

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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ADVENT

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!
Behold the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near,
The Savior of the world is here;
Life and salvation He doth bring,
Wherefore rejoice, and gladly sing:
We praise Thee, Father, now,
Creator, wise art Thou!

The Lord is just, a Helper tried,
Mercy is ever at His side;
His kingly crown is holiness,
His sceptre, pity in distress,
The end of all our woe He brings;
Wherefore the earth is glad and sings:
We praise Thee, Savior, now,
Creator, wise art Thou!

O blest the land, the city blest,
Where Christ the Ruler is confessed!
O happy hearts and happy homes
To whom this King in triumph comes!
The cloudless Sun of joy He is,
Who bringeth pure delight and bliss:
O Comforter Divine,
What boundless grace is Thine!

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ,
Adorned with prayer, and love, and joy;
So shall your Sovereign enter in,
And new and nobler life begin:
To Thee, O God, be praise,
For word and deed and grace!

Redeemer, come! I open wide
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!
Let me Thy inner presence feel,
Thy grace and love in me reveal;
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on,
Until our glorious goal be won!
Eternal praise and fame
We offer to Thy name.

COMMENTS

The Modern Mind and the Creed The modern mind, so called, is an uncertain and very elastic term. It is employed by those superior people of our day who wish to convey to the rest of mankind that they have advanced beyond the achievements of former generations,—not in discoveries and inventions so much, as in the power of free

and untrammelled thinking. The modern mind refuses to believe what others have believed and chooses to believe what former generations have refused to accept; modern thinking is supposed to be superior to the thinking of the past. He who refuses to follow the apostles of modernity confesses himself to be hopelessly antiquated. When the formidable term is thus reduced to its simple meaning it becomes evident that it is nothing less than the most intolerant form of conceit. Modernity and newness are found to be in no way associated with it. It is arrogance.—Like all arrogance and intolerance it does not hesitate to invade the most sacred precincts and to trample on the most hallowed possessions of others. Not content to differ with others, it finds its mission in assailing everything that is stable and authoritative. The modern mind finds the marital relation a convention and clamors for its virtual dissolution under the plea of personal liberty to live one's own life. The same modern mind attacks the problem of poverty by advocating regulation and restriction of personal liberty; it defines morality as a condition brought about by prohibition, not only in the matter of spirituous liquors but equally in the matter of other affairs. The modern mind is convinced it is the best the world has ever had, and that it is in a minority, and that the vast majority can not be expected to share its lofty sentiments and must therefore be led and guided by the enlightened few. It frequently advocates democracy and socialism but is the very incarnation of absolute rule. The modern mind has said of itself that it is the very best for so long that it naturally seeks to rejuvenate religious ideas according to its lights. Today the modern mind can be said to be governing the American churches. The test of preaching is its modernity. Personal religion is measured according to the degree in which the modern mind is displayed. The Bible is subject to the revision of the modern mind. Creeds and confessions must be remodeled according to the new standards.—Little wonder that the Apostles' Creed meets with small favor from these advocates of license that balk at all authority but their own. Every year we find attempts made within the different church-bodies to oust these unwelcome reminders of staunch faith. When their zeal carries them on to offer substitutes they are revealed in all their shallowness. At a Baptists' convention the Creed was assailed as "containing phrases which the modern mind cannot accept

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at their face value" and the spokesman of the modernists offered the following substitute:

"I believe in God, the Father of all races; in Jesus Christ, Our Lord, and in the Holy Spirit, the purifier of hearts of men.

"I believe in the gospel as the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and in the Christian good-will as the force to transform the world.

"I believe in the church universal, the communion of the good, the coming of the kingdom and the life ever-lasting."

This sorry fabrication is to replace the majestic Creed! The miserable deception in using Christian terms to cover up the bald unbelief of the statement only makes the screed more repulsive. If the Christian faith is to be disavowed, why the unmanly hiding behind misleading phrases? If this is the modern mind then there can be no further doubt—if there ever was any—its father is the "father of all lies." This confession confesses nothing; it leaves every question of importance open to ten thousand interpretations. Its silence on those truths makes emphatic denial of the Triune God, of the divinity of Christ, of the creatorship of God, of the forgiveness of sins; its assertion of platitudes in glib phrases shows but too plainly that the "gospel" meant is the gospel of selfrighteousness. And the modern mind flatters itself that this is an improvement on the Christian faith of centuries! If a relapse into the semipaganism of the early centuries of the Christian era is an improvement, then it may be. In the third, fourth, and fifth centuries of the Christian church the very questions which are now resuscitated by the modern mind were taken up and definitely judged according to the light of scriptural truth and the verdict was laid down in the ancient creeds. The modern mind is old,—old and decrepit; it is a ghost from the graveyard of lies that have been buried fifteen hundred years ago, it reeks of the tomb and of decay. Dress the fleshless bones of those ancient skeletons ever so gaudily, bedeck them with all the frills and tinsel of our new vocabulary of the twentieth century,—a breath of the fresh air of Bible truth will blow the sorry rags aside and reveal the death's head leering behind the flimsy veil. Do not fear the message of the modern mind, look at it, judge it, appraise it—if you are a Christian you will confess your Creed the next time with renewed fervor and with devout thankfulness that God has revealed to you His blessed truth, though it be hidden from the sages and the great of this world.

H. K. M.

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A Referendum on Amusements Recently a Methodist pastor of Chicago propounded the following question to his fellow pastors of the district:

"Do your young people, as a rule, dance, go to the theater, play cards, attend paid concerts on Sunday, attend theaters on Sunday, go to moving picture shows? Is the rule in the Methodist discipline prohibiting indulging in the amusements named a hindrance, a help, or a matter of indifference?" He tabulated the answers he received as follows: Dance: Yes, 24; no, 28 etc., and the answer to the last question was: Pastors who regarded the rule against the amusements as a benefit numbered 9; a dead letter, 3; without effect, 14; a hindrance, 25.—There will never be a time when the church can disregard the lure of amusements on its members. Especially in our time, which is amusement-mad, there must be reference made to the call of the world as voiced by the worldly amusements. But will a prohibition ever accomplish anything? Certainly not! Those who shun one or the other public amusement merely because it is forbidden are not one whit better for their abstinence spiritually. It is not a matter for rules and regulations. Among Christians it can only be the sober strength of faith in Christ and love for Him, which will operate in a wholesome manner to keep them free from the taint of worldliness. St. Peter says: "As he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." Any one of a hundred "respectable" occupations may become a source of unholy worldliness, and the most harmless amusement may become an obsession that drives out the love of God. There are, to be sure, some amusements more dangerous than others and a warning against them must be given, but when a rule is necessary to conserve Christian life, then the law which Christ has abolished for His elect is imposed anew and the seed of unholiness is sown. The one way to wean man of his love for the lustful things of the world is to make him love Christ more. That is done by showing him in the Gospel what Christ has done for him. In the degree in which this knowledge of Christ grows, his interest for worldly amusement diminishes and is guided into safe channels; an observance of mere rules in shunning the world breeds selfrighteousness and must lead away from Christ. This is not our Lutheran way of preaching license, but it is the divine way of making better men and women. Fanatics and self-righteous reformers have never yet liked the Bible's way and they never will, but that will not induce us to trade in the living Gospel for the deathdealing law—not even in the form of rules and regulations against dancing, theaters, and the like.

H. K. M.

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Yes, But Why the Slur? Mr. Patrick Cudahy of Milwaukee, Wis., has recently retired from business, a very sensible thing to do; may he long enjoy his well earned rest. On the occasion

of his retirement, Mr. Cudahy made a handsome gift to the cause of public education; we admire him for the spirit he displayed in doing this. And then Mr. Cudahy also spoke, which is the inalienable right of every American, and spoke words that moved the Sentinel to the following outburst of appreciation:

"Even our sometimes cynical contemporary, the Leader, is impelled in spite of itself to a little outbreak of applause for the sound, deep and true sentiment expressed by Patrick Cudahy on the occasion of his retirement from active business and apropos of his handsome gift to the cause of public education.

What Mr. Cudahy said is so well reasoned and so full of the pith and sense of a real American mind accustomed to do its own thinking and not to go on the crutches of authority and other men's thinking that it is well worth requoteing and digesting."

At the suggestion of the Sentinel, we requote the words which Mr. Cudahy spoke:

"I think that private schools, whether sectarian or otherwise, should be placed in the supply and demand class, and those who build them, or encourage them, should see to it that the supply is no greater than the demand. If there are a few who think their children are of finer clay than those are who patronize the public schools, and wish to have a select or private school for their children, then they should be willing to go down in their pockets and pay sufficient tuition fee to support it, without asking their neighbors for assistance. I think that our public educational institutions, from the kindergarten to the university, should be the best that money could buy, and should be patronized by all who wish their children to become good, loyal American citizens."

Right here it is that we begin to disapprove of what Mr. Cudahy did. Not, indeed, that we believe that he should not have spoken at all, nor that we disagree with him on the principle which he sets forth in this interview; we, too, have always held, and now hold, that "those who wish to have a select or private school for their children" "should be willing to go down in their pockets and pay sufficient tuition to support it, without asking their neighbors for assistance." We have always opposed the soliciting of donations for church, or private, purposes from outsiders as an imposition on those approached and a disgrace to the Church.

But why the slur "who think their children are of finer clay than those who patronize the public school," and the but slightly veiled innuendo in the last sentence "should be patronized by all who wish their children to become good, loyal American citizens"?

Is that the attitude of the "real American mind accustomed to do its own thinking" to pass such severe and undeserved judgment on thousands of citizens

who send their children to parochial schools? The implication is that they do this because they consider themselves and their children superior to their fellow-citizens, that they are filled with the spirit of pride. Would it not be but fair to inquire of them why they found and maintain at a great expense to themselves their parochial schools?

The inquiry would speedily show that they do this for reasons of conscience. These parents believe that they are the divinely appointed guardians of their child and that they are responsible to God for its education. In the fear of God they do all that is in their power to train it as God would have it trained. Is it un-American to have a conscience and to try to follow its dictates? Are these parents by their views on child training disqualified for citizenship in our country, and are the schools they conduct in this spirit unable to produce "good, loyal American citizens"? Is it American continually to cast reflections on them for their faithfulness in the care of their children?

It were well if the "American mind" would begin to do a little thinking, for we are gradually drifting away from true Americanism, which guarantees freedom of religion to every citizen. State control of the child is incompatible with freedom of religion. Let those who will send their children to the public school, we have no quarrel with them, but he who will not surrender his parent's right nor relinquish his parent duty to the State is for that reason no less an intelligent, loyal American citizen, and no true American will heap him with reproach for this attitude. J. B.

THE SECOND DEATH

The fears of man are apparent in his denials, as his hopes are expressed in the objects of his faith. The doctrine of Scripture most consistently denied by modern men is that of eternal damnation. It is almost taken for granted among men of the world, and among modern preachers as well, that the preaching of doom and perdition is a sign of arrested development. One is permitted to preach of immortality and everlasting life because that is a cheering thought and especially at funerals it is "very effective." But to speak of damnation seriously is considered bad form and a breach of the proprieties. It is so unpleasant. But that is the way of truth—it is always unpleasant for some.

In Revelations St. John calls this state of doom ushered in by Judgment Day the second death; it is the real death and Scripture to the satisfaction of any doubter explicitly tells us the nature of this death. Whatever may be said in the denial of eternal doom, this much is certain beyond the necessity of argument: the Bible teaches it. All efforts of semi-Christians to

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tone down the severity and the finality of this judgment are hopelessly unbiblical.

The death of which St. John speaks comes to those described by St. Paul in Thessalonians: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed . . . in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is not extinction that comes to the ungodly; that would be a welcome thought to many. Far from being that, it is shown to be the most enduring punishment—"for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." It is that enduring and lasting torment which is depicted so vividly in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

This is a horrible future and without the authority of Holy Writ it would be criminal to burden the minds of men with the fear of it. It is so horrible that if the petition of the Rich Man would have been granted and one of the damned would be permitted to demonstrate the reality of the second death to the mortals on earth, the sight of his condition (if mortal senses could grasp it) would freeze them in horror. Yet, it is inevitable that judgment and doom of the ungodly be as Scripture describes it, for it is the concomitant of God's holiness and righteousness; He is holy and can approve only holiness in those creatures whom He has created that His righteousness and love be glorified. If the unutterable doom of His judgment were not the goal toward which his iniquity seeks to drag man, the great love of God shown in sending His Son into the world to redeem man would be an unnecessary and trivial adventure and all His revelation would be a meaningless and unconvincing harangue. Damnation is horrible; but it is the perfect realization of divine justice upon him who challenges by his sin the holiness and majesty of the Creator. In Paradise man faced the alternative of either serving his God in perfect obedience or of denying Him allegiance, but with the denial came the announcement of its inevitable result: "Thou shalt surely die."

What is this eternal punishment? Scripture speaks

of fire. That term may be used to convey to our understanding the fearful agony of the suffering; at any rate it is not merely the material fire that we know, for in Judgment all material things will be consumed. The agony is marked by Scripture by several descriptions that supplement each other. Jesus himself describes it as the eternal separation from the sight and enjoyment of the presence of God, "Depart from me"—"they shall be cast into utter darkness." That may not reach our understanding with all its terrible force, but we can conceive to some extent what it must be to be "lost" from all love of God. To have Him hide all His divine pleasure and unload all the vials of His wrath is indeed the height of damnation.

It is equally certain that if God is hidden from the damned, those whom God has received into His presence must also be eternally separated from those cast into darkness, as the parable of the sheep and the goats tells us.

The tortures of the damned are not restricted to the mind, the soul, or the body—they are applied to the whole of man, just as the blessings of eternal life are enjoyed by the whole persons of the redeemed. Though Scripture seems to indicate that there is some variance in the punishment laid on different individuals, one thing is certain that the essential thing of separation from the sight of God makes them all equally miserable. And since their conscience gave them warning they will recognize in all clearness that their judgment is just and hate and curses will be their answer—"there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The Hell where this judgment is executed is plainly designated as a place to which God assigns the condemned but it is an idle question to pry into further details. It will not be on earth—for the earth will then be destroyed; it will not be where the saints may mingle with the tortured—for it is to be in "outer darkness." Let that suffice. Hell is not preached to strike terror into the hearts of men and make them good from fear. Even if that were possible, that is not the plan of God. He has told us of the doom that awaits the ungodly to verify those warnings of our own conscience, which becomes uneasy when it breaks the law; Hell is a part of the apparatus of the law. When the fear of the wrath of God because man has broken His divine law takes hold of the heart, it is not the frightfulness of the punishment but the fearfulness of the transgression which rends the soul. The fear of Hell prepares no one for the reception of the Gospel, but when contrition has unfolded the satanic nature of sin—its hate of God, its disregard and disrespect for His awful majesty, then the message of His love in Christ is eagerly grasped.

For that reason much of the "evangelistic" preaching, often pronounced so very effective, is essentially

un-Christian. It depicts the horror of Hell and the agonies of perdition, which can easily be made effective and which easily lead to emotional results that arise from love of self and from self-pity,—and on that basis it offers the help of God. But the law requires the fear of the Lord and not the fear of Hell. One might say that mankind was informed of Hell and damnation in the Word to satisfy the technical and legal requirements of the commandments so that no one may say, "I did not know it was so serious." It is the law in its inevitable results and a Christian who has found redemption and has been absolved from all sin must find that he loathes sin not because it leads to Hell but because it is enmity of God. On the other hand, the spirit of rebellion and satanic rage against the decrees of God which will fill the utmost recesses of Hell in their impotence are essentially the same as those mutterings and utterances of unbelief that are heard here on earth in denial of the truth that God has imposed a penalty, the penalty of eternal death, upon those who flout His holiness and break His commandments. Softspoken voices that speak in honeyed words of the great love of God which would not condemn any of His creatures for any cause to the terrible punishment of Hell belong to this class as well as those who deny God outright and seek a balm for their fears of punishment in their denial.

There is tragic irony in the half-truth one hears so often: Hell is here on earth and one man is the other's devil. Yes, one man may do the Devil's work for another by teaching him the lie of unbelief, and there is a foretaste of Hell in the uneasy conscience that is beginning to realize its separation from God, but the Bible with its plainly-taught doctrine of Hell and Satan stands vindicated by the unwilling admission made in that lighthearted statement.

H. K. M.

WHEN WAS LUTHER BORN?

A simple question that all those who are in the least familiar with the story of Luther will answer quite readily. Why, on the tenth of November, 1483, they will say, at Eisleben. The answer is very likely correct, though recent research has not been any too well satisfied with the evidence that supports this date. The data concerning Luther's early history and that of his father's family are but meagre and many details that generally pass unquestioned are more the result of circumstantial rather than direct evidence.

That Luther was born at Eisleben, for instance, is well known and is substantiated to the satisfaction of scholars. To reconcile this fact with the movements of the Luther family, some authorities assumed that the parents of Luther had lived at Eisleben for a

few months before they moved to Mansfeld, where we know they lived at about this time. But this assumption is based on error, as the best available records show that the Luther family had lived at Mansfeld for some time before and continued to live there after Martin Luther was born at Eisleben. The apparent disagreement is reconciled by a tradition which must be accepted as authentic and which runs as follows: Luther was born in Eisleben "by accident." His mother went there to make some purchases of grain and was well on her way back to Mansfeld—tradition even records just how far she got—when she was compelled to retrace her steps and gave birth to her famous son at the house in the Long Lane.

Luther's birthday has always been fixed in histories as the tenth of November, 1483, but the very first life of Luther, written by Melanchthon in the year of Luther's death, also gives us the basis for doubt. Melanchthon records that he once asked Luther when he was born and Luther answered quite positively that it was on the tenth of November at eleven o'clock at night, but that he was uncertain as to the year; his mother was unable to fix the year exactly, but according to the family tradition it must have been the year 1483.

A further complication arose recently when one of the many investigators noted that the memorial tablet on Luther's tomb at Wittenberg conveyed the startling information that he died on the 18th of February, 1546, aged 63 years, 2 months, and 10 days, which would place his day of birth on the 7th or 8th of December, 1482. It has been suggested that this may be nothing more than the mistake of the engraver who was to write: 62 years, 3 months—and wrote: 63 years, 2 months. Taking the first figures and counting 30 days to the month, we would arrive at the usual date of November 10th, 1483.

Besides the record of Melanchthon, we have another good testimony that the 10th of November is the right day. On November 6th, 1532, Luther invited his friend Hausmann to celebrate with him three memorial days, three St. Martin's days, Luther put it. On the 9th there was the birthday of Luther's little son Martin, on the 10th "was the birthday of Martin, the father" (his own), and on the 11th was the day of St. Martin of the calendar, on which Luther was baptized and from which he took his name.

As for the year, Luther would occasionally make references that would indicate 1482, and then again he would indicate 1484. In 1542 he referred to himself as a man of 60 years, for example. But the very fact that data fluctuate between 1484 and 1482 would guide us in accepting the conventional statement—that he was born in 1483. If he himself and his own mother can give us no further information, it is to be

expected that in spite of the evident uncertainty we will have to be content with this date which we have learned in childhood.

H. K. M.

THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS

Many of our readers have no doubt frequently heard the assertion made by Roman Catholics that the very fact that their Church dates its beginning from the days of the Apostles proves it to be the possessor of the Gospel as taught by Christ and His disciples. They repeatedly state that their Church was founded by Christ, and built upon Peter, the Rock. They claim that members of the various Protestant denominations have strayed from the "Faith of the Fathers", are outcasts from the "true Church", who will pay the penalty of their estrangement in the fires of purgatory. Catholics claim further that their Church has never changed since the times of the Apostles,—that it is unchangeable, and that it will remain so until the end of time. While repudiating and denouncing Protestantism, they arrogantly assert that the Roman Catholic Church is the "Mother and Mistress of all Churches".

To prove the fallacy of the claim that the Roman Catholic Church has not changed one iota in doctrine and practice since the days of the Apostles, history records the following facts,—

(1) Worship in the Latin language was not commenced until the year 600 A. D.

(2) Worship of the Virgin Mary was not an established doctrine of the Church until 600 A. D.

(3) The idolatry of images, relics of saints, etc., was commenced in 788 A. D.

(4) The use of Holy Water was not "in vogue" until about 1000 A. D.

(5) The priests of the Roman Catholic Church were permitted to marry until the year 1079 A. D.

(6) The use of the Rosary was unknown in Catholic worship before the year 1090 A. D., although statues of saints and even of the Apostles are adorned with it.

(7) The mass became an established doctrine of the Catholic Church about 1100 years after the Crucifixion.

(8) The doctrine of Transubstantiation dates its beginning in the year 1215 A. D.

(9) Auricular confession was not introduced into the Catholic Church until the beginning of the thirteenth century.

(10) Purgatory was not mentioned in the doctrines of the Papal Church until the year 1438 A. D.

(11) Roman Catholic Traditions were not made a part of Holy Scriptures until the year 1545 A. D.

(12) The doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary" was not established until the year 1854 A. D.

(13) The blasphemous doctrine of the "Infallibility" of the Pope was not proclaimed to the "Faithful" until the year 1870 A. D.

As an organization the Catholic Church as it now stands dates back to the "Council of Trent" (1563), although its popes, prelates, and other "dignitaries" have since found it necessary to add new doctrines.

In this respect our Lutheran Church is some thirty years older, dating from the time of the great Augsburg Confession (1530).

Ignoring the question of age, has the Roman Catholic Church the right to claim that she is the only true Church? Emphatically no. Instead of abiding in the truth of the Gospel, as taught by Christ and His disciples, she has seen fit to add doctrine after doctrine, even going so far as to repudiate and ignore plain statements of Scripture, particularly passages in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans. The Fundamental Doctrine of the early Christian Church as taught by the inspired apostles was that we are saved, not by works of our own, but by grace through faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, while the Catholic Church teaches salvation by works. The early Christians had but two sacraments, while the Catholic Church teaches seven. She has deviated from plain scriptural truth in other doctrines too numerous to mention, and then arrogantly claims to be the only "true, unchangeable Church,—the spouse of Christ".

But what proof have we Lutherans that we are in possession of "The Faith once delivered to the Saints" if, as an organization, we have our beginning in the drawing up of the Augsburg Confession?

What about our Smalcald Articles, The Formula of Concord, Small and Large Catechisms, and other Books of Doctrine, are they not additions to the Holy Scriptures? Additions to the Scriptures? God forbid. These symbolical books, in showing the faith of the Lutheran Church, show also the faith of the Church founded by the Apostles, squarely built on the Word of God. Nothing is taken from the Scriptures, nothing added, but all the rubbish of tradition, and other doctrines at variance with the Scriptures cast aside. The drawing up of these symbolical books was a necessity at a time when the world was in gross darkness,—they held up the beacon light of the Gospel, and the pure, unadulterated Word of God was again proclaimed to spiritually starving humanity as it was in the days of the Apostles. The symbolical books of our Lutheran Church lay no claim to take the place of the Scriptures, but stand out as bulwarks and mighty fortresses in defense of the Bible as the Word of God, and sole authority of doctrine and prac-

tice. Eminent divines of other denominations have admitted that "they were unable to detect a single flaw in the Augsburg Confession"—in comparison with doctrines of Holy Scripture.

The Lutheran Church can therefore claim to be in possession of "The Faith once for all delivered to the Saints", and, resting securely on that rock foundation, the Word of God, its communicants can "see their title clear to mansions in the skies", clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and trusting in His finished redemption.

Well it has been said of the prelates of the Roman Church, that

With Frauds that they themselves invent
Thy Truth they have confounded,
Their hearts are not with one intent
On Thy pure doctrine grounded.

What a marked contrast to the above are the words of the poet who thus sings the praises of the Lutheran Church, — (Gerberding in "Way of Salvation").

My Church, my Church, my dear old Church,
My glory and my pride,
Firm in the Faith Immanuel taught,
She holds no Faith beside.
Upon this rock, 'gainst every shock,
Though Gates of Hell assail,
She stands secure, with promise sure,
They never shall prevail.

* * * * *

My Church, my Church, my dear old Church,
I've heard the tale of blood,
Of hearts that loved her to the death
The great, the wise, the good.
Our martyred sires defied the fires
For Christ, the Crucified.
The once delivered Faith to keep,
They burned, they bled, they died.

* * * * *

My Church, my Church, I love my Church,
For she exalts Her Lord,
She speaks, she breathes, she teaches not,
But from His Written Word.
And if her voice bids me rejoice
From all my sins released,
'Tis through the atoning sacrifice,
And Jesus is the Priest.

* * * * *

Then here, my Church, my dear old Church,
Thy child would add a vow,
To that whose token once was signed
Upon his infant brow.
Assault who may, kiss and betray,
Dishonor and disown,—

My Church shall yet be dear to me,
My Father's and my own.

The three creeds, held by the early Church in its pure state, (Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian), are still held in the Roman Catholic Church, having had the good fortune not to be altered or "doctored" at the Council of Trent or other councils. As the Lutheran Church has always, and still does, subscribe to these creeds, where does the question of age come in? Truly, there were "Lutherans before Luther", and the Lutheran Faith is as old as the "Faith once delivered to the Saints" and identical with it. A. H.

HUMILITY AND HONESTY

At Wittenberg Melancthon had issued an order that all the students should rise when Luther entered to lecture. Although this was an ancient college custom, yet the humble Luther was not pleased with it and said: "I wish Philip would give up this old fashion. These marks of honor always compel me to offer more prayers to keep me humble. If I dared, I would almost retire without having read my lecture." How different from the spirit of those who expect people to rise in mark of reverence for them, when they are only ministers of the people, and not having any personal qualities to command such external worship! The worthier a man, the more humility he usually has.

A friend proposed to Luther that he should dedicate one of his writings to Jerome Ebner, a juriconsult of Nuremberg, who was then in great repute. "You have too high an opinion of my labors," answered Luther, modestly; "but I myself have a very poor opinion of them. It was my wish, however, to comply with your desire. I looked, but among all my papers—which I never before thought so meanly of—I could find nothing but what seemed totally unworthy of being dedicated to so distinguished a person by so humble an individual as myself."—Luth. Witness.

TEACHERS' CONVENTION IN MICHIGAN

On November 4th and 5th the teachers of the Joint Synod residing in Michigan assembled at Owosso in the congregation of Rev. Hahn for their annual convention. There were fifteen members of the teacher body present of which number five were lady teachers. Seven papers were read and discussed and all but one of these were on practical questions. A paper of special interest, presenting a plan for the study of Bible history in two class schools, could not be finished for lack of time. Mr. Fuhrmann, who read this essay, will finish his work at the next annual meeting.

A resolution was adopted by which the time of session for the coming year will be extended to three days. Several timely speeches and addresses were made before the convention this year: In his opening address Mr. Stein held up Jesus to his colleagues as an example for all teachers; Rev. Hahn, taking as his text 1 Pet. 5:2-4, encouraged them to show faithfulness in their difficult task; Prof. Hensel of the progymnasium in Saginaw cheered the members on to efforts for individual advancement along the lines of their work. It would be well for our congregation to urge their lady teachers also to attend this conference and, perhaps, even to pay their fare. G.

"The raven was an unclean bird; God makes use of her to feed Elijah; though she was not good meat, yet it was good meat she brought. A lame man may with his crutch point out to you the right way, and yet not be able to walk in it himself."—Mead.

"A VAIN SHADOW"

The world—what a world, ah me!
Mouldy, worm-eaten, grey;
Vain as a leaf from a tree,
As a fading day,
As veriest vanity,
As the froth and the spray
Of the hollow-billowed sea,
As what was and shall not be,
As what is and passes away.

—Christina Rossetti.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Seventy-fifth Anniversary

The German Evangelical Synod of North America (Unierte Kirche) last month celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding. It has at present 1,348 congregations with 270,000 communicants. This is the one church concerning which the average layman is always in doubt as to its confessional standing. Time and again a pastor is asked: Are they Lutherans? And when told that they are not he will frequently say: Well, that's what they call themselves where I live. Whether this be true or not, the fact remains that many Lutherans permit themselves to be added to their congregations expecting to find an equivalent of their Lutheranism. We must urge the slogan of the advertiser: Do not accept a substitute!

A Record

From Platte City, Mo., comes the account of a record that will not easily be broken. William M. Paxton has missed Sunday school for the first time in 65 years. After uninterrupted attendance up to the age of 97, physical infirmities caused the first failure to respond to roll call with his cheery "Present."

Comfort for the Sick

(A translation of "Krankentrost")

A monthly leaflet for free distribution to the sick in Hospital and Home. Edited by Rev. B. P. Nommensen. 1 copy 10c, 10 copies 50c, 25 copies \$1.00, 100 copies \$3.00. Size 5½x8.

Please subscribe in order to obtain second class rate. Address: Rev. B. P. Nommensen, 1231 Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

The sainted Rev. Schlerf wrote in his last days: "My patients are best pleased, if I read a passage from 'Krankentrost' to them. Lately a young man said to me: Pastor, read those parts once more. Is there an english edition of 'Krankentrost'?"

The Largest Presbyterian Church in America

The strongest congregation of the Presbyterian confession numerically is to be found on the Pacific coast, in Seattle. It has a membership of 5,652 communicants. In this case the largest in America also means the largest in the world. This is remarkable because in the nature of the case the rapid growth was confined to recent years. It is also a vindication for conservative faith and methods, for the pastor of the church, Dr. Mark A. Matthews, is the foremost champion of orthodox faith within the Presbyterian ranks and his opponents are numerous and powerful. The statistics from which the above figures were taken also show the ephemeral character of Billy Sunday's "work." All the churches in which he performed in 1913 showed numerical gains for 1914, but every one of them had a bad relapse in 1915. Some of them even fell below the normal gains they were able to report in previous years.

Anniversary and Dedication

To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the erection of its present church edifice, St. John's of Jefferson held jubilee services and dedicated to its sacred uses a new eagle lecturn and a complete set of altar and pulpit vestments in the five liturgical colors.

CULLED BY THE WAY

Sure He Did

Deacon—Susie, I am sorry your papa was not at meeting.
Susie—Please, no, sir; he went out walking in the woods.
Deacon—I am afraid, Susie, your papa does not fear God.
Susie—Oh, yes, sir; I guess he does; he took his gun with him.—Buffalo Courier.

He Was Bored

The pastor announced at the close of the sermon that a meeting of the board would follow. All the audience except the board and one stranger, passed out. The pastor hemmed and said: "Brother, I guess you misunderstood. Th's is a meeting of the board."

"Yes," the stranger said, "go right ahead. I was never so bored in all my life."

Astounding

A number of tourists were recently looking down the crater of Vesuvius. An American gentleman said to his companion:

"That looks a good deal like the infernal regions."

An English lady, hearing the remark, said to another:

"Good gracious! How these Americans do travel!"