



Lutheran Synod Quarterly

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George O. Lillegard, Editor-in-Chief, % Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota

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ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

By way of introduction - this brief piece is quite personal. It comes from one who despises neither 20th Century English nor Elizabethan English. It develops from one's having read and heard considerable about the need or the lack of need for having the Bible in 20th Century English; more immediately, it is being set down here because in our circles it seems to be commonly understood that in regard to the King James Version we list only its good points and the reasons for continuing to use it, and in regard to other English versions we list only the bad points and the reasons for not using them.

One notes this common failing in so much that is written and said about translations: They consider the translations as a thing in themselves without considering them in relation to the people who are to use them. But it is not merely a matter of praising this or that translation to the skies or of exposing the weaknesses of another; you also have to ask questions like these: In which century do we live? What sort of English is the average Bible reader (not the trained linguist, which is what most pastors are to some extent; not the professional teacher of English, who may quite justifiably have a fondness for Elizabethan English; not the traditionalist, who would regard any new translation of the Bible into English as an affront upon our heritage of English literature) - what sort of English is the average Bible reader most likely to appreciate? It is somewhat disturbing to note how the church papers quote from everybody who has something to say about it, to the effect that we should most surely use nothing but the King James Version. It is disturbing because the fact is that much of what is said in this regard has nothing to do with the fact that people are supposed to read the Bible, not merely as literature, but in order to be made wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Much of what is said in praise of the A.V. would be said with as much eloquence and vehemence if the subject were "Modernizing Shakespeare's English" instead of "Bible Translations". But you have to consider the person who uses the translation, not merely the translation.

In this connection one hears some insist that the language of the era of King James I offers no barrier to the average Bible reader of today. This insistence amazes the writer. For one thing, the clarity of the A.V. is not uniform throughout. On the one hand, for example, you have the crystal-clear presentation of something like Luke Two; in quite a different vein you have the rendering given to some of St.

Paul's writings, much stiffer and abstract in the A.V. than in the original Greek (if this very inexperienced reader of Greek may be allowed such a comparison). For another thing, this insistence is at variance with the writer's experience. It is all very well for us to insist that the average person should be able, in a little while, to get used, e.g., to the "thou" and its verb endings and to the third person singular verb endings and to the "ye" of the second person plural, etc., etc.; it is another thing to see the person who does not daily use and read this sort of thing stumble upon it when he meets it. Maybe it should be emphasized that it is quite easy for us more-or-less professional linguists to imagine that becoming comfortable with 17th Century English is easier for the non-professional than it really is; we may tend to transfer to him, without his knowing it, our own familiarity with it.

One has to remember that, for better or for worse, modern man is bombarded with words at a rate that is likely higher than ever before. It would seem rather out of place to expect of him ("him" is the average reader, again) that he develop an acquaintance with an older kind of English, beautiful as it is, for religious purposes only. To this writer it is not a bad thing but a good thing when a part of the Bible is read in good 20th Century English and someone remarks in astonishment: "Why, that sounds just like the way we talk nowadays". Some have demeaned modern efforts at Bible translation by saying that they make the Bible sound like everyday speech. If we understand what Bible translators since the LXX have been trying to do, then this is what should be done. This is certainly what Martin Luther tried to do, to make the Bible speak the language of the people of his day; the preface to the A.V. makes it clear that this is what those good translators tried to do. This is not an argument for careless or over-colloquial translations; it is, rather, an assertion that the English in which we present the Word of God to the people of our time should be the kind of language which the Greek of the New Testament was. It was Koine, common - not vulgar, not indecent, not hypercolloquial, but common, within the grasp of the average reader of Greek of that day.

One notes an inconsistency in the eloquent pleas of many who insist that there is no need whatever for a translation of the Bible in 20th Century English. They use good, clean, 20th Century English for making their case; and their case is this, that you should, in religion, use good, clean 17th Century English. If it is fitting that we insist that our average parishioner should, for purposes of religion, be well acquainted with 17th Century English, then would it not also be fitting for us to help him attain that goal - perhaps by preaching our sermons in 17th Century English? And perhaps by printing our churches papers, such as our "Sentinel", in that admittedly clear language? Or does someone say: But no one would read our papers then? And does he insist at the same time that having the Bible in beautiful 17th Century English is an incentive for the average man to read it?

Another thing: Some of those who seem to believe that the A.V. needs defending (it doesn't) say too much, much too much; or, from another point of view, they say too little. That is, they list all the good qualities of the A.V. without ever listing any of its less desirable ones; and at the same time they list by chapter and verse the failings of any and all recent translations. One wonders: Is not this the route by which the Latin Vulgate became the Roman Catholic version, hoisted by hyperbole into an all-excluding domination so that even its errors were canonized? - This writer remembers that in his seminary days it was the fashion to point out the inferiority of the A.V. as compared with Luther's translation. One bold person published an article in the student periodical of that day in which he insisted that the A.V. had its good points, too. A person has the impression that some conservative Christians are saying too much too soon about present-day efforts at putting the Bible into English.

And one of those too-much-too-soon assertions is this; the most horrible of them all: It is not in the cards for our civilization to produce another good translation of the Bible. Our civilization has already produced one, the A.V., and that's par

per civilization; in fact, it's the insuperable maximum; besides, on that we've spent ourselves; we're exhausted, and we'd do better not to try again. One suspects that this is a home-made rule, conceived for the purpose of appearing to give stability to a too-hasty conclusion.

One can also hazard the guess that the impact and the durability of the N.E.B. will be far greater than some of its early and eager critics suggest; this much, surely, can be said without condoning any weakness that has already appeared or will appear in it. But the point of these few remarks is not to advocate that we forthwith adopt the N.E.B. as our official version; the point is, rather, this: There is a need for a Bible in 20th Century English; we shall ignore that fact at our peril; and we ought, therefore, to view the possibility of having a Bible in good, clean 20th Century English with joy instead of with fear.

--Stuart A. Dorr

A REPORT ON NEW DELHI

(The information here given was gleaned from a brief 6-page report by the Rev. Arthur E. Steele, Vice President of Faith Theological Seminary, on the recent meeting of the WCC at New Delhi, under the title, Unity Talk at New Delhi. The outline is that of the undersigned. Italics reproduced from the original report of Rev. Steele, who was an observer at the WCC meeting.)

1. The WCC can hardly be called a Protestant Church organization --

- a) in view of the benedictions found in the printed bulletins of the Morning Worship Services, e.g.,

For November 29, 1961

"Christ our true God, by the intercessions of his most pure Mother ever-Virgin Mary: of our Father among the Saints, John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople; of the holy martyrs Paramonus, Piloumenus and Faidre, whose day it is and of all the Saints, will have mercy upon us and save us, for he is good and he loveth mankind. Amen."

For December 2, 1961

"May God be merciful unto us and bless us, and make His face shine upon us, and have mercy upon us. O Lord, save Thy people; bless thine inheritance; lift them up forever. Through the supplications and prayers which our Lady Theotokos Mary and the Prophets, and the Apostles and the martyrs and the crossbearers and the righteous make on our behalf always.

To Thee be glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and for ever. Amen".

(Unity Talk, p. 1)

- b) and in view of the evaluation made of the Orthodox Church as published by the WCC in its "Orthodoxy, A Faith and Order Dialogue", pp. 8 & 9. (Geneva, 1960),

"The first fundamental and essential characteristic of the Orthodox Church is its steady adherence to the holy tradition which it inherits from the early Catholic Church.

"But if Holy traditions is accepted as a source of faith, its immutability must be recognized, just as the Bible (the other source of faith) is recognized to be immutable.

"Like the Bible, holy tradition is regarded in the Orthodox Church as the 'Word of God', as 'water springing up into everlasting life'." (ibid., p. 1)

2. The WCC seems inclined to give up the Protestant heritage it has by welcoming conversations with Rome in the hope of removing theological differences, as seen, for example, in the report of the Policy Reference Committee, on December 1, 1961,

"The Committee welcomes the closer contacts which have recently been established with certain Roman Catholic churchmen specifically concerned with Christian unity and hopes that these will develop fruitfully in the future." (ibid., p.3)

3. The WCC is asking about injecting heathen elements into the corpus of Christian doctrine, thus in danger of becoming syncretistic. The much-used official guide book at New Delhi, Evanston to New Delhi, p. 40, quotes Principal J. R. Chandran of the Church of South India as saying:

"What is the real difference between the collective, but individualistic, worship of Hinduism as compared with the corporateness of Christian worship; How can the East's indigenous cultural and thought forms, which are part of God's creative work, be taken over by the Church; What are the appropriate symbols for Christian liturgical life and to what extent can Hindu Symbols, for example of the relation between God and man, be used; To what degree does an exaggerated fear of syncretism impoverish the worship of the Asian churches..." (ibid., p. 3)

4. The WCC, though professedly a church federation, is developing into a political organization.

- a) In an address on November 23, Dr. O. Frederick Nolte, Director of the Churches on International Affairs, made this declaration re the mission of the WCC,

"Its activities (the CCIA) rest on the assumption that the Churches have a right, indeed a duty, to speak to the nations for peace and justice and, if their word is to be effective, it must be uttered at the time and place where international and intergovernmental decisions are made...."

"For example, early in September of the current year, as in past years, the CCIA staff prepared a memorandum over sixty pages in length wherein the views of the churches were related to about fifty of the items which had been inscribed on the provisional agenda of the Sixteenth Session of the United National General Assembly..." (ibid., pp. 4 & 5)

- b) In the report of the Committee of the CCIA on December 2, President Pusey of Harvard said this about the political activities of the WCC,

"To be equal to its role in international life, the United Nations must have the constant support of all its members..."

"The churches should urge governments to discharge their full responsibilities towards the United Nations and to be prepared to increase their efforts for the common cause of peace and orderly progress." (ibid., p. 5)

- c) In his address on November 23, Dr. O. Frederic Nolte also made this pronouncement on National Sovereignty,

"By the exercise of their sovereign power, nations must progressively relinquish those aspects of sovereignty which are outworn and self-defeating. Submission to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, to international regulations effecting trade and commerce, to international inspection to insure compliance with treaties -- these and similar commitments must replace the former claims of sovereignty..."

(continued on page 9)

"KING SVERRE'S ECCLESIASTICAL CONTROVERSIES"

Part VII

(Continued from Dec. issue)

From the foregoing we can well determine the ideas of Sverre in regard to the matter of church and state. He never denied the divine origin of the office of bishop, priest or other clergymen. He never questioned their authority and jurisdiction in matters purely religious.

However, in temporal matters which concern the church, Sverre insisted that the king had not only the right, but the plain duty to serve as guardian and protector of the church (See note 98 above). He therefore denied the churchmen the authority and supremacy in things temporal which pertained to the church.

Since that was his view in temporal matters pertaining to the church, it is only natural that Sverre would most violently oppose any attempt of the church to encroach upon the matters which pertain to the state as such. The Gregorian viewpoint, which placed the church above the state, and consequently gave the churchmen, especially the Pope, power over the rulers of the state, was repudiated and condemned by Sverre. Instead of conceding the church two swords, Sverre denied them any power in temporal matters and refused to let the churchmen meddle in things pertaining to the state. Hence, he felt such a great responsibility over against the church as well as the state. Like Frederick Barbarossa, he demanded the right to approve or disapprove of candidates elected to church offices.¹⁰⁴ In that respect, one cannot help but feel that he intruded upon and interfered with the duties of the church leaders.

It is no wonder, therefore, that Sverre, convinced of his own royal birth, faced so many difficulties and struggled and fought so hard to gain and hold the throne. He spoke and acted with such conviction that one can scarcely doubt that he believed that God had given him the throne and its prerogatives, and that God would hold him accountable for it. Sverre's faith in God as the one who shaped his destiny and directed everything accordingly seems to have been the chief guiding principle in his life. Paasche points out the fact that although Sverre's religion was fatalistic, it was not fatalistic in a blind sense, to the exclusion of God. Rather it was a fatalism in which God played a most important part.¹⁰⁵ Hence he had an unwavering conviction that he, Sverre, as king had those rights and duties given him by God, and was responsible to God in discharging them.

There can be no question that Sverre Sigurdsson is of great importance because of the views which he so clearly and forcefully expressed in the matter of the relation between church and state, and specifically between the churchmen and the king in matters temporal. At the time when he arrived on the scene, the power of the king was greatly limited, and the archbishop exercised great authority both spiritually and temporally. There was a real danger of total domination by the clergy, and even worse, of domination by a foreigner, the Pope of Rome. Toward the end of Sverre's life, the most powerful Pope of all, Innocent III, sat in the papal chair. Perhaps no other Pope used the powers of excommunication and interdict to such an extent as Innocent. In most cases he succeeded. In the case of Philip Augustus he neither succeeded nor failed. But it must be said that in only one case did he really fail, and that was in the case of Sverre. It is therefore noteworthy that Sverre was able to resist and oppose that powerful Pope. One significant difference between Sverre and Philip Augustus is that whereas the latter opposed Innocent on personal grounds without caring particularly about the theological side, Sverre opposed Innocent and all the

¹⁰⁴ Paasche, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 265.

clergy who held that view of church and state on theological grounds.

Although the Speech Against the Bishops was primarily directed against the bishops of Norway, it was also an answer to Innocent and those who held his views. Sverre, with the help of the actual author, refuted the arguments of his opponents by quoting from both the Bible and the church fathers.

The significance of Sverre's achievements is summarized as follows by Zorn:

Sverre's conflict with the church belongs to the most notable conflicts in world history It is in reality the same principles of state and sovereignty which we also today advance against the Roman Church. They are first found in this clear logical consistency in Norway under King Sverre. For that reason Sverre's conflict, far more than all other conflicts between church and state at that time, bears a character of principle in completely modern form.¹⁰⁶

As a defense of the power of the king against the papacy and the Norwegian hierarchy, the work of Sverre was significant. However, there was a danger connected with his movement, which if not checked, could have proved disastrous to Norway. For while Sverre was defending Norway from the domination of the clergy, he was bringing her under his own power and the people of Norway consequently had little power themselves. The king himself had most of the power, and for a while he was to rule with an iron hand, until later the people gained more rights and privileges. Paasche compares the earlier Norwegian state with that of the time of Sverre and his immediate successors:

In earlier times the Norwegian state lay only as a thin blanket over the body of the people; all the time we see its powerful movements under the blanket During the time of the diligent lawgivers of the family of Sverre, we do not see the people as clearly as before. The king, the one king, becomes everything, becomes Norway.¹⁰⁷

Bang expresses himself similarly. He states that Sverre had the idea of centralizing everything in one person. He adds that it is fortunate that Sverre did not entirely succeed in that respect, for if he had, conditions would have been worse for the Norwegians during the many hundred years when the royal power was located in Copenhagen.¹⁰⁸ Norway was the minor partner in a union with Denmark which lasted over 400 years, until the year 1814.

None the less, Sverre's contributions were great, not only because he was endowed with many remarkable gifts, but even more because he was convinced of his right to occupy the position of king. Throughout his twenty-five years of rule as king, he suffered hardships, and seldom could he enjoy any peaceful pursuits, which he probably would have preferred. But he felt it to be right to defend what he was convinced was his. We could therefore do no better than close this treatise with the very words which Sverre himself uttered on his death-bed early in March, 1202:

The kingdom has brought me labor and unrest and trouble, rather than peace and a quiet life. But so it is, that many have envied me my rank, and have let their envy grow to full enmity. May God forgive them, and decide all my cause.¹⁰⁹

THE END

¹⁰⁶ Zorn, op. cit., p. 149.

¹⁰⁷ Paasche, op. cit., p. 295.

¹⁰⁸ Bang, op. cit., pp 109 f.

¹⁰⁹ Gjerset, op. cit., p. 406.

KING SVERRE'S ECCLESIASTICAL CONTROVERSIES
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R. E. Honsey

A REPORT ON NEW DELHI
(continued from page 5)

And, in the report of the Section on Service, delivered December 4, it was further stated,

"But it must be said to new nations as to older ones that the evolution of an international order will require of all a measure of surrender of autonomy and sovereignty for the sake of the world community..." (ibid., p. 6)

(Faith Theological Seminary is affiliated with the American and International Council of Christian Churches, of which Dr. Carl McIntire is the chief representative.)

M. H. Otto

MISCELLANEA

Anybody having a workable mimeograph which they do not use, please get in touch with the Rev. Wilhelm Petersen, 5530 Englewood Drive, Madison 4, Wisc.

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Anyone else having anything they want or that they have that someone else can use, get in touch with the Lutheran Synod Quarterly.

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A Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, by Dr. J. Ylvisaker, translated into English by George O. Lillegard, may be purchased at the Lutheran Synod Book Store for \$4.50 net.

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CORRECTION: In the December issue, the last page, something was attributed to the Lutheran Spokesman - when it should have been the Journal of Theology of the CLC. We are sorry for that mistake (Ed.).

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x A reprint of Prof. Bigelow's	x All books reviewed in the
x "A Primer of Existentialism" may	x
x be purchased: 10¢ each; 30 for	x <u>Lutheran Synod Quarterly</u>
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ENTRENCHED UNIONISTIC PRACTICES IN
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

VII. Toleration of Unionistic Activity by Individuals

Under the above heading, the Wisconsin Synod's NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN for March 11th prints an article by Rev. E. Arnold Sitz which gives grieved expression to the offence caused by several prominent individuals in the Missouri Synod by their connection with heretics of the worst sort. The editor of the NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN introduces the article in the following words:

"When a unionistic spirit has invaded a church body, its presence can usually be detected not only by what that body does through its officials, its boards, and its responsible spokesmen. Equally significant and revealing is what that church does not do about individuals, prominent or otherwise, who engage in unionistic practices. Toleration of such activities speaks just as loud a language as does an official pronouncement sanctioning unionistic endeavors.

"Perhaps it is not necessary to say — but we say it anyway so that we are correctly understood — that we are not interested in making personal attacks on the men mentioned. Our sole concern is the issue raised by their unionistic activities and the failure of those responsible to apply the admonition and discipline necessary to check those individuals in their offensive course."

The article reads:

In the Lutheran Witness and in correspondence from the Missouri Synod leaders, we read that they have been saddened by the suspension of fellowship between the Wisconsin and Missouri Synods. We also are saddened by the break which the Missouri Synod has caused not only by its unionistic practice, but also by the gross unionism it has tolerated on the part of individuals in high places within its own ranks. Their names and offenses appear in the official periodicals of the synod without a word of censure. Offense is given whenever anyone says or does anything that tends to obscure, smudge, or draw away from the Word of God, or to hinder, retard, turn aside, lead astray, or dishearten anyone in his faith.

We are saddened by the careless — and to Dr. Walther, Dr. Pieper, and Dr. Pfotenhauer utterly unthinkable — unionism as it is practiced by a Jaroslav Pelikan, Jr., and a Martin Marty. We are saddened by the conduct of Dr. Fuerbringer because of loose devotional activity, no less by the unionistic stance of Dr. O. P. Kretzmann in the guise of the pursuit of learning. We are saddened by the uncertain steps taken in the case of men like Dr. Martin Scharlemann, Dr. Arthur Piepkorn, and a Berthold von Schenk.

The secular press has exalted Dr. Pelikan to the high rank of being one of the top spokesmen for the Missouri Synod. No one doubts that God has given Dr. Pelikan eminent intellectual gifts; witness the translation of Luther's Works into English, generally work of high order. But his book, "The Riddle of Roman Catholicism," remains much of a riddle. Far from being "a volume in the strict tradition of the Reformation", as one critic has written, far from portraying the Pope as the Anti-christ, the reader will come to the conclusion that Roman Catholicism is not nearly as perverted and heretical as Luther asserted it to be. The book helps to blaze the trail back into the corral of the Antichrist.

Beyond this, Pelikan vacated his chair on the theological faculty at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and for the past several years has been a member of the Federated Theological Faculty at the University of Chicago. Whoever maintains that the school

teaches an unadulterated Biblical theology is far gone. Though now in the process of dissolution, it favored men of every shade of religious opinion. Report has it that now Pelikan will join the similar faculty of Yale Divinity School.

What will Dr. Pelikan — and the Missouri Synod that harbors him — answer when his example leads others in the Lutheran Church to think lightly of loyalty to God's Word (John 8:31,32) and to think lightly of giving offense? Consider Matthew 18:6,7. Will anyone in the Missouri Synod assert that Dr. Walther would have tolerated for one moment such offense as Pelikan is giving?

Dr. Martin Marty is pastor of the Missouri Synod Church of the Holy Ghost, Elk Grove, Illinois. At the same time he is associate editor of The Christian Century, a religious journal which denies the teachings of Scripture on Jesus Christ, the inspiration of the Bible, the atonement, the virgin birth, and other cardinal doctrines. It has occurred several times lately that the Lutheran Witness has published the fact that Marty is an associate editor of the Century, apparently with pride, certainly not with any word of dismay. Whether or not Dr. Marty as associate editor is directly responsible for the shaping of editorial policy, the fact remains that he is responsible before God and the Church for what appears in that periodical, for he has lent his name and sanction as a Lutheran to the blasphemies the unchristian Century prints. Again the question: How many may have had a stumbling block put in the way of their faith by this gross offense? And what will the Missouri Synod answer for lending its membership and prestige to that kind of gross offender? Luke 17:1,2.

We think here also of Dr. O. P. Kretzmann, the head of Valparaiso University. It was reported in the press that Dr. Tillich would speak there. How in the name of higher education could he invite an unbeliever like Tillich to the University, a man who glories in the ungodly and blasphemous conceit of ridiculous paradoxes, shallow and arrogant spoutings which he terms "principles"? And what are these principles he claims every thinking theologian must arrive at? Forsooth: "1. That God is no God; 2. That one must be concerned." Is there a god called "Higher Education" who ranks above the God who created the heavens and the earth? Or are Lutheran universities and university heads exempt from heeding St. Paul's warning against philosophy and vain deceit? Colossians 2:8. Or Christ's: "Beware of false prophets"?

We are also saddened by the unionistic practice of Dr. O. A. Fuerbringer, when Missouri Synod periodicals tell of common devotions with theological faculties not in doctrinal agreement with us. Certainly this goes beyond even that which the Missouri Synod asserts about 'joint prayer' being allowable. For devotions bespeak altar and pulpit fellowship. One thing leads to the next. Saddening also is the Romanizing stand of men like Dr. Piepkorn and a Pastor von Schenk. The uncertain status of the Scharlemann case and the leeway given him to plant his opinions synod-wide raise a grave question.

We know full well that if evangelical correction were undertaken in the Missouri Synod, it would receive a bad press. But is not this part of the cross we must bear for the sake of Christ and the Gospel? No Christian dare cut a pattern to please or accommodate the world. For: "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." So says Jesus in Luke 16:15.

"But", it will be said, "the Missouri Synod must progress." The toboggan also progresses — downhill. While the Missouri Synod has certainly done eminent service to the Lord, there is room for return to the simplicity of the Gospel and of faith. Beware of a 300-horsepower motor car with faulty brakes!

Who of us is not slightly uncomfortable when we meet the word "Existentialism"? The very sound of the word tends to give us an inferiority complex because we are dealing with the unknown. And yet a theological conversation today doesn't go very far without bringing up the word. But cheer up. It is not only a few conservative Lutheran pastors who experience these feelings. If there is any comfort in it, you might like to know that there is a large group of society who have had similar experiences — college English professors. College English (an official organ of the National Council of Teachers of English) for December 1961, carries an article by Dr. Gordon E. Bigelow of the University of Florida, entitled "A Primer of Existentialism" (pages 171-178). We recommend this article to our pastors, and as an inducement to reading it we shall briefly summarize some of the points.

Prof. Bigelow begins by saying: "For some years I fought the word by irritably looking the other way whenever I stumbled across it, hoping that like dadaism and some of the other "isms" of the French avant garde it would go away if I ignored it. But existentialism was apparently more than the picture it evoked of uncombed beards, smoky basement cafes, and French beatniks regaling one another between sips of absinthe with brilliant variations on the theme of despair." He discovered that currently it is of considerable importance to literature and the arts, to philosophy and theology, and even to the social sciences. But when he went to the discussions of existentialism he couldn't get much help, since apparently the introductory discussions took too much for granted for the novice. So the good professor endeavored to make a simple statement of its basic characteristics, and this he did by setting forth six major themes of existentialism, but cautioning us that these six themes "will apply in varying degrees to particular existentialists". We think that the professor did very well.

Before listing the six themes, we should note that Dr. Bigelow points out that "there are almost as many varieties of this ism as there are individual writers to whom the word is applied." He also adds that "without being facetious we might group them into two main kinds, the ungodly and the godly." As a member of the first group he lists Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Simone de Beauvoir. Of the second group (theistic) he names Søren Kierkegaard, the mid-nineteenth century Dane; two contemporary French Roman Catholics, Gabriel Marcel and Jacques Maritain; two protestant theologians, Paul Tillich and Nicholas Berdyaev; and Martin Buber, a contemporary Jewish theologian. Of course, behind both these groups are philosophers who have influenced the movement — Blaise Pascal, Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers; and literary figures, such as Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Hawthorne, Faulkner, etc.

Here are the six themes he discusses:

1. **EXISTENCE BEFORE ESSENCE.** "Existentialism gets its name from an insistence that human life is understandable only in terms of an individual man's existence, his particular experience of life."
2. **REASON IS IMPOTENT TO DEAL WITH THE DEPTHS OF HUMAN LIFE.** "Since Plato, Western civilization has usually assumed a separation of reason from the rest of the human psyche, and has glorified reason as suited to command the non-rational part."
3. **ALIENATION OR ESTRANGEMENT.** "Existentialists are convinced that modern man lives in a four-fold condition of alienation: from God, from nature, from other men, from his own true self."
4. **"FEAR AND TREMBLING", ANXIETY.** In accepting the Nobel Prize at Stockholm, William Faulkner said that "our tragedy today is a general and universal physical fear so long sustained by now that we can even bear it. There are no longer problems of the spirit. There is only one question: When will I be blown up?" (1950)

5. THE ENCOUNTER WITH NOTHINGNESS. "The testimony of the existentialists is that this is where modern man now finds himself, not on the highway of upward Progress toward a radiant Utopia but on the brink of a catastrophic precipice, below which yawns the absolute void, an uncompromised black Nothingness."

6. FREEDOM. The themes outlined above "describe either some loss of man's freedom or some threat to it, and all existentialists of whatever sort are concerned to enlarge the range of human freedom." -- "For the avowed atheists like Sartre freedom means human autonomy." -- "The religious existentialists... stress the man of faith rather than the man of will. They interpret man's existential condition as a state of alienation from his essential nature which is God-like, the problem of his life being to heal the chasm between the two, that is, to find salvation." Tillich describes salvation as "the act in which the cleavage between the essential being and the existential situation is overcome."

We strongly suggest that you hie yourself off to the nearest college library, take some copious notes on this essay, then dig into some existential literature, and then to the Word "which liveth and abideth forever" so that you can perform the usus elencticus for your people.

B. W. Teigen

"DIALOG"

That is the name of an 88 page theological quarterly magazine which has made its bow with a "WINTER" issue, 1962. It is published by Sacred Design Associates of Minneapolis. Beyond that, sponsorship is not indicated. It has an Editorial Staff of nine and an Editorial Council of twenty-eight. The list of Contributing Editors brings the total number of names on the masthead to seventy-one. A quick check of the names reveals that the ALC is more heavily represented, in numbers at least, than any other Lutheran group. We recognize a few names from Missouri, Augustana, Lutheran Free Church, and the ULC. A good share of the key Staff Members are professors at Luther Seminary in St. Paul. Word has gone out, though, that the ALC and Luther Seminary disclaim any responsibility for the periodical. The Editorial Staff and Council are said to be a "group of young men" ("Angry young men", maybe) acting entirely on their own.

Whatever else DIALOG may stand for, it certainly stands for "dialogue". "The journal DIALOG seeks to be a rendezvous where the mind of the church and the cultural consciousness of our age encounter each other in mutual ferment, exposure, criticism and questioning." p. 5. Presumably, it is expected that the dialogue will be carried on in the pages of DIALOG. Nothing is said about editorial policy, but we have been informed that articles will be welcomed from whomsoever.

The make-up of the magazine is arresting, - colorful, indeed. We do not know of any theological periodical of this sort that has gone to such lengths in the use of pigments and illustrative designs, some of them quite apt, in fact. To be sure, it still has a long way to go to catch up with "The Lutheran Wisual-aid-ness".

This particular issue has the title: "CRISIS IN THE CHURCH", and, besides a considerable volume of editorializing, has a number of larger articles devoted to said crisis: "Does the Church Need a New Reformation?" by Regin Prenter, "The Crowded Temple" by Loren E. Halvorson, "The Ecumenical Councils and the Assemblies of the World Council of Churches" by Edmund Schlink, "The Crisis of Confessionalism" by Carl E. Braaten, "The Prophetic Word For Today" by Richard Luecke, "Pluralism in Lutheran Ecclesiology" by Kent Knutson. This section is introduced with the editorial comment:

"Anyone who looks carefully at the world or the church will understand why these people are saying that there is crisis in the church. DIALOG addresses its first issue to this situation, not in order to answer this crisis, not even to lay out a specific program for arriving at an answer. Rather, in this issue it simply listens to some voices which speak out of different contexts to various aspects of the problem". p. 16

The reader will be interested in learning the aims of DIALOG:

"DIALOG seeks to pattern itself after the analogy of the eternal-temporal dialogue with all the accompanying features of contrast, controversy, even contradiction... else it will not reflect the truth as it is either in heaven or on earth... D. seeks to correlate the meaning of the kerygmatic word with the questions and pursuits of our modern world... D. proceeds from a Christ-centered theology to interpret all reality upon which it touches in the light of that center... D. hopes to serve as a medium where the issues which churches hold in difference and in common may be clearly and frankly defined, with a view to "help in the healing process leading toward the ultimate reunion of the churches... D. aims to serve as a bridge between European and American theological movements... D. will be interested in the difficult task of recovering the lost decades of theology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the sheer wealth of their learning, the depths of their criticism, and the breadth of their vision." pp.6.7.8.

Even so, there are a few expressions of editorial modesty sprinkled here and there:

"D.'s intention will undoubtedly overreach its achievement." p. 6. We are fortunate to have a number of Europe's leading theologians among our contributing editors. They have expressed great interest in DIALOG, not only that they might place their constructive efforts in the service of American Christianity, but also, as they so modestly claimed, that they might benefit from the exchange. We are certain that we have much to receive from them; less certain that they have anything to receive from our side." p.7.

"None of us speaks in the tongues of angels." p. 8.

In the way of vocabulary, one expects to see these days in a journal of contemporary theology such words and expressions as: relevancy, existential participation, individual involvement, dimension, kerygmatic, encounter, dialectic, undialectic, paradoxes and polar principles, continuum, conceptuality, diastatic and synthetic tendencies, dialectical interplay, self-identity, self-knowledge, self-understanding, confrontation, historical milieu, dekerygmaticization, demythologizing, re-discovery of the church, etc. DIALOG plays in the big leagues in this respect, and such words are made to bear quite a bit of the burden of the day.

Let's get a few samples of what we might call "gobbledygook":

"Only in the immediacy of faith can we attain to an undialectical Word, the archimedean point in the Christian revelation, namely, the concrete self-embodying action of God the Word become flesh and blood in Jesus of Nazareth." p. 6.

"Theology must not abandon its classic apologetic function of intermediating the plethora of relatively autonomous areas of research and knowledge." p. 7.

"No human word or religious concept may be permitted to collapse the dialectical process of negation and affirmation." p. 6.

"It is the human question, the question of authentic and in-authentic human existence, even when man does not consciously ask this question." p. 45.

"Jesus confronted the Scriptures with a present activity and will of God." p. 53.

"Preaching is secularized when the act assumes preponderance over the content, and it is depotentiated when communication of content lacks the existential dimension of the credo." p. 47.

DIALOG has a few naughty words in its vocabulary, too, which it tosses around quite generously at who knows whom: "pseudo confessionalism", "symbololatry", "repristination theology", "fundamentalist biblicism", "biblicist theology", "naive biblicist", "the narrow confessionalist", "the polemical Lutheran", "the cynical Lutheran", "repristinating dogmatics and ethical notions", "out-dated scholasticism", etc.

It is possible that the citations thus far given could do the job, but let us get a few more quotations taken from the editorials and other articles written by the editors to get somewhat of an idea of DIALOG'S theological presuppositions and the direction its editorial wind is blowing. Assuming that the average pastor is more discriminating in his reading than DIALOG gives him credit for (p. 13), we shall refrain from underlining and italicizing:

Page 6 & 7: "DIALOG is conscious not only of the cleavage in life between the church and the world, but also of the fractured body of Christ. It regards the present denominational fragmentation of the church catholic as a malignant condition within the body of Christ. DIALOG seeks to be a help in the healing process leading toward the ultimate reunion of the churches, toward an empirical manifestation of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church."

Page 8: "A movement from American fundamentalism to neo-orthodoxy without having been filtered through the screens of the liberal critique is like trying to change your personality by putting on a new suit of clothes. Much fundamentalism masquerades in the fashionable dress of neo-orthodox jargon. A rose by another name smells as sweet... or a fish as foul."

Page 46: "The real question is not whether I am pleased with everything in the confessions. The real question is whether our contemporary witness does not or cannot possess real continuity with the substance of the confessions 'in, with and under' the discontinuities in respect to forms of expression, exegetical deductions, and logical argumentations. That is to say, do we not face the same problem here as we now face with respect to the Scriptures themselves? If the concern of 'demythologizing' is for a true interpretation of the Scriptures without the loss or abridgement of the kerygma (i.e. a de-kerygmaticization), we may have a similar legitimate concern for a 'demythologizing' or, as the case may be, a 'dephilosophizing' of the confessions without robbing ourselves of their substantive meaning.

"The dynamics of history and corresponding changes in world-view impose these conditions of a true interpretation upon us. Our confessions share the medieval framework in some degree, the pre-scientific framework of Aristotelian metaphysics, naive mythologoumena, unhistorical exegesis, questionable proof-texting, and the like. It does not help matters to pretend or to wish that things were otherwise. But we still possess the possibilities of continuity with

our confessions through contemporary re-interpretations, because they are transparent to the evangelical message in which all ages may share."

Page 43: "The phrase, 'bound to the confessions,' is legalistic terminology, and it can only conjure up images of medieval authoritarianism and ecclesiastical heteronomy."

Page 66: "If the view of the polemical Lutheran prevails, Lutheranism will eventually be shattered into a melee of conflicting forces, as has so often happened in the past, which will deplete its vitality and destroy the real contribution it can make to this age. But if Lutheranism can move, gradually if it must, into the position where it will maintain its confessional integrity and at the same time recognize the validity of other confessional claims, the crisis of this hour can become a great opportunity."

Page 77: "Nineteenth century theology sought first a secure base in man's independent reason in order to build bridges from there to the Gospel, and so secure the rationality, the cognitive legitimacy, of theology. The biblicist theology which made of 'inspiration' a static principle of knowledge by authority, which said: 'Because of Inspiration we know that everything in the Bible is true; the message of grace in Christ is in the Bible; therefore ...' is no exception."

Page 44: "The confessions are not meant to be my private confessions ... the odyssey of my inner spiritual thoughts. The confessions are documents of the church, and as true exposition of the Word of God they are the act of the total community. One's private interpretation of the Word of God becomes right in the moment in which it ceases to be private, and flows into the ecumenical voice of the living church - yesterday's and today's."

A certain reputable theologian, whose name we will not now mention, upon hearing the last paragraph above, commented: "Let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret." (I Cor. 14, 13). One reacts similarly to a great many things written on the pages of DIALOG. This state of affairs may be explained by the admission that the members of the Editorial Staff and Council are heavily influenced by Barth, Brunner, Bonhoeffer, Tillich, Bultmann, Aulen, Nygren, the Niebuhrs and others, for whom they have an undisguised admiration: "Our present generation has had the good fortune of arriving upon the scene in time to have encountered some of the most creative theological minds which Protestantism has ever produced." (p. 8). The Editorial Staff claims that since even these minds cannot reach the new generations, "we must place what we are and have in the service of our generation." Undoubtedly many will make dialogue out of that piece of monologue by saying that they will serve the present generation best by continuing to speak in tongues.

Plainer language is used in a series of short editorials which bemoan the imbalance between "theologians" and "church officials" among the representatives from American Lutherans at Delhi; write off CHRISTIANITY TODAY, THE WORD ALONE, THROUGH TO VICTORY, and a number of other papers they call "Free Literature" as "retrograde propaganda" representing "worn-out ideas" and "repristinating dogmatics and ethical notions," pleading at the same time with pastors "to subscribe to journals of sound scholarship and responsible judgment." (We feel quite sure that the modest editors do not mean to exclude DIALOG from a list of such). The editorials also espouse a mild anti-anti-communist position, see great advances in the "Essays on Cooperation" (NLC-Mo. confrontation), and rejoice in the seemingly imminent death of the Synodical Conference, indeed, see its death before its death, and express the hope that "no one will make the fatal mistake of trying to resurrect this corpse." By the way, among

the interesting bits of information offered by DIALOG is the news that the Synodical Conference "had originated in the great controversy on predestination that shook the Lutheran churches in this country during the last two decades of the nineteenth century." (p. 70). DIALOG'S plea (p. 7) that "we all buckle down to some elementary homework in historical theology" is quite in place.

Before rounding out our little introduction to this first-born papoose, let us submit another paragraph for a bit of mulling over:

"As norms, neither the Scriptures nor the confessions are the object of faith. We do not preach the Bible or the Lutheran Symbols, but rather the living Christ, crucified and resurrected, and the mighty deeds of God, interpreted by prophets and apostles, confessed by the church, and even now manifest in our faith. Bible and Creed witness to Christ. The hermeneutical significance of the word 'and' is absolutely essential for the sake of preserving the apostolicity and the catholicity of the faith of the Christian Church. Fundamental biblicism threatens the latter, and Roman Catholicism jettisons the former. By observing a christological unity of Scriptures and confessions we embrace both the apostolicity and the catholicity of the church's proclamation. From this standpoint we can overcome the protestant denial of the work of the Holy Spirit in church history, as well as the Roman Church's idolatrous system of substituting itself for the Holy Spirit." p. 47.

A "best construction" to put on the above would be that the "affirmation" cancels the "negation". If that is not the case, the paragraph contains a brew that would make "kick-a-poo joy juice" comparable to lemonade. The notions, "We preach Christ, not the Scriptures", "We believe in Christ, not the Scriptures", should have been museum pieces by this time. And the "as interpreted by prophets and apostles" bit is favorite stock these days with "theologians" who have the "acts of God" limited, in a very consequent manner according to their premises, to "the Exodus", and they can't even tell you what made the "Exodus" different from other happenings in history, since the possibility of miracles isn't in their thinking.

We can imagine that the Number 1 issue of DIALOG might be heavenly reading for the existentialist. The "affirmations and negations" which almost obliterate each other, the "ifs", "ands", "buts", and "may be's" should keep him in a dither of pleasureable anguish, and, for the existentialist, we understand, that's heaven. This reader, having looked forward to DIALOG'S appearance with warm anticipation, leaves the first issue with a feeling that it is aptly described, "WINTER, 1962". SPRING is coming, and we shall see..... will the good spirits in ALC and other groups come forward to speak in DIALOG, unhampered and unrestricted by the standards the pseudo-intellectuals are inclined to set? If so, by SUMMER, we should see a few articles bringing refreshing rains "according to the Scriptures".

To conclude:

None of the Emperor's clothes had been so successful.

"But he has got nothing on," said a little child.

"Oh, listen to the innocent," said its father. And one person whispered to the other what the child had said. "He has nothing on - a child says he has nothing on."

"But he has nothing on!" at last cried all the people.

The Emperor writhed, for he knew that it was true. But he thought, "The procession must go on now." So he held himself stiffer than ever, and the chamberlains held up the invisible train.*

T.N. Teigen

* From "The Emperor's New Clothes" in Anderson's Fairy Tales, Tr. Mrs. E. V. Lucas & Mrs. H. B. Paull: Grosset & Dunlap, New York, 1945, p. 204.

"MINE ADVERSARY HATH WRITTEN A BOOK!"

B. W. Teigen

Job wished that his adversary "had written a book"! He of course meant "book" in the sense of a list of charges or complaints, something in the sense in which we use the term when we say "he was booked on suspicion of murder".

In recent years the enemies of the Gospel have written many books listing many charges against Scripture as the sole source of saving knowledge. To be found on almost every such list are items such as these: "Biblicism", "authoritarianism", "the legalism of following a dead word or letter", "Bibliolatry", "literalism", etc.

These present-day critics of the Bible employ a new and strange terminology, for example: "divine encounter", "the mighty acts of God", "God's self-disclosure", "the existential moment", "hic et nunc", "demythologizing", "dialectical theology", "the dialogue between God the Creator and men His creatures", "the apostolic kerygma", and so far into the night. They may also call themselves proponents of "Luther's theology", of "neo-orthodoxy", of "the new theology", and more popularly and deceptively, the proponents of "Biblical theology".

You can now buy many of these books as paperbacks, and we suggest that you add a few of them to your library. As a start you might get Bultmann's Jesus and the Word (Scribners), H. Richard Niebuhr's The Meaning of Revelation (Macmillan), and C. H. Dodd's The Authority of the Bible (Harpers). And then you might add this hardback: The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought (Columbia University Press) by John Baillie.

The fact that so many of these books are now available in paperback editions ought to frighten us into realizing that we must be posted for the sake of our flocks. Paperbacks are put out for the mass market. We believe that Dr. William Oesch has rightly said: "The enemies are next door and nearer. Our affirmatives and negatives must meet today's state of controversy in a special way, if we are to continue as a world-wide orthodox Lutheran communion. This speaker feels that we should have spoken advisedly, clearly, bravely, jointly on the historico-critical method and on Neo-Orthodoxy's false doctrine of revelation, and on 'the Bible in the church' a number of years ago." (Dr. William Oesch, "The Authority of Scripture in the Church", p. 30. One of the essays delivered at the Conference of Theologians at Mequon, Wisconsin, 1960).

The central issue has to do with the knowledge of God. Where does God make Himself known to us? Hence the word epistemology gets bandied about. Epistemology is the science of the nature and the possibility of knowledge. Religious epistemology has to do then with the knowledge of God's revelation to man.

Dr. Theodore Engelder, in the May, 1940, issue of the Concordia Theological Monthly began a remarkable series of articles, under the general title "Reason or Revelation", with this question: "What is the source of saving doctrine, the seat of authority in religion, reason or revelation?" (p. 321). He proceeds to answer this question by saying: "Scripture is most clear on this point. Scripture declares that God's revelation, His revelation in Scripture, Scripture itself, is the sole source of saving knowledge." In support of this thesis he quotes Isaiah 8, 20, Luke 16, 2, II Timothy 3, 16, I Peter 4, 11, Colossians 2, 8, and I Corinthians 2, 14. And then to show that this has always been the position of the Lutheran church, Dr. Engelder quotes the famous passage from the Formula of Concord: "We receive and embrace with our whole heart the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the pure clear fountain of Israel, which is the only true standard by which all teachers and doctrines are to be judged", and "allow ourselves to be diverted therefrom by no objections or human contradictions spun from human reason, however

charming they may appear to reason." (Trigl., pp. 851 and 987).

This should settle the matter. Pieper, and any other Biblical theologian (as I shall later point out, this term has now three meanings -- I here intend it in the sense used among us in the Synodical Conference), will come up with basically the same answer. But Pieper in his Christian Dogmatics did not have a special locus on "Revelation and Scripture", no doubt because in his day it was not a particularly moot point. The chief Gospel-adversary bookwriters of his time, Harnack and Ritschl, did not bother much about the problem of revelation at all. The essence of Christianity to them was the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Special Revelation was a dead issue with them.

But in the mid-twentieth century there has been a revival of interest in special divine revelation, and people are asking how does God break through to man. The rise of existentialism, with its distrust of human reason and its assertion that man is alienated from God, together with the lingering influence of Kant's philosophy which excludes cognitive knowledge of the supernatural world, together with another factor so influential in contemporary thought, namely, the conviction lying behind the modern scientific view that in this world we have a closed causal order, and then together with the retention of the old principles of nineteenth century Biblical Criticism -- all these facts, unequally mixed, have brought out some bizarre ideas with regard to what revelation is; Witness, for example, the "Scharlemann Controversy" within the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

Now there has not, to my knowledge, been too much written in our Lutheran circles with regard to revelation and the Word of God, revelation and inspiration, etc. We would like to refer you to Prof. Robert Preus's book, The Inspiration of Scripture -- A Study of the Theology of the Seventeenth Century Lutheran Dogmaticians (Mankato: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 1955), where he has a chapter on "Inspiration and Revelation" (pp. 29-33). He states: "All dogmaticians call Scripture revelation. Scripture was more than merely a record or history of God's revelation; it was revelation, or to put it more accurately, it was revelation put down in writing. Hence there was no real difference between the revealed Word of God and Holy Scripture. However, the dogmaticians never called revelation Scriptures: the two terms were never equated as if Scripture was God's only revelation. God's revelation has taken place in a great variety of ways." (p. 31).

As a means of assisting one towards a better understanding of what contemporary theology is saying about revelation and what Scripture says, I would like to suggest three books for study. They could well be discussed in pastoral conferences. These three books are not similar in their content, but I believe that a careful perusal of them will give one a good background for understanding some of the current theological issues.

Ridderbos, Herman, Bultmann, Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1960, 46 pages, price \$1.25.

This paperback is one of a series of the "Modern Thinkers", an International Library of Philosophy and Theology which the Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company is sponsoring. This series consists of a critical analysis of the thought of some of the more famous modern philosophers and thinkers. The authors of these monographs are, for the most part, conservative Calvinist scholars of Holland. So far studies on the following men have appeared: Barth, Bultmann, Kierkegaard, Van Til, Rheinhold Niebuhr, Tillich, Nietzsche, Sartre, and Dewey.

Dr. Herman Ridderbos, the author of the monograph on Bultmann, is professor of New Testament studies in the theological seminary at Kampen, the Netherlands. The Ridderbos name is a very honored one in conservative Reformed circles; his father, Dr.

J. Ridderbos, was professor in Old Testament at the Kampen Theological Seminary, and his brother, Dr. N. H. Ridderbos, is professor of the Old Testament in the Free University of Amsterdam.

Bultmann, the subject of Ridderbos' critical analysis, is technically a Lutheran. He is now retired professor of New Testament of the University of Marburg, where he taught from 1921-1950. He was on the editorial staff of Kittels TWNT, writing articles on several of the entries, notably on "faith", "hope", "truth", "death", etc. His later work, especially that which calls for the need of "demythologizing" the Gospel, has been extremely influential both in Europe and in this country.

Dr. Ridderbos analyzes Bultmann's theological program under the following headings: "The So-Called Mythological Character of the New Testament", "Form and Essence of the New Testament Message", "The Basic Features of the New Testament Message", "The Relation of the New Testament and Existentialism", and "The Significance of God's Redemptive Work in Christ's Death and Resurrection". We can perhaps most easily show the results of this analysis by a few quotations, although they will certainly not do justice to the book. Only a close reading will do that.

"Bultmann belongs to the radical-critical wing of German Biblical criticism and yet he has given this criticism new ways, new paths and new perspectives." (p. 10). "Personally Bultmann thinks that Jesus did not claim to be the Messiah, but he acknowledges that others can with as little absolute certainty be of a different opinion" (p. 12). Bultmann "has placed a very sharp distinction between himself and the ethical rationalism which the older liberal school proclaimed, in its moral and social optimism, as the kernel of the Gospel" (p. 14). Bultmann insists on this distinction because he has accepted the philosophy of existentialism which does not regard the Gospel as proclaiming "timeless truth or eternal verities" (p. 15), but rather, "its content consists of the actual change and emancipation which the Gospel calls forth in the whole of human existence, as soon as man obeys the call to Entscheidung (decision)" (p. 15). "It is incontestable for Bultmann that in the New Testament the history of Christ is a mythical history. Jesus Christ as the Son of God, as a pre-existent divine essence, is a mythical figure" (p. 23).

Dr. Ridderbos then subjects Bultmann's view to a rigorous criticism under the two general headings: "Bultmann's Mythological Interpretation of the History of Redemption", and "Bultmann's Existentialist Interpretation of Redemptive History" (pp. 26-46). He declares that "anyone carefully viewing Bultmann's program to de-mythologize the New Testament ought to be truly aware that it contains a frontal attack upon the manner in which the church of all ages has confessed its faith" (p. 26).

We believe that Dr. Ridderbos puts his finger on the heart of this modern unbelief when he makes the judgment that what Bultmann considers to be mythical in the so-called Biblical world picture and in the New Testament view of history is, that the New Testament view of the world, man and history does not recognize a closed causal order, essential in the scientific view" (p. 29). Have you ever investigated how much of this view point your parishoners may have unconsciously absorbed by their continuous attendance in the secular schools, where such a point of view is constantly being promulgated? Might not some of your young and old members, in the doubts raised in their mind by such educational conditioning be ripe candidates for Bultmann's existentialist exposition of the New Testament which "signifies a grandiose reduction of its content, both in breadth and in depth" (p. 40)?

We wish that conservative Lutherans had embarked on producing some analyses such as these instead of taking over the existentialist terminology, if not some of its concepts. A diligent reading of Dr. Ridderbos' book should help arm you for the conflict with the Old Dragon in a newly machined model.

Ramm, Bernard, Special Revelation and the Word of God, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961, 220 pages, \$4.00.

You will recall that Prof. Robert Preus summarized the teachings of the Lutheran dogmatists on Revelation and the Word of God by pointing out that they regarded Scripture as more than merely a record of God's revelation; they called Scripture revelation. "But they never called revelation Scripture". The reason for this is that "God's revelation has taken place in a great variety of ways: by personal encounter (Genesis 18, 2; 19, 1; Exodus 19, 10); by the Urim and the Thummin in the breastplate of Aaron (Exodus 28, 20); by visions (Daniel 10, 15; Acts 10, 10; Exodus 1, 4); through dreams; through riddles, as in the case of Ezekiel and John; and by immediate illumination in the intellect without the use of dreams and visions (II Timothy 3, 16; II Peter 2, 21)" (Preus, op. cit., p. 31).

In view of present controversies, it certainly should prove profitable to explore this area further. Scripture has a great deal to say about revelation, as it does about inspiration. Once again, it is a matter of knowledge: How and where has the transcendent God revealed Himself to us? How did God reveal His good and gracious will towards a world of sinners?

This book by Prof. Ramm, a conservative Baptist, is a study of God's special revelation of the Gospel and its relation to the inspired Word of God. He does not discuss general revelation and its relationship to special revelation.

On one of the first pages, Dr. Ramm has a longer quotation from Luther's Bondage of the Will, which sets the purpose and the tone of the work: "Show me out of the whole race of mortal men one, albeit the most holy and righteous of them all, to whose mind it ever occurred that the way to righteousness and salvation was simply to believe on Him who is both God and man, who died for men's sins, and was raised and is set at the right hand of the Father. . . Let us ask experience: the world, human reason, yes 'free will', are forced to confess that they had not known or heard of Christ before the Gospel entered the world" (See Packer and Johnston Translation, p. 306).

Dr. Ramm's book is concerned with three main topics: The Concept, the Modalities, and the Products of Special Revelation.

Special Revelation is "special" in that it is necessary, gracious and remedial (pp. 19-27). Dr. Ramm, quoting Deuteronomy 29, 29 and Amos 3, 7, points out that God has not kept His total counsel secret: "Some secrets He has whispered to men . . . These secrets are not available to the human race at large. There is no religious epistemology which can bring them to the surface. Only when the Person to whom the secrets belong speaks are the secrets made known! Special Revelation is God whispering His secrets to His servants, the Prophets." (p. 27).

The second division of the book examines the modalities of Special Revelation. Dr. Ramm uses a rather strange word, "modality", in a technical philosophic sense to signify the mode or form as opposed to the substance: "The very specific manner in which revelation comes to us in its cosmic-mediated form is by modalities (forms, media, instruments)" (p. 43). Dr. Ramm presents the modalities of Special Revelation under five headings: The Modality of Divine Condescension, The Modality of the Divine Speaking, The Modality of Historical Event, The Modality of the Incarnation. Of this last, Prof. Ramm declares that "the supreme modality of revelation and the supreme content of Special Revelation is Jesus Christ" (p. 106). "Hebrews 1, 2, clearly states that God spoke in His Son. . . The Son in turn speaks through his Apostles (II Cor. 13, 3), so the entire New Testament may be justly called the speaking of God in His Son" (p. 110).

The third major division of this book discusses the products of Special Revelation (pp. 125-208), under the headings: "Revelation in the Form of Language", "The

Knowledge of God", "Scripture", and "Translation". Prof. Ramm here investigates the inscripturation of the Word of God. The heart of this section can perhaps be best set forth by two or three quotations: "The outward form of this written product of revelation is a small roll (Biblion), or a larger roll (Biblos). Because it is written it is called Scripture (graphē, gramma). And because it is from God it is called Holy Scripture" (P. 165). "The Word of God is true and living whether in the form of uttered speech, remembered tradition, or graphē. It gains nothing new in authority when cast into written form, nor does it lose any of its essential substance. . . . For the well-being of the church (but not for its existence), for the purity of the Gospel, and for the guidance of the Christian, it pleased God to call into existence a Christian graphē, the New Testament Canon which the church added to the graphē of the old covenant" (p. 169). "Inspiration, then, is the Holy Spirit securing for the Church the Christian graphē in such a form that the Church may trust its verbal form as an adequate, authentic and sufficient vehicle of Special Revelation" (p. 179).

It is well known that today theologians infected with existential philosophy and modern Biblical criticism have a prejudice against Special Revelation being a knowledge of God; it is rather, they say, an encounter with God, and as a corollary to this, these modern theologians attempt to avoid "propositional revelation". Compare, for example, Dr. Scharlemann quoting approvingly Prof. Oepke in the TWNT: "Revelation is not the communication of supernatural knowledge" ("Revelation and Scripture", p.7).

Dr. Ramm has some telling things to say about this modern theological idiosyncrasy. (See, e.g., pp. 142, 143, 149, and 154-160).

There is a tendency among modern theologians, as the study of the next book to be reviewed will indicate, who, because they want to get away from "Propositional Revelation" and who have "an unwillingness to deal with ideas in the Bible" (Barr, The Semantics of Biblical Language, p. 271), have tried to put too much of a load of meaning in a single word, building a large segment of their theological system on "Bible key-words", the most popular words being "word" and "truth". Prof. Ramm speaks a healthy word of warning against this tendency by simply reminding us of a truth that will come out of any introductory study of linguistics: "Except for single commands ("go") or expressions of feeling ("ouch"), or responses ("yes"), meaning comes in chunks -- phrases, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, and books. Meaning is not doled out by word but comes in clusters of words. The same is true in revelation and inspiration." (p. 177).

We believe that this book is worthy of careful study and that, as the Christianity Today review stated, it is one that "must be reckoned with" (June 19, 1961, p. 34). There are certain points we think should be stated more clearly and others that need to be elaborated on (e.g., pp. 103, 104 -- The Discussion of Historical Revelation as Progressive; The Attributes of the Bible, p. 165). But a critical study of it should help one get a better understanding of what Scripture has to say regarding a topic under heavy discussion in Synodical Conference circles today.

Barr, James, The Semantics of Biblical Language, Oxford University Press, 1961, 313 pages, price 37s. 6d. (\$6.00).

This book could well go hand-in-hand with the two previous books in updating our knowledge of what has been going on in recent theological circles and also in helping us to see through some of the erroneous judgments so confidently and assuredly set forth by the younger "New Theology" group. Those who read their Bible in the original languages and are interested in learning more about these languages, will find this a stimulating book because it imparts a great deal of linguistic information. When Dr. Barr uses the word "semantics", he means "the study of significance in language" (p. 1). He rightly shows that signification in language involves much more than the study of "key-words", important as this is. It includes the way words are put together in

sentences. One need not read far in linguistic literature today before he comes across the terms "lexical meaning" and "structural meaning". To understand the importance of keeping in mind this simple fact, just remember the neo-orthodoxists' distaste for propositional theology. They try to substitute proof-words for proof-texts (p. 271).

Prof. Barr is much concerned about the fact that although modern theologians make much ado about their Biblical and scholarly approach in their neo-orthodoxist understanding of God's revelation, the "Word of God", etc., some of them are nevertheless exceedingly careless in their handling of the Biblical languages and more particularly in their unwarranted use of "bad linguistic conceptions" (p. 262). Prof. Barr is careful to state that "the purpose of this book is not to criticize Biblical theology or any other kind of theology as such, but to criticize certain methods in the handling of linguistic evidence in theological discussion" (p. 6). He wants us to get our linguistic principles straight before we begin to "interpret the Bible". This is fair enough for those taught in the tradition that "sensus literalis unus est".

The book will also make you just a little more comfortable when you see some of these highly-touted and self-assured modern scholars squirm a little under the linguistic probing of this Scotch professor. Among his main targets you will find T. Boman, Kittel, A. G. Hebert, and T. F. Torrance, the latter two being of the stable of patron saints frequently evoked by American neo-orthodoxists. The Interpreters' Bible, the 12-volume modernistic commentary, also comes in for its share of criticism.

As a means of orientation it is helpful for the general reader to note Prof. Barr's three definitions of "Biblical theology" (pp. 273, 274). The first definition refers to the type of modernistic liberal criticism so popular in the nineteenth century, "distinctively not belonging to dogmatics or systematic theology", but which purportedly was a descriptive discipline scientifically employing language, history and literary criticism. The second definition is that which we in our circles call "Biblical theology": "Roughly that type of dogmatics which lays heavy emphasis on the Bible and takes it as the basic or the only source of authority." The third type of "Biblical theology", and the newest, is what its proponents call "expounding the Bible as the Word of God". In other words, modern neo-orthodoxy of the Barthian to Bultmann varieties. Prof. Barr says: "It is in this third or intermediate kind of 'Biblical theology' that most of the linguistic arguments which I have criticized lie" (p. 274).

One of the modern lead soldiers Prof. Barr knocks down is the one that there is a fundamental distinction between Greek and Hebrew thought, in that the former is static while the latter is dynamic. He feels that this is a modern theory foisted upon the Biblical languages without any real linguistic proof (See pages 15-20).

The main thrust of Prof. Barr's book is aimed against the fact that "modern Biblical theology in its fear and dislike of the 'proposition' as the basis of religious truth has often simply adopted in its place the smaller linguistic unit of the word, and has then been forced to overload the word with meaning in order to relate it 'to the inner world of thought'" (p. 246). Therefore he warns against the notion that the meaning of a word may be determined by reference to its etymology and to its supposed root meaning. Not that the etymology and the history of the word are unimportant, but they do not determine the meaning in a particular context. He suggests that you study the history of the English word "nice" which is ultimately derived from the Latin nescius. I could add an even more dramatic word: "gossip"; as you know, its etymological meaning is "God-related". But you better study its history in the OED. Today the word "properly" or "basically" does not mean a Godparent. So, as Prof. Barr says, "the main point is that the etymology of a word is not a statement about its meaning but about its history." (p. 109). Prof. Barr then examines two words of great theological interest today: "qahal-ekklesia" and "Dabar-word, matter". In this latter case Prof. Barr shows how "the etymology is theorized and generalized" to make it mean a "dynamic event" when its chief senses are: "a. speech, word; b. thing, matter" (See pages 129-140).

This ultimately leads to a discussion of Kittel's Theological Dictionary, of which Prof. Barr rightly states that "no single work is perhaps more influential in the study of the New Testament today than Kittel's Theological Dictionary (TWNT)" (p. 206). I believe that this part of Dr. Barr's work is particularly useful for us here in America because for many years we have been fed on a promotional campaign to buy a particular brand of dictionary because it is "the one great standard authority" or "the supreme authority". As a result, we have been so conditioned by this type of advertising that we are almost inclined to look on a dictionary as the 67th book of the Bible. This feeling can easily transfer (and I believe it is transferring) to Kittel. This, of course, is not to say that it is not a great work and should not be studied. But let us be careful that we are not suddenly tempted to transfer authority due only the Scripture to a human book, no matter whether it is a Greek lexicon or an English dictionary.

Dr. Barr criticizes Kittel not only for its unevenness but also for its emphasis on "concept history" when the dictionary itself is supposed to be a dictionary of Greek "words" (p. 207). He also points out that its conception of revelation is that it consists in events in history rather than in ideas or propositions (Sounds familiar by now, doesn't it?). He is hard on Prof. Oepke, who wrote the essay on "Revelation" from which quite a few quotations have been taken in order to promote neo-orthodoxy in the Missouri Synod (Witness the Scharlemann papers and Bibliography). He charges that Oepke "fails to take actual linguistic usage as his starting-point" so that "the result is that the article is assimilated to modern theological usage to a degree that the actual linguistic material will not bear" (p. 230).

Prof. Barr closes this chapter with the judgment that "far from it being the case therefore that TWNT is 'in many ways the most valuable achievement in Biblical studies of this century', it is rather true that progress can only begin to be made, even with the material assembled by TWNT, through an awareness of the great and sweeping linguistic misconceptions which have become more widespread through its influence" (p. 262).

We recommend this book for serious study. One need not agree with all its assertions to gain much from the work. You will find it challenging and stimulating. Incidentally, on pages 268 and 269 you might find some notes on the Chinese Term Question which will show that it was a serious question that was debated and not "ludicrous" as The Springfielder suggests (Spring, 1961, p. 3).
