

Concordia Theological Monthly



AUGUST



1950

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

THE 1950 THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCES IN EUROPE

Plans have been completed for the continuation of theological conferences in Europe which our Synod began in 1948. Whereas in the past two years these conferences were held at Bad Boll in Wuertemberg, this year's conferences will be conducted in Bad Harzburg, Neuendettelsau, and Berlin. Arrangements have also been made for conferences of shorter duration in Alsace and London. The commissioners appointed by President Behnken are: Dr. Herm. Harms, Rev. E. L. Roschke, President of the Western District, Dr. J. T. Mueller, Dr. L. W. Spitz, and Professor M. J. Naumann. Professor Theo. Hoelty-Nickel of Valparaiso University, who is in Germany this summer, will enrich the program with a lecture on the character of the Lutheran service in our land. The conferences to be held in Germany will extend throughout the month of August.

The program of the conferences will revolve about the general theme "Christ loved the Church" and will deal with the commission and power granted the Church by her Lord Jesus Christ. Subtopics of the general theme will be: "He has made us kings and priests" (the universal priesthood of all believers); "The ministry of reconciliation" (the preaching ministry: its basis and its effective operation); "Ye have suffered a while" (the Church in tribulation); "Behold, I come quickly" (the Church in the assurance of victory). The essays to be presented will discuss the subtopics from various points of view: the Biblical-exegetical, the dogmatic-theological, the apologetic, and the practical. Themes of the essays to be read are: The "state" of being a Christian according to Scripture; The universal priesthood in the Lutheran Church; Perversions of the "state" of being a Christian — a critique of fanatical schismatics and institutionalists; "Faith is a living, dynamic, active, and powerful thing" — the universal priesthood as it manifests itself in the life of the Lutheran Church; The office of the ministry according to Scripture and its relation to the congregation and to the universal priesthood; The Lutheran concept of "office" (*Amt*); The pastor as a preacher; The pastor as a shepherd of souls; What does Scripture teach regarding the necessity and blessing of tribulation?; Luther on temptation, tribulation, and submission in suffering; The witness of the Christian and the Church in times of tribulation; The Christian hope according to the witness of Jesus,

the Apostles, and the Early Church; De-emphasis and over-emphasis of eschatology; "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith"—the pious devotional life of the individual Christian and of the congregation in tribulation and hope.

The conferences will be attended by theologians and pastors of the Free Churches and the United Lutheran Church of Germany. Essays will be read also by German and Scandinavian theologians. May the Lord of the Church bless also these conferences and through them strengthen the walls of our Lutheran Zion and extend the frontiers of His kingdom.

P. M. B.

VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY, 1925—1950

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the acquisition by Lutherans of our Church of Valparaiso University and the beginning of the conversion of this school (founded in 1859) into a Lutheran university. In commemoration of this event, Valparaiso University observed on May 21 Founders' Day, issued a handsome silver and blue stamp, of which forty million are being distributed, and organized, so the *Valparaiso Bulletin* (May-June issue) informs us, a committee of approximately 250 synodical leaders under the leadership of Governor Henry F. Schricker of Indiana with the purpose in view of "bringing Valparaiso University to the attention of people interested in the welfare of the Church and the nation."

Our MONTHLY congratulates Valparaiso University on the occasion of this anniversary. Who could have dreamed twenty-five years ago that the Lord would so overtly bless the faith of those who in 1925 acquired Valparaiso University and resolved that, under God, this school should become a Christian and Lutheran university. Who would have believed twenty-five years ago that this school, dependent for support on tuition fees and freewill offerings of individuals, congregations, and consecrated groups of men and women, would not only survive the crises of this quarter century, but would grow into an institution of which Governor Schricker recently said that it is now one of the nation's great universities "which is only beginning to make itself felt in its service to the Church and to the general welfare of the country." Who would have believed twenty-five years ago—and perhaps most of us were too fainthearted to believe it—that by 1950 more than 2,000 students would attend Valparaiso University and that it would be possible for the present president of this school, Dr. O. P. Kretzmann, to say of the most recent graduates of this University: "It is my honest conviction that these graduates are about

as well prepared for the second half of the twentieth century as they can possibly be."

Valparaiso University as of 1950 is another illustration of the power of a living faith, of fervent and persistent prayer, and of unfeigned love and devotion to the cause of the Savior's kingdom. God's blessing has rested on those who in 1925 conceived the idea of founding a Christian university. He also blessed those thousands of Christians in our Church who throughout these many years loyally supported this school with their various talents. He has blessed the consecrated efforts of the administrative officers and the Board of Directors of this school. He has richly blessed the thousands of students who within the past quarter century attended this school. He has blessed this school particularly also through its faculties. He has given this school many Christian men and women whose great concern inside and outside the classroom has not only been to teach effectively, but also sympathetically to guide their students into the ways of Biblical truth. Dr. Kretzmann did not overstate the case when he wrote in the *Bulletin* quoted above: "Ultimately the test of any educational institution lies in the caliber and stature of the men and women of its staff. . . . I would be untrue to my deepest convictions if I did not say a word of gratitude to all members of our faculty who have again gone far beyond the line of duty in their various activities. Financially their reward is often small; in terms of the years and character and knowledge and immortal souls their reward will be exceedingly great."

The MONTHLY joins Valparaiso University's thousands of friends in wishing it God's continued purest and richest blessings. P. M. B.

THE WRITTEN AND SPOKEN WORD

Under this title Professor Uuraas Saarnivaara, in the *Lutheran Quarterly*, May, 1950, discusses the question whether Luther gave priority to the written or to the spoken Word as the means of grace. This question was first raised by the Luther renaissance and then made an issue by the Barthian theologians, who claim that the written Word is merely a static Word (*Deus dixit*), while the oral proclamation is the dynamic and existential Word of God (*Deus dicit*). In the Free Conference at Bad Boll in 1948 one or two theologians went so far as to question the efficacy of the written Word as the regenerating power of God. (Cp. *The Story of Bad Boll*, 27.) They insisted that the *kerygma* (Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 1:21, etc.) must be understood as a verbal noun, denoting the act of proclaiming rather than the

content of the proclamation. Professor Saarnivaara seeks to find a solution for the apparent conflict in Luther's theology, where the emphasis at times is placed exclusively on the spoken Word and at other times on the written Word. The author first brings the pertinent references in which Luther states that "God does not wish to deal with us otherwise than through the spoken word and the sacraments, and that whatever without the word and sacraments is extolled as spirit is the devil himself." (Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII, and especially Art. IV.) "The oral word must before anything else be present and be grasped with the ears if the Holy Spirit is to come into the heart, who enlightens us through the word and works faith." (WA. 29, 581, St. L. XI:1736f.) "The unique work of Christ, who has suffered and risen from the dead, God has, through the word, placed in the mouth of the apostles and the ministers of the Church, and in cases of emergency of all Christians, to the end that they through it would distribute and proclaim the forgiveness of sins to those who desire it. Thus, if you there will seek forgiveness of sins you will surely find it. . . . But if you do not wish to seek it there [in my mouth], you shall be bound to your sins, do what you will." (WA. 52, 273, St. L. XIII:1957.)

Professor Saarnivaara next lists several references from Luther's writings in which Luther maintained that although the Scripture is written by men, it is God's Word, and therefore all doctrines in conflict with the Scriptures are lies. He states that for Luther and his time in general the questions of the inerrancy of the Scriptures and of verbal inspiration were no problem, and that Luther made no attempt to harmonize apparent discrepancies, because they do not endanger the articles of Christian faith. Luther "demanded that the word of God is to be taken and believed as it is, without adding any 'allegorical,' 'spiritual,' or other artificial interpretations to it. Our faith 'must above all things be based on clear Scriptures, which are to be understood simply according to the sound and meaning of the words.'" Professor Saarnivaara holds that Luther saw no conflict between the statements "Scripture is the normative word of God, and that God bestows His grace and forgives sins by means of the spoken word and sacraments. All preaching and administration of sacraments have their source in the written word of God and must take place according to it. Therefore, the proclamation of the word (in sermons and in personal absolution and counselling) and the administration of sacraments is inseparably connected with the Scriptures. Only a scriptural teaching and preaching, and consolation leads

men to the knowledge of Christ and salvation in Him." In other words, the written Word is the only source and norm of Christian preaching and the spoken Word the means of grace. In this connection Luther makes some rather bold statements, such as, "The Gospel is not a writing, but a spoken Word which explains Scripture," or, "The nature of the Gospel of the New Testament in distinction from the Old Testament is that it must be preached and proclaimed in an oral and living voice," or, "The Church is a 'mouth-house' not a 'pen-house.'"

Does Luther really mean to say that God performs His gracious work only through the oral proclamation, the administration of the Sacraments, and through the *mutuum colloquium*? Is the purpose of the writing of the New Testament only to serve as a bulwark against heresies, while the Gospel as a means of grace is to be continued only in the oral Word? Professor Saarnivaara states that according to Luther the Holy Spirit may engender faith also through the reading of the Word, and cites Luther's comments to 1 John 5:13. These words are so significant that we give them in full (as translated from the Weimar edition):

The Apostle wants that this is to be understood of the increase of faith, in order that we may day by day grow in the sure knowledge and certainty. . . . Writing is a means or way whereby we attain to knowledge and faith. . . . If writing can accomplish this, how much more effectually does a living speech do it? . . . Christ comes through the testimony, through Scripture and spoken word (*venit per scripturam et verbum locale*). . . . Why should we be asked to read the Bible if Scripture is dead? If they [the fanatics] have received the Holy Spirit without a spoken word and Scripture, why do they write books and bother others with a work that they themselves despise? . . . We teach that the Word is to be read and heard; through reading the Holy Spirit comes where He wills (*docemus, ut legatur, auditur verbum, lecto venit spiritus sanctus, ubi voluerit*). . . . The Scriptures are to be written in the heart, they must be read and meditated upon. Satan cannot stay where he hears God's Word read. (WA. 20, 789, St. Louis, IX:1514.)

Professor Saarnivaara believes that Luther in this reference only wished to stress that if the written Word can engender faith, how much more the oral Word, and that it is only in exceptional cases that God works faith through the written Word.

Three observations are in order. In the first place, it is in our opinion oversimplification to state that "the written Word of God

is primarily a 'revelation Word,' which is the norm and standard of all faith, life, and teaching. The spoken Word (preaching, absolution, Sacraments) is the actual 'means-of-grace-Word,' through which God forgives sins, works faith, and imparts His Holy Spirit." He goes too far when he states that "Luther never says that Scripture has the office or ministry of reconciliation or that Christ has given the power of the Keys to the written Word; neither does Scripture itself contain any such statement. The ministry of reconciliation and the power of the Keys are given to the living Christians of each generation, not to Scripture. God may work faith through the written Word, namely, faith in Him and His truth and promises, so that the penitent sinner can seek the Gospel in the Church from the ministry of reconciliation and be justified by believing it." In our opinion, Luther's bold statements in support of the oral Word as the means of grace were necessary as an antithesis to Rome's sacramentalism. Luther's boldest statements occur in those sermons and writings in which he inveighs against Rome's theory that God deals with man only through the Sacraments performed *ex opere operato*. In that connection Luther is prompted to say in his massive manner that "das Wort muss geschrieen werden."

In the second place, Luther's emphasis on the oral proclamation places a tremendous responsibility upon the Christians, whose oral witness the Holy Spirit employs as a means of grace, and particularly upon the pastor, who as Christ's ambassador is the Holy Spirit's instrument to engender faith. The fact is that the Holy Spirit accommodates Himself to human psychology. Experience shows that in daily life the oral word of a living personality, the human voice with its inflection and modulation, is a powerful factor. Is it not true that when the pastor after careful preparation reads aloud to the congregation portions of the Bible the hearer is ordinarily much more deeply affected than by private and silent reading? In delivering his sermons the pastor will therefore be extremely solicitous in seeing to it that he not only proclaims nothing but God's Word, but that he will proclaim the message in such a way that his word is really a "living word."

And in the third place, Lutherans should carefully consider Professor Saarnivaara's plea, lest Lutheran theologians exchange Luther's concept of the Word for that of Calvin. He points out that while Luther laid great emphasis on the *viva vox ecclesiae*, Calvin held that meditation in solitude, either on the basis of the written Word or of one's private thoughts, was the way to God. Professor Saarnivaara fears that some Lutherans lean toward the Calvinistic view and "profess

faith in Scripture as the inspired and infallible Word of God, but in practice make void and of no effect some clear statements of the written Word through their doctrinal tradition." He believes that many Reformed who say that "God's chief agency in reaching souls is other souls" are closer to Luther's views on the oral Word than many Lutherans.

We are grateful to Professor Saarnivaara for stressing the "means-of-grace-word" and reminding us of Luther's dictum that when the Church teaches and proclaims the Gospel *in harmony with the Scriptures*, its voice is the voice of God, Luke 10:16. If it teaches anything in conflict with the written Word of God, its voice is the voice of the devil. But an earnest caution is in order lest the Lutheran theologian, in wishing to safeguard the dynamic character of the Word of God, will lose its normative value. The Lutheran pastor will constantly keep both truths in mind: "Scriptures cannot be broken," and "faith cometh by hearing."

The "Common Confession" in discussing the Word of God under the chapter of the means of grace does not depart from historic Lutheran theology. Of course, modern antitheses have compelled dogmatists to discuss the Word of God under Prolegomena, where they set forth that the Word of God is the only source of doctrine. However, this can also be done very effectively under the locus of the means of grace. The important thing is that we avoid all overstatements lest we become so involved in maintaining the inerrancy of Scriptures and the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures as the means of grace that we ignore the "living Word." No Lutheran pastor would feel satisfied to have directed an alarmed sinner only to the written Word. Nevertheless, he will exercise great care lest he so stress the efficacy of the spoken Word and the Sacraments that the written Word as the life-giving Word is ignored. He knows from personal experience that the Holy Spirit is in the written Word and speaks to him there. He knows that his parishioners in their private and family devotions have in the written Word the living voice of their Savior effectively inviting, comforting, and strengthening them. As a curate of souls he will apply either the written, or the spoken, or the visible Word, or all three at the same time, as the needs of his parishioners require.

F. E. M.

BARTH, BRUNNER, NIEBUHR — NEO-ORTHODOX OR LIBERAL?

Under the title "The Liberalism of Neo-Orthodoxy" published in the *Christian Century* (three installments beginning with the June 7 issue) Charles Clayton Morrison presents a concise and penetrating

analysis of the theology of Barth, Brunner, and Niebuhr. He points out, first of all, that "Neo-Orthodoxy" is a misnomer. It has often been stated that Neo-Orthodoxy as represented by its chief exponents, Barth, Brunner, and Niebuhr, is the very antithesis of liberal theology. Many writers believed that the Barthian theology had sounded the death knell of modernistic Liberalism. (Cp. H. Rolston, *A Conservative Looks to Barth and Brunner*, p. 17 f.; Herman Sasse: "In Karl Barth liberal theology brought forth its own conqueror. He could overcome the liberal theology because he was bone of its bones and flesh of its flesh." *Here We Stand*, p. 155.) Morrison, however, states, and we believe correctly so, that "there is far more common ground for both argument and understanding between Liberalism and Neo-Orthodoxy than is generally supposed." He even goes so far as to state "that the exponents of Neo-Orthodoxy have not sufficiently recognized the strong currents of Liberalism in their own thinking." It is, of course, a fact that the neo-orthodox theologians on both sides of the Atlantic went through a training in liberal theology, and Morrison is correct when he states that these neo-orthodox theologians did not really reject "their earlier Liberalism as such, but certain conclusions reached by liberal thinkers of the past generation." In this evaluation he seems to agree with the findings of C. Van Til in his incisive critique "The New Modernism, an Appraisal of Barth and Brunner." Morrison holds that Neo-Orthodoxy is not opposed to Liberalism as such, but to an "arrested Liberalism," a Liberalism which holds to certain prematurely crystallized conclusions and thus actually denies the fundamental premise of liberal theology, namely, that Liberalism is a method, rather than a creed, a method whereby man is continually growing in his theological understanding.

Morrison examines the dialectical Neo-Orthodoxy in regard to seven features: (1) its acceptance of the higher criticism of the Bible and, in general, the findings of modern science; (2) its acceptance of the Biblical *Weltanschauung*; (3) its shift of the locus of revelation from the Bible to the living history that is mirrored in the Bible; (4) its acceptance of the findings of New Testament scholarship; (5) its eschatology; (6) its doctrine of original sin; and (7) its existentialism.

1. Morrison reminds his readers of the rise of liberal theology as it manifested itself in the acceptance of the "scientific" approach to the Bible, which brought liberal theologians into a sharp clash with conservative, or orthodox, theology. He holds that Neo-Orthodoxy "shares with Liberalism in the attempt to orient the Christian faith

away from the Biblical literalism of the six-day creationism of the traditional school," and that it really applies the liberal principles of Higher Criticism and thereby makes the Bible relevant for our age. Our CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY has often pointed out that there is a diametrical cleavage between Neo-Orthodoxy and conservative theology in Bibliology, and that Neo-Orthodoxy does not represent the Lutheran view of a "dynamic revelation," but the liberal and modernistic view of revelation.

2. According to Morrison, "static Liberalism" denies that the Bible presents a *Weltanschauung* which is the heart and core of Christian faith because it followed modern science of a generation ago, which held that the Biblical *Weltanschauung* was completely out of date. Liberal theology, therefore, gave to science the task of solving the problem of the nature of the universe and reserves for theology only the fixing of a high standard of morality. It is against a view which reduces Christianity to mere moralism that Neo-Orthodoxy vigorously protests. It presents a *Weltanschauung* which is grounded in the nature of the cosmos itself. "The Christian Gospel, it says, is not primarily a disclosure of ideal human conduct; it is a vision and a proclamation of the nature of the world and a meaning of human existence." Morrison believes that Neo-Orthodoxy views the Christian faith as a whole, in which the following parts constitute the Biblical *Weltanschauung*: God as the Creator of everything; the whole creation subject to His sovereign will; man created in God's image, a free and responsible agent, and therefore prone to sin; human history as the scene of God's self-disclosure and the Hebrew-Christian history in which God most clearly revealed Himself as Judge and Redeemer. The revelation of God culminates in the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus as this total event is interpreted by His early disciples.

The Bible is therefore "the mirror in which mankind for all time may discern and thereby participate in this world outlook." Static Liberalism had failed to see this, while Neo-Orthodoxy has brought into bold outline this "Biblical *Weltanschauung* which, like a palimpsest lies underneath the Bible's historically incidental pre-scientific outlook." This to Morrison is "strictly within the liberal tradition."

3. Static Liberalism, by completely humanizing the Bible, had robbed it of its revelatory character. Neo-Orthodoxy agrees with the position of Liberalism that the Bible and revelation must not be equated, but differs from it in that it accepts a revelation, namely, "in the living historical experience of which the humanly composed

literature of the Bible is the reflecting mirror." As such the Bible is an indispensable auxiliary of the revelation in history. According to Morrison, Neo-Orthodoxy places the locus of revelation in the empirical historical fact centering in the life of Jesus and thereby remains in the liberal tradition, which sets man free to exercise his intelligence in reading the Bible and to find in it the concepts which constitute the "Christian *Weltanschauung*."

4. Morrison believes that Neo-Orthodoxy is more liberal and radical in its attitude toward the New Testament than "static Liberalism." It fully accepts the contemporary New Testament scholarship which takes a different attitude toward the historicity of the New Testament writings than static Liberalism did. Neo-Orthodoxy, in line with contemporary New Testament scholarship, wishes to magnify the Person of Jesus "as the supreme event in the long story of historical events which had been pregnant with the divine revelation." For it was Jesus who kindled the disciples' imagination to see in Him the final revelation of the divine Father who in Jesus reconciled the world to Himself."

5. Liberalism saw in the "ethical teachings" of Jesus the "Gospel" of the kingdom of God which was to be established upon earth. Contemporary scholarship, however, sees the entire New Testament within the framework of eschatology. Neo-Orthodoxy projects a world view in a dimension which is beyond temporal history, that is, in a dimension which transcends temporal history here and now, and which may be called "the history of salvation." "The Neo-Orthodox view of the end of history from one viewpoint embraces temporal history and from another is distinct from it." All Christians participate in this extratemporal history and find here the assurance of redemption, the meaning of existence, and the hope of the ultimate fulfillment of the Creator's purpose. Morrison holds that only a liberal mind can agree with an interpretation of history such as Reinhold Niebuhr offers in his *Faith and History*.

6. Liberal theology views sin merely as an expression of man's immaturity or ignorance or a maladjustment of some sort. Neo-Orthodoxy speaks of original sin; however, not in the conservative tradition, but in the liberal tradition. Niebuhr, for example, follows the empirical method of examining nature itself by introspection and observation and "finds the ground and explanation of sin as the very constitution of man, that is, in the inevitable imbalance between man's freedom and his finitude."

7. The final structural concept in which Dr. Morrison finds a close

affinity between Neo-Orthodoxy and Liberalism is existentialism. Most of us have been under the impression that it was precisely at this point that Neo-Orthodoxy departed radically from Liberal Theology. Morrison, however, makes a good case for this contention. It is, of course, true that it is extremely difficult to define existentialism, because there are many types of this philosophy, e. g., that of Neo-Thomism, of Kierkegaard, of Heidegger, of Sartre, of Barth. Morrison holds that the core of existentialism "is the doctrine that the apprehension of and response to the Christian gospel revolves ultimately upon faith and not upon rational proof." The Neo-Orthodox theologians believe that existentialism must answer the all-important question: How does man apprehend the Christian *Weltanschauung*? According to Morrison, Neo-Orthodoxy summarizes its answer as follows: "Christianity rests, at bottom, upon faith, not upon reason. And faith is regarded as essentially decision and commitment, not rationalized belief. The acceptance of the Christian *Weltanschauung* and the commitment of man's life in loyal devotion to the sovereign will of his Creator constitute, according to neo-orthodoxy, a venture of unproved faith. In some crucial moment of experience, man, not in mere intellectual curiosity, but in the profound seriousness of anguish or despair, asks the supreme and inescapable question: What is the ultimate and most real nature of this world and the meaning of my existence in it? In such a moment—the 'existential moment'—his answer is not determined by rational thought; it is an answer in which his whole existence is involved." The Barthian theologians must therefore reject Sartre's answer, which is nothing more than naturalistic determinism, and rather follow Kierkegaard. Man is actually and really confronted by God and in this encounter he must decide where he will find the ultimate meaning of all existence, whether in a self-existent world unable to answer man's basic question or, according to the Christian *Weltanschauung*, in a world "created by God and over which He reigns in righteousness and grace."

In this crisis-situation man's answer is at the same time a decision—an act of faith, and as Morrison points out, *not* an "act of rationalized belief." This decision is the existential moment (the German Barthians call it *Ereignis*), however, not a coerced decision, but a spontaneous and free act of man.

At first glance this seems to be a radical departure from Liberalism. But Dr. Morrison contends that it is indeed a departure from "arrested liberalism," but not from genuine Liberalism. The former refused to go beyond the data of science and philosophy in seeking an

answer to the meaning and significance of existence, and by ignoring the Supernatural (Aubrey in *Present Theological Tendencies* distinguishes between the Super-natural and the Supra-natural) landed in the existentialism of Sartre. Morrison believes that "the existentialism of neo-orthodoxy, with its doctrine of the limitation of human reason, is an empirical and realistic attempt to answer the question as to the ultimate nature of the universe and the meaning of human existence. And this, I maintain, invests it with the highest credentials of liberalism. In support of this proposition, I wish to call two witnesses, whose liberalism is beyond question. In fact they represent the extreme left wing of liberal thought." He thinks that the modern pragmatists and empiricists have a great deal in common with Neo-Orthodoxy and says of William James in particular, that he "was in truth an existentialist. He was not far from the kingdom of neo-orthodoxy." After discussing the relation of Dewey, James, and Kierkegaard he raises the question: "Is neo-orthodoxy less empirical than the answers of Dewey and James? I am bound to say that it is no less empirical than the other two!"

From the Lutheran viewpoint, Dr. Morrison's analysis of Neo-Orthodoxy shows that no *approachment* between Lutheranism and Barthianism is possible. Lutheran theology holds that there is objective truth outside of man's experience, a "given," while in Liberalism and/or Neo-Orthodoxy truth is truth only in the encounter (cf. title of Brunner's book: *Wahrheit in Begegnung*). F. E. M.

PROCLAMATION OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF GERMANY

Christ und Welt, a German weekly published in Stuttgart and one of the leading German newspapers which emerged since the war, features in its issue of May 4 a report of the annual convention of the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKID) held in Berlin in April of this year. The report indicates that the Soviets put no obstacles in the way of the convention but rather, as they have done on similar occasions, gave evidence that they intended to make the convention as agreeable for the delegates as possible. Nevertheless the convention did not fail to take note of the serious difficulties which in many ways are impeding the work of the Church especially in the Eastern Zone and of the critical political situation in which Germany finds itself at the present time. The convention therefore released a public proclamation in which it called attention to the tensions and difficulties confronting the German people and in which it also appealed to all governments of the world to restore and maintain peace among the

nations. We believe this proclamation to be of such importance that we have translated it for the MONTHLY. It reads as follows:

In Berlin, where the war began and where we are facing the terrifying reality that God's judgment on us has not yet come to an end, we, the Evangelical Church of Germany, are confronted in our convention by the question what the Church can do to bring about and preserve peace.

Countless terrified human beings in the entire world are today clamoring for peace. They are living in constant fear and anxiety that there may be another war. Our own people, unarmed as they are, are subjected to powers which view one another with fear and suspicion. The Iron Curtain severs the body of our people, and conflicts of the most serious consequences may result at a moment's notice. In this crisis we see God's judgment. For wars do not rise from themselves. Rather, men begin wars because they do not honor God and because they disregard God's laws. But God is not mocked. When men revolt against God, the demons of hell break loose as well as the spirits of merciless power, of strife which engenders hate, of perplexity and fear. Nations are even now in revolt against God and are trampling under foot the laws which He intended for their common good.

Our Lord Jesus Christ says: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." As such who believe that God wishes men to live at peace, we find ourselves called upon to seek peace with all men and to strive for the establishment of peace among all nations.

We therefore implore all our people as we have done in our Eisenach message: Do not cultivate the spirit of hatred and bitterness. Do not permit yourselves to become tools of a propaganda which fosters enmity between nations and incites to war. Neither become tools of peace propagandas which in reality sow hatred and promote war. Do not become victims of the illusion that our sad lot can be remedied only through another war. We call upon all our people in the east and in the west: Make your influence felt among all who are in politically responsible positions so that they will not agree to a war in which Germans will fight against Germans. We ask everyone seriously to consider whether he could in the event of such a war take a weapon into his hand!

We appeal to the governments of our people: Respect justice, whose author and preserver God is. Practice justice! There is no justice without recognition of the claim which God has on man. God is Lord. He alone has the final claim on man's life and entire existence. Only if the State respects this holy claim of God will the State be able to protect the dignity and freedom of man.

Therefore no man should be deprived of his freedom without due process of law. Therefore no pressure or terrorizing methods should be employed in matters of faith and conscience, and no one should be persecuted because of his faith, his world view, or his race, and no one should be coerced into actions which are contrary to his conscience. We beseech the governments of our people not to violate this sacred right of man which he possesses as a creature of God. Such violations will destroy all order and national peace.

We beg all those in authority to execute every possible measure of social justice, to insist that all suppressed and disinherited, all who were bombed out and became homeless victims of the war, get a fair deal and adequate living quarters.

We adjure the governments and representatives of our people not to let themselves be deceived by any power of the world into the belief that a war will bring a solution and a turning point of our great distress. We are grateful that some governments, in their constitutions, protect those who for reasons of conscience refuse to go to war. We beg *all* governments of the world to grant this same protection. Whoever for reasons of conscience refuses to go to war should be assured of the intercessions of the Church.

We appeal to the military powers ruling over us and to all rulers of the world to set free at last all prisoners of war, all displaced persons, and all others who, as a result of the war, fell into your hands. Be merciful toward all those who are under your jurisdiction. Conclude honorable peace treaties. Remove at last the zonal boundaries dividing Eastern Germany from Western Germany, for these boundaries are dividing our people and jeopardizing the peace of the world. Give the German people the opportunity to create for themselves a new order of justice in which East and West might again become one. Make efforts that the present boundaries of States may no longer be walls between national and ideological spheres of influence.

We appeal to the governments of the entire world to join hands in a new union of justice in which peace will be sought and preserved. The price which every nation in such a union may have to pay may be high, but it can never be too high if through that union the peace of the world is won and preserved. We plead with all churches of the world to join us in this appeal to the nations and not to relent in bringing this appeal to the governments of their respective countries.

God's avenging hand is still stretched out over us. If He does not show mercy, all our efforts are in vain. But He is a God of peace and promises us His grace. Therefore we must pray

unceasingly for peace. We beg the Christians in the entire world to join us in this prayer. We call upon the evangelical churches of Germany regularly to pray for peace in their services, to join with other congregations on certain days in a common prayer for peace, and to include in these prayers especially those governments which are chiefly responsible for war and peace.

P. M. B.

ROME AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

In the *Commonweal* (April 28) Rev. Thomas Boyle, a priest of the Antigonish diocese in Canada, submits an instructive overview on the attitude of the Catholic Church to the ecumenical movement: which, following the ecumenical assemblies held in Panama (1916), Stockholm (1925), Lausanne (1927), and Oxford (1937) culminated, in 1948, in the formation, at Amsterdam, of the World Council of Churches. Rev. Boyle expresses the relation of the Catholic Church to these ecumenical assemblies in the following words:

The first approach to the Holy See by the leaders of the ecumenical movement . . . took place in 1919 when a delegation called on Pope Benedict XV. Their report stated that "the Holy Father received them courteously, listened to their story and expressed sympathy with their purpose, but intimated tactfully, but no less decisively, that there was one way and only one in which the object they had at heart could be realized, namely, that they and those for whom they spoke should submit themselves to the one whom their Lord had appointed to be their rightful head, the one to whom they were then speaking.

In 1927, a decree of the Holy Office forbade Catholics to attend the Lausanne Conference. . . . After the conference, an encyclical (*Mortalium Animos*) was issued giving the reasons for the abstention of Catholics. Chiefly it was because of the underlying assumption of the organizers that among the existing churches there is none that is simply the true Church and that all Christian bodies are, although imperfectly, the Church of Christ. Nor were Catholics permitted to take part in the Amsterdam Assembly in 1948. Finally, the very first sentence of the recent *Instruction to Local Ordinaries about the Ecumenical Movement* reads, "The Catholic Church takes no part in ecumenical conventions and other assemblies of a similar character."

Nevertheless, so Rev. Boyle continues:

The recent *Instruction* of Pope Pius XII wants to help the ecumenical movement to attain its goal. For this reason the Church recommends it to the fervent prayers of the Catholic people. Furthermore, she permits competent theologians to participate in

discussion groups which may offer "a desirable occasion for spreading a knowledge of Catholic doctrine with which non-Catholics are generally not sufficiently conversant." . . . While it is true that unity for practical activity without unity in doctrinal matters cannot be effective in an essential mission of the Church, the spreading of the Kingdom of God on earth, nevertheless a mutual alignment of forces against materialism, whether of the communistic or the secularist variety, can be very useful in the promotion of a secondary aim of the Church, the building of the Good Society. The doctrinal basis here is natural theology. Concerted action for the defense of the principles of the natural law are given special encouragement in the *Instruction*.

In the above, Rev. Boyle has indicated some reasons for the change of attitude by the Catholic Church toward the ecumenical movement. Yet it seems in order to enumerate these reasons and to add others which no doubt are playing a part in this change of attitude. These reasons are:

1. By allowing competent Catholic theologians to cross swords with non-Catholic theologians, Roman theology is at least assured of a full hearing;
2. The Catholic Church discovered in 1948, to her great surprise, that it was possible for non-Catholic Christians to agree on a common confession of faith, though, indeed, this confession is from our Lutheran point of view in important respects inadequate;
3. Even in Catholic theology there is a current of thought which exalts the *Una Sancta* above the visible organization of the Catholic Church;
4. The Catholic Church discovered that the liberal element in present-day Protestantism had to give way at Amsterdam to a positive position toward Biblical Christianity;
5. The Catholic Church, which has been most outspoken in denouncing Soviet Communism and is therefore largely responsible for the deepening antagonisms and growing tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, will greatly strengthen her position if she can rally to her support also non-Catholic Christian churches;
6. The Catholic Church, which has, in recent years, frequently outplayed her hands in the political arena, has discovered that American Protestants are not yet ready to submit to Catholic power and authoritarianism, and that she must therefore tread tactfully and cautiously so as not to estrange also on religious grounds many non-Catholic Christians.

Yet, even though the Holy See has, since 1948, shown a more sympathetic attitude toward the ecumenical movement, particularly over in Europe, Roman Catholicism will not yield one inch from its central authority in the Vatican and will continue, as it has throughout the centuries, to be the irreconcilable foe of the free interpretation of Scripture and of the Scriptural teaching of the priesthood of all believers. *Roma semper eadem* also in 1950, when it is possible, as it is in Europe, for evangelical and Roman theologians to meet and to discuss Christian doctrine.

P. M. B.

CATHOLIC WORD LIST

Our Sunday Visitor, a national Catholic Action weekly, published in recent issues definitions of Catholic words and terms. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the entire list is asked by the editor of *Our Sunday Visitor* to apply to Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Ind., for a copy of *A Catholic Word List* (price 20 cents). We have found these definitions helpful for a better understanding of Catholic life and thought and for interpreting Catholic teaching. The list might prove useful also to pastors who are instructing Catholic converts in our Lutheran doctrines. For their benefit in particular we are submitting a few samples from the word list:

High Mass—A sung Mass without the assistance of a deacon or subdeacon.

Holy Water—A sacramental consisting of water mixed with salt and blessed by a priest; used to bless persons and things.

House of God—Refers to the Blessed Virgin Mary in whose womb Christ dwelt; may also refer to a Catholic church wherein Christ dwells.

Holy Orders—A sacrament by which bishops, priests, and other ministers of the Church are ordained and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties. There are seven steps by which a cleric advances in succession to the priesthood: Ostiarius (Porter); Exorcist, Lector, Acolyte, Sub-deacon, Deacon, Priest. The first four are called Minor Orders and the last three are called Holy Orders.

Indulgence—A remission granted by the Church of the temporal punishment, which remains due to sin, after its guilt has been forgiven. If it remits all punishment it is called plenary. An indulgence may be partial, i. e., part of the temporal punishment of sin is remitted to persons rightly disposed.

Indulgence, Apostolic—Indulgences attached by the Pope or his delegate to crucifixes, rosaries, medals, and other images.

Infused Virtues—Virtues which come into the soul together with sanctifying grace, as the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

Inquisition—An ecclesiastical organization for discovering and preventing heresy.

Interdict—A penalty inflicted by the Pope or bishop upon a group barring them from the use of the sacraments, religious services, and Christian burial.

P. M. B.

ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

In 1943 Dr. Amos John Traver, professor of practical theology at Hama Divinity School of Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, introduced a two-hour elective course entitled "The Ministry of Writing." Dr. Traver's aim is to teach men how to be as good ministers when they sit down at their typewriters as they are when they stand in the pulpit. The course offers guidance and practice in publicity, advertising, letters, announcements, programs, editing parish bulletins, and in all writing normally required of a pastor. Dr. Traver advises his students "to turn newspaper man once a week; it is an important and necessary part of being a good pastor," and urges them to visit the newspaper office upon their arrival in the city where they will take a parish.

The British and Foreign Bible Society has speeded up the production of Bibles in Great Britain during the past nine months. During the past nine-month period 2,357,000 Scripture portions were published as compared with 1,800,000 during the previous twelve months. Over 7,000,000 copies in 369 languages and dialects were distributed throughout the world according to the report issued at the Society's recent annual meeting in London.

Mount Olivet Lutheran Church in Minneapolis probably has established a record in the number of new members received in one service. On Palm Sunday 650 new members—450 adults and 200 children—were received into membership. Dr. Reuben K. Youngdahl, pastor, said many of the new members became interested in his church after reading a reprint in the Minneapolis Sunday *Tribune* of an article which the *Christian Century* had printed about Mount Olivet as the first of a series of "twelve great churches of America." The majority of the new members were reached by a concerted effort by the church laity as well as staff members "to win persons without a church home for

Christ and the church during Lent." Six years ago, on All Saints' Sunday, Mount Olivet added 469 persons to its membership. At present somewhat more than 5,500 people are affiliated with this Augustana Lutheran congregation. It would be interesting to find out how the "life and growth" committee which makes every-member visitations is trained and how it operates.

Ground was broken at San Pedro, California, on a site overlooking Los Angeles harbor for an \$80,000 Norwegian seamen's church. The new edifice will be known as St. Olaf's Lutheran Church.

Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, will be the scene of the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches scheduled for the United States in 1953. Plans for the Evanston assembly will be drawn up in detail at the annual meeting of the 90-member Council Committee of the World Council in Toronto, Canada, July 8—15.

The Far Eastern Gospel Crusade, with international headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota, is completing its plans for sending 500 new missionaries into the rural areas of Japan during the next five years. The Crusade, an independent Protestant organization, grew out of missionary projects carried on by Christian service men and women in the Far East during and following World War II. At present the Crusade is building a large missionary receiving home in Yokohama where missionary candidates will receive three months of intensive training before they are sent out into Japanese villages for pioneer work.

The 162d general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., which met in Cincinnati during May, adopted a huge budget of \$17,049,880 for 1951. Of this sum \$2,225,000 was set aside for Christian education, \$7,537,000 for the Board of National Missions, and \$6,030,000 for the Board of Foreign Missions. In order to raise this sum the assembly voted that churches with a current expense budget under \$5,000 are requested to set their benevolence giving ratio at 13%; those with budgets between \$5,000 and \$10,000 at 14%; \$10,000 to \$25,000 at 18%; and \$25,000 and over at 22%.

The newly elected national president of the Episcopal Parish School Association, the Rev. David C. Colony of Metairie, La., has issued the report that Episcopal parish schools are spreading rapidly throughout the South. During the last two years eleven Episcopal schools have been established in Louisiana and are mushrooming throughout the nation, especially in the South. The Rev. Colony's school at Metairie,

La., was founded in February, 1947, with one teacher and twenty-five pupils. Today there are twenty-six teachers with more than 500 children registered for the fall term. According to the Rev. Colony, the rapid growth of the Episcopal parish schools during the past few years is "the church's answer to a too materialistic public school system . . . which has gotten away from any subject that can't be turned into dollars and cents." As a result of this overemphasis on the materialistic aspects of life, he feels people today have no emotional resources to fall back upon in times of crisis.

The Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Long Island established a precedent at its annual convention in Garden City, New York. By a unanimous vote, 800 delegates agreed to permit three women to serve on the diocesan council which administers the missionary, educational, youth, promotion, and social work of the diocese.

Major General G. K. Bourne, British city commandant of Berlin, laid the cornerstone for the new British Church of St. George, to be built at Charlottenburg, in the British sector of Berlin. The new structure will replace the former Church of St. George located in what is now the Soviet sector, which was badly damaged during the war.

Christian leaders in Berlin are deeply concerned about the distribution of the third edition of Professor A. W. Michulin's antireligious Soviet history textbook entitled "History of the Antique." The new edition is expected to increase by 30,000 the 55,000 copies of the Soviet textbook already issued by the official printing shop of the German Democratic Republic. The textbook is fundamentally anti-Christian and atheistic, asserting among other things that Jesus Christ never lived, that there is no God, and that the Bible is merely a collection of myths, legends, and tales. Professor Michulin's book is one of a set of four history texts written by Soviet historians which are being issued to East German teachers as a guide for history classes. The other three, similarly antireligious, are Professor Kosminskij's "Medieval History," Professor Jefimow's "Modern History I," and Professor Subok's "Modern History II."

A conference of pastors and theological students met at Betzdorf, Germany, and passed a resolution urging that students for the Protestant ministry should spend a year as self-supporting industrial or farm workers before ordination. The conference was held in the Evangelical School for Social Work at Friedewald Castle, an institution recently set up with the aid of some American Lutherans to provide special

training courses for Protestant clergymen and laymen engaged in all types of social activity. The resolution proposed that during the final examination theology candidates should be required to prove a reasonable theoretical knowledge of political economy and the history of the trade unions and the political workers' movements. Another recommendation of the conference urged that pastors in active service should be invited to attend courses and workshops to give them a thorough knowledge of social politics.

The Roman Catholic Church has made plans to build the University of Detroit into their largest Roman Catholic university in the world. In connection with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the university in 1952, the Rev. Celestin J. Steiner, S. J., president of the institution, declared that an appeal for \$20,000,000 will be made to finance the expansion program. Father Steiner said that five new buildings, a field house, administration building, a university chapel, one or more residence halls, and a student activities building will be started as soon as possible at a cost of \$5,000,000. Other construction will include three classroom buildings, an engineering laboratory, an addition to the faculty building, storage and utility buildings, and completion of parking space and other facilities.

Ecumenical patriarch Athenagoras of Istanbul told Eustatios Timoidus, president of the Friends of Byzantine Music, that he will retain the Byzantine music traditionally used in the Greek Orthodox Church.

A theological seminary for Russian Orthodox women has been opened in Paris under the sponsorship of Metropolitan Vladimir, head of the Russian Orthodox parishes in Western Europe. This first Russian Orthodox seminary ever set up for women will provide intensive courses for students preparing to enter Orthodox sisterhoods or seeking to qualify as teachers in Sunday schools. Orthodox women who are merely seeking to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of their faith will also be admitted as students.

The Jewish Braille Institute of America has made the entire Hebrew Bible available for the blind in Braille. The project, comprising twenty encyclopedia-size volumes, took five years to complete. The internationally accepted Hebrew Braille alphabet was completed in 1936 and revised by a committee of prominent rabbis and scholars. The work on the Hebrew Braille Bible began in 1944 after the committee had put its final touches on desirable revisions in the alphabet.

ALEX W. C. GUEBERT