

The Northwestern Lutheran

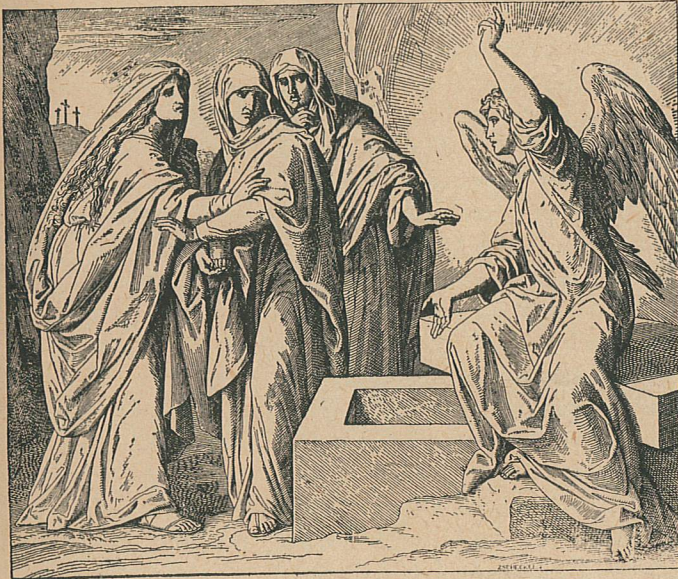
The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

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THE EMPTY GRAVE



Easter Hymn

Dawn bursts o'er death's prison;
Fulfilled is the Word!
To life He hath risen;
Oh, joy to the Lord!
The victor is greeted
By angels in bliss,
Redemptor completed
His victory is.

The seal hath been broken, the tomb is unbarred,
An angel performed it, in fright fled the guard,
And Tartarus groans, Hallelujah!

The darkness infernal
Withstood Him in fight;
But victory eternal
He won for the right.
Death's kingdom is ended;
Faith rises again,
'Mid destinies blended,
With hope in her train,

Ye sorrowing women, why seek ye the dead?
From death's gloomy prison the Living hath fled!
The Savior hath risen, Hallelujah!

Once more upon mortals
God smileth in love;
The grave opes its portals
To pathways above
Heads bending in sadness
'Neath Calvary's cross,
Look upward with gladness
Nor fear the world's loss!

Come back, scattered flock, your Shepherd and Lord!
He liveth! He liveth! to watch and ward,
Unseen from the sky, Hallelujah!

Ye ages, storm onward!
His church shall not fail;
As light spreads from sunward,
His love shall prevail.
His messengers, flying
Where foot hath e'er trod,
Through battling and dying,
Bear witness of God,—

Bear witness of Thee, O Thou Trust in all need,
Who, dying for us, didst Thy followers lead
Through death up to life, Hallelujah!

Ye saints, why your sorrow,
Your doubt and dismay?
The night and the morrow
Will soon wear away.
Soon, soon in earth's bosom
Shall sleep and your pain;
Soon life shall re-blossom
And spring up like grain.

Himself the great Sower, shall come at the end,
And winnow His wheat from the tares, and ascend
To garner His sheaves, Hallelujah!

Franz Michael Franzen, Bishop of Hernösand, ca. 1813.
Tr. by A. P. Hitchcock.

RESURRECTION

“The heathen sorrows without hope. A shattered pillar; a ship gone to pieces; a race lost; a harp lying on the ground with snapped strings, with all its music lost; a flowerbud crushed with all its fragrance in it;—these are the sad utterances of their hopeless grief. The thought that death was the gate of life came not in to cheer the parting or brighten the sepulchre. The truth that the grave was the soil, and the body the seed sown by God's hand, to call out all the latent life; that the race was not lost, but only a little earlier won; that the column was not destroyed, but transferred to another building and another city to be a pillar in the temple of God; that the bud was not crushed, but transplanted, for fuller expansion, and with all fragrance unexhaled and unimpaired, to a kindlier soil and air; that the harp was not broken, nor its music spoilt and lost, but handed up to a truer minstrel, who with a finer touch and heavenlier skill will bring out all the rich compass of its hidden music, which man would not have appreciated, and which earth would have spoiled;—these were things which had no place in their theology, hardly in

their dreams. They sorrowed as those who have no hope.

"But to the believer—that which seems to us the destruction of all fruitfulness is its true paternity, that which seems to dissolve all excellence, to wither up all beauty, to scatter all sweetness, and to mar all powers of reproduction, is the very thing by which these are led forth from inactivity and inertness, to do their work upon earth, and to fulfill the end of their being. Death, which is in itself an evil and a penalty, is yet God's instrument for opening prisons, and unloosing chains, and disengaging the higher vitalities and perfections of being. . . . It is by means of darkness that we reach the light. It is by falling that we rise; by going down into the depths of the valley, that we find our way up to the mountains of immortality beyond. It is through winter that we pass into spring. It is by dying that we are made to live, live forever,—for the life that is not reached by death seems but half secure,—the life that lasts, the life that is truly immortal and eternal, is only obtained by dying. It is resurrection—life that is the truest as well as the most glorious immortality. It admits of no reversal and no decay."

The above exposition, as powerful as it is beautiful, is by Dr. Bonar. To us it seems there is one thought strangely lacking. He shows us the darkness in which the heathen sorrows, he leads us into the light in which the believer rejoices: but—as far as his words go—we stand with him in a beautiful temple which is illumined by indirect lighting. Here direct lighting is best. We can supply it by adding the words of another: "Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." G.

COMMENTS

Imitation Which Is Not Flattery The proverb has it that imitation is the sincerest flattery. Not always. For a number of years our large cities have had "down-town" meetings during Lent. These meetings are held daily in some accessible place in the business district. Usually held at noon, they are not intended to run over a half hour. The office man and the office girl are to congregate there in the spare moments left from their luncheon hour and are to be led in serious thought by brief addresses and congregational songs. This has been going on for some time and though we do not wish to appear faultfinding, it is to be assumed that the de-

nominations conducting these services were not averse to interesting members of other churches as well as their own. This may not be very ethical, but in so good a cause so "trifling" a breach of the proprieties could easily be borne. Now the Lutherans of Chicago have announced, in imitation of these others, a series of daily Lenten meetings to be held at the noon hour in the Olympic theater. This imitation is not at all flattery, sincere or otherwise. It is practical criticism. The other Lenten meetings were manifestly far from what a Lutheran would wish them to be. The central Lenten thoughts were often not even mentioned, much less earnestly impressed upon the audiences. During Holy Week those many thousands that work in the Chicago loop will have little opportunity to go to the regular services; the business world takes no cognizance of this most sacred season. Shall the thousands of Lutherans among these workers be without the Word when so many others have it brought to them? Among them are many not as firmly grounded in the faith as they might be. Shall they be permitted to go to these other services that have nothing to offer them? Imitation or not, it was a very wise thing for the Chicago Lutherans to do when they decided to preach the Gospel in the loop of Chicago. Moody once said, "The devil has the best tunes". He promptly adopted the catchy popular songs and made them bear the words of his Gospel hymns. We may not share his opinions of musical values but we understand him and approve of his measures. The Lenten services of others are not "devil's tunes", but for all the good our Lutherans might get out of them they might as well be. To serve our own people we must not hesitate to adapt the ideas of others to our own better uses.

H. K. M.

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Sunday Blue Laws The Iowa legislature has decided by an overwhelming majority to enforce the laws pertaining to activities on the first day of the week. The new Attorney General, Havner, served notice as soon as he took office, that unless the old blue laws on the statute books were repealed he would try to enforce the existing laws rigorously. For fifty years Iowa had on its books a most stringent set of laws restraining all, or nearly all, public amusements on Sunday. These laws had been dead letters. The attitude of the Attorney General may well be understood. Sworn to uphold the laws of the commonwealth, he saw before him the prospect of standing idly by while a whole group of laws were being broken. Perhaps he thought that his declaration (that he would enforce all laws) would lead to their repeal. If that was his intention, he failed to carry it out. He is now doubly pledged to enforce obedience to all the laws that forbid, among other things, theaters, baseball, amusement parks, and all other forms of public amusement. Every kind of labor will be prohibited as well,

excepting those occupations expressly sanctioned under the law.—The state of Wisconsin, and most other states, have similar laws. In nearly all of them enforcement is rarely attempted in all instances. In Wisconsin there is an active organization which pursues no other aim than to complete the “blue law” legislation of our statutes with especial reference to the Sunday laws. They have so far published more than 200 pamphlets and are untiring in their efforts to shape public opinion in accordance with their plans. No doubt, there is much to be said in favor of having a real day of rest every week. Nothing can be said against legislation which seeks to protect the health and welfare of the citizens by prescribing one day of rest out of every seven. If that were the real aim of the agitation it might be easier to fall in with such plans. But unfortunately most active agitators are only incidentally interested in these truly civic improvements. They are conducting their campaign under the stimulus of their zeal for moral and religious uplift. For that reason they address themselves to church organizations and expect from them support in their plans “because they are doing Christian work”. It is true, the churches are deeply interested in Sunday observance. But—and that is a vital difference—the true Christian church is concerned with its individual members, irrespective of the laws of the state on the subject. Our Lutheran views on Sunday observance, for example, by no means tally with the superficial and mechanical designs of the Sabbatarians. A code of laws which contained all the blue laws ever devised would leave the Lutheran Christian exactly where he was without the compulsion of police power. He might even find that the many new laws have merely complicated his position. Our Third (Fourth) commandment is in itself a very lucid exposition of the duties toward God. Blue laws are not an improvement on it; they are a complication carried into it.—Let legislatures pass any laws they deem necessary for the health and welfare of the citizens. But let them abstain from assuming the duties of bailiffs for any religious (sectarian) legalism. Sunday amusements easily lead to abuse; so do other amusements: It is the duty of a Christian church to guide its members through this life which offers so many temptations. God’s law is a good enough basis from which to do this; there is no need of waiting for state laws or to depend on them. With or without them, the Christian’s conduct will remain quite the same. H. K. M.

“Jesus our passover was slain,
And has at once procured
Freedom from Satan’s heavy chain,
And God’s avenging sword.”

“Little habits drive nails into our coffins.”

THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

Article VIII—What the Church is

“Although the Church properly is the Congregation of Saints and true believers, nevertheless, since, in this life, many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled therewith, it is lawful to use the Sacraments which are administered by evil men: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat,” etc. (Matt. 23: 2). Both the Sacraments and the Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men.

They condemn the Donatists, and such like, who denied it to be lawful to use the ministry of evil men in the Church, and who thought the ministry of evil men to be unprofitable.”

What is the Church? This is not a mere academic question, one that offers the dogmatician the opportunity to make fine distinctions; it is a question that vitally concerns the personal faith of every Christian. If we are to be assured of our salvation, we must know that the Word preached to us, our Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper we receive, are truly valid and efficacious. This assurance we cannot have unless we know the right answer to our question.

This fact is illustrated by the Donatist schism to which our article refers. The Donatists were a powerful sect that formed itself in northern Africa at the beginning of the fourth century. Africa had long been the home of religious fanaticism and rigorism. The churches in Africa were extremely severe in their treatment of the lapsed, people who had denied the faith under the stress of bloody persecutions. They hoped to establish on earth a Church of perfect saints. If the Donatists did not go to these extremes, they at least held the validity of sacerdotal acts depended to some extent on the personal character of the preacher or priest.

Diocletian had in his persecution of the Christians (about A. D. 300) attempted to confiscate and destroy all sacred books in the possession of the Church. Many Christians had been driven by fear to surrender those they had. Such men were called traditors. Mensurius, bishop of Carthage, had shown great moderation in his conduct toward these unfortunates. When he died in 311, a strong party was quickly formed, whose object was to fill the vacancy with a more rigoristic man. But the opponents of this party succeeded in electing Caecilianus, who had been archdeacon under Mensurius.

Bishop Felix of Aptunga consecrated him, thereby offending the Primas of Numidia, bishop Secundus of Tigisi, who appears to have exercised a leading authority in the conduct of the election of the bishop of Carthage. Now Felix had been accused of having delivered the sacred books to the heathen officers. This gave the opponents of Caecilianus a reason for

declaring his consecration invalid. They in their turn elected Majorinus bishop of Carthage. From this arose a schism of long duration. All negotiations were in vain. The attempt to suppress the Donatists by force resulted in bloody riots. The sect spread rapidly throughout North Africa, where it maintained itself till the invasion of the Vandals and even to the coming of the Saracens in the beginning of the seventh century.

The Donatists asserted that theirs was the True Holy Church, that had the Spirit of God and the power to administer the Sacraments efficaciously, because its clergy was free from men who had committed mortal sin. They charged the Catholic church with having forfeited its character and power as Church by tolerating in the ministry men unworthy of sacred office. For this reason, they baptized again those coming from the ranks of the Catholic church, holding that the baptism they had there received was not valid. Against the interference of the Emperor they finally urged:

"What has Caesar to do with the Church?"

The defenders of the Catholic church very correctly declared that the validity of the Sacraments does not depend on the character of those who minister them: "Since therefore you see that they who baptize are ministers and are not lords, and the Sacraments are holy in themselves, not on account of men, why is it that you claim so much for yourselves? Why is it that you endeavor to exclude God from His gifts? Permit God to be over the things which are His. For that gift cannot be performed by a man because it is divine. If you think it can be so bestowed, you render void the words of the prophets and the promises of God, by which it is proved that God washes, not man." Optatus against the Donatists.

But arguments like these were also heard: "You cannot deny that in the city of Rome the episcopal cathedra was first placed by Peter, and in it sat Peter, the head of all the Apostles, wherefore he is called Cephas, so that in one cathedra unity is preserved by all, that the other Apostles might not claim each one for himself a cathedra; so that he is a schismatic and a sinner who against that one cathedra sets up another." Optatus. What the views of Augustine, the leader of the Orthodox in the dispute with the Donatists at Carthage (411), were, we may see from his letter against the Manichaeans: "Not to speak that wisdom which you do not believe to be in the Catholic Church, there are many other things which most justly keep me in her bosom. The consent of people and nations keeps me in the Church; so does her authority, inaugurated by miracles, nourished by hope, enlarged by love, established by age. The succession of priests keeps me, beginning from the very seat of Peter the Apostle, to whom the Lord after His resurrection gave it in charge to feed His sheep down to the present episcopate. And so lastly does the name itself of Catholic, which not

without reason, amid so many heresies, that Church alone has so retained that, though all heretics wish to be called Catholics, yet when a stranger asks where the Catholic Church meets no heretic will venture to point to his own basilica or house. Since then so many and so great are the very precious ties belonging to the Christian name which rightly keep a man who is a believer in the Catholic Church . . . no one shall move me from the faith which binds my mind with ties so many and so strong to the Christian religion."

"No one will attain to salvation and eternal life who has not Christ for his head; and no one can have Christ for his head who does not belong to the body of Christ, the Church." Though Augustine had at first objected to the use of temporal power against these heretics, he later advised it, quoting in favor of such practice Luke 14: 23: "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."

We see that each of the contending parties had recognized a part of the truth: the Donatists, that the Church is not dependent on the cathedra of Peter, or on the apostolic succession; the orthodox, that the validity of the Means of Grace is not impaired by the unworthiness of the agent. But neither of the two had been able to arrive at a clear understanding in the matter, as both labored under the error that the Church is a visible body. This struggle, then, must have confused many a soul, depriving it of the full assurance of its salvation.

Against this fundamental error our article declares that **the Church is the invisible Congregation of Saints and true believers.**

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2: 19-22.

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17: 20, 21. Further, **the fact that, in this life, many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled with it, does not deprive the Church of its character.**

Hypocrites and evil persons will always be found mingled with the Church: "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. . . . Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Matt. 25: 1, 12.

Still the Church remains the Church. Paul addresses the Corinthians as "the Church of God," though he has serious complaints to make against them: 1 Cor. 5: 1-6. 15: 12. 2 Cor. 12: 21.

Finally, "it is lawful to use the Sacraments, which are administered by evil men, as both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men."

Matt. 23: 2. 3: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not."

Phil. 1: 15-18: "Some indeed preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add afflictions to my bonds; but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

Rom. 3: 3. 4: "Unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what, if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?"

How the Church is to deal with those who prove themselves unworthy of the name of a Christian, does not here concern us; we have simply asked, How can a Christian know that he is under the saving and preserving influence of God, and thus be assured of his salvation? The answer is, The Church of God is where His Word and Sacraments are found. Be sure that the Word is being preached in its truth and purity and that the Sacraments are administered according to their divine institution, and you need have no doubt that they are effective in saving you for everlasting life. No one can by his unworthiness deprive you of their power. J. B.

THE RESURRECTION BODY

The body here is mortal, always subject to decay. We dwell in a poor, uncomfortable tent, continually is the canvas being rent, the cords are being loosed, and the tent pins are being pulled up. We are full of sufferings, and aches, and pains, which are but the premonitions of coming death. We all know, some by our decayed teeth, which are but the emblems of a decayed man; others by those gray hairs which are scattered here and there; we all know that our bodies are so constituted that they can not remain here except for a limited period, and they must—so God has willed it—return to their native dust. Not so, however, the new body; "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption." It will be a body upon which the tooth of time can have no power, and into which the dart of death can never be thrust. Age shall roll after age, but the body shall exist in everlasting youth. It shall sing, but never shall its song be stayed by weakness; it shall fly, but never shall its flight flag with weariness. There shall be no signs of mortality; the shroud, the mattock, and the spade are never seen in heaven. Such

a thing as an open grave shall never appear in the celestial kingdom; there they live, live, live; but never, never, never shall they die. See, then, how different the body must be; for as this body is constituted, every nerve and every blood vessel tells me I must die. It can not be otherwise. I must endure this stern decree, "Dust to dust, earth to earth, ashes to ashes," but in heaven every nerve of the new body shall cry, "Immortality."

There shall be, moreover, a great change in the new body as to its beauty. "It is sown in dishonor; it shall be raised in glory." You see here a crawling caterpillar, a picture of yourself, a creature that eats and drinks and may readily be trodden on. Wait a few weeks, that caterpillar shall spin itself a shroud, lie down, become inactive, and sleep. A picture of what you shall do. You must spin your winding-sheet and then be laid in the tomb. But wait a little while; when the warmth of the sun shall come that apparently lifeless thing shall burst its sheath. The chrysalis shall fall off, and the insects fly forth equipped with glittering wings. Having arrived at its full state of perfection, the very image of the creature shall be seen by us all dancing in the sunbeam. So shall we after passing through our wormhood here to our chrysalis state in the grave, burst our coffins and mount aloft, glorious winged creatures made like unto the angels; the same creatures, but oh! so changed.

Another transformation shall take place, namely, in power. "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." The same body that is weak shall be raised in power. We are puny things here. And oh, how weak we become when we die! A man must be carried by his own friends to his own grave; he can not even lay himself down in his last resting-place. Passively he submits himself to be laid out, to be wrapped up in his winding-sheet, and to be shut up in the darkness of the grave. The clods are shoveled over him, but he knows it not, neither could he resist his burial if he were conscious of it. But that powerless body shall be raised in power.

There will be in the bodies of the righteous an undoubted personality of character.

If you sow barley, it will not produce wheat; if you sow tares, they will not spring up in the form of rye. Every grain hath its own peculiar form; God hath given to every seed its own body. So there are differences among us here; no two bodies are precisely alike; there are marks on our countenances, and in our bodily conformation, that show that we are different. We are one blood, but not of one fashion. Well, when we are put into the grave, we shall crumble back and come to the same elements; but when we rise, we shall every one of us rise diverse from the other. The body of Paul shall not produce a body precisely like that of Peter; but to every seed his own body. In the case of our blessed Lord and Master, you will remember that when he rose Himself from the dead He preserved his

personality; there were still the wounds in his hands, and still there was the spear-mark in his side.—Sel.

ROMANISM AND THE LAW

There was recently a clash between the civil authorities and the Roman Church in the Panama Canal Zone that grew out of the *Ne Temere* decree. The clerk of the district issued two marriage licenses to the same couple. The first was presented to the Protestant chaplain of the Ancon Hospital, and he, an Episcopalian, performed the marriage ceremony. The second was presented to the Roman chaplain of the same institution, Father Daniel Quijan. In making the required return Father Quijan added this impudent note to the official certificate: "N. B.—No Catholic parties can be married by ministers who do not belong to the Roman Catholic Church, but only by Roman Catholic priests. Otherwise the marriage will be void and the parties remain free to be married to some other person. And the children whom they may have are looked upon as unlawful. This is for all the world and for every nation." What then happened we will tell in the words of *The Continent*, from which this account is taken: "Happily Mr. Carson (the Protestant chaplain) was too spirited an American to abide such insolence. He appealed direct to the acting governor of the zone, Honorable Chester Harding. Mr. Carson called attention to the fact that, like himself, Father Quijano was in the service of the national government, and insisted that the priest should 'be restrained from publicly interpreting a theory of marriage in violation of the laws of the United States and of the Canal Zone while he is in the employ of the Panama Canal.' The response of the governor was prompt and unequivocal. In an official letter addressed to Quijano, Governor Harding, besides condemning the issue of a second license as unlawful, said:

"It is of course clear that all priests and ministers of any religious association or denomination in good standing may perform the marriage ceremony, and this ceremony is legal and binding . . . regardless of any religious denomination to which either or both of the parties may belong . . . So far as your statements may be intended as an aspersion on marriages performed by other ministers and priests of other religious denominations, as distinct from an exposition of the tenets of the Catholic Church, it is an improper one for an official or employee of the Panama Canal."—The Lutheran.

"BIG BUSINESS" AND EDUCATION

"The Rockford State Center writes:

"Either that, or the United States will be a corporation-governed nation. It is too largely that, now. The powerful money foundations, such as the Rocke-

feller Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, and others of similar character, are pouring out vast sums of money in support of propaganda for crushing out of service educators that have a vision antagonistic to the money oligarchy, so it is claimed, and recent investigations seem to substantiate the fact, in order that students in college shall become imbued with ideas not in harmony with the established order. To facilitate their work, men can be found in every section of the country to further the interests of 'big business' and the money oligarchy."

Here we have an additional reason for the support of our own schools. The schools selling out to these rich foundations will naturally have teachers working in harmony with "big business," and it would be entirely improper to engage a man as teacher in political economy whose ideas in any way would antagonize or criticize the business methods of these large corporations. It would hardly be fair to eat their bread and talk against them. By their millions they will be able to buy up the schools and control the education of the nation. It is undoubtedly a good investment, otherwise they would never have placed their money in these schools. The church school, which is supported by the people, is free to tell the truth about corporation greed and to preach against theft in high places: Such schools are necessary in our days, when stealing has more than ever been reduced to a fine art. There is more than ever a call for men who will cry out against the stock manipulators and managers of monopolistic enterprises who pose before the world as financial geniuses, but are nothing but thieves on a large scale: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they be placed alone in the midst of the earth," says the prophet Isaiah. Luther seems to have had some experience with such people in his day when he writes: "Yea, we might well let the lesser individual thieves alone if we could arrest the great powerful archthieves, with whom princes and rulers associate. They daily pillage not only a city or two, but all Germany. (Substitute America.) Such is the way of the world, that he who can publicly rob and steal runs at large in security and freedom, claiming honor from men, while the petty, sly thieves, guilty of only a small offense, must suffer, to contribute to the appearance of godliness and honor in the other class. Yet, the latter should know that before God they are the greater thieves, and that he will punish them as they merit."

"It is impossible to churn happiness out of a chest of gold; it will never come. You can never make unfading crowns of fading flowers."—Case.

—"What shall I come to, father!" said a young man, "if I go on prospering in this way?" "To the grave," replied the father.

PULL

By Rev. F. W. Murray.

"How is your church going along now?" said a minister to the deacon of a nearby congregation.

"Only fairly," was the reply.

"Why, what's the matter?"

"Oh, I scarcely know; our pastor doesn't seem to draw as he did at first. I think it would be better for him to seek a change."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. How is the prayer-meeting getting along?"

"Well, I don't think so very well. But, to be honest, I haven't been attending so well as I might lately."

"I suppose there is some excuse for you. Sabbath-school takes up a good deal of your time. I suppose you are superintendent yet?"

"Well, no, I am not now. My business is pushing me pretty hard, and my time is pretty well taken up."

"Now, see here, my young friend; you say your pastor isn't drawing as he used to. You'll pardon me for a plain talk. I am an old man. Do you think it is fair to take a young man fresh from college and full of the high ideals and enthusiasm of youth, and call him to your church, and then take your hands right off him and let him do this work alone?"

"Oh, I don't know that you could say that we are doing that. We are footing the bills."

"Well, I am glad to hear that. Some men don't even have the grace to do that. But footing the bills is a small part of your contract. You promised in your call to give your minister all due encouragement and obedience in the Lord. Do you think it's fair, for example, that you should drop out of the prayer-meeting and Sabbath-school?"

"Well, I suppose it's hardly fair. I had not looked at the matter in that light."

"Don't you think it's the right light?"

"Well, I suppose it is."

"Now, my brother, suffer a further word of advice from an old friend. You go home and do your level best to pull and get your friends to pull; and you can take the word of an old experienced friend that your pastor will 'draw.' I know him, and his good heart and sincerity; and I can warrant you he will draw if you will all try."

There is no patent on the old minister's advice. It is free, and it will be found to work well in many cases. To call an inexperienced man, and then heartlessly to allow him to make his experiments; and, if they temporarily fail to "draw," mercilessly to withdraw the hearty support, which is above all things his due, is one of the coldest and most merciless pieces of conduct one could well imagine.—Christian Endeavor World.

POWER OF THE WORD

John 6: 63.

Gilbert West and Lord Lyttleton, both men of acknowledged talents, had imbibed the principles of Infidelity from a superficial view of the Scriptures. Fully persuaded that the Bible was an imposture, they were determined to expose the cheat. Mr. West chose the resurrection of Christ, Lord Lyttleton the conversion of St. Paul, for the subject of hostile criticism. Both sat down to their respective task, full of prejudice and a contempt for Christianity. The result of their separate attempts was truly extraordinary. They were both converted by their endeavors to overthrow the truth of Christianity. They came together, not, as they expected, to exult over an imposture exposed to ridicule, but to lament their own folly, and to congratulate each other on their joint conviction that the Bible was the Word of God. The Spirit moved them to bear witness, both in favor of revelation. From the pen of one came, "Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul"; the other wrote, "Observations on the Resurrection of Christ." "Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us." Is. 8: 10. "He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Is. 28: 29.—Selected.

OH, THE JOY THAT NOW I AM.

Oh, the joy that now I am
Jesus' own and blessed lamb!
Lo, I have a sure Defender,
Ever true and ever tender;
I am loved of Him and known,
Called by name to be His own.

Safe beneath His scepter's reign,
I secure my sweetest gain;
Pastures fresh, my soul to nourish,
Lest it sink, and faint, and perish;
And my thirsty lips may drink
At His waters' healing brink.

Why should not my soul rejoice
In my Shepherd's kindly voice?
Sought by Him, restored, befriended,
Till my happy life is ended;
And I lay me down to rest
In His arms, forever blest.

Adapted from the German, Weil ich Jesu Schaefflein bin, by J. T. Mueller.—Luth. Pioneer.

—"It is a great mercy to have the Gospel of peace, it is far greater to have the peace of the Gospel."

—"Death stung himself to death when he stung Christ."—Romaine.

OUR SUBSTITUTE

The story of the suffering and death of Jesus is so wonderful that human reason fails to understand it. The Jewish rabble insisted that He who hung on the tree was a base deceiver, while the Roman soldier says that He is the Son of God. Who is right? If the Jews were justified in their position, the scene on Calvary would have little meaning for us. If the centurion spoke the truth, men should pause and inquire carefully why the Son of God hangs on the cursed tree.

We talk of stories which have a human interest, but here is one which, in a unique sense, is of surpassing interest to every child of man. The idea of a substitute is familiar to all, and Scripture tells us that Jesus, in His Passion, is our Substitute. This can only mean that we, each and every one, should be suffering for our misdeeds; that we should bear the curse of God for our sins. But Jesus, of His own free will, out of great love for us, His brethren, takes our place. As we look upon Him with the eye of faith, we perceive that the curse is removed from us, because He, our Substitute, has rendered full satisfaction to God for our sins. What return can we make for His atoning love? Shall we not with lips and hands praise Him all the days of our life?—Lutheran Witness.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Encouraging Signs

Some agreeable signs of Spring are the building plans made in a number of congregations to be carried out this year. From Slades Corners we hear of a new school house and a much improved parsonage.—Waterloo is building a parsonage and turning over the parsonage formerly occupied by the Rev. Mr. Pankow to Mr. Theo. Schultz, teacher of the parish school. At Jefferson a similar change is decided upon. In the latter instance a generous gift of \$2,000.00, made by a member of the church, induced the congregation to appropriate the remaining funds necessary to carry out the intended changes. Mr. M. H. Schumacher, principal of the school, will occupy the former parsonage.

Church Growth in the United States

The communicant membership of the churches in the United States exceeds 40,000,000, according to the statistics issued by the Rev. H. K. Carroll, formerly in charge of the United States census of religious bodies, now associate secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The statistics are printed in the year book issued by the federal council. The total does not include children or others affiliated with the churches, but only actual communicants.

The net increase for the year was 747,000, or 204,000 more than the increase in 1915. Since 1890 the membership of the churches has almost doubled, having in 1890 a total of 20,618,000. The churches gained 94 per cent and the population 61 per cent in twenty-six years.

For the first time in the year book a chapter is devoted to the distribution of Protestantism in the world. The figures are: The Anglican communion, estimated, 26,758,000;

Baptists, 21,000,000; Congregationalists, 4,355,000; Lutherans, 70,500,000; Methodists, 32,418,000, and Presbyterians and Reformed, 30,800,000.

The Sunday schools of the United States have had a net increase in membership in the last ten years of 6,300,000 and an increase in the number of schools of between 15,000 and 16,000.

Episcopalian Relief Fund

The Episcopalians throughout the United States have completed their campaign, begun a year ago, to collect a reserve fund of five million dollars for the purpose of guaranteeing pensions to their superannuated clergymen and to the widows and orphans of clergymen deceased. It is said that the total contributed has overshot the mark, amounting to six and a half millions. The additional amount will make it possible for those in charge of the fund to assume the obligations of the General Clergy Relief Fund.

American Church Rights Hit

Mexico City—Representatives of Protestant religious denominations, which own approximately \$10,000,000 worth of property in Mexico, met Ambassador Fletcher to discuss church interests under the new constitution, which prohibits ecclesiastical functions by any but Mexican citizens and bars church societies from holding property. Among denominations at the conference were the Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians.

The ambassador said the new constitution operated to annul all conflicting treaty rights of foreigners and that the matter would need to be taken up by diplomatic exchanges.

It is the impression that satisfactory adjustment will be reached soon after the installation of the new constitutional government in May.

"Sunday" Figures

The records of the recent Billy Sunday campaign in Boston show 48,903 converts distributed as follows: Churches: Baptist, 11,845; Methodist, 7,104; Congregational, 6,195; Episcopal, 3,275; Presbyterian, 2,282; Evangelical, 128; Christian, 118; Friends, 70; undesignated (blank), 2,887; out of town, 10,823; Catholic, 1,513; Lutheran, 892; miscellaneous, 931; Unitarians, 296; Universalist, 128; Christian Science, 239; Hebrews, 177. Inasmuch as the Church authorities at Boston discountenanced the attendance of Catholics at these Protestant revival services, the 1,513 Catholic converts made by Billy Sunday must be odd instances worth some investigation. We understand that Billy Sunday certifies their names to Catholic pastors.—The Catholic Citizen.

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