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

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

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

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ARCHIVES

Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches.

I. Amerika.

The New History Society and Its New Religion.—As the *Sunday-school Times* (July 11) suggests, the New History Society takes its name apparently from its ambitious program — the establishment of the United States of the World and of a universal religion. The *Sunday-school Times* writes in part: “The society was founded in 1928 and is, we are told, based on Bahaist principles. Among its speakers have been John Haynes Holmes, Rabbi Wise, John Dewey, Einstein, Mrs. Sanger, Tagore, and a son of Tolstoy. The chief activities of the organization so far have involved the offering of money prizes in international competition on the promotion of world peace and similar subjects. The theme for one competition was, ‘How Can Youth Contribute to the Realization of a Universal Religion?’ Among the judges were the names of Bishop Fred Fisher, Devere Allen, editor of *The World To-morrow*, Dr. Henry F. Atkinson, General Secretary of the World Conference for International Peace through Religion, and a number of Unitarian ministers. Enterprises of this type and parliaments of religion have always had a peculiar attraction for Unitarians. One way of getting rid of Christianity is to submerge and drown it in a union of religions. This ends Christianity’s uniqueness and its absolute demands on the human heart. Competition for this fourth series of prizes was confined to young people of Asia. Its sponsors declare the result to have shown ‘that the rising generation in all countries has been caught in a new vibration. Following the footsteps of its spiritual ancestors, Buddha, Confucius, Laotse, Moses, Christ, Baha-U-llah, it has discarded sectarianism and comes out boldly for the religion of progress and love. Never before has the youth of Asia had the opportunity to express its hopes. Youth has made up its mind to annihilate dogmas and to build in their place a fairer edifice.’ The writers are then characterized as ‘charter members of the order of the great companions,’ ‘the heralds of a new dawn,’ ‘the harbingers of a new spring,’ ‘the stars guiding travelers to a world of idealism, of peace, and of immortal bliss.’ We swim in pure azure! What are we to say about this? The proposed religion of progress and love is not the Christian religion. In these essays the name of Christ is not once named save in the customary series, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus. The idea of salvation does not appear, nor does the word sin. ‘Religion’ is but a rhetorical synonym for friendliness and optimism. The dark and tragic in human nature, man’s personal spiritual needs and agencies, are not referred to. We are in a ‘summer land’ like that of the Spiritists, which is supposed to welcome all after death. Strange that in the present mad welter, as of a burning building, these young people are not looking for a way of escape. They deem themselves sufficient at every point and feel no need of a Savior. One writes from Madras: ‘Youth will play the major part in establishing a universal religion. They inherit all the best in the world and have the power to erect a new civilization, avoiding the blunders of the past. Their minds are at least not petrified by blind dogmas.’ The Tokyo lad, Shoji Kimura, writes: ‘Youth must rise and take the world

by the hand and say, This way.' Another Japanese, who bears the Christian name of Paul and who writes from the Doshisha Mission College (Congregationalist), says: 'We are scientific-minded. Our perspective is not refracted by prior experience. Consequently we can provide the vision for the new social order and draw blue-prints for it. We have a superabundance of energy with which to fire the crucible of modern events.' — 'Create a universal Bible,' cry these youths, 'based on the teaching of all prophets, saints, and thinkers.' 'Publish a universal holy book,' writes a student in the American Mission College (Presbyterian) in Beirut. They call for 'world mansions' in capitals of the nations as headquarters of a world religion. They would organize a Board of Missions to establish missions of the universal religion in all the cities of the world. They would hold religious world congresses, 'an annual celebration, in the leading cities of the world, of a Pantheon of universal religion where all religions will gather together to sing one universal song of love, pray one universal prayer of love, worship one universal lord of love.' 'All religious institutions, churches, mosques, synagogs, should be utilized for the realization of a universal religion.' — That's enough. This 'movement' has already drowned itself in verbiage. We in America are not unfamiliar with that verbiage. Miss Louis Pin Chang, first prize-winner, talks about the 'democracy of God,' a phrase of Shailer Mathews's invention; others roll under their tongues Dr. Fosdick's cherished word 'modern.' It is worth noting that sixty-eight of those competing describe themselves as Christians, the next largest group to the eighty Hindus. Does not this mean that these young people have had their training in mission colleges? Can it be true that this verbiage is the religious colloquial in these colleges?"

No doubt, what the *Sunday-school Times* here suggests is true. Any one who knows the destructive attacks of Modernists upon the Christian religion can readily understand also what should prompt them to establish a "world religion" in which Jesus would count no more than Confucius or Buddha or Mohammed. It is the total destruction of the Gospel of the crucified Christ which the advocates of this new "world religion," which is nothing else than the old naturalistic religion of the carnal heart, has in view.

J. T. M.

Modification of the Mexican Government Attitude Allows Reopening of Churches. So reports a correspondent of the *Christian Century*. "Already the government is showing a more conciliatory attitude. Wide attention was given to a recent address of President Cardenas in Guadalajara, in which he declared that the religious question had been given overimportance; that the main aim of his administration is social and economic transformation; and that the government should not promote antireligious campaigns, thus sowing discord and impeding constructive accomplishment. This was followed a few days later by an official statement to the effect that the government would not oppose the reopening of churches in those places where they had been closed without federal authorization. Already churches are being reopened on the large north-western states of Sinaloa, Sonora, and Chihuahua, where they had been closed for a year and a half or longer. Local difficulties continue however. Within the past week in the state of Guanajuato a clash between Catholics

on one side and agrarians and rural teachers on the other resulted in the death of fifteen persons and the wounding of fourteen others. An official bulletin places the blame upon Catholic fanatics, who attacked teachers attending a cultural mission when they were putting on a social program in one of the public gardens." A.

Mr. Babson and the Congregationalists. — When Mr. Roger Babson was elected Moderator of the Congregational and Christian Churches, in convention assembled at Mount Holyoke, this was looked upon as a victory for the Conservatives. We read with interest what an editorial in the *Christian Century* stated about Mr. Babson: "Mr. Babson has long been interested in religion and its relation to business. He has many times said that a revival of religion is necessary to a revival of business. This can be of course a highly dangerous doctrine. The notes he struck at Mount Holyoke, however, were quite innocuous. He proposes to replenish Congregationalism by increasing the birth rate in Congregational families. If the clergy fails to stop the ebbing of the membership in certain Congregational churches by regeneration, he proposes that the laity do it by generation! Some years ago Mr. Babson proposed that the salary of ministers be determined by the number of new members they brought into the church during the year! Apart from the merit of his specific ideas, it may prove that Mr. Babson's emphasis upon responsibility of the laity — the deacons and trustess, and the rank and file — will be a wholesome one." The editorial before us states that during the next two years, according to a vote of the convention (called General Council), a denominational plebiscite will be held on questions concerning the economic order, which course the *Christian Century* construes as the entering upon "a new dimension of Christian responsibility." While this plan may acquaint Congregationalists with the questions studied in courses of sociology, we are quite sure that it will not result in what the *Christian Century* predicts, "a reconstructed and regenerated Church." A.

Will the Presbyterian Church of America be Compelled to Change Its Name? — The *Presbyterian* of August 27 writes as follows, respecting the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (Northern Presbyterians): "Our Church has filed a bill in equity in the common pleas court of Pennsylvania seeking to restrain the Presbyterian Church of America from its use of this name and title. The moderator, stated clerks, and members of the General Assembly's special committee, appointed last May to guard rights and property, are the plaintiffs. The brief charges that the new organization is engaged 'in a successful campaign to induce members and individual churches of the plaintiff Church to withdraw therefrom with the church property and to bring themselves and said property into membership and support' of the Presbyterian Church of America. It charges that the defendant Church is organized on the same platform of standards and asserts itself to be 'the spiritual successor' of our Church. The brief declares that here and abroad the new Church seeks to grow, and to accomplish these objects, 'through the impairment and disintegration of the organization and work of the plaintiff Church.' 'The principles and practises of comity which prevail among all other Protestant evangelical churches and societies have been openly

disavowed by the defendant,' it is stated. It asserts that our Church is generally known in the world to be 'the prerepresentative of what is known as Presbyterianism in America.' An 'irreparable' injury is claimed if this name is allowed to stand. The defendants have not yet filed a reply." The outcome of this suit will be watched with interest, although from this distance it appears that the plaintiff has no case. A.

Has the Teaching of Immersion been Abandoned in Some Influential Baptist Quarters? — An editorial in the *Christian Century* of July 22, having the heading "No Immersionist Bloc," makes a frank remark about immersion which our readers will be interested to see: "Certainly the old claim of both Disciples and Baptists that there is some authoritarian basis for immersion either in the Scriptures or in the commandment of Jesus has no longer a leg to stand upon. Baptism is not immersion, as Alexander Campbell taught. Neither, however, is it sprinkling or any other physical act. It is the *social* act of initiating a proper candidate into the membership of the Christian Church. That this act has results, that it makes a difference, who will deny? But the results do not flow from the isolated act in its organic meaning as incorporation into the body of Christ." If we understand the author correctly, he definitely admits that the Bible does not teach that baptism must be by immersion. There is much which one has to object to in the second part of the paragraph, but we agree with the author when he maintains that neither immersion nor sprinkling is prescribed as the proper mode of baptizing. That a statement of this sort was made in a journal which is supposed to represent the views or principles of the Disciples, commonly regarded a Baptist sect, gives it special significance. A.

"A Far-Sighted Liberal." — Under this heading *Christianity To-day* (September, 1936) writes: "A Universalist preacher writing in the *Nation's Business*, decries the tendency in his Church and in the Federal Council of Churches to spend their energies in social betterment. He says: 'Instead of the words of Christ "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," we are now told: Seek ye first what ye shall eat and drink and wherewithal ye shall be clothed, and the kingdom of God and His righteousness will then be added unto you. When all your economic schemes have been put into action; when your planned economy has been duly planned; when the capitalistic system has gone down to the dead gods and broken things; when your cooperative state, whatever may be its shape, has risen upon the ruins, your real task remains the same. The beneficiaries of your idealism are not going to flock to your altars to thank you for your mistaken intervention. They are going to be as far from the kingdom of God as ever; and you will have to return to the old preaching of righteousness with all the vigor and enthusiasm that may be left after liberty has been destroyed and the planned economy, which will not include you in its plans, has been introduced.'" That means, more briefly expressed: "Your whole social-gospel scheme is bound to turn out to be a wretched failure, and besides, by your social gospel you are not going to make any one a Christian." But why, then, remain a Universalist?

J. T. M.

Laymen and the Preaching of the Social Gospel. — An article in the *Christian Century* seems to be telling the truth when it depicts the viewpoints of the clergy and the laity with respect to the social gospel as follows: "There is a gulf between the clergy and the laity in their ways of thinking and socially applied religion. Perhaps it would show more consideration for the men of our churches, who are, by and large, men of good will, if it should be said that there is a gulf between the spiritual viewpoint on life as enunciated by the pulpit and the practical exigencies of life as encountered by the laymen. Those practical considerations involve cargoes of such value that many laymen prefer not to place them in the hazardous care of ministerial pilots. They say that the pulpit should leave social and economic questions quite alone. This is one danger avoided, but so is the possibility of a commerce offering great rewards. However we may describe the gulf, it surely exists." The writer then outlines what is called the "new partnership" plan, which is sponsored by the Unitarian Laymen's League and which "proposes to construct a bridge of understanding over that gulf. It assays the difficult task of achieving a group conscience on the part of religious-minded people with respect to the vital social, economic, and political issues of the day, a conscience that shall represent the joint conclusions of ministers and laymen." Coming from the Unitarians, who have not much of a theology to preach, the plan does not cause great surprise. The writer, however, is justified in holding that the gulf he speaks of exists not only in Unitarian churches, but in all the denominations where the social gospel is preached. A.

Judge Upholds Right to Refuse Salute to Flag. — Sacramento, Cal. (NCJC.) — In the first test case in California, Judge Peter J. Shields has granted a mandamus writ to Joseph Gabrielli, compelling the Sacramento school authorities to readmit his nine-year-old daughter Charlotte. The family are members of Jehovah's Witnesses, and Charlotte was suspended for refusing to salute the flag.

Judge Shields says: "The Constitution states that the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be guaranteed in this State." However, he insisted that the objection to the salute must be "purely religious in character," adding: "If there is any particle of political or social purpose involved in the matter, her action will not be tolerated." — *Living Church*.

Brief Items. — "Although it has taken but one per cent. of the ministers and but five per cent. of the members, the newly organized Presbyterian Church of America has begun to grow. Three presbyteries have been started: New Jersey, New York and New England, and Philadelphia. The Knox Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia was the first to unite with the new Church. An interesting debate at the Philadelphia presbytery hinged on eschatological liberty as one church wanted to make sure it would always have a premillennial pastor. The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions now has nineteen missionaries," some located in China, others in India, Japan, Manchukuo, and Peru. What missionary zeal! But we note that the germ of serious dissension is in the new body because some of its members are given to the premillennial vagaries; so the body from the very start is a house divided against itself. The part of this

item which is in quotation-marks is taken from the *Christian Century*.— At Lachish, where archeological research is going on, “three specimens of alphabetical script were found. One is penned on the remains of a ewer in a temple; the second around a red bowl in a tomb; and the third on another piece of pottery. They all belong to the period B. C. 1295—1262 and are considered as the connecting link between the Phœnician and the oldest alphabetical script which was found in the peninsula of Sinai engraved on stones.” (*Christian Century*.)—It is reported that Presbyterian missions in Korea are considering closing their schools at which secular education is carried on because the Japanese government demands that at times all schools must engage in public obeisance at Japanese shrines.—The *Presbyterian* prints the Gunning Prize Essay of 1934, written by Rev. De Hart-Davies, M. A., D. D., having the heading “Biblical History in the Light of Archeological Discovery since A. D. 1900.” The author very properly confines his attention to the chief points of interest in this field. Looking over the chapter headings, ten in number, one must say that he has selected the matters that have been given chief prominence in this endeavor during the last decades. Those of our readers who are particularly interested in archeological research, as far as it has bearing on the trustworthiness of the Scriptures, should try to obtain a copy of this essay.—A person does not have to be a friend of the Papacy to stand aghast at the news of religious persecution perpetrated in Spain these days. Nor does the consideration that the Roman Catholic Church through its exploitation of the masses and through its policy of keeping its members ignorant brought this disaster upon itself reduce the enormity of the atrocities that are reported. An item appearing in one of our exchanges late in August reads: “The Pope has been officially notified that one Spanish bishop has been burned alive and four others murdered by radical mobs, according to a Universal Service dispatch from Vatican City. The report stated that the Bishop of Sigüenza was tarred and burned at the stake. The other bishops reported murdered were those of Jaen, Lerida, Segordia, and Barbastro. The Vatican also was notified that the Archbishop of Toledo and the Bishop of Madrid have been forced to flee for their lives.”—What are the prominent present theological tendencies? A writer in the *Living Church*, reviewing a book by Edwin Ewart Aubrey, entitled *Present Theological Tendencies*, gives this convenient, helpful summary: “Dr. Aubrey’s classification shows 1) modernism (a method rather than a creed, and on the wane); 2) dialectical theology (‘Father’ Kierkegaard and his variant children—Barth, Brunner, and, painfully, Reinhold Niebuhr); 3) neo-Thomism (the revival of “rational” theology in Maritain, Dawson, Wust, and other Catholics); 4) naturalism (a diverse group, including Dewey as well as Wieman and among theistic naturalists both Bergson and General Smuts); and 5) the ‘new supernaturalists’ like Dean Inge, Dr. Temple, and D. C. Macintosh.” It may give us some satisfaction that conservative Biblical theology is not listed among the “tendencies.”—Ritualists, as is well known, have a tendency to debate things that are of little moment. In Greece, for instance, the Orthodox Church is convulsed and rocked with respect to the question whether the Julian calendar may be set aside and the Gregorian, now used quite generally in Christian countries, be adopted. What a pity to see people spend immense amounts

of energy on things that do not matter! — From Geneva comes the news that Protestant churches in Spain have suffered very little damage. In several instances where incendiaries planned destruction of Protestant church edifices they were persuaded to change their minds. One must not forget, of course, that in all Spain there are only about six thousand Protestants. — *Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Freikirche*, the official organ of our brethren in Germany, has issued a special number, in which the sessions of their last convention are well reported and the sixtieth anniversary of their church organization is fittingly commemorated. One hundred copies may be obtained for 18 marks. A.

II. Ausland.

Ein gewaltiges Zeugniß gegen Irrlehre. Wir unterbreiten unsern Lesern eine Rundgebung des bayrischen Landeskirchenrats, unterzeichnet von D. Meiser, die bestimmt war, am 13. Sonntag nach Trinitatis auf den Kanzeln der lutherischen Landeskirche Bayerns verlesen zu werden. Gott gebe, daß dieses Zeugniß nicht auf dem Papier stehenbleibt!

I.

So spricht unser Herr: „Es wird e i n e Herde und e i n Hirte werden.“

Als unser Herr dies Wort sagte, hat er an das Schicksal seiner Gemeinde, seiner Kirche, gedacht. Er hat die Not seiner Gemeinde und den Jammer seiner Kirche gesehen, daß sie nicht immer „e i n e Herde“ ist, daß sie getrennt ist und zerspalten und zerrissen. Aber mit seinem Wort von der e i n e n Herde gibt er die Verheißung, daß diese Not und dieser Jammer nicht bleiben sollen, sondern daß die Zeit kommt, wo alle Trennungen und Spaltungen überwunden werden, wo alle, die Christen sein wollen, einmütig und einstimmig ihn loben und ehren.

Mit dieser Verheißung hat der Herr uns die starke Sehnsucht ins Herz gelegt nach dieser „e i n e n Herde“, hat er uns die Aufgabe gegeben, daß wir arbeiten und kämpfen und beten um die Einheit der Kirche.

Aber er sagt nicht nur das Wort von der „e i n e n Herde“, sondern auch das Wort von dem „e i n e n Hirten“. Die „e i n e Herde“ ist nur da, wo der „e i n e Hirte“ ist.

Damit ist die klare Linie gezogen: Wir sollen arbeiten und kämpfen und beten um die e i n e Kirche; aber die Einheit der Kirche kann sich nur da gestalten, wo man an den Herrn Christus glaubt, an den wirklichen Christus, nicht an einen erdichteten und enträumten. Nur wo dieser Glaube ist, kann es die e i n e Kirche geben; nur der Glaube an den, der unser Herr und Heiland ist, kann die Trennungen und Spaltungen aufheben, die durch die Christenheit hindurch gehen. Wo wir aber die „e i n e Herde“ wollen ohne den „e i n e n Hirten“, wo wir die Einheit der Kirche schaffen wollen ohne den Glauben an Christus, handeln wir wider den Willen des Herrn. So wird es nie und nimmer zu e i n e r Kirche kommen.

II.

Es geht durch unser Volk zur Zeit ein leidenschaftliches Rufen nach der Einheit der Kirche. Es sind vor allem die Thüringer Deutschen Christen, die diesen Ruf erheben. Sie wollen die sogenannte Nationalkirche. E i n e Kirche soll sein, die die ganze Nation umfaßt, deren Mitglied jeder ist, der

zur deutschen Nation gehört. Es soll nicht mehr geben Lutheraner und Reformierte, Protestanten und Katholiken; ja, es scheint, als wollten sie ihre Tore auch für diejenigen öffnen, die sich überhaupt nicht mehr zum Herrn Christus bekennen. Der neuen Nationalkirche sollen ohne weiteres alle angehören, die die deutsche Volksgemeinschaft bejahen.

Auf den Kanzeln soll alles gepredigt werden dürfen, was irgendwie der deutschen Wiedergeburt entspricht und sie fördert.

Zur Durchsetzung dieses Zieles in der Kirche soll nötigenfalls die Hilfe des Staates in Anspruch genommen werden.

III.

Es hat den Anschein, als würde der Plan der Nationalkirche dem Wort Jesu entsprechen von der „einen Herde“. Aber es ist dabei eben das vergessen, daß der Herr fortfährt „und ein Hirte“. Es geht denen, die die Nationalkirche wollen, nicht mehr wirklich um den „einen Hirten“.

Man redet wohl bei ihnen vom Heiland; aber es ist nicht mehr der Heiland der Bibel. Man redet wohl vom Christenglauben; aber es ist nicht der Christenglaube, den Gottes Barmherzigkeit durch seinen Knecht Luther dem deutschen Volk wiedergeschenkt hat.

Man weiß in diesen Kreisen nicht, daß Christus der Herr ist und daß nichts neben ihm Platz hat. Das Volk ist ihnen so wichtig wie der Herr Christus, ja wichtiger als der Herr Christus. Darum konnte einer der führenden Thüringer Deutschen Christen erklären, um der Einheit des deutschen Volkes willen sei er bereit, auch den Herrn Christus daranzugeben.

Man weiß in diesen Kreisen nichts von dem tödlichen Ernst, der in der Botschaft Jesu liegt. Vor ihm ist alles menschliche Wesen, auch das edelste, verloren und verdammt. Sie aber verkündigen, daß, wer nur recht deutsch sei, auch ein rechter Christ sei.

Man weiß bei ihnen nichts davon, daß der Herr Christus der einzige und Einmalige ist und daß sein Erlösungswerk etwas einziges und Einmaliges ist. Der Herr Christus ist ihnen nur einer von denen, die durch den Einsatz ihres Lebens Erlösung bringen. Vor allem predigen sie, daß auch Deutschland mit seinem Schicksal religiöse Erlösung schaffe. Das Leid Deutschlands seit 1914 wird ihnen zu einem zweiten Golgatha; der Aufbruch Deutschlands seit 1933 wird ihnen zu einem neuen Ostern.

Es sind unter ihnen Leute, die noch weiter gehen. In leichtfertiger Weise reden sie vom Werk Jesu Christi. Opfertod und Blut Christi nennen sie überflüssigen Kram, den der deutsche Mensch von heute nicht mehr brauche.

So steht ihre Lehre in Widerspruch zur Lehre der lutherischen Kirche und zur Lehre der Bibel. Ihre Lehre ist Irrlehre.

IV.

Eine Kirchenleitung, die sich gebunden weiß an das Evangelium, muß gegen solche Irrlehre aufstehen, muß sich mit aller Kraft, die ihr geschenkt ist, gegen solche Irrlehre zur Wehr setzen. Die Leitung der bayerischen Landeskirche weiß um diese ihre Pflicht und wird im gegebenen Augenblick das tun, was notwendig ist.

Man wird uns vorwerfen: Das ist nichts anderes als Gezänk der Schriftgelehrten und Theologen, die ihren Glauben nur im Kopf haben, aber nicht im Herzen. Man wird uns vorwerfen, daß wir mit dem Kampf gegen

diese Lehre lieblos und selbstgerecht die Einheit der Kirche und die Einheit des Volkes zerreißen.

Mag man das von uns sagen, wenn man's nicht lassen kann!

Wir wissen, es gibt nicht allerlei Herren, sondern nur den einen Herrn; darum gibt es nicht allerlei Wahrheiten, sondern nur die eine Wahrheit; darum gibt es auch nicht allerlei Evangelien, sondern nur das eine Evangelium von dem Christus, der da gestorben ist für unsere Sünden nach der Schrift und begraben und auferstanden am dritten Tage nach der Schrift. Wo nicht einzig und allein dieses Evangelium verkündigt wird, da wird die Ehre des Herrn Christus verletzt; denn man hat aus ihm etwas anderes gemacht, als was er selber sein wollte.

Wo das geschieht, da wird unser Volk um den Trost seines Gewissens und um das Heil seiner Seele betrogen. Denn allein das biblische Evangelium rettet unser Volk von Sünde und Tod.

Um der Ehre Christi willen darf die Kirche kein anderes Evangelium verkündigen, darf sie kein anderes Evangelium dulden auf ihren Kanzeln. Um des Heiles unsers Volkes willen muß sie unerbittlich scheiden zwischen Wahrheit und Lüge.

Gott weiß, daß wir nicht mit leichtem Herzen so urteilen und richten und den Kampf kämpfen gegen die falsche Lehre. Aber es ist das Wort Gottes, das da scheidet zwischen Lüge und Wahrheit, zwischen Lehre und Irrlehre, zwischen Glauben und Unglauben.

Wer kann wider das Wort Gottes?

Weil wir gebunden sind an dies Wort Gottes, können wir auf die Versuche, die auf diese Weise die deutsche Nationalkirche schaffen wollen, nur antworten mit einem entschiedenen und entschlossenen Nein. Niemand und nichts kann uns zwingen, daß wir zu einer solchen Kirche ja sagen.

Man wird uns dann vorwerfen, daß wir nicht zu unserm deutschen Volk stehen. Mag man sagen, was man nicht lassen kann! Wir befehlen diese Sache Gott. Er weiß, daß wir bereit sind, unserm Volk jedes Opfer zu bringen. Ein Opfer aber dürfen wir nicht bringen, das ist das Opfer der Wahrheit.

Was wollten wir lieber, als daß es eine Kirche in unserm deutschen Volke gäbe! Wir trauern, daß wir im Heiligtum Gottes nicht gemeinsam stehen können; daß die einen dahin gehen und die andern dorthin. Aber zur Einheit der Kirche gibt es nur einen Weg: Unser deutsches Volk von oben bis unten muß sich bekennen zum Evangelium; unser Volk muß sich Mann für Mann befehlen zu ihm, der gesagt hat: „Ich bin der Erste und der Letzte und der Lebendige. Ich war tot, und siehe, ich bin lebendig von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit und habe die Schlüssel der Hölle und des Todes.“

Gottes Heiliger Geist stehe uns bei, daß wir alle, Kirchenleitung und Pfarrer und Kirchengemeinden, treue Zeugen dieses Herrn werden! Und er, der Herr der Kirche, wird allen treuen Zeugendienst segnen und schaffen, daß zu seiner Zeit werde ein Hirte und eine Herde. U.

Das Wachstum des Katholizismus in Afrika. Nach einer in dem Missionsblatt „Allgemeine Missionsnachrichten“ veröffentlichten Mitteilung aus der römischen Missionszeitschrift „Die katholischen Missionen“ ist Afrika gegenwärtig das bei weitem fruchtbarste Feld der katholischen Missionsarbeit. Im Jahre 1933 zählte die katholische Mission insgesamt auf den verschiedenen Missionsfeldern 16.6 Millionen Katholiken und 2.6 Millionen

Taufbewerber. In Afrika betrug die Zahl fünf Millionen Katholiken und zwei Millionen Taufbewerber. In diesem Jahr entfallen 61.7 Prozent der Neubefehrten auf Afrika. Wie riesig rasch die römische Mission in Afrika gewachsen ist, ergibt sich aus den folgenden Zahlen: Im Jahre 1918 zählte man in Afrika 1.87 Millionen Katholiken, im Jahre 1923 2.66 Millionen, im Jahre 1929 3.90 Millionen. Am stärksten ist der Fortschritt im Missionswachstum in Zentralafrika und da wieder in der Nordwestecke des früheren Deutschostafrika und in Ruanda und Urundi, dem jetzt belgischen Mandatsgebiet. Gerade dort aber wird den deutschen evangelischen Missionen, die früher hier mit großem Erfolg gearbeitet haben, der Zutritt verweigert. Daß die römische Mission natürlich auf Kosten der protestantischen, die von den Römischen vielfach verdrängt wird, Fortschritte macht, darüber ist schon längst in den evangelischen Missionszeitschriften aufs bitterste geklagt worden. Rom hat vorwiegend dort seine Triumphe gefeiert, wo die große Armut es den deutschen Evangelischen unmöglich machte, ihr Werk fortzusetzen.

J. L. M.

Antimasonic Action. — From the correspondence of the *Christian Century* emanating from Tokyo, Japan, we clip the following paragraph: "American Masons will be surprised to learn what the Kanagawa prefectural police has discovered concerning the amazing international institution of Freemasonry. It is a powerful secret order, having headquarters in the United States, 'composed mostly of people of Jewish extraction.' Secret orders are strictly forbidden in Japan, and as this one is said to have been active in the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, the World War, and even in the League of Nations' treatment of the Sino-Japanese embroglio, the Japanese police and gendarmes are concerned over its possible activities in Japan."

Wacht und Weide. Vor uns liegt das zweite Heft des ersten Jahrgangs von „Wacht und Weide“, dem spezifisch theologischen Organ unserer Brüder in Südamerika. Wir freuen uns sowohl über den Inhalt dieser neuen theologischen Zeitschrift wie über den Ton, den sie anschlägt. Eingeleitet wird die Nummer durch ein sehr zeitgemäßes Vorwort, worin die rechte Stellung der treulutherischen Kirche dem Irrtum unserer Zeit gegenüber fein charakterisiert wird. Dann folgt ein ermutigender Artikel über den großen Missionsbefehl Christi, Mark. 16, 15, mit rechter Kennzeichnung der Aufgabe des christlichen Predigers. Daran reiht sich ein dogmatisch-exegetischer Artikel über Matth. 3, 11, ein Aufsatz über „Die Lehre vom Beruf unter gegenwärtigen Verhältnissen“, eine sehr feine Katechese, praktische Artikel verschiedenen Inhalts, auch einen über den Schulbau, Nachrichten und Bemerkungen, Bücherbesprechungen usw. Wer das Geld dazu hat, sollte sich diese interessante Zeitschrift bestellen. In unserm Concordia-Verlag kann man erfahren, wie hoch sich der Bestellungspreis von 10\$000 oder auch drei Pesos gegenwärtig beläuft, etwa zwischen ein und zwei Dollars. Die Zeitschrift dient nicht nur Pastoren, sondern auch Lehrern, und sie verdankt ihr Erscheinen der Tatsache, daß das bisherige Blatt, das ja für das Christenvolk insgesamt bestimmt ist, seinem Zweck nicht mehr genüge. Daß unsere Brüder in Südamerika es wagen, eine solche Zeitschrift ins Leben zu rufen, zeugt von hohem Mut. Glück auf zum guten Werk! Heil dem Fleiß und Eifer, der sich hier betätigt!

J. L. M.