looking back over these fifty years, we have much to be thankful for in the gradual regaining of the rich liturgical heritage of our Lutheran Church. On the other hand, looking around on our present conditions in the congregations, we can all see many ways in which the use of the Service can be improved.

What suggestions can be made for pastors and congregations in celebration of this anniversary? Here are my own, just as suggestions which can be further elaborated and expanded. There are at least six

books put out by our own Publication House that give information. *Explanation of Common Service*; *Manual of Worship*, Strodach; *Lutheran Handbook*, Traver; *Worship*, Finck; *Catechism in Christian Worship*, Swank; *Worship Booklet*, Jones; *The Common Service*, Harry; and, last but not least, a most profitable reading for pastors and musicians is to be found in the preface of the *Reed-Archer Choral Service Book*, just lately reissued by the Publication House. All or some of this reading ought to help in producing one or more inspiring sermons on "The Service and the Church-year."

The second suggestion for this golden-anniversary year is that our Sunday-school superintendents should teach the singing of the Service, part by part, to the Juniors and Intermediates and have them memorize it. This cannot be done all at once, but it can be done, with patience, in the course of the year. And then bring those children regularly to the service to share in the worship of the congregation.

The third suggestion applies to every congregation. Improve the slovenly and drawly singing of the Service. From comments of visiting pastors I gather that in most congregations slow and painful singing of the *Gloria in Excelsis* is a universal fault. Next comes faulty and slovenly phrasing, in spite of plain marking of punctuation. Why, most of us cannot even say the Lord's Prayer correctly. This is the way we pray: "Thy will be done [pause] on earth [pause] as it is in heaven." The only place the pause belongs is after the word earth, where there is a comma.

Here in the Pittsburgh district we have tried to bring improvement by means of mass conferences of choirs and singers. But surely even the isolated Lutheran congregation can, with a little study, care, and effort, decently sing the Service.

The fourth suggestion applies to the permitted variations in the singing of the Service. These are called "the Propers of the Day," and include the Introit, Gradual, and Hallelujah sentences. Perhaps the Hallelujah sentences are the most widely used; yet there are literally hundreds of pastors and congregations that do not avail themselves of this means of diversifying the Service. A simple thing; yet why is it not brought into use?

One of the finest improvements in the singing of the Service, I believe, would be the restoration of the old churchly custom of the singing of the Introit. Can it be done by a small volunteer choir? From our own experience I would say that it can. And in our experience the simple melody of the Gregorian settings as found in the *Reed-Archer Choral Service Book* is most practicable and effective. Larger choirs may prefer the setting of Matthews or Schmauk.

The fifth suggestion is that we more frequently use the Service in its fulness and completeness. Most of our congregations have Communion services four times a year. A few have them six times, and perhaps a still smaller number increase these celebrations of the Holy Supper. As a plain matter of fact we only use the Service as intended four to six times a year. Every other service which ends with the sermon, might just as well be the Matins, for it means we are using part of the Service as a minor order.

That is not the way our Lutheran people figure it out. They think the normal order is the preaching service, and that for the Communion service something is added to the regular service. No wonder that we have so many "oncens" in our congregations, who appear once a year to make their Easter Communion. Evelyn Underhill in her book *Worship*, page 281, says: "Had the Protestant churches been true to the ideals of their founders, . . . it would have led to the practise of frequent communions." Here is one way that every congregation can be led to a deeper and more spiritual life.—

The article has been submitted *in toto* because it contains valuable material and hints for all of us. A.

Presbyterian Church of America Loses Suit to Retain Name.—*Christianity Today* (February, 1938) reports that the group which seceded in 1936 from the *Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.*, to form the *Presbyterian Church of America* was enjoined by court order on January 18, 1938, from using that name. The injunction was issued by President Judge Frank Smith in Common Pleas Court Number Five, Philadelphia. He pointed out that the similarity between the name which the secessionists chose for themselves and the official name of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America is confusing. His decision declared that it would be "a serious hurt to the reputation of the [mother] Church and a detriment to its work if the [other] Church, bearing a similar name, should enter the areas already occupied by the [mother] Church, and in real competition with it, thereby destroying the faith of those individuals in foreign countries not sufficiently educated in English to comprehend the controversy existing between the organizations." But the injunction decree not only restrained the group from calling it the Presbyterian Church of America but also forbade the use of any other name "similar to, or imitative of, or contractive of, the name Presbyterian Church in the United States of America or the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., or ever doing any act or thing calculated or designed to mislead the public or members of the plaintiff Church." In their defense the officers of the new Church had declared that their purpose was "to continue what we believe to be the true principles of the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechism." To this the judge replied: "A court in equity has no jurisdiction in examining into the merits of the two respective doctrines any more than it would look into the merits of commercial products after it had concluded that one concern had misappropriated the long-established trade name of another." The litigation began in August, 1936, with the filing of a petition by officers of the parent Church. Time will be allowed the defendants to file exceptions to the injunction decree before it is made final. Whether the group will appeal or not, or whether the moderator of the new Church, the Rev. J. J. De Waard of Cedar Grove, Wis., will call a special meeting of the General Assembly to choose a new name, has not been determined. At any rate the court decision means a new victory for Liberalism over the conservative Christian forces that rallied round their brave and steadfast leader, Dr. J. G. Machen. To an outsider the court decision appears to be rather one-sided and severe. J. T. M.

Inadequate Salaries in the Southern Methodist Denomination.—

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Board of Lay Activities of the Southern Methodists, held at Lake Junaluska last August, Dr. Geo. L. Morelock, as reported by *Christianity Today* (February, 1938), gave some "staggering facts" which the efforts of the Board had brought to light. Among these "staggering facts" are reported the following: "One half of the ministers of the M. E. Church, South, are inadequately supported; there is a low tide of giving to the benevolences of the Church; approximately sixty-five per cent. of the members are not enlisted at all; a large percent of the Church's ministers know apparently little of church finance and all kinds of duplication and overlapping occur in financial methods." Of the 6,181 pastoral charges studied, according to Dr. Morelock, 710 are paying their pastors less than \$500 a year; 1,863 receive between \$501 and \$1,000; 69 per cent. of the pastors of Southern Methodism receive a salary of less than \$1,501. To adjust the matter, the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in session recently, set a minimum salary of \$1,000 annually for unmarried ministers, with a married man's scale set at \$1,200 annually. Funds to provide the minimums will be raised through a plan whereby ministers in the higher-salary brackets will join with their churches in donating a small percentage of the pastors' salaries. The funds will be pooled, and payments to those whose salaries must be supplemented will be made from it.

J. T. M.

Brief Items.—The one-thousandth translation of the Bible has appeared. It is a version which is intended for the Belgian Congo Territory. It is the British and Foreign Bible Society which has furnished the world this gift, constituting the one-thousandth instrument in the divine orchestra.

Think of this reception given the newly appointed Cardinal Hinsley of England when he returned from Rome! Not only were immense crowds of Catholics at the railroad station, among them the Duke of Norfolk, but "two rover scouts were handed the cardinal's red hat to take to the cathedral." The service in the cathedral was attended by the ambassadors of Brazil, France, Belgium, and Poland, the Austrian minister, and the High Commissioner of Ireland. Rome evidently is still a power to reckon with.

The Presbyterians have a college union representing fifty-four colleges in all parts of the United States. A campaign has been launched for ten million dollars to support these schools. The two chairmen of the campaign committee are Dr. John H. Finley, editor of the *New York Times*, and Dr. Arthur C. Compton of the University of Chicago.

A University of Chicago professor, Dr. Ralph Gerard, teacher of physiology, is credited with saying in New York that "as man learns more of his neural mechanisms, the hormones that modify them, the drives they generate, and the personal and social consequences of his acts, much control will undoubtedly be possible, and reason will sufficiently dominate emotion to keep a functioning civilization from perishing." What twaddle! Is the professor blind?

The daily press reports that 1,016 clergymen of the Church of England state that they during the last eight years have subscribed to the faith of the Council of Trent and have pledged themselves to preach it in their parishes. They make the claim that two thousand other clergymen are in sympathy with them. At the Church Assembly meeting in February this matter was to be one of the topics of discussion.

The Rev. E. T. Bagnall, secretary of the London Free Church Federation, announced recently that during 1938, the fourth centennial of the Reformation, he would undertake to place a Bible in every Englishman's home. "In 1538 a Bible was placed in every parish," stated Mr. Bagnall; "why not a Bible for every home in 1938?" He admits that the scheme is an ambitious one and that at least ten million Bibles will be needed.

News Bulletin N. L. C.

Critics who question the need of foreign mission activities might consider these figures, included in a recent issue in the *Religious Digest*: The Imperial University of Tokyo recently circulated a questionnaire among its students which shows that of its 5,000 students 6 were Confucian, 8 Shintoists, 60 Christians, 300 Buddhists, 1,500 atheists, and 3,000 agnostics. — *News Bulletin N. L. C.*

Protestant Christians in Germany, in spite of tremendous difficulties, are continuing to carry on mission-work in the foreign field. According to the annual of the Evangelical Missions, entitled *Die deutsche evangelische Heidenmission*, German evangelical missions at the end of 1936 numbered 1,659 European missionaries and 12,551 salaried native workers. These people served 1,349,100 heathen Christians and 66,000 candidates for baptism. The courage of the German missions is most commendable.

Prof. Frederick C. Grant, dean and president of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary (Episcopal) at Evanston, Ill., has resigned his position and will join the faculty of Union Theological Seminary, New York, where he will become chairman of the Department of New Testament. This statement of his made recently may be passed on: "Something should be done to prevent many of the clergy's growing stale and going to seed. There are men in the ministry who have ceased to grow, have nothing in particular to give in their sermons, and whose pastoral ministry is purely mechanical. It ought to be made clear that ordination is no guarantee in itself of a livelihood regardless of a man's abilities, devotion to his work, and personal character—or the success of his ministry." Making success in the ministry a criterion of one's fitness for this holy work is of course, taken by itself, an unjustified procedure.

From San Francisco it is reported that the Methodists lost an office building in that city, the William Taylor Hotel, which has now become the Hotel Empire and whose church auditorium is being changed into a garage. The financial loss involved for Methodists is said to be \$750,000.

In the *Christian Century* we read that Washington, D. C., is becoming thoroughly alarmed at the prospect "of gaining the unenviable distinction of being the 'gambling capital' of America. New York City's vigorous house-cleaning seems to have driven the racketeers to the banks of the Potomac, where thousands of small-salaried people are falling easy prey, particularly to those who work the 'numbers' game. Six thousand

men, it is said, are engaged in the highly lucrative practise of fleecing the innocent public here, and their daily intake approximates one hundred thousand dollars."

The beginning of February saw many Methodists in Chicago. The occasion was the meeting of the United Methodist Council of the Future of Faith and Service, which lasted for three days and was attended by four thousand registered persons. Addresses were delivered by Alfred M. Landon and Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Commission on Evangelism and the Million Unit Fellowship Movement. The two-hundredth anniversary of John Wesley's Aldersgate experience on May 24, 1738, was observed.

The oldest Baptist church in the United States is observing its tercentenary this year. It is the First Church of Providence, founded by Roger Williams in 1638.

In connection with the mentioning of the 250th anniversary of the birth of Emanuel Swedenborg we are told that the church edifice of the New Jerusalem Congregation in Boston is used so much for interdenominational gatherings that it has been called "the Protestant cathedral." Is it not significant that gatherings of this kind are held in a building used for spreading the teachings of an arch-heretic?

Dr. William Pierson Merrill of the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York, a building which is now being torn down, has resigned. He is known as an outspoken Modernist. Being seventy-one years old, he quite likely retires from active church-work.

In England literary men are discussing the English of the King James Bible. One man, while admitting its great beauty, states that it places before us an alien imagery. Defenders of the Bible very properly point to the Twenty-third Psalm as being intelligible to us in spite of its Oriental picture language.

A.

II. Ausland

Das Gericht über die Kirche. Das ist der Grundgedanke des Vorworts zum laufenden Jahrgang der „Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung“ (Nr. 1 und 2). D. Raible sagt unter anderm: „Die Kirche soll wissen, wenn Gottes Gerichte über die Welt kommen sollen, daß das Gericht zuerst anfängt am Hause Gottes. Und wer wollte leugnen, daß das Gericht schon angefangen hat? Aller Lärm um die Kirche her und in der Kirche kann es nicht zudecken, daß sie unter dem Gericht Gottes steht. Eine sonderliche Aufgabe war ihr gestellt, als im deutschen Volk der große Umbruch geschah. Ein neues Reich war mit einem Male gekommen, und der Kirche stand es zu, dem neuen politischen Reich mit einer innerlich erneuerten Kirche zu antworten, mitten im Volk des Umbruchs die unvergängliche Fackel des Evangeliums hochzuhalten. Denn über allem Wandel der Zeit steht ihr ewiger Auftrag: ‚Predigt das Evangelium!‘ Was wäre geworden, wenn eine Kirche in Erscheinung getreten wäre, erfüllt von dem Feuer der Apostel, einig im Bekenntnis Martin Luthers! Das ist nicht geschehen. . . . Das erste Wort (an dem die Prüfung geschehen soll) ist: ‚Gebet dem Staate, was des Staates ist, und Gott, was Gottes ist.‘ Das konnte im Ernst niemals eine Frage sein, daß die Kirche dem Staate gebe, was des Staates ist, auch dem neuen Staat.

Hier ist Christi Befehl zu klar und das Wort des Paulus von der Obrigkeit zu eindeutig, als daß es darüber zu einem „Kirchenstreit“ kommen durfte. Und doch ist es dazu gekommen. Man hat jenes Wort Christi vergessen, wollte nicht mehr Gott geben, was Gottes ist. . . . Die Kirche selbst wurde auf den Altar des Staates gelegt. Nicht Christus war mehr der „Erste“, sondern der Staat, das Volk, die Klasse. Die alte Bibel wurde zerbrochen, der alte Glaube entwertet, das alte Bekenntnis antiquiert. . . . Immer weiter ging der Wagen abwärts, bis es zur öffentlichen Leugnung eines persönlichen Gottes kam. Unwillkürlich fragt man, wie dieser Abstieg der Kirche der Reformation möglich war, die doch von Anfang ihren Ruhm darin hatte, Kirche des Wortes zu sein. Der Niedergang war nicht von gestern, er war längst vorbereitet. Seit der Aufklärung arbeitete ein fremder Geist an der Kirche, der ihren Leuchter erschütterte. Erst kam die Bibelkritik, als ihre Theologen Stein um Stein aus der Bibel ausbrachen, bis der ganze Bau biblischer Autorität zusammenstürzte. Die Bibelkritik wurde abgelöst von der religionsgeschichtlichen Betrachtung der Schrift; diese räumte vollends aus, was die Kritik noch hatte stehen lassen; Gott verschwand hinter der „Religion“. Die Stimme seiner Offenbarung war zum Schweigen gebracht. Es war noch nicht das Ende. Auch die religionsgeschichtliche Betrachtung wurde durch ein Neues abgelöst, durch ein Hineintragen der Politik in die Kirche. War es bisher noch ein geistliches Ringen gewesen, so wurde es nun ein politischer Kampf, ein Kampf um die Macht. Nicht ein Kampf gegen den Staat, sondern gegen die, die noch Gott geben wollten, was Gottes ist. Es hat nie gut getan, wenn die Kirche sich in die Politik mischte, wenn sie politische Kirche werden wollte. Hätten die Wächter geschlafen, die wachen sollten, oder traten sie zu spät auf den Plan? . . .

„Wer mich bekennet vor den Menschen, den will ich bekennen vor meinem himmlischen Vater.“ . . . Eines bleibt der Kirche unverwehrt, das Bekenntnis. Das Bekenntnis ist aber nicht bloß in das Petruswort gefaßt „Du bist Christus“. Es hat eine heilige Geschichte gefunden im Kampf mit bösen Geistern und allerlei falschen Propheten; und der Geist Gottes, der die Kirche in alle Wahrheit leitet, hat ihr Bekenntnisse geschenkt, sämtlich erbaut auf jenem Felsengrund, unaufgebbare Schätze Gottes. Wir würden an Gott schuldig werden, wollten wir sie verleugnen, die Zeugnisse der Reformation, die Bekenntnisse der lutherischen Kirche. In ihrem Geist zu predigen, in ihnen die Jugend zu unterrichten, mit ihnen die Mühseligen und Beladenen aufzurichten, gehört auch zu dem Auftrag „Predigt das Evangelium!“ Wie die äußere Gestalt der Kirche werden wird, weiß heute kein Mensch. Seltsame Kirchbaupläne hören wir sogar aus dem Munde von Theologen. . . . Aber die Kirche der Zukunft wird, es sei in welcher Form auch immer, eine Kirche des Bekenntnisses sein, oder sie wird es nicht sein. Darum mag man die wohl von Gott beraten heißen, die ohne alle Kirchenpolitik sich um das lutherische Bekenntnis gesammelt haben und sammeln.“

Es sieht allerdings böß aus in der lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands. Die äußere Bedrängnis ist das Geringste. In der Kirche selbst sieht es böß aus. D. Laible hat recht, wenn er von „dem Gericht über die Kirche“ redet. Theologen der lutherischen Kirche lehren unlutherisch vom heiligen Abendmahl, sie verbreiten eine synergetische Lehre von der Bekehrung, haben gar die Rechtfertigungslehre verfälscht und leugnen die wörtliche Eingebung der

Heiligen Schrift. Ja manche treiben gar ungläubige Bibelkritik. Mit Recht klagt Laible darüber, daß man nicht einig ist „im Bekenntnis Martin Luthers“. Die Not der Kirche geht ihm zu Herzen. Möchten doch er und seine Gefinnungsgenossen erkennen, daß man auch in ihrem Kreise von dem lutherischen Bekenntnis abgewichen ist! Und möchten sie dann auch weiter erkennen, daß das aufrichtige Bekenntnis zur lutherischen Lehre auch die Trennung von denen fordert, die von der lutherischen Lehre abgewichen sind! Dann würde das Gericht über die Kirche seinen seligen Zweck erreicht haben.

Es ist überaus beklagenswert, daß man auch bei dem jetzigen Stand der Dinge nichts von einer Freikirche wissen will. Laible klagt also: „Und nun hat die Kirche über Nacht das Vertrauen des Staats verloren; sie soll aus ihrem Dienst am Volk entlassen werden; sie nütze ihm nichts mehr. Der Staat steht über den Konfessionen, er läßt jedem seine Religion; aber er will die Kirche nicht mehr aus Staatsmitteln unterstützen“ (Sperrdruck von uns), „er will nicht mehr kirchenverbunden sein. Daher auch die Kirchenaustrittswelle, die jetzt durch gewisse Kreise geht, und die Meinung vieler, daß es zeitgemäßer sei, außer der Kirche zu leben. Würde diese Welle weiter gehen, so wäre das zwar nicht das Ende der Kirche, aber der Volkskirche. Die vielen Kanäle, die die Kirche zum Volk hatte in der Pflege der Jugend, in dem mancherlei Dienst durch das Wort Gottes, würden sich verschließen, und sie würde, auf ihre Anfänge zurückgestellt, nur noch Missionskirche sein. Wäre das zum Heil des Volkes?“ Es ist unbegreiflich: sie können den Segen der Freikirche nicht erkennen und das Unheil der Staatsverbundenheit. „In einer bedeutsamen Schrift, Völker vor und nach Christus“, weist Paul Mthaus nach, wie sehr die Religion nicht bloß Privatsache, sondern Volksache ist, öffentliche Angelegenheit. . . . Im Gehorsam gegen sein Wort wird sich auch die Frage der Volkskirche lösen. Wir haben kein Recht, nach Freikirche zu rufen, solange der Bau der Volkskirche noch nicht abgebrochen ist. Wir haben die Volkskirche nicht gebaut, der Herr hat es getan; so haben wir sie auch nicht abzubrechen.“ Ja, die Volkskirche soll sogar von Gott geboten sein: „Weil wir unser Volk lieben, es groß und stark sehen möchten, darum erfüllt es uns mit schwerer Sorge, wenn die Volkskirche aufhören soll; darum reden wir von einem Gottesgericht über die Kirche, wenn ihr das Volk genommen wird, wenn sie den Befehl ihres Herrn nicht mehr ausführen kann: ‚Machtet die Völker‘“ (Sperrdruck im Original) „zu meinen Jüngern.“ Der Staat will die Kirche auf ihre eigenen Füße stellen — und dagegen wehrt sich die Kirche!

Aus dem „Neujahrsgruß des Lutherischen Rates an die Geistlichen“ der in eben diesen Nummern der „Kirchenzeitung“ veröffentlicht ist, teilen wir folgendes mit: „Aus der Kirche haben wir eine Unternehmung für allerlei fromme Veranstaltungen gemacht, um von ihr den Verdacht der Unzeitgemäßheit zu nehmen. Politische Methoden haben wir ins Handeln der Kirche herübergenommen, weil sie augenscheinlich zu großem Erfolg in der Welt führten. Wir bemühten uns, das politische Werk, das unter uns und für unser Volk's Ehre und Freiheit mit hoher Leidenschaft und opferfreudigem, zähem Willen begonnen wurde, mit Gottes Rathschluß in eins zu bringen, und vernachlässigten darüber die Predigt des Evangeliums vom Reich in der ganzen Welt zu einem Zeugnis über alle Völker und über unser Volk, Matth. 24, 14.“ „Die Kirche hat in der Welt kein anderes Recht, als das Evangelium vom Reich Gottes und der Versöhnung zu verkündigen.

Darum aber wird sie immer ungesichert und in Verlegenheit um die Form ihrer irdischen Existenz in der Welt stehen. Es ist gut so, daß wir heute auch durch das politische Wort daran erinnert werden, daß die Kirche keinen Anspruch darauf hat, ansehnlich und in Herrlichkeit vor der Welt zu stehen und in ihr ein repräsentatives Leben zu führen. „Er wird nicht schreien noch rufen, und seine Stimme wird man nicht hören auf den Gassen“, Jes. 42, 2. So allein wird die Kirche denen etwas wert, die mit sich selbst und mit der Welt nicht mehr zurechtkommen, die in sich selbst verelendet sind. . . . Zu der in Armut und verachteter Gestalt, umdrängt und bekämpft in der Welt erscheinenden und auf das Verheißungswort ihres Herrn angewiesenen und geworfenen Kirche werden die Mühseligen und Beladenen den Weg suchen und finden.“

G.

Religion in the Scandinavian Countries.— Writing in the *Christian Century* on the subject “Revolt in the North,” Rev. Ezra P. Young, a Congregational minister of Little Falls, N. J., begins his article with this sentence: “When twenty-five million people dismiss the Church as unimportant in their daily life, it is news.” He maintains that, while people in the Scandinavian countries are willing to discuss almost any subject, they are not willing to consider the subject of Church. “Except among a few Fundamentalists and ardent ritualists, the state church in Scandinavia is a dead issue.” “In general, the state churches of Scandinavia are little more than a parade-place for the *élite*, a glorified military museum.” In fact, he thinks signs of revolt can be witnessed. This revolt is directed against creeds “which were written for the Middle Ages.” A high-school principal of Denmark is quoted as saying: “Our attitude toward the state church is one of indifference rather than opposition. You to the West expect much of your Church; we expect little, and we are not therefore disappointed.” Mr. Young has found that there are few churches in Denmark with the social message. He says that, while the people are very indifferent toward the state church, they do manifest interest in the Oxford Group and in Barth’s theology, and among the workers and farmers the Free Church idea has spread widely.

Whether this author is reliable in his observations and whether his antipathy to the old Gospel did not color his glasses and failed to let him see things in the true light, is a question which may well be asked. Dr. Boe, president of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., addressed a letter to the *Christian Century* in which he maintains that Mr. Young’s observations, though probably correct for the instances reported on, do not furnish an adequate portrayal of the situation and a basis for just generalizations.

A.

The Doctrinal Status of the Anglican Church.— Much space has of late been given by the religious press to the discussion of a remarkable document which was published in England in the second half of January. The history of this document began fifteen years ago. At that time the archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Davidson) appointed a commission of twenty-five members “to consider the nature and grounds of Christian doctrine with a view to demonstrating the extent of existing agreement within the Church of England and with a view to investigating how far it is possible to remove or diminish existing differences.” Of the twenty-

five members of the commission five have died, and a sixth one has resigned because he left England. The vacancies, however, were filled in every case. The commission, so the *Manchester Guardian* informs us, has met each year for a week in September and in three years—1934-5-6—for a week also in March. "Between the full session the commission divided into groups, which worked on material assigned to them." And what is the outcome of these fifteen years of labor? From the paper just mentioned, which submits an exhaustive report, we glean the following:

The commission "sought to trace the boundaries within which the wide liberty of statement and of interpretation which has always been the glory of the Anglican communion is allowable. This work was theological, dealing with doctrines, not judicial, passing judgment on persons." This purpose of the commission explains why many subjects which a comprehensive statement of doctrine would have to dwell on have been omitted or treated very briefly. In other words, controversial matters only are discussed. The first section of the report, called "Prolegomena," treats of what authority the Holy Scriptures, the Church, and the creeds have. On the Scriptures the commission makes this colorless statement: "When all allowance is made for possible divergences between the records as they stand and the historic facts behind them, it remains true that the religious and moral teaching of the gospels conveys faithfully the impress made upon the Apostolic Church by the mind and personality of Jesus and thus possesses supreme authority." With respect to creeds the following paragraphs are quoted by the *Manchester Guardian*: "General acceptance, implicit if not explicit, of the authoritative formularies, doctrinal and liturgical, by which the meaning of the Gospel has been defined, safeguarded, or expressed, may reasonably be expected from members of the Church. Assent to formularies and the use of liturgical language in public worship should be understood as signifying such general acceptance without implying detailed assent to every phrase or proposition thus employed. Part 1, which occupies itself with the doctrines of God and of redemption, accepts the doctrine of divine creation." (The *Manchester Guardian* report does not say what view the commission expresses on evolution. Other reports indicate that evolution is legitimated.) The non-omnipotent God of H. G. Wells is rejected. While miracles are accepted, the commission adds: "It is felt by many that miracle has a special value, in that it is a striking demonstration of the subordination of the natural order to spiritual ends and affords particular points at which God's activity is manifested with special clarity and directness. On the other hand, it is to be recognized that many others feel it to be more congruous with the wisdom and majesty of God that the regularities such as men of science observe in nature and call laws of nature should serve His purpose without any need for exceptions on physical plane. It is important to notice that the motives leading to this view are not exclusively scientific, but that a religious interest also is involved." The meaning seems to be that those who refuse to accept miracles must not be branded as false teachers. With respect to sin the commission says: "In our view the doctrine of a universal tendency to evil in man is not bound up with

historical truth of any story of a fall." The acceptance of the Scriptural account of the virgin birth of our Lord is not insisted on. Concerning the resurrection of Christ we find this distressing paragraph: "To Christians the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the central fact in human history. And when a fact is so closely linked with such momentous and far-reaching issues in heaven and earth, it is not surprising that opinions should differ when the question is raised how much in the record of it is derived from the sheer occurrence of the fact itself and how much is due to the primitive interpretation of the fact in the minds which first perceived its transcendent significance and expressed it in forms inevitably belonging to their own manner of thought and speech." Of the ascension of Jesus the commission holds that "its physical features are to be interpreted symbolically."

Part 2 has the heading "The Church and Sacraments." Of the section dealing with the Real Presence the *Manchester Guardian* says: "The handling of the subject of the Real Presence is on familiar lines and bears witness to the approach of divergent schools of opinion, which is so marked a feature of present-day thought." This means, we suppose, that all the various teachings are declared permissible. The topics of reservation and of auricular confession, if we understand the *Manchester Guardian* correctly, are sidestepped because they belong to the realm of practise rather than of doctrine, according to the view of the commission. The prayers for the dead are said to meet with little opposition today. The following paragraph shows to what extent Scripture doctrine has been undermined: "If we extend this hope, as many feel bound to do, to a general expectation of further opportunities of grace for all, it will not be on account of specific declarations of Scripture, but rather as an inference from the Christian doctrine of God as a whole. That doctrine requires us to repudiate all conceptions of the judgment which represents God as abandoning the appeal of love and falling back on the exercise of omnipotent sovereignty to punish those who have failed to respond to the invitation of the Gospel. God is Love, and He cannot deny Himself." On views concerning angels and demons Christians are told that it is legitimate for them to suspend judgment or to interpret the language of the Bible and of the liturgy of the Church in a symbolical fashion. The *Manchester Guardian* says in conclusion of the report that "it does nothing to limit the traditional liberty of the Anglican communion. It does much to make the acceptance of the traditional doctrine of the Church easier for men of modern ways of thinking."

In the *Living Church* a correspondent from London writes: "Prominent Non-conformists [Methodists, Congregationalists, etc.] have been inclined to welcome the report; but evangelical opinion within the Church has been less sanguine. For example, one of its most earnest and distinguished representatives, Prebendary Hinde, writes: "The first thought which springs to my mind is one of profound thankfulness that my faith rests on something more precise and more sure than this expression of Christian doctrine. . . . If the report should fall into the hands of some 'man in the street' who wants to know truth, I fear it will lead him into a morass; certainly it will not establish him in the truth of the Gospel. He will probably draw the conclusion either that

the Church does not know truth or that truth is indeed many-sided and nothing much matters." A London Jesuit is quoted by the same correspondent as seeing in the report a confirmation of the oft-repeated charge that the Church of England is riddled with Modernism. He is said to have observed: "It is inconceivable that in future the Anglican Church will take any disciplinarian action to silence any bishop or person who openly denies the Virgin Birth, the Gospel miracles of Christ, or the existence of the devil and evil spirits." Sad to say, the Jesuit is right.

A.

Warum müssen wir an der lutherischen Abendmahlslehre festhalten?

Unter dieser Überschrift schreibt Prof. D. Hermann Sasse, Erlangen, in drei Nummern der „*M. G. L. R.*“ (Nr. 3 ff., 71. Jahrgang) herzensbelegende Worte an seine Mitlutheraner zur Beibehaltung der lutherischen Lehre vom heiligen Abendmahl. Eigentlich ist seine Aufsatzreihe gedacht als Antwort zu H. Gollwigers Behauptung („Abendmahlsgemeinschaft“, Beilage 3 zur „*Evangelischen Theologie*“ 1937), „daß einheitlich von allen heutigen Evangelischen die lutherische Abendmahlslehre zum mindesten in ihrer für sie so notwendigen Eindeutigkeit durch ein *non liquet* in Frage gestellt, darüber hinaus von den meisten bestritten wird“. Der erste Aufsatz schließt mit dem Appell: „Das ist einer der schwersten Vorwürfe, den wir den Vorkämpfern von Barmen und Halle machen, daß sie das reformierte Verständnis von Kirche und Kirchengemeinschaft, Bekenntnis und Bekenntnisverpflichtung heimlich an die Stelle dessen gesetzt haben, was jahrhundertlang in der lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands gegolten hat. Die alte evangelische Kirche verpflichtete, wie es heute noch jede wirklich lutherische Kirche tut, ihre Pfarrer auf die Lehre der Bekenntnisse, weil sie die rechte Auslegung der Heiligen Schrift ist. Nach den Haleschen Beschlüssen sollen die Pfarrer darauf verpflichtet werden mit der offenen Frage, wie weit die Bekenntnisse mit der Schrift übereinstimmen. Diese Frage soll erst durch ein neues ‚echtes Hören der Schrift‘ entschieden werden. Es ist fraglich, ob man dann nicht besser täte, nach dem Beispiel vieler reformierten Kirchen die Lehrverpflichtung auf die Heilige Schrift als *norma normans* überhaupt zu beschränken. Wir jedenfalls halten uns für berechtigt, die Bekenntnisverpflichtung der Pfarrer auch in der altpreussischen Kirche ebenso ernst zu nehmen, wie unsere Väter sie genommen haben und wie jede wirklich an das lutherische Bekenntnis gebundene Kirche sie nehmen muß. Wir tun es wahrhaftig nicht ‚aus Gründen der Tradition und des Bekenntnisformalismus‘ — nur ein vollendeter Narr könnte meinen, heute mit solchen Motiven Kirchen aufrichten zu können —, sondern einzig und allein deswegen, weil wir im tiefsten Herzen davon überzeugt sind, und zwar auf Grund ernstesten Studiums der Heiligen Schrift und der Geschichte der Kirche überzeugt sind, daß die Lehre der Augustana (sollte heißen: der Konfessio) ‚aus Gottes Wort genommen und darin fest und wohl begründet ist‘.“

Im zweiten Aufsatz schreibt D. Sasse u. a. die leider nur zu wahren Worte: „Es klingt hart, wenn wir das so offen aussprechen, aber es muß um der Wahrheit willen gesagt werden. Wir Theologen haben allen Anlaß, den großen Anteil an der schweren Schuld nicht zu verleugnen, die unsere Kirchen bis an den Rand des Verderbens gebracht hat. Wir plaudern ja auch kein Geheimnis aus, sondern stellen nur fest, was jeder Student und mancher aufmerksame Predigthörer weiß: die evangelische Theologie der Gegenwart hat trotz der gewaltigen Bemühun-

gen der beiden letzten Jahrzehnte den Weg zu einem wirklich theologischen Verständnis der Bibel noch nicht wieder gefunden. (Sperrsatz im Original.) Wir haben ausgezeichnete biblische Theologen, aber wir haben keine biblische Theologie. . . . Welche Vorzüge auch immer die moderne Exegese derjenigen der Reformationen gegenüber haben mag, insbesondere auf dem Gebiet des rein sprachlichen Verstehens, den Vorzug wird kein heutiger Exeget seinen Vorgängern im 16. Jahrhundert bestreiten, daß es für sie ein einheitliches Neues Testament gab, das mehr war als eine Summe von aufeinanderfolgenden literarischen Schichten. Sollte aber nicht damit die Tatsache zusammenhängen, daß die heutige Exegese die Glaubenssätze der evangelischen Bekenntnisse, die den Reformatoren völlig evidente Schriftwahrheiten waren, nicht mehr aus der Schrift zu begründen vermag? Man sagt uns, kein heutiger Exeget finde im Neuen Testament noch Luthers Abendmahlstheorie wieder. Dürfen wir uns die Gegenfrage erlauben, welchen Artikel der Augustana sich denn die moderne Exegese noch biblisch zu begründen getraue? . . . Theologen, die sich selbst zu den Verteidigern des evangelischen Glaubens gegen den Liberalismus vergangener Zeiten rechnen, geben die Lehre vom Strafleiden und vom sühnenden Opfer des Erlösers auf. Sie bestreiten, daß die Lehre von der Erbsünde sich aus der Bibel begründen läßt. Sie machen aus Jesus einen Pelagianer, der dem Menschen wenigstens die Erreichung einer relativen Vollkommenheit zutraut und die kleinen Kinder für sündlos hält. Sie protestieren gegen die Einseitigkeit, mit der man die paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre zum Mittelpunkt der ganzen Schrift macht. Kurz, es gibt kaum einen Satz des kirchlichen Bekenntnisses, den die moderne exegetische Theologie — und wir reden nur von derjenigen, die bewußt kirchlich sein will — noch aus der Schrift zu begründen und den Glaubenssätzen anderer Konfessionen gegenüber zu verteidigen vermöchte. Wer uns also mehr oder minder triumphierend entgegenhält, kein moderner Exeget halte heute noch an der lutherischen Abendmahlstheorie fest, dem erwidern wir, daß wir das mit Bedauern zur Kenntnis nehmen, daß wir im Grunde ja auch nichts anderes erwartet haben, daß es uns aber keineswegs gewiß sei, daß damit irgend etwas gegen die Abendmahlstheorie unserer Kirche gesagt sei. Es könnte ja sein, daß die 'neuere Forschung' sich mit ihren Anschauungen über das Abendmahl ein vernichtendes Armutszeugnis ausstellt. Die Kirche hat jedenfalls recht daran getan, wenn sie uns Theologen samt unsern Forschungsergebnissen niemals ganz so ernst genommen hat, wie wir uns selber zu nehmen pflegen. . . . Und so feiert unsere Kirche ohne jede Rücksicht auf die Meinungen, Hypothesen und Diskussionen, 'neuerer Forschung' über das heilige Abendmahl das Sakrament des Altars als das Sakrament des wahren Leibes und Blutes des Herrn in genau demselben Sinn, wie sie in ihren Bekenntnissen darüber lehrt. Sie tut das wahrhaftig nicht mit schlechtem Gewissen aus einem falschen Konservatismus, sondern weil ihr Respekt vor dem Worte Gottes immer noch größer ist als ihr Respekt vor den Hypothesen der modernen Wissenschaft." J. L. M.

Wissenschaft und Glaube. Aus dem Blatt „D. E. D.“ zitiert der „Luth. Herald“ die folgenden auch für uns wichtigen apologetischen Angaben: „Zahlreiche deutsche Naturforscher haben in letzter Zeit zur Frage ‚Religion und Naturwissenschaft‘, Natur und Offenbarung‘ das Wort ergriffen. Ihre Stimmen geben Zeugnis davon, daß ‚Religion und Wissenschaft nicht im

Widerspruch stehen'. Mit einem Vorurteil, das jahrzehntelang (seit der Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts) genährt wurde, wird damit entgültig aufgeräumt. Eine Fülle ähnlicher Zeugnisse trägt jetzt ein Werk zusammen: „Gott, Mensch, Technik, Wissenschaft“, von Dr. ing. E. G. M. Beekman (Schöningh, Paderborn), der den religiösen Grundstellungen großer Naturwissenschaftler, Physiker, Mathematiker und anderer Forscher nachgegangen ist. Die zahlreichen von ihm beigebrachten Zeugnisse widersprechen eindeutig der Annahme, daß die Wissenschaft zum Monismus oder Materialismus führe. Einige Proben daraus mögen hier folgen. Aus einem Brief Voltas: „Ich begreife nicht, wie jemand an meiner Aufrichtigkeit und Standhaftigkeit in der Religion, zu der ich mich bekenne, zweifeln kann. Es ist mein fester Vorsatz, in diesem Glauben zu leben und zu sterben in der Hoffnung, das ewige Leben zu ererben. Diesen Glauben betrachte ich als ein Geschenk Gottes, als einen übernatürlichen Glauben.“ Der Mathematiker Cauchy: „Ich bin ein Christ; das will sagen: ich glaube an die Gottheit Jesu Christi mit Thcho Brahe, Kopernikus, Descartes [?], Newton, Fermat, Leibniz, Pascal, Grimaldi, Euler, Guldin, Boscovitch, Béril, mit allen großen Astronomen, allen großen Naturwissenschaftlern, allen großen Mathematikern der früheren Jahrhunderte. Und wenn man mich nach dem Grund fragen sollte, würde ich ihn gern angeben. Man wird sehen, daß meine Überzeugung nicht das Ergebnis anerzogener Vorurteile, sondern das eines gründlichen Studiums ist. Ich teile die tiefe Überzeugung, die so viele hervorragende Gelehrte, wie Buffini, Haüy, Laennec, Ampère, Pelletier, Frehcinet, Coriolis, durch ihre Worte, ihre Taten und in ihren Schriften bekundet haben. Und wenn ich jetzt die Namen der noch Lebenden aus Furcht, ihre Bescheidenheit zu verletzen, nicht nenne, so will ich doch die Namen meiner berühmten Freunde aufzählen, bei denen ich zu meiner Freude den Adel und die Großmut [?] des christlichen Glaubens gefunden habe. Es sind dies: der Schöpfer der Kristallographie, Haüy; die Erfinder des Chinins und des Stethoskops, Pelletier und Laennec; der berühmte Seefahrer an Bord der „Urania“, Frehcinet, und der unsterbliche Schöpfer der dynamischen Elektrizität Ampère.“ Der Astronom Poussur: „Die verdorrenden, dem religiösen Empfinden feindlichen Lehren entspringen jedesmal einer GeistesEinstellung, in der der wahre Gelehrte nicht verharren kann. Wieviel bedeutender und anziehender ist für ihn die Forschung, wenn er an eine freie und höchste Intelligenz glaubt, die die Welt beseelt, wenn er weiß, daß vom kosmischen Nebel bis zum Atom jedes Ding uns etwas offenbaren kann von einer Ordnung, die aus dem Ewigen ist.“ Alles Apologetische leidet ja an einer gewissen Unsicherheit und Schwäche, so daß man geneigt ist, ab und zu Fragezeichen an den Rand zu setzen. Und doch sind dergleichen Gelehrtenzeugnisse trotz allen Mangels deswegen wertvoll, weil sie bezeugen, daß Wissenschaft an und für sich nicht gottlos macht. Wird die Wahrheit unterdrückt und die Lüge verbreitet, so hat dies auch in einem Gelehrten seinen Grund in der ἀσέβεια und ἀδωλία des verderbten Fleisches. (Vgl. Röm. 1, 18.) J. E. M.

