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Suffering for Conscience' Sake a Christian Duty One Should Not Seek to Shirk.

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It is part of true Christianity to be conscientious in one's every act. God's Word is the Christian's guide and rule of life, and his conscience binds him to follow its rule and guidance. If in any case he fails to do so, his conscience will reproach him. Therefore, if he would live conscientiously, he must bring all his actions into harmony with the teachings of the Bible. But one cannot do so without finding that many people take offense thereat. For instance, it is a matter of conscience for us to abide by the Biblical doctrine of conversion, predestination, the Sacraments *et al.*; to have no church-fellowship with all such denominations or synods as teach a doctrine different from what we know to be the truth. Our conscience being bound by the Word of God, we cannot do otherwise. But what is the consequence? People seem not to understand our position and therefore accuse us of conceit, bigotry, and of preventing Christian unity in the Church. What are we to do in the matter? We would fain avoid all this and live in peace and harmony with all that call upon the name of Jesus. But as that would mean sanctioning false doctrines and teaching otherwise than God's Word teaches, which for conscience' sake we cannot do, we must suffer uncharitable judgments and unmerited condemnation at the hands of those who would be our brethren. Yet we would rather have all the world against us than know that we are condemned by God and His Word. Ministers of the Gospel are criticized as being narrow-minded and fanatical, and they are hated by the public because for conscience' sake they refuse to officiate at some funerals or marriages or to admit unworthy communicants to the Lord's Table. And such cases are by no means rare in which earnest Christians experience enmity and annoyance from neighbors and relatives because of their Chris-

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

The Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., reports the graduation of a class of fifteen, as well as the death of Dr. T. C. Billheimer, *Professor emeritus* of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis, on February 10. D.

A student's distress that cannot be relieved by money is voiced in the following letter to Dr. G. T. Rygh, which is published in the *Lutheran Church Herald* (May 15): "I wish to express my appreciation of the efforts which are being made to check antichristian teachings at the university. I am a Lutheran. I feel that some of the instruction that has been given me in various departments, especially biology and anthropology, has been almost antagonistic enough to shake a strong faith from its foundations. It is only through a sincere intercourse with God that I have been able to cling to Christ, the only solid Rock. My anthropology instructor started the first lecture of the course by stating that Christianity had adopted the ancient Hebrew mythology as doctrine. It is all good and well to say that we need not accept their statements, but when the Christian faith is made the laughing-stock of the class, I think it is going too far. I am in full sympathy with the movement to check the teaching of antichristian doctrine. I am praying to God to open our eyes to the truth. 'Make haste to answer me, O Lord; my spirit faileth! Hide not Thy face from me, lest I become like them that go down into the pit.' Ps. 143, 7." — These things are suggested by our reading of this melancholy letter: 1. Christian students must remonstrate against attacks upon their religion in the classroom, either by speaking out in class, if that is practicable, or in some other way. The duty of confessorship requires this of them. If their remonstrance is not heeded, they should leave the institution. 2. The churches should give every instance of this kind prompt and pitiless publicity. We pay our taxes to support our universities. We do not expect them to teach our religion, but neither do we expect them to attack our religion and have us pay them for doing so. If infidels need universities, let them build them and support them. The universities belong to the States, which protect all religions. 3. The cheapest, meanest, and most cowardly attacks upon Christianity are those made by professors in their lectures to students, the majority of whom are awed into silence by the superiority of their teacher, while not a few of them, usually the shallowest minds, will curry favor with the professor by applauding his infidel *ex cathedra* exhibitions. D.

The defeat of Mr. Bryan for the moderatorship of the Presbyterian General Assembly at Indianapolis on May 17, after several ballots, can be only partly ascribed to the fact that he is a layman, not capable of dealing with the doctrinal matters of the Church and issues that confront the ministry. Mr. Bryan has made himself *persona non grata* with a powerful element in the Presbyterian Church by his attacks on evolution, perhaps also by his syndicated Bible-studies published by the secular press. This fact shimmers through the re-

mark credited to a leading member of the General Assembly that Mr. Bryan's election would have endangered the cohesion of the conservative and the liberal elements in the Presbyterian Church. With its unscriptural teaching regarding divine saving grace and the means of grace, conservatism does not mean much in the Presbyterian Church. Nevertheless it is a melancholy spectacle to behold a large body of churchmen that was known for its rugged adherence to its creed forsake its doctrinal standards at a point that concerns all Christians alike. How feeble confessional consciousness among Presbyterians has become was revealed lately when the Presbytery of New York, according to a report in the *United Presbyterian*, "by an overwhelming majority voted down all resolutions censuring Dr. Fosdick," who, though belonging to a different church-body, serves a prominent Presbyterian church on Fifth Avenue and is a lecturer at Union Seminary, that theological *enfant terrible* of the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Fosdick had made himself obnoxious to an earnest element among the Presbyterians by his extreme liberalism, alias rationalism. Dr. John Robertson, after the vote, announced that he intended to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church and apply for orders in the Episcopal Church. In view of the fact that by such withdrawal Dr. Robertson would merely exchange fellowship with the rationalist Fosdick for fellowship with the rationalist Percy S. Grant, the *United Presbyterian* applies to him the old proverb: 'Out of the frying-pan into the fire. May not the Lutheran Church with its loyal Bible-faith some day become the asylum for such as are fleeing from the attacks of modernist and liberalistic unbelief? The deplorable condition in the Presbyterian Church again excites the old wonder: How much infidelity Christians are made to pay for! If infidels had to finance their own mission, establish and maintain their own schools and organism, how much would they achieve? Injecting themselves into the body of the Church like bacilli, they draw rich nourishment from the body which they ultimately destroy. In passing, it may be suggested that modern Presbyterian literature and bookstores can offer little to Lutheran pastors that could be of value to them, except for a study of what ought not to be.

D.

A Word on Christian Education by Roger W. Babson. — "In a paper published in the *Continent*," writes the *Biblical Review* (April, 1923), "Mr. Roger W. Babson makes an urgent plea that the Church take a more active part in determining the nature and conduct of various lines of business, looking to their broader service of the public. His opening paragraph concerns certain powerful rivals of the public school in molding the lives of the children: 'Once the Church and the home actually directed the education of the children. Then this education was gradually turned over to the public schools. It was felt that this could be safely done. The influence of the Church and of the home has greatly decreased as the public school system has grown. Furthermore, the public schools have largely become a football for politics. As a result the public schools are not educating our young people. The great educational forces to-day are

the newspapers, the movies, and the bill-boards. These are all private enterprises and operated for profit. Ownership of newspapers varies in different communities. Many newspapers are a power for good, but many others are a power for evil. The movies, which are a tremendous factor in the education of our young people, are mostly in the hands of Jews, and rather a low class of Jews at that. This is not a criticism of the Jews. They are at perfect liberty to operate movies for the Jewish people and use them to educate their own Jewish children, but it seems very paradoxical to have Jews operate the movies for Christian children. As for the bill-boards, they are largely supported by the tobacco interests and are mostly devoted to encouraging our young people to smoke." MUELLER.

Is Christianity Dead?—In reply to this question the *Christian Herald*, April 28, 1923, says: "Sir Conan Doyle, who is in this country lecturing on spirit communication and exhibiting what he claims are spirit photographs, says, 'Christianity is dead.' And the reason he gives is 'the failure of Christianity to stop the Great War.' By the same reasoning Sir Arthur might conclude that 'God is dead,' inasmuch as He did not stop the war, or because He does not put an end to all human selfishness and wrong. It is a common mistake to lay the blame for conditions in the world upon some form of universal truth or belief rather than upon the failure of those who profess such a belief to practise it. Christianity is no more to blame for not stopping the war than the sun is to blame for not shining on a man who goes into a dark room and shuts his eyes. Christianity is not dead, but human beings who are not practising its love and light are dead. As the great Apostle says: 'For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' That power is the most living force in the world to-day. But it cannot express itself except through those who believe, any more than an electric radio message can express itself without a wire and a radio contact." MUELLER.

The Nineteenth Amendment?—Will it be the prohibition of the use, etc., of tobacco or the embodying of the name of Jesus Christ in the Constitution of our country? Appeals reach us for either measure. In a choice between the two we could suffer the former measure to be inflicted on the nation, but we should cry out against the latter, which is vigorously advocated by the Witness Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, with offices at 119 Federal St., N. S., Pittsburgh, Pa. Christ desires no such recognition from any person or people, but spurns it as He spurned the crown, though He is a King. If America came to Him with such an offer, He would again say: "Get thee behind Me, Satan!" He receives only those who come to Him repenting of their sins and believing in His mercy for forgiveness. There is reason to believe that a majority of the citizens of the United States have not the least inclination thus to come to Christ. But they might vote for the amendment and congratulate themselves on having paid a fine compliment to Christ that cost them not even the twenty-seven cents that they pay to see Christ in the

movies and applaud Him. Then, after we have voted Christ into our Constitution, we may get Moses in, too, to please our Hebrew fellow-citizens, and Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, to please the Christian Scientists, and Manitou for the original Americans, and Confucius for the Chinese, etc. Would it not be fair? And then we shall turn the cupola of our Capitol into an American pantheon that will surpass its defunct Roman predecessor in variety and grotesqueness. D.

Anniversary of Odd-Fellowship Celebrated. — "The Fraternal Idea" was the subject of an address delivered Sunday by Rev. Dr. J. Bradley Markward, pastor of the First Lutheran Church, at the Ohio Odd-Fellows' home chapel, as part of the program in celebration of the 104th anniversary of the founding of the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows. The program began at 2.30 p. m., and members of the order went to the home at 2.15 p. m. In his remarks Dr. Markward said that the fraternal idea grew out of the fact that people are gregarious and like to get together in groups. He said that people want to share their emotional experiences because of their mutuality; that they want to enjoy the mutual aid theory; that they wish to help one another, to serve one another, and to protect one another. The home chapel was filled with members of the order and friends. Music was furnished by the boys' band of the home and the home chorus. Rev. Ira McLaughlin, pastor of the Universalist church, gave the opening and closing prayers. The committee in charge of the affair was composed of Charles Baxter and Fred Smith. (*Springfield [Ohio] Daily News*, April 30, p. 12.) We shall be glad to announce that this publication is a newspaper fake. D.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Again. — Depending upon the gullibility of the American public for ample box office receipts, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is again touring the country with his spiritistic propaganda. Relative to his superstitious tenets, the *Catholic World* writes: "Witness Conan Doyle, who has been again 'in our midst.' He is the son of an Irish Catholic. He was educated, partially, at a Catholic college. But Catholicism could not hold him. Presumably it was a strain upon his reason. Now he is telling the world — at somewhat advanced box office prices — what he has found in place of the Catholic religion to meet the exacting demands of his intellect, and to assuage the hunger of his soul. In an interview given to the New York newspaper men, he says that he believes in fairies, which are 'elementals.' 'An elemental,' he explains solemnly, 'may be a fairy or a spirit, good or evil.' 'And do you think that there may be spirits of the woods and trees?' Sir Arthur was asked. 'O yes, there may be,' he answered. 'Nature is never empty, I am sure.' — He also believes in witchcraft. 'There is,' he says, 'black magic, witchcraft. There isn't any doubt that witchcraft is perfectly real. . . . The ancient Egyptians had powers that we know nothing of. They may easily have used these powers, occult and otherwise, to defend their graves. They were always opposed to digging up the mummies.' So Lord Carnarvon's death was very probably the result of a curse proclaimed by King Tut-Ankh-Amen."

Equally interesting are the comments of the same journal on Sir Arthur's oracles concerning social conditions in the other world. We read: "Sir Arthur has definite ideas about social conditions in the other world. The reporters asked him if he thought Lord Carnarvon would meet the king whose laws he had violated. 'Not unless the king was a terrible rotter,' was the answer. 'Otherwise he would have risen far above the plane on which a newly disembodied spirit would enter.' Sir Arthur constantly receives help from the other world. 'I have a guide,' he says, 'who is most helpful to me. He is an Arabian who lived three thousand years ago. He has given me the most valuable advice many times when I had problems to solve.' We think Dr. Doyle could get better advice without going so far for it. Some of the spirits, it seems, must be corporeal. We used to think that a ghost was intangible and elusive. We never thought, in the old days, when grandmothers' tales took the place of scientific psychic research, that a ghost could shake hands with you or let your children sit on its knee. But we have Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's word for it that the spirit of Kate King often used to come to the house of Sir William Crookes and 'dandle his children on her knee.' Recently Sir Arthur asked one of Crookes' children if she remembered Kate King, and she said she would never forget being held on the knee of that departed spirit. This opens up great possibilities, especially for these days, when the servant problem is so acute. Why not summon spirits to wash the dishes and scrub the floors and make the beds, as well as to dandle the children on their knees? If there are fairies in the woods and trees, there must be fairies in the kitchens. And if they have nothing to do on the other side, they would probably welcome a little employment over here. No doubt the 'little people' would be more satisfactory than those to whom our modern householders pay such high wages with such poor results."

MUELLER.

To Draw and to Win.—The *Biblical Review* (April, 1923) quotes the *Canadian Lutheran* on the important topic of the Christian pastor's real work, which deserves careful perusal. The quotation follows: "The preacher's function is not that of drawing or that of holding; it is that of preaching, and that primarily alone. His mind is not to be taken up with distracting anxiety as to how to get men to come to him. His absorbing thought should be to present the truth so as to get men to come to Christ." The preacher who is an adept at 'drawing' congregations is, in ninety-nine cases out of every one hundred, a failure at winning souls. Unconsciously it may be, yet too surely, he yields to the temptation of tickling ears rather than fulfilling his obligation of touching and reaching hearts. This, we say, is almost invariably true of one who thinks much about 'drawing.' But it is equally true that he who, possessing average ability and making a consecrated use of it in the study of the Word, of nature, of providence, and of man, gives himself to the work of winning souls will be a drawing preacher. At the same time, it is in the power of a church to do either of two things with those who are drawn to it: to thaw them in or to freeze them out. We say 'thaw them in,' that is,

by manifestation of a truly Christian love, move them to a more and more complete identification of themselves with the Church in its various expressions of life and activity. Love on the part of the people more than the eloquence of the pastor will hold a congregation together, while, on the contrary, indifference and coldness and clique spirit on the part of the people, despite all the ability shown in the pulpit and by the pastor, will serve to dissipate any congregation."

MUELLER.

France Requires Protection Against the Laws of Nature.—In the March issue of *Revue Contemporaine* two writers discuss the French problem of national security and sufficient safeguards for their country against aggression. The first writer declares: "France is slowly dying. Every year the number of deaths exceeds that of births, and since the war the condition which was critical before has become serious." The writer asserts that, unless internal causes now operating towards the decay of the French nation are stopped, one may say with almost mathematical accuracy that within twenty-five years the native population of France will be reduced from 40 to 25 million. That will be the time when "a foreign nation which everybody knows" will fall upon France, reduce it to a colony, and, in general, place it under tutelage. The second writer also speaks of "a crisis that is without parallel in the civilized world, and that saps the foundation of the French nation's existence." He figures out that the depopulation of France proceeds at the rate of 200,000 inhabitants per annum. On the other hand, French sociologists and statisticians point with alarm to the prolific increase by natural growth of the nation across the Rhine. The millions of children and youths growing up in Germany have given France a terrible nightmare. Against this danger protection must be provided at any cost and by whatever means.—Now, it is likely that the decadence of the native French stock is just now overemphasized for political purposes and to solicit sympathy. But suppose matters are as bad as Frenchmen picture them, does a nation like theirs that is cankered with extreme immorality deserve to be protected against a nation in which the laws of the Creator are still obeyed to some extent? Ethics and equity answer, No. The prolific state of the German nation is also stressed by French writers beyond the limits of truthfulness, likewise for political purposes. But, granted the prolific conditions are as pictured, who has the right to criticize them or to alter them? Is not the murderous devil in several distinct ways inspiring French arguments for protection?

D.

Fascism.—From an autobiographic article of Mussolini in *Gerarchia*, the Fascist review, the Fort Wayne *Journal-Gazette* (March 31) quoted the following remarks on liberty: "Men nowadays are tired of liberty. Both in Russia and in Italy it has been demonstrated that it is possible to govern outside, above, and against all liberal ideas. Neither Communism nor Fascism has anything to do with liberty. . . . Liberty is no longer a chaste, severe maiden for whom generations in the first half of the last century fought and died. For the intrepid,

restless youths who are now in the dawn of a new history other words exercise a greater fascination, namely, order, hierarchy, and discipline. Fascism is not afraid to declare itself illiberal or antiliberal. It has already passed, and, if necessary, will again pass, without the slightest hesitation, over the body, more or less decomposed, of the Goddess of Liberty." — Thus speaks the friend and ally of the Roman Pope.

D.

A German View of American Charities.—In the German *Reichstag* Representative Lauscher recently said: "America is at the head of all nations in rendering humanitarian aid to our sufferers." To this sentiment the *Koelnische Zeitung* (May 2) takes exception as follows: "The statement is dangerous — and it is false. It is dangerous because many of our people will again have their hopes directed to the magnanimous country, only to meet with another disillusionment; and it is false because America has actually done nothing at all for our sufferers. All the aid that has been rendered from over yonder — and there is an infinite amount of it — cannot be credited to America, but solely and only to the German-Americans. America has not the least share in this unparalleled relief activity of Americans of German extraction. In our German publicity we have to be careful to keep strict and correct account. Honor and gratitude to whom honor and gratitude are due. But America as such has no share in it, nor can it claim any. This fact should be borne in mind also by men who speak from the rostrum of the *Reichstag*. When such assertions as those of Representative Lauscher are scattered broadcast throughout the country and go uncontradicted, they cause harm and are resented principally by the true givers in America, especially when they are not even mentioned by name, as happened day before yesterday. The organ of the Centrum Party, *Germania*, which is in close relation to Representative Lauscher, on March 8 reviewed the account which Professor *Hengesbach* gave of his journey to America and the impressions he received, and nailed down the fact that even the Catholic Knights of Columbus are not just to the Germans; 'for it is poor evidence of their neutrality to arrange an exceedingly fulsome reception for Cardinal Mercier, to appoint Marshal Foch an honorary member of their society, and to make a contribution of \$65,000 for a monument to Marquis Lafayette, while they have not a cent for the misery in Central Europe.' The same is true of the Protestants, unless they are Germans, and official America so far has not stirred a finger in an effort to 'place itself at the head of all nations in rendering aid to our sufferers.' Not even the American Red Cross, which, in the days when America was neutral, served as a recruiting station, had anything to give to German sufferers until January 25, when it finally forwarded \$25,000 to the German Red Cross. On March 10 the Washington correspondent of the Chicago *Abendpost* investigated the Red Cross and found that the only organization that could help, after Congress had failed to help, the Red Cross, was not doing anything either, nor did it intend to do anything. The reason given at the headquarters in Washington was that

'no request for aid had been received.' In unmeasured abundance a stream of offerings from the Red Cross is flowing to Armenia: in round figures \$15,000,000 was sent to that country during the last twelve months. In addition to this, 600,000 tons of clothing and shoes were forwarded during the last months. Congregations and individuals of every denomination were requested to adopt Armenian children at an expense of \$5 a month per child. Hundreds of thousands of children were cared for in this manner. Others were fed and clothed in orphanages that had been erected for them. The Greek Government even donated the German Emperor's palace at Korfu for this purpose, and 3,000 children were sheltered in this building. President *Harding* issued two calls for aid to Armenia, and they proved effective. Moreover, he promised his aid toward obtaining *from the next Congress an appropriation of at least \$20,000,000*. What has he done for Germany? In the Ruhr District thousands of persons are driven from house and home, families are deprived of their supporters, milk is taken away from children. The American Red Cross does not notice these things, neither do the American reporters in Duesseldorf and Essen. For the sufferers are only Germans, don't you know! On March 14 the *Milwaukee Herald* reported that Secretary of Commerce *Hoover had denied in decided terms* that an extensive feeding of children at the expense of the American Government was being planned, but he referred to a rumor that a delegation of Quakers would thoroughly investigate conditions in Germany, especially in the Ruhr District. The report concludes with these words: 'However, as stated, a relief action on the part of the American Government will be taken under advisement only in an extreme emergency, that is, if Germany were reduced to *actual famine conditions*, because very influential interests and numerous 'patriots,' chiefly, however, *political clubs of women, are decidedly opposed to rendering aid to the former enemy*. In this connection we may refer to a *letter*, addressed on November 7, 1919, to Miss Dierkes by Mr. James Jackson, the Division Chief of the American Red Cross at Boston. Miss Dierkes had inquired whether the contributions to the American Red Cross which were actually demanded from German Americans were being used in proper proportion for starving and dying children in Germany and Austria. Here is the answer she received: 'You inquire, in the second place, about our disposition of stores for Europe. *We are working only in the countries of our allies and distribute our stores only to them. Our only work done in Germany was in behalf of prisoners from our allies, especially Russian prisoners. In reply to your third question regarding our relief work for children in Europe, I would say that this work is being done on the largest scale in France and Servia. I can assure you that we are not doing any work of this kind in Germany and Austria!*' This letter is quite in harmony with the attitude of the chairman of the American Red Cross, Mr. Davidson, who declared some time ago that *German-Americans would not be permitted to engage in works of charity in war territory, even though ten times as many of their sons*

were on the firing-line! It is necessary to recall some of these details in order occasionally to quicken the memory of our own people. This may help to render such assertions as those of Professor Lauscher in the *Reichstag* impossible in the future. We are willing to express our gratitude, but it should be directed to the correct address. This address, to which we cannot make our gratitude too abundant, is not America, but *the German-Americans.*" (Italics by *Koeln. Zeitung.*) We have been told in impudent fashion what France thinks of us after the war. Only recently England expressed in speeches and cartoons how disgusted it is with us. Russia has denounced us; Turkey has spoken contemptuously about us. Now comes Germany with a bill of indictment against us for unscrupulous unfairness. Travelers in Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Poland, etc., have heard remarks about America that are not pleasant to relate or to listen to. That is what we have achieved by our generous, high-minded, ideal motives for entering the war in Europe. And these mutterings are only the first-fruits of our coming harvest. We are going to reap a bumper crop of hatred and contempt, not mentioning the frauds that our own 'patriots' have committed against us right here in our country. As to the German complaint which we have restated in full, that, too, is the forerunner of other remarks. Leaving the justice of the complaint out of the discussion and discounting the praise of German-Americans in which the German writer indulges, the article breathes resentment, and that resentment will grow and ultimately will not stop at an undefinable ethnological line. American benefactors of German sufferers must be prepared to receive scorn and contempt from those whom they now support. Notwithstanding this, we, on our part, will continue the work which we are doing for suffering Germans, not as German-Americans, but as Christians, and remember 1 Pet. 2, 20. It is quite noticeable, moreover, that under the continued pressure of all sorts of misery German nerves are going to pieces, and much patience with German utterances about America will be necessary in the future.

D.

Germany. — Genuine ecclesiastical Bourbons are the former supporters of the German state-church system: they learn nothing, and they forget nothing. The constitution of the new German Republic has laid down for all Germany the principle of the separation of Church and State. The various church-bodies of Germany, accordingly, proceeded to effect a new organization, resp. reorganization. The constitutional principle is not yet realized; not a few of the leading churchmen are slow in effecting the necessary changes and want to retain as much as possible of the old system. Strange things occur: In Prussia they are debating the question whether the new constitution of the former *Landeskirche* must be submitted to the Diet for approval, and Dr. Reinhard, who died recently, had to point out the silliness of the idea to have a legislature composed partly of Catholics, Jews, infidels, and declared enemies of the Church determine what the new evangelical Church of Prussia is to be like. — In a discussion of Art. 24 of the new constitution of the Evangelical

Church a motion prevailed to strike the clause that the elders of the congregation have the right and the duty "to be concerned about the preaching of the divine Word and all ministrations within the congregation." The clergymen present declared that by this arrangement the elders might feel authorized to oppose doctrinal "views" of pastors that are contrary to the accepted standards. They desired to retain their doctrinal independence; in other words, German theologians who have created the worst confusion in the Protestant churches of Germany propose to continue the confusion. — The Consistory of Saxony has fined Pastor Dr. Mehlhose M. 1,000 for publishing an article in which he advocated giving the modern church an airing by which "the hallowed atmosphere of the Middle Ages" and "the dogmatic hymns and prayers of the sixteenth century" would be expelled. But Dr. Mehlhose is retained as a member of the ministerium. — In the *Neue Saechsische Kirchenblatt* a writer argues that after the demise of the former church controlled by the government a spirit of liberty and democratic institutions must be fostered by which the people would be joined to a new *Volkskirche*. The writer does not seem to realize what sacrifices of Scriptural principles this *Volkskirche* would have to make to get the *Volk*, that is, the people *en masse*. — Ministerial Director Dr. Hedrich proposes to make the new church popular and induce greater interest in it and especially financial cooperation on the part of the people by casting out of it "the ballast of old institutions" and thoroughly liberalizing it to make it agreeable to modern man. Dr. Amlung has to point out to him that this means casting out the teaching of Jesus, the Savior of sinners, and driving the very people that still want a church away from it. — In the Province of Hannover the executive committee of the "Vereinigung der Bekenntnisfreunde in der hannoverschen Landeskirche," under the leadership of Pastor Goudefroy, are protesting against the adoption, by the framers of a new constitution for the Church of Hannover, of a paragraph that is "to protect minorities" in the Church. This means that if any person or group of persons is not satisfied with the teaching of Scripture and the Lutheran Confession in his congregation, he may demand service by another pastor more to his liking. Dr. Laible expresses his painful surprise at beholding the spectacle of labored efforts by the builders of the new church to find a formula by which those who confess and those who deny the truth can be brought into the new organization. He calls the formulas which are embodied in the new church constitutions of Germany "a symbol of internal untruth." Pastor Goudefroy's society also protests against retaining Dr. Doerris, the author of *Believing in the World (Der Glaube an die Welt)*, in the ministry of the Church of Hannover because he is practically an infidel. Dr. Haccius, of Hermannsburg, regards the situation in the Church of Hannover as very critical, but does not feel a sufficient urge to joy in the protest of the Goudefroy people. — In view of the appointment of the radical Professor Heitmueller, of Marburg, as successor of Professor Schlatter at Tuebingen, which has roused the resentment of conservative elements especially throughout Wuerttemberg,

Pastor Hartwig Harms, of Hamburg, advocates the erection of seminaries as the only way in which the Lutherans of Germany can hope to obtain orthodox pastors. — Prof. Dr. Bornhausen, of Breslau, appeals to the state for protection of his liberal views against those who want to force a certain confessional declaration upon the new church. Dr. Dibelius, of Berlin, comforts him by saying that any confessional preambles adopted for the new church would have no normative force whatsoever. — Dr. Wuensche, of Loebau, Saxony, who quit the church and became an active Social Democrat, has been appointed Supreme Counselor in the *Kultusministerium*, the department of the government which regulates church affairs. — Addressing a class of graduates at Dresden, *Oberlehrer* Rau scandalized his audience by remarks like these: 1. Those guilty of the most inhuman acts in history are the rulers and the Church. Even in antiquity Socrates suffered inhuman treatment from the state, but he bore up under his fate manfully and did not whine like the One on the cross: "My God, My God," etc. 2. What harm is there in having illegitimate children? None. 3. Why, what was the Virgin Mary? Did not she, too, have an illegitimate child? 4. Who is God? Formerly we had a Jewish, an Evangelical, and a Catholic god; after that we even had a Prussian god. But this latter was deposed and another put in his place. Complaint having been made to the city authorities about this address, the teacher sent a written apology to them — and remained in office. — Of all infidels and skeptics the Germans are the nastiest. Their unbelief is frequently steeped in cynicism of the vilest sort, the "dirty dog" type: they revel in obscene and sacrilegious remarks. — As regards the architects of the new German *Volkskirche*, it seems as if they are at times purposely blind to the plain teaching of Scripture on what constitutes the Church, in which spiritual rights are vested, how men are made members of the Church, how a Christian congregation is organized, built up, and governed in accordance with God's Word, etc. Most of them loathe the idea of free, self-sustaining and self-governing organizations of believing Christians. The free-church idea is denounced as an American importation, oftentimes as "Missourianism," and the people are warned against it as something worse than American Russellism, Christian Science, the ruthless sectarianism of Baptists, Methodists, Adventists, etc. Leading German churchmen will stomach anything, it seems, except a confessional Lutheran of the Missouri Synod type. There are American Lutherans in Europe fraternizing with the left-overs of the former *Landeskirche* and advocates of the new *Volkskirche*. By connivance at least they sanction views and doings in Germany which they would not dare to sponsor in America.

D.

Regarding the Eisenach World Conference of Lutherans we learn from the *Lutheran* (May 17) that "in agreement with the Central Committee of Europe the National Lutheran Council has determined to stick to the business of the kingdom of God (matters of Christian doctrine and practise) and to lift the convention into the higher realm where the wicked state questions (occupation of the

Ruhr District, the League of Nations, the Versailles Treaty, the question of boundary lines, etc.) cease from troubling and Christian brethren, weary of earth's turmoils, may be at peace." The editor thinks that Lutheran laymen in America would prefer removing the ravages of war in Europe to "harping upon the old strings of doctrine and practise." "If all of the Lutheran bodies subscribe to the same confession or confessions, why discuss doctrine and practise? Is not the great question of faith fixed and settled for all time? Why not give such matters a rest and attend to the burning practical issues of uniting our Lutheran forces the world over to meet conditions so critical as to threaten the very existence of the Lutheran Church in many sections?" Rightly the editor says: "Subscription to the confessions does not settle the question of faith and unity." Not if the subscription is a mere lip-profession, without the proper accompanying action. Rightly, too, the editor holds that before the eighteen different nationalities that will meet at Eisenach in August can enter into "an international affiliation of Lutheran forces that will function and prove effective, . . . a working basis of faith unity must be established. It is of the utmost importance that the eighteen different branches of the Lutheran Church, which have hitherto been more or less out of doctrinal and practical touch with each other, as if they had been eighteen different denominations, should examine the faith foundations upon which they profess to rest, and find a common ground on which to stand." An official declaration like the foregoing from the leading American body which will take part in the Eisenach Conference — if it did not actually bring this conference about — raises great hopes. The method here proposed is, as the editor says, "the first thing to be attained. The rest will then follow. It is not only the Lutheran mode of procedure; it is the right mode, the Scriptural mode." What will be attempted at Eisenach, if the program of the *Lutheran* is adopted, is a restatement of the Lutheran faith in terms of the twentieth century. Of the existing Lutheran Confessions — we take this to mean the Book of Concord — the editor says: "They register what the Lutheran Church in a great crisis had to witness in defense of the truth as over against prevailing errors. We accept that witness, but not as the final word in settling questions that new methods of attack against the faith have thrust upon us to-day, questions which the Confessions do not touch. The faith of the Church is a living thing. It is a well of water gushing forth from the living Fountain, the Word of God. The moment it is looked upon as a fixed and settled thing it becomes a stagnant pool, and the Church cannot live and fulfil its mission on that kind of water." There may be occasions in the life of the Church where a new and specific confession is required to meet new errors. Our Synod faced such an issue when it adopted its Thirteen Theses to declare the Lutheran faith regarding the doctrines of election and conversion. But even on such occasions the new statement goes back to the old standards of teaching. They are indeed to be looked upon as "a fixed and settled thing." That is what subscription to them means; otherwise, what is there to attach the subscription to? A restatement of doctrine is

a restatement only when it states the old doctrines again; otherwise it is a new statement, by which the original statement is superseded, somewhat like the process by which an organization may put its constitution practically out of existence by smothering it with amendments. The Lutheran Confessions emphasize the supreme and sole authority of Holy Scripture for determining men's faith: "The object of the Augustana, as stated in its preface, was to show 'what manner of doctrine has been set forth in our lands and churches from the Holy Scriptures and the pure Word of God.' And in its conclusion the Lutheran confessors declare: 'Nothing has been received on our part against Scripture or the Church Catholic,' and 'we are ready, God willing, to present ampler information according to the Scriptures.' *Juxta Scripturam*"—such are the closing words of the Augsburg Confession. The Lutheran Church knows of no other principle. In the Formula of Concord we read: 'Other writings, however, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever name they bear, must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them, and [they] should not be received otherwise or further than as witnesses [which are to show] in what manner, after the time of the apostles, and at what places this doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved.' (777, 2.) In the conclusion of the Catalog of Testimonies we read: 'The true saving faith is to be founded upon no church-teachers, old or new, but only and alone upon God's Word, which is comprised in the Scriptures of the prophets and holy apostles, as unquestionable witnesses of divine truth.' (1149.)" (*Triglot Concordia*, p. 7.) This rule the Lutheran confessors applied to their own declarations of faith, which were drawn from "the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the pure, clear fountain of Israel." (*Ibid.*, p. 851.) That is what gives them perennial freshness and enduring normative power. There is no danger of stagnation in accepting them as a fixed and settled thing. A close study of the Lutheran Confessions, moreover, leads to the often surprising discovery that many of the issues of modern church-life have been judged in advance in these documents. Modern church-life exhibits many novelties, but little that is really new. The *Lutheran* anticipates a peaceful discussion of Lutheran doctrine and practise at Eisenach. May its expectation be fully realized! Until the *personnel* of the convention is known, it is impossible to say to what extent this expectation is justified. It is possible that the discussion will be as troubled and disharmonious as it would be, were the conference to take up the occupation of the Ruhr District and kindred matters for debate. But even if it should become disagreeable, it can still be honorable. Smoothness and pleasantness in conducting a discussion on such important matters as Lutheran faith and practise are not the greatest boon to be desired for the convention. Unflinching fidelity and frankest sincerity are a greater blessing.—The remarks of the editor foreshadow that the conference will also take up for discussion practical questions created by the ravages of the late war, and devise a way of cooperation for solving them. If American Lutherans can cooperate with the Federal Council of Churches, they will

also find a way for such cooperation with Lutherans of other countries. Perhaps the definite tangible result of the conference will be just this cooperation in works of charity and benevolence. — The *Lutheran* asks that the conference be made the subject of prayer. Inasmuch as the acts of the conference may affect the entire Lutheran Church of the world, every member of our Church will make the conference his concern and pray that the outcome of it may redound to the honor and prosperity of true Lutheranism. Particularly do those members of the conference need the prayers of all lovers of our Lutheran Zion who have undertaken to represent America among the eighteen nationalities that will participate in this conference. D.
