

The Lutheran Visitor

GOD'S WORD, OUR RULE; CHRIST, OUR PATTERN; A PURE FAITH, OUR WATCHWORD.

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Editorial.

From different sections of the church come words of approval and appreciation of our honest efforts to serve the Church, and to hold up the high standards of faith and practice, for all of which we are very grateful. One of our most intelligent laymen, an educator of marked ability and success, writes, "I wish to thank you for your article on 'Football.' I enjoy your work on The Visitor."

On the same subject one of our rising and progressive pastors writes, "Your football editorial is very timely. Would that more leading men of the church had the courage to speak out against this and similar evils."

As we said before, we are in favor of all manly and elevating forms of athletics. Boys at college need wholesome exercise, nor would we seek in any way to curtail their pleasures or to suppress the honest gaiety of youth, but we regard football as the twin brother of the prize ring, and see no ground on which it can be justified. It is certainly not a healthy exercise, as facts will show, nor can it be shown to be elevating mentally, morally or spiritually. We can see some reason for baseball when engaged in with moderation, but none for a sport so brutal as the up-to-date football. We fully agree with Prof. Stevens when he says, "It is reckless brutality." Education and life at college should tend to refine and ennoble young men, and when they go out into the activities of the after life the world should be made to see in them models of gentlemanly bearing and not simply men whose minds have been crammed with classic lore. When the young man is being educated he is literally going through a process of moulding, of character formation, and whatever habits are then formed he will, in all probability, carry with him through life. Just as the defects in the model of the

sculptor are likely to appear in the finished work so the disposition cultivated and the habits formed in college life will in great measure condition the life thereafter.

Hence we hold that true manliness, refinement of manner and high moral deportment should pervade college life, and thus make it well nigh impossible to find a college graduate without these lovely traits. And this is true of many of our institutions, at least in goodly measure, but this should be the rule and never the exception.

In our several visits to Elizabeth College we were peculiarly impressed by the spirit of refinement which pervaded the atmosphere of that school, and by the fact that the young ladies are expected and required to cultivate those charms and graces of manner which become adornments of the highest importance in their future social life; and there is no good reason why boys in college for young men should not cultivate the same beautiful habits. This, however, will prove a difficult task where brutal sports and mischief vile are absorbing considerations.

Though we thus speak it is fair and just to add that most of our young men cultivate refinement of manners, and would not stoop to things low and vile, and we hope that the co-educational feature introduced into most of our schools will greatly tend to the cultivation of those charms and graces of manner which become jewels in the social life of every man who possesses them.

For Lutheran Tracts—We have received for this object, for free distribution in Mississippi Synod, \$1.00 each from Rev. H. E. H. Sloop and Mr. Jno. M. Hendrix—\$3.00 so far. We want \$8.00 more.

Mission Work.—Talk up the mission work in your synod. God wants workers, not idlers. Work for the Master—be true to the holy cause of God. His case is urgent.

The fact has been brought out in the religious statistics that the growth of the church has been greater than the increase in population in our country during the past year. Following is a review of the statistics:

Dr. H. K. Carroll, who was in charge of the religious statistics in the United States census of 1890, and has since then annually made up figures on the growth of the churches, has just completed the statistics for 1901. He finds the total church communicant membership, in the United States alone, and exclusive of members on foreign mission fields, to be 28,090,637, out of a population that must, if population growth has been the same this year as during the decade from 1890, be about 77,000,000. This is for actual membership, and does not include adherents and members of congregations. The increase, according to Dr. Carroll, was 730,027 last year, or 2.67 per cent. This is an increase slightly greater than the annual increase of population from 1890 to 1900. The latter rate of increase was 2.18 per cent. Thus, if Dr. Carroll be correct, the churches of the United States are growing slightly faster in membership than is the population.

So far Dr. Carroll's work seems to be all right, but in an appended table, showing the order of denominational rank in 1890 and in 1901, with number of communicant members in the respective years, his method is misleading. He divides the various denominations into their different general bodies, the Methodist Episcopal (North) standing first and the Lutheran General Synod last in the list of Protestant bodies, of which twenty appear in the table, including the Roman Catholic Church. The Missouri Synod occupies the twelfth and the General Council fourteenth place, and with the General Synod are the only Lutheran bodies of which any notice is taken by Dr. Carroll, who thus places the Lutheran strength in

this country at 1,116,936, or just about 600,000 less than the real figures. The Augustana Synod, with 500,000 members, is ignored entirely as well as smaller bodies like the Associate Reformed Presbyterians and our United Synod. Dr. Carroll's figures appear in the metropolitan papers in such an incomplete manner that they have absolutely no value so far as the Lutheran Church is concerned.

Lutherans Ahead.—In an article on "Religious Conditions and Progress in New York" in the Baptist Standard of Chicago, we find the following of interest to our people: "The Lutherans are increasing in membership in New York faster than any other religious body, Roman Catholics not excepted. This increase is due in large part to enrollment of families already here but not before identified with their own or any other churches. In this reclaiming of property, so to speak, the English-speaking element, chiefly sons and daughters of those who crossed the Atlantic, have led, and in the leading they have been not a little hampered by the element that insists upon remaining German, in ways of looking at things as well as in speech. Recently twenty-four English-speaking pastors withdrew from the New York Ministerium, and asked for letters dismissory to enable them to organize a new ministerium. These letters were refused, and it is stated the new ministerium will be organized anyhow. There is not what can fairly be called trouble, but there is an absolute inability on the part of the German element to comprehend ambitions of their sons and nephews."

Governor's Message.—We acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of a nicely printed copy of the governor's message. It is clear-cut and gives no uncertain sound.

The congregation of the Second church at Louisville, Ky., Rev. H. K. Fenner, D. D., pastor, has adopted the plans for a new house of worship.