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## Putting the Bible In and Taking Christianity Out.

A Critical Examination of the Dominant Ideas Concerning  
Religious Teaching in Public Schools.

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The question concerning the study of the Bible in the public school becomes more acute and also more complex every day. The vexed problem seems to defy every attempt at solving it and is like the Gordian knot, which puzzled the minds of men till it was cut by the sword of Alexander. The advocates of religious teaching in the public school, after much useless deliberation, seem to be inclined to follow the method of the great conqueror by *forcing* the Bible into the public school, whether this agrees with the Constitution or not, and whether it pleases or displeases the voters. While we are not in possession of accurate and extensive statistics on this score, the reports that have reached our desk show that at least a fair beginning has been made in the attempt to embody Bible-study as a part of the curriculum of the public schools, and if the movement should gain in momentum, it may not be long before the Bible will be a regular and indispensable text-book in the public schools of our country. Weary of fruitless discussions, the friends of the Bible have quit talking and have begun to act. Such is the course of the movement as delineated in reports covering practically all the States of the Union.

An interesting feature of the movement seems to be that the advocates of religious education in the public school are serious and zealous Protestant Christians. People not connected with the Christian Church, or such as are opposed to it, have, upon the whole, remained strangely indifferent, whereas the movement has progressed most rapidly in circles in which Fundamentalism is

## THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

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**Religious Schools.**—On the same day two remarkable utterances were published. In display type the *Lutheran*, on April 12, published on its front page its call to Lutheran congregations to revive the defunct office of special teacher of religion for the children of a congregation. The former parish-schools, which “did much for citizenship as well as for religion,” had been abandoned when the States and provinces established “common schools.” “The Church was thus relieved of its obligation to furnish instruction in secular subjects. The office of teacher was allowed to disappear, though the public schools took over only Scripture-reading and opening prayer.” It is to be regretted that the Church permitted itself to be thus “relieved”; by so doing it rendered a poor service to the State and inflicted harm on itself. Those churches which were “relieved” of their parish-schools have also persecuted the parish-school in other circles, denouncing them as a foreign institution and an obstacle to the amalgamation of the Lutheran forces of America. Meanwhile those churches which dropped their parish-schools have learned a lesson. “It has now become clearly evident that this discontinuance of the office of teacher in congregations because there was no longer need of parochial schools was a mistake. Instruction of the youth by the pastor in the Catechism and the assemblage of the children in Sunday-schools are insufficient. That final and vital command of Christ to teach the people ‘to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you’ is receiving only *partial* obedience. Christianity dares not depend on the state for imparting religious instruction. The moral and religious conditions now apparent among the young folk even in the Church prove this. They lack knowledge of God’s commands.” This is the most respectable and a compelling reason why every church should have its own school. But the statement by no means exhausts the reasons why there should be a parochial school, in which not only religion is taught, but the entire elementary education of a child should be provided in a religious atmosphere and the child associated from its earliest life with his coreligionists. The *Lutheran* is not ready to advocate the establishment of complete congregational schools as we have them in the Missouri Synod. “Corrective action by church councils and congregations should be promptly undertaken. Plans should now be made so that with the beginning of another school-year the churches will be open at certain convenient hours each week, during which a qualified teacher will give instruction in religion. The teacher should be engaged at once and thus enabled to prepare for work to be begun next September. Lutheran congregations will again greatly serve by taking the lead in establishing schools of religion.” It is plain therefore that the advocates of the Lutheran congregational school in the circles served by the *Lutheran* have not learned all their lessons yet. They will as they proceed find that they will have to take hold of the entire education

of their children, or permit the good work which they are doing in their school of religion to be neutralized and destroyed by the non-religious common school. But the school of religion, even if taught only "at certain convenient hours each week" by a competent teacher, is at least a good beginning, on which all Lutherans will invoke the Lord's blessing. A movement like this, moreover, contains a promise that Lutherans may begin to understand and appreciate each other a little better in the future. — The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, on April 12, reported from Omaha, Nebr., that Rev. Dr. William E. Gardner, executive secretary of the Department of Religious Education of the Protestant Episcopal Church, said in an opening address to the annual conference of educational leaders of that denomination: "We need frankly to recognize that the Sunday-school has no future because it is doomed to grow weaker in its appeal to the rising generation. I do not mean to say that there will be less religious instruction for children in the future; on the contrary, there will be more and of a more thorough and systematic character than is possible under present Sunday-school limitations. But as an educational institution the church-school meeting is losing the confidence of leaders and parents. All kinds of families have ceased to place emphasis on children's being members of a Sunday-school. Week-day is the time for religious instruction, when the child is in a receptive mood and effective teachers can be obtained, who will not teach on Sunday, and when a discipline can be maintained, impossible on Sunday." How these thoughts will be formed into actions still remains to be seen. But the friends of the congregational school will certainly draw comfort and encouragement from them. D.

The Seventh Regular Convention of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Australia, assembled at Tweedvale, South Australia, March 2—7, was turned into a farewell meeting for the General President of the Synod, Rev. Th. Nickel. We quote from the *Australian Lutheran* for March 14: "Synod was inaugurated on Friday morning by a particularly solemn and impressive service. The preacher, our worthy General President, the Rev. Th. Nickel, for the last time as General President of the Ev. Luth. Synod in Australia, addressed a large Lutheran audience, and the hearers, cognizant of the fact, listened with rapt attention to his stirring words of farewell. Choosing as his text 1 John 2, 28: 'And now, little children, abide in Him,' etc., the able speaker exhorted both the ministry and the laity to remain true to Christ and His soul-saving Word unto the end. By way of introduction he made several references to the call he had accepted from the European field of the Lutheran Church. He felt deeply his approaching departure from this land of peace and plenty, and the fact that he was severing his connection with Synod, which body he had served as General President for a period of over twenty years, was causing him many a pang. However, he had not consulted flesh and blood in this matter and felt assured that it was the Lord who had called him into this distant and, at present, perilous field of labor. To the ministers assembled before him he made a powerful

appeal to abide in doctrine and life in the Lord and to carry on conscientiously and cheerfully the glorious work the Lord of the Church had entrusted to them. Profound silence and deep emotion attended his memorable address to the last word. . . . On Sunday evening Pastor Nickel was farewelled by the pastoral conference and presented with a roll of notes. On Wednesday morning the official farewell of Synod was celebrated. President Darsow, of Queensland, delivered the farewell address, while Mr. W. Nichterlein and ex-Teacher Hubner also spoke. Pastor Nickel feelingly responded.— A new page was written in the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia at the convention in Tweedvale. It is the first time that the honorary title of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on any one of its pastors. As a token of esteem and in recognition of the many and most valuable services rendered to Synod during his twenty years of office as General President this honorary title was conferred upon the Rev. Th. Nickel.”—

The resolution to confer the title of Doctor of Divinity on President Nickel was in the form of a request to the faculty to give effect to the Synod's resolution. The Synod also established a “Free-Church-in-Europe Treasury,” from which “assistance is to be speedily given to our brethren in Europe in Church and mission.” D.

**Birth Control.**—The Republic Syndicate is publishing a copy-righted article by Kathleen Norris on this mooted subject which deserves wide dissemination. We can give only glimpses of its contents. The article does not discuss the deeper ethical questions that enter into this subject, but exhibits the unsoundness of the movement from the social and sanitary viewpoints. “To use the word ‘control’ for what is really deliberate license remedied by unnatural means is a stupid misuse of terms.” The stock argument of the champion of birth control, the question whether the teeming families in the slums do not need birth control is met thus: “My dear woman, of course they do! They need self-control first, foremost, and all the time! [Very good; comp. 1 Pet. 3, 7.] They need money control and dirt control and health control. But what you propose to give them is less, and not more, responsibility. . . . Surely this is the very apotheosis of perversity.” The appeal to the law of heredity, which expects from families with a large number of children only paupers, mental mediocres, and criminals to rise, is met by the facts of history. It is rather the few pampered children of the idle rich, supposedly thoroughbreds of the first quality, that come under the curse of heredity. “Our hospitals are full of white-faced women, struggling back to partial health, winning a few years before the inevitable and untimely end, because Nature will not be eternally flouted, because delicate flesh and blood must pay the price when great privileges are abused and great purposes balked.” The author informs us that sixteen-year-old high school girls are discussing birth control and deciding for it. She warns her sisters: “Yes, you poor little blindfolded child, one feels like saying in answer: ‘And ten years ago you said that when you had to stop playing with dolls,

you would kill yourself — and ten years before that you would have handed over the Kohinoor itself for a graham cracker! There are all just two classes of things in the world — and in one class are all these wedding-presents of yours, and theaters, and jewels, and books, and all the other lifeless things that never change! And in the other class, all by itself, is the miracle — the miracle of life, as mysterious as, and so much more sweet than, death — the fairies come alive, and yours — your children! Don't arm yourselves against them, one wants to say. Don't put them out of your life. Begin with lesser things! Put away vanity and selfishness, put away the silly competition that makes home-making so hard. . . . There is nothing down-town to draw you away; there is a fulness and a sweetness right here in your hands that might make the most successful professional woman in the world sick with envy! . . . She is going to be a pioneer in her generation, that young woman, perhaps a child to-day, who brings the big family again into fashion, who arouses the envy and admiration of all her world with her boys and girls! . . . 'Birth control,' in that it would make irresponsible persons even less responsible, can accomplish nothing. But when women begin to appreciate what they do when they bear children, how unimportant everything else becomes beside it, how far their present household laws and regulations are from the simple, sensible homes that they might be building about their children, how entirely sex matters are in their hands, and how completely indeed sex responsibilities fall upon them, and, above all, what infinite joys, dignities, glories, and delights they fling away when they fling away motherhood, then we shall have 'control,' indeed, in almost every detail and department — except where 'life more abundant' [?] is concerned!" (Quotations from *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Sunday Magazine section, p. 11.) On this subject the men, too, deserve to be addressed separately by some competent person.

D.

**Another Utopia.** — In Smith River Valley, Patrick County, Va., Rev. Allen Stickney, with six families from Georgia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Indiana, has established a "Christian community removed from the temptations of a reckless world, where a daily religion based on the fundamental truths of the Bible can be practised." It will not take long until these enthusiasts learn that they cannot run away from this reckless world while they are living in it in bodies of flesh, and that the prince of the air flies over the lofty mountains enclosing Smith River Valley.

D.

**The Harm Done by the Sponsors of the Volstead Act.** — Addressing nine hundred women assembled at Atlantic City, N. J., for the annual convention of the State Federation of Women's Clubs, on May 4, Governor S. Silzer asked those who had not violated the Volstead law or known it to be violated by some member of their family to arise. More than half of the audience kept their seats "with dismay on their countenances." What if the nation were asked to "fess up" to such a question? Not the least of the results of our

late prohibition legislation is that it creates evil consciences, erring consciences, confusion in ethics. The powers that be have declared something wrong that is not wrong in itself. The powers should be obeyed because obedience in the matter in question does not deprive one of salvation. Christians do obey the Volstead Act, while they abominate it. But how about the rest? It is a pity that Christian churches have permitted themselves to sponsor and champion this legislation, which incites to greater and more multifarious law-breaking than we had without it, fosters hypocrisy, protects graft and greed, and damns men's souls by making them regard something as sin that is no sin, and its opposite, which is sin, as no sin. D.

**"Mr. Page in the Abbey."**—A tablet has been placed for our ambassador to England during the late war in Westminster Abbey, where England honors those who have performed distinguished services for the British Commonwealth. This is, indeed, an event that compels serious reflection. The *Chicago Tribune*, on April 14, comments on it editorially. It cites from the recommendation of the distinguished Britons who wished Mr. Page so signally honored this remark: "He was the happiest, the most liberated man in Europe when America entered the war," and says: "Any American who was capable of being 'happy' and 'liberated' when his country was about to plunge into a great European conflict, and when 75,000 American boys were about to lay down their lives, no matter what the cause, was not the man to represent American interests, either abroad or at home. . . . There were Americans at home who felt happy and liberated when we entered the World War, but very few of them were in khaki." We recall a scene in a grocery store during those days. A mother remarked, weeping, that her boys had been drafted for the army and was violently rebuked by another lady, who declared the draft and America's entrance into the war a glorious and happy event. When asked how many sons she was sacrificing for the glory and happiness of America, she remembered that she had urgent business somewhere else, — probably she was due at another place to enthrone men for "canning Bill." This lady had no children at all; she was lavishly expending the life-blood of others with a cannibal joy and happiness which in those days was regarded as the criterion of a patriot. Mr. Page has deserved well of England, no doubt. His tablet in England's hall of fame, however, raises the question whether he did not serve England better than America. "We have too many representatives who forget that they are appointed to represent the American people and not some others. We think Mr. Page was an outstanding example of this perverted partisanism, and his tablet in Westminster should be a warning to those who select our ambassadors." Unless a great change takes place in our nation, the tablet in Westminster will not act as a warning, but as an incentive and a promise. It is most likely so intended. Time was when an American representative would have been publicly pilloried for permitting himself to be thus "honored." We have lost that feeling. We are growing callous to moral reflections, though we are increasing in

patented and trade-marked American virtuousness by the Coué method. We have run up a fearful account with the righteous God, who hates lies, hypocrisy, and double-dealing. Mercy on the innocent bystanders (if there are any such), when our day of reckoning comes and our bills are presented to us! D.

**Latvia.** — *Semaine Relig.* of October 2, 1922, reports that the National Assembly by a two-thirds majority, made up of Jews and Freethinkers, has adopted the *Concordat* with the Roman Curia, which spells the doom of the Lutheran Church. Latvia obligates itself to maintain a Roman archbishop at Riga and several bishops at other places. One of the Lutheran churches at Riga — possibly St. James's — is to be made the Roman Cathedral Church. A number of buildings are to be placed at the disposal of the Roman Catholics for administration purposes and as dwellings. The order of the Jesuits is to receive the sanction of the government, and the Catholics have been given permission to erect schools, which are only partly amenable to the school laws of the state now in force. The Roman Church is thus the only Church officially recognized by the state, and a subsidy of four million is to be paid to this Church. The Roman Catholic clergy is to be supported by the state, while the clergy of the Lutheran and the Orthodox churches are to derive their support from their congregations and from a subsidy of one million voted to each of these churches. The entire property of the Orthodox Church — the palace of the archbishop, the cathedral, the cloisters with their domains, and the schools — has been turned over to the Roman Catholics. The Lutherans are regarded as partisans of Germany, the Orthodox people as friends of Russia. The Roman Catholics parade as representatives of the nationalistic spirit of Latvians and friends of Socialism. Outside of its successes in Germany this is probably the greatest political *coup* of Rome during the aftermath of the war. Some one sufficiently close to the scenes of action to collect the necessary data should tabulate and publish the war gains of the Roman Church. This part of the history of the World War has so far received no systematic and exhaustive treatment by expert investigators. Only stray details are being picked up here and there, which suggest the consummate skill with which the diplomats of the Vatican have worked the terrible war game in their interest. *Vis et dolus*, violence and cunning, the two instruments of the Roman church policy which John Gerhard described in his *Confessio Catholica*, are still the efficient tools of Rome. Luther called them "Gross' Macht und viel List," and beheld in them the cruel panoply of the Man of Sin. D.

**Pope and Fascisti.** — Recently the news service of our American press reported that an *entente cordiale* existed between those two Italian worthies, the Vicegerent of Christ and the greatest political bluffer of the day, Mussolini. The Pope looks with favor on the brutal dictator, who sneers at covenanted rights and constitutional government. Through *fascismo* influence the Pope has succeeded in

paving the way for amicable relations with the Quirinal and has dropped the tragico-comical rôle of "the prisoner of the Vatican," which used to wring groans of commiseration and abundant Peter's pence from the faithful peasants in Catholic districts. Now comes the editor of *Le Populaire*, M. Jean Longuet, who has made a special study of the *fascismo* movement, and informs us in *Foreign Affairs* (April issue): "The whole fascisti movement is appearing more and more as a purely extreme reactionary and clerical movement, while it is delivering the schools of the nation into the hands of the priests and the wage-workers into the hands of their employers. At the same time *fascism* appears to be more and more uncontrollable and unable to sustain any criticism even from the more moderate elements of the *bourgeois* liberals." But the climax of sensational reports regarding the Pope and the Fascisti was reached on April 4, when our better informed dailies, like the *Chicago Tribune*, published under display headings the ultimatum of the Vatican to the Spanish government, in the following dispatch:—

"Madrid, April 3. — Among the dozens of matters vital to national existence which are harassing Spain on the eve of the general elections are the arrival of an ultimatum from the Vatican, the danger of a revolution, and the resignation to-day of the cabinet. The question of separation of the Church from the State, which long ago has been settled by the other European nations, was brought up while the ministry of Marquis Alhucemas was preparing to reconvene the chamber. The cardinal archbishop of Saragossa issued an ultimatum which was published to-day in all the newspapers, notifying the cabinet that it must not change Article XI of the Spanish constitution, and that it must uphold this article in the forthcoming ministerial speech at the opening of the Chamber. The cardinal archbishop's ultimatum caused a tremendous sensation. Article XI of the Spanish constitution established the Roman Catholic Church as the state religion. Marquis de Alhucemas's ministry is liberal and is pledged to reform the constitution and to obtain equality for all religions in Spain. The ministry faced the necessity of obeying the Vatican by breaking its election pledge or else by incurring the enmity of the largest organized force of public opinion in Spain, which is led by the priests of the Church. The cardinal archbishop openly warned the premier that, if Article XI was not respected, all the parish priests would forbid their parishioners to vote for the government under pain of eternal damnation. Marquis de Alhucemas, fearing a crisis particularly from the Fascisti, had put off the election as long as possible. Resignation seemed to him the only way out. The only alternatives were to reconvene the old Chamber, thus facing an impassable difficulty between the Church and the reform element, or ordering an election, thereby incurring the danger of a Fascisti revolution. Dispatches received to-day from Rome carry a direct statement from the papal secretary of state that the Vatican opposes any change in the Spanish constitution. If the premier at the opening of the Chamber on April 10 were to pronounce himself in favor of



revision of Article XI, the Vatican immediately would abrogate the Concordat, creating war between the Church and State. This would amount to a diplomatic rupture, with threatened breaking off of all relations between Spain and the Vatican. Such an action would have produced tremendous difficulties for Marquis de Alhucemas. His ministry has been composed partly of reformers, who went to the election on a platform of reforming the constitution so as to make all religions equal. The Fascisti are openly preparing for a revolution in case of a general election. Three radical workmen have been shot so far at Barcelona, the chief of police declaring that the social question will not be settled until the government has become frankly communist or Fascisti."

This news interests Americans in particular. To the well-informed in the United States it is really not news, for they had known the unchanging attitude of the Roman Church to the principle of the separation of Church and State. The report from Madrid will add fuel to the fanatical flames of Ku Kluxism. But what an uncanny power is this, which under the blessed name of the Christ can strike political bargains with Socialists and Jews in Germany, with atheists in France, with communists in Latvia, etc., etc.! And how increasingly Rome-ridden is our boasted free American press becoming! Verily, the mark of the beast is coming into greater evidence from week to week. Another sign of the return of Christ.

D.

What Is Christian?—Much of the religious confusion of our time is caused by the fact that many cults claim the name Christian that scientifically are not entitled to the name. Aside from doctrinal controversy, it is a historical fact that Christianity has continued for twenty centuries and grown to its present proportions and power on the basis of a belief in the Bible as the supreme authority in religion and in the true deity of Jesus Christ. Pliny the Younger found the worship of Jesus Christ as God the distinguishing feature of Christianity and confessed that he did not see in it anything worthy of imprisonment. As far as the Scriptures are concerned, it was a belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His living and personal interest in them that revived the hopes of His disciples that had been blasted by the crucifixion, and furnished the ground for the continuation of their belief in Him and of their efforts to spread His teachings. From a purely historical and scientific point of view there is not the slightest evidence that, without a belief in the continued life and presence of Jesus Christ with His disciples, Christianity would have lasted a century after the crucifixion. Christ would have been numbered among the false teachers of religion whose very names are forgotten. It seems clear, therefore, that those who deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His continued presence with His people, and who refuse to worship Him, have no claim, either historically or scientifically, to the name Christian.

*Watchman-Examiner*, March 1, 1923.

**The Growth of the City.**—A comparison of census reports of 1910 and 1920 shows a remarkable increase in the population of our cities. In 1910 there were 91,972,266 people living the United States, of whom 42,166,120 lived in the cities. In 1920 there were 105,710,620 people in the United States of whom 54,304,603 lived in the cities. The total population thus increased fifteen per cent., while the city population increased twenty-nine per cent.—*Watchman-Examiner*.

**Bible-Passages in Newspapers.**—The fad of inducing newspapers to publish passages from the Bible in their editions is directed by the Back to the Bible Society, which has its headquarters in Cincinnati. Its bureau served 871 papers in 1922, and is serving 2,038 papers in 1923; of these, 1,946 are published in the United States, 87 in the Dominion of Canada, 2 in Newfoundland, 2 in the West Indies, and 1 in Korea. These papers have a combined circulation of 14,233,254, and it is estimated that each copy is, on the average, read by two persons. There is a mission in this odd enterprise, especially if the Gospel-texts of Scripture are published. To many a person this may be the only time that he looks at a Bible-text. True, these texts appear in a strange setting in a secular newspaper with its daily accounts of human wickedness. But just such a strange setting exists for a Christian noonday service in a theater, for a mission in the slums of a great city, for a religious gathering among the frivolous crowd on an ocean liner on Sunday, etc. Phil. 1, 18. D.

**The Einstein Theory.**—The photographic experiments made by the Lick Observatory expedition on the island of Tahiti and in Australia during the solar eclipse last year are said to have so satisfactorily proved Dr. Albert Einstein's theory of relativity that Dr. W. W. Campbell, the director of the observatory, has decided to make no further experiments. Photographs made of 62 to 84 stars in the neighborhood of the sun three months before the eclipse, at night, and during the eclipse showed an average deflection of 1.75 seconds, supposed to be due to the action of the sun upon these stars. This is taken to prove that the claim of Dr. Einstein is established, *viz.*, that time and space are not terms carrying with them an absolute and fixed meaning, but state only what is true concerning an object in relation to some other object. To the popular mind the theory has not become more intelligible through these experiments. Dr. Campbell admits that "to the man in the streets his confirmation of the theory will not make an appreciable difference. But in astronomy and in physics its importance is expected eventually to be noticeable." Prof. T. J. J. Lee, Government astronomer on Mare Island, has stated that he does not believe the Einstein theory capable of proof. D.

**Rev. Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin**, of the wealthy Park Avenue Baptist Church, of which Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., is a member and a trustee, signaled his departure from the old creedal position of his church in a sermon on April 29. According to the report in the *New York Tribune* for April 30 he said: "I want to present to you a statement of the faith that is in me to-day. This is a time of great

religious unrest. The Church must move with the times. It is a living organism, and it must break traditional ties that bind and hamper it. Our practise of excluding members of other denominations unless they are baptized again in our rite is out of harmony with the spirit of unity that is growing in the churches. We already have opened our Communion table to other Christians, and this proposed step follows that logically. Do you suppose that in heaven, when Communion is celebrated, John Calvin, John Knox, Charles Wesley, and other great leaders of the non-Baptist world will be denied the privilege of sitting with the Baptists? he asked, to the obvious amusement of his audience. 'We need a great tolerance for the various sects, isms, and fads that are springing up about the fringes of the older churches. I do not regard them as heretical. They are the result of a spiritual urge on the part of people who are seeking what they think the Church cannot furnish them. Sir Oliver Lodge is one of the outstanding physicists of his generation, and he is trying sincerely and earnestly to lift the veil. So also is Conan Doyle, an eminent and high-minded man. The healing movements, Christians Science and the others, are practising a lost function of the Church which the Church should regain. . . . I am a Modernist, out and out,' he began, 'as opposed to the Fundamentalists and Traditionalists. I am also a democrat in religion. I am in step with Dr. Fosdick and believe in accepting the scientific attitude of mind and scientific truths. The world is in a critical condition and needs the Church as never before; but the Church must make itself capable of meeting the needs of the world.'" The reporter added: "The Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick is special preacher at the Old First Presbyterian Church, although a Baptist, and is under fire from conservative Presbyterians for his liberal utterances. Dr. Woelfkin explained that, while his statements would perhaps be criticized by denominational leaders in this country, they were those of the great majority in the English Baptist Church. At least 90 per cent. of the Baptist congregations in that country receive members who have been baptized by another mode than immersion, and have abandoned the closed Communion table. Nearly all of the other so-called Evangelical churches in the United States, including the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, recognize the baptism of other Christian bodies as valid when receiving members." Dr. Woelfkin also registered his dissent from those who oppose the modern theater. The reporter says: "His attitude toward the playhouse was in marked contrast to that of the Rev. Dr. John Roach Straton, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, who led his members two weeks ago in a revival service in a pledge not to attend the theater, play cards, or dance. After the service Dr. Woelfkin explained his stand on the theater more in detail. He said that, while he attended plays occasionally, he was not a 'regular theatergoer.' 'It is a permanent institution with great possibilities in the way of inspiration, education, and entertainment, and it is foolish to condemn it whole-

sale. There are evils in it, and these should be attacked, but the good should be commended also. When I was a boy, our Church was so strict that we were permitted to visit only the menagerie at the circus. If we had strayed through the entrance and watched a slack-wire walker, we could have been put out of the Church for it. I have a cousin in Philadelphia who is one of the most splendid philanthropists I know of. She was barred from the church in her youth because she attended the theater, and she has never since joined. The Church sustained a loss in its action then.'—The Baptist mode of baptism by immersion should never have been made a church-dividing issue. So far as the removal of this schismatic practise is concerned, one might rejoice in the action of Dr. Woelfkin, and all those whom he names as partners in his movement. But his action is permeated with the spirit of modernism, and in getting away from a mere church rite, he is getting away from more serious matters, and his whole attitude, both in doctrine and ethics, tends towards laxity. That is the signature of most men of his stamp in our day.

D.

**Bolshevism and Christianity.**—On this subject the *Catholic World* (May, 1923) writes: "Those who still cherish the illusion that the Bolsheviki, while themselves irreligious, are willing that the people should be free to practise religion as they please, should read the following articles from the Constitution of the Soviets: "9". The school is separated from the church. Article 30. It is forbidden, in churches and in private homes, to teach religion to children under eighteen years of age. The right to teach religion in the churches to those who have reached that age will be granted by the local executive committee, if the mass of the population really feel the need of it. Article 50. In consequence of the separation of the church from the school the teaching of any religion whatsoever cannot in any sense be authorized in either public or private establishments. Exception is made for special schools of theology.' The extreme radical, socialistic view is manifest in these enactments. Parents have no right to say how their children shall be brought up. The state owns the child and consequently dictates what shall be done with the child. The views of parents are not to be considered. Furthermore, there remains no private life. Legislation extends to the most intimate activities of the home. A mother teaching her child to pray at its own bedside is a criminal. Even Sparta never dared to carry state socialism as far as that. Yet there are still those—chief among them the prince of modern prophets, H. G. Wells—who say that Russia is the hope of mankind, and that Lenine and Trotzky are the saviors of the world."

MUELLER.