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## The Virgin Birth of Christ.

Essay read before a conference by REV. G. ALBERT SCHULZE  
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### II.

The *sedes doctrinae* of the Virgin Birth are not in conflict with any statement contained in the writings of the other two evangelists and the apostles. Fosdick and others of his type make much of the silence that we encounter in the rest of the New Testament with respect to this subject. Fosdick, in his sermon on *The New Knowledge and the Christian Faith*, says: "The two men who contributed most to the Church's thought of the divine meaning of Christ were Paul and John, who never even distantly allude to the Virgin Birth." Even if Fosdick were justified in making the assertion that John and Paul make no reference to the Virgin Birth, what would their silence prove? *E silentio non valet consequentia*. Does the fact that Paul and his colleagues do not say *expressis verbis*, "Christ was born of the Virgin Mary," give us the right to impute to them the intention of saying, "Christ was not born of the Virgin Mary"?

No significance whatsoever attaches to the silence of Mark. He begins his gospel with the public ministry of Christ and so has no occasion to enlarge upon the Lord's birth. But neither does he mention the youth of Jesus. Are we prepared to say that he would have us believe that Jesus had no youth? It is interesting to note that higher critics profess to find Mark ranged upon the side of the witnesses for the Virgin Birth. Orr, in *The Virgin Birth*, p. 106, says: "One curious circumstance in connection with this gospel may be noted in passing. It was the singular contention of the Tübingen critics — of Baur, Hilgenfeld, and others of the school, also of a scholar like Bleek — that Mark *did* know of the Virgin Birth. . . . It will be remembered that in Matthew's gospel the people of Nazareth are represented as saying, 'Is not this the carpenter's son?' (13, 33.) In Mark this saying appears in the

## THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

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**Dr. Delk's Theological Position.**—That the U. L. C. tolerates false teachers in high places is evident from the address delivered by Dr. Delk, of Philadelphia, at the installation of three new professors in Gettysburg, Professors Stamm (New Testament), Aberly (Systematic Theology), and Hoover (Practical Theology). This was an occasion for rejoicing for the old historic school at Gettysburg. It is a pity that the occasion was marred by the address of Dr. Delk. We quote some of the characteristic utterances of Dr. Delk: "When I came to the seminary years ago, I fully believed in the verbal inspiration of every book of the Bible. Questions concerning the genuineness and authenticity of the various books had not presented themselves to me. I believed that each book had one particular writer and that he was not dependent upon earlier Scriptures or traditions, but that out of the blue of heaven or from mountain-top God spoke to men, and that, inspired and controlled by an indwelling divine spirit, the books were made free from all error from cover to cover. To think of myth or legend in connection with the Bible seemed destructive and morally reprehensible. A text that seemed usable in supporting a theological tenet could be legitimately taken from any part of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible was to me an infallible authority in its statements concerning astronomy, geology, anthropology, history, ethics, and religion. I do not say that our professors held or taught a verbal dictation theory of inspiration, but I fancy I had plenty of company in my jejune conception and belief that the Bible in all its statements was inerrant.—What a change has been wrought in the sphere of New Testament scholarship during the last fifty years! . . . Lutheran theology did not cease or culminate in the seventeenth century. Dorner, Tholuck, Frank, Luthardt, Martensen, Kaftan, and Hermann are a few of the masters that have added luster to German and Scandinavian theology and given to our Christian faith a wider and fuller expression than the dogmatists that immediately followed Melancthon and his *Loci*. In a word, theology is a progressive accomplishment in Christian truths, ever rejuvenated by a fresh study of the Christian facts, the history of the Church, and Christian experience." Nobody will deny that the present-day theological teacher has to be acquainted with the aberrations manifesting themselves so painfully in the field of theology, which put tradition or human reason in the place of the revealed Word of God. If Dr. Delk had merely emphasized this point, we should have no objection to offer. But when he belittles the inerrancy of the Scriptures and praises men like Kaftan and Hermann, men who have rejected the authority of the Scriptures, we have to raise our voice in protest. At the same time, we would ask those members of the U. L. C. who are advocates of confessional Lutheranism and who are surprised that the Missouri Synod will not fellowship with them, whether they can criticize our body for standing aloof from a Church which tolerates in its ranks a heretic like Dr. Delk.

**"Give the Scriptures a Chance."** — Apologetics is able to marshal an imposing array of strong proofs for the divinity of the Holy Scriptures, such as "their antiquity, the majesty of the subjects discussed, harmony of all parts, dignity of the predictions, the reality of their fulfilment, divinity of the miracles by which their doctrine is confirmed, the violence of the diabolical opposition to it," etc. (Gerhard); "the singular clearness of the sacred writers, the harmonious testimony of the Church, spread over the whole earth, to the divinity of the Holy Scriptures, the constancy of the martyrs, the testimony of other nations to the doctrine contained in the Holy Scriptures, the successful and rapid propagation of the Christian doctrine through the whole world, and its wonderful preservation during so many persecutions," etc. (Hollaz). These proofs are convincing, as far as they reach, but they cannot go beyond producing a human faith. The strongest proof, and the only proof that carries with it unwavering conviction, that is, creates divine faith, is the testimony of Scripture itself. The proofs addressed to reason are good enough in their place, but they must never take the place of, or encroach upon, the testimony of Scripture. A thousand noble witnesses are speaking in behalf of Scripture. But they must not drown out the voice of Scripture speaking for itself. All this by way of introduction for the reproducing here of a most weighty statement taken from Dr. F. Pieper's Latin address delivered at the inauguration of Dr. W. H. T. Dau at Valparaiso: "How do we recognize the divine authority of Holy Scripture? I shall not cite the arguments by which human faith in the divine authority of Holy Scripture can be called forth. Let me remind you of the well-known expression: 'Give the Scriptures a chance.' Even as in the realm of nature the creatures themselves show forth and declare the Creator, so the Scripture itself, inspired of God, if it is diligently used, declares and proves its divinity." See 1 Cor. 2, 4, 5; John 7, 17; Ps. 19, 8. For collateral reading, *Lehre und Wehre*, 68, p. 161, or better still, *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, 371.

E.

**Religion and Education.** — The *Lutheran Church Herald* (April 19) writes editorially on this subject: "Our Church believes that the public school system of America, as it is established to-day, ruling out religious instruction, is the only possible public school system safeguarding religious liberty. If the time should ever come when the state should begin to introduce religion into the public schools, the time would be at hand when it might become necessary for us Lutherans to take our children out of the public schools. The religion to be taught in the public schools would have to be determined by the state. What kind of religion this would be would depend upon the legislatures of the various States. The question of true religion would become a political issue in the election of members of the legislatures. By majority vote they would decide what should be the state religion. Even in the strong Lutheran States it would not be the Lutheran religion, because the Lutherans have not a majority in any State of the Union. There are always some people who speak about a religion which is non-sectarian and of such

a general character that it can be subscribed to by everybody. It is, of course, possible to mention a few doctrines regarding which there is general agreement among all who profess the Christian religion, as, for instance: that there is a God; that there is a future life; that all should live a moral life to be happy. These were the general principles advocated by the English Deists, who, after many years of religious wars in England, were looking for a common ground of belief on which all men could agree. This is the religion adopted by the Masonic organization, which was organized in 1717, according to Rebold's *History of Freemasonry*. But if we should begin to emphasize some specific Christian doctrine, immediately the Jews, the Mohammedans, the Unitarians, the Universalists, and others would commence to raise objections. The essence of Christianity, that Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of God, one with the Father, that by His suffering and death He atoned for the sins of the world, and that salvation is through faith in Him and His redemption, would immediately bring on controversy and be branded as 'sectarianism,' to be eliminated. The result of the establishment of a state religion for the public schools would give us this least common denominator of religion, a deistic religion of such a general, nondescript character that it would, in its practical effects, antagonize the very essence of Christianity and lead our children into Unitarianism. . . . There is no common ground for religious faith of such a nature that the Christian can be satisfied with it. The Christian religion makes no compromise. It lays exclusive claim to be the only religion and condemns all other religions as false. . . . In our opinion the only possible form in which we can agree to maintain a public school system is the present, where religion is left out." MUELLER.

**Proof that the Bible Is God's Word.** — The following remarks of the *Lutheran Standard* are to the point and helpful when the question is asked: "How do we know that the Bible is God's Word?"

"The Holy Scriptures are inspired, and therefore we say the Bible is God's Word. But just how do I come to know and believe that the Bible is inspired and is God's Word? For one thing, the Scriptures themselves claim that they are inspired. Thus Paul says: 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.' It is true, this was said expressly only of the Old Testament Scriptures; but Jesus gave His Holy Spirit to His apostles, as He had promised, so that the New Testament books which they wrote are likewise inspired.

"However, this testimony is the testimony of the Scriptures themselves, and for that reason some may think it cannot have much force; it is like a man bearing witness of himself; we should rather hear some one else tell of his virtues. There are other reasons for believing that the Bible is God's Word. We shall here speak of a few. One is the unity of the Bible. Here are sixty-six books, written possibly by forty different authors taken from various walks in life, extending over a period of more than a thousand years, all authors generally writing independently of one another. Yet in all the Bible there is a beautiful harmony and a setting forth of one great thought. Only God could have made such a book.

“Another reason for believing that the Bible is God’s book to men is the one great theme which runs through it. That theme is the redemption of the world through Christ. Christ and His redemption run through the entire Bible like a stream down through a broad valley; wherever you cross that valley, you come upon that stream; so wherever you cross the Bible story, you come upon Christ. Of course, not every book speaks expressly of Christ, but every book does have a part in setting forth God’s preparation of the world for Christ.

“Another reason for believing that the Bible is God’s book to men is the fulfilment of prophecy. Scores of events and even mere incidents were foretold hundreds of years before they took place; and they did take place just as predicted. History itself is proof of this, and the spade is piling up this sort of proof more and more in Bible lands, and the end is not yet. The greatest fulfilment, of course, is that which pertains to Christ, how everything written concerning Him came to pass. It is difficult to understand how any one who reads the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, keeping Christ Jesus in mind, can come to any other conclusion than that the Bible is God’s book to men.

“However, the only finally convincing proof is the power of this Word upon one’s own soul. There is a way of getting around all these other proofs if one does not want to believe; but when the Word of God rouses one’s conscience to his own sinfulness and fills him with fear and dismay and then offers the blessed Gospel and enables him to rejoice in the peace of forgiveness and of salvation, then it is hard for a person any longer to evade confessing that this is God’s Word and saying, ‘Such power I do not find anywhere else in the world.’ And when one has once felt this power and has found peace and comfort and strength in the Word, then it matters little what men may say about the Bible and the inspiration of the Scriptures; such a person will know that the Bible is God’s holy Word, and no man can destroy its power nor take it from his heart.”

**Is the Decalog a Part of the Constitution?**—Governor Richards of South Carolina, if he is reported correctly, seems to think so. He is enforcing the Sunday-closing law and announced on February 28 that as long as these laws are on the statute-books, he would endeavor to enforce them. We have no quarrel with him on that point. But he continued: The criticisms raised by certain newspapers “seem to me a little strange when it is remembered that they want laws based on the Ten Commandments enforced. ‘Thou shalt not kill,’ under which lynching would come; ‘Thou shalt not steal.’ These they want enforced, yet they condemn me for enforcing the commandments, ‘Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.’” Governor Richards seems to think that the Ten Commandments are the law of the land. Now, neither the Constitution of the United States nor that of any State has incorporated the Decalog in its provisions. Back in 1897 a Kansas legislator attempted to put the Ten Commandments on the statute-books. Section I of the bill he submitted read: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” and the other sections enacted the

other commandments. The penalty for idolatry was fixed at \$1,000; for blasphemy, \$500; filial disobedience, the same; murder was to be punished by death and adultery by lifelong imprisonment. The bill was not enacted, but Governor Richards and a host of others think it should be. The National Reform Association is working for the Christian Amendment, which would recognize "His [the Lord Jesus'] revealed will as the supreme authority in civil affairs." That is the spirit of the Reformed churches, as expressed in Calvin's declaration: "*Officium magistratus extendi ad utramque legis tabulam.*" That is not Biblical. The Ten Commandments were, indeed, in the constitution of the Jewish state, but the Theocracy has been abolished, and in the days of the New Testament the domains of Caesar and of God are sharply delimited. That is Lutheran doctrine. "Carlstadt was insane in imposing upon us the judicial laws of Moses." (*Apology. Trigl.*, p. 331.) According to Scriptural, Lutheran, and good American doctrine it is not the province of our legislators to enact laws because of anything that is written in the Decalog. Legislation must proceed along the lines of reason and the National Law. It should prohibit murder, not, however, because of the Fifth Commandment, but because of the dictates of reason and the Natural Law. — Governor Richards would have his hands full if the Decalog were the law of the land. There is the First Commandment. Who gave the Kansas legislator the right to make idolatry punishable by a fine of \$1,000? The Decalog imposed the death penalty. Governor Richards would not only have to exclude the heathen Chinaman from his State, but in case one was smuggled in and apprehended, he would have to send him to the gallows. The same applies to the Freemason. Calvin was very consistent. With regard to Servetus, the Antitrinitarian, he said: "If ever he enters the city, he shall not leave it living if I can prevent it." And he did prevent it in the theocracy of Geneva. Further, Jewish America (it would be a misnomer to call it Christian America) would have to enforce the Ninth and Tenth Commandments, too, and make the idolatry of the lovers of money and the hatred and evil desires of the heart punishable. For all of that is covered by the Decalog. Do you still think that the word "insane," as used by the *Apology*, is too strong? — But that is not the limit of the troubles Governor Richards is invoking upon his head. He refers to the Third Commandment and wants the Sabbath-day to be kept holy. His court-preacher — for in theocracies every executive has a court-preacher or adviser in spiritual matters — is probably a Reformed minister. He is getting bad advice. Scripture teaches that the Sabbath is abolished. The provisions regarding Sabbath-labor applied only to the Jewish state. And supposing the Seventh-day Adventists should carry the next election? The Adventist court-preacher would insist that this Americo-Jewish State observe Saturday. How would the governor defend himself against the criticism of his Reformed constituents? Better not put the Decalog into the Constitution! — There is a man in New Jersey who takes the same position as Governor Richards. Associated Press, Trenton, N. J., March 7: "Blue-law advocates won their fight in the State

Assembly to-night against permitting local option in the observance of Sunday. A bill to modify the laws was defeated by just one vote. . . . 'It's repealing the Ten Commandments,' said Assemblyman Dater. . . . The bulwark of this country is the Christian Sabbath. I am proud to be in this house at a time when I can vote to support it." E.

**The Church and the Spirit of the Age.**—The *Presbyterian* (April 21) contains the following excellent admonition, addressed to churches which are disloyal to their Master and adapt themselves to the "spirit of the age." We read: "We are sometimes told that the Church should adapt herself to the spirit of the age; that times have changed and that she should change with them; that old methods are too stiff and old doctrines too uncompromising. This is by no means a new demand. Christianity never has been in harmony with the spirit of the age. It was not in Christ's day nor in that of the apostles and will not be unto the millennium [*sic!*]. The Church is to be peculiar. Christians are to be 'not conformed' to this world. The preaching of the Cross was and is foolishness to unbelievers. That these should see with their own eyes and should say to Christians, as Festus did to Paul, 'Thou art beside thyself,' is neither surprising nor alarming. The things which worldly people regard as folly are the Church's strength. Conformity to the world is her weakness. Her mission is to conform the world to herself and to Christ. The plea that the Church would gain in numbers by lowering her standard either of conduct or orthodoxy or benevolence, is a mistaken one. Any apparent gain would be more than balanced by a real loss."

MUELLER.

**Archeology's Commentary on Is. 3.**—C. Leonard Woolley, director of the joint expedition of the British Museum and the museum of the University of Pennsylvania, reporting on the work of excavating in Ur, Abraham's native city, writes that he found a complete toilet set in ivory, including a lotus-shaped mirror handle, a powder-box, a paint-pot in the form of a Sphinx, and an exquisitely engraved fine-toothed comb. "It was a set of which any lady might have been proud," he writes. Again: "The most surprising feature is the abundance of precious metal. Diadems, rings, earrings and beads of gold and silver are the rule rather than the exception. Long pins have heads of lapis lazuli mounted in silver or gold." Archeology seems to have undertaken to prove the exactness of Biblical statements and descriptions. Isaiah portrayed exactly the fashions of the day. The ladies of Ur seem to have made use of the same articles of toilet and personal adornment as were in vogue with their sisters in Jerusalem. "The bravery of the tinkling ornaments and the chains and the bracelets and the headbands and the tablets (perfumed capsules) and the earrings and the glasses and the sweet smell and the well-set hair," etc., etc. The comment of the Associated Press of February 13: "Evidence that milady in the days of Nebuchadnezzar was as careful of her beauty as her sister of the twentieth century A. D. is apparently confirmed by the 'finds' recently made at Ur of the Chaldees," calls for the remark that, as human nature itself has not changed, so, contrary to the popular dictum, fashions do not change.—And in another

respect the change and progress has not been quite so great as we moderns like to represent it. Speaking of the great hall excavated, "it might have been a royal audience chamber, put up by King Sin-Idin-nam shortly before 2000 B. C.," Woolley coolly remarks: "The remarkable feature about it was that it had undoubtedly an arched and vaulted roof, and until recently such would have been judged wholly impossible at such an early date." Compare the statement by Dr. Melvin Kyle (quoted in THEOL. MONTHLY, 7, p. 26): "This hall shows better than anything else the advanced stage of culture which this people had reached." E.

**The Minister and His Time.** — Time is as precious to a minister as it is to any other man of affairs; and yet of all sinners who deliberately waste time, the average pastor is perhaps the greatest. The *Watchman-Examiner*, in a recent issue, again calls attention to this much-discussed, but always vital subject, writing editorially: "That is altogether wrong. The minister's time belongs to God rather than to casual comers and goers. It is not Christian to let others steal our time and to assist in the theft. If we attend to God's will in this matter, we shall be able to 'bunch' our engagements and arrange one appointment to follow another so closely that the people we meet will be obliged to come to the point quickly, consider things promptly, and then make room for the next comer. Many precious hours can be saved by careful planning. Do not let that schedule of engagements sprawl all over the map of your life. Concentrate the items. Trot merrily through a program of these concentrated dates. Meet one committee after another the same evening. Interview between times, with five or ten minutes for each, Tom, Dick, and Harry, and the others, who would like to lounge through an hour or two. Then rejoice in the two blank pages that you have thus been able to keep clear and free in your date-book and fill them with the bigger and more important things that you would otherwise have side-tracked. All of this may seem trivial, but there are few things more vital in the minister's life and work. These words are the result of hard-won personal experience."

With regard to methods followed by others and their imitation by ministers who cannot plan their own work, the editorial says: "We can make suggestions to one another, as we have just been making them here, but in general a man must make out his own program and divide his time according to his own tastes and talents and his own peculiar ways of working. We cannot plan other people's lives. Every man to his own method, as long as the grist be ground. That man is very foolish who follows some other body's method. It is always best to study one's own particular bent and aptitude. What is one's meat may be another's poison."

The "more important things" in a minister's life which he cannot afford to side-track, are the development and maintenance of his efficiency as a preacher of the Gospel, which requires constant study and the winning of souls through the preaching of the Gospel. If he fails to accomplish this, his work must be regarded as a failure, no matter how busy he may have been in his ministry. MUELLER.



**H. E. Fosdick Provided For.** — If H. E. Fosdick should ever be expelled from the Baptist communion, other societies will take him in. The Ethical Culturists are offering him a "church" home, and we are sure he will feel at home with them. In an address delivered in St. Louis February 21, Henry J. Golding, a leader of the New York Ethical Society, described Dr. H. E. Fosdick as "the most advanced outpost of Liberal Christianity in the American pulpit — the man who has liberalized Liberal Christianity." H. E. Fosdick need not hesitate to accept the cordial invitation here tendered; he will find in the Ethical Culturists kindred spirits. The doctrine of these men has been thus defined: "Religion is undogmatic, purely ethical. Atheists may be moral and hence also religious. The Moral Law has immediate authority, is independent of religious theory. Moral ends are above all human interests. They are promoted by ethical culture only, which is the object of the ethical society. It teaches the science and art of right living." One cannot blame the Ethical Culturists for inviting H. E. Fosdick into their home after they read his article of last year, "The New Religious Reformation." The only thing that counts in the church reformed according to this article is "His [Jesus Christ's] fellowship with God, His Good Samaritan, His Golden Rule, His Sermon on the Mount, His law of finding life by losing it, His sincerity, His courage, His kindness, His Cross — they are not unreal. There one touches directly the supreme exhibition of spiritual life in human history." And a comparison of Fosdick's article and Golding's address shows that these two men bear a striking family likeness. Says Golding: "Enough of the religion about Jesus! What we need, says Liberal Christianity, is the religion of Jesus. Spiritual heroism is the essence of religion. How shall we awaken that valor which cannot live idly in the same world with evil? For Liberal Christians the solution is to get rid of the 1900 years and to become contemporaneous with Jesus. Hence they proclaim a new Reformation." Says Fosdick: "There are two types of Christianity. One is the religion which Jesus Christ Himself possessed and by which He lived. His filial fellowship with God, His purity, unselfishness, sincerity, sacrifice, His exaltation of spiritual values, and His love for men — the religion of Jesus. The other consists of things said of, and believed concerning, Jesus, theories to account for Him, accumulated explanations and interpretations of Him — the religion about Jesus," and it is Dr. Fosdick's business to substitute the former for the latter in his "New Religious Reformation." And the family likeness becomes the more pronounced when we look from Golding's statement: "Yet even Jesus does not represent all the best we know. No one personality, however radiant and moving, can embody all the excellences" to Fosdick's creed: "When one appeals across the centuries to the religion of Jesus, one does not mean to ascribe finality even to that, as though God had not spoken since, as though no new light had broken on the world." Of course, Fosdick has not yet quite grown up to the stature of his Ethical Culture brethren. But they will bear with him; he will, they hope, develop in their company. Horsch says of them: "The

more advanced type of modern liberalism, though, as a rule, it does not openly deny the existence of God, is practically atheistic." And Golding tells Fosdick that the rules and regulations governing the Ethical Culture house differ somewhat from what he has been accustomed to. He says: "It is more and more clearly recognized that the Christian teaching alone is inadequate to our moral needs. We need greater moral knowledge than we have. The Golden Rule yields limited guidance in the complexities of to-day." (Fosdick's "New Reformation" is not quite radical enough.) "Nor can we find in the gospels the true ideal of marriage of which we are in search." Certainly Dr. Fosdick will repudiate these and similar dogmas. He will feel at home in the vestibule of the new home opened to him, but will refuse to enter into its inmost sanctuary. But it should give him pause that these men are hailing him as a kindred spirit and asking him to come in. E.

**The Bible Not out of Date**—not even in the matter of courtship and marriage. It has long been the fashion to poke fun at the story of Isaac and Rebekah as related Gen. 24. Following the fashion set by Esau, Gen. 28, 8, 9, modern youth is refusing to be bound by the order laid down by Moses, Deut. 7, 3, and Paul, 1 Cor. 7, 36—38. They have been telling each other, and some of their elders have been telling them, that the Biblical regulations requiring the young people who are contemplating marriage to seek their parents' advice and obtain their consent are no longer applicable. Now comes Dr. Joseph Collins, eminent New York neurologist, and testifies to the wisdom of the divine order. Not that he would care to be hailed as a champion of Biblical ideals. He believes, according to the *American Review of Reviews* of March, 1927, "that something more suited to modern life than marriage as it is to-day will undoubtedly be devised." He does not stand for the old order,—and unwittingly he is supporting it. "Dr. Collins believes in marriages arranged by other than the contracting parties, who can judge far more sanely than the love-blinded candidates." The *Popular Commentary* believes that 1 Cor. 7, 36—38 is not out of date: "It would be well for modern parents to heed these words of the apostle and not to permit their children to contract foolish and frivolous marriages, particularly when they are not yet able to realize the obligations and responsibilities which the married state imposes upon both husband and wife." Some of our young people say that was written by an old fogey. But Dr. Collins is ultra-modern, and, being a good observer, he recognizes the need of stringent regulations. The chances, however, are that he will try to improve on the divine order, and our young people who ridicule parental authority and love and wisdom may some day have to do their courting under the supervision of a State and National Board. E.

**The Buddhist Sunday-School Movement.**— "The Buddhist Sunday-school Movement in Japan is to a large extent a result of the Eighth World's Sunday-school Convention in Tokyo," writes the *Sunday-school Times* (Jan., 1927). "This gathering seemed to open the eyes of Buddhists to the importance of capturing the children,

and, as a consequence, there are now some four thousand Sunday-schools, with six hundred thousand pupils and thirteen thousand teachers under Buddhist auspices in Japan. Those back of the movement have not only equipped schools with organs, blackboards, and hymnals, but have established a Department of Religious Education in the Buddhist College of West Honganji, with courses in child psychology, pedagogy, Sunday-school management, music, nursery, methods, and story-telling, quite in the style of American theoreticians. A summer institute is held for teachers yearly in the Honganji Temple."

"These schools," the report proceeds, "have the sympathy of the municipal authorities and public school teachers, who are, in most cases, at least nominal Buddhists. They have the backing of the well-to-do. They have the use of innumerable temples, whereas the Christian Sunday-schools are largely held in uninspiring hired quarters. They have a far larger constituency to draw on for teachers; for there are as many Buddhist priests in Japan as members of all the Protestant churches. *But they have no Gospel.* Their Buddhism is vague and inconsequent and little adapted for children's thought. Worse than all, the Buddhist Sunday-schools are being backed financially by brewers and prostitute owners, and the real reason for their existence is to head off the advance of the Christian Sunday-school."

The fact that Buddhism has no Gospel marks it for ultimate defeat by Christianity, provided Christian missionaries really preach the Gospel of Christ. But here's the rub. Liberalism has reached the mission-fields and is doing more harm to the evangelization of Japan than Buddhism, which is effete and dead. MUELLER.

**Wanted: an Expurgated Bible.**— "A possible reason for the crime wave may be the teachings of the Sunday-school, says Charles Haven Myers, pastor of a Cleveland, O., Church, in *Scribner's*. Dr. Myers is concerned with the wrong ethical twist which can be given the young boy who studies the brigands of the Old Testament as 'heroes' to be revered merely because they are in the Bible. If the lives of these men are to be told to children, they must be greatly cut and told as stories of half-mythical characters. If Genesis is to be taught, it must be taught as folk-lore." (*Am. Review of Reviews*, March, 1927.) Attention is here called to this theory of Dr. Myers not so much on account of the wickedness of any theory which treats the Bible as a possible source of wickedness, but rather for the purpose of pointing out that it is simply a corollary of the denial of inspiration. While it is true that "they that are unlearned and unstable" may "wrest" the Scriptures "unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3, 16), only those who view the Bible as in whole or in part the product of man can harbor the thought that some of its teachings are vicious and are forced to apply the remedy proposed, to cut out the harmful portions. We are not surprised at the appointment of censors charged with the duty of expurgating the plays presented to New York audiences, and we are not surprised to hear men who believe in the human authorship of the Bible call for a Board of Censors. The corollary of the statement that "all Scripture is

given by inspiration of God" is that "it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. 3, 16. But if Scripture is not given by inspiration, if portions of it have been written by fallible men, it needs most careful editing and pitiless expurgation. E.

**What is Going On on the Stage.** — Goethe knew what was going on there in his day, and he said that the stage was an institution devoted to refined sensuality. Dumas, author of *Camille*, knew what was going on at a later period and advised a friend not to take his daughter to see this play, — "do not take her to the theater at all." At a still later period Miss Roselle Knot, who played the leading part in *A Modern Magdalen*, said: "When my two little children asked me to read *Magdalen* to them, I had to refuse, and I could not give them the reason." What is going on on the stage to-day? Florenz Ziegfeld ought to know. An Associated Press dispatch of March 1 tells what he knows. "Florenz Ziegfeld thinks box office madness and out-of-town visitors are to blame for the present 'corrupt' condition of the theater. 'I'm ashamed to be in the revue business,' he said, 'so I'm going to get out.' 'The modern revue,' said the producer, 'is far worse than the old burlesque show. In fact, the revues have driven the burlesque shows out of business. The stage in New York has been corrupted to the point where it is risky to take one's own mother, wife, or children to the theater, not because there is a large public that wants filth, but because the theatrical people have gone box-office crazy. The revues have gone too far. Stories such as are heard in smoking cars are being acted out. Nudity has become the order of the day, and the beauty of the draped figure has been forgotten.'" So the stage has got down to unrefined sensuality. Somebody is remarking that all theaters are not devoted to unrefined sensuality. Granted. But what was it that caused some producers to cater, instead of to refined, to unrefined sensuality? There is a natural devolution from refined to unrefined sensuality. Your friend may to-day be fully satisfied with what his favorite theater is offering him. To-morrow he may have a craving for something stronger. E.

#### Glimpses from the Editor's Window.

John Wesley's proof of inspiration is worth noting: "The Bible is a fact which cannot be denied. How, then, did we get it? It must have come from good men or angels, or from bad men or devils, or from God. It could not have come from good men or good angels, for they would not constantly lie, saying, 'Thus saith the Lord,' hundreds of times. It could not have come from bad men or devils, for it would be impossible to imagine bad men and devils to be such fools as to write so of themselves. Therefore it must be from God."

Eight of our Presidents have been Episcopalians; seven, Presbyterians; four, Methodists; four, Unitarians; two have belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church; one has been a Baptist; one, a Congregationalist; one, a member of the so-called Christian or Disciples Church. Jefferson alone had no particular church connection. — *American Review of Reviews*.

In Moscow we are told the inhabitants are more and more turning away from Baptism and Christian marriage rites. It is chiefly when people are at the point of death that an overwhelming majority deems the presence of a priest worth while. There is in that unfortunate city a

League of the Wicked, which announces that in 1925 fifty-six per cent. of the children were baptized, in 1926, fifty-four per cent. Of burials, sixty-five per cent. are performed with Christian ceremonies. The *Christliche Apologete*, from whose columns we take this information, adds that one must not be led to conclude that all of Russia is discarding religion to the same extent. Especially in the country districts atheism has not been so successful.

"The United Presbyterian Church," the *Christian Herald* writes, "has made a wonderful record in Egypt with schools. There are at present 195, with an enrolment of 16,611 pupils. More than three-fourths of all expenses of these schools are met by the Egyptian themselves. The pupils in these schools number many nationalities and creeds. Christian and Moslem Egyptians, Italians, Greeks, French, Maltese, Armenians, Roumanians, and Jewish." Let us hope that these pupils are not taught merely secular knowledge, but are made acquainted with the Gospel of salvation.

There are about forty-eight million church-members in the United States, of whom one-third are Roman Catholics, somewhat more than one-third are Methodists and Baptists in almost equal parts, and somewhat less than one-third are Presbyterians, Lutherans, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Congregationalists and members of numerous other, lesser bodies.

*American Review of Reviews.*

It seems that the Bible is beginning to be spread extensively among the Catholics of Italy. Even among the clergy, Bible-reading is gaining ground. The holy Book is entering hospitals, factories, and barracks. A colonel bought forty copies for the officers of his regiment. It is true that the version of the Bible sold to the Catholics of Italy is that one which has the *imprimatur* of Rome. But even so, one must rejoice that the Word is spreading. Here, if anywhere, it is true that half a loaf is better than nothing at all.

Now and then even a cardinal does or says something that is commendable. *Time* reports that recently a cardinal had been invited to a dinner in Rome at which there was present a lady with a very immodest dress. The cardinal ignored her till the dessert, when he placed one half of an apple on her plate, saying: "You must eat it, for when Eve ate the apple, she knew she was naked and felt ashamed."

Speaking of the coming World Conference on Faith and Order, which is to meet at Lausanne, Switzerland, next August, Charles Evans Hughes, who is General Chairman of the American Committee preparing the Conference, which has for its aim the unification of the Christian forces, says: "My personal view is that the closer we come to the simplicity of the teaching of Jesus, the more united we shall be." Yes, but it is very important that all the teachings of Jesus be adhered to and not merely a few to which our reason does not object.

Two years ago Rome broke off relations with Czechoslovakia because the government had participated in celebrations in honor of John Huss. Now the report comes that the Vatican has relented and has accepted Czechoslovakian explanations of the occurrences that were so objectionable to Rome. The Vatican is shrewd, whatever else it may be.

An exchange states that in 1925 three million gallons of wine which had been bought to be used for sacramental purposes were put to a different use. That is quite a serious indictment, if it is true.

*Elmer Gantry* is the title of the outstanding novel of the month of March. One reviewer says that Sinclair Lewis here writes "with less art and subtlety, but with great vehemence, brutal cleverness, and penetrating caricature." Another one says *Elmer Gantry* is "a rough-neck book with little art to commend it, but with great power and great interest." We quote a critic writing in the *Chicago American*: "When he [Sinclair Lewis] wallowed in the pigsty for atmosphere and smeared his dirt over the cloth of the clergy, he descended to the level of a literary 'cheap skate' and has invited the god of American literary refinement to 'strike him dead' with a vengeance."