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## Theological Observer. – Kirchlich Zeitgeschichtliches

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## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

JOHN PHILIP KOEHLER (1859—1951)

On September 30, 1951, in Neillsville, Wis., Prof. John Philip Koehler died at the age of 92.

A graduate of Northwestern College and of our Saint Louis Seminary, Professor Koehler served the Wisconsin Synod as professor for forty-two years. The first twelve of these he spent at his Alma Mater, Northwestern College in Watertown, where he also held the office of *Inspektor*. In 1900 he became professor at the Wauwatosa Seminary and was chosen its president in 1920. He retired in 1930.

Professor Koehler's interests and accomplishments spanned many fields of human endeavor as well as theology. In the latter area he was particularly given to historical theology and to exegesis, which he regarded as a historical discipline. Viewing the history of the Church within the context of the history of culture, he brought to church history a rare combination of scrupulous scholarship and evangelical insight, which enabled him to evaluate the phenomena of the Church's past in a light that was true to the best in the Lutheran tradition. The corruptions that have infected the Church, past and present, he saw as the narrowing of the spirit of the Gospel, and he pointed them out wherever they occurred.

Professor Koehler gave voice to this complex of judgments in his *Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte* (Milwaukee, 1917). In this observer's judgment, Koehler's *Lehrbuch* is perhaps the outstanding work of its kind to come out of American Lutheranism, regardless of synod. It is almost uncanny in its penetration into the way such things as the establishment of the canon, the creation of the episcopacy, the cultivation of the liturgy, the zeal for purity of doctrine, and the Christian ethical concern have become tools for legalistic perversion. With this there is combined a wholesome regard for the good, the beautiful, and the true wherever they have appeared in the history of the Church. Professor Koehler knew well and demonstrated well that in its history the Church has to be ecumenical, never sacrificing confessional loyalty and yet never permitting it to become a legalistic denominationalism.

Of Professor Koehler's work the *Concordia Cyclopaedia* wrote: "His scholarship is a comprehensive and comprehending survey of life, thought, and emotion. Pre-eminently, however, he is a historian, who reads the record of the Gospel in history in its widest sense, including the wide field of art, on which his views are, therefore, refreshing and

illuminating. His aim in teaching and writing may be stated in these words of his: "The Gospel of Christ, the Savior of sinners, is *that* truth, that *one* truth, on which rests all true understanding in heaven and on earth."

John Philip Koehler's critique of legalism and his testimony to evangelical ecumenicity will not soon be forgotten by those who have learned so much from him. *Requiescat in pace, et lux aeterna luceat ei!*  
 JAROSLAV PELIKAN

#### A EUROPEAN PROFESSOR LOOKS AT LUTHERAN SEMINARIES IN AMERICA

About eight months ago Dr. Ernst Kinder of Neuendettelsau visited the U.S., and the greater part of his sojourn in our country he devoted to a study of the work done at the seminaries conducted by the Lutheran synods of America. In the *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* issue of May 15 he, the editor of this paper, publishes a long and interesting article, giving a report of what he saw at eleven of the twenty-two seminaries of American Lutheranism. He has divided his observations into five sections. The first one treats of the external aspects: the relation of the seminaries to the churches, their age, administration and campuses; likewise the peculiar tendencies characterizing them; the accreditation, entrance requirements, and degrees offered. In this connection he refers to the absence of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, among the accredited seminaries of the U.S. and says that this is not owing to a lower level of the work done, but to Concordia's adherence to the old entrance requirements which include preparation at schools similar to the *humanistische Gymnasium*.

The second section views the purpose of the seminaries, that of furnishing pastors for the congregations, to which is joined the aim to train theological instructors. Various factors are enumerated which necessitate a profounder and more extensive study of theology than was engaged in in the past: the problems and confrontations of the present age, the realization that mere traditionalism does not satisfy, the ecumenical pressure coming from the other groups of Protestants, the undeniable menace of secularism, the growing interest in church history, the new liturgical emphasis, and the present-day delving into religious psychology and education. All this, Dr. Kinder says, has created a strong desire for a seminary cultivating graduate studies (*Oberseminar*), probably one conducted jointly by a number of synods; at present extra courses given at the various schools have to satisfy the demand for advanced work. (At the time of Dr. Kinder's visit

the special building on the campus of Concordia Seminary for graduate studies was not yet in process of construction.) The field work which is in force in a number of schools is briefly described. The provision followed in Germany that the graduate of the theological school must obtain practical training in the field and then return to the seminary or university for a second examination has not been introduced in America.

In the third section the writer dwells on the peculiarity of the American system that the student, as a rule, does all his work at one school, while in Germany the ideal is to enroll at a number of universities. That the curriculum is fixed for the student, that the courses for the greater part are prescribed and electives as a result are few, that examinations occur at least at the end of every semester instead of at the end of a student's academic career, while in Germany a general and extremely comprehensive one has to be faced by the student, are further American peculiarities. The conditions that have to be met for the B. D. and other degrees are briefly sketched. Generally speaking, says Dr. Kinder, practical theology is given greater emphasis than is the case in Germany. The explanation is that in America the pastor is far more independent of direction from superiors and hence has to be able to solve problems which in the European system he does not have to grapple with and that the American mentality is more inclined toward activism, while the German theologian's dominating interest is of a speculative, reflective nature. Dogmatic theology, too, says the observer, as a rule, is given a prominent place in the course of studies in the Lutheran seminaries of America.

In the fourth section, tribute is paid to the atmosphere of true piety which is said to prevail at the American seminaries visited and to the endeavor to stay on the Biblical foundations. Dr. Kinder was impressed with the earnestness displayed by students in speaking of their future calling and with the chapel exercises conducted in the seminaries. In exegesis he thinks one finds the chief weakness of American Lutheran theological schools, owing to the fact that in most of them acquaintance with Greek and Hebrew is not required for entrance and graduation. While Biblical history, archaeology, and introduction are stressed, interpretation based on the original text is rare. He states there are exceptions; he mentions as such Luther Seminary, St. Paul (E. L. C.), and especially Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. If I may interpose a personal remark here, what the kindly and trained observer from abroad says on the urgent desirability of adhering to the study of the original tongues should certainly be a strong admoni-

tion to us to continue traveling in the old tried paths of thorough exegesis, involving study of Greek and Hebrew, and of Latin, as a prerequisite for the fruitful pursuit of theology in general.

Finally Dr. Kinder endeavors to describe the chief tendencies prevailing at the various Lutheran seminaries in America. In American theological thought one has to differentiate between three strata, he says: a very conservative, Fundamentalistic one; another one that is humanistic, secularizing, and Modernistic; and one that represents middle ground. He thinks that in American Lutheranism, too, these three kinds of theological thought can be found, though not nearly as sharply differentiated and as distant one from the other as, for instance, with the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. In his view all Lutheran seminaries wish to adhere to Lutheran doctrine, and by and large American Lutheranism is free from Fundamentalism and Modernism. He believes that wholesome impulses have come to American Lutherans from Europe, for instance, such as have resulted in a renewed emphasis on the study of Luther and the endeavor to capture some of the worth-while insights of Kierkegaard in the existential approach to theology. He does not fail to mention the danger of opposing an unhealthy Fundamentalism to such an extent that the result will be a totally negative attitude, lacking life and substance.

The questions which, according to Dr. Kinder, are now chiefly discussed in American theological circles are the necessity of holding and teaching a correct doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, the Sacraments (the "sacrificial" view of the Lord's Supper and infant Baptism), confirmation, marriage, the ministry, liturgy, the various phases of the doctrine of the Church, the eschatological function and world responsibility of the Church, war and military service, etc.

This report of the friendly visitor from Germany is here submitted in a brief summary because it contains much food for thought, especially for us of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who in these days, when the senior college question is before us, are studying, probably in a degree never equaled before, the many problems pertaining to ministerial training.

W. F. ARNDT

#### AMERICANISM AND ROMANISM

The present controversy stirred up by President Truman's appointment of General Clark as ambassador at the Vatican, an appointment which has not as yet received the endorsement of the Senate, reminds one of an episode that occurred in 1908 when William H. Taft was candidate of the Republican party for the presidency. At that time

a man by the name of J. C. Martin of Dayton, Ohio, had written President Theodore Roosevelt as to the religion of Mr. Taft. Mr. Martin had stated in his letter that a report was circulated and constantly urged as a reason for not voting for Taft "that he is an infidel (Unitarian) and his wife and brother Roman Catholics. . . . If his feelings are in sympathy with the Roman Catholic Church on account of his wife and brother being Catholics, that would be objectionable to a sufficient number of voters to defeat him. On the other hand, if he is an infidel, that would be sure to mean defeat. . . . I am writing this letter for the sole purpose of giving Mr. Taft an opportunity to let the world know what his religious belief is." This letter brought down on Mr. Martin the ire of President Theodore Roosevelt. After dwelling on the question whether Taft's being a Unitarian should bar him from the presidency, Mr. Roosevelt said: "Now for your objections to him because you think his wife and brother to be Roman Catholics. As it happens they are not, but if they were, or if he were a Roman Catholic himself, it ought not to affect in the slightest degree any man supporting him for the position of President. . . . I do not for one moment believe that the mass of our fellow citizens or that any considerable number of our fellow citizens can be influenced by such narrow bigotry as to refuse to vote for any thoroughly upright and fit man because he happens to have a particular religious creed. Such a consideration should never be treated as a reason for either supporting or opposing a candidate for a political office."

When this letter had been published, our Lutheran brethren in New York appointed a committee to draft a letter to President Roosevelt in which the reasons would be set forth why we Lutherans view with alarm the election of a Roman Catholic to the position of President of the United States. The committee consisted of Pastors William Schoenfeld and Martin Walker. Several paragraphs from that letter might well be quoted in 1951. After stating that the committee was in full agreement with the President on the issue of separation of Church and State and religious liberty, the brethren continued thus: "Are you not aware of the fact that the Roman Catholic Church has again and again, for centuries back and to modern times, through its official head and other authorities, denounced as wholly wrong and as things to be tolerated only so long as they cannot be changed the complete separation of Church and State, full religious liberty, freedom of conscience, of speech, and of the press, and that, moreover, it proclaims its teachings and principles to be unchangeable, and boasts of being '*semper idem*'?"

"Lest we be accused of either misapprehension or misrepresentation, permit us to quote some of the pertinent official declarations of the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church.

"Pope Boniface VIII in his famous bull *Unam Sanctam* declared:

In this Church and in its power are two swords — to wit, a spiritual and a temporal, and this we are taught by the words of the Gospel. . . . Both, therefore, the spiritual and the material swords are in the power of the Church, the latter indeed to be used for the Church, the former by the Church, the one by the priest, the other by the hands of kings and soldiers, but by the will and sufferance of the priest. It is fitting, moreover, that one sword should be under the other, and the temporal authority subject to the spiritual power. . . . We moreover proclaim, declare, and pronounce that it is altogether necessary for salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman pontiff.

"Pius IX, in his syllabus of 1864, condemns as an error the proposition that 'the Church must be separated from the State and the State from the Church.'

"Leo XIII, in his encyclical *On the Christian Constitution of States*, Nov. 1, 1885, indorses this declaration of Pius IX, and in his encyclical *On Human Liberty*, June 20, 1888, condemns what he terms 'the fatal theory of the right of separation between Church and State.'

"In the same encyclical Leo declares:

From what has been said, it follows that it is quite unlawful to demand, to defend, or to grant unconditional freedom of thought, of speech, of writing, or of worship, as if these were so many rights given by nature to man.

"Pius IX, in his syllabus of December 8, 1864, on *The State*, declares that it has not the right of establishing a national Church separate from the Pope nor the right to the entire direction of public schools.

"Have these declarations ever been revoked by the Roman Catholic Church? If so, we have gained no knowledge thereof. All that we have read by Roman Catholic writers was merely an attempt either to justify these declarations or to take the edge off of them in order to meet attacks from those who maintain that the Romanist, if he be a loyal adherent of his Church, its official teachings and principles, is in irreconcilable conflict with the principles set forth in the Constitution of the United States. Even Cardinal Gibbons, in his book *The Faith of our Fathers*, makes these significant statements, the best he has to offer in vindication of his Church against the charge that it is opposed to civil and religious liberty:

A man enjoys religious liberty when he possesses the free right of worshiping God according to the dictates of a right conscience and of practising the form of religion most in accordance with his duties to God (49th edition, 1897, page 264).

The Church is indeed intolerant in this sense that she must never confound truth with error; nor can she ever admit that a man is conscientiously free to reject the truth when its claims are convincingly brought home to the mind. Many Protestants seem to be very much disturbed by some such argument as this: Catholics are very ready now to proclaim freedom of conscience because they are in the minority. When they once succeed in getting the upper hand in numbers and power they will destroy this freedom because their faith teaches them to tolerate no doctrine other than the Catholic. It is, therefore, a matter of absolute necessity for us that they should never be allowed to get this advantage.

Now, in all this there is a great mistake, which comes from not knowing the Catholic doctrine in its fullness. I shall not lay it down myself lest it seem to have been gotten up for the occasion. I shall quote the great theologian Becanus, who taught the doctrine of the schools of Catholic theology at the time when the struggle was hottest between Catholicity and Protestantism. He says that religious liberty may be tolerated by a ruler when it would do more harm to the State or to the community to repress it. The ruler may even enter into a contract in order to secure to his subjects this freedom in religious matters, and when once a contract is made it must be observed absolutely in every point, just as every other lawful and honest contract. (Page 268.)

"What else are these obviously mildest declarations of Romanists but a confirmation of the charge that the Roman Catholic Church does not stand for full and perfect religious liberty, as understood by all Americans and defined in our Federal Constitution, that every man shall be free not only to worship God according to the dictates of a 'right conscience' and to practice a 'religion most in accordance with his duties to God,' but according to his conscience and his conception of his duties to God, right or wrong, so long as he is not thereby led to endanger the equal rights and liberties of his neighbor, or to interfere with the free exercise of the Government's power in the equal protection of all citizens? . . .

"We do not wish to be understood as though we mean to accuse the bulk of the Roman Catholics of being disloyal American citizens. We sincerely believe a great many do not fully realize the position the hierarchy of their church maintains with reference to the principle in question, especially in view of the outgivings of their teachers in this country, and that if it came to an issue compelling a decision either for the Constitution or the Papal hierarchy, they would decide in favor of the former, upholding the Constitution of the United States. Yet, in determining our attitude in this matter, especially when it comes to electing a man to the highest public office, we must be guided by the official teachings of the recognized authorities of the Roman Catholic Church."



This letter of our brethren at the time created a mighty stir and was quoted far and wide in the press of our country. It was issued in a separate pamphlet having the title *Romanism and the Presidency* and the subtitle "President Roosevelt's Letter. The Lutheran Reply and Various Indorsements." It was, of course, not the intention of the brethren to influence the election through their letter of protest, but they believed it necessary to bring to the attention of President Roosevelt and our American people the dangers that lurk in the Roman Catholic system with respect to the greatest earthly gem which we as Americans possess — religious freedom.

W. ARNDT

#### WHAT MAKES A LAYMAN HALFHEARTED?

Under this heading, Elizabeth McCollister in the *Living Church* (September 30, 1951) points out several reasons why many laymen in the Church are "halfhearted" in the service of the Lord. She sums up her findings in an ardent appeal addressed to the clergy in which she stresses four important things to be considered by pastors. She writes:

"First, you must get to know us better. For many of you such a time-consuming task would be nearly impossible. Then you must revise your schedules. You may be doing magnificent work for the national Church or the community or the nation. Nevertheless, we are your first responsibility. A priest who neglects his parishioners for extra-curricular work is like a mother who neglects her children for outside causes. If you are not suited to parish work, do something else. While you are our rector, we come first.

"Second, take a long, cold look at life in your parish with a view to overhauling it completely. Weed out the adventitious growths and point everything to the center of our religion. I suggest you take the trouble to ask us. You have fed us with milk. Give us meat.

"Third, expect more of us. It is not sentimental; it is realistic — it is Christian — to bear in mind every man's unplumbed capacity for greatness. But it takes something great to evoke a great response. Don't ask dinky little things of us. Teach us what our membership in the Church implies, underestimating neither our ignorance nor our desire to learn. Then hold us to it.

"Fourth, preach better sermons. It is all very well to say that the sermon doesn't matter while we have the liturgy. Take a more positive approach. Right now the sermon is your best, almost your only, opportunity to get your message across to us. If you, who have given your life to the Church, have nothing to pass on to us, you have missed

your vocation. Don't cast about frantically for a topic. Start with the fundamentals and pound away at them.

"Every requisite for a great spiritual revival is ready to our hands, if only we will use it. Let's not miss our opportunity."

J. T. MUELLER

#### LUTHER'S TEACHING ON CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY IN POLITICS AND PUBLIC LIFE

In the *Lutheran Quarterly* (August, 1951) Dr. H. H. Kramm, pastor of St. Mary's and Hamburg Lutheran Church, London, and a member of the Lutheran Council of Great Britain, discusses clearly and helpfully the questions whether Luther taught the responsibility of Christians in politics and public life and whether he paved the way for our present-day liberties. He considers the matter to be important, since, on the one hand, Bishop Berggrav of Norway and other Lutheran churchmen who resisted the tyranny of totalitarian states based their resistance on Luther, and because, on the other, Dean Inge accused Luther of having paved the way for tyranny and deification of the state, asserting that princes and governments could do no wrong.

The writer shows that Luther, when giving advice to his followers on political questions, as, for example, when he was consulted on a new city constitution, was wont to make a threefold distinction.

In the first place, Luther recognized certain aspects of political life where Christians have definite demands to make. Should these not be heeded, then they are in conscience bound to resist. There are thus certain basic laws, given not only to Christians, but also to the Jews, that concern conscience, respected somewhat even by the pagan Roman state (Romans 13). Breaches of such basic law, Christians must be free to resist, just as Luther, for instance, fought against lies, exposing the falsehoods and crimes of princes; to point out the perils of an unchristian civilization, as Luther himself warned against the crimes and dangers of the Turks should they win the victory, and the like. Luther distinctly demanded for the Church the right to criticize the princes and to rebuke them for trying to suppress such freedom. Luther even proposed excommunication for those who committed usury and exploitation, since such economic practices in his opinion were anti-Christian. While Luther believed that a Christian prince as "first layman" of the Church should help his church in setting its house in order, he nevertheless taught that such powers, given by the Church, could be withdrawn, they being limited strictly by the Word of God. When princes interfered with the "inner life" of the Church, Luther declared that in these things they must not be obeyed, since they over-

stepped their lawful bounds. When Luther was ordered to put a stop to his reformation activity, he refused to obey. From this it is clear that Luther did not teach blind obedience to all princes; nor did he assert that the state could do no wrong.

In the second place, Luther recognized certain spheres of political life where Christians should give advice and express their wishes. These, however, should be regarded as recommendations and constructive proposals rather than unalterable demands, so that in such matters Christians, at least to a certain extent, could yield. Luther in his writings thus discusses matters of public morals, drinking and licensing hours, riots and police, beggars and welfare of the poor, foreign trade and imports, usury, banking, rents and finance, military service and foreign policies. In all these areas he acknowledged the Christian's responsibility. While expressing his opinion in all these matters, Luther remained most conservative in his practical estimate of the state. In his opinion even a state of doubtful value is better than no state at all. In this evil, sinful world the state exists as God's ordinance to prevent it from falling into general chaos. While the state cannot create a paradise on earth, it can at least prevent this world from becoming a hell. For this reason Luther very earnestly opposed anarchy and civil war and admonished his followers to obey lawful governments unless these demanded things contrary to God's Word. In such cases Christians are not to perpetrate sabotage, murder tyrants, or stage revolutions, but they should simply refuse to obey; for the Christian's weapon is not revolution and murder, but refusal and suffering. Luther thoroughly disliked conspiracies and underground movements and demanded that Christians be honest, even in their resistance against state laws. Lutherans living in a Catholic state as a suppressed minority he advised to emigrate rather than start riots and tumults.

In the third place, Luther recognized in public affairs *res mediae*, or *adiaphora*, which should be left to the lawyers, the princes, and to reason. To Luther, for example, it was not important that Saxony was a monarchy and the Lutheran cities of Hamburg and Luebeck were republics. Monarchy, in Luther's opinion, does not necessarily mean tyranny or blind obedience, nor is democracy as such a guarantee for a lawful and Christian state. Both monarchies and republics should be governed by men who respect law and equity and who, if possible, rule in a Christian spirit. To the neutral sphere Luther counted also details of state constitutions, certain traditions and festivals, various occupations and ways of trading, even many church ceremonies and traditions.

Luther did not favor the custom of having worldly rulers call themselves "defenders of the faith," since the Word of God alone should create and preserve convictions. He demanded, however, freedom for those who had to preach the divine Word. While he opposed the celebration of the Roman Mass in public, since he regarded it as a blasphemy and an offense to young people, he was more tolerant than were the Pope, Calvin, Queen Elizabeth, or anybody else in those times, for they did not tolerate divine services of other denominations and prevented them if they could do so. Luther, moreover, did not want to convert Roman priests or monks by force or economic duress. He, however, greatly feared the fanatical sects that endeavored to overthrow all state authority by conspiracy and force. Such anarchic movements were to be suppressed even if religious convictions were claimed for them.

It is obvious, therefore, that "Luther in many respects paved the way for our present-day liberties and that in questions of tolerance and freedom, while still a child of his age, he was much more advanced than any other religious reformer of his time or the Pope."

J. T. MUELLER

#### ANTICHRISTIAN BLASPHEMY

*The American Ecclesiastical Review*, published by the Catholic University of America Press, is running a series of articles on "The Meaning of Mary's Compassion." In the September issue of this year it treats the special subject "Mary, Our Coredemptrix by Way of Sacrifice." Of all the articles that so far appeared this is the most vicious and blasphemous, as a few excerpts will show. In the whole article there is not a shred of Scripture proof, but every statement is based on Papal decrees and rationalistic speculation. We read:

"But even from the sacrificial aspect of our Saviour's Redemption of us, Mary is inseparable. The Eternal Father to whom Christ's sacrifice even of Himself was all-pleasing and before whom it was infinitely efficacious, yet never willed that sacrifice apart from Mary's participation in it. He willed it as Christ Himself willed, only on condition of Mary's consent and co-operation. By divine ordination this, the divine sacrifice through which comes all life to all men, was to be, in the order of execution, dependent upon the Holy Virgin. . . .

"Mary's Coredemption of us by way of sacrifice, then, is and could be here alone; for of all human persons she alone had maternal rights to her Son; only she could sacrifice them. . . . Mary did more, incalculably more: she gave her only-begotten Son.

"Christ had taken His human life, formally, as the price of our

liberation, from Mary. The very life of Christ, His precious blood, His most innocent flesh, was something of Mary. Hence Mary had, with respect to the man Christ, true maternal rights, true rights with regard to His life. Mary *could* [italics in the original] therefore co-offer Him as something of herself because she could . . . 'abdicate her maternal rights to her Son.' The Divine Maternity, then, is the foundation of our Lady's capability to be Coredemprix.

"In a most perfect and most profound sense, then, Mary is indeed our Coredemprix. Indissolubly joined to the Divine Redeemer by God's eternal predestination she is, in the working out of that predestination, one with Him in a manner indescribably holy, and indescribably exalted, one with Him most of all in that work for the sake of which He came among us, that work which is peculiarly and Divinely His—the work of our Redemption.

"May we not add one word of reverent joy and thanksgiving that in our own day we have been privileged to see the greater clarification of this most moving and most holy doctrine? Through the Catholic world, theologians, always more conscious of the grandeur and the sweet power of our Lady, are in this day concerned especially to defend, explain, penetrate the deep truths about the holy Virgin—and with none perhaps are they more concerned than with this very question of our Lady as Coredemprix."

"This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist, who has exalted himself above, and opposed himself against, Christ." Smalcald Articles, *Triglot Concordia*, p. 475. J. T. MUELLER

#### THE THREAT OF TRADITIONALISM AND PIETISM

Under the heading of "A Progressive Theology" James Daane in the September issue of the *Reformed Journal* makes observations which, *mutatis mutandis*, Lutheran theologians may take to heart. He says in part:

The Reformed character of Reformed theology is always in danger of being lost. Sometimes, as today, it is threatened by Liberalism, Sectarianism, and Dialectical theology. None of these, however, constitutes the greatest threat to Reformed theology. The greatest threat comes from those who love and cherish Reformed theology. Whenever the heirs of Reformed theology have entertained the attitude that Reformed theology is no longer a task to be worked at, but an accomplishment to be enjoyed, Reformed theology has been in peril of its life.

Whenever theologians succumbed to the temptation to enter prematurely into their rest, theology was also laid to rest. At such times

Reformed theology became a "body of knowledge" without a living soul. The idea of a theological task was indeed not surrendered; it was redefined. The task was no longer construed as the work of theological enrichment through fresh insights and new understandings, but as the mere function of preserving the body of knowledge for coming generations. The body of theological knowledge was embalmed for the future, and its departed spirit generated no new theological advances.

At these points of arrested development, Reformed theology became, on the one hand, traditionalistic, and, on the other, pietistic. Whenever Reformed theology regarded the theological enterprise as a finished task and viewed its past with complete satisfaction, it became pure traditionalism: a past without a living present. Nothing remained to be done but to pay homage to past achievements. But how soon the dead are forgotten! . . . On the other hand, when Reformed theologians prematurely carried their theology with them into their rest, Pietism inevitably emerged. The Reformation's demand for constant reformation was indeed not forgotten; it was redefined and restricted. . . . Piety required reformation, but theology was exempted. Spiritual living was the task; theology as the constant action of the mind of the Church upon its Faith was unimportant and even detrimental to true spirituality. This is the mark of Pietism. . . . Our only defense against the threats of Fundamentalism, Liberalism, and Dialecticism is the constant repudiation of the comfortable but fatal attitude that our theological task is finished. . . . One thing only can keep strange fires [Traditionalism and Pietism] from burning on the theological altar—a Reformed theology bristling with vitality and restless with creative power. . . . Those who are concerned about the future of Reformed theology would do well to focus most of their attention, not on these alien theologies, but upon Reformed theology's present resources of vitality—or lack of it. Only a dynamic and living theology possesses an assured future. F. E. M.

#### BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

The Vatican Radio reports that all priests belonging to the Greek Catholic Church in Communist Czechoslovakia have been arrested. The station said: "It is expected that the Prague government will shortly issue a decree proclaiming the extinction of the Greek Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia."

\* \* \*

Three Lutheran Church bodies with headquarters in Minneapolis, Minn., have disclosed plans to send missionaries to Formosa. The Augustana Lutheran Church has decided to send out one ordained man and two single women; the Lutheran Free Church, one ordained man

and one single woman; the Evangelical Lutheran Church, two ordained men. . . . The appeal to send missionaries to meet "the urgent challenge of Formosa" came from Dr. Fredrik A. Schiotz, chairman of the Lutheran World Federation's Commission on World Missions.



*The 1951 Yearbook of American Churches*, published September 21 under the auspices of the National Council of Churches, reports a total membership of 87,548,021 in all religious bodies of this country. The figures are compiled by official statisticians of Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and other religious groups. . . . A total of 256 religious bodies are embraced in this compilation, showing that 285,834 congregations, parishes, and similar local units now embrace 58.09 per cent of the nation's population. . . . These religious groups are reported to have a total of 281,251 ordained clergy, 3,763 of them being women. 166,891 clergymen, among them 2,437 women, are actively engaged in religious work; many of the remainder of both sexes are inactive, owing to retirement or change of occupation. . . . Total enrollment in American Sunday schools, including officers and teachers, is given as 29,775,357 in 246,240 schools, an increase of more than 800,000 over the previous year's figures. . . . A section on finances shows that 125 denominations contributed a total of \$1,138,737,506 for all purposes last year. Of this sum, \$56,567,292 was for foreign missions and \$58,724,358 for home missions. The church property of these denominations was valued at \$5,234,979,598.



According to the annual statistical summary compiled by the National Lutheran Council, membership in the Lutheran churches of the United States has for the first time climbed above the six-million mark in 1950. The summary showed 6,103,784 Lutherans in the United States and 198,164 in Canada, an increase of 2.7 per cent over 1949. Confirmed membership increased to 4,358,791, a gain of 2.2 per cent. It marks an average gain of 10 new members for each of the 16,660 congregations. . . . A loss was reported only for the Slovak Church (of 2,353 members) and for the Negro Missions (of 7,365 members); the latter decrease, however, as a spokesman for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod pointed out, was due to the absorption of Negro members into established congregations. . . . The highest numerical increase, for the sixth successive year, was registered by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: 50,672 baptized members, or a gain of 3.0 per cent over 1949 to a total of 1,728,513. . . . The largest of the Lutheran bodies, the United Lutheran Church of America, passed the two-million

mark for the first time, gaining 49,104 new members, or 2.5 per cent, for a total of 2,001,673. . . . All Lutheran churches combined conducted 24,652 schools, with 2,503,100 pupils and 247,304 teachers — 15,108 Sunday schools with 1,834,714 pupils; 1,354 weekday released-time schools with 69,293 pupils; 6,762 Vacation Bible Schools with 487,021 pupils; and 1,428 parochial schools (1,146 of them in the Missouri Synod) with 112,072 pupils. . . . Contributions spent locally rose to \$152,481,911; an increase of \$18,400,878; contributions to the church at large amounted to \$42,397,151, a rise of \$5,655,607 (the increase in donations to the church at large in the previous year was \$612,924).

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Two veteran New York Central railroad employees faced loss of their jobs in Toledo, Ohio, because they refused on religious grounds to join the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers as required by a recent union-shop agreement between the railroad and the union. The two men, brothers, with a total of 45 years' work for the railroad, are conscientious objectors to union affiliation as members of the Plymouth Brethren. They base their opposition to union membership on 2 Cor. 6:14. . . . The division superintendent of the New York Central System, J. H. Spooner, said the company was reluctant to dismiss the men but was bound by its agreement with the union. . . . It is stated that many Seventh-Day Adventists also refuse to join labor unions, since "their sanctions require coercive measures, such as the boycott, the picket line, and the strike"; that some labor organizations, however, allow Adventists to remain outside their ranks as long as they pay a sum equal to union dues to some charitable institution.

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Plans to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the founding of the Moravian Church were launched at the 27th quinquennial synod of the denomination's Northern Province in Dover, Ohio. Officially called *Unitas Fratrum*, the Church was founded in Bohemia-Moravia in 1457 as an outgrowth of the Hussite movement. . . . The delegates at the convention approved a recommendation that all denominational publications and correspondence carry a "Moravian Year" inscription to call attention to the anniversary. In accordance with the action taken such publications will this year carry the imprint "Moravian Year 494," with the number raised each year until 1957.

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A Roman Catholic weekly newspaper will be established in Washington, D. C., early in November, to take the place of the *Catholic*



*Review* of Baltimore, which for 50 years has served Catholics in the capital area. . . . The new paper will be called the *Catholic Standard*, will be published in 24-page tabloid format, and will initially be delivered to 35,000 Catholic homes. . . . Editor in chief will be the Rev. Philip Hannan, who was ordained in 1939, served as chaplain of the 82d Airborne Division in World War II, and after the war completed study for a doctorate in canon law at the Catholic University in Washington.

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News comes from Hong Kong that a Chinese Roman Catholic priest, Father Wang Liang Tso of Kwanyuan in Szechwan province, was executed in May after protesting the false use of his name by the Communists as heralding the organization of an independent Catholic Church movement. . . . On December 13, 1950, the Communist press hailed a manifesto allegedly signed by 500 Roman Catholics in that province under the leadership of Wang Liang Tso; at a session of the Cabinet on December 29 the chairman of the government's cultural and educational committee named the priest as the moving spirit behind a Catholic independence movement; another Cabinet member called upon Catholic priests of the country to follow the patriotic movement which, he said, was launched by Father Wang; in January, Premier Chou En Lai addressed a meeting of Catholic clergy on the same subject. . . . But in May the Communists accused the priest of spreading a rumor that he was not in favor of the three Chinese autonomies: self-rule, self-support, and self-propagation; Father Wang told Communist authorities that he opposed every effort to set up a schismatic Church, and "you can cut off my head if you wish"; which they did. . . . To date there is no evidence that any Catholic priest is supporting the schismatic movement.

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Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek were expelled from the Communist-controlled Chinese Methodist Church. Bishop Kiang Changchuan, who baptized the Generalissimo as a member of the Church, was required to criticize himself for the action.

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Pope Pius XII issued an appeal for Christian unity in the encyclical *Sempiternus Rex*, commemorating the 15th centenary of the Council of Chalcedon, 451. He stressed the need for all Christians to join under one flag in the struggle against "the infernal enemy" — Communism. . . . His appeal was answered by the executive council of the Church of England in Canada. An adopted resolution stated: "The Pope has

been invited to lead his followers into the fellowship (of the World Council of Churches) and so strengthen spiritual unity against the onslaught of the common enemy. Unfortunately, he has so far refused this co-operation with other Christian people."—It would seem that a previous resolution, which was considered unsatisfactory, might also have been in place; it said there could be no favorable reply to the Pope's appeal unless the Papacy "changed its attitude in regard to its exclusiveness and totalitarianism." The Papacy is, and has always been, for one union only: a union under the flag of the Papacy.

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Five priests and about 35 laymen representing Roman Catholics from Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and France took part in a pilgrimage in Finland, going to the small St. Henry's Island in Lake Koylio, where the legend says St. Henry, the first Christian Bishop of Finland, was slain by pagans in 1156. . . . This is said to have been the first Roman Catholic pilgrimage in Finland since the Reformation. . . . Catholics in Finland number about 2,000 in four parishes—a small number; and when you hear that before the Reformation the Catholic Church had about 4,000 parishes in Finland, this pilgrimage does not seem memorable; but—it is a beginning!

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Army chaplains conducted nearly a quarter of a million worship services during the fiscal year that ended June 30, 1951, with an average attendance at Sunday services of 100. Total attendance at Army chapel services in the 12-month period was 12,682,000. About one fourth of these services were conducted by civilian clergymen in the absence of military chaplains. . . . Attendance at religious instructional classes conducted by U.S. Army chaplains during the year exceeded 1,000,000. A total of 82,010 such classes were reported by the 1,200 chaplains in service, and attendance totaled 1,108,600. . . . Chaplains reported 1,430,000 counseling talks; they made 111,800 hospital visits, performed 8,041 marriages, baptized 8,714 persons, and conducted 15,414 funerals. . . . Sunday school classes have been receiving the particular attention of chaplains because of the increasing presence on many posts of families with children. . . . This report was made by Chaplain (Major General) Roy H. Parker, Chief of Chaplains. "From the annual compilation of chaplains' reports," he said, "it is evident that our chaplains have a religious program to which the military personnel are responding in increasing numbers. The response speaks well for our soldiers, who more than ever are drawing upon spiritual resources for their daily duties."

Dr. Herbert Krimm of Stuttgart was elected to succeed Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier as head of the Central Bureau of the *Hilfswerk*, the welfare agency of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID). Dr. Gerstenmaier's resignation took effect on October 1, though he will remain associated with the welfare advisory board. Dr. Krimm was formerly Dr. Gerstenmaier's assistant.

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Dr. John A. Mackay, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, reported on a recent trip to five European countries taken under the auspices of the International Missionary Council, of which he is the chairman. Purpose of the trip was to survey the problems faced by Protestants in carrying on their religious work. . . . In Belgium and France, he reported, Protestants enjoy full religious freedom and official protection. In Belgium there are about 80,000 Protestants, but in the Belgian Congo there is a Protestant constituency of 1,500,000, "the fruit of missionary activity." In the Belgian army there are chaplains belonging to all faiths, and their number is proportionate to the adherents of the faith concerned. . . . France is a "lay state which is not hostile to religion, but which does not desire to become subject again to any religious hierarchy." Though the Protestants in France number only 700,000, "their influence in French affairs has been, and continues to be, far out of proportion to their number." . . . In Portugal, 15,000 Protestants "enjoy *relative* freedom and official protection. Protestant churches can even obtain permission to own property. Permission to open new places of worship is difficult to obtain, but not impossible." But the Roman Catholic Church is the Church of the nation, and the State subsidizes it in missionary work, in philanthropic activity, and in public education. . . . In Italy "the picture changes and takes on a somber hue." The 100,000 Protestants "live under the severest restrictions in the exercise of their religious rights. It has become virtually impossible for Italian Protestants to secure permission to open new places of worship. Meetings held in places which have not been authorized by the authorities subject those who conduct them to fines and imprisonment." The Fascist laws of 1929 have never been repealed and "local authorities, under pressure from the Roman clergy, insist upon the application of these laws to religious gatherings, even though their action in so doing runs counter to the Italian constitution. The result is that many Protestant churches remain closed, and new places of worship cannot be opened. The chief technique of the authorities, when appealed to for permission to hold religious services, is either to make no reply or to put the responsibility for decision upon

some other person or department." . . . In Spain he found the situation "worse than I had imagined. Freedom was dead. The peace that prevailed was the peace of the sepulcher." The "overt persecution" which marked the early years of the Franco regime "has been transformed into a subtle, sadistic, inexorable policy of making the social and cultural life of Protestants as intolerable as possible. In the expression of their religious life, Spain's 20,000 Protestants are surrounded with the grim confining barriers of the ghetto. They may worship in buildings which they possessed before 'the glorious movement,' as the present regime calls the new order in Spain. But no external sign can mark a Protestant place of worship. No publicity can be given to the services. No literature can be published by the congregation. No religious gatherings, however small, can take place in private homes. No authorization can be obtained for the organization of new congregations or the establishment of new places of worship. Protestants can have no recreational clubs for youth. They can conduct no parochial schools for their own children. They cannot circulate Bibles or religious literature through the mails. They cannot become officers in the army, because every officer is obliged to accept the Catholic faith. For like reasons they cannot become teachers or lawyers, because advancement in all the professions is contingent upon courses in Roman Catholic dogma and the abandonment of every Protestant connection. Most revolting of all is the fact that when any person, man or woman, who was baptized a Catholic becomes a Protestant, he or she finds it practically impossible to be civilly married by a judge."

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There is no longer any Bible society in Communist Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak Bible Society, whose history goes back to 1806, was one of the many "religious, scientific, and cultural" bodies dissolved under a new law aimed against all "non-progressive" groups in the country. . . . The Society sold more than 50,000 Bibles a year. It was not announced what was done with the copies of Scriptures in the Society's depots; it is assumed that they were burned. State-run bookstores do not carry Bibles. . . . In 1943 Nazi authorities ordered the Society to disband. However, it went underground and stepped up its production until it reached a total of 100,000 Bibles a year. This distribution of Bibles was credited with playing a vital role in the anti-Nazi resistance movement.

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The New Jersey Methodist Conference at Ocean City, N. J., sounded a plea to head off a threatened shortage of qualified ministers. 1,200

new pastors are needed each year to supply the 42,000 churches, while only 500 are received on trial. Also recommended was a further increase in salaries to keep pace with the rising cost of living.

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The Italian branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society reported that it sold 107,849 Scriptures or Scripture portions during the past year—the highest total of any year since the end of the war.

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The Japan Bible Society reported in Tokyo that a wish expressed by General Douglas MacArthur in 1945 is now nearing fulfillment, the wish that America help to get 10 million Scriptures into the hands of the Japanese people. . . . Actually, not all the Scriptures are complete Bibles; a large proportion consists of the New Testament alone or portions of the Old Testament. . . . Meanwhile, the Rev. T. Miyakoda, the secretary of the society, said, the Japan Bible Society, with the aid of the American Bible Society, is making various kinds of Bibles available in Japan: Bibles in Korean for the more than 500,000 Korean refugees in Japan, Bibles for the blind in Japanese Braille, and Bibles in both English and Japanese. . . . "Last year," Mr. Miyakoda added, "the distribution of Bibles reached 3,066,000, exceeding that of the best-selling novels. The rural districts are still calling for Bibles, and we want to supply them. We must set our ambitions high for a population of more than 80,000,000."

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A new Mass has been prepared and approved by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, to be celebrated in Roman Catholic Churches throughout the world on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The text for the Introit is Rev. 12:1 and Psalm 97:1; the Epistle Judith 13:22-25, and 15:10; the Gospel Luke 1:41-50; the Gradual Psalm 44:11, 12, 14; the Offertory Gen. 3:15, in the Roman Catholic version, of course: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." . . . On the eve of the feast day an article appeared in the Vatican newspaper *Osservatore Romano* announcing that a congress of Catholic theologians would be held in Rome from October 27 to November 1 "to review and evaluate in a critical manner what Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox authors have written" about the Assumption proclamation. The article was by Father Carlo Balic, a member of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, and Magnificent Rector of the Atheneum Antonianum

in Rome. The Atheneum is conducted by the Order of Friars Minor and teaches theology, canon law, and philosophy. . . . Father Balic wrote that "our dissident brothers" had considered the proclamation of the Assumption dogma as "an arbitrary act of the Supreme Pontiff." "Thus they disregard the fact that the truth he proclaimed was already the common patrimony of the Church of Christ long before the separation (Patriarch of Constantinople in the ninth century), Luther, and Henry VIII." . . . Calling the Protestant charges "unfounded," Father Balic said that the Protestant and Orthodox Churches, like the Catholic Church, "admit the assistance of the Holy Ghost"; and this "constitutes the primordial and basic factor that has guided (Catholic) theologians in discovering and making known what was contained in the Sacred Scriptures and Tradition."—What would one call that argument? Moreover, the belief in Mary's bodily assumption after her death admittedly does not go back farther than about 1,500 years. How is it that it only began 400 years after the supposed event?

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The Lutheran Brethren Church of America, one of the smallest Lutheran bodies numerically, has one foreign missionary to every 90 members. . . . Perhaps this news item will help to explain that phenomenal program: Mr. Anton Peterson, a member of the Lutheran Brethren Church of America, provides full support for six missionaries serving in foreign fields. In 1950 he gave \$12,000 to the work of the Church.

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At a conference of Latin American Evangelical radio experts in Quito, Ecuador, it was disclosed that Peru's ban on non-Roman Catholic broadcasts had been lifted and Protestants had returned to the air with their programs. . . . Steps were taken by delegates from Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, and Ecuador to create a Latin American Protestant radio chain. . . . Protestants now are kept off the air only in Argentina, where the ban on non-Catholic broadcasts has existed for the past two years.

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At their semiannual meeting, held in Richmond, Va., the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board adopted a budget of \$15,180,000 for 1952, the largest in their 106-year history. . . . The Board's secretary, Dr. M. Theron Rankin, said: "We are irrevocably committed to the personal support of 820 active missionaries and 117 emeritus missionaries under political and economic conditions which can, and frequently do, change radically within a day's time. We also must provide annual appropriations for aid in the development of new churches, for schools

of all kinds from kindergarten to college, for seminaries, training schools, hospitals, publication houses—not just in one country, but in 32 areas.” . . . Records indicate that 79 volunteers will seek appointments as missionaries in 1952.

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A ten-year drive to recruit 4,500 new ministers and 250 more missionaries was launched by the Disciples of Christ at a six-State regional conference in Washington, D.C. The drive is also being inaugurated at other regional conferences of the denomination.

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The Vatican has acquired the rights over 1,325 acres of land on the outskirts of Rome from the Italian government for the erection of new radio transmitters. The new equipment will cost about \$6,000,000 and will be strong enough to carry broadcasts in 23 languages to every corner of the globe.

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A film guild has been organized under the sponsorship of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID) to “counteract immoral tendencies in German motion-picture production.” Pastor Werner Hess, EKID commissioner for film matters, heads the guild.

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*The Guardian*, 105-year-old weekly organ of the “High-Church” group in the Church of England, has fallen a victim to the soaring production costs. The last issue bore the date October 12.

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### AMONG OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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