

theran Church of Australia, which is affiliated with the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. The Intersynodical Committees are now discussing the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture, the only point on which agreement has not been reached and unofficial reports indicate the negotiations are proceeding successfully. — *News Bureau* (NLC).

According to unofficial reports which have reached our desk, full agreement has been reached between the two Lutheran churches in regard to the doctrine of inspiration including the inerrancy of the Scriptures. There is only one question in this connection which, according to our unofficial reports, is still confronting the two church bodies in Australia. It is the question how in view of the inerrancy of the Scriptures the human and the divine side of the Scriptures come to their own. There can be no doubt in our minds that the final thesis of these two churches on the doctrine of the inspiration will deserve our full consideration and thorough study.

P. PETERS.

Walther on Communism. — When our attention was called to the fact that Walther had written a tract on the Communism of his day,* we had the good intention of reading it sooner or later. Soon after when the following item from *Religious News Service*, which deals with Communism's fight against religion, came to our notice, we did not postpone the reading of Walther's tract any longer. Did Walther have something to say about this fight of Communism against religion? While Walther did not know anything about the Russian Communists and while it must be granted that the term "communism" today includes more than it did in Walther's day, still in his tract he takes issue with the attempt of Communism to combat religion.

In the Russian youth organ, *Young Bolshevik*, Soviet young people are being called upon "to fight religion," are being told that "victory for Communism will come only after the struggle against all religious traditions of the world has been won." "Under our Communist conditions," the article adds, "religion continues to play a reactionary part. It clings to all that is old and false, and being a most viable conservative ideology, it impedes the overcoming of other remnants of the past." Therefore the Communist education of the youth and workers "is indissolubly connected with exposing and overcoming religious morality."

*) *Communismus und Socialismus. Verhandlungen der ersten deutschen evang.-luth. Gemeinde U. A. C. zu St. Louis, Mo. Geleitet und nach stenographischen Aufzeichnungen auf Beschluss der Gemeinde herausgegeben von C. F. W. Walther, 1878.*

Communism in Walther's time also wanted to do this very thing. We read: "Of course the Communists say: To be sure, in our communistic State religion will not be practised. Above all, we do not want any religious teachers. They must all be banished. But what does it profit them," Walther asks, "if they decide to do this? They will never dispel the need for religion from human nature, even if man from his youth had never heard anything of God, even if no mention of God had ever been made in such a State. There will nevertheless be a reawakening of the conscience" (p. 45).

But are not the Communists of our day real atheists, who according to all appearances have no conscience, who brazenly deny the very existence of God? Walther answers this question as follows: "Although many say, there is no God, still there are fewer atheists in our day than we usually think there are. During the day many a one is a formidable atheist. But when he retires in the evening and darkness envelopes him, then he does hear a weak voice in his innermost heart: There is a God anyhow. At least it is doubtful, if there is not a God. And if there is a God, what will become of you? Only a Satanic hardening and hardness of the heart can silence this voice altogether. Anyone can at the spur of the moment give a glowing talk against the existence of God, but we dare not think that such a one really believes it. There are many boasters who only want to display their intellectual prowess by speaking thus against God. And when they then reach their homes, they think: Oh, what have you done! They themselves do not believe what they have said. God Himself has written it into their hearts and no man can erase it: There is a God and you are responsible to this God. He will cite you before His tribunal. Woe to you if you are without a Savior. He will judge you strictly according to His holiness and righteousness" (p. 21f.).

There are those who often say that Communism despite its atheism is a religion. They say this in view of the "religious" or rather fanatical zeal of the Communists. Walther's claim, however, is more far-reaching. He claims on the strength of Romans 1, 19ff. and 2, 14f. that the Communists of his day despite their atheism and fanatical zeal are not without a knowledge of God and of His Law, "being a law unto themselves." This certainly remains true, even in the face of present-day Communism and its vain endeavors to eradicate all religion.

P. PETERS.

German Evangelical Church Day in Retrospect — *Unser grosser Kirchentag*, Our Great Church Day, thus Bishop Dr. Dibelius calls the Berlin Church Day of 1951, which drew no less than 150,000 Protestants from all parts of Germany to Berlin and brought 300,000 persons together in the German metropolis for a five day conference from the 11th to