

The Northwestern Lutheran

Jan 23
Rev. C. Buenger
65 N. Ridge

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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IN CONTRITION

I will return unto the Lord
From pathways of transgression.
My God, to me Thy help afford,
Hear Thou my heart's confession.
Let Thy blest Spirit's strength divine,
Create anew this heart of mine;
Grant me, through grace, this blessing!

Man fails to see His wretched plight,—
So blind is his condition.
Without Thy Holy Spirit's light,
Sin leads him to perdition.
Corrupt in thought, and word, and deed,
Filled with distress, I come, and plead:
"O Father mine, relieve me!"

Knock at my door, and make me feel
My sinfulness and blindness.
The evil I have done reveal,
Win Thou my heart with kindness.
Then, as I comprehend my woe,
Dear Father, let my cheeks o'erflow
With tears of true contrition.

Thy grace in Christ hath rescued me,
From flames of hell I'm riven.
Naught have I lacked. Thy love so free
All good to me hath given.
That I might be forever Thine,
Thy faithfulness, O Father mine,
Spared not the rod to save me!

Lord Jesus, to Thy wounds I flee,
In this blest shelter hide me!
Thy anguish was endured for me,
My guilt has crucified Thee!
On Thee was laid the world's vast load
Of sin, and Thou, blest Lamb of God,
Most willingly didst bear it.

Garbed in Thy robe of righteousness,
The Father will receive me.
In love's paternal tenderness
His counsel He will give me.
He knows the traps the world doth lay,
He knows that Satan day by day,
Doth labor to ensnare me.

Henceforth from evil will I flee,
And shun the world's temptation.
Let Thy blest Spirit dwell in me,
Revealing Thy salvation.
His strength can stem the pow'r of sin,
Whate'er displeaseth Thee within,
May I forever banish.

ANNA HOPPE,
Milwaukee, Wis.

(Translated from the German)

The Lord Hath Bidden Him

2 Sam. 16:11

"Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head"—in these words Abishai the son of Zeruah voices his resentment of Shimei's treatment of David on the day of the king's flight before his rebellious son. And we all are inclined to feel ourselves in accord with him, for he speaks from our own natural heart: Curses upon him who curses us; vengeance upon him who wrongs us.

But David says: "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him." This does not mean that Shimei was moved by God to curse David, nor even that he was justified in doing so. In his denunciation and execration of the king, Shimei was giving vent to the wicked thoughts of his own heart; and he is damned of God for his wickedness. But, while Shimei curses because he wants to curse and thus assumes the sole responsibility for his conduct, God employs his very wickedness to serve a divine purpose.

David feels this. In the humiliation and sufferings of that day, he sees the hand of his God. And that determines his attitude toward his suffering. Against the accusations of Shimei he could have indignantly asserted his innocence, but before Jehovah he bows down overwhelmed with the knowledge of his guilt. While he feels that Shimei is doing him a great injustice, he knows that justice from the hand of the holy and righteous God would mean for him a fate that is far worse than that which has befallen him now. He bows his head in humble submission.

But his submission is not the resignation of despair. "It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day. He knows that while Shimei hates him the Lord loves him. Though acknowledging himself a sinner, he boldly lays hold on and clings to the gracious promises of God. He trusts to the God who is merciful to sinners that he will turn the sufferings of his child into blessings.

And this has been done even now, though David may at the moment not realize it. Why should the Lord so plague his chosen servant? One could argue that this could result in nothing but harm; that the foes of Israel would have occasion to rejoice over the humiliation of the king whose hand they had felt

and that David would be unfitted to be the head of God's people, his dignity gone and his authority undetermined.

True, if we judge after the manner of men. But God's thoughts differ from ours. David was the king after the heart of God only as long as he remained faithful to Jehovah and single-minded in his service. The Lord had no need of David's person, nor of his abilities and powers. On these the welfare of Israel did not depend.

This day we see David a broken-hearted father, a king deprived of his power and stripped of his dignity. He has, it seems, lost everything, everything—save the grace of his God. And it is given him to cling to that grace in the face of all adversities. Jehovah's grace is his only comfort, his sole possession. The dross has been burned from him by the fire of his adversities and his faith again shines forth pure and strong. That faith in the grace of God is his only glory. By that faith he is the happy child of God and again the king after the heart of God. Shimei's curses have been turned into an unspeakably great blessing.

"The Lord hath bidden him"—in this spirit we should face the adversities with which we meet and bear the indignities heaped upon us by our foes. In them our God is dealing with us. He is dealing with us in mercy for Jesus' sake, though we have deserved nothing but everlasting punishment. He will turn the persecutions and the curses of our foes into blessings. Our weakness and humiliation before men is not really weakness. God is simply knocking away from under us the rotten props of human strength in order that we may rest directly on the firm rock of his power. God is burning away the dross in order that the pure gold may remain.

Paul puts it thus: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: **for when I am weak, then am I strong.**"

After the short season of sorrow and humiliation God again manifested before all men his grace toward David, restoring him to his throne and uniting the Israelites about him. We, too, can look forward confidently toward such a day. For we are promised: "Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." J. B.

My daily prayer is that my late chastisement may have its intended effect, and make me all the rest of my days more humble and less self-confident. Self-confidence has often let me down fearful lengths; and would without God's gracious interference prove my endless perdition.

—Henry Martyn.

COMMENTS

Work In the Home Bishop J. J. Hartley of the Catholic church recently addressed the members of the Catholic Women's League, at Columbus, O., on the importance of improving conditions in the home "rather than indulging in indiscriminate welfare work." Of the home he said: "The greatest thing on earth is a Christian home and the greatest ornament of that home is a Christian mother. A good father and mother come out of the mind of God himself and He has given to the Christian mother a mind and a tact that make her like an angel in the home. There is no better place in the world for work than in the Christianization of the home."

Next to the individual soul the home is the most important unit in society. Indeed, in a very proper sense the family is the real unit of society, for a community is made up, not so much of so many individuals as of so many homes or families. And what the person or individual is to be as he grows up in society depends more upon the home than upon any other institution or force in the world. The home therefore is where the first and the most work needs to be done, and every mother will find her hands amply filled doing that work. Welfare work on the outside there is to do, and there is much of it to do. But there is so much to do on the outside because so little is being done on the inside—within the home itself. Make the homes what they ought to be and the necessity of welfare work will grow less and less. Much emphasis and much effort are being placed at the wrong point, even churches are crying frantically for more welfare workers, and in their zeal the home which is the source both of good and evil is forgotten. Why not work harder at the source of conditions? If the levees of the Mississippi in the recent flood had been high and strong enough the lowlands would not have been flooded. Let the moral and the spiritual levees of the home be built up and things will go much better all around.—Lutheran Standard.

This goes to the very heart of the matter. What the world needs today is Christian homes, those smaller God-given circles where every member seeketh not his own but is mindful of the admonition: "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification." But, let us be just and not over-emphasize the mother, her opportunities and responsibilities, as if she were the only factor worth considering when home-making and home-betterment are under consideration. What of the father? Is he not worth considering? God kept his word when he said of man, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." God be thanked that true wifeness and self-sacrificing motherhood are not yet extinct among us! Every true Christian woman is an inestimable blessing to all

who are so fortunate as to come within the sphere of her influence, which in every case is far wider than appears. But that does not exempt the man and father from duty and responsibility where the home is concerned. When these are spoken of there are, sad to say, many who with a gesture toward woman and a "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me" would turn the insinuation of responsibility aside. That Bishop Hartley should emphasize woman's capabilities and duties is easily understood when you bear in mind that he is addressing the Catholic Women's League. Let us, however, bear in mind that God addresses both parents when he asks for the proper attention to the best interests of the child; if anything, he singles out the fathers for special admonition to faithfulness when he says: "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." True it is that the fathers of today have a host of reasons to advance for being unable to fulfill their most obvious duty toward their children, but it were well for their own and their children's sake to ask what valuation God will set by these reasons. After all, there is nothing more precious than a soul; and no one can be expected to give the child-soul more loving and constant attention than the parent. Let us fathers prayerfully seek wisdom and guidance with the Heavenly Father that we may strive to give our children Christian homes in order that they may glorify God in the heavenly Home. G.

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Back to the Fundamental Principle In the Western Christian Advocate we find the following complaint which is

of unusually great interest to us:

"The efforts of the promoters of religious education in the week-day schools are increasing their emphasis upon that enterprise. They are now seeking to get a half holiday on Wednesday that they may give religious instruction to the children. So far 228 towns and cities are experimenting with the plan. As yet they have taken the children after the public school hours, but in none of them has the half-day release been brought about. The latest move is for a united plan to present the matter before the legislature of the different States and secure modifications of laws. It is found that privately the members of the school boards favor the release, but officially they oppose it on legal grounds. It is interesting to see how the public school system has gotten away from Protestantism, originally the child of this branch of the religious life of America. The cleavage between church and State has continued until Protestantism has no means save that of the Sunday school to give to her children the religious education that is absolutely essential, not only to her own survival, but to that of the moral and ethical standards of the nation. She is now placed in the compromising and pathetic position where she must beg to have religion given to her children and to have her supplication received by a cold attitude and to suffer the information that compliance cannot be made with her request because of existing laws. This situation has been produced not because of the difference between the denominations of Protestantism, but because of the fundamental opposition of

the Roman Catholic Church and the Hebrew synagogue. To those who are not familiar with the facts, this assertion may seem to be unjust and perhaps untrue; but anyone who investigates the situation will find that we are historically correct. It places both bodies of Christianity in a peculiar position. They must each support the State schools by direct taxation and then support their own schools by denominational funds because they do not have the opportunity to do the work in the regularly-established system of education that the religious life of the people requires. To any discerning man the perplexity of the situation will seem almost an incongruity that a strange providence has thrust into the path of the development of the religious life of the nation."

We admit that we do not quite understand how the writer can deplore that the "public school system has gotten away from Protestantism" and deprecate the wide cleavage between Church and State, which to us frequently appears to be too insufficiently marked. We cannot agree with him in his statement that "this situation has been produced not because of the difference between the denominations of Protestantism, unless he no more includes the Lutheran Church among the Protestant Churches. We want to state most emphatically that we are fully in accord with the Roman Catholic Church and the Hebrew synagogue in so far as they insist on a clean separation of Church and State, though they may, perhaps, take that stand from different motives. And we feel that no American citizen should deplore this separation or attempt to obviate it. Our country is not a Protestant country, a Catholic country, or a Jewish country. It is a country in which, according to the principles of the founders, men can live together in harmony as citizen, while they worship their God according to the dictates of their conscience.

We admit that a most perplexing situation has ensued. But it has not been thrust upon us by a "strange providence"; it is of our own creation. For decades the thought has been assiduously fostered among us that the State is actually first in authority over the child. During the recent war the Lutheran parochial school was attacked most bitterly and without cause, as interfering with the sacred prerogative of the State. It was made plain to us that we were merely tolerated during good behavior. Since then the rights of our Lutheran parents have been interfered with by legislation, and attempts have been made, notably in Michigan, to close our schools entirely.

Let the Western Christian Advocate ask its constituency whether it did not have a hand in this suppression of the freedom of education.

Now these good people find themselves "in the compromising and pathetic position where they must beg to have religion given to their children and to have their supplication received by a cold attitude and to suffer the information that compliance cannot be made with their request because of existing laws."

What is to be done? Let them repent of their past errors and go back to the fundamental principle.

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Let them start with the question, Whose is the child? They will find in Scripture, and in nature as well, that the child is first and foremost the parent's; that the parent is responsible to God for its training; and that no one can relieve them of that responsibility.

They will find that the State cannot assume control of the education of the child without trespassing on the rights of the parents and interfering with them when they conscientiously attempt to do their duty. Then let them stand with those who are fighting for the freedom of education and begin to found schools in which they train their children according to dictates of their conscience. They have a difficult task before them, we admit, but one worthy of every effort and sacrifice. It will mean destroying forces that they have helped create. It will be a blessing to the cause of the Christian training of the young and, at the same time, a step back toward true Americanism.

J. B.

Budget and Canvass With the Synodical sessions approaching our attention is again called to meeting the budget necessary for carrying on the work of the Synod. In considering this matter, we would make a few pertinent remarks which in a measure might prove serviceable.

First of all, some errors are to be avoided in regard to the makeup of the budget. Thus an arbitrary and artificial budget is to be eschewed. The various boards of the Synod should confer as to the amount of money to be raised. In determining this, due heed should be given both to the needs in the field and to the financial condition and competency of the people within the borders of Synod.

As to the extent of Synodical work the following fields are covered by our Joint Synod: 1) Educational institutions, viz: Theological Seminary at Wauwatosa, Wis.; Normal School and College at New Ulm, Minn.; Northwestern College at Watertown, Wis.; and the preparatory school at Saginaw, Mich., 2) Home Mission with approximately 80 stations and

more, 3) Indian Mission in Arizona with 9 stations, 4) Support of widows and superannuated pastors and teachers, 5) Home for the Aged at Belle Plaine, Minn., and 6) in conjunction with the Synodical Conference Negro Mission in the South.

Each of these departments of Synodical work is under a special board of control. These boards must carefully analyze the conditions and needs of their particular fields, and settle the budget for the ensuing year accordingly. But in doing so it is of no less importance to give due heed to the financial conditions of the constituents supporting Synodical work. It must not be forgotten that one emphatic difficulty for raising the amount needed is the scarcity of money due to the depression in business. There is no worthy cause today which is not confronted with difficulty in securing necessities, and the difficulty has a reasonable basis. There are many conscientious thrifty people who find times are hard and it is with difficulty they meet pledges already made. This difficulty of finances ought to be met with care and caution on the part of those who make up the budget.

A careful analysis of the situation ought to be made—the numerical strength of Synodical membership, both of voting and communicant members of good standing, deducting 10% from parish reports, local and physical conditions, business and labor status within the various districts, the status of farming communities—all this ought to be taken into minute consideration, even to the extent of examining official economic and business statistics given out by State or Federal Government, in order to attain a correct appraisal of the competency of our people.

Having analyzed the situation, an adequate budget may then be settled upon and announced to the church-body as the best judge of what is really necessary for the support and upbuilding of Christ's Kingdom. When properly qualified men, pre-eminently the pastors, visitors, and other informed men to assist them, present these needs to the Christian people, with spiritual encouragement of the Scriptures bearing upon the case, it can safely be left to the people, as the children of God, as families and individuals, to answer the Lord's demands. If this has been properly cared for through the year, the results will appear in the canvass.

We do not believe, however, that each member of the Church should be apportioned. Such apportionment is of the nature of a tax. There is no just basis upon which it can be levied, and there is no Scriptural authority for such a levy under the New Testament dispensation. All contributions toward the support of the Lord's cause are a matter of Christian charity, and are directed by the measure of grace God has presented to each individual. But we do believe, that the every-member canvass is Scriptural, when properly conducted. "Let every one of you lay by him in

store, as God hath prospered him," says Paul, 1 Cor. 16: 2. It simply means the assurance of a definite opportunity presented to each baptized or communicant member to respond to the need of God's house and cause. The method of it must be left to the discretion of the particular congregation.

It is the duty and privilege of every believer to worship God with offerings, to honor him with his substance, and to give as the Lord has prospered him. This is a most sacred and important duty and privilege. Let us never forget that God has appointed His people to be His stewards and that He holds us accountable in proportion to the amount He has committed to our care. True, He is not dependent upon us, but He is well pleased with fidelity in stewardship, and has promised to pour out substantial blessing upon it. Yet He is very sensitive about stewards and offerings. An unjust and disloyal steward He summons to account, and often takes his stewardship away. Let us, therefore, give diligent heed to the needs of the Lord's cause; and when the budget of Synod is again submitted to us, let us all consider it in this light, each one using his best wisdom to meet it squarely for the furtherance of Christ's Kingdom on earth.

J. J.

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Eliminating Christ An Episcopal rector of Elmira, New York, reports to "The Churchman" that last Christmas, at a community Christmas service, song slips were used which bore the following garbled version of "Silent Night, Holy Night."

"Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright;
Round thy children, Father on high,
Beams the light of thy starry sky.
Sleep in heavenly peace.

"Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds pray at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Golden beams from the eastern star.
Comes the glorious morn.

"Silent night, holy night,
God on high, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from the holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Peace and heavenly love."

— Kirchliche Zeitschrift.

Early in our career as a writer for the Northwestern Lutheran, we protested against the community Christmas celebrations which were springing up at about that time. For this we were criticized by a writer in a Lutheran magazine, who thought us rather narrow for the stand we took. However, the notice we print above fully bears out our arguments. The trend of all community functions of that kind can be no other than that which is easily recognized in the "garbled version" of the beautiful song, "Stille Nacht." Once we realize what really is the spirit of such functions,

we will have no word of appreciation or of praise for them. We will, rather, regard them as an insidious attack on the faith by which we live. The garbled song is bad enough, garbled hearts are worse. J. B.

GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNODICAL CONFERENCE OF NORTH AMERICA

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America. On the 10th of July, 1872, representatives of the Synods of Ohio, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, and the Norwegian Synod had assembled in St. John's Lutheran Church at Milwaukee, Wis., and effected the organization. Later the Synod of Illinois merged into that of Missouri, while the Synod of Ohio and the Norwegian Synod withdrew in 1881 because of the great "predestinarian controversy." Meanwhile there was an accession of other Synods, so that at present the Synodical Conference comprises the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, the Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, the Slovak Synod, and the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church.

What was the reason for such a confederacy of Lutheran Synods? It was not for external or material strength and glory, not to effect an imposing organization of Lutheran Church bodies in this country under titled dignitaries, at which the multitudes would gaze with wonder, or that such amalgamation of Synods might develop into a mighty stronghold and power for selfish purposes that the Synodical Conference was organized. Every thought of this kind was discarded by the founders of this organization as conflicting with the idea of the Church presented in Scripture as a spiritual kingdom of Christ, over which He reigns supreme. Such an external union with all its numerical and material strength could add nothing to the saving work of the Church. No, the purpose which governed the organization of the Synodical Conference is plainly stated in its constitution, article 3: Outward expression of unity of spirit by the respective Synods; mutual strengthening in faith and confession; fostering the spirit of unity in doctrine and practice, and removing, as much as possible, eventual or threatening disturbances relative to doctrine and practice; and finally united activity in work common to all its members.

Evidently what brought this union of Synods about is the fact, that they are of one Spirit. Experiencing what Paul says in his second epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 4: 13: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believe, and therefore have spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak," they formed a closer union. The founders of the Synodical Conference rejoiced in the fact that despite

former disunion which was a sad spectacle for all the friends of the Lutheran Zion in America that God, in great mercy, has led these Synods into a fellowship which is loyal to the Gospel of Christ and the confessions of the Lutheran Church.

Such unity of faith was and is fully in keeping with the latter. For thus the Apology of the Augsburg says (M. 152, 5): "The Christian fellowship consists not alone in fellowship of outward signs or rites, but it consists especially in inward communion of eternal things in the heart, as of the Holy Ghost, of faith, of the fear and love of God, which fellowship nevertheless has outward marks so that it can be recognized, namely, the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the Gospel of Christ." The unity which the members of Synods comprising the Synodical Conference would fain see, is far deeper and more vital than mere unanimity of opinion, or identity of polity, or co-operation in external church work. They are glad to recognize each other as brethren professing the same faith and enjoying the same eternal blessings of the Gospel, and to be recognized by them as such. They are subjects of the same Lord and working together in the same glorious cause, and they not only desire to enjoy each others fellowship and encouragement, but are engaged in a mission in which they need each other's encouragement and co-operation.

Thus far the Synodical Conference has, by the grace of Almighty God, existed for fifty years. And it is this fact which gives reason for rejoicing and thanksgiving. For what is it we rejoice in at this Golden Jubilee? Is it something new, or something peculiar which no one else is in possession of, or is entitled to? Forsooth there are those who would stamp the Synodical Conference as a peculiar sect holding peculiar tenets and exercising peculiar practice. Yet we stand on no peculiar ground, save "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone." The real cause of our rejoicing at this Jubilee is this, that there has been revealed in its fulness to all Synods comprising the Synodical Conference the same Gospel, of which St. John says in his first epistle 1:3: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," while on the other hand we find ourselves in full agreement with the Lutheran confession which says Apology (M. 154, 11): "It is verily true, that the Christian Church is not like any other external polity, bound to this or that land, kingdom, or nation, as the Pope of Rome would have it, but rather men scattered here and there from the rising to the setting of the sun, who agree concerning the Gospel, and have the same Christ, the same Holy Ghost, and the

same Sacraments, whether they have the same or different human traditions."

Fifty years of inter-Synodical fellowship in the pure and unadulterated Gospel of the Savior! Half a century for a church body composed of separate Synods to have remained true to the teachings of Holy Writ in faith and practice, testifying the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, over and against the whole of a godless world, against all the errors of the present age, refusing to compromise with any teachings of modern liberalism, refusing to fraternize with any church body that will not accept our Evangelical Confession; carrying on incessantly the great work of preaching Christ crucified for the salvation of sinners, and performing the works of love for the amelioration of human misery in its charitable societies and institutions, which the church is moved to do for the glory of God, spreading the light of the Gospel in every way possible, in the house and family, in Christian Day Schools, in educational institutions, in home and foreign missions—what a wonder of God before our eyes! And what grounds for rejoicing and thanksgiving on our part! Who can measure the rich blessings which have been poured upon the Lutheran Church of America, yea upon the whole of our land and people! Through the medium of the Synodical Conference and its blessed work of Christian fellowship this land has become a veritable garden of God during the half century of its existence.

But let us not forget at this Jubilee, that there are always forces at work which tend to part the most closely knit unities even when they are consecrated by Christian faith. Someone has said, where there are no dogmatical grounds of discord, nor any open alienation, there may still be the beginnings of separation, and a chill breeze may be felt even when the sun is shining with summer warmth. Next to the grace of God to sustain our unity in faith we need on our part love, that love of which Christ says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love toward one another," and, "a new commandment I give you, that ye love one another." And we do well ever to ponder that splendid plea for Christian unity which Paul makes in his epistle to the Philippians, chapter 2:1-4: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." We have all known and experienced the consolation in Christ, the comfort of love, and the fellowship of the Spirit, should it not impel us to continue in the unity of the spirit and in that blessed work which we as a truly

Lutheran Church body are called to—the establishing and extending of Christ's Kingdom on earth by proclaiming above all the one great doctrine of salvation that man is justified before God by no merits of his own but solely by the grace of God through faith in the merits of Christ, true, at the same time, to the purpose the Synodical Conference has been organized for, namely, of mutually strengthening each other in faith and confession, of fostering the spirit of unity in doctrine and practice, and of removing, as much as possible, eventual and threatening disturbances relative to doctrine and practice?

A semi-century of true Christian fellowship and unity of faith among the members of the Synodical Conference despite human weakness and shortcomings on our part, despite the manifold dangers of disrupting this unity of spirit surrounding us,—how much gratitude to God do we owe on this semi-centennial for having preserved spiritual unity among us during all these perilous years! May the Lord in His grace and mercy continue to preserve and protect the Synodical Conference in its fraternal concord for the furtherance of His Kingdom unto the glory of His name.

J. J.

REVIVALISM

The "Big Four" weapon of the devil in his warfare against Christianity is: Deprivation, mutilation, procrastination, vacillation. When he can not keep the people from hearing the gospel, or take it away from the Christians, he either undermines its authority or puts a wrong construction on it. When he succeeds in neither, he makes man put off acceptance of it to some more convenient time; or keeps him running from one sect to another, as the different revivalists may direct, thus keeping the word of God, the good seed, from sprouting and bearing fruit.

Revival, in the Biblical sense, is only another name for conversion. But whereas conversion can be used both about heathens and fallen Christians, revival can properly be used only about such who **have been** living Christians, but who now are spiritually dead.

But this distinction is now never stressed. Nor does it make any difference which word is used. The object sought is the main thing, namely, the saving of man's soul. The object, then, of conducting a revival no one can object to. To save souls is man's most glorious work on earth, also a work which God expects every Christian to help in. But this work, also called "the King's business," must be done according to the King's orders, or no blessing can be expected from it.

Now, what are the King's orders? Only this: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to all creatures," Mark 15:15. What this means the apostle Paul reveals to us in his exhortation to

Timothy when he writes: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." 2 Tim. 4:2.

With these means and in this way the man of God worked among the faithless Israelites. Their spiritual condition for centuries after the division in two kingdoms was certainly as deplorable as it possibly could be. Yet one prophet after another only "preached the word" without the accompaniment of anything which could be likened to what we today know as Revivalism. What happened at Jerusalem at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles has nothing to do with Revivalism. It is a phenomenal event. The like of which had not occurred before, and has not occurred since. It was a revival, it is true, but can not be compared to those of the present time.

At the time of the Reformation a revival also took place, but wholly without revivalistic means or methods. Luther followed the advice of Paul, as referred to above, and the effect, so history states, can be compared only to effect of the preaching of the apostles.

The awakening wrought by Spener († 1705) in Germany was indeed a revival of religion, though not as to acceptance of Scriptural truth so much, but to a more intense practice of Christian virtues. The work of Hauge († 1824) in Norway caused a revival of religion in that and neighboring countries. But his efforts were directed more towards the preservation of religious truths which the common people held fast to, but which the rationalistic theologians assailed. In reality, he was an apologete for Christianity, though only exhorting the people to hold fast to its tenets, and to live according to it.

Revivalism, on the other hand, is a method of conducting home mission work, mostly along the line of human efforts, and as such therefore subject to criticism for its many objectionable features. It has ever been man's besetting sin to try his wits on improving God's government. But as he never has succeeded, it would be a miracle if Revivalism would not be found wanting.

The reason for the rise of Revivalism in the universal belief among the Reformed that the word of God is not the sole means through which the Lord operates in saving man. Indeed they call it a means of grace, but thereby then only understand **help** to grace, and thus make **man's** efforts, with its accompanying new measures, the main cause in man's conversion.

For many years stress has been laid on Revivalism, conducted by so-called evangelists, who, "at so much per," have held forth in one city after another for weeks at a time. These revivalists may owe allegiance to some denomination or they may not. Converted (?) gamblers, cowboys, gypsies, and even boys

("boy preachers") pose as evangelists, not to mention women with a shady reputation, as in the Salvation Army. If these are really converted, good and well. Sinners differ in degree only. And the blood of the Lamb can wash any sinner clean. But such, as shown in the article on the ministry, God does not wish as His ambassadors.

But also others, persons of honor, touring as evangelists, have not much to commend them. They may hail from a certain denomination, but will conduct a revival for an other one if "hired." They may conduct one inside of their own, but will be just as pleased (?) if the "convert" joins an other one. Why such persons prefer a certain denomination for themselves, and what conviction they have of the doctrinal statement of their own church, is a conundrum which the devil does not like to have answered. He has blinded them, as all Unionists are blinded, to the importance of declaring "all the counsel of God," Acts 20:27, and he wishes to keep them so. For by doing so he will also have a chance later on to make them indifferent about fundamentals, and end up in the religion of "social service," "the larger gospel" of modern rationalism.

But next to withholding the counsels of God unto salvation, also of misinterpreting them, the substituting of doctrine invented by man is as reprehensible as the first. But that is the sin which every revivalist commits. The revivalist talks a plenty about Christ, salvation, repentance, faith and all that. But the foundation upon which the convert builds his hope of "having gotten religion" is his **feeling**. Though the constant exhortation "to come forward," "to strike the sawdust trail," "to throw away the cigarette"—he is hypnotized into falling in line, while the choir repeats again and again a certain doggerel hymn (!) which acts like a stimulant on the already overworked nerves. It is religious mesmerism, on par with the miracle cures of the so-called divine (?) healers and Christian Scientists!

The Reformed have always lacked the deep realization of sin. Ethics has always had a prominent place in their preaching, and hence the converts always talk about how bad they used to behave, but how changed they are now. And nothing else can be expected since they are never indoctrinated from the pulpit, not even at a revival.

And yet that was the command of Christ: "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. 28:20. And in order that they should not forget this, He sent them the Comforter who guided them into all truth, and brought all things which He had taught them to their remembrance. John 14:26; 16:13.

But to be a successful revivalist scholarly attainments are not as a rule required. To be endowed with "the gift of gab," also "the gall" to go ahead,

are the main requirements. Instead of Biblical instruction, amusing or hair-raising anecdotes are told; or there is thundering against the use of tobacco, the Sunday newspapers, riding for pleasure on a Sunday afternoon; making flippant remarks about people who do not favor their clownish ways, or counseling some sinner, just described, to "jump off" some place, saying: "Here goes nothing."

Such religious workers may be sincere in their hatred of sin, but the methods used are more than doubtful. Who has not heard the stage whisper of the revivalist urging some convert "to make it strong" when his or her turn comes to testify? And the supposedly spontaneous outburst of joy, prayer or song, how often prearranged stage plays! * And how often has not the revivalist become the ground of salvation to the convert. The hymn book he used together with his photograph—paid for into his coffers—take the place of the Bible and the "Ecco Homo" on the center table!

That some have come to real repentance and a changed life afterwards is not denied. Wherever the word of God is preached the Holy Spirit is given a vehicle through which to work. But the same results are reached in a safer and saner way by sticking to the old paths and the old historical method as outlined (above) by Paul.

There are back-sliders in every church, but where are they most numerous? Statistics prepared of revival campaigners show that of the multitudes who signed cards of church preference the majority, to put it mildly, were either members, or did not join, or could not be located! Of thirty converts in a two weeks' revival one year, not one was a member the following year, nor did one of them appear inside the tent! And how many have arrived at insane asylums after "striking the sawdust trail," some never to leave them alive, God only knows!

Such was never the effect of the preaching of Christ and the apostles. Those that were crazy when Christ ministered to them became docile and well. The multitude at Jerusalem "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. They continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people." Acts 2:43, 46-47.

Methods of doing most any kind of church work are subject to change. God has not forbidden that. But when certain means have been designated, and other means have been prohibited, the new methods used must not be of such a character that they make the designated means valueless, or superfluous, and

* The author was counselled by a Methodist editor how it was to be done!

the prohibited means the only ones worth while. But this is just the danger in Revivalism. Instead of relying trustfully on the proper presentation of revealed truth, refuge is taken to trick methods whereby the sentiments and the feelings are aroused instead of a full conviction of sinfulness, and a full knowledge of saving grace in Christ Jesus.

Whatever the method may be, the dropping of this or that fault, actual or imaginary, must never be held up as a sign of conversion. But this, as a rule, is called conversion in Revivalism. Conversion consists in avoiding sin and being sorry for having done wrong, but this is not enough. Judas was certainly sorry for having betrayed Christ, but he was not therefore converted. Hence conversion consists not only in sorrowing over sin and shunning it, but also believing that God has forgiven the praying, penitent sinner for Christ's sake.

Because the last half is not urged and presented in its fulness, the convert who shortly finds that the desire to sin is still strong, soon concludes that his conversion was a fake, and either ends up as a scoffer or in despair, in or out of an asylum. And Revivalism has many such to answer for!

Revivalism is sometimes staged as Rivalryism. A few disgruntled individuals either wish something new, or are dissatisfied with the churchliness of the place, call in an outsider to organize a new church, and then start a revival to get new members, not from the floaters exactly, but from other churches. In order to hide the real intention the neighboring pastors are asked to join in together with their people. If the pastors do not meet up—and that is the revivalists' real wish—they are off and on alluded to in no complimentary manner in order to make their parishioners disgusted with them, leave the church, and join the new organization. This, and similar practices, has correctly been styled "sheep stealing." The practice has been frowned on even by Methodist bishops, but in villages and country communities some zealot missionary, or student pastor, still continue the old game.

The blessings of revivalism have of late years been looked into more closely and found questionable, not only as far as numbers are concerned, but also as to good results spiritually.

At a Baptist pastoral conference in Chicago 1908, Rev. W. H. Geistweil characterized "modern methods of evangelism" as "a three-ringed circus, a vaudeville show, a bazaar, and, lastly, a pulpit. These so-called social systems of reaching the people and making converts may bring people to church, but they do not make them Christians." The audience approved the sentiments with their Amens. Another speaker remarked that "once all preaching was evangelistic, but now a sermon is as apt to be on 'The sewage of a great city, as 'The salvation of souls.'"

The sentiments of Bishop John H. Vincent, uttered at a chautauqua in Kansas, 1907, have been widely quoted. He was convinced, he said, that revivals produced only temporary good and that on account of the sensational methods often used, the bad effect more than offset the good. His colleague, Bishop Chandler, called the system "popcorn method" whose results are next to nothing.

The way of the apostles in evangelizing remains therefore the safest and best. And their way was following both the example and instruction of Christ. Any one reading the fourth chapter of St. Mark will get the correct teaching concerning this matter. In the parables there quoted, both means and methods in evangelization are given. Sow the seed, the word of God, and God "will do the rest." Preach the Word diligently, prayerfully, and in its purity, and it will grow in some hearts, "first the blade, then the ear, after that, the full corn in the ear." And we need not ask: "What will the harvest be?"

Gr. in Lutheran Sentinel.

THE SUBTLETY OF SPIRITISM

By Mrs. J. B. Horton in "The King's Business"

"The Spirit saith expressly that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, seared in their own conscience as with a hot iron." — 1 Tim. 4:1, 2, R. V., marg.

Corroborative evidence gathered from reliable authorities to prove that intercourse with spirits is contrary to our Divinely constituted nature, and, if practised, results in its utter degradation:—

"I venture to say," writes a well known authority on the subject of Spiritism, "that no one of the better class of Spiritualists will deny the fact that most professional mediums eventually become physical wrecks: many are overtaken by mental derangement, and some by a moral degradation too loathsome to be described. Few, if any, escape serious physical trouble."

"The majority of spiritualistic mediums are more or less afflicted with nervous disorders, and many of them are hysterical to the last degree. Most of them complain of extreme nervous exhaustion after a seance, and many require days to recover from its effects. . . . It is undeniable that the tendency of mediumship is to unhinge the mind, to destroy the mental balance, and often to produce the worst form of insanity. . . ."

The author of a book entitled "Spiritualism Unveiled" bears this testimony: "I have known many whose integrity of character and uprightness of purpose rendered them worthy examples to all around, but who, on becoming mediums and giving up their individuality, also gave up every sense of honor and decency."

(Herein is iniquity. The call of God to the human soul is for loving surrender of the will, and not of the individuality, which He has given us, and which He respects.)

Another writer, after eight years' experience as a medium, speaks of Spiritism as "the most seductive, hence the most dangerous, form of sensualism that ever cursed a nation, age or people. . . . Five of my friends destroyed themselves, and I attempted it by direct Spiritualistic influence."

The following case came under our personal observation some years ago:—

A certain minister was known to us as an earnest soul-winner and faithful pastor, in his early days a preacher of great spiritual power. As time went on, his people noticed a change: he became indolent and indifferent, left off visiting, and although he preached with more eloquence, he lost his power. At last he retired, apparently wearied out with his work. His manner to friends was that of a man half-dazed, though he occasionally roused himself to something of his old energy.

An instance of this occurred at a social gathering one evening at his own house at which we were present. The conversation happened to turn upon Spiritism: some of the company inclining to question its authenticity: others being in favor of it. One of us asked our host what he thought of it.

He immediately replied in vehement terms, denouncing it with fury; and warning us all with passionate earnestness never to meddle with it. His manner impressed us deeply, and we were anxious to know why he spoke of Spiritism with such intense abhorrence. So after the rest of the company had left we returned to the subject, and asked him if he had really been acquainted with any one who had come to grief through being entangled in its toils.

He looked at us for a few moments in silence: an expression of almost abject despair settling upon his countenance. Then he replied, "Yes—yes—indeed I have. Listen, and I will tell you my own experience as a warning. For some years before I retired from the ministry I dabbled with Telepathy, Concentration, Thought-transmission, and at last Spiritism. It attracted me as a science, and as the months passed I went deeper and deeper into it. Now let me frankly own to you; I felt my ministerial power waning, and my interest in the spiritual well-being of others dying out. My health failed, and I retired. Since then I have discovered that the conditions I had created through following Spiritism had quietly and imperceptibly encased me until I was not always free to think and act as I wished. At other times the most blasphemous and horrible thoughts have overwhelmed me—even to the suggestion that I should take my own life. Never, never allow yourselves or anyone whom you can influence to touch Spiritism."

Then the good man offered prayer, and we left. We never met him again, but about two years afterwards we read the account of his death by his own hand. His friends could not account for the act: there had not been any case of insanity in his family. They could only suppose that he had been suddenly overcome by a suicidal control.

Throughout Holy Scripture occult practices are consistently denounced, and at the close of Revelation we are told that the sorcerer is finally shut out of the Eternal City of God. The ground of these denunciations is invariably that such practices are a crime against God: that they evidence a departure from Him, and a transference of allegiance to His (and our) enemy. We are enjoined to resist all enticements from the other side.

MOVING PICTURES AT CHURCH SERVICES

After Using Them by Way of Trial, Six Objections to Their Appearance in Services of Worship Become Evident—"As a Substitute for the Sermon They Are a Joke"

BY SYLVESTER L. BOGER

After an experience of over six months with both stereopticon and reels alternated at the evening service, we have arrived at certain definite and satisfactory conclusions as far as we are personally concerned. It has given us an opportunity to study both the subject matter produced and the psychological effect of its presentation. If these conclusions, based on an extensive experience, will be of any value to those who are contemplating a similar trial, but are undecided as to what course to pursue, we shall be glad to pass them on for what they may be worth.

In general, our conclusions of the whole matter may be summed up as follows: That the material to be had at the present stage of film writing and production is of such a character that its continued use in connection with church services in the auditorium will eventually prove to be more of a liability than an asset in the spread of religious truth. In substantiation of this claim we present the following proofs:

Few Pictures—Biblical Throughout—are available. Legion, however, is the name of films flooding the market bearing suitable, satisfactory and specific scriptural titles, and of whose making, like books, there continues to be no end, but nevertheless their reproduction usually proves woefully disappointing if not often actually vexatious, distasteful and disgusting to the extreme. The average moving picture producer is interested primarily in dramatic opportunities and thrills that grip his spectators; he is not in the least concerned with exact and truthful spiritual interpretations. Hence, an attempted modern application of the selected text, usually a love scene, is made the basis of the plot. A Biblical tableau is somewhere

sandwiched in as a secondary scene, perhaps to give it a semi-religious setting and to serve as a sop to the conscience of those who think that it "must be good or it would never have been intended for the church." Usually the whole thing least does say what it was intended most to mean. More often than otherwise, even the Biblical tableau which gives the film its name is woefully distorted in the visualized interpretation. The text is handled recklessly with little regard for the actual truth. Suggestions are sometimes supplied for the sake of dramatic effect and action that are neither expressed nor implied—in short mere conjectures or downright creations of the imagination contrary to the conclusions of the best accepted scholarship of all time. Thus false conceptions are not only formed but fixed in the plastic, impressionable minds of children unable to discriminate for themselves and of older members not sufficiently grounded in the truth, which in the end can only result in incalculable harm.

Misinterpretation of Truth an Objection

How can our Church Councils who are doing their full duty according to their installation vows stand silently by and see such things go on in a church auditorium in the name of interpretation and application of God's Word? Among the various duties of Church Councils as set forth in our Order of Installation we read that they are "to see that the pure Word of God be preached, as the Church confesses it, and only by those duly accredited by the constitution of the congregation," which means in others words, by a regularly called and ordained Lutheran pastor or Lutheran layman who understands the doctrinal distinctions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. If our congregations will not permit Mormons, Mohammedans, Christian Scientists, Adventists, Russellites and other heretical sects to proclaim their heresy and isms from our pulpit by word of mouth, then why do we permit others of whose faith we know absolutely nothing, to visually interpret the Word in pictures before us—preach it if you please—and in many instances with applications, suggestions and interpretations that are neither expressed nor implied, but often totally foreign to both the letter and the spirit of the text? If we are so careful in demanding purity of interpretation in the spoken word, then to be consistent we must be equally careful in demanding purity of interpretation through the acted word. But too often the actors on the screen have spoken so loudly through the eye-gate of the innocent onlooker, that no amount of words to the contrary can counteract the false impression that has been made; in fact, criticism only serves to fix the attention on the error all the more closely and impress it more deeply still.

No Substitute for Sermon

As a substitute for the sermon, or as an aid in its interpretation, the moving picture is a huge joke. As a pretext it may be passable, but as a text or an aid in its interpretation and application, never! Like many mid-week prayer meetings, a service where moving pictures are used is "a pathetic meeting" as far as genuine spirituality and true worship is concerned. Their ardent advocates remind us of the dean of one of America's greatest Theological Seminaries in advising the maintenance and fostering of the prayer meeting, giving his own successful experiences for so doing. His success was due to the following reasons: One night he had a medical officer from the Department of Health to speak on "Pure Milk for Babies"; on another night the park commissioner spoke on "The Need for Open Spaces in the City." Needless to say, before he could proceed further a student had already interrupted to ask if he was still speaking of the prayer meeting. For the same reason the moving picture becomes a mighty poor substitute for a sermon or even an aid in its interpretation and has a tendency to turn true worship into entertainment for amusement's sake. Edification is entirely out of the question.

The Moving Picture Is Entertainment, Not Worship

In spite of all that can be done to keep the idea and atmosphere of worship uppermost in mind, both in announcing and conducting such picture services, its patrons invariably persist in speaking of it as a "show." The spiritual idea is crowded out and the secular steps in. The church automatically sinks for them to the level of a theatre, vaudeville, or cheap amusement place, and worship is put on a par with entertainment, amusements and shows. One is continually abashed, chagrined and humiliated to hear children ask, not "When does the service start?" but "When does the show begin?" In order to keep the idea of service and worship uppermost, we have attempted on several occasions to make remarks on the films after their showing or to preach a sermonette immediately before on the subject of the film. Both experiments proved equally unsatisfactory and disappointing. If you preach before the showing of the film, the expectation of what is to follow overshadows all that you may say; if your remarks follow the film, they prove entirely too tame and common-place for what has gone before. In either case the film has talked so loud that your audience has failed to hear what you have said. Entertainment is the thing uppermost in the mind; entertainment is expected and the quicker it begins and ends and the less formality of worship precedes and follows, the better it suits the crowd.

The Continued Use of Films Begets Irreverence

The sacredness that naturally attaches to God's house as a place of worship is gradually lost and the atmosphere of the theatre more and more works it-

self in. There is no reverent seeking of seats but a rush for places of advantage. Whisperings soon become general and monotones will after a while be distinctly heard throughout the audience. Even loud talking before the opening of the service will be indulged in by some. Irreverence in and for God's house, indifference and contempt for things sacred and holy is the crying sin of the age. The use of moving pictures in the church does not destroy nor decrease this tendency nor mitigate its evil, but fosters, nourishes and contributes to the growth of this prevalent and crying sin.

The Use of Pictures Offends the Conscience

Those who have been trained in an appreciation of the church, its artistic architecture, its historic symbols, its ancient liturgy, its appropriate appointments and its respective furnishings naturally experience an offense of conscience with such a radical innovation as the average Biblical film proves to be. To see a screen shutting off the view of the worshiper from the altar, to behold the atmosphere of the secular pervade the habitation of God's house and the place where His honor dwelleth and become more pronounced than the spiritual, to permit entertainment to displace true worship in spirit and in truth and the Word to be visualized and preached with interpretations and applications often far fetched and foreign, and to note a growing spirit of irreverence on the part of many, is an offense to godly and pious souls whose appreciation of the spoken Word can never be supplanted by pictures, however good.

Useful in the Future, Perhaps

We would not be so foolish as to take the position that the day will never come when the moving picture may not be safely used as an aid and adjunct to the interpretation and application of spiritual truth. But that day is not yet here, and until the producers of Biblical films will concern themselves with spiritual interpretations instead of dramatic opportunities and thrills based on a modern love plot with a Biblical tableau as bait to catch the unsuspecting, they cannot be safely used. As the matter stands at the present time the moving picture finds its largest use in a congregation as an entertainment device. Occasions that call for some form of entertainment will find pictures a convenient, popular and cheap method to meet the demand. Scenics, comedies, cartoon comedies, travelogues, and magazine reels can be had that will meet the demands of any meeting where educational or entertainment features are sought. But here it must stop. It is not only impossible but impractical for the Church to compete with the moving picture shows in anything like a weekly program. It simply can't be done. It is foolhardiness to attempt it.

Methods and modern devices have their place in the propagation of the Word, but no matter how good

and popular is the device, or how efficient the method, there is one thing that the Church cannot and dare not overlook, underestimate, nor cast aside, namely, the plain, practical preaching of the Word—"not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power," "for after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. —The Lutheran.

AFTER THE BOYS

The secret empire is doing its best to entrap the boys. The latest is an organization gotten up by the Free Masons to make sure of the boys when they come to legal age and get them into the Masonic order. The new organization is called "The De Molay order." The newspaper reports state that the chamber of commerce of Kansas City raised a fund of \$25,000 to send representatives of the order on a tour throughout the United States. These representatives, twenty-four young men, have recently visited Battle Creek, Michigan, and organized an order. The purpose is to provide a lodge for boys between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one after they outgrow the Boy Scout age, and until they become twenty-one, at which time they can become Masons.

This order was started by the Masons in Kansas City and they boast they now number 100,000 in Kansas and Missouri.

Satan always looks after the boys. He well knows that after they become Masons there is very little hope of their becoming Christians, for Masonry is a rival religion to the Christian religion. It is a covert but decided enemy to Christianity. From standard Masonic authors it is easy to show that Masonry claims to be:

1. **A religious institution.** Webb's Monitor, page 286: "The meeting of a Masonic lodge is strictly a religious ceremony."

2. **A complete religion,** meeting all the wants of the soul. Drew's Monitor, page 127: "We now (as a Master Mason) find man complete in morality and intelligence, with the stay of religion added, to insure him protection of Deity and guard him against ever going astray. These three degrees thus form a perfect and harmonious whole. Nor can we conceive that anything can be suggested more which the soul of man requires."

3. **It saves from sin in this world.** Mackey's Lexicon, page 16: "Acacian—a term derived from *akakia* ("innocence"), and signifying a Mason, who by living in strict obedience to the obligations and precepts of the fraternity, is free from sin."

4. **It saves the soul in the world to come.** Salem Town, page 188: "They are found in that eternal weight of glory, that crown of joy and rejoicing laid up for the faithful in a future world."

We also learn that:

5. **It rejects the Bible.** Chase's Digest of Masonic Law, page 206: "To require that a candidate profess a belief in the divine authenticity of the Bible, or a state of future rewards and punishments, is a serious innovation in the very body of Masonry."

Webb's Monitor, page 6: "A few private lodges append to the application a pledge to the effect that the applicant believes the Holy Scriptures to be of divine import. **All this is irregular and unmasonic.**" (Bold face ours.)

6. **It rejects Jesus Christ.** A judicial decision of the Grand Lodge in 1869, says: "Disbelief in the divinity of Jesus Christ does not in any sense affect Masonic standing."

The Grand Lodge of Illinois says: "A Mason must believe in God; but in what form he shall believe Masonry has nothing to do.

7. **Masonry perverts the Scriptures** by omitting the name of Jesus when it occurs in passages which it quotes. Sample: 2 Thess. 3:12, "We command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." In Webb's Monitor, page 122, Christ's name is omitted, as it is when 1 Peter 2:5; Matt. 21:42; 2 Thess. 3:6, are quoted.

8. **Masonry omits Jesus' name from all prayers.** Webb's Monitor, page 287: "Prayer in a Masonic lodge should be of a general character, containing nothing offensive to any class of conscientious hearers."

In a judicial decision of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania it is stated, "To offer prayer in the name of Christ is contrary to the universality of Masonry."

To name Christ in the prayers offered or scriptures read in the lodge would offend the Jews and others who do not believe in Him and so they offer salvation without Him. In the ritual for the burial of their dead they consign every brother Mason to the Grand Lodge above, regardless of the life he lived upon the earth.

It is bad enough to deceive those who are of full age, but it is worse to train the boys in the principles of secrecy. It is only because the church has not done its duty, and that so many preachers have yoked themselves up in the lodge, that the secret empire has such a tremendous hold upon the world today. The church of God has no greater enemy than secrecy.—The Free Methodist.

To give our readers an idea of the results to which the workers in this new movement may point, we quote the following news item from the Wisconsin News of April 21st:

"More than 1,000 young men between 16 and 21 will be initiated tonight in the order of De Molay. Only sons of Masons are eligible. The order is spon-

sored in this state by Royal Arch Masons. It is a national fraternal organization for boys. Headquarters are in Kansas City." G.

PHOGGY PHRASING

From the immediate family of James Henry Wiggin, the ex-Unitarian minister who acted as literary expert for Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, Rev. A. C. Wycoff received his hitherto unpublished story which explains the bewildering ambiguity in Mrs. Eddy's writings. After he had waded through the tangled mass of manuscript which Mrs. Eddy left with him to revise for the sixteenth edition of Science and Health, he said to her: "I can translate your sentences into good English, but not into good sense, as there is no sense in them." This offer suited her exactly, and she engaged him on the spot. After he had been working as her literary adviser and reviser he discovered that what he had ignorantly assumed to be an irremediable defect in her book was in reality one of its distinctive merits. Good English she wanted, but "good sense" would not have served her purpose.

Some years later in a letter to an old college chum, commenting upon this peculiarity Mr. Wiggin makes this statement:

"As for clearness . . . the truth is she does not care to have her paragraphs clear, and delights in so expressing herself that her words may have various readings and meanings. You know sibyls have always been thus oracular, to "keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the hope." (Milmine's Life of Mrs. Eddy, McClure's Magazine, Oct., 1907.)

This assertion, that with Mrs. Eddy ambiguity was one of the tricks of the trade," when it comes from her personal literary reviser is of highest value. But this information is not necessary. Any close student of Science and Health and Mrs. Eddy soon makes this discovery. She did not fool Mark Twain's keen literary sense. He soon detected her little trick. In one place, after quoting a particular fine specimen of this type of expression, he remarks, "Quite Christian Scientifically foggy in its phrasing." He saw that foggy phrasing was an essential part of Mrs. Eddy's non-sense science. By inventing her non-sense language by which she arbitrarily reads into perfectly familiar English words any meaning which may suit her fancy, she reduced foggy phrasing to a science. This enabled her to write in riddles which only those who have made a careful study of this confusing language can decipher. The river of water of truth which proceedeth out of the throne of Christian Science, its queen designed to filter through obscurity so that its waters would always remain roily, and thus conceal how shallow it is. And here again this scheme has worked. A most common thing is to hear uneducated persons who have tried to read Science and Health

say, "It is too deep for me." Its teaching is not deep; it is the shallowest kind of pretense. But where waters are kept roily it is hard to tell how deep these waters are. It is asking the skeptical reader a great deal, to believe there is so much duplicity back of all this non-sense science.

—Biblical Review.

"THE MARK OF THE BEAST"

By Geo. N. Anderson

The appended newspaper clippings have been verified as substantially correct:

"Every one who was downtown Saturday night thought there was a big fire somewhere. A siren was screeching the greater part of the night.

"There was a fire.

"The conflagration was at the Elk's club. The siren which was heard had been placed outside the door of the club to advertise 'Hell', one of the features of the Elk's carnival.

"When one came into the club to see what the noise was all about, he was greeted by a sign 'Go to Hell,' placed conspicuously in the lobby.

"If you don't want to dance, go to hell,' a fierce-looking Satan shouted through a megaphone to the visitor. Another sign read: 'Don't fail to go to Hell.'

"The Elks treat 'em rough, but their visitors seem to like it, — — —, general chairman, who built hell, said.

(The next day the following item appeared):

"The Elk's carnival, being conducted by the ladies auxiliary and a special committee of the lodge is so popular and so well attended that it may be continued. . . .

"Hell proved to be the greatest attraction to hundreds. A real devil, with a red garb and horns, conducted the visitors to his kingdom. Burning sulphur, skulls and skeletons, and terrible noises, proved delightful to the explorers."

There is nothing especially surprising that the lodges put on 'entertainments' of this sort. We are getting quite accustomed not only to have the word of God made light of and caricatured, or even worse, perverted in the name of 'religion'; we are even having common decency and propriety so continually outraged that we as Christians, in such atmosphere, 'slumber and sleep.' No, my purpose in telling this is to again express my profound sorrow that church members by the hundreds are giving their moral and financial support to these Christless organizations. Yes, I know it is a part of the 'apostasy.'

But the 'devil' does not always appear so brazenly. He oftener comes as an 'angel of light.' There is the appeal of 'charity,' a charity which is a farce for the most part, and in any event robs Christ of the honor and glory.

I cannot express the emotions I experienced at one of our conference meetings when we were profusely 'welcomed' by the chairman of the reception committee, wearing a big, gemstudded Elk pin. Similar emotions were experienced when we invited a 'soloist' of one of our Lutheran churches to sing at a song service at our church. He too was decorated "with the mark of the beast," and prated lugubriously with the organist about the wonderful Elk's club that was about to be 'dedicated' in the neighboring city, at which 'service' he was to be honored with a prominent part.

Just a word to those who profess to be Christians, and who may be 'entangled.' "Ye cannot drink of the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and table of demons." (1 Cor. 20: 21). "Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." (Rev. 8: 4, 5).

The saddest part of this whole situation is that we pastors, (shepherds!) some of us are 'hirelings.'

—The Lutheran Companion.

PRESIDENT BERGEMANN'S CONGRATULATIONS AND PRAYER

The Rev. G. E. Bergemann, President of the Wisconsin Synod, sent the following telegram to the President of our Synod, the Rev. F. Pfothner:—

"Our most hearty congratulations on the Diamond Jubilee of your Synod. Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces."

(Signed) "G. E. BERGEMANN,

President Wisconsin Synod."

That counts! In the name of the many thousand Christians and Lutherans of our sister Synod, their president assures us that they rejoice with us and that they are praying for us.

We thoroughly appreciate these congratulations and prayers. We add to them our "Amen!" for we are certain that "these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and heard, for He Himself has commanded us so to pray and has promised to hear us."

This congratulatory telegram of President Bergemann's, moreover, calls to mind the many prayers which at this time have ascended to God for our Synod. Everywhere Christians have been and are praying for us. And all these prayers are powerfully supported and seconded by the unutterable intercession of the Holy Spirit within our hearts (Rom. 8: 26), and to this powerful and united appeal Jesus Himself adds also His mighty intercession (Rom. 8: 34). Is that not reassuring?—God be praised also for the many prayers which ascended for us upon this occasion of our Diamond Jubilee!

We know that the trials and the conflicts of the last days are as yet confronting God's people. We know that the kings of the earth and the rulers have gathered themselves together against us, aye, that the very gates of hell are doing their utmost to prevail against us and to destroy the temple of God which we are building. But we also know that all Christians, together with the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus Himself at the right hand of God, are praying for us day and night and saying: "Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto Thy servants that with all boldness they may speak Thy Word, by stretching forth Thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of Thy holy Child Jesus." Acts 4:29-30. And He who has commanded us to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem" has also promised us, "They shall prosper that love Thee."

If there is a petition of which we may be sure that it is acceptable to our Father in heaven, it is our prayer for His Church. The whole Bible is full of commands telling us to pray just these petitions and adding God's promises and solemn oaths that He will certainly hear such prayers. We are certain, therefore, that God hears the precious words which President Bergemann utters in the name of all his people: "Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces!" Let open enemies, let false brethren do their utmost, let Satan marshal all his forces as he will, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against us." These prayers are stronger than Satan.

God will also in the future lead us, not according to our counsel, not according to the counsel of our friends, nor according to the counsel of our enemies, but according to His own counsel, and He will finally receive us into glory. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." If at times we must sing: "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord," we know that before we close our song, we shall praise the Lord, who is the health of our countenance and our God forever.

All this the congratulation and prayers of President Bergemann have again brought to mind. We have given his words this publicity that every member of the Missouri Synod may rejoice with us in taking knowledge of this precious congratulation, and that every member of our Synod may be strengthened by the knowledge of these prayers of our brethren for us.

Our prayer is that God may fulfill His promise to these brethren: "They shall prosper that love Thee."

—Lutheran Witness.

"Christ has redeemed us with His precious blood. Let us gladly serve Him with all our powers!"

WHO SHOULD GIVE NOTHING FOR MISSIONS

Matt. 28:19; Rom. 1:16; Matt. 24:45

1. Those who believe that Jesus made a mistake when He said: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations."

2. Those who do not believe that "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, Jew or Greek." Rom. 1:16.

3. Those who wish that no missionary had come to our forefathers and would prefer to be heathen.

4. Those who believe that everyone in the world should shift for himself and ask with Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

5. Those who do not care to have part in Christ's final victory.

6. Those who believe that God will not call them to account because of the way they spent their (?) money.

7. Those who are willing to have Jesus say to them: "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me!" (Matt. 25:45.) —Expositor.

The above was sent us by a reader who is actively identified with the work referred to. Don't you agree that it is a short but powerful appeal? G.

NOTED IN PASSING

According to a press report fifty-six high school pupils of Monroeville, Ohio, signed a petition asking the board of education not to re-employ the present superintendent of the school, on the ground that "he had been teaching the Darwinian theory of evolution," these young people resenting the implication that they "are descendants of monkeys." That is really a new way of getting at this matter, and it may do some good. Quite probably what Bryan says is true that if the purses of these evolutionists, who are paid for their teaching with the monies furnished by the people, are cut, they will make up their minds to forget about their monkeyism.

—Lutheran Standard.

Said a friend to us: "Music in our churches should not try to compete with grand opera, for the opera stars can lay the church artists in the shade. The sermon should not try to compete with newspapers and popular lectures in dealing with the topics of the day. The press and the platform have the pulpit beat before it begins on these matters. From ordinary common sense and good strategy, the music and the sermon should deal in values in which the others cannot compete with or supplant it. Of course this worldly wisdom does not really bring offending churches to their senses, however. Only the Spirit of God can do that. If the music shall interpret the hunger of human souls for God, and if the sermon shall shed a radiance from the Sun of Righteousness on the fitful and sin-beclouded souls of men, they shall have no competitors. Moreover, they shall give what millions of American men and women most want to hear in the churches. They shall fill more empty pews than all the newspaper tooting and queer sermonic antics under heaven can fill." We think our friend spoke words of truth and soberness.

—Western Recorder.

We hear every once in a while that "the laymen of the church should organize." Surely there are many lay organizations in various cities and sections that are decidedly worth while. But before any one attempts to create a new body to "prevent ecclesiastical domination," let the elders line up their possibilities (and their obligations) within our established government.
—Continent.

Spurgeon's sermons are still widely read in England. His biographer, seeking the reason, quotes the great preacher himself: "I can say very simply, my heart goes — I am no deceiver in that respect — with every word I say." The great Unitarian, Dr. Martineau, was not unfrequently in his congregation. When someone expressed surprise at his being there, and added, "You don't believe what he says," Martineau replied with quiet significance, "No; but he does."
—Christian Register.

FROM OUR CHURCH CIRCLES

Meeting of the West Wisconsin District

The third biennial meeting of the West Wisconsin District will be held at Columbus, Wis., (Rev. W. Nommensen) June 28—July 3. Two papers will be presented, one in the German and the other in the English language (Rev. J. B. Bernthal—Rev. A. Sitz). Delegates will please bear in mind that all credentials should have the signature of both the president and of the secretary of the congregation. The brethren who entered this district in the last bi-ennium are requested to forward their release to the President, if that has not been attended to already. All memorials should reach the President not later than June 17th.

Free accommodations will be provided for the delegates by Zion's congregation. All desiring free lodgings, however must announce their coming **not later than June 4th**. Those who intend to come by auto will kindly mention this with their announcement.

O. KUHLOW, Sec'y.

Meeting of Southeast Wisconsin District

The Southeast Wisconsin District will meet in the First Lutheran Congregation at Racine, July 5—11. The opening service on Wednesday, July 5th, will begin at 10:00 a. m. The doctrinal discussion will be led by Prof. W. Henkel. All credentials of the lay delegates must be signed by the chairman and secretary of their congregation and are to be presented to the secretary immediately after the opening service. Every congregation is requested to pay for lodging and board of their delegates. All requests for quarters are to be sent to the local pastor, the Rev. Theo. Volkert, 735 Grand Ave., Racine, Wis., before June 18th. All reports, petitions, etc., must be made in a written form and must be in the hands of the president of the district, the Rev. C. Buenger, before June 18th.

HENRY GIESCHEN, SR., Sec'y.

Change of Address

Rev. W. P. Hass, 109 South Park St., Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Professional Begging

Professional begging letter-writers to the number of 249,000 are registered by a London charitable society, which makes a business of investigating the truth or otherwise of any begging letter received.
—Milwaukee Leader.

'Thefts' Foil Soviet In Taking Church Wealth

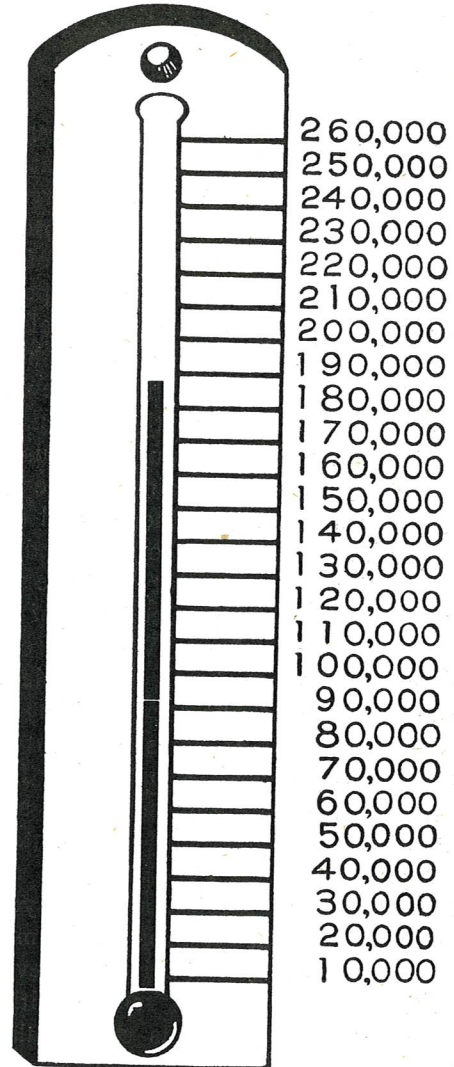
Mysterious "thefts" and disappearances of church treasures and countless other difficulties are facing the soviet officials engaged in confiscating such treasures which are to be sold for the benefit of the famine sufferers.

In one church, noted for the value of its jewel studded ikons, the jewels had been removed and imitations substituted before the officials arrived. Dozens of valuable articles listed as in the possession of other churches were missing.

—Milwaukee Journal.

Synodical Barometer

Budget for period June 1st, 1921—July 1st, 1922
\$255,175.00. (Ref. Synodal-Bericht page 120)



Requirements per Budget for period	
1921-22	\$255,175.00
Receipts applying thereto up to June 1st,	
'22	186,651.36
Balance which needs to be collected by	
July 1st	\$ 68,523.64
THEO. H. BUUCK, Dep. Treas.	