

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MISSION BIOGRAPHICAL SERIES

BISHOPS – MISSIONARIES

ID#

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MELLE, BISHOP F. H. OTTO

Richard T. Baker
Board of Foreign Missions
Methodist Episcopal Church
150 Fifth Avenue, New York City

Bishop F. L. Otto Melle, of the German Methodist Church of Berlin, will be the guest-speaker at

Bishop Melle is a recognized leader among the Protestant forces in Germany, having been identified with temperance and other reform movements, and has a deep understanding of the free-church principles of Methodism. A son of Methodist parents, Bishop Melle was born in 1875 and began preaching when he was 16 years of age. Two years later he entered the Methodist ministry and graduated from the Seminary at Frankfurt in 1900. For a number of years he worked in Hungary, where he learned the language (he speaks three languages fluently) and preached in the native tongue.

In 1924 and again in 1928, Bishop Melle was a delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church held in this country, first from the North German Conference and later from the North-West German Conference.

According to Bishop Melle, the work of the Methodist church in Germany is going on as usual, especially at annual conferences. The 100th Jubilee last year was celebrated in the most favorable concert hall of Berlin, the Philharmonie.

The well-known Frankfurt Theological Seminary in Frankfurt-am-Main, has thirty students at the present time, coming from Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, the Baltics and from the northern countries of Europe. The deaconess work of the Methodist Church was begun in Germany about 65 years ago, and from

there the idea spread over the other countries. At present we have more than 1000 deaconesses, all trained nurses, who passed the state-examinations. One of Bishop Welle's first episcopal actions was to dedicate a new hospital at Leipzig, and a few months ago a second ~~one~~ one was dedicated at Frankfurt-au-Main. So that, all in all, there are nine Methodist hospitals - two in Frankfurt, one in Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Nuernberg, Heidelberg, Stuttgart, and Chemnitz.

Bishop Welle is in America this year to attend the conference to unite the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Protestant Methodist Church. This conference will be in April 26 in Kansas City. This is his tenth visit to the United States and he states that he is very glad to be here, to meet old friends and see the spirit of Methodism, which he hopes will bring through the Uniting Conference, a new enthusiasm for evangelistic work to the world-wide church.

Bishop F. H. Otto Melle

Adm. Comm. Apr. 16, 1947

Bishop F. H. Otto Melle, retired head of the Methodist Church in Germany, died in Berlin on March 26, according to word just received by the Board of Missions and Church Extension of The Methodist Church. Bishop Melle had retired in 1946, when the Central Conference of German Methodism met in Frankfort, because of ill health, and he had been seriously ill for several months before his death.

As the head of German Methodism during World War II, Bishop Melle found his movements restricted by police and military regulations, partly because the church he represented had been an outgrowth of American Methodist evangelical missions to Germany in the previous century. But he did manage to preach and to direct philanthropic work during the war years.

Born in Germany to Methodist parents in 1875, he began preaching at the age of sixteen. Two years later he entered the Methodist Theological Seminary in Frankfort, from which he was graduated in 1900, and of which he was later to become president.

For a number of years he was pastor and missionary in Hungary, where his mastery of languages enabled him to preach in three tongues. He was a member of the North German and later of the Northwest German Annual Conferences, representing them in General Conferences in the United States. He visited America ten times, and was well-known as a lecturer and preacher. On the continent of Europe he was a recognized leader of the evangelical forces, and was long identified with temperance and other reform movements.

Bishop F. H. Otto Melle

In the death of Bishop F. H. Otto Melle, Methodism in Germany has lost a leader who was responsible for administering the affairs of the church during the most difficult period in all its history on the Continent. He came to the episcopacy in 1936 just when Hitlerism was fast becoming a matter of world concern and, as the responsible head of a relatively small minority denomination in the midst of an intoxicated nation, he was expected to guide its destinies through a succession of unprecedented experiences.

That he made mistakes goes without saying, but that he was devoted to the church and that in his last days he literally gave his life for it cannot be disputed. We predict that time will be much more charitable in its judgments of him than were his contemporary critics. Of one thing, however, there can be no doubt—the monumental labors and the unsparing efforts he gave to the church during the war years were a determining factor in the preservation of the movement, and the new Methodism which is rising from the ashes of a devastated Germany owes its very existence in large part to his leadership. A missionary, educator, pastor, linguist, publicist, and administrator—Bishop Melle gave his all without hesitancy and without reserve.

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Melle and Otto Melle

and dignified language. It has happened many times that ill-tempered language has defeated godly purposes.

Iowa Sets a Precedent

By a vote of 88 to 12 the Iowa House of Representatives on Apr. 10 approved a measure which will, if approved by the state senate, provide a sum of \$50,000 which is to be expended by the State Department of Public Instruction in behalf of education on the subject of alcohol. Newspapers, billboards, radio, schools and other media are to be utilized in the program. At least some of the funds are to be used for visual education.

So far as we know this is the first time that any state government has actually proposed to appropriate money for public education on the subject of the dangers involved in the use of alcohol, though many states have legislation which requires such instruction in the public schools.

The lopsided vote by which the measure was passed in the Iowa House indicates the growing concern among thoughtful people on the rising tide of drunkenness. The argument used most forcibly against the proposal was that "this is an opening wedge to bring prohibition back," but if the present conditions are to be maintained only as a result of ignorance of the subject then it is high time that the government begin an educational program for the

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Administrative Committee
April 16, 1947.

When the German Methodist conferences were set apart as an independent Methodist Church in 1936, Bishop Melle was elected its first Bishop.

Address of Bishop F. W. Otto Melle
Chester Hill Methodist Church
Mount Vernon, New York
March 26, 1939

Methodism came to Germany in two streams. A young German laborer from Württemberg was in London, invited in a Methodist meeting, made there a personal experience of Christ, and when he came home to Germany and told the story, he became the founder of Wesleyan Methodism there. About the same time—one hundred years ago—German emigrants to the United States of America came in touch with the Methodist revival movement here, found the pearl of great price and brought the glad tidings to the fatherland. The stream from America was the stronger one. In 1895 both branches of Methodism in Germany united, and since that time we have a united Methodism there.

The story of Methodism in Germany, sounds like chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. If you ever want to realize anew what it means that the Lord himself is leading his apostles, that he is opening the doors for them, that he is adding daily those to his church who are saved, read the history of Methodism in Germany. The work grew day by day, and the old aggressive apostolic and Methodist spirit made them ready to be messengers of Christ to Switzerland, to the Baltics and Russia, to Austria, Hungary and Yugoslavia. It should be kept in mind that in all these just mentioned countries, where we have now Annual and Mission conferences, the pioneers of Methodism came first down from the German speaking Methodists in the United States and later on from Germany.

And in Germany—what have we there today? There are five Annual Conferences—since 1936 organized as a Central Conference—with about 50,000 members, and—I think it should be mentioned, because it was the first Central Conference to reach this goal—perfectly self-supporting. Maybe somebody thinks that I, perhaps

have the most difficult episcopal area at the present time, but in looking it over, I tell you, I would not like to change my area with any other one. It is one of the best we have, full of tasks, of problems too, of difficulties, yes, but also of possibilities so great, and so hopeful, that we really have no time to complain.

I wish I had time to speak about our Theological Seminary, of which I was president until 1936. It takes its rank with the theological faculties of the state universities. There was a time after the war when we had 83 students. Today we have thirty, and what a wonderful opportunity for these students! They came from Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, the Baltics, and the northern countries of Europe. They are burning with zeal to bring the good tidings of Jesus Christ to their nations.

Or I could talk about our Deaconess-Work. As a matter of fact, the deaconess work of the Methodist Church was begun in Germany about 60 years ago, and from there the idea spread over the other countries. At present we have more than 1000 deaconesses, all trained nurses, who passed the state-examination. One of my first episcopal actions was to dedicate a new hospital at Leipzig, and a few months ago a second one at Frankfurt am Main. So that, all in all, there are nine Methodist hospitals—two in Frankfurt, one in Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Nuernberg, Heidelberg, Stuttgart, and Chemnitz.

And in the present church crisis, you ask, "What are the Methodists doing?" And I can answer that the work in Germany is going on as usual. We preach the gospel just as our fathers did. A special feature of the work is our Tent-Missions. We have two tents which are used during the summer months in public squares of the cities. The days before I left Germany, we had a conference on

evangelization at Leipzig, attended by delegates from all the five conferences. The wish was expressed that the tent work should be extended by having at least one more small tent, if possible, all ready this summer, and I hope that while I stay here, I may find some friends helping to secure the necessary means.

I wish you could have attended one or the other of our annual conferences last summer. Conference-Sunday, for example, is always a great festival day for the Methodists in Germany. Almost everywhere the largest halls of the city was crowded with people. In Berlin we even had the privilege to use the most famous and beautiful concert-hall of Berlin, the Philharmonie. There, where the statues of the greatest German musicians, Beethoven, Wagner, Bach, etc., look down from the walls, the gospel songs of the love of God and the salvation of Christ were sung, and it was a special joy to us that Bishop Wade from the Northern European Area was with us to represent world-wide Methodism.

Somebody will ask, how is it that the Methodists enjoy these privileges while we read of persecution of Christians, of church-leaders in the concentration camps, etc. In a time of political unrest, of war, of revolution, some things may happen which in quiet times would not be thought of. It is then difficult to distinguish between political and religious motives. I esteem the religious conviction of everybody, but easily in such times mistakes may be made. Therefore I should not like to speak about other churches, but confine myself to our own work. But I am free to give you some reasons for the freedom we enjoy. What I say is meant also for other evangelical free churches. We do not deal at all with political questions in the pulpit, but following the example of Jesus, of Paul and the primitive church-preach the gospel in a biblical way. And I state that so far nobody has tried to influence our preaching or our confession of faith. What the authorities are concerned about

is not the religious conviction but whether there is any opposition against the state.

Another reason is, I think, the fact that we are a "Free Church", which does not receive any subsidy from the state. The former state-churches-there were 27 in Germany-receive annually hundreds of millions from the treasury of the state. As far as I know these subsidies have been increased by almost 100% since 1933. In my opinion it would have been wise, and courageous, if these churches would have taken the opportunity to become Free-Churches. But they missed that opportunity. Whether another will come nobody knows. The future of the church-life in Germany will belong to the free churches.

One word more about the attitude of the churches in general in this crisis. I cannot see any help for the churches and for Christianity in Germany in sermons preached against the totalitarian states, in resolutions of the same kind. here is the danger that the churches are led away by political motives, as it is easily the case in times of psychoses. We have to take it as a matter of fact that there are and there will be democratic states and totalitarian states, and people will have to learn-even if this will take some time-to live beside each other just as Catholics and Protestants have learned to live with each other under the roof of the same state. And the disciples of Jesus Christ will have to prove their Christianity and their faith as well in a totalitarian state as in a democracy. The faith in Jesus Christ has nothing to do with the form of government.

And as we as Methodists in Germany take this position, history-that is our conviction-will see therein a contribution to the solving of one of the most urgent problems of our generation.

New Methodist Bishop

THE Rev. F. H. Otto Melle, D. D., Director of the Frankfurt Theological Seminary, Frankfurt au Main, Germany, is the newly elected Bishop of the Central Conference of Germany, according to a cablegram from Bishop Nuelsen in the consecration service, which was scheduled for September 20.

Bishop Melle is a recognized leader among the Protestant forces in Germany, having been identified with temperance and other reform movements, and has a deep understanding of the free-church principles of Methodism. A son of Methodist parents, Bishop Melle was born in 1875 and began preaching when he was 16 years of age. Two years later he entered the Methodist Ministry and graduated from the Seminary at Frankfurt in 1900. For a number of years he worked in Hungary, where he learned the language (he speaks three languages fluently) and preached in the native tongue. In 1924 and again in 1928, Bishop Melle was a delegate to the General Conference, first from the North German Conference and later from the Northwest German Conference. He has also been associated with the Christian Student Movement and visited this country a number of times as a delegate from Central Europe to the World Christian Federation. His magnetic personality, cosmopolitan sympathies, rare administrative talent and fine diplomatic ability admirably fit Bishop Melle for the new duties and responsibilities which have been put upon him. He will reside in Berlin.

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through college years and later out in the world, one tends to lose youthful ideas and become more cynical—to imitate the attitude of some of the older people. But when you get with a group of people who have problems that seemed insurmountable and your ambitions awake—I get a new hold on life.

I thought of the thrill of “the orphans” (campers honestly see the rise), sunset, and the heavens declare the glory of God,” has been a camper. One cannot stand on the shore and watch a sunset, see the sky change into something more beautiful, than one has ever seen. I have watched a full moon appear in the heavens and become a changed person.

“But how does this happen to you?” asked my business man friend.

“I have often wondered,” he said. “I have a sense of responsibility for my group. I learn to love them. I know how I do hate to leave some of them. I have a chap who never voiced a prayer, though the group had. As I tucked him in one night he never prayed aloud as the other boys. ‘Gee, Mr. _____, I never want any of the things the kids ask for.’ I loved him for his sincerity. The other boys knew for what they prayed—others which they could interpret no better than I. I tried to interpret some of the prayers I have heard. I tried to help him through that ‘tough spot.’ I’m not any too clear regarding prayer.”

I could picture that handsome man and that boy. Was he not demonstrating George Washington’s plan for beating crime and delinquency? I could start?

Prepare for Rally D

RELIGIOUS Education Week 1955

My Visit to Warsaw

By Bishop F. H. Otto Melle

The first authentic report of the experiences of Methodist missionaries and the status of the Methodist Church in Poland as a result of the war, by the Bishop of the Germany Central Conference

A CABLE from Dr. W. G. Cram asked me to inquire about the fate of Misses Ruth Lawrence and Ellen Newby, who were in Warsaw as missionaries at the beginning of the war. With the consent and support of the Ministry of Church Affairs, I asked the military authorities for help. After some time of waiting I received a letter from Miss Lawrence—through the Kommandantur at Warsaw—with the comforting news that both ladies were in Warsaw and well. They, however, had no news from Mr. Gaither Warfield, another missionary, and did not know where he was.

I felt that Bishop Arthur J. Moore and Dr. Cram would like me to look after things in Warsaw. Permission for a journey into the occupied territory was granted, and Rev. K. Kreutzer, superintendent of the Koenigsberg District, Northeast Germany Conference, accompanied me. We were happy to catch one of the first trains that ran again, with through cars from Berlin to Warsaw, and we spent there two days, November 15 and 16.

In the first place, I asked our preachers and the ladies to tell their personal experiences. There were present Rev. Gaither P. Warfield, Rev. K. Najder, Rev. M. Kosmiderski, Miss Ruth Lawrence, and Miss Ellen Newby. The stories they told were touching, sometimes thrilling; in all cases they gave a vivid picture of the war and the present situation.

Brother Kosmiderski traveled—I think on August 30—from Bromberg to Warsaw to attend a meeting of the executive committees. As it was a warm summer day he carried neither overcoat nor hat. On September 1 the war broke out. He could not return and is now still in Warsaw. His wife is with him.

Brother Najder stayed with his congregation at Kattowitz all the time. He reported that his services were well attended and that not one meeting could not be held. The work went and goes on in the usual



Bishop F. H. Otto Melle, of Berlin, Bishop of the Germany Central Conference of the Methodist Church



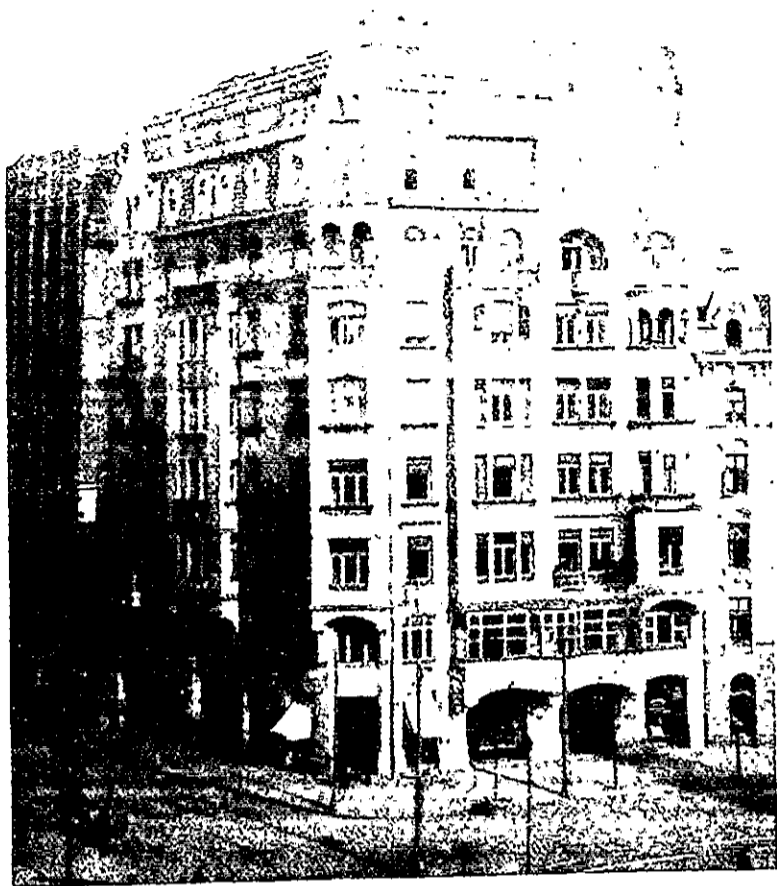
Rev. Gaither Warfield, Methodist missionary in Poland, imprisoned as a spy by the Polish and Russian troops

way. Some of his members were sent as prisoners to Germany. He tells a thrilling incident, that one of these prisoners was reading in his Polish New Testament and was recognized by one of the subofficers in charge of the prisoners as a fellow-Methodist.

The two ladies left Warsaw—on the advice of friends—when the German troops came nearer and nearer to the city. The American Consul told them that perhaps only one train more—within two hours—would leave the city in the direction of the east. They hurried to the station. Instead of two o'clock in the afternoon, the train left Warsaw the next morning and required more than two days to get thirty miles from the city, where it was stopped by bombs from aeroplanes. With knapsacks on their shoulders, Misses Lawrence and Newby marched from village to village, stayed one night in the home of a Catholic priest, another with the family of a Reformed pastor, then again with farmers, etc., until at last, using every kind of vehicles, they arrived in Warsaw again after the Germans had occupied the city. But both are well, and they tell their experiences with humor. They are glad to be back at the place of their work, which they hope soon to begin anew.

The strangest experiences of all befell Mr. Warfield. He had disappeared. His wife—she is still somewhere in the Carpathian Mountains—had not heard from him for several weeks. On the same day that Miss Lawrence wrote me she also did not know where he was. Mr. Winston Cram, coming directly from Warsaw to Berlin, told me that suddenly Mr. Warfield had returned. Of his interesting story, I can give only a brief outline.

When by the radio those people at Warsaw who were able to do so were asked to leave the city, he resolved to go toward the east and to reach the Russian frontier, taking his bicycle with him. His intention was to find somewhere a 'quiet place.' Soon he



Central Building of the Methodist Mission at Warsaw, damaged by German bombardment

was caught by a troop of Polish soldiers who thought him to be a German spy. After a few days the Russians came, and when they discovered he was an American, they took his passport, telling him that he was under suspicion of being an English spy. Fifty-one days he was in prison with Polish soldiers. At last the Russians turned him over to the Germans, and one of the German officers who spoke English immediately understood the situation and sent him back to Warsaw, where he arrived, as I mentioned above, only a few days before I myself reached the city. Of course, Brother Warfield has suffered from all these experiences, and he needs in my opinion some time for recreation, but he looks well, is of good cheer, and is glad to begin anew with his work, the future of which he sees with the eyes of a strong faith.

The same may be said of all the people whom I had the pleasure and privilege to meet. They believe that the past weeks have deepened their spiritual life and strengthened their faith. And when they spoke about events one felt that they believe in new opportunities for the gospel. I was glad to be able to bring the brethren a little gift as a greeting from the Methodists in Germany and to invite Brother Warfield, when he can do so, to spend a few weeks at one of our homes in Germany for recreation.

Secondly, we talked and looked over the problems of our property. All seems to be intact. In Warsaw I was more than surprised to see the beautiful property of the Methodist Church at the Mokotowska 12. It is really a representative building. We had just passed the streets where the bombardment had done

so much damage. And now—our own house—almost unhurt! Only the glass of the windows is broken. One or two bombs fell through the glass roof, but without exploding, and of course here and there is the sign of a bullet or a shrapnel. While other houses are vast heaps of ruins, the Methodist building stands in good shape and reminds the visitor that there are still miracles in our days. With \$2,500, which they urgently ask, the repairs can be made. Glass is especially expensive now. But it is necessary that these repairs be made immediately before the cold winter comes. The earlier this can be done, the greater will be the advantage. Also the building outside the city, which is rented to the Magistrate, is intact. I had, however, no time to visit this place.

Then I tried to get a picture of the situation in the different congregations and the possibilities of their work at present. The picture as it now appears shows a variety of problems. The Church will have to adjust the administration to the new circumstances, yet I hope that no essential change will be necessary for the moment. I myself shall be very glad in advising the brethren so that little differences easily may be overcome with the help of the German authorities. As a matter of fact, the Methodist Church is better recognized by the new government than by the old.

Yet there are some problems. The Polish Mission has its work in four different countries or territories, each with special laws and rules for church activities: Russia, Lithuania, Germany, and Poland. The latter, of course, is also under German rule.

RUSSIA

1. The Church of Lemberg is situated in Russia. Rev. Ernst Nausner is believed to be somewhere in Lithuania, and the brethren think that he will not be able to return to Lemberg.

2. Dunkowice. It is uncertain whether this place is on the Russian or the Polish side of the frontier, and nobody had received any news from Rev. Ludwig Chudy.

3. Srednie Siolo belongs to the Wilno Circuit but lies in Russia. The Methodists have there a chapel. Our members there express the hope that they—with a little financial support—can continue the work themselves without a preacher.

4. Pzemysl. Here is a funny situation. The river San divides the city in two parts, one belonging to Russia and the other to the Polish Government. The Methodist hall is on the Russian side, the pastor and most of the members live on the other. The problem will easily be solved by finding a new hall on the Polish side.

LITHUANIA

The Church in Wilno belongs to Lithuania. Rev. Jan Piotrowski is the pastor. The impression was that there were no special difficulties, although the railroad and postal connec-

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 10]

New Orleans Methodism takes rank with the leading churches of the country in per capita giving.

While furnishing a hundred preachers to the church New Orleans Methodism has also furnished many efficient and liberal laymen. Among these are: Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Knobb, Theresa Canu, Edward McGehee, H. W. Foster, J. D. Parker, Mary Werlein, Mrs. Lillie Meekins, Robert W. Rayne, J. H. Kellar, Chauncy French, Mrs. S. M. Munholland, and the Parham, Werlein, Carre and W. B. Reily families. These are the names of only a few of the many New Orleans laymen who have given of self.

The Earliest Methodists in Virginia

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10]

hand. Pulpits were closed to him, and he found difficulty in finding a place to preach. Harvard and Yale issued declarations against him. However, thousands flocked to hear him and many ministers stood by him. The New Lights had come into disfavor in other places, and it is not surprising that when they appeared in Virginia proclamations were issued against them and the Moravians and Methodists who may have been in the state. Whitefield had been associated with all three groups—the Methodists, Moravians, and the New Lights.

He returned to Virginia in 1751. Gillis, in *Memories of George Whitefield*, says: 'He took leave of the Boston people at four in the morning, November 7, and went to Rhode Island, from thence through Maryland and Virginia, where the prospect of doing good was so promising that he was sorry he had not come sooner. Many came forty or fifty miles to hear him, a spirit of conviction and consolation seemed to run through all the assemblies. Three churches were opened to him. Prejudices subsided, some of the rich and great began to think favorably of his ministrations; and

service, and substance for the cause of Christ in this beautiful, enchanting, and interesting city.

The story of those who have sacrificed and suffered and given themselves for Christ and Methodism in this city can never be told. They belong to the immortals.

'These are they who have come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore, they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.'

several of the lower class came to him and acknowledged what God had done for them, by his preaching, when there before.'

It is shown here that some of the prejudices of 1746-47 had subsided and that there were still some left who had been helped by him before. The battle for religious freedom had not yet been fought and won, and the Methodists seem to have died out in Virginia until we hear of them again when Robert Williams began to preach in 1772.

Our theory is that there were two reasons for the movement dying out. One was that the Established Church was still firmly entrenched and the opposition was too strong for Methodism. The other reason was that Whitefield was no organizer.

Wesley had this gift and he left behind him the Methodist Church. Whitefield did not have it and he left no permanent organization.

Belden says that although Whitefield did not organize, his labors prepared the way for Wesley's itinerants. Certain it is that there were Methodists in Virginia and America before 1745.

The Woman's Missionary Society of Louisiana Conference

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29]

The missionary women of Louisiana take great pride in MacDonell French Mission School, which is located in the town of Houma in Terrebonne Parish, at the convergence of many bayous. Mrs. F. F. Stephens called it a 'jewel in a bayou setting.' To the north and west of the school lies the famous old Sugar Bowl of Louisiana, which includes thousands of acres of sugar cane. Here we find many old palatial homes.

In direct contrast to this, east of MacDonell, lies the most densely populated rural section of the United States. The small bayou farms of the Cajun truck farmers extend for sixty

miles along Bayou Lafourche. The primitive little wooden houses of two and three rooms stand as close together as homes on a village street. To the south of the school there is the strangest land of all, for here are the great sea swamps of Louisiana. This land has been called the *Land of Forgotten Children*, for these children of the marshes have had no chance at all except when this school reaches out and helps them. While the school has had a steady normal growth, yet the story of its development has revolved around the life of one woman, Miss Ella K. Hooper. It is a story of a great faith and belief in prayer. From a small beginning this

work has grown into a school of one hundred and ten students. Its work is threefold. It serves as a community center, as an educational institution approved by the State Board of Education, and as a vocational training center for its boys and girls.

At the present time the Louisiana Conference employs three Council workers for various types of service. Deaconess Sheila Nuttall is engaged in rural work, and is now serving in the Mon-

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[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29]

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The Earliest Methodists in Virginia

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10]

hand. Pulpits were closed to him, and he found difficulty in finding a place to preach. Harvard and Yale issued declarations against him. However, thousands flocked to hear him and many ministers stood by him. The New Lights had come into disfavor in other places, and it is not surprising that when they appeared in Virginia proclamations were issued against them and the Moravians and Methodists who may have been in the state. Whitefield had been associated with all three groups—the Methodists, Moravians, and the New Lights.

He returned to Virginia in 1754. Gillis, in *Memories of George Whitefield*, says: 'He took leave of the Boston people at four in the morning, November 7, and went to Rhode Island, from thence through Maryland and Virginia, where the prospect of doing good was so promising that he was sorry he had not come sooner. Many came forty or fifty miles to hear him, a spirit of conviction and consolation seemed to run through all the assemblies. Three churches were opened to him. Prejudices subsided, some of the rich and great began to think favorably of his ministrations; and

service, and substance for the cause of Christ in this beautiful, enchanting, and interesting city.

The story of those who have sacrificed and suffered and given themselves for Christ and Methodism in this city can never be told. They belong to the immortals.

'These are they who have come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore, they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.'

several of the lower class came to him and acknowledged what God had done for them, by his preaching, when there before.'

It is shown here that some of the prejudices of 1746-47 had subsided and that there were still some left who had been helped by him before. The battle for religious freedom had not yet been fought and won, and the Methodists seem to have died out in Virginia until we hear of them again when Robert Williams began to preach in 1772.

Our theory is that there were two reasons for the movement dying out. One was that the Established Church was still firmly entrenched and the opposition was too strong for Methodism. The other reason was that Whitefield was no organizer.

Wesley had this gift and he left behind him the Methodist Church. Whitefield did not have it and he left no permanent organization.

Belden says that although Whitefield did not organize, his labors prepared the way for Wesley's itinerants. Certain it is that there were Methodists in Virginia and America before 1745.

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[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29]

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roe District. Miss Margaret Infinger is located at Hodge, an industrial center, where she is giving of her best to provide the abundant life for five hundred women and girls employed in a paper bag factory. The latest addition to this corps of workers is Deaconess Mamie J. Chandler, student counselor at the State Normal School, Natchitoches, who holds a high place in the life of that institution.

Louisiana Conference, too, claims an honor roll of missionary daughters. Many from this state have heard the

call and are proclaiming the gospel of good news, both in the homeland and in the uttermost parts of the earth.

A faithful group of consecrated women head the work of the Conference. Mrs. George Sexton, Jr., is president, and Mrs. W. M. Ledbetter conference secretary. They are women of large vision, rare intellect, and deep consecration, and have proved themselves capable of leading their Conference into more glorious achievements in the building of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

Methodism Pioneers in Negro Education

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14]

strengthening the assurance of his place as a child of God in the brotherhood of men, and in qualifying him for the kind of citizenship which every American should achieve. Largely by virtue of Methodist schools and colleges there are now nineteen Negro conferences in Methodism, with over 2,000 ministers, and 325,000 members; and the influence of these schools has reached far beyond the bounds of our own church.'

While Methodism looks to its colleges to provide the basic educational foundation for ministerial leadership, it is to *Gammon Theological Seminary* at Atlanta that the church looks for professional ministerial training. Gammon is recognized as the most outstanding theological school for Negroes of any denomination in America. More than 2,500 ministers have received training there, including many pastors serving in the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. In this connection a word should be said for the fine short-term Pastors' Schools held at these Methodist colleges and at Gammon each summer. They are making a significant contribution to the training of the vast majority of rural pastors who have had no college education and, of course, no theological education. This is one of Methodism's significant answers to the need for a trained ministry.

Health education and medical care are other needs which The Methodist Church is facing in its twenty educational institutions for Negroes. Methodism is meeting this challenge of a high death rate among Negroes by courses in health and hygiene in all of its insti-

tutions and by specific medical training in two centers. The record of achievement is significant: more than a third of the Negro doctors practicing in America and about one-half of the dentists have been trained in Methodist institutions.

At Nashville The Methodist Church has *Meharry Medical College*, which is recognized as a Class 'A' medical school, with an enrolment of approximately 300. It trains doctors and nurses, dentists and pharmacists.

Flint-Goodridge Hospital and Nurse Training School, in connection with Dillard University in New Orleans, is the second center of health education. Important as its ministry is to the patients whom it serves, and its very large out-patient clinic, its major service to the public is through its training of nurses and internes, with special facilities for advanced training of physicians in that whole southern region.

Race Relations Sunday is the time when the need of Christian education for Negro youth is presented to the churches in accordance with paragraph 1119 of the 1939 *Methodist Discipline*. The offering taken on that day will be used to supplement the assistance given the twenty institutions established and supported by the branches of Methodism now being merged. Methodism, north and south, has pioneered in the field of education for Negroes. Methodism will continue to meet this challenge and answer this need by being a real brother in Christ! The story of this work presents a real challenge to the church.

seem advisable for him to return to Bromberg now; we agreed that the pastor at Graudenz, who is able to preach in German, should visit Bromberg regularly and try to serve the congregation. Meanwhile, Brother Kosmiderski is to stay in Warsaw.

Another province is called Warthe-Gau.

Three congregations are in this Gau: Kolmar (German), Schwarzwald (German), and Posen (Polish).

The third province is Gau Silesia. Only one circuit is in this region, that of Kattowitz. Brother Najder, pastor and district superintendent, has four preaching places. His work is exclusively in the Polish language. Things here can be handled in the same way as in the other German Gaus.

It is yet to be seen how the relation will be between these Gaus and the Government of Poland, but I think that Brother Warfield will easily get permission to visit his churches and to hold the Quarterly Conferences. My advice is that Rev. K. Kreutzer, of Schneidemuhl, visits these places, if possible, with Brother Warfield, so that the two superintendents may remain in touch with each other and can discuss the new questions that arise. Whether at least the German-speaking congregations should be transferred to the Northeast Germany Conference is a question that may be talked over later. For the present, Brother Warfield shall try to supervise and administer these circuits in the same way as before the war.

It is a pity—I am inclined to say—that we have not more congregations in the section of the country remaining as the Government of Poland. For here certainly work in the Polish language will not only be most necessary, but it also will receive the recognition of the government easier than anywhere else. There seem to be special opportunities and possibilities. But as far as I have been informed we have only work in Warsaw (two congregations) and in Przemsyl.

It is my intention to speak about the whole problem with representatives of the government as soon as possible. It may be necessary that we German Methodists do something in the German language in the new Gaus mentioned. There are tremendous plans in preparation to bring the Germans from the Baltic States back into the Fatherland. Thousands of them have already left, for example, Latvia, and settled down at Gotenhafen (Gdangin). Others will follow to West Prussia and the Warthe-Gau. Among them are Methodists and Methodist preachers. Perhaps Poles in these Gaus will prefer to immigrate to the Government of Poland, where they

My Visit to Warsaw

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8]

tions are interrupted. Whether it will be possible to send money from Warsaw to Lithuania is in doubt. Perhaps Bishop Wade can find a way.

GERMANY

Three provinces or so-called 'Gaus' have been created out of the territory

that belonged to Germany before the World War. One of these is Gau: West Prussia. There we have two Polish churches, one in Graudenz and the other in Bromberg. (I give the German names.)

Brother Michal Kosmiderski's lodging has been occupied and it does not

can develop their national life and their national culture with greater opportunities than as a minority in another part of the world. By such movements new places in the Government might be opened for our Church, if, perhaps, Polish Methodists from the above mentioned German Gaus move there. Though these plans are already in the way of realization, it is still too early to take them in consideration as far as our work is concerned. But everybody will feel that here great tasks are involved for the Church of Christ, and that all who are in responsible positions need much wisdom, much patience, and much faith.

It is a great work our ladies have done in the Language College in Warsaw. Financially, they have done very well. A little afraid after their return to Warsaw of what now may happen to the school. Miss Lawrence went to the Kommandantur and asked permission to reopen. She showed me, with some pride, the document which gave the permission, and she told me that it was given in a most friendly way after only a few minutes of waiting.

They had already registered more than 100 scholars and were just about to give the first lessons when an order came that all schools in Warsaw must be closed on account of the danger of typhoid fever. How long this will last nobody knows. We understood that in the face of such a danger everything had to be done to prevent an epidemic. The school, however, has to pay the salaries of the teachers for a few months. As soon as this school can be opened again, it certainly will prove its old attraction, especially since they will teach more languages than before. They have engaged teachers for the German language.

Mr. Warfield mentioned two students who should have a theological education. The superintendent of the Theological Seminary at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, Dr. Sommer, told me that Bishop Moore had promised to take care of one student from the Poland Mission, and I was happy to declare that if it seemed practical to send him, the Seminary would take the financial responsibility for the second one. The Seminary—that is now the plan—will be opened at the beginning of January. It will have only a small number, perhaps ten or twelve students, who are free for the course (the others are in the army), but this small number gives the professors time to give special attention to brethren who may not have had the same preparatory schools as others, and who first will have to overcome some language difficulties.

From the beginning of the war on September 3 to the date of my visit, the missionaries had received no money. Funds cannot be sent directly to Warsaw, but we have made arrangements for sending money through Berlin. How did they meet the emergency? As long as Mr. Warfield was away, of course, nothing could be done. Now he tries to pay the salaries for the past months. I brought them 500 marks as a greeting from their fellow-Methodists in Germany, asking Brother Warfield to use them as relief. Besides this, we borrowed them some money, which may be refunded later. So they will be able to live until the money arrives from America. It is my intention to remain in close touch with the leaders of our Church in Warsaw and—if it seems advisable—to visit them again.

As Mr. Chambers will not be able to return to Warsaw, the executive committee asked Brother Warfield meanwhile to act as treasurer. There are a lot of problems connected with the office of the treasurer. We do not yet know whether he will be able to send money from Warsaw to Lithuania or to Germany. But time will teach us what can be done, and I hope that it will be possible to adjust things through Berlin.

It is my impression that relief work will be necessary after a few weeks, beginning with the members of our own Church. And my advice would be to prepare for it, but to begin it in a very quiet way without public propaganda, which must be avoided.

Let me close with a word of appreciation for the work the Methodist Church has accomplished in this Mission and the kind of people she has sent there as representatives. Brother Warfield makes the impression of a true Christian character, a preacher with an evangelistic spirit, and a wise and thoughtful leader who will think carefully before he acts and so be able to lead the Church through such a serious crisis. And no praise would be too high for Miss Lawrence and Miss Newby, who, brave as soldiers and kind and patient as lambs, won the admiration, the confidence and the love of all who know them, including the authorities.

Though the political situation changes and our experience be a serious trial for our Christian life and faith, the task of Methodism remains the same. In my opinion it is now even greater than before. The more the Church will be Christlike in thinking, speaking, and acting, the greater will be her blessing. And the Lord will fulfil his promise: 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.'



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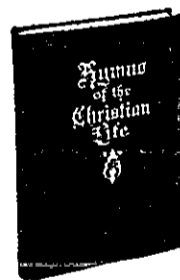
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Total War or Total Faith

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32]

purposes of God, instead of means which defeat themselves and end in futility because they are evil. It is capable of indefinite extension. It begins wherever there is one man or woman of faith. It can be applied immediately and anywhere in this world of various cultural and economic levels, and of individual and social growth. All these things militarism denies.

Christian totalitarianism is, therefore, basic to the world civilization which is in the process of being built. It requires, in the judgment of increas-

ing numbers of Christians, the absolute veto by the Christian upon efforts of the state to get him to sanction, support or participate in war or preparations for war for any purpose whatever. Christian youth who believe that the loving God has a purpose for each life, as he must have if he has a purpose for the world and a goal for history, will refuse to permit the state or any other agency to defeat that purpose through military conscription. Believing that God is love, they find it impossible to agree with the military system

that the good ends of peace and justice can be achieved by the evil means of hatred, lying, destruction, and wholesale murder. Therefore, they turn to the better way. They choose total peace instead of paganism.

It is through this minority—this remnant who say the resolute 'NO' to war, that the church today promises to make its greatest contribution both to the saving of democracy and to the far more important extension of the universal Kingdom of God. They carry the hope of democracy because now that the very heart of democracy—its respect for the individual and for religious freedom—is imperiled by fascist regimentation inaugurated through the device of conscription, *they assert democracy* by continuing to exercise democratic choice and personal veto through refusal to co-operate. It was the assertion of religious freedom by the use of freedom forbidden by the archaic laws of the day which enabled the Quakers and other pacifist groups to inaugurate democracy by winning the struggle for religious liberty in England three centuries ago. It will only be by a similar assertion, at great personal cost, that religious liberty can be restored in a world bent on destroying its freedom and its life through the total paganism of war.

When all other methods fail, the Church of the Spirit chooses the way of the Cross, which is a universal truth, as applicable to that collectivity of persons called a nation as it is to any one person. The chief aim of any conflict is to change the will of the one regarded as in the wrong. War, boycotts, and punitive methods short of war attempt to change this will by forcing suffering on the one who is thought to be the sinner. All history shows that his will is not changed by this method. He is resentful, stubborn, full of hatred and revenge. Further, he does not fail to observe that in the process of forcing suffering on others the so-called good man is himself brutalized and becomes a sinner. But when the good man voluntarily takes the suffering on himself, even until death if necessary, in faithful witness to God as love, penitence breeds penitence, the evil will is changed, repentance comes, the heart seeks to restore the wrong that has been done and finds forgiveness and peace.

Jesus on the Cross was victorious where Jesus as Jewish king or Roman emperor would have been defeated. In the Cross he adopted God's way of overcoming evil with good and so something in the nature of reality that responds got at the root of sin, the evil will, and the changes which began on Calvary in evil and cowardly hearts will never end till there is 'peace on earth, good will among men.' Come, let us arise and follow him.

WORLD OUTLOOK

Methodism came to Germany in two streams. A young German laborer from Querttemberg was in London, invited in a Methodist meeting, made there a personal experience of Christ, and when he came home to Germany and told the story, he became the founder of Wesleyan Methodism there. About the same time - one hundred years ago - German emigrants to the United States of America came in touch with the Methodist revival movement here, found the pearl of great price and brought the glad tidings to the fatherland. The stream from America was the stronger one. 1805 both branches of Methodism in Germany united, and since that time we have a united Methodism there.

The story of Methodism in Germany, sounds like chapters of the Acts of the apostles. If you ever want to realize anew what it means that the Lord Himself is leading his apostles, that he is opening the doors for them, that he is adding daily those to his church who are saved, read the history of Methodism in Germany. The work grew day by day, and the old aggressive apostolic and Methodist spirit made them ready to be messengers of Christ to Switzerland, to the Baltics and Russia, to Austria, Hungary and Jugoslavia. It should be kept in mind that in all these just mentioned countries, where we have now Annual and mission conferences, the pioneers of Methodism came first from the German speaking Methodists in the United States and later on from Germany.

and in Germany - what have we there today? There are five Annual Conferences - since 1930 organized as a Central Conference - with about 50,000 members, and - I think it should be mentioned, because it was the first Central Conference to reach this goal - perfectly self-supporting. Maybe somebody thinks that I, perhaps, have the most difficult episcopal area at the present time, but in looking it over, I tell you, I would not like to change my area with any other one. It is one of the best we have,

full of tasks, of problems too, of difficulties, yes, but also of possibilities so great, and so hopeful, that we really have no time to complain.

I wish I had time to speak about our Theological Seminary, of which I was president until 1936. It takes its rank with the theological faculties of the state universities. There was a time after the war when we had 63 students. Today we have thirty, and what a wonderful opportunity for these students! They came from Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, Jugoslavia, Bulgaria, the Baltics, and the northern countries of Europe. They are burning with zeal to bring the good tidings of Jesus Christ to their nations.

Or I could talk about our Deaconess-Work. As a matter of fact, the deaconess work of the Methodist Church was begun in Germany about 65 years ago, and from there the idea spread over the other countries. At present we have more than 1000 deaconesses, all trained nurses, who passed the state-examination. One of my first episcopal actions was to dedicate a new hospital at Leipzig, and a few months ago a second one at Frankfurt am Main. So that, all in all, there are nine Methodist hospitals - two in Frankfurt, one in Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Bamberg, Heidelberg, Stuttgart, and Chemnitz.

And in the present church crisis, you will ask, "What are the Methodists doing?" And I can answer that the work in Germany is going on as usual. We preach the gospel just as our fathers did. A special feature of the work is our Tent-Mission. We have two tents which are used during the summer months in public squares of the cities. The days before I left Germany, we had a conference on evangelization at Leipzig, attended by delegates from all the five conferences. The wish was expressed that the tent work should be extended by having at least one more small tent, if possible, all ready this summer, and I hope that while I stay here, I may find some friends helping to secure the necessary means.

I wish you could have attended one or the other of our annual conferences last summer. Conference-Sunday, for example, is always a great festival day for the

Methodists in Germany. Almost everywhere the largest halls of the city was crowded with people. In Berlin we even had the privilege to use the most famous and beautiful concert-hall of Berlin, the Philharmonie. There, where the statues of the greatest German musicians, Beethoven, Wagner, Bach, etc., look down from the walls, the gospel songs of the love of God and the salvation of Christ were sung, and it was a special joy to us that Bishop Wade from the Northern European Area was with us to represent world-wide Methodism.

Somebody will ask, how is it that the Methodists enjoy these privileges while we read of persecution of Christians, of church-leaders in the concentration camps, etc. In a time of political unrest, of war, of revolution, somethings may happen which in quiet times would not be thought of. It is then difficult to distinguish between political and religious motives. I esteem the religious conviction of everybody, but easily in such times mistakes may be made. Therefore I should not like to speak about other churches, but confine myself to our own work. But I am free to give you some reasons for the freedom we enjoy. What I say is meant also for the other evangelical free churches. We do not deal at all with political questions in the pulpit, but - following the example of Jesus, of Paul and the primitive Church - preach the gospel in a Biblical way. and I state that so far nobody has tried to influence our preaching or our confession of faith. What the authorities are concerned about is not the religious conviction but whether there is any opposition against the state.

Another reason is, I think, the fact that we are a "Free Church", which does not receive any subsidy from the state. The former state-churches - there were 27 of them in Germany - receive annually hundreds of millions from the treasury of the state. As far as I know these subsidies have been increased by almost 100% since 1933. In my opinion it would have been wise, and courageous, if these churches would have taken the opportunity to become Free-Churches. But they missed that opportunity. Whether another will come nobody knows. The future of the church-life in Germany

will belong to the free churches.

One word more about the attitude of the churches in general in this crisis. I cannot see any help for the churches and for Christianity in Germany in sermons preached against the totalitarian states, in resolutions of the same kind. There is the danger that the churches are led away by political motives, as it is easily the case in times of psychosis. We have to take it as a matter of fact that there are and there will be democratic states and totalitarian states, and people will have to learn - even if this will take some time - to live beside each other just as Catholics and Protestants have learned to live with each other under the roof of the same state. And the disciples of Jesus Christ will have to prove their Christianity and their faith as well in a totalitarian state as in a democracy. The faith in Jesus Christ has nothing to do with the form of government.

And as we as Methodists in Germany take this position, history - that is our conviction - will see therein a contribution to the solving of one of the most urgent problems of our generation.

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APR 1 1948

Methodism Still Lives in Germany

By Bishop F. H. Otto Melle
Berlin, Germany

(Editor's Note: This is the first statement of conditions among Methodist people and churches in Germany received by Secretary R.E. Diffendorfer, of the Board of Missions and Church Extension, from Bishop Melle since the war disrupted communications between U.S.A. and Germany.)

Since the end of February I have been unable to travel. I did not leave Berlin, as many of my friends did, but stayed here during the time of the air raids, and, of course, also through the bad days of the Battle of Berlin.

All our Methodist preachers stayed also. It was a very dangerous time. We lived in the cellar for months, then had Russian soldiers in our home; but the episcopal residence suffered only small damages, which I think, can be repaired.

From the leaflet "The Methodists in Europe" (which one of the chaplains showed me), I see that you are partly informed about the damage to our church property in Germany. What further has happened since the battles in the West and South and East, the break down of the German forces, I am not yet able to tell. There is no postal intercourse at all, we cannot travel, and therefore we must have patience till we shall be able to meet somewhere or at least to correspond with each other again.

Our Book Concern at Bremen has been totally destroyed -- not one book, or machine, or even a sheet of paper was left. And we had quite a lot of paper spared for the expected time of peace. Even the little church paper, a monthly of four small pages that we could publish only for the preachers and members of the quarterly conferences, does not exist any more.

But I know that our congregations without any connectional link, without conferences, without a church paper, without the visits of the bishop and the

district superintendents, without committee meetings, will stand the test; and also that this terrible time will prove to be a blessing.

The very last day of the Battle in Berlin, May 1st, the beautiful church at the Junkerstrasse 5/6 was destroyed. This building was the last of the larger churches that was left in Berlin to that day. We liked to use it for meetings of all the Methodists of Berlin. It was the first church the Methodists built in this city, 80 years ago, with the help of the then American Ambassador in Berlin, Mr. Wright. For a long time it was used as the American Church, and to the day of destruction the wall behind the altar showed the Ten Commandments and the Apostles Creed in English and in German. Even in the midst of the war, when the waves of hatred were high, we were able to withstand every attempt to paint over the English. But though the wall with that inscription now has been annihilated, the faith is still alive that the time is not far, when the two languages and the two peoples will have fellowship again in the love of Jesus Christ, and work together for the coming of the kingdom of God.

A few of the smaller church buildings and houses can perhaps be repaired. But the most beautiful and representative churches in Berlin are destroyed. In the east of Berlin, Filsiterstr. 15, the church building was burned out, the lodging house at the front of the street (lodgings for 30 families) was hit by an explosive bomb that killed also the able and beloved pastor of this church, Rev. E. Petrikowsky, his wife, the deaconess, and some other people who were in the air-raid shelter.

At present we are confined to the district of Berlin. But I hope that it will be possible, after some weeks, to meet the district superintendents of our five conferences.

We hope that in the North of Berlin, Rugenerstr. 5., at least the larger hall may be restored before the winter comes. As far as I know, however, the situation is better in the territory occupied by the Americans and English. The fewest losses in our work, it seems to me, are in the Central-Germany Conference (Saxony). We have there about 20,000 Methodists; they may become a strong centre of our activ-

ities in the future. In that region only the three churches in Leipzig, Planitz (the largest church building we had in Germany) and Plauen were destroyed. The congregations in the South, in the Southwest and Northwest Conferences suffered very much. The greatest problems -- and the greatest needs -- are in the Northeast Conference with the centre of Berlin. In this conference most congregations were in East and West Prussia, Pommerania, in the region east of the Oder; they are now fugitives somewhere.

The Theological Seminary at Frankfurt-on-the-Main still stands. It is used partly as a hospital in connection with our hospital "Bethanien" in that old city. This hospital -- so I heard -- is the only intact and working hospital of Frankfurt. The hospital buildings in Nueremberg have been totally destroyed; but those in Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Chemnitz, Heidelberg are left like that in Frankfurt. They all are crowded with patients. Our sisters do a splendid work in helping the people and healing the wounds of the war.

I will mention in brief only two or three of our most pressing problems:

1. The food situation. You may know about this from the newspapers.

People, well informed, fear that about two and one-half million people may starve in the next winter in Germany.

2. The tremendous stream of fugitives from the East. Millions of people, expelled from East and West Prussia, etc., are overflowing Berlin and other parts of Germany. They are not allowed to stay in Berlin, but we must give our Methodist brethren a shelter at least for one or two days while they are passing through the city. We try to organize a relief work as well as it is possible. In the church services a second collection is taken in a basket for little pieces of bread which the friends may sacrifice from the few bread rations they have; there is also a wardrobe for used clothes.

3. We were not in want of money during the last years. Our people supported the church very liberally. I was even able to collect a war relief fund. We could pay off a large part of our church debts, and we could also lay a good founda-

tion of a fund for the retired preachers and their families. It was touching how our Methodists brought their sacrifices. Now, after the capitulation of Germany, all bank accounts have been closed, no single mark or pfennig can be used. It is the common impression that they are lost forever. All bills, however, have to be paid in cash. So all our preparations, for the time of need we expected after the breakdown of Germany, were in vain. In spite of the saved money in the banks we stand here without financial means.

4. The need is especially felt for the families of the preachers who had to serve the state, and are now war-prisoners somewhere. The retired preachers and their families are in need also.

But there are questions which can not yet be decided: the question of re-organization; of rebuilding the destroyed property; of beginning anew with a book concern; of editing a church paper again. We are to wait till the leaders of the allies have decided the geographical, economical and political future of Germany. As soon as this is done we also may be able to speak about plans of our work for the future.

In spite of all the misery the war has brought to Germany, many thousands of Methodists are still alive. Many have been killed in the air-raids, thousands left their homes; yet, wherever they are, they seek immediately the connection with their Methodist brethren, renew their church-membership, and try to work for the Master even in the most troubled situations.

Looking at the crises of the present time, and looking somewhat into the future, I can say that we as Methodists seem to have in Germany an opportunity so great, so promising, and so helpful to the rebuilding of the life of our people as to surpass anything our fathers dreamed. There is a nation in despair which needs the gospel. There are other churches, formerly closely connected with the state and depending on its financial support, who need the example and the suggestion of a free church according to the ideal we Methodists here had from the beginning, and as you have it in the U. S. There are many people who can now be won for Jesus Christ.

It is possible to build churches and conferences that will be life-centres of religious work on the continent of Europe, and that will also be a blessing to the Mother Church. That wonderful band of international fellowship and friendship which Methodism made so strong and helpful in the past will play a very important role in the church history of the future, especially in Europe.

The Methodist congregations in Germany are still alive. In a very interesting round-about-way I received a faith-strengthening letter from one of our ministers the other day. It comes from a section where they had no battle and no occupation troops. This brother does not make a single remark about the war. But he tells of a wonderful revival of the spiritual life. People, he writes, fed for many years only with political and war news, hunger after the word of God. The meetings are crowded. They have conversions again as in the old time.

Here in Berlin we have experienced the help of the Lord in such a wonderful way that our faith has been strengthened and our hearts strangely warmed in the hope that the Lord of Hosts will be with us in the future as he has been with us in the past, and that he will use our beloved Methodism and Methodists as tools of the coming revival. Our services, partly held in small rooms, partly in rooms of friendly churches, partly between the ruins without a roof, are places of new revelations of the Lord.

The political and military events of this time we take as a judgment of God according to the word of the Scripture: "O Lord, our God, the Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments", and we know that the great responsibility rests upon us to "commend ourselves under all circumstances, as God's ministers should" (2 Corinth. 6:4) knowing that (Heb. 12) out of all this "painful discipline" -- if we hold our faith -- "afterwards" its fruit will be seen "in the peacefulness of a righteous life which is the lot of those who have been trained under it". We are suffering and shaken. But we are not in despair, and I feel as if St. Paul has written those words for us, 2 Corinth. 6:9 "As at death's door, yet see we are living; as chastised, yet not killed; as saddened, yet always rejoicing".

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Bishop Melle on German Food Shortage

"The food situation in Germany is serious -- but you probably know about it from your newspapers," writes Bishop F.H. Otto Melle, head of the Methodist Church in Germany, to Bishop Herbert Welch, director of the Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief, New York City. "Well-informed people," he adds, "fear that about two and a half million people may starve in the next winter in Germany....."

"There is a tremendous stream of fugitives from the East. Millions of people, expelled from East and West Prussia, etc. are overflowing Berlin and other parts of Germany. They are not allowed to stay in Berlin; but we must give our Methodist brethren a shelter for at least one or two days while they are passing through the city. We have tried to organize a relief work. In our services a second collection is taken in a basket for little pieces of bread which the friends may sacrifice from the few bread-rations they have, and there is also a wardrobe for used clothes....."

"Our services, partly held in small rooms, partly in rooms of friendly churches, partly among church ruins without roofs, are places of new revelations of the Lord."

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Bishop Melle Dies in Germany

Bishop F. H. Otto Melle, retired head of the Methodist Church in Germany, died in Berlin on March 26, according to word just received by the Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church, New York City. Bishop Melle had retired in 1946, when the Central Conference of German Methodism met in Frankfort, because of ill health, and he had been seriously ill for several months before his death.

As the head of German Methodism during World War II, Bishop Melle found his movements restricted by police and military regulations, partly because the church he represented had been an outgrowth of American Methodist evangelical missions to Germany in the previous century. But he did manage to preach and to direct philanthropic work during the war years.

Born in Germany to Methodist parents in 1875, he began preaching at the age of sixteen. Two years later he entered the Methodist Theological Seminary in Frankfort, from which he was graduated in 1900, and of which he was later to become president.

For a number of years he was pastor and missionary in Hungary, where his mastery of languages enabled him to preach in three tongues. He was a member of the North German and later of the Northwest German Annual Conferences, representing them in General Conferences in the United States. He visited America ten times, and was well-known as a lecturer and preacher. On the continent of Europe he was a recognized leader of the evangelical forces, and was long identified with temperance and other reform movements.

When the German Methodist conferences were set apart as an independent Methodist Church in 1936, Bishop Melle was elected its first bishop.