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## Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

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## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### RE LUTHERAN UNITY

The *Lutheran Standard* (December 31, 1949) presents an over-all picture of the status of Lutheran unity as it existed at the close of 1949. In a final paragraph the author singles out the following three 1949 developments in the field of Lutheran unity negotiations:

1. Between our Church (American Lutheran Church) and the Missouri Synod there is now the definite prospect of agreement on a "common confession" that, if consummated, should lead to pulpit and altar fellowship.

2. There is now a definite plan, which seems likely to materialize, for federating our American Lutheran Church with the other seven church bodies in the National Lutheran Council. The 1950 conventions of these bodies are also to express themselves on their willingness to work toward an organic merger of these bodies.

3. Negotiations between the delegations of our own Church and those of the E. L. C. and U. E. L. C. have resulted in very definite proposals that look toward the organic merging of these bodies. If all goes well—and at this time the prospects of things going well seem bright—the decision to merge could be made by the three bodies in 1952, and the actual merger could be effected as early as 1954.

The most recent development which took place regarding Lutheran unity are the proposals arrived at in Chicago on January 6 by the Committee of Thirty-Four made up of representatives of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, the United Lutheran Church in America, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, the Finnish Suomi Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Danish Lutheran Church. This Committee voted unanimously to submit three questions to the eight church bodies listed above. Each body will be asked:

1. If it is willing at this time to approve in principle complete organic union with other participating bodies in the National Lutheran Council.

2. If it will join in creating a joint ways and means committee to formulate a plan to draw up a constitution for such a union.

3. If it approves in principle the transformation of the National Lutheran Council from a common agency to a federation.



Regarding the third question, Dr. P. O. Bersell, president of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, is quoted as having said: "If organic union is agreed on by the various bodies, it still would take several years to effect a merger. A federation could function in the interim period. However, if one or more bodies reject the merger proposal, the federation plan will be considered as an alternative."

From the above it appears that all national conventions of Lutheran church bodies scheduled for this year will give serious thought to the question of Lutheran unity. If ever there was a time when Lutherans throughout our country, regardless of their synodical affiliation, ought to pray the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ so to guide the thinking and actions of all those in key positions in the various Lutheran groups in our land that faithfulness to the Word and loyalty to the Confessions are made the basic consideration of further *rapprochements* between Lutheran groups — that time is now. May sound theological and Confessional considerations, rather than measures of momentary expediency, guide the thinking of those most responsible for the future of the Lutheran Church in America.

P. M. B.

#### THE SAD CASE OF ALCOHOLISM

UP reported on January 6 that our leading corporations are far from agreement as to either the cause or cure of alcoholism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York claiming that alcoholism is a disease and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company asserting with equal positiveness that alcoholism is not a disease. The latter's medical director, Dr. E. C. Bonnett, was quoted as having said: "If it is a disease, it's a self-inflicted one, and it can be cured only if the person afflicted recognizes his condition and wants to correct it." There was no disagreement, so the report continued, as to the seriousness of the problem. "About three persons out of every 100 employed drink enough to be considered alcoholics. It is estimated that the average alcoholic loses some 22 days each year from his job. This adds up to 28,000,000 workdays annually lost throughout all industry."

Whatever medical men, psychiatrists, social workers, and efficiency experts may say regarding the cause of alcoholism, Scripture makes it abundantly clear that God has no pleasure in the drunkenness of His children. In the class of those who "shall not inherit the Kingdom of God" we find listed not only thieves, covetous people, revilers, and extortioners, but also drunkards (1 Cor. 6:10). And God has some serious words to say also to those who entice others to drunkenness. He tells His people in Hab. 2:15: "Woe unto him that giveth his



neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also," a word that applies in our day to those who become partly responsible for juvenile delinquency because of the bad example they are giving through their own indulgence in hard liquors and because of their oftentimes deliberate efforts to make minors partners of their sin. In recent months we had occasion to hear about the results of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. But upon inquiry we were informed that many of those reported cured had come to a living consciousness of their sin through the power of God's Word and, propelled by the love of Christ, had made a new beginning of life. A drunkard must never be laughed at. He must be pitied. True. But this pity must be more than sentimental palaver. It must be a pity which flows out of one's love for the Savior, a pity which sees in the drunkard a reckless sinner but also a redeemed child of God whom the power of God residing in the Word can rescue from the slavery of drunkenness.

P. M. B.

#### MEETINGS IN CINCINNATI

At the meeting of The Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis held in Cincinnati, December 28 to 30, a number of outstanding papers were read on the discovery, age, and significance of the Old Testament scrolls which came to light only a few years ago. It became evident that the age of these scrolls is still in dispute. One Old Testament scholar tried to demonstrate that they may not be dated earlier than the sixth century after Christ. Said Professor O. R. Sellers of McCormick Theological Seminary, who had within the past year and a half explored caves in Palestine in which the scrolls were found, "I think there are more scrolls in existence."

Among papers on New Testament exegesis those by Professor J. R. Mantey (Northern Baptist Theological Seminary) on "Causal Uses of εἰς in the New Testament"; by Professor R. R. Brewer (James Millikin University) on "Revelation 4:6 and Translations Thereof"; and by Professor S. V. McCasland (University of Virginia) on "Abba, Father" were of particular value to New Testament students. Professor Merrill M. Parvis (University of Chicago), who had just returned from England, where he conferred with British New Testament scholars, said: "There are still hundreds of boxes of Oxyrhynchus materials at Queens College."

Among jottings taken in the meetings, I find a statement made by Professor F. V. Filson (McCormick Theological Seminary), who presided over the meetings: "Man *must* take into account divine purpose and action in his interpretation of history." On an after-dinner stroll



with a well-known professor of New Testament studies, with whom we were discussing Professor Nygren's commentary on Romans, this writer was informed: "Professor Nygren lectured on ἔρωσ and ἀγάπη four hours a week for eight years. It was the only course he taught in that period of time. Then he wrote his great work *Eros und Agape*. He lectured four hours a week for five years on Romans. That was the only course he taught in that period of time. Then he wrote his commentary."

Also in Cincinnati, on December 28, Rev. Clarence Peters, pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, St. Louis, and chairman of the Board for Young People's Work, read a paper titled "The Parochial School from the Lutheran Point of View" in the annual meeting of the American Association of Schools of Religious Education. The paper provoked much discussion, was favorably received, and is being distributed in scores of copies among those who are interested in Synod's system of parish education.

Cincinnati was, finally, the scene where there came into being a new organization henceforth known as The Evangelical Theological Society. The purpose of this organization is "to foster conservative Biblical scholarship by providing a medium for the oral exchange and written expression of thought and research in the general field of the theological disciplines as centered in the Scriptures." The Statement of Faith adopted by the society reads: "Membership in this Society shall include subscription to the following declaration: The Bible alone and the Bible in its entirety is the Word of God written, and therefore inerrant in the autographs." In one of the sessions Dr. Alexander Heidel of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago read a paper in which he harmonized the Biblical account of Sennacherib's campaign against Hezekiah with the inscription on the Taylor Prism (a bow to Dr. Heidel, who was recently promoted to the position of research associate with the rank of assistant professor). P. M. B.

#### THE DOCTRINE OF INSPIRATION ONCE MORE

The *Lutheran Outlook* (January 1950) presents two controversial editorials on the inspiration of the Bible by its editor, Dr. J. A. Dell, in which he discusses and refutes a number of errors on this point. One is saddened by the denial of Biblical inspiration by Lutheran divines after so many Lutheran churches in our country have adopted clear and distinctive confessions affirming this important Scripture teaching. But one is gladdened also by the clear and able defense of the doctrine by Lutheran leaders, such as Dr. Dell and others. Two



salient points might be brought to the attention of our readers. Rejecting the error of a partial inspiration of the Bible, Dr. Dell writes: "But Rev. Neve [one of the correspondents] would probably say . . . that he has difficulty in believing that all the Bible is inspired. The Word of God is inspired — this he believes —, but how much of the Bible is the Word of God? Those who use this method of speaking do not seem to see that they thereby allow a principle of doubt, of subjectivity, to enter in which will in time destroy the whole doctrine of inspiration, and much more besides. For if some of the Bible is the Word of God, but not all of it, then it is up to us to determine what is Word of God and what is not. Men will have to determine that. In other words, we no longer have God telling us what we *should* believe, but we have men telling God what they *will* believe. Man has exalted himself and his authority above God and God's authority. In this new pride of reason some men will deny (and they have done so) the very basic truths of revelation, as that Christ died for our sins. Thus the Christian faith disintegrates and the Christian Bible degenerates into a collection, more or less valuable, of little moralisms. Then you have No Word [so in the original] of God any more. This is the point that the defendants of an inspired Bible see clearly. The Christian faith and the Bible hang together. . . . If the Bible is not an authoritative source of doctrine, then the doctrines which are the foundation of the Christian faith will not stand, and the Christian Church will not stand." Against such as call Verbal Inspiration a theory, Dr. Dell writes: "That is the *Doctrine* [thus the original] of inspiration. It is no theory of man. It is the doctrine of God's Word. . . . The Holy Spirit has seen fit to reveal in His written Word the fact of the inspiration of the written Word. I wish therefore that men who write on the subject of inspiration would stop using the phrase 'the theory of verbal inspiration.' Either the inspiration of the written Word — the doctrine that God supplied 'content and *fitting form*' [thus in the original] is a fact or it is not a fact. If it is a fact, it is not a theory. If it is not a fact, then we have no authority, no religion, no Christ, no salvation, no hope — and no theories." This is indeed well stated. In his letter to Dr. Dell, Rev. A. V. Neve refers to the articles on inspiration written by Dr. J. Tanner in the *Lutheran Herald* between September 27 and October 25, 1949. He emphasizes especially five points which, according to Dr. Tanner, inspiration must include. We read: "The inspiration of the Bible must include . . . 5. That the Holy Spirit enabled each author to choose from his own vocabulary the words that adequately expressed what God had given



him to say. And so the Bible is verbally inspired." We are here not concerned with Rev. Neve's arguments against the five points, but we are vitally interested in the paramount premise that those who affirm Biblical inspiration, both verbal and plenary, should speak clearly on the doctrine. We personally read the first three articles of Dr. Tanner with great joy and commented on them favorably (cf. *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, December, 1949, p. 937 f.), though putting the best construction on some of the expressions and statements that did not seem clear to us, in view of the many fine essentials which they contained. In the final article, however, the doctrine of verbal and plenary inspiration is not adequately presented, especially not in the five points to which Rev. Neve refers. If what is said in the fifth point is all that there is to inspiration, then, in the last analysis, there was no inspiration at all, but merely divine guidance, and Scripture is not a divine book, but essentially a human book. In a doctrine so weighty and controverted no room must be left for doubt. Let those who defend Verbal Inspiration speak as clearly and distinctly as do the special Lutheran Confessions on inspiration which in recent years were adopted by Lutheran synods. Disregarding the *Brief Statement of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod*, we quote, for example, the *Doctrinal Affirmation* (1944), which says: "They [the Scriptures] are the Word of God, because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only that which the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration, 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21. . . . By virtue of inspiration, *i. e.*, the unique operation of the Holy Spirit, 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21, by which He supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word, 1 Cor. 2:12-13, the separate books constitute an organic whole, are without contradiction and error, John 10:35, and are rightly called the Word of God." In a similar way the *Pittsburgh Agreement* (1940) says: "By virtue of a unique operation of the Holy Ghost (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21), by which He supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word (2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:15), the separate books of the Bible . . . constitute a complete, errorless, unbreakable whole, of which Christ is the Center (John 10:35). They are rightly called the Word of God." The *Baltimore Declaration* of the United Lutheran Church (1938) says: "We believe that the whole body of the Scriptures is inspired by God. . . . We accept the inspiration of the Scriptures as a fact of which our faith in God, through Christ, assures us, and this assurance is supported by words of Scripture in which the fact of inspiration is asserted or implied (1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21)." The *Intersynodical (Chicago) Theses* (1928) say: "They [the Holy Scriptures] are the



Word of God, because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only that which the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration, 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21." Again: "Over against modern theology we maintain, now as formerly, the doctrine of verbal inspiration, 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16). We believe and confess that Scripture not only contains God's Word, but is God's Word, and hence no errors or contradictions of any sort are found therein." Not all statements in these doctrinal declarations are altogether satisfactory, but all of them clearly state what is meant by Biblical inspiration: the Holy Spirit supplied content and *fitting word*. Since these declarations have been officially adopted, we wonder why the doctrine of Biblical inspiration should still be in controversy. Why deny Verbal and Plenary Inspiration when Scripture teaches it so clearly?

J. T. MUELLER

#### A PLEA FOR DOGMATICS

Dr. Carl C. Rasmussen, professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pa., reports in the *Lutheran* (January 11) how he spent his leave of absence from September till Thanksgiving, 1949. He visited a dozen schools of theology, such as Princeton, McCormick, Seabury-Western, Hartford, Yale, the University of Chicago, and others. "The visitor to our theological schools sees many signs of the present 'evangelical revival.' . . . A Lutheran feels that Christian seminaries have come back where they belong, where they stand again on the great Christian beliefs of the centuries."

Having reviewed his contacts with members of the Federated Faculties of the University of Chicago, Dr. Rasmussen notes: "It is interesting, and not strange, that its catalog offers no courses in systematic theology or dogmatics. The place of that venerable field is taken by courses in 'Constructive Theology.' That means that the student, supplied with the learning which the school helps him to acquire, is to 'construct' his own theology to fit circumstances of the world as it is now. I soon found that at least some of the students felt the outcome was rather that they were sent out with a homemade confusion instead of a theology. 'I have been in this course in constructive theology for a half term,' said one graduate student, 'but there is no theology yet. We have only been watching the shifting scenes from Locke, Berkeley and Hume, down to twentieth century modernism. Give me some dogmatics!'"

Systematic theology, with a strong emphasis on dogmatics, has always occupied an honorable niche in the curriculum of Lutheran theological seminaries. Apart from the practical consideration that



dogmatics provides the student with a frame of reference, a structural pattern, the *norma normata* of Biblical truth which he will later preach, teach, and apply in whatever situation he finds himself, Lutheranism as a Church is under deep obligation to the systematically compiled Scriptural teachings as these are expressed in the Lutheran Confessions. There are, of course, extreme views regarding the place of systematic theology, in particular of dogmatics, in a theological curriculum. The story is told that when students at one time helped Dr. Adolf Harnack move his library to other quarters in Berlin, one of them asked him, "Where do you wish us to place your books dealing with dogmatics?" Dr. Harnack is reported to have replied, "Place them among the belles-lettres." That attitude, usually expressed in less euphemistic language, is the attitude which prevails in many interdenominational theological schools in the country. But the other extreme is equally dangerous. It proceeds on the assumption that dogmatics is the final arbiter for the settling of all theological disputes. Opposing this extreme, the informed Lutheran theologian replies:

"We believe, teach, and confess that the sole truth and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone. . . . 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 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 pure doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved." (Formula of Concord, *Triglot*, p. 777.)

Future Lutheran theologians will need to know systematic theology, especially the Lutheran Confessions and Lutheran dogmatics. But they will also bear in mind that "Holy Scriptures alone remain the only judge, rule, and standard, according to which, as the only test-stone, all dogmas shall and must be discerned and judged, as to whether they are good or evil, right or wrong" (Formula of Concord, *Triglot*, p. 779). This means, in effect, that the study of the sacred writings of the Old and the New Testament themselves must ever remain the central core of the curriculum of a Lutheran theological seminary. P. M. B.

#### THE BIBLE IN MODERN POETRY

*Religion in Life* (Winter number) contains an article in which the author, Professor Charles S. Braden of Northwestern University, submits his findings on the use of the Bible in contemporary poetry.



He limits himself to the following writers: W. H. Auden, Robinson Jeffers, Edna St. Vincent Millay, E. A. Robinson, and Carl Sandburg, though he has, of course, investigated the poetry of many others. In a final chapter, Professor Braden concludes: "Our leading contemporary poets seem not to make such extensive use of the Bible as those of an earlier day. If they do not, the question may well be asked: Why? Is it because they themselves do not know the Bible? This may well be the case, though with the exception of one of those studied, MacLeish, the references that occur are well enough scattered through the Bible to lead one to believe that the writers at least have some familiarity with the Book, possibly much more than the limited use of it might lead one to think. Could it be that they think their readers would, because of a lack of biblical background, not understand what they were saying if they used the language of Scripture? If they did — though that is probably not the reason — they might have been justified, for actually the degree of biblical illiteracy among people of middle age or younger is tragic, due probably to the fact that they received their religious education during the period in which the life-situation emphasis as over against the Bible-centered emphasis in that field was most in vogue."

It is obviously unfair, on the basis of this one study, to draw any final conclusions. Yet, when the findings of Professor Braden are placed alongside studies made in recent years to determine the general status of religious and Bible knowledge in our country, they confirm the conclusions of these studies. It would be rash, indeed, to blame the sad illiteracy in Bible knowledge prevailing in our country wholly on the life-situation-emphasis curriculum, widely in vogue in the last decades. There may well be other reasons. But it is noteworthy that the present generation is charged not only with illiteracy in Bible knowledge, but also with illiteracy in other areas, particularly in literature and acceptable language habits. The problem is too complicated to be discussed at this point. Yet it may not be said too often that the Church fails in its duty if in whatever program of religious education it sponsors, it sacrifices Bible-emphasis to life-emphasis. If one of the two alternatives must suffer, it must be the latter. Fortunately, however, the truths of the Bible are so timely and relevant in every generation that the imaginative and sympathetic teacher of the Bible does not find it difficult to make these truths eminently existential in the life and thought of those whom it is his privilege to teach. P. M. B.



## ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

The Lutheran church bodies of the United States sent 152 missionaries to foreign fields in 1949. The United Lutheran Church in America sent 40; The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 37; the Augustana Lutheran Church, 22; the Evangelical Lutheran Church, 14; the American Lutheran Church, 12; the World Mission Prayer League, eight; the Sudan Mission, seven; the Lutheran Brethren, six; the Lutheran Free Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, each three. Of these missionaries 67 went to Africa, six to Argentina, seven to Bolivia, two to Brazil, two to British Guiana, three to China, one to Colombia, one to Cuba, two to Guatemala, one to Honduras, 20 to India, 18 to Japan, nine to Madagascar, 10 to New Guinea, and three to the Philippines.

Negro Baptists in Mississippi have introduced a traveling "theological seminary" in an effort to lift the educational level of their ministers. The seminary travels from place to place, giving the clergymen an opportunity to study at night. The central office of the school, in operation seven years, is located in Jackson. In that period the seminary has reached 567 ministers through regular classes. A total of 5,343 have been given short-term instruction in "Bible institutes," and 6,563 boys and girls have received religious instruction in special summertime schools sponsored by the seminary.

Four bills designed to cut the divorce rate in Massachusetts have been filed in the House of Representatives which (1) give exclusive jurisdiction in divorce cases to probate courts; (2) establish boards of conciliation in the courts as well as "alimony trustees" to supervise payments made after divorce or separation; (3) provide for a "60-day cooling off period" through requirement of a 60-day notice to the court of intention to file a libel for divorce; (4) create a recess commission to investigate the State's marriage and divorce laws.

Protestant and Greek Orthodox delegates attending the Conference of European Culture in Lausanne, Switzerland, joined in special worship services at the Protestant cathedral of Lausanne. The officiating clergymen were Bishop Stephen C. Neill, assistant to the Archbishop of Canterbury; Dr. Nils Ehrenstrom of the Swedish Lutheran Church, and Greek Orthodox Archimandrite Constantin Valiadias. The sermon was preached by Pastor Alphonse Koechlin, president of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches.

A total of \$1,001,574,371 has been given this year by the members



of fifty-two Protestant denominations for local church expenses and benevolences. It was the first time since the United Stewardship Council has been publishing figures on contributions to churches that the total has exceeded the billion-dollar mark. The 1949 total represents an increase of \$138,603,682 — or 13.6 per cent — over 1948. Dr. Harry S. Myers, Council secretary, stressed that the above figure does not include contributions by some two hundred smaller Protestant denominations. Some of these, he said, make liberal contributions, and their total would be at least fifty million dollars. The statistics also do not include millions of dollars contributed to church-related colleges, theological seminaries, church hospitals, and church homes. In addition, Mr. Myers said, there are contributions made by individuals to city and State councils of churches, and to national councils of churches, which total between \$800,000 and \$1,000,000.

Representatives of the Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish faiths consecrated a grave site near Munich containing the remains of about 20,000 victims of the Dachau concentration camp. Specially constructed altars of the three faiths erected at the sides of the cemetery were lighted during the ceremony. Overhead was an arch bearing the words "We have not forgotten you." Presiding Bishop Hans Meiser of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany officiated at the Protestant service; Suffragan Bishop Johannes Neuhaeusler of Munich, himself a former Dachau inmate, at the Catholic service; and Chief Rabbi Aaron Ohrenstein of Bavaria conducted the Jewish rites.

Striking out against those "who would keep the anti-Catholic pots boiling for reasons of politics or prejudice," Archbishop Richard J. Cushing of Boston denounced the activities of organizations "like the Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State" as a "refined form of the Ku Klux Klan." The Archbishop warned Catholics to be vigilant concerning the education question and spoke of a "cooler, calculated campaign" whose "ultimate purpose is to close all parochial schools." He also cautioned Catholics against permitting themselves to be "dazzled" by slogans about separation of Church and State, preservation of the public school, and similar "glittering generalities."

Dutch Catholics are sponsoring a protest to be submitted to the United Nations against religious persecution in Soviet Russia and its satellite countries and against the "violation of divine and human rights" in those nations. The protest action is also designed "to unite all Christians in continuous and ardent prayer in order to obtain the



liberation of eastern Europe from the grip of Communist terror." Catholics signing the protest pledge themselves to fast and abstain on Saturdays and observe the first Saturday of every month in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Scholars who attended the sessions of the National Association of Biblical Instructors at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati examined a rare copy of the Pentateuch printed in Bologna, Italy, in 1482. The volume was given to the college by Louis Rabinowitz, New York manufacturer and art collector. Dr. Nelson Glueck, president of the college, said that only five copies of the book, printed on vellum, are believed to be in existence. The others are in J. Pierpont Morgan Library, Library of Congress, New York Public Library, and Jewish Theological Library, New York City.

Wives of more than a score of student seminarians at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, are attending a study course to learn how they can best help their husbands in the ministry. Professor Edward C. Fendt, director of the course, will teach the wives "Christian Doctrine and Ethics." Dr. Harold L. Yochum, president of Capital University, will instruct them in "Church Organization and Societies." Professor G. H. Doermann will conduct a course in effective Sunday school teaching. Forty-five of the 135 seminary students are married.

A record membership of 8,792,569 for the Methodist Church during 1949 and an all-time high in annual contributions, amounting to \$229,297,111 were reported by the Rev. Albert C. Hoover, director of the Statistical Office. The figures cover 106 annual conferences of the Methodist Church and missions in the United States and its possessions. They indicate a net membership increase of 141,507 over 1948. Church school membership increased 152,153 during the year and now stands at 5,807,959. This includes a Sunday school enrollment of 5,113,704, with an average attendance of 2,871,061.

Per-capita giving in the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern) in 1949 was \$52.64 — the largest figure of any Protestant denomination having a membership of 250,000 or more. The largest per-capita giving of any denomination affiliated with the United Stewardship Council regardless of size was \$148.21, received by the Free Methodist Church. This represents a contribution of \$2.85 a week per member.

ALEX. WM. C. GUEBERT