

# Concordia Theological Monthly



N O V E M B E R   ♦   1 9 5 0

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### GLEANINGS FROM RECENT ISSUES OF "CHRIST UND WELT"

According to this outstanding German weekly, all Catholic, Evangelical, Baptist, and Reformed theological schools in Czechoslovakia have been abolished and replaced by theological institutions controlled by the government.—According to the Executive Committee of the LWF, every tenth Lutheran in the world is at the present time homeless.—Suicides in the Western Zone of Germany in 1949 show a marked increase over suicide statistics for 1948 and 1947.—According to the Swedish Red Cross, there are about three million children in Korea whose fathers are at the front and whose mothers were compelled to flee.—Archaeologists discovered in Barcelona the ruins of a Christian basilica built in the fourth century. It is regarded as one of the earliest Christian edifices erected on Spanish soil and antedates even the invasions of Germanic tribes.—The total enrollment of theological students in West German universities and seminaries is 7,490; of these, 3,576 are Evangelical and 3,914 Catholic; included in the total number are 473 Evangelical and 141 Catholic women students.—In reply to a charge raised against him by Premier Otto Grotewohl that he was a "gossiping reactionary," Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin recently told a conference of pastors that in his interview with President Truman, which, he said, lasted hardly fifteen minutes, not a syllable was uttered regarding the Soviet Zone republic, the coming elections, and the question how the Evangelical Church of Germany would react in case of a European war. NOTE: According to the report of an American student who spent six weeks in Berlin this summer, many Germans believe that Bishop Dibelius is now a "marked" man.

P. M. B.

### NEWS FROM THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

Looking at the report of the LWF Executive Committee, which met at Schloss Tutzing, Bavaria, Germany, the first week in August, the following items strike me as particularly interesting. The Federation is growing: five new bodies were admitted—the Andhra Ev. Luth. Church, India; the Ev. Luth. Church, India; the Jeypore Ev. Luth. Church, India; Federacao Synodal do Brasil; the Ev. Luth. Church of British Guiana. In this connection the report reprints the conditions that have to be met if a church body wishes to become a member of

the Federation. "To qualify for membership in the Federation, a Lutheran church body must declare its acceptance of the LWF constitution, the doctrinal basis of which affirms the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments 'as the only sources and infallible norm of all church doctrine and practice, and sees in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism, a pure exposition of the Word of God.'"

The next assembly of the LWF is to be held in Hannover, Germany, in the summer of 1952. It will be the first time since the recent world war that an international Christian body will hold its meeting in Germany. The 1951 session of the executive committee of the LWF has been scheduled, believe it or not, for Jerusalem, in what is now called the Hashemite Kingdom of Judea. This meeting place was chosen undoubtedly because negotiations are going on now to obtain from the kingdom mentioned and from the Israeli government the right of control of former German Lutheran mission properties in Palestine, now valued at more than \$25,000,000. Among these properties are the well-known Syrian Orphanage in Jerusalem and the grand Empress Augusta Victoria Hospice on the Mount of Olives. As has been reported several times in the *Observer* section, Dr. Edw. Moll of the ULCA is now stationed in Jerusalem, engaged in the effort of keeping these properties in the hands of Lutheranism. In Tanganyika there are German mission establishments which need to be looked after, and a plan is on foot to have them transferred to the Federation. The race tensions in South Africa led to the appointment of a committee to study conditions in that remote part of the world.

W. ARNDT

#### CONFERENCE AT BAD HARZBURG

In the *Augustana Lutheran* (September 20) Dr. David L. Ostergren, who represents the Lutheran World Federation in England, submits his impressions of the conference of Lutheran theologians held at Bad Harzburg, Germany, August 1—7. From this very fine report we are bringing the most significant paragraphs to the attention of our readers. Dr. Ostergren writes:

Lutheran pastors from all parts of Germany, numbering 100, participated in this conference as guests of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod of the United States. There were also guests from England, Denmark, Sweden, and Italy. . . .

The strength of the conference lay in the fact that the Missouri leaders, in explaining their faith, would not give a philosophical explanation, but would always refer either to the Bible or the Lutheran Confessions. To spend a whole week discussing problems in

the light of the Word and the Confessions obviously had a strengthening effect on all present. Discussions beginning in the organized sessions would continue at the table during meals and then long into the night.

The vitality of these discussions indicated that there is still a very strong spiritual core in the Lutheran Church of Germany. They may not hold so closely to the Confessions and the verbal inspiration theory [!] as some American Lutherans, but they are seriously concerned about their Lutheran foundation and that salvation is to be found in Jesus Christ alone.

The weakness of the conference consisted in the pressure on the part of the German brethren to look at every subject from the viewpoint of systematic theology. Time and again the Missouri brethren tried to turn the theoretical discussion into practical application to church life in Germany, but with somewhat unsatisfactory results.

In spite of this shortcoming, one must say that the conference was very inspirational. The discussions indicated that the liberalism found in the German churches 30 or 40 years ago is on the decline. Many statements of the men during the conference showed that they were happy to be reminded of their Lutheran heritage. Some admitted that they had drifted away from the Confessions and needed to come back to them. One pastor reflected the attitude of a considerable number when he said to the writer in private: "During the war many of us Lutheran pastors in the *Kirchenkampf* (the struggle between the Nazi and anti-Nazi pastors) fellowshipped together both in church and outside of church with the Reformed brethren. This association was sweet and fine. As our work is getting back to normal, we are realizing the importance of our Lutheran Confessions. Our problem now is whether we should adhere closely to these Confessions or keep up our unionistic relations with the Calvinists. These conferences with our American brethren are helping us to see the issues involved in making this decision."

P. M. B.

#### THE NEW ABBOT OF LOCCUM

*Evangelische Welt*, August 16, 1950, reports the inauguration of the new Abbot of Loccum. He is Bishop Hanns Lilje of Hannover, who has already acted as prior of the institution since the death of Dr. Marahrens, the previous abbot.—Loccum was a great medieval Cistercian monastery, founded in 1163. The Reformation altered its constitution only gradually. The original endowments were preserved, now for the purpose of training a ministry for Hannover. The faculty forms a permanent group akin to the ancient monastic society, and the candidates of theology who have completed the theoretical examination and await the final examination for ordination associate them-

selves to this fellowship. Bishop Lilje was himself such a candidate at Loccum. He now bears the title of Johannes XI, *Abt zu Loccum*. American ecclesiastical and academic institutions seem primitive by contrast with the hoary traditions and rich heritage of this school.

R. R. C.

#### THE QUESTION OF JOINT OR UNITED PRAYER

Last year there was held in Australia a pastoral conference at which were represented seventy-nine pastors of the U. E. L. C. A. and of the E. L. C. A. for the purpose of studying theses of union submitted to the two synods. The matter was reported by the *Lutheran Witness* of November 15, 1949. On the basis of this report, Professor Reim, in the *Quartalschrift—Theological Quarterly* (January, 1950) commented on this conference, writing, among other things, the following: "There is . . . one inconsistency in the report. We note that the question of joint prayer was among the articles subsequently adopted by the conference and still to be submitted to the conventions of the two churches. It was obviously one of the issues on which these bodies had been at variance before. At the same time we note that this same conference was opened with a short devotional service. It seems to us that this anticipation of a desired outcome may indicate impatience with the necessarily slow processes of carefully removing the existing differences, an impatience which—if impatience it was—would raise serious misgivings as to the soundness of the entire agreement. We earnestly hope that the state of affairs which we have pictured as possible does not exist in fact." In reply to these remarks Dr. Hamann writes: ". . . The inconsistency noted by Prof. Reim is more a matter of seeming than of reality. It simply cannot be demonstrated that the doctrine which would prohibit in all conceivable circumstances joint or united prayer by representatives of Lutheran bodies not yet in communion, but earnestly seeking fellowship on the basis of the Holy Word, is a doctrine of Holy Writ. Both sides being satisfied that unionistic or syncretistic notions did not enter into their desire to ascertain what differences actually existed in the *publica doctrina* and to remove these differences in a God-pleasing manner, a prayer for the divine blessing upon their undertaking was not looked upon as an anticipation of a desired outcome, but as something that, in the given circumstances, should not be withheld, as though the question in itself constituted a doctrinal difference. It is not at all contradictory that, especially in view of some uncertainty existing perhaps on both sides, an earnest effort was made to arrive at a common conviction on the matter of unionism and unionistic prayer. While this question must

be decided on the strength of principles clearly given in the Scriptures, and not by precedent or example, it may be pointed out in passing that, as we learned from reliable sources, the discussions preceding the establishment of fellowship between the Lutheran Free Churches in Germany were begun with united prayer. Not a word of censure pronounced upon this action came to our notice. For the rest, we can assure Prof. Reim that not the slight apprehension, but the hope which he voices in the final sentences of his comment is justified by the actual situation." The principle which Dr. Hamann here lays down, namely, "it simply cannot be demonstrated that the doctrine which would prohibit in all conceivable circumstances joint or united prayer by representatives of Lutheran bodies not yet in communion, but earnestly seeking fellowship on the basis of the Holy Word, is a doctrine of Holy Writ" is one which requires constant emphasis. Of course, there must be no unionistic or syncretistic prayer, which occurs wherever there is a denial of the divine truth of Scripture. But the assumption that every joint prayer is *per se* unionistic begs the question. Again, we wish to commend the conciliatory, brotherly spirit of Dr. Hamann's reply, which, while stating principles and facts very definitely, seeks only to win and not to wound. To us it appears as a masterpiece of Christian confutation. Lastly, it seems to us that far too much is being written nowadays that hinders, or at least makes difficult, the progress of the cause of Christian unity. While cautions and warnings must be issued in a time when there is so much unionistic offense, there also exist areas where, in efforts at true Christian church union, we must give our brethren in the faith who have proved themselves sincere followers of God's Word the benefit of the doubt and refrain not only from downright condemnation, but also from raising doubts as to the Scripturalness of their procedure. This is not written in special criticism of the article in the *Theological Quarterly*, but rather as a general plea for greater trust in the honesty and competence of those whom we fully recognize as our brethren in the faith, as they are trying to bring about true unity of faith on the basis of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

J. T. MUELLER

#### "A PROPOSED JOINT CONFSSION OF FAITH"

Under this heading, Dr. H. Hamann, principal of Concordia College, Unley, South Australia, in the *Australasian Theological Review* (June, 1950), offers a constructive critique of the *Common Confession*, which was adopted by our convention in Milwaukee last June. While it may seem a little late to quote Dr. Hamann's review at this time, it might

be said in defense that the Australian periodical, which could be read by us only after our return from Europe, does the very thing which, upon the suggestion of Committee No. 3, the convention resolved to do, namely, to have our churches study the *Confession* with reference to its value to bring about that God-pleasing church union which all true Christians desire. In addition, Dr. Hamann's remarks bear reading even now, after the *Confession* has been adopted, as the opinion of a sincere and profoundly interested as well as very keen analyst. Because of the length of the article we shall quote only the salient statements. We read: "A first reading leads to the opinion or conviction that certain matters in the Proposed Joint Confession could be given a different and better expression. Thus, in the first section, the sentence, 'In Jesus Christ, God became incarnate,' is of course quite sound, but, especially in view of the fact that the Holy Trinity is mentioned in the first paragraph of that section, the Incarnation might have been confessed in a more precise dogmatical formulation. The treatment of the Means of Grace in Section V is rather full, but it would not have been out of the way to state that the Gospel is a means of grace also when orally proclaimed. The Inspiration of the Scriptures is confessed in such a manner that one who takes it upon himself to teach otherwise can do so only by departing from what is clearly intended meaning and purpose of the words used. Section IX (The Church) should have emphasized much more clearly and unmistakably the supernatural origin and the spiritual quality of the *Una Sancta*, and it might not have been amiss to set forth, however briefly, the Lutheran teaching on Church Polity. Section X (The Ministry) probably contains all that is needed for the churches concerned, and the final section (The Last Things) apparently lays to rest the eschatological opinions which at one time figured so prominently as a divisive factor in American Lutheranism. The Proposed Joint Confession will, *mea quidem sententia*, be criticized adversely more for what it omits than for what it contains. Perhaps it does err a little on the score of extreme brevity in some particulars, just as the Union Theses so far adopted by the two Australian Lutheran churches may be considered by some as dealing with some unnecessary details. The important matter is that full clarity and agreement result from the discussions, and that all doubts are set at rest." Dr. Hamann closes his review by saying: "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, at least, will probably have to deal with a number of proposed amendments as well as with the completed draft. *Yet, basically, the Joint Confession seems sound enough to the writer*" (italics our own). The last sentence of the article is, as we

believe, of extreme importance. Despite some shortcomings the *Common Confession* seems "sound enough" to a scholar who for years has headed the theological seminary of our fellow Lutherans "down under" and who has been a most helpful agent in working toward doctrinal unity between the Lutheran synods in his own land. The charge brought against the "Union Theses" of the two Australian Lutheran Churches, "as dealing with some unnecessary details," is well worth considering. Confessions must be complete, the means and products of "full clarity and agreement," but they must also be popular and concise so that laymen will be attracted to their study. The Augsburg Confession no doubt has served as well as it did, just because, in its essentials, it confined itself to "what had to be said" and emulated the rare virtues of brevity and simplicity. May the *Common Confession* serve as a modern *Augustana* to bring all Lutherans in North America, indeed, in the whole world, into true Lutheran ecumenicity. J. T. MUELLER

#### THE ENCYCLICAL "HUMANI GENERIS"

A recent issue of *America* informs us that the Pope's new encyclical *Humani Generis* ("Of Mankind"), of which an English translation appeared in August, is a warning addressed mostly to scholars. The writer goes on to say:

It [the encyclical] deals with philosophical and theological opinions which have attracted a good deal of attention in Europe, but comparatively little in the United States. Perhaps the most important of these opinions concerns the variability of concepts and of philosophical systems consistent with Catholic orthodoxy. . . . The Holy Father found that in such discussions . . . some theologians, with the best of intentions, have proved too venturesome. The Pope reminds philosophers and theologians that the Church demands that future priests be instructed in philosophy "according to the method, doctrine and principles of the Angelic Doctor," St. Thomas Aquinas, because . . . "his doctrine is in harmony with divine revelation, and is most effective both for safeguarding the foundations of the faith and for reaping, safely and usefully, the fruits of sound progress."

In a later paragraph the writer in *America* reminds his readers:

Those who run the risk of minimizing revealed doctrine, especially that of the infallible teaching office of the Church, in order to "do away with the barrier that divides good and honest men," are also censured. To us such writers seem not only to skirt the edges of heresy but to be adopting (even from a human point of view) a very doubtful strategy. The fullness of Catholic truth, both theological and philosophical, is the greatest safeguard of human dignity and of human rights.



The article suggests that Pope Pius XII, too, like his predecessors since Leo XIII, is a promoter of St. Thomas' doctrines. But what interests us in particular is that the Catholic Church, which claims to have the full philosophic truth, is having considerable difficulty in keeping some of its scholars in line with its philosophy, the Thomistic synthesis. Obviously, the optimistic faith of Leo XIII, who believed that a return to St. Thomas by all thinkers in the Roman Church would protect the Church against the encroachments of modern scientism and secularism, has not been fully realized. Upon a little reflection, how could it be otherwise? Neo-Thomism is not Thomism, as little as Neo-Platonism was Platonism. But even if it were, there is no word of assurance in Scripture by the Founder of the Church that the Thomistic synthesis is the true Christian philosophy. This philosophy had its day. But that day is past, and every revival of Thomism is only a pale glimmer of what was once a bright light. The honest Catholic scholar of our day may still be warmed by that light but hardly much enlightened.

P. M. B.

#### HOLY SCRIPTURES THE ONLY SOURCE OF DIVINE TRUTH

How do Catholic writers meet the objection of Protestants against the dogma of Mary's assumption, to be proclaimed by Pope Pius XII on November 1? Protestants have asked: "Where is the Scriptural and historical evidence?" Speaking for the Anglican Church, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher and Dr. Cyril Garbett declared some time ago: "There is not the smallest evidence in the Scriptures or in the teaching of the early Church of belief in the doctrine of her bodily assumption." In reply to this declaration in particular, *America* editorializes as follows (September 2):

The Church [Catholic] teaches as divinely revealed all those truths which were made known by God to the Apostles. This constitutes the "deposit of faith," to which nothing could be or has been added since the death of the last Apostle. At most the Church can make explicit what was clearly implicit in this original revelation.

How does the Church know what was contained in this original revelation? Through two sources, not one: the Sacred Scriptures *and* Apostolic tradition. "Apostolic tradition" has a very definite meaning. It means what the Church from the beginning has believed *as having been revealed to the Apostles* [italics in original]. Since the teaching of the Church is in every age infallible, we know that whatever the Church has taught in any age as having been revealed to the Apostles was actually so revealed to them. Protestants, because they reject the most important truth (as far as the rule of faith is concerned) re-

vealed by Christ — namely, His establishment of an infallible Church as a divine teaching authority — have no way of knowing all that was originally revealed to the Apostles. This revealed truth of the infallibility of Christ's Church, incidentally, is "plainly contained in the Scriptures."

When the Holy Father inquired whether the Catholic bishops of the world regarded the assumption, after death, of Mary's body into heaven as revealed to the Apostles, only six out of 1,191 bishops questioned its dogmatic character. Extant patristic and liturgical writings clearly trace this belief, as an apostolic tradition, back to the fifth century. The lack of veneration of any alleged repository of Mary's body is evidence, as Christ's Church infallibly assures us is true, that the Assumption has been believed from the beginning.

It pays to examine the above reasoning, for it appears that some very hot questions were fired at *America* regarding the assumption dogma. The editorial reveals a careful effort to make the dogma palatable to Catholic readers. We note the following steps in the argument:

1. The Catholic Church has two sources of truth: the Sacred Scriptures and "Apostolic tradition."

2. "Apostolic tradition" is what the "Church" "from the beginning has believed as having been revealed to the Apostles."

3. This "Apostolic tradition" has been preserved by the Catholic Church.

4. Since Protestants do not recognize the Catholic Church to be the sole "infallible Church," they do not know the "Apostolic tradition."

5. Deluded Protestants! They do not even know that the Catholic Church, a truth "plainly contained in the Scriptures" (!), is the one and only "infallible Church."

6. Now, where does the assumption of Mary come in? Well, only six out of 1,191 bishops questioned the dogmatic character of her bodily assumption. Surely, they ought to know, for they belong to the "infallible Church," and this Church is in possession of the "Apostolic tradition," and this tradition asserts that Mary was received bodily into heaven.

7. How old is the "Apostolic tradition" which allegedly supports the assumption of Mary? It may be traced back to the fifth century.

8. What about the earlier centuries? Did the earliest Christians believe, on the basis of the "Apostolic tradition," that Mary was taken bodily into heaven? Stupid question! Why, of course they did! Don't you know that there is no evidence of any kind that the early Christians pointed to this or that grave or tomb or church as being the repository

of Mary's body? Therefore the evidence points persuasively and overwhelmingly in the direction that her body was taken into heaven when she died.

Isn't it too bad that the early Christians believed that the bodies of Peter and Paul were buried at some spot near the walls of Rome? They thus made it impossible for the Church ever to declare the bodily assumption of Peter and Paul. And what about St. Anna? Where was she buried? There is no evidence that she was buried at all. And so later generations may be blessed with the dogma of the bodily assumption of St. Anna, the alleged grandmother of the Lord Jesus.

"The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel" (*Smalcald Articles*, Part II, Article II, 16; *Triglot*, page 467).

P. M. B.

## BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

The Lutheran World Federation has adopted a flag of its own, marking the first time that a world-wide Protestant denomination has created its own ensign. The adopted flag has Luther's "Rose of Sharon" sealed within a gold-rimmed circle of daylight blue. This, in turn, is mounted on a field of midnight blue.

The Associated Services for the Armed Forces is seeking \$9,600,000 for 1951 to provide religious, recreational, and cultural services for America's new draftees. The A. S. A. F., successor to the wartime U. S. O., comprises the Y. M. C. A., National Jewish Welfare Board, and National Catholic Community Service.

On July 29 the Army Chaplain Corps marked its 175th anniversary. The legal origin of the Chaplain Corps is a resolution adopted by the Continental Congress on July 29, 1775, shortly after General Washington had issued a call for the clergy to serve with the Revolutionary Army. The Chaplain Corps, as it exists today, is the result of a slow development that had its foundation in the Colonial period. On March 3, 1791, an act of Congress authorized appointment of a chaplain of the Army. The Rev. John Hurt of Virginia, who had served for seven years as a chaplain with the Revolutionary Army, was named to the post the following day by President Washington.

The Korean Bible Society has appealed to the American Bible Society for Scriptures for members of the Korean armed forces. A special edition of 50,000 books containing the Four Gospels and the Book of Acts in Korean and 100,000 copies of the Sermon on the Mount in Korean and English have been printed in this country and will be distributed to the Korean army, navy, and air force by the Chaplain Corps.

Dr. F. Townley Lord, pastor of the Bloomsbury Baptist Church of London and editor of the *Baptist Times*, is the new head of the Baptist World Alliance.

The first Ecumenical Institute on Christian Education was held in Toronto under the auspices of the World Council of Christian Education. The purposes of the Institute are the following: (1) To provide opportunity for a number of carefully selected persons from all over the world to learn from one another and from leaders in Christian education through an exchange of experience and ideas. (2) To assemble information that may be useful to leaders in all countries.

(3) To formulate proposals for launching an advance in Christian education and for preparing leaders in that field.

The importance of the family in implementing Christian understanding of the worth of the individual was discussed by the National Conference on Education of Christian Parents at Lake Geneva, Wis. Conference workshops studied community development through church and home; co-operation of state, city, and denominational groups in improving family life within a geographical area; the function of religion in the family; techniques for promoting a family-centered church program; and the family's role in developing social attitudes and action.

Dr. Martin Niemoeller told a group of churchmen in Albany, New York, that the greatest opportunity for the church in Germany lies in former Nazi youths who have grown to manhood "and are looking for the right answers. Those young men have been uprooted with nothing in which to put their confidence. It is up to the church of Germany to supply them with the answers they seek."

The International Christian Leprosy Mission has acquired new headquarters in Portland, Oreg. A five-acre tract and three buildings were dedicated for the use of this mission a short while ago.

The World Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists in its recent session was informed that the sale of their literature amounted to \$12,450,000 last year, and that their fifty publishing houses throughout the world employ 1,772 persons and issue 315 magazines in 195 languages and dialects. It was further reported that this body has established a new seminary in New Mexico for the training of missionaries among Spanish-speaking Americans. In their American church work the Adventists use twenty-five languages and issue publications in German, Swedish, Danish-Norwegian, Italian, French, Ukrainian, Icelandic, and Romanian. In addition, this group makes extensive use of radio and television. Voice of Prophecy, the major broadcast of the denomination, is heard each Sunday over 465 stations in North America and 108 Adventist broadcasts are carried every week in the United States. In the South Pacific the Adventists conduct evangelistic broadcasts over 53 stations. In addition, they sponsor broadcasts over 23 stations of the French National Network, on Radio Luxembourg, and Radio Monte Carlo, over 18 stations in Central America, 44 in South America, and two in Manila, P. I. They also produce religious telecasts every week from New York, Baltimore, and San Francisco.

The Vatican has planned a new radio station which is to be located within Vatican City. According to plans, the station should be ready for broadcasting by 1952 and will cost approximately \$6,000,000.

The Congregation of the Holy Office in Rome warned Catholic parents that they would incur severe spiritual penalties if they enrolled their children in organizations and institutions formed to educate young people according to "materialistic anti-Christian and anti-religious principles." All offenders, the warning said, would fall under the Congregation's decree of July 1, 1949, which declared that Catholics who "defend and spread the materialistic and anti-Christian doctrine of the Communists" would suffer excommunication. The new decree specifies that: 1. Parents and guardians who send their children or wards to anti-Christian materialistic organizations cannot receive the sacraments. 2. Anyone teaching children doctrines contrary to the Christian faith and custom will be punished by excommunication. 3. Children attending institutions where materialistic anti-Christian and anti-religious doctrines are taught will be debarred from receiving the sacraments.

The Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Greece is facing an acute clergy shortage. Metropolitan Germanos of Cephathlonia has reported that 170 out of 250 churches in his diocese are without priests. In an effort to meet this shortage the Holy Synod passed a resolution permitting laymen to be ordained as priests for a period of three years even though they do not have the required theological education.

When Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, announced that it would no longer exempt any students from courses in religion, the reaction among Catholic and Jewish students was quite different. Catholic students looked for other schools to continue their studies. The position of the Jewish students was expressed by Rabbi Sidney Brooks, who said: "Wittenberg College is a private institution. It is sponsored by the Lutheran Church and is identified as a Lutheran institution. It seems to me, therefore . . . that the authorities of Wittenberg College have a perfect right to plan their curriculum in any way they see fit. For Jews there is no religious law which forbids them to study other religious or sacred texts. Jews are perfectly free to study these things academically, even though they do not accept them religiously."

Rabbi Judah L. Mainon, Israeli minister of religion, has asked the Mizrachi World Conference, composed of orthodox religious Zionists, to take the lead in reviving the Sanhedrin. Rabbi Mainon's plan, how-

ever, is strongly opposed by the Agudath Israel, another world organization of orthodox Jews, and by the Reformed Jewish leaders.

Egyptian and American scholars engaged in microfilming ancient documents in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai have discovered what is believed to be the oldest copy of the New Testament in Greek and Syriac. Written on gazelle's hide, the manuscript dates from the fourth century and includes a translation of the Bible in Arabic written over the Greek text and on the margins. The manuscript is also crammed with the story of early Christian saints. Dr. Wendell Phillips of Philadelphia, Pa., president of the American Foundation for the Study of Man, has placed a value of \$1,000,000 on the manuscript.

A group of Christian minority leaders has succeeded in working out a compromise for the new constitution of Syria, which had tried to make Islam the official state religion. Article III of the new constitution, which had declared Syria a Moslem state, has been modified to embrace these provisions: (a) the religion of the president of the republic is Islam, (b) the Islamic Fiqh (Moslem jurisprudence) is considered the main source of the state's legislation, (c) the state guarantees freedom of worship and respects all "inspired religions" ("inspired religions" according to Islam are Judaism and Christianity), (d) The state guarantees the personal status (authority over marriage and divorce cases) of all minority groups. In addition to this revised Article III, this amendment has been inserted into the preamble of the constitution: "The majority of the Syrian people being Moslem, they declare the state's attachment to Islam and closer co-operation with Moslem people all over the world, to resolve to combat atheism and moral degradation, and promise to build the new state on moral foundations as prescribed by Islam and the 'inspired religions.'"