

# The Northwestern Lutheran

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

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No. 3.

## THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

A faith that trusts in Jesus' blood,  
And proves the promises are good;  
A faith that follows where He leads,  
Who knows His children's hourly needs—  
Such faith be mine!

A faith that trusts no human skill,  
My pitcher at the fount to fill;  
A faith that conquers in His name,  
Who for our full salvation came—  
Such faith be mine!

A faith that doth for blessing trust,  
Tho' self be humbled in the dust,  
And gladly takes the lowest place,  
Sustained by undeserved grace—  
Such faith be mine!

A faith that, tho' the heart be rent,  
Doth yet the mercy-seat frequent,  
And find it in the hour of grief  
A place of ever sure relief—  
Such faith be mine!

A faith that looks time's shadows through  
And keeps eternity in view;  
Yet with the talents God hath lent  
Is on some useful mission bent—  
Such faith be mine!

A faith that, when life's day declines,  
Can ever read between the lines  
Upon the glorious page,  
"How bright the Christian's heritage!"—  
Such faith be mine!

William Kitching.

## COMMENTS.

**A Japanese Arraignment.** A Japanese Christian thinks he has found the reason why the American Missions in Asia are not as successful as they should be. In giving it, he may be guilty of measuring success by the very standards he condemns in his criticism, but his views are interesting, nevertheless, even if they do not give the real reason of the slow advance made by Missions in the countries of the Orient. He says that we "do not recognize the value of religious work which can not be shown by statistics." That may be true, but it seems that this is a trait of the whole human race, and not confined to the inhabitants of the American Continent. Since we have the multitudinous movements of every description making their appeal in the name of Christ,

most of them with very little justice, we are subjected to a flood of figures. Everyone submits his figures as proofs of success and tries to enlist our cooperation on the strength of them. He goes on to say: "To Americans nothing is more powerful than the fact of personal success as embodied in successful men. Therefore they cannot understand mystical religion. In praising Luther, they refer to his works, but never touch upon his profound faith; they can comprehend Luther the reformer, but not Luther the Christian. It seems that Luther's delicate idealistic conception of religion is beyond the comprehension of Americans." This is a very true observation and explains the high regard expressed for Luther in many quarters where such praise is entirely unlooked for. These tributes to our great hero need not elate us particularly; when he is so admired, it is almost invariably his success that prompts the admiration. The personal faith Luther preached, which we preach today, will always meet the unqualified opposition of the man who wants the Church to reform others, but not to offer him redemption. H. K. M.

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**A Timely Warning.** Instruction on sex hygiene or sexual education of children in public schools is a subject openly discussed in nearly every paper of the day. In various localities such instruction has been added to the course of studies in the common schools. Literature is also being sent out promiscuously, showing methods of teaching this delicate matter in order to propagate the idea of sexual hygiene and to promote race perfection.

A warning against such a movement is, indeed, timely. We consider the teaching of such delicate and serious a matter entirely out of place in school. If children need any information on this subject for the sake of sexual purity, let them receive a solicitous and salutary advice in the privacy of the home from the lips of their parents.

A heeding of the warning uttered by "The Advance," which we quote from "The Lutheran Witness" is well needed:

"Within the last year there has been a perfect epidemic of sex consciousness, one aspect of which has been a vociferous demand for the teaching of sex hygiene to children.

"There is real need of something in this direction,

but we wish to utter a reiterated warning. Whatever else there is in this movement, one thing has been evident in many of the discussions, the attempt to secure instruction on sex hygiene in public schools constitutes one more effort of parents to shirk their God-given responsibility. No well-meaning maiden lady, giving blushing lessons out of a text-book, no imported lecturer with exaggerated ideas of sex consciousness can be any proper substitute for fathers and mothers, and these may do great harm. We have no doubt of the good intentions of most of the people who are behind this movement, but we have grave doubts of the practical wisdom of many of them. If a father or mother refuses to do his or her own duty, and turns it over to school-teachers and paid lecturers, it were better that a millstone were hanged about the parent's neck.

"Moreover, we have more than a doubt concerning the wisdom of too much instruction on this question at the present time. This is not the best time in the world's history to pass judgment on matters of this character. As some one has remarked, 'Just now it is sex o'clock in literature.' There is a morbid sex consciousness. God has His way of teaching through the reticencies of life as certainly as through the screaming stark-nakedness which sometimes parades itself in the disguise of purity.

"It is not by thinking purity that the mind becomes pure. There is real danger in brushing the bloom off the cheek of modesty.

"This is no defense of prudery, nor of ignorance, but it is what we believe to be a timely warning."

J. J.

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**Slavery Under Our Government.** When the Philippines were acquired by our government, the way of the new rulers of the country was seen to be beset with difficulties of every description; as time went on, unexpected problems arose. One of these deserves our attention and is forcibly brought to public notice by Dean C. Worcester, the very able Secretary of the Interior for the Philippines. He tells us that slavery of the baldest type and peonage—holding men in bondage for debt—is flourishing all over the Islands. For a long time this was not known. When taken note of, existing laws were found to be inadequate and new legislation was very tardy. With new laws the authorities hope to be able to check this disgraceful practice, though great difficulties are anticipated, the opposition coming from the "Christian" Philipinos. The cruder and less civilized natives were less clever in evading detection and in offering explanations. This indicates that the "Christianity" found there is nothing more than a thin veneer of civilization,—some western clothes, a very little soap, but no Christ.

H. K. M.

**Abyssinia.** King Menelik of Abyssinia is really dead; many reports of recent years announcing his death had merely served to demonstrate his ability to read his own death notices. His death calls attention to a peculiar growth in the Christian Church as it is found in Menelik's country. Abyssinia was christianized as early as 320 A. D., but in the sixth century the prevailing heresy of the neighboring diocese of Alexandria gained a foothold and has been retained to this day. When Mohammedanism swept over northern Africa, it also left its impress on the impure Christianity of Abyssinia. Even Judaism has contributed elements to the worship. This nondescript mixture defies all efforts at reformation and still has a loose sort of attachment to the Greek Catholic Church.

H. K. M.

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**An Anniversary.** The oldest Protestant church edifice west of Lake Michigan would only be eighty years old if it were standing today. The eightieth anniversary of its dedication was celebrated in Chicago in January. The First Presbyterian Church of Chicago is the church that enjoys this unique distinction. A small frame structure costing \$600.00 was erected near the Fort—it was then Fort Dearborn and not Chicago—in 1834. The congregation of 26 consisted mainly of officers and men of the Fort. It was a Presbyterian church, but their first pastor was a Congregationalist. Crowded out by the growing city, the church has been moved a number of times. In the eighty years of its existence it has been served by nine pastors.

H. K. M.

#### THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND ITS CONFESSION.

Within the Church of the Word there never should be occasion for serious difference of opinion regarding the desirability and the usefulness of the confessional writings. They are more than merely desirable, they are indispensable. Without reason some quarrels have been provoked by Lutherans on these questions, but they merely served to establish the confessions the more firmly; the most searching and hostile criticism failed to discover a single flaw, severest scrutiny proved their truth and accuracy. Nearly all Churches calling themselves Christian have such confessions, but the Lutheran Church stands alone in having a confession that is complete in itself and is recognized as the true expression of Lutheranism the world over. In the Lutheran Church there is no doubt as to what writings are meant; there is a definite and established code of such documents, accepted by every true Lutheran.

This code is made up of a number of writings, the first of which are the three Ecumenical Confessions,

or Symbols: the Apostolic Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Creed named after Athanasius. These three confessions have come down to us from the Ancient Church and they preserve the tenets of the true Christianity of all times. Then there are the purely Lutheran confessions that originated within the Lutheran Church at the time of the Reformation or immediately thereafter: the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, the Smalcald Articles, the two Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord. All of these are collected in the book known as the Book of Concord and are the formally adopted Confession of the Lutheran Church.

According to these declarations all teaching in the true Church is done, and according to them all questions arising are adjudicated; it is the Supreme Court of Lutheranism from which there is no appeal for Lutherans. But in using the Book of Concord in this fashion there is never a thought of setting it above the authority of the Scriptures, as uninformed people often suppose and say; on the contrary, it derives all its authority solely from the Bible and holds the exalted position of arbiter of the Faith **because it agrees with the word of God**. Its contents are merely a reproduction of the doctrines revealed to us there; Scripture is the fountainhead, our Confession is the cup that dips down and brings up its sparkling clearness. Though our Lord surely watched over its production as the Head of the Church it was to serve, yet no divine inspiration, in the peculiar sense in which we speak of the Bible, is contended for. As long as we accept the Bible as the revelation of God's Eternal Truth, so long will our Confession remain unaltered and intact; these truths are unchangeable and unalterable and beyond the reach of any development that requires a change. It is conceivable that occasion might arise where they might be amplified to ward off some new heresy, though as yet no such necessity has become apparent, but even then the old would remain, just as the Apostolic Creed was amplified by later confessional declarations, but was never abolished or superseded. The Lutheran's conduct in the face of all recent attempts to modify Creeds and Confessions is governed accordingly.

'Tis true, a symbol forfeits the reverence it once commanded, when the thing it stands for is shown to be untrue. Under such circumstances it is a useless endeavor to contend for its abolition—it is abolished as surely and effectually as if it never had existed. At best, it survives as the memento of bygone days. We are now told by certain modern tinkerers of religions that Creeds and Confessions, in fact all the Symbols of historic Christianity, have outlived their usefulness and should be abolished in favor of something more adequate to our needs and times. Our Church has always turned a deaf ear to such appeals

and proposals, not, as opponents would have you believe, because it is unaware of modern needs, but rather because it is most thoroughly awake to the necessities of men and women of today, whom the Church of Christ owes service.

With those who would like to see Confessions abolished we have little patience,—they are fighting windmills with very brittle spears, for with them Confessions have been abolished. Why should they excite themselves about symbols which they have long ago stripped of all meaning? On the other hand, all the argument in the world will not make anyone give up a sign, which for him stands for a precious truth. Would you defile and spurn the Stars and Stripes merely because a cynical anarchist has lost faith in the Republic? The Lutheran Church still believes what it confesses and, God granting, will continue so to believe. It exists in this Faith and Confession and will continue so to exist, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." If there be anyone that finds the Creed or any other of our Confessions an irksome burden, if anyone has found that he no longer believes the truths they declare, then these very Confessions serve their proper purpose in forcing upon him the conviction that he is no longer a Lutheran Christian. He cannot abolish the Confessions, but the Confessions are performing their appointed task in "abolishing" him. Contentions on this score from without concern us not at all. If others feel the hypocrisy and deceit of their conduct in continuing to teach or to confess in their public worship what they have ceased to believe in their hearts, it is purely their concern. We agree with them as to the hypocrisy and shamefulness of their conduct.

It is quite apparent that the few that act as leaders in such revolutionary undertakings, as the abolition of Confessions, may have gone into the campaign from an unbelief born of spiritual pride, but the great number of their followers, very often the most insistent clamorers, have no other basis for their posterous demands than sheer ignorance. They know little of the Confessions and still less of what they mean to teach, and what is more, if they were asked for their substitutes they could hardly avoid the contempt they deserve. Ignorance prompts most of the talk heard against Creeds and Confessions and that is why attempts to tell such doubters what our Confession is, are by no means always futile. This is no mere suggestion, it is a sacred mandate of Scripture itself. St. Peter says, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." In that word alone, if in no other, we find our commission to sustain our Creeds and Confessions. And not alone are we to have them as a Church, but, as Peter so plainly says, as individuals. If we are so frequently

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undecided and fearful when we face opponents of our Confession, such fear is not the result of the weakness of our cause, but rather of our indifference to our Confession and to everything of which it is the Symbol. A cheerful and living faith will never be embarrassed by the nagging criticism that seeks to make us lose that which it has lost itself.

Our Confessions must be kept inviolate! They are our bulwark against the flood of irresponsible and transient correction and substitution that has before our very eyes washed down the feeble defense of Churches that have given up such protection. Our Confession is our anchor that holds us safely in the haven in the midst of the seething tide of destructive criticism; we can see those that have spurned such a safeguard, they are floundering in the turbulence of the sea, the tide they trusted to carry them to safety has turned and bears them away to destruction. It preserves true unity because it eliminates those who depart from the straight path of scriptural truth, and it adds strength to the Church because it is the standard around which all loyal sons and daughters of the Church of Christ can always rally and find the comfort and blessing of true communion and fellowship. The Lutheran pastor is pledged to preach the Word of God as it is interpreted in the Confessions, this should make it impossible for any to forget himself and teach personal opinions. To these Confessions the Lutheran communicant pledges himself. He may know but the Small Catechism and the Creed, but they suffice to make him an able judge of his preacher and give him the standard by which his own faith is judged. This preserves the Truth and insures the welfare of the believers. H. K. M.

### IS DISCORD REAL?

**Discord Felt by All.** Present life is not harmonious. Read Rom. 8: 18-23: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, destructive winds and floods, rack the very earth itself, causing it to tremble and groan.

Everywhere in nature we find strife, pain, and death, even the dumb brute suffering under "the bondage of corruption." And as for man—poverty, pain, disease, grief, and worry, little happiness and much sorrow are his lot, until death finally overpowers him, and his body is laid away in the grave, there to see corruption.

No Community is without courts, jails, prisons, or reformatories, while the press daily tells the story of selfishness, greed, oppression, unfaithfulness, theft, robbery, perjury, drunkenness, vice, and murder.

Look into the hearts of men. Even the Gentiles have a conscience bearing witness, "their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." Rom. 2: 15. Men go about oppressed by the sense of their guilt, fearful of the consequences of their deeds, in dread of death and judgment. Many follow despairing Judas into a self-inflicted death.

The discord in present life is so evident, that none can fail to note it, so deep, that it vitally affects our welfare and happiness, making this world indeed a vale of tears, and fear and sorrow the daily companions of men.

**The Declaration of Christian Science.** In the face of this, C. S. declares: "Harmony in man is as real and immortal as in music.

Discord is unreal and mortal. If God is admitted to be the only Mind and Life, there ceases too be an opportunity for sin and death." Science and Health, Ed. 1896, p. 172. According to C. S. God is the only Mind. In fact, "In one sense God is identical with nature; but this nature is spiritual and not expressed in matter." Thus, nothing really exists which is not God. There can, consequently, be no discord in nature. Furthermore, God could not exist without man, nor can man become separated from God. Whatever is real in man is God. "Spiritual man is the idea of God, an idea which cannot be lost, or separated from its divine principle." Later Ed., p. 199. "If God, who is soul of man, were parted for a moment from his reflection, man, during that moment there would be no divinity reflected. The Ego would be unexpressed, and the Father would be childless, no Father." p. 208. This makes it clear that there can be no sin on the part of man, nor wrath on that of God. "Man is incapable of sin, sickness, and death. The real man cannot depart from holiness, nor can God, by whom man is evolved, engender the capacity or freedom to sin." p. 475.

"Is there no sin? All reality is in God and his creation, harmonious, eternal. That which he creates is good, and he makes all that is made. Therefore the only reality of sin, sickness, or death is the awful fact that unrealities seem real to human erring belief, until God strips off their disguise." p. 472.

These statements are plain. They assert the essential and eternal oneness of man with God, and deny the reality of the present world and life. Paul is, accordingly, in Rom. 8 not stating actual facts, but merely recording the erroneous impressions of mortal mind. Present life is only a nightmare. Pain, sorrow, sickness, and death do not exist. Man is not responsible to a Supreme Being. The accusing voice of conscience lies, David could not truthfully say, "I have sinned against the Lord." Man need not fear future punishment. When the truth is known, discord yields to harmony, and sorrow and fear are superseded by happiness and peace.

We are fully conscious of the fact that there is absolutely no point of contact between our views and those of C. S. from which it would be possible to proceed in the hope of reaching an understanding. But, as C. S. has appropriated Biblical expressions and asserts that it stands on the grounds of Scripture, we would briefly set forth the teaching of Holy Writ on this subject, showing the real meaning of the terms employed by Christian Science.

**God is not Identical with Nature.** "God is a Spirit." John 4: 24. He is a person: "I AM THAT I AM." Exod. 3: 14. He has a will and exercises it. "Who hath resisted his will?" Rom. 9: 19. James 1: 18. He has need of no one, but is perfect in Himself. "For as the Father hath life in himself." John 5: 26. He created the material world. Gen. 1. Col. 1: 16, 17. Nature is the work of God, made according to His free will, subject to Him, and not His necessary expression. It is real and is spoken of as real throughout the whole Bible.

**God and Man.** Man was not. Gen. 1: 26. God freely resolved to create man. He formed the body of man of the dust of the ground, "and the rib, which the Lord God has taken from man, made he a woman." Gen. 2: 7, 21, 22. The human body is real and will remain so in eternity. Rom. 8: 11: "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." Phil. 3: 21. Job 19: 26.

"And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. 2: 7. Man consists of body and soul united in one person.

**Harmony.** "So God created man in his own image." Gen. 1: 27. Man was endowed by the Creator with "righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4: 24. "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Gen. 1: 31. There was perfect harmony. Man lived in the closest and most blessed communion with God. Nature, too, was harmonious, undisturbed by any discord. Gen. 1: 28, 31.

But God is not the soul of man, He is the Creator,

the Lord. He treats man as a separate person, discriminating also between Adam and Eve as individuals. God puts man in the garden to dress it and keep it. He assigns man his place in nature, granting him the dominion over all creatures. He demands of man obedience, forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge, Gen. 2: 16, 17, and His threat, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," declares that man is capable of sin and that a separation of man from God is possible.

**Discord.** Gen. 3 tells how discord entered into the world. It does not state that man's mind suddenly became clouded, that unrealities seemed real to him. No, when man in unbelief and disobedience rose up against his maker, it was real discord, an actual change of the relation between God and man. Thus, in the evening, God appears as the offended Lord and Judge, man as the offender, an object for wrath and punishment. As all men are involved in the fall, Rom. 5: 12-15, the statement of Is. 59: 2 applies to all: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God."

This is not the vain imagination of mortal mind, but the declaration of God Himself, it is His eternal truth which will prevail against all denials of men. God declares man to be sinful, totally corrupt. Rom. 5: 12. "All have sinned." Gen. 8: 21. Rom. 7: 14. Gal. 5: 19-21.

Man is alienated from God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Rom. 8: 7. Col. 1: 21.

Man is responsible to God and guilty in His sight. "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Rom. 3: 19. James 1: 13, 14. The wrath of God rests on sinful man. "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." Ps. 5: 5. Gen. 3. Eph. 2: 3. Rom. 1: 18.

God causes man to suffer for his sins in this life, and to that end also lays his curse on nature. Gen. 3: 16-19. Luke 21: 11. Rom. 8: 18-23. Pharaoh. Sodom and Gomorrah. Deluge. 2 Sam. 24: 13.

The final punishment on earth is death. "For the wages of sin is death." Rom. 6: 23. Gen. 3. Rom. 5: 12.

Punishment follows man beyond the grave. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Hebr. 9: 27. Acts 17: 31. 2 Cor. 5: 10.

Suffering will be eternal for those who die in their sins. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." Matth. 25: 46. Dan. 12: 2. Luke 16: 23-25. Is. 66: 24.

Discord is real, indeed. Sickness, pain, and sorrow are not imaginary. Accusing conscience speaks the truth, and human fears are well founded. St. Paul, Rom. 8, describes the actual condition which will obtain as long as this world will exist. A more perfect

knowledge of the truth will only increase in us the sense of our sinfulness and guilt, causing us to bow our heads in shame and fear before the holy, righteous Lord. This, in fact, he exhorts us to do: "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God." Jer. 3: 13. J. B.

### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN TWO GREAT FOREIGN NATIONS.

Of all the blessings a citizen may enjoy in his country, religious liberty is one of the greatest. To serve God according to the dictates of one's own conscience, particularly to preach the Gospel pure and undefiled, and to establish the true Church of Christ freely and unmolestedly, without interference on the part of the State or a State religion, is a privilege every Christian citizen enjoys with gratitude to his Creator.

We Americans fully realize what a precious right is granted us by our federal constitution in the free exercise of religion, and in the complete separation of Church and State. It is one of the chief cornerstones in the foundation of our republic.

It is therefore, gratifying to read reports, of late, from two great foreign nations to the effect, that religious liberty and equality of all religions in the body politic is gradually gaining ground, and will eventually be established in their respective constitutions. These two nations are the Republic of Peru, and China, one of the oldest nations and now the youngest republic.

Touching upon the aspects of religious liberty in Peru a correspondent of "The Christian Herald" has the following to say:

"Under the constitution of Peru, adopted in 1860, the public exercise of any other than the Catholic religion is forbidden. In recent years, however, owing partly to the spread of education and other causes, the desire for a degree of religious toleration has grown until it has become a fixed object in the popular mind. Foreign Protestant churches and mission schools, which on their first introduction met with stubborn opposition from Catholic sources, gradually won their way. During the years from 1899 to 1903 laws were passed enabling non-Catholics to contract civil marriages. At that time there were less than 30,000 professing non-Catholics in the republic.

In the last few years the movement to amend Article Four of the Constitution—which recognizes the Roman Catholic as the established religion and refuses legal toleration to any other religion—has become a vital public question. Elementary education has been under the control of the church, compulsory education not being enforced. The State has contributed to the support of the archbishop, and while the government maintained control of episcopal appointments, the appointees were subject to confirmation by the Pope.

Under such conditions Protestant missionary enterprise was exceedingly restricted, but the restrictions have been relaxing gradually. Now that the action of the Senate has given assurance of religious freedom of worship in the near future, the outlook for increased evangelical effort in Peru is better than ever before. It is a great triumph for religious liberty and puts the ancient republic in line with the other progressive South American governments, which have already done away with a State church and put all religions on an equal footing."

As to the state of affairs in China, recent reports show that under the new republican regime a movement is well under way to grant religious liberty to all the people living in China, irrespective of nationalities. It is true, ever since the organization of the new republic a strong movement has been in progress to make Confucianism the religion of the State. It is advocated principally by the educated classes—the aristocracy of the nation. Soon after the new parliament the majority of whose members being of this class, organized, a Confucian society was formed for the purpose of establishing Confucianism as the only religion to be acknowledged by the State.

Native Christian leaders remonstrated against this movement, while the President of the new republic, Yuan Shi Kai, perceiving the danger involved in the actions taken by the national parliament, took a bold step in favor of liberty for all religions. He dismissed parliament, thus leaving the supreme power in the hands of the president and the council. Speaking in the national council, President Yuan is said to have expressed his views in these memorable words, which we quote from "The Christian Herald":

"In view of the religious liberty of the people, all religions will be regarded as being on the same footing, and there will be no discrimination against any particular one. There should be mutual respect and avoidance of mutual distrust among the people, irrespective of whether they practice any particular religion or not, or whatever faith they embrace, so that they may all share in the enjoyment of public peace and happiness."

In reading these words every lover of religious liberty will most heartily wish that the principle involved may fully be materialized and that in due time religious liberty and equality of all religions shall be established in China for all times to come.

How wonderful are God's ways, that, after centuries of heathen darkness and oppression of true religion, freedom of conscience and worship, a fruit of the Reformation, should in these late days be granted to every citizen in that far-off new republic! And what glorious outlook for evangelical work in China!

J. J.

## SPECIAL SUNDAYS.

In recent years requests to observe "special features" on certain Sundays in agreement with other Churches have become more and more numerous. Our congregations have not noticed that they were observed in our midst and may have wondered whether we were invited to join in the general observance. Invitations were received, but there was no response, for good and sufficient reasons. To begin with, these requests came from any and all quarters, not only from such without any authority whatever, but even from such as appealed in a manner that made refusals to accede to the demands peremptory. The "Special Sunday," once discovered, was used by many as a cheap device to secure good advertising for some pet movement. Very often the pastor is offered material for the propaganda, and if the appeals were often not agreeable to our views, the material offered for use was quite astonishing. A second and more practical objection that every churchgoer of any denomination will appreciate, was always felt acutely and is brought out by a writer of one of the suffering Churches.

The rapid increase of the "Special Sunday" has grown to be a serious nuisance in the very Churches that first encouraged it. The writer referred to enumerates the most widely spread celebrations of that character as follows: "January 4, New Year's Sunday; January 25, Child Labor Sunday; February 8, Lincoln Sunday; February 22, Washington Sunday; April 12, Easter Sunday; April 19, Sabbath Observance Day; May 10, Mother's Sunday; May 17, Peace Sunday; May 24 or 31, Memorial Sunday; June 14, Children's Sunday; June 28, Independence Day Sunday; September 6, Labor Sunday; October 25, Prison Sunday; November 22, Thanksgiving Sunday; November 29 to December 6, Tuberculosis Days; December 20, Christmas Sunday." Of these 16 Sundays the writer was only ready to accept 4 or 5 as suitable Church Days, New Year's, Easter, Christmas, and Thanksgiving, though he thinks the latter is best observed by keeping the day set aside for national observance; he is also inclined to consider favorably a Children's Day.

The list is entirely unsatisfactory to us, as much for what it contains, as for what it omits. As for the real Church Festivals, we have them all and some of them are observed by periods of devout preparation and by more than one service. There is no necessity for a Children's Day or any other kind of "special" day. If one is admitted, there is no reason why any other should be excluded. We need none of them, for everything that can be properly brought to a congregation from the pulpit is very satisfactorily provided by the Scripture Lessons that are adhered to in our preaching. There everything of vital importance to the individual, be he "father," "mother," or "child,"

to the general welfare of humanity, and to the best citizenship is treated fully and satisfyingly by the Word of God. It is the haphazard selection of sermon texts, customary in some churches, that permitted this nuisance to obtain a foothold. With us the sermons preached during a church year are not done at random, but are intended to cover the field of divine Revelation as far as possible. More than that would be impossible, less than that would be serious neglect; to admit any of the topics suggested in this endeavor, would break the complete and thorough chain of scriptural preaching.

Even the daily press has taken up the discussion of the "Special Sunday question and, we are pleased to note, is not entirely of one mind as to the advisability of adopting the features" suggested. The Brooklyn Eagle, reports:

"Brooklyn will respond to the appeal of former President Taft that the first Sunday of February be observed as a "go to church Sunday."

But another daily, commenting on this item of the Eagle, says:

"All right and commendable, of course.

But is it not rather a reflection on the spirit of the times or the power of the churches that any one Sunday in particular should be marked out and signalized as a "go to church Sunday?"

Are all the other Sundays popularly regarded as "stay away from church Sundays?"

The unavoidable inference from the appeal is that the good old habit of treating every Sunday as a "go to church Sunday" is somewhat in abeyance.

It is as easy to form a good habit as a bad one, and just as hard to break it off.

So let habitual churchgoing be revived."

Although we do not hold that good habits and bad habits are alike easily formed, and would have a regular attendance at worship based on something higher than mere habit, yet we certainly stand for "treating every Sunday as a 'go to church Sunday'."

H. K. M.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST.

## The Joint Synod.

At the meeting of the Joint Synod in Green Bay last August, the question of training young ladies for their work as teachers in our parochial schools came up for discussion. Attention was called to this subject by the great change that has taken place in our teaching force in the last few years.

While in the past our schools had been in charge of men almost exclusively, the number of lady teachers has of late been steadily increasing. Thus of the 181 teachers of the Wisconsin Synod 80 are ladies.

Though our Teachers' Seminary at New Ulm is prepared to receive ladies, not many have been enrolled to the present time, the majority having merely attended some High School

which does not offer a normal course. The question therefore was, what assistance can we offer to those who have not enjoyed the advantages of a thorough training for their important position. The situation calls for action, as the welfare of our schools demands a capable and efficient teaching force. A vacation school or teachers' institute was suggested. The Synod adopted the suggestion and placed the matter in the hands of a committee, of which Prof. Dir. J. Schaller, Rev. C. Buenger, and Mr. R. Albrecht of the Jerusalem School at Milwaukee are members.

This committee has now completed the preliminary work and is able to announce that the institute will in all probability be held next summer either at Northwestern College in Watertown or in Milwaukee. A six weeks' course is planned for ladies already active in our schools. Definite announcements will be made at a later date.

St. Paul's Congregation at Mound City, So. Dakota (Rev. J. H. Renner) recently celebrated its 25th anniversary.

St. Paul's congregation at Green Bay, Wis. (Rev. A. F. Zich) was founded 30 years ago. Nov. 31 was anniversary day and was celebrated as such by the congregation.

Zion's Congregation in Brannan, Wis. (Rev. A. Sydow) have erected a new altar and pulpit in their house of worship. The dedication took place Nov. 23.

Frieden's Congregation of Elkhorn, Wis. recently completed the erection of a spacious new parsonage for their pastor, Rev. Chr. Gevers.

#### Missouri Synod.

The new Lutheran High School at Deschler, Neb., founded last fall, is making satisfactory progress in its work. The Rev. Carl Schmidt is at the head of the institution and the faculty is composed of six teachers, three of this number being ladies. There are now 55 pupils enrolled. A fine three-story building of modern construction is the home of the school.

The Lutheran Sanitarium for Consumptives, located at Wheat Ridge, Colo., has now carried on its good work for over seven years. Rev. J. Schlerf, the chaplain and director of the institution, in the last number of the "Sanitarium Review" gives an interesting account of the work so far accomplished. The hospital comprises 29 buildings of light construction, built on a 20 acre plat just outside of Denver. Almost 600 consumptives have been treated in the institution since it was opened in 1905.

#### LUTHERAN MISSION IN CHINA.

Work was begun in China more than a year ago by the "Ev. Luth. Missionsgesellschaft fuer China," of which Rev. C. J. Albrecht, New Ulm, Minn., is president. Rev. E. L. Arndt, of Hankow, in his "Missionsbriefe" reports fair progress. Services, held four times a week in a little chapel with a seating capacity of about 80, are well attended, chiefly, though not exclusively, by men of the lower or the middle classes. The missionary has succeeded in recruiting a number of catechumen for a class opened in December. One child will be confirmed in the near future. The field is large, about 18,000 natives living within a radius of 750 feet of the chapel. Last November Rev. Arndt visited the field in Peking, about 850 miles distant, in the company of Rev. C. W. Kastler, who will take up the work in that city. The missionaries are assisted by their wives and by two natives, Li Hai Shan and Hsie Ho Ngan.

Efforts are being made to raise the necessary funds for the erection of suitable buildings in both cities.

#### BRIEF ITEMS.

##### Zionism.

In 1897 leading Jews from all countries united to further a cause they designated as "Zionism." Their object was to establish in Palestine a number of colonies of Jews, hoping to gain a foothold in the country of their fathers so that in the future it might be governed by themselves. The prime object was, therefore, rather political and only incidentally intended to benefit the economic condition of the oppressed Jews of certain countries. The leader of this movement was the Vienna lawyer, Dr. Theodore Herzl. After his death Zionism drifted away from its first aims to some extent, the idea of a Jewish Republic was allowed to recede and the colonization of Jews in the Holy Land was emphasized as a means to give them economic independence. This latter hope seems to be one step nearer realization by gaining the active support of one of the wealthiest American Jews, Mr. Nathan Straus. Mr. Straus has for many years been a familiar figure in all philanthropic enterprises and now, in his older years, he intends to forsake all his lifelong connections and will personally take up the work of redeeming the Land of Promise from the woeful state of desolation into which it has fallen. Mr. Straus' personal beliefs are not those of his fathers, he is acting merely in the interest of his race, not at all in the interest of the religion of his race. His work will undoubtedly benefit the city of Jerusalem, for which he will first of all attempt to secure an adequate water supply—its most crying material need.

##### Plan Floating Church.

Seattle shipbuilding companies were asked to tender bids for the construction of a colportage cruiser, or floating church, for the American Baptist Publication society for the 70,000 inhabitants on the islands and shores of Puget Sound. The craft, to be christened the Robert G. Seymour in memory of the late Bible secretary, will be 50 feet long and will contain a cabin 16 feet long and 11½ feet wide in which services will be held in communities where there is no hall available.—Ex.

##### The Cedars of Lebanon.

All that now remains of the cedars of Lebanon is a little forest of some 400 trees, which are rigidly preserved. They lie on a small fertile plateau, situated at an altitude of 6,123 feet above sea-level. The grove is reached from Bsherreh by a steep and winding road.

With the exception of a few stragglers, the grove is inclosed by a neat stone wall built by a former governor of Lebanon to protect the smaller trees from goats.

The older trees have always occupied a position of honor in the estimation of man because of their connection with the temple built by Solomon and the various allusions to them in the Bible.

Among the dwellers in Syria, where forests of tall trees do not exist, the cedars naturally excite admiration, and a modern Syrian writer says of them that they are undeniably the most lofty of all the vegetable kingdom. We know, of course, that this is hardly the case, for the famous redwood trees of California reach a height of over 300 feet, while in Tasmania the blue gum is almost as large so far as height is concerned. The cedars are actually about eighty feet high, which is more than the height of the trees of an average forest.—Wide World Magazine.