

REVIEWS

A Seminary Survey

by Yorke Allen, Jr.
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A Seminary Survey by Yorke Allen, Jr., is a **very important work which deserves to be carefully studied by all who are concerned with theological education throughout the world.** However, considering the scope of this journal, it is necessary for the reviewer to limit his comments to the areas which concern Protestant Japan, that is, a part of Chapter VI.* (For the benefit of the reader who wishes to know something of the scope of the volume, the table of contents is given in full at the end of this review.)

In view of the great effort made by the author to gather information from so many different sources, it is unfortunate that the manuscripts for the respective areas were not submitted to those who

were in a position to check the accuracy of both the statements of fact and the comments. Obviously this was not done in the case of Japan. For example, at the bottom of page 146 we read: "In 1941 the Japanese Government required all the Protestant Churches in Japan to unite into one organization, the Kyodan Church, in order that their activities might be more easily supervised by the government during World War II." It is certainly quite clear that this statement cannot be documented. The bitterest critics of The United Church of Christ in Japan have publicly admitted that no order to this effect is to be found in any of the records. Bishop Yoshimune Abe^a, then bishop of the Methodist Church of Japan and chairman of

* A review of the Catholic material will be published in a subsequent issue. Ed.

a. 阿部義宗

REVIEWS

the National Christian Council, has repeatedly stated that no such order was ever issued. I was present during all the Council's negotiations and certainly knew of no such order.

It is true that the new Religious Organizations Law (1939) had been passed and that religious bodies could be recognized by meeting certain requirements, but there was never a requirement that all the Protestant churches unite in one church or that any Protestant churches unite. In interpreting the Law the officers of the Department of Education did say that they would not consider recognition for any body having less than 50 congregations and 5,000 members, and this caused the amalgamation of certain small denominations in order to get recognition. But such amalgamations were in process before the organization of The United Church itself; notably the combination of the two Baptist churches that had been related to the Southern and Northern Baptist missions from the United States, and of the

Evangelical, United Brethren, and Disciples churches with the Kumiai (Congregational) Church.

As the international tensions grew, there were suggestions from certain really unauthorized agents of the government, that the whole group of Protestant churches should unite. Moreover, there was serious concern for union in the apprehension of small groups of Japanese Christians about the growing anti-Christian feeling and the identification of Christianity with the West, the prospective enemies of Japan. However, there had been a movement for church union from the very beginning of the Protestant Christian movement in Japan, and it had been particularly active in the late thirties. To be sure, the total political situation unquestionably accelerated the movement for union, but the statement as it appears is definitely indefensible.

It is, of course, quite inaccurate to speak of the "Kyōdan Church." *Kyōdan*^a is simply the word for any religious denomination. There are many *kyōdan*. The United Church

a. 教団

REVIEWS

of Christ in Japan (*Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan*^a) is largely responsible for the use of this term as applying solely to itself because at the end of the war it was the only Protestant *kyōdan*. This usage has continued, but Westerners should avoid use of the term in this manner. It being much the largest and the only substantial united church in Japan, the term, 'The United Church, is preferred.

A reference to the Episcopalians is likewise inaccurate. On page 147 it is stated that one-third of the Episcopalians "refused to join the Kyōdan and, in effect, went 'underground' instead." The fact is that in the beginning the entire Episcopal Church refused to enter the union and only about one-third of them ever did enter. That was during the war. At the end of World War II all of them withdrew. The statement that the churches that did not join went "underground" sounds rather strange. They were legally able to exist as local, unrelated religious associations (*kesshab* in Japanese),

and they did so openly. If anything went underground, it was the denominational organization, but my understanding is that it was completely dissolved and ceased to exist. (I suppose that the best word to apply to these local associations would be "conventicles," the word used by the old dissenters in England.)

The further statement that "During the war the Kyōdan also included the Episcopalians, Lutherans, some Presbyterians, and the Holiness groups" (p. 147) is, of course, somewhat inconsistent with the statement quoted above, and the phrase "some Presbyterians" is quite misleading. Every Presbyterian church without exception went into The United Church and remained there until after the surrender. The same is true of the Holiness "groups", so-called, which were two large well-organized denominations that had resulted from a split in the original Holiness Church some years before the war. Dr. Allen then goes on to say, "Late in 1945 and 1946

a. 日本基督教団 b. 結社

REVIEWS

these Protestants withdrew from it [The United Church] in order to establish their own separate denominational activities." Actually many of the Holiness churches still remain in The United Church and about three quarters of the Presbyterians. There were withdrawals of many former Holiness congregations, which now exist as at least three separate denominations; and of Presbyterians who exist in the form of two separate denominations and at least one independent local church.

In the paragraph at the bottom of page 147 it is stated "The Kyōdan requested the American Mission Boards contributing personnel and financial aid to its support to channel such assistance through one agency." This is quite the reverse of the actual facts. The proposal for a single agency to channel cooperation to the United Church came from America not Japan. It was agreed to readily enough by the United Church for purposes of convenience.

On page 148 and subsequently,

frequent mention is made of the theological faculty or the "Theological Department" of Aoyama Gakuin^a University. This is a misuse of terms. Aoyama Gakuin has within its Department of Literature a subdivision called The Division of Christianity (Kirisuto-kyō Gakka), and while it has a number of the characteristics of a theological seminary, it is not properly described by either of the terms used in this chapter.

It is stated on page 149 that "the Kyōdan is now supporting four other schools as well. However, the UTS is the official school of the Kyōdan and receives the largest single share of this church's support for its seminaries." As a matter of fact, while The United Church makes a direct financial grant only to Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, it does give certain recognition to the graduates of four other seminaries in the matter of examination for licensure and ordination. Since the appropriation for theological education of the Interboard Committee for

a. 青山学院

REVIEWS

Christian Work in Japan is distributed among the five related seminaries on the basis of an agreed percentage by the Council of Cooperation in which The United Church participates, it might be said that The United Church "supports" the four seminaries as well as Tokyo Union Theological Seminary.

In another reference to Tokyo Union Theological Seminary (at the end of the 3rd paragraph on page 149) we read "UTS has a Rural Center for practical training in the ministry located some forty miles east of Tokyo." This is misleading. Some ten years ago Dr. Sam Franklin of the seminary faculty did take some seminary students to Tomisato^a in Chiba^b Prefecture for summer and other part-time work in the establishment of a church among repatriates from Manchuria, but Dr. Franklin's direct connection with this project ended some years ago, and so far as I know there is no connection with the seminary at present. The work at Tomisato has been as-

sisted by two women missionaries of the United Church of Canada and is quite independent of the seminary. There may be some confusion here with the rural seminary, maintained by The United Church, which is located at Tsurukawa some miles west of Tokyo, but it also has no connection with Tokyo Union Theological Seminary.

The quotation from Dr. Frances Smith, at the top of page 150, hailing the fact that in order to grant a university degree a seminary is required by law to provide the preliminary college training for its students, would be dissented from by practically every informed missionary in Japan. We would prefer to see our seminary students graduate from standard colleges and coming to the seminaries for specific and exclusive theological education. Dr. Smith seems to think that these seminaries conduct extensive college programs and select from their student bodies the ones who are permitted to go on into theological education; but this is completely incorrect. These pre-

^a. 富里 ^b. 千葉

* For additional comment see note at end of this review, Ed.

REVIEWS

paratory students are all going on into the seminary, and they are unquestionably getting an inferior variety of preparatory college work to what they would get in any one of the recognized Christian universities.

There are frequent references in this chapter to the Barthian emphasis at Union Seminary. Some of the professors are outstanding interpreters and introducers of Barth's theology to Japan. But this is not the whole picture. There are, and always have been, devoted students of Walter Horton, Emil Brunner, and far more of Calvin than of Barth. With the growing recognition of the significance of Barth in Western theological education, it is surprising to have this cited as a criticism.

In reference to Japan Biblical Seminary, we find the surprising statement on page 153 that "it has an evangelical background." That could certainly be said of all the other seminaries as well. I presume the implication is that it is more conservative theologically and

possibly of a revivalistic nature; but, if this is the case, it is quite mistaken. The theological position of the Biblical Seminary is not different in any notable degree from the standard seminaries and it is certainly not concerned with producing laymen who can serve in religious education as is stated in the next sentence. It is producing well trained men and women who take the regular examinations for licensure and ordination, and who through several years of experience have proved to be among our best ministers. It is embarrassing to admit that for pioneer and rural evangelism they seem to serve, on the whole, more effectively than the degree-bearing graduates of the so-called standard seminaries. The implication that academic standards at the Biblical Seminary are low, I think is unjustified. The faculty may not quite measure up to those of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary and Dōshisha^a, but they are men and women of competence and ability, and I know of students

^a 同志社

REVIEWS

who have been flunked by them—a phenomenon I do not often encounter in the standard seminaries or other institutions of higher learning in this country.

In the middle of page 153 there is the following peculiar statement concerning Dōshisha: "Later the Presbyterian USA and the United Brethren joined in supporting it." The implication seems to be that the Presbyterian Church in the USA supported Dōshisha before the United Brethren did, whereas the fact is that the Presbyterian board has never supported Dōshisha except for a small pro-rated share of the general Interboard Committee grant for theological education (15% of the total grant). The United Brethren mission board has been a participating board in the support of Dōshisha since the beginning of the 20th century, and commonly has had a missionary on its faculty. (The Presbyterian board's participation through the Interboard Committee began with the committee's organization in 1948, and for the past six or seven years it has contributed a missionary to the faculty.)

The sentence on page 156 concerning "the need to improve the intellectual caliber of the men serving on seminary faculties in Japan" would seem to imply that the intellectual caliber of these men is inferior to that in the other seminaries in Asia and Africa under review. This seems to me an unjustifiable statement. There are men in India, no doubt, who measure up intellectually in training to those in the Japanese theological faculties, but in my judgement the implication that the intellectual caliber of our men is low is a gross insult. There are several faculty members with foreign Ph. Ds; and there are others with Japanese doctorates which academically are regarded more highly in this country than the American equivalent.

The number of students in the seminaries has changed since this book was prepared so the latest statistics may be of interest. Current enrollments are: Dōshisha 104, Kwansei Gakuin 50, Tokyo Union Theological Seminary 180, the Biblical Seminary 150, and Kanto Gakuin 30. DARLEY DOWNS, Tokyo

REVIEWS

Additional Comment by
Dr. Sam Franklin
*Tokyo Union Theological
Seminary*

The Tomisato^a Rural Center has always had, and continues to have, a vital relation to the Tokyo Union Theological Seminary. Frequent field trips through the years since its founding have been made to it by students in the seminars on Rural Evangelism which are regularly held at TUTS, and in a few cases students have spent their summers working at Tomisato or nearby Narita^b. During the years when Mrs. Franklin and I lived in Tomisato and taught at the Seminary (1952—1954) we were able to maintain this relationship in many ways. The chief link between the Center and the Seminary, however, has been the Rev. Ichirō Naitō^c, a graduate of the Seminary, under whose creative leadership as pastor of the Tomisato Church the whole project has developed. Mr. Naitō has given numerous lectures to classes at the Seminary through the years since the inception of the project, and beginning in the spring

of 1960 he assumed duties as special lecturer in Rural Evangelism. He spends at least one day each week at the Seminary, leading the seminar on Rural Evangelism and counseling students interested in rural work. In the spring of 1961 he organized a conference of the Seminary's graduates engaged in rural work, which was attended by some 35 ministers. Thus the results of the broad experimental program in public health, family counseling, education and other activities which are being carried on at Tomisato are made available to the Seminary students.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD by C. W. Ranson

PREFACE

LIST OF MAPS

LIST OF TABLES

PART ONE: PROTESTANT THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS

CHAPTERS

1. INTRODUCTION

- A. Purpose and Scope of Survey
- B. Types of Protestant Theological Schools
- C. The Administrative Structure of the Protestant Foreign Missionary Enterprise

^a 富里 ^b 成田 ^c 内藤一郎

REVIEWS

2. AFRICA
 - A. North of the Sahara
 - B. East Africa
 - C. West Africa
 - D. Latin Africa
 - E. The Relations between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic Churches in Africa
 - F. Southern Africa
 - G. Over-all Aspects
 3. THE MIDDLE EAST
 4. SOUTHERN ASIA
 - A. India
 - B. Pakistan and Ceylon
 - C. Over-all Aspects
 5. SOUTHEAST ASIA
 - A. Burma, Thailand and Malaya
 - B. Indonesia and Borneo
 - C. Oceania
 - D. Philippine Islands
 - E. Over-all Aspects
 6. EAST ASIA
 - A. Japan
 - B. Korea
 - C. Formosa
 - D. Hongkong
 - E. China
 7. LATIN AMERICA
 - A. The Relations between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic Churches in Latin America
 - B. Mexico and Central America
 - C. The Caribbean Area
 - D. South America
 8. SUMMARY OF THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS
 - A. Quantitative Aspects
 - B. Qualitative Aspects
 - C. Supplementary List of Theological Schools (1958--59)
 9. THE NUMBER AND ROLE OF THE BIBLE SCHOOLS
 - A. The Number of the Bible Schools
 - B. The Role of the Bible Schools
 10. THE LACK OF TEXTS
 - A. The Condition of the Libraries
 - B. The Need for Texts in the Vernacular
 - C. The Languages Used in the Theological Schools
 11. INTERBOARD AGENCIES ASSISTING THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS
 - A. Agencies Producing Theological Texts
 - B. Agencies Disbursing Funds to Seminaries
- PART TWO: MAJOR SEMINARIES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
12. THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE FOREIGN MISSIONS AND EASTERN RITES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
 - A. The Role of the Religious Orders and Communities of Priests in Furthering the Roman Catholic Foreign Missionary Enterprise
 - B. The Eastern Rites
 13. THE DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC MAJOR SEMINARIES AND SCHOLASTICATES
 - A. The Historical Development of the Seminaries
 - B. The Administration of the Seminaries

REVIEWS

- C. The Formation of Priests
- D. The Scholasticates
- 14. THE EFFORTS OF THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
TO CREATE AND TRAIN A
LOCAL CLERGY IN AFRICA,
ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA
 - A. As Directed by the Vatican
 - B. As Carried out in the Field
 - C. Africa
 - D. Middle East
 - E. Southern Asia
 - E. Southeast Asia
 - G. East Asia
 - H. Latin America
 - I. Over-all Aspects

PART THREE: THE SEMINAR- IES OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES

- 15. THE SEMINARIES OF THE
EASTERN CHURCHES IN
AFRICA, ASIA AND LATIN
AMERICA
 - A. General
 - B. Africa
 - C. Middle East
 - D. Southern Asia
 - E. Over-all Aspects

PART FOUR: CONCLUSION

- 16. THE SUPPORT GIVEN TO
PROTESTANT THEOLOGICAL
SCHOOLS BY FOREIGN
MISSION BOARDS

- A. In Theory
- B. In Practice
- C. Some Reasons for the Neglect
of Theological Education

- 17. RECOMMENDATIONS
 - A. General Conclusions
 - B. Seminary Program
 - C. Texts Program
 - D. Underwriting the Cost

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX C

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY INDEX

MAPS

The maps on pages 283—289 indicate those localities in Africa, Asia and Latin America in which the theological schools and major seminaries of the Protestant, Roman Catholic and Eastern Churches, as listed in this Survey, are situated.

AFRICA
MIDDLE EAST
SOUTHERN ASIA
SOUTHEAST ASIA AND OCEANIA
EAST ASIA
MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN
SOUTH AMERICA