

The Northwestern Lutheran

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

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PSALM 12

Help, Lord, for men of virtue fail,
Religion loses ground;
The sons of violence prevail,
And treacheries abound.

Their oaths and promises they break,
Yet act the flatterer's part:
With fair deceitful lips they speak,
And with a double heart.

If we reprove some hateful lie,
They scorn our faithful word!
"Are not our lips our own," they cry,
"And who shall be our Lord?"

Scoffers appear on every side,
Where a vile race of men
Is raised to seats of power and pride,
And bears the sword in vain.

Lord when iniquities abound,
And blasphemy grows bold,

When faith is rarely to be found,
And love is waxing cold,—

Is not Thy chariot hastening on?
Hast Thou not given the sign?
May we not trust and live upon
A promise so divine?

"Yes," saith the Lord, "now will I rise,
And make th' oppressors flee;
I shall appear to their surprise,
And set my people free."

Thy Word, like silver seven times tried,
Through ages shall endure;
The men that in Thy Truth confide
Shall find Thy promise sure.

COMMENTS

Oct. 31, 1517— Two days that stand forth with great prominence in church history are Nov. 10, 1915. Oct. 31st and Nov. 10th. On the latter, in the year 1483, Dr. Martin Luther was born. On the former, in the year 1517, he began the great life-work for which God had prepared him in His school—he nailed his now world-renowned theses to the portals of the Castle Church at Wittenberg. Those hammer-strokes announced the coming of the dawn, though Luther had little thought of the far-reaching results which his first proclamation was in the wisdom of God to bring about. The battle which followed was that of darkness and light, of error and truth. The spoils of victory were freedom from the yoke of popery and countless blessings which follow in its wake. One of these was political freedom from the bondage of the pope. Of this latter we were forcibly reminded by a little item which met our eye in a daily paper a few days ago—this is to account for the other date, Nov. 10, 1915. The notice bears the head: "Pope Will Be Represented." It reads: "Pope Benedict will be represented officially at the coronation of Emperor Yoshihito of Japan on Nov. 10, by Msgr. Petrelli, apostolic delegate to the Philippines, who will be the bearer of an autograph letter from the pontiff to the emperor." Whatever else may be true the pope has certainly not sought out this as a fitting way of commemorating Luther's birthday. It is rather a proof of his untiring zeal with which he seeks to regain one of the things he was deprived of through Luther's work—temporal power. One is not required to gaze through the

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glasses of Lutheran prejudice to perceive this, the prominent position which the pope takes or tries to take in all the great political questions of the day is commented on quite generally throughout the civilized world. 1517 to 1915—a long fight, and the end is not yet. Let us remember this latter truth with watchfulness unabated. But let us not at this late day seek to end the fray by a change in weapons. As far as we are concerned as a church there can be but one way of successfully meeting the enemy: Luther's way or, better said, God's way—with the light of truth.

G.

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Successful Rural Churches What are they? You may not know yet, but the time of enlightenment is at hand. Valuable knowledge on this as on so many other important questions of our day can, of course, come only by "investigation." Within the last year a "committee on rural communities" has quietly looked into this matter and has now handed in its report to the National Social Service commission. A daily paper claims to strike the keynote of this report when it says: "When religious denominations furnish rural parishes with pastors trained for rural leadership, the farmers will respond by building churches of influence and purpose."

As was to be expected when this committee was "authorized to make a study of types of successful rural churches," the investigators have some definite suggestions to offer looking toward the "training" such pastors. They recommend: "That an order of American volunteers be established, that summer schools of religion for country pastors be started, that country seminaries be formed and that a board of strategy on parish development be chosen."

What "reforms" these leaders of men are looking for is apparent: the above title Social Service commission, reveals so much. To their mind the "social side" of rural church work is woefully neglected, thus the rural districts have a crying need for pastors "trained for rural leadership", and the reformation these are to bring about in "parish development" is to be on social lines—to which the farmers "will respond by building churches of influence and purpose."

Do you perhaps belong to a church where development on these lines is unknown? If you do, you need not on this account have any regrets that your parish has neglected any part of its legitimate work. The church's work is the saving of souls through the preaching of the Gospel and to put anything else into the foreground is to hinder the church in the fulfillment of its true duty.

Speaking of these poor little reformers of our day puts us in mind of another reformer, of the great need he found, and of the means by which he sought to

bring relief. We speak of Dr. Luther. In the preface to his Small Catechism he says: "The deplorable destitution which I recently observed, during a visitation of the churches, has impelled and constrained me to prepare this Catechism or Christian Doctrine in such a small and simple form. Alas, what manifold misery I beheld! The common people, especially in the villages, know nothing at all of Christian doctrine: and many pastors are quite unfit and incompetent to teach. . . . O ye bishops! how will ye ever render account to Christ for having so shamefully neglected the people, and having never for a moment exercised your office! You command communion in one kind, and urge your human ordinances; but never ask, in the meantime, whether the people know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or any part of God's Word. Woe, woe unto you everlastingly! Therefore I entreat you all for God's sake, my dear brethren who are pastors and preachers, to devote yourselves heartily to your office, and have pity upon the people who are committed to your charge. Help us to inculcate the Catechism upon them, especially upon the young."

Luther's views of church need and church success are certainly not those of modern reformers. We have held them in the past, if we be true Lutherans. Let us abide by them in the future: they are based on Bible truth.

G.

* * * * *

Yes, if— In a letter to The Congregationalist, A. B. De Haan, of Shantung, China, encourages the exponents of Higher Criticism that they "need not worry that the truth for which they have laboriously spent the years will be lost to the world. Truth will conquer in the end." He is not blind to the weakness of Higher Criticism, for he says: "The trouble has been that the positive, constructive note has been lacking. Such a type of evangelism as Billy Sunday's and others depends for its success on the fundamental human problem of sin and escape from it. It is because these evangelists are striking notes which have a response in the human heart of need that such success is following the work of these men." This diagnosis is correct, but when Mr. De Haan continues, "If once the men who have absorbed all that modern Biblical science can give of historical and other facts turn themselves loose in society with as burning a message as Billy Sunday has, I believe the same results will follow," we can only say, Yes, if—

J. B.

"Gifts are as gold that adorns the temple; grace is like the temple that sanctifies the gold."—Burkitt.

"A great deal of rust requires a rough file."—Moses Browne.

LUTHER'S NEW DOCTRINE

Wherein lay the significance of the Reformation? It is possible to give a great variety of answers, for the Reformation, like all great movements, exerted powerful influence in many directions. But tracing all later effects down to their common cause we inevitably reach one vital thought that was responsible for all of Luther's activity and successful work. If others used the momentum of his original energy to carry them on in other fields, that does not alter the fact that above all other impulses, Luther followed the dictates of his conscience in preaching his new doctrine; and therein lies the significance of the Reformation.

Luther was never in doubt about the "newness" of his preaching. He knew very well that it only seemed new because it had been hidden by a mass of man-made ordinances and institutions for centuries. His work deserves the name Reformation, because it aimed at nothing else than the re-forming according to the proper divine standards of the doctrine which the Romish clergy had adulterated and corrupted beyond all recognition of the divine truths of which it originally had been custodian.

Luther began his work by attacking the horrible fraud of the indulgences, but when he did enter the lists he did so, not in the spirit of criticism and of destruction, which marks the work of modern "reformers,"—but in the full consciousness that a vital truth was being trampled under foot and must be rescued from oblivion. His work was constructive. The one truth which he felt urged to enthrone in the church from which it had been ousted, was a truth which he had found in prayerful seeking and which his own soul craved for until it was found—the truth that God in His grace forgives the sins of sinners without any work or service on the part of the sinner. Neither indulgences nor any other form of human effort can lead to righteousness; it is the free gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Luther was made Doctor of Theology because his superior in the Augustinian order so wished it that he might use his eminent powers as a teacher to the greatest good. Luther himself was too modest to seek the honor and accepted it with a heavy heart, for he thought of the great responsibility which the honor laid upon him. But after he had begun to teach he delved deeper and deeper into the depths of the Word and though the new doctrine did not come to him as an inspiration in the flash of a second, his own conscience gradually became more and more convinced that salvation was alone to be had in the free grace of Christ. In obedience to his oath as Doctor of Theology he did not hesitate to teach the old truth he had found, even

when it made enemies of the whole powerful Roman church. The truth Luther then began to teach has been preached from Lutheran pulpits ever since and is still the vital truth of true Christian teaching: God forgives our sins by grace, through the merit of our Savior Jesus Christ.

It is a truth, in fact the very essence of divine truth, to such an extent that all Christian knowledge properly dates from the time that it is grasped. Christ himself, God the Father, the Holy Spirit—all of the revelation is an empty collection of words until the soul begins to rejoice in the Savior who saves freely and without gold or silver or any other price. It is the central doctrine of Christianity and as such is made the object of every attack that aims at the Christian religion. Wherever Christianity is adulterated, the poison begins its work by undermining this cardinal and essential truth. What remains of "faith in Christ" if the results and effects of that faith are not recognized in the purity of truth? What is it that you believe if you fail to accept this one great gift which God has prepared for those who believe?

Luther, then, like St. Paul and Augustine his great teachers, was intensely practical. He did not seek a faith that would satisfy a certain longing to be recognized as a religious man—he sought a faith which would give him assurance of righteousness before the tribunal of God in judgment. Luther's faith was pinned on words such as those of St. Paul to the Romans: "The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe (is manifested) being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just and a justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." 3:22-26.

To Luther, to us, this clear statement can mean but one thing—God does not forgive our sins and make us acceptable because of any virtue on our part. He does not await the observance of certain practices and penances or the performance of "good" deeds before He makes us His children in Christ, on the contrary, He forgives our sins in spite of the absence of all these through the abounding merit of Christ, whose righteousness is counted as our own. It is relief from this impossible burden of works, which never satisfy, even when they are performed as whole-souledly as Luther performed his works of penance, that leads Paul to exclaim jubilantly: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith

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into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God". (Rom. 5:1, 2.)

It is faith in Christ, nothing but faith—there are no works which lead to righteousness. Our justification is removed entirely from the sphere of human activity to the sphere of God's grace. It is a work of God, never a work of man. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law". (Rom. 3: 28.)

As illustration of this act of God which gives us remission of sins and therefore salvation, our church has made use of an expression that is of great assistance in briefly describing what the Word of God teaches concerning this great doctrine. Following closely the terms used in the fourth chapter of Romans: Abraham's faith was "counted unto him for righteousness"; "to him that believeth . . . his faith is counted for righteousness"; and verse 8, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin",—the act of God whereby man is justified is called a judicial act. It is an act which God performs in His court, according to the "laws" of His grace and mercy and according to the "evidence" which is in His possession, the abundant merit of His Son Jesus Christ.

The believer "in him who justifieth the ungodly" receives this judicial declaration of God and is secure from all the accusations of his own conscience in his faith. Neither in Heaven nor on earth can the completeness of his reconciliation with God be questioned. If God himself, and He alone, has removed all obstacles and has pronounced him clean and made him His child, then all other voices must be silent. And to him who has this heavenly assurance hope in the eternal life is a reality. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or

nakedness, or peril or sword?" (Rom. 8:33-36.) A hope is born from this justification that will defy all the powers of darkness to overcome it; from any faith that rests even remotely on the fallible efforts of man no such hope can rise triumphant over all ills.

Why should so cheering, so generous, so glorious a doctrine become buried in the Dark Ages of Roman domination? Why should this Gospel of life-saving mercy be assailed and suppressed even in our times? There is a potent reason: it only helps the sinner! The ungodly, the unholy, the poor in spirit, they alone gratefully receive the ministrations of divine love. The proud, the selfrighteous, the workers of the deeds of the law consider themselves much too good to stoop and accept for nothing the gift they insist upon claiming as a just reward. When Satan has made any man believe that he is good and that he can accomplish moral deeds to please God out of his own strength, then he has cast a shadow over the mercy seat and made it invisible to the eye of the deluded sinner that believes himself an acceptable child of God without the righteousness which God alone can grant. That is the natural attitude of man; he tries to come to God on his own terms, if he tries at all. The whole Revelation of God's truth, the whole work of Christ Jesus, is given us that we may be cured of his fatal delusion.

It is the re-statement of this doctrine of righteousness by faith alone, which makes the Reformation the one great event since Pentecost, when the preaching of this doctrine was first undertaken by divine command. It is always a new doctrine to man in his natural state and so Luther's re-assertion of the old truth may be called a new doctrine; but as for its newness in the history of mankind, it is as old as the first Gospel given to fallen man in paradise. As long as this earth is permitted to remain the abode of man it must come into the life of man as the new and lifegiving force which carries the faithful to the Life Everlasting.

H. K. M.

THE FIRST LUTHERAN MARTYRS

The University of Louvain has been destroyed in the course of this terrible war. Is it a judgment of God, but delayed in execution? The question is not meant to indicate that we rejoice in the visitation that has overtaken the proud seat of Roman learning; all human misery moves to sympathy. But why a judgment—if judgment it is? Because the University of Louvain was guilty of the blood of the first Lutheran martyrs.

It was in the days of 1523 when the Gospel doctrine of the Reformation as Luther had begun to preach it five years before had found its way in its simplest form into all the countries of the empire. At

that time finer differences and distinctions were waived; it was a question of being of the old faith of Rome and the Pope or of the new, which knew but one source of authority, the Bible, and but one way of salvation, forgiveness of sins by faith in Christ alone. At the time, modern Belgium was still a part of the province of the Netherlands, which was then a part of the Holy Roman Empire embracing practically all of central and western Europe with the exception of France and England. In Germany the staunchness of some of the German princes prevented the iron rod of Rome from wreaking its vengeance on the professors of the new faith, but in the Netherlands the fanatic Roman clergy had the support of equally fanatic civil authorities under sanction of the emperor. To favor the new doctrine put one under suspicion and often led to the inquisition, that institution of horror which sought to terrorize men into obedience to the Roman church.

The Augustinian convent at Antwerp had enthusiastically taken up the study of Luther, the Augustinian monk of Saxony. Their joy over finding the truth silenced their fear over the wrath of their superiors and soon enough their open avowal of Luther's hated doctrine was made the subject of a church court of inquiry. All means were utilized to induce the Antwerp monks to retract and under great pressure and threats of death some of them did let fear become stronger than faith. But not so John Esch and Henry Voes, two young friars, and Henry Moeller, who was considered the principal offender. Moeller fled their jurisdiction, but suffered death two years later, the young friars, however, remained steadfast though the efforts of the Roman clergy grew more violent from day to day to make them retract.

The convent was burned to the ground as a breeding place of false doctrine, the two friars were unfrocked and deprived of all privileges and honors. They were then delivered over to the tender mercies of the theological faculty of the University of Louvain, known for its fanaticism; the Louvain professors were to induce them to confess their error. They were then, after all other means failed to weaken them, forced to read aloud a catalogue of their heretic beliefs; they did so but did not alter their declaration that they would not retract what they had found to be the truth. The Louvain theologians had come to the end of their resources and recommended extreme measures to bring them to reason. The official persecutor of heresies for the district then bluntly left them their choice between dying at the stake or retracting. And when the two young heroes promptly replied that they would rather die than renounce their faith, the firewood was laid to the stake. Praising Jesus their Savior they died in the flames.

"Burnt at Brussels by the Sophists of Louvain,"

says Luther in the title of the poem he composed upon hearing of the heroic martyrs of the cause he had called into being. It was the first great poem that Luther composed and was speedily spread throughout the land. If any further impetus had been needed to speed the Gospel message those two fires that took the life of the first martyrs of the cause would have served the purpose. As is always the case, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church, and Luther was right when he saw an epoch in the foul deed committed by the Romanists and began his song with the words:

We sing a new song loudly
In fear and love of God,
We sing the deeds of God himself,
Deeds done to His praise and glory.

And the same idea seeks expression when he concludes:

Let the enemy rave as he will,
It will avail him nothing.
But let us praise our Lord on high,
For His saving word is come again:
Summer will soon revive the land,
Dread winter is all but gone.
The Great One who has begun this,
Will surely bring it to a happy end. Amen.

H. K. M.

THE MILLENNARIAN CONTROVERSY

A reader sends the following communication to "The Northwestern Lutheran":

"Our church teaches that the thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20 are partly past, and that they merely mean or signify a peaceful period on earth for the church. At least this is what I heard from one of our pulpits. If this is true, then we are able to figure out the date of Christ's coming, because thus far we have had peace as Christians since the Inquisition, Thirty Years War, etc., and according to this Christ's coming would be several hundred years distant. Why then, are we enjoined to be ready at any moment, and to expect Him at any time, since He comes as a thief in the night? Numerous denominations are expecting Him soon, some in this very generation, as practically all prophecies pertaining to His coming have been fulfilled. It is rather discouraging to think of His coming at a distant date, and I think that the pre-millennarians are far more scriptural in their views,—that Christ comes before the millenium. Considering the conditions which will exist on earth when He comes,—lack of faith, etc., is it not far more reasonable to believe that His coming is pre-millennial, as the first church, the early fathers, and countless divines at the present time believe? I would appreciate it greatly

and numerous other readers would also, if you answer this in our paper."

In response to this communication we would say at the outset, that the subject referred to is much too extensive to be treated in a short article in this paper. Volumes have been written on the so-called millennial controversy, and if we would enter into detail, we would neither satisfy our readers, nor would our answer be final and complete. We must, therefore, be content with making a few statements on the matter.

The controversy before us is, of all others, one which Scripture alone can determine. We may not appeal for its decision to Tradition, to the first church or the early fathers. We may not rely upon a progressive development of truth, nor may we look forward to a new revelation. The one only question is this, "What saith the Scripture?"

Now Scripture speaks in plain terms of the second coming of Christ. The same Christ, who came the first time in great humility to achieve complete redemption of fallen mankind, shall come again the second time with great power and great glory. Acts 1:11. "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Matthew 25:31. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." Luke 21:27. "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." John 19:37. "And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced." Tit. 2:13. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." All these and many other passages of Holy Writ leave no doubt as to the second advent of Christ.

But the question agitated in the millennial controversy is this: Shall the glorious appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ be the end and consummation of all things, or shall He come to establish a millennial kingdom on earth before His final advent at the end of the world?

The pre-millennarians believe in the latter. They contend, that there shall be a personal coming of Christ before the final consummation, that for a thousand years Jesus shall visibly reign with His risen and glorified saints over an earth physically and morally renewed; they rejoice in anticipation, that the glories of the millennial age will consist not only in the complete cessation of all moral and physical evil, all Satanic agency upon earth being entirely suspended during the thousand years, but also in the abundant outpouring of every temporal and spiritual blessing upon earth and its inhabitants. Then one last, one des-

perate outbreak of hellish evil more, and for ever God shall be all in all.

We, on the contrary, believe and teach according to the plain testimonies of Scripture that there is but a twofold appearance of the Lord Jesus, the one which has passed, the other which is to be expected at the end of the world unto eternal salvation. Thus Scripture says, Hebr. 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." It follows, that there can be no double future advent of Christ, but only one. It is, however, impossible to think of the future coming of Christ, and not to think of the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the quick and the dead, and the life everlasting. Not only do we confess in our Creed: "Whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead," but the divine Word plainly states the purpose of Christ's second advent to be the resurrection of all the dead, the final judgment, and the consummation of all things. A few passages may suffice. Matt. 25:31, 32. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations." I. Thess. 4:16. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." John 5:28, 29. "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Acts 17:31. "Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained." II. Pet. 3:10. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Surely these passages of Holy Writ all of which speak of the last things say nothing of an establishment of a millennial kingdom.

But aside of these plain Scripture passages the millennial idea is denied by the very nature of the work of Christ and the saints' inheritance. Of our Savior Jesus Christ it is testified "that he hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." He Himself assures us, that even now the souls of them that depart hence in the Lord are in joy and felicity. Absent from the body, they are present with Him. But it is to the day of His appearing that He directs our eyes, if we would learn the full excellency of that glory which shall be revealed. "Behold," He saith, "I come quickly; and my reward is with me."

And what is that reward? It is "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." It is for the whole ransomed church of God to be "for ever with the Lord" in heavenly mansions, to which neither the world, the flesh, nor the devil can approach. These are enemies with whom every true Christian has to battle here on earth. But they cannot pursue him beyond the grave. On the contrary, they are forever conquered. And immediately the Lord appears shall His church, now for a time militant on earth, become, on the destruction of every foe, everlastingly triumphant in heaven, yes, in heaven, not on earth. This is the Christian's hope which the Lord Himself connects with His glorious appearing.

But with this simple Christian hope the pre-millenarians will not be content. Nay, they would have the inheritance of the risen saints on earth, instead of in heaven; they would have the souls once more brought to earth; not a newly created earth, which may possibly be a fitting abode for Christ and His church during the ages of eternity, to which St. Peter refers saying, "Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," but to the very earth that now is, improved it may be, but by no means perfected.

Why is it, that men take to the pre-millennial idea? Evidently it is its sensuous character. Things heavenly are clothed in beautiful earthly forms. And man, shrinking as he ever does from the effort which faith requires, eagerly embraces a tenet, which gives to things future a substance and a form cognizable by his natural senses. Yet St. Paul says, I. Cor. 15:50, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

But what of the thousand years spoken of in Revelation 20? Does not this chapter clearly teach a millennium? We answer: no, not necessarily, at least not in the sense of pre-millenarians. In the first place it will be noticed that this passage of Holy Writ is figurative, and mysterious, and cannot, therefore, be taken in a literal sense. Furthermore those passages of God's Word which are literal and clear take precedence of those which are figurative. Thus the passages relating to the second coming of Christ which we have adduced are literal and clear, and take precedence of Revelation 20. It is furthermore worthy of notice that the Revelation ranges over a period of time neither wholly past nor wholly future; but extending from the beginning of the Christian era to the consummation of all things, so that we may not positively affirm that the thousand years are certainly past, nor that they are unquestionably yet to come.

On the other hand Scripture says, in the very sight

of the coming of the Lord, II Pet. 3:8, "Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." There is no limit of time or duration with the Lord, neither will He be constrained in His reign to any specified period of time, such as a thousand years. We further know that the whole time under the dispensation of the Gospel is a time of great joy and happiness, a time in which to a believer in Christ even Satan is bound and has no power over him. The whole period of the New Testament time is a time of salvation, and the kingdom of heaven, as now existing under the Gospel dispensation, is the proper Kingdom of Christ, the holy Christian church, in which Christ rules supreme. We need not look forward to a better age on earth, and we have no desire for such an age to come.

Nor are Christians slow to heed the admonition of the Lord to watch and wait for His coming. The Lord may come at any moment, and He will not suffer His coming to be measured by us with the yardstick of time. Time is subject to any change He decrees.

Let us, therefore, not be carried away by any carnal speculation concerning the coming of Christ, but rest content with those evident and unquestionable truths of the Gospel, which the church of Christ has hitherto unanimously taught and maintained. J. J.

DEDICATION OF THE GRACE ENGLISH EV. LUTH. CHURCH AT TUCSON, ARIZ.

The 12th of Sept. marked a new era in the annals of the Lutheran church in Arizona, for on that day the first church structure to be erected by a Lutheran congregation in Arizona was dedicated to the Lord at Tucson. Two simple services were held. After the congregation had assembled in the church, Rev. Paul Hensel, the pastor of the congregation, read a brief dedicatory service and thereafter addressed a few words to the congregation which magnified the goodness of the Lord as manifested in the history of the congregation and particularly in the construction of the church. In this same morning service Rev. Harders of Globe, Ariz., preached a sermon in which he set forth to the members that this was not an occasion for them to think of what they had done but to think rather of what God has done. The second and final service of the day was held in the evening, Rev. Frey of Phoenix, Ariz., delivering the sermon. A mixed choir organized for the occasion sang in both services. About 75 people attended each of the services.

The plans for the church, which is very beautiful, were drawn by an architect who is a member of the Tucson congregation. The dimensions of the building are 24 x 36. It has a seating capacity of about 100.

It has a large organ and is furnished with opera seats which, by the way, are of historical interest in this that they came from the first Protestant church in Arizona. The lot on which the church is built was purchased two years ago at a cost of \$625.00. The church building itself with furnishings represents an investment of \$2,500, of which less than \$500.00 remains unpaid. This is very creditable if one takes into consideration that the congregation has only 6 voting and 3 contributing members. The members themselves raised \$1,200.00 for the building fund. The remainder was contributed by personal friends and several congregations in the East. The congregation herewith expresses its cordial thanks to all the kind donors, without whose generosity it would have been impossible to build this church.

The Tucson congregation has been supported by the Wisconsin Synod for the past five years, the present pastor, Rev. Hensel, having served the congregation for the past four years.

May the gracious and bountiful Lord who hath visibly blest this congregation continue to pour on it the streams of His mercy, and may this newly dedicated church by the grace of God serve the purpose to which it was dedicated, the building up of the spiritual church of Christ. Immanuel Frey.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

German Hymns in England

Those who have any knowledge of our hymnology would have recognized two old favorites in a recent German wireless message. They were two sung before the chancellor's palace in Berlin, and they were described as "the old Lutheran song, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God, and Now Let Us All Thank God." Of course, we know them in this country as A Safe Stronghold Our God Is Still and the ever popular Now Thank We All Our God. Both are great favorites in this country, as in Germany, where the former is known as a battle hymn. In Germany a hymn is sung on the smallest excuse. There are at least 100,000 German hymns; 10,000 have passed into German hymn books, and about 1,000 are regarded as classics by the German critics. We have borrowed largely from the enemy in this respect, and, indeed, until the modern revival of the translation of hymns from the Latin and other languages, Germany was almost the only source from which hymns other than British were taken for our hymn books. Luther wrote a large number marked by rugged and intense power, and other writers whom we know well here are Rickart, von Loewenstern, Freylinghausen and the Moravian Count Zinzendorf.—Westminster Gazette.

When a Pope Preached

The preparation and delivery of sermons which impose such a heavy burden of toll upon other ministers of God have no terrors for the Pope, for the good and sufficient reason that the traditions of the church forbid his preaching.

Of all the many strange restrictions which hedge about a Pope, one of the strangest is that he should not be allowed to preach. Only once in 300 years has a Pope delivered a sermon, and that was under most exceptional circumstances in 1846.

On the Octave of the Epiphany a celebrated preacher, Padre Ventura, was to have occupied the pulpit in St. Peter's, but was suddenly taken ill.

To prevent disappointment to the vast crowd which had assembled Pius IX. broke through the custom of ages, and ascending the pulpit delivered a simple, homely sermon that perhaps impressed its hearers more than the finest eloquence might have done, because of its uniqueness.

The Holy Grail

Few places are more absolutely cities of the past than Cesarea. Some one has spoken of the remains of its ancient glory as the "ruin of ruins." The medieval town which was twice rebuilt by the Crusaders covered scarcely a tenth of the area occupied by the city as St. Paul knew it, and the ruins that we see today are chiefly the relics of the medieval city, which was itself built out of the ruins of the ancient city.

What a rich quarry Cesarea has been for other city builders is shown by the fact that, though it has been drawn upon for all these centuries for marble and granite and sandstone, it is not yet absolutely exhausted, but still affords building material for the peasants of the vicinity.

The green crystal vase which was found here when Baldwin I., the great Crusader, captured the city at the beginning of the Twelfth century, says the Christian Herald, gave rise to the story of the Holy Grail, which has inspired so many legends and poems, for Baldwin and his followers believed that it was the one that was used at the Last Supper by our Lord, when He gave His disciples the cup of wine and said: "Drink ye all of it; this do in remembrance of me."

Vanished

Only four persons are left in the immensely valuable Shaker settlement near Lexington, Ky., once a populous community. The sect seems to have shaken itself to pieces.—Kansas City Star.

Gives Large Sum to Baptists

It is announced that the executors of the will of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller have paid \$100,000 to the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission society and \$300,000 to the Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission society.

Jumpers Buy Another Farm

Under the above head a Waukesha, Wis. news item says the following:

"Who said the Metropolitan Church association was disposing of its property and would leave the city? Members of the association announced that they had purchased the August Honeydew farm of 159 acres, on the Mukwonago road, southwest of the city. The price was \$20,000, and immediate possession was taken. It is said that an increased membership of the sect necessitated the acquisition of more property. The property will continue to be operated as a general farm."