

January 15, 1955

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The Presbyterian
G U A R D I A N

A lawful oath is a part of religious worship, wherein, upon just occasion, the person swearing solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth, or promiseth, and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he sweareth.

Westminster Confession XXII.1

J. Gresham Machen
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Meditation

Minding One's Business

Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.—JOHN 21:22.

When the risen Lord called Peter to be a shepherd of souls and announced his eventual martyrdom, the Apostle noticed that nothing was said about John who stood by. He decided to investigate the reason for the omission, and approached our Lord with the question, "Lord, what of this man?"

The answer is instructive. What John might be called to do or endure would have no bearing on Peter's calling and destiny. He must still follow Christ where Christ led him. And with that he must be concerned.

Perhaps Peter was not yet reconciled to the humiliation of suffering for Christ's sake. To do he seems always to have been prompt. To endure he was reluctant—in fact, though not in theory. And the thought that he alone might have to carry the martyr's load seemed hard to bear. He longed perhaps for the comfort of company in tribulation.

But he was blind to an important point. His Lord is truly lord of all his people. And it is his prerogative to do with each of them what he wills. There is no injustice in this because no one in his Kingdom has anything but by his grace. All is undeserved. And neither is anything given that will not finally work out for good to those that love God. While one may be called to glorify God by the death that he will die, another can just as fairly praise him by the life that he will live. And because there is perfect harmony and order in all his administration, no man's dispensation can ever change that which is given to another. All will work out perfectly by his appointment. We need but mind our business.

Would fewer things be done in the church through rivalry and vain glory, if all would take this to heart?

Usually the troubles come when there is the difficult, the irksome, the apparently unrewarding, the unnoticed thing to be done. No one wants the trying experience, the menial job. Fascinated by the honors involved, some would gladly take the Elder's job. But who wants to be the janitor? If

the large city church is offered, some men may feel that the Lord is smiling upon them and that surely his blessing is upon their work. And it would lead them to wonder if the Lord had perhaps forsaken them, if they had to labor in some small country town. We easily forget the sovereignty of our Lord in the disposition of these matters, and that the matter of rewards is determined not by the kind of stewardship but by the measure of faithfulness.

What would happen to some of our financial problems in the work of the Kingdom, if every man would mind his own stewardship without improper concern for the performance of others? But too often the rich are satisfied to match the giving of the poor, and the poor leave it to the rich to do it all. No one will cut his cloth by the poor widow's pattern. Unlike her, they prefer to please themselves rather than do service to God as God has given them means and opportunity.

Would that men would learn to mind their own affairs before the Lord, and follow Christ where he leads them. God is not in the assembly line business. In his Kingdom, each man has his occupation. Within the bounds of his holy government, each of us must be himself and so confess the lordship of Christ.

In this day of mass movements, few people dare to buck the crowd. The tyranny of the majority is something more than an abstract possibility. And we are pressed to think of ourselves as duty bound to submerge our individuality in a kind of mass existence. It is not easy to depart from the common mold because we must then endure brow beatings and charges of presumption and insufferable egotism. Yet every man must give an account of himself. He must surely attend to his own affairs.

Each must heed for himself also the call to repentance and faith. When the books are opened, will some not be found written among the living because they waited for friends and relatives to come to Christ? What remorse will eat their souls forever! What is it to you that your husband will not believe? What is it to you that your parents refuse the Savior? What if your bosom pals think it foolish to be a Christian? "Follow me," is the word of

the Lord. It is a matter of life and death—eternal life and death—that you mind your own business. And if you love him, you will.

HENRY P. TAVARES

Westminster News

THE Annual Day of Prayer at Westminster Seminary is scheduled for January 29. On this day all classes are suspended, and special services of prayer and meditation are held in the morning, afternoon and evening. Visiting speaker this year will be the Rev. Burton L. Goddard of Boston, Mass.

The annual Home Coming of Westminster Alumni is to be held on Tuesday, February 8. The program for this day includes meetings of the alumni in the afternoon and evening, with dinner at the Seminary commons, and a meeting of the Alumni Executive Committee. As part of the program this year it is hoped to have reports on "Westminster Around the World," originating with alumni in various countries of the globe.

Mr. Paul Lovik of Long Beach, California, a former Westminster student, has been employed for three months to represent the Seminary in the solicitation of funds on the west coast.

Atwell to Visit Colleges

AGAIN this year the Rev. Robert L. Atwell will be visiting colleges during February, to interview students for the ministry in the hope of interesting them in attending Westminster Seminary. Mr. Atwell has a leave of absence from Calvary Church, Glenside, Pa., of which he is pastor, and expects to begin his trip on February 7. He plans to visit schools in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska, Canada and New York. This work will be supplemented by that of other friends of Westminster who will visit colleges in other areas. If any of our readers know of students who might be interested in a visit from Mr. Atwell, they are requested to send him the names and addresses of such prospects. Mr. Atwell may be addressed at Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia 18, Pa.

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THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN

JANUARY 15, 1955

An Orthodox Presbyterian Church

IT is good from time to time that we consider again what it is we are seeking to accomplish in this world. And no time is better for that than the beginning of the year.

Our aim, as a Christian community, is to establish and build up what, for lack of a better name, we have chosen to call an Orthodox Presbyterian church. There are some who do not like that name but it is the name we use at present, and in many ways it is a good name.

An orthodox Presbyterian church will in the first place be "orthodox." The word is derived from the Greek, and it means simply "straight thinking." The idea of "straight" suggests a rule. When we want to draw a straight line, we get a ruler or straight-edge and keep the pencil against it while drawing the line.

So "orthodox" means simply having our thinking in accordance with the rule. What rule? The rule of holy Scripture. In the field in which we are concerned now, to be orthodox means that all of our thinking and doing is performed right up against the rule of Scripture. If you are using a ruler to draw a straight line, and at some point the pencil loses contact with the ruler, you no longer have a straight line, but there is a wave or wiggle or crookedness in the line you have drawn. And so when our thinking or our doing at any point loses contact with the rule of Scripture, there is a wave, a crookedness, something not "straight" in what is being performed.

It is never easy to be orthodox, to stick to the rule, to refrain from deviating in any direction. It is—or seems—easier to go around obstacles, to draw a line that suits the circumstances rather than the rule, to follow the path where we please instead of where God pleases. But that simply means that in the word orthodox there is a challenge. By using that name we challenge ourselves and our church to conduct itself at all points in strict conformity with the Word.

Once this fact is established, we are convinced that the rest will follow of necessity. In other words, when we do conform our thinking to Scripture the result, so far as the church is concerned, will be an organization with those doctrines, and forms of worship, which have come in history

to be associated with the name "Presbyterian." One cannot be conformed to the teachings of Scripture without holding to the absolute sovereignty of the Triune God, the utter sinfulness of man as he is born in this world, the substitutionary, sacrificial and redemptive character of the death of Christ, and justification before God through faith in Christ alone, without works or merit of the believer. And these are doctrines to which Presbyterianism is committed and which find expression in her historic Confessions.

Straight thinking in the light of Scripture leads inevitably to the doctrines of Presbyterianism, of the Reformed faith, of Calvinism. Straight thinking according to the rule of Scripture also leads inevitably to that form of church organization which sees presbyters exercising governmental responsibility over the congregations and the whole church.

But we must remember that the "straight thinking" is to be done not merely by the persons set in authority, the ministers and elders, but by the whole church, by each individual member of the church. The greatest need of a church that would be strong in faith and service is an informed, intelligent, convinced membership. For such a devoted membership every pastor prays and works and hopes. And the members ought to be concerned one for another along the same lines.

But the church, in Scriptural terms, is not simply a group of "called out" ones, but it is a group of "out calling" ones—a group set and organized to bear witness to the Christ, to the faith, to the life, which are set forth in Scripture. A church is, as a whole, a missionary organization. And a church never comes into its own until it sees the fields white unto the harvest, and sends forth reapers to gather the sheaves.

Our aim is to establish and build up an orthodox Presbyterian church. This means, and means nothing less than, a church committed in thought and conduct to the standard of God's Word, and committed to proclaiming that Scripture-determined message to the ends of the earth. May this indeed be our aim.

L. W. S.

A Word of Appreciation

WE sincerely appreciate the sympathetic support and encouragement we have received from numerous quarters, at a time when financial limitations compelled us to reduce the number of pages in the *GUARDIAN* and make certain other changes. Readers appear to have accepted the situation without complaint.

We also thank the goodly number of you who found it possible to send in an extra contribution in recent weeks. We have sent receipts for all contributions, though not in every case a personal letter. But we are very grateful for the "lift" you have given us.

So again, thank you very much.

Year of Union

IT IS apparent that 1955 will be the year for emphasis on church union. Last year, 1954, was the year of Evanston and the World Council. Evanston did not produce union, but it certainly produced, in the minds of many, an appetite for union.

Chief among the projects actually under consideration is of course the plan for the union of the three major Presbyterian bodies. Recently it was reported that spokesmen for the Northern, Southern, and United Presbyterian churches visited President Eisenhower at the White House and reported to him on their plan of union—with appropriate publicity. The President, of course, was "interested."

Dr. Eugene Blake, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and now President of the National Council of Churches, on his return from a Christmas trip to Korea, took the occasion to make a speech supporting the idea of union. Dr. Henry Van Dusen, President of Union Seminary in New York, also took up the theme of union in a speech a few days later.

The promotion and publicity of the

proposed Presbyterian union is of such proportions that if the plan is not approved by the Southern denomination (the vote is now being taken in the presbyteries and the outlook is certainly not too promising) there will be a terrific let-down, and in all probability some individuals and groups will find some way to unite in any case.

But the ideal of union is not limited to such sister denominations. The ideal is a pan-Protestant union—the eventual unification of all of American Protestantism. There has just been released a report which indicates the existence of a detailed blue-print for such a program. This blue-print has been worked out by the Conference on Church Union, an interdenominational body which was established in Greenwich, Conn. in 1949. Members of the conference include top-ranking churchmen of major protestant denominations, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, and other.

While the details of the blue-print have not been released to the public, being at present under study by church leaders, the plan is said to have offered a compromise solution to the problem of the ownership of church property, one of the chief difficulties in any church merger program.

Where does the future of Protestantism lie? In some large, well-directed organization of merged Protestant churches, or in small denominational groups holding strictly to their heritage?

In our judgment, the answer is this. The future of Protestantism, the future of Christianity lies with that group, or with those groups, which are most sincerely and courageously loyal to the Scriptures as the Word of God, in their doctrine, ecclesiastical practice, and personal living. A small church, loyal to the Word of God, will serve the cause of Christ better than a large church, indifferent to that Word. But a large church, loyal to the Word of God, will serve the cause of Christ better than a small church, bound to man-made traditions and false interpretations of Scripture.

The Tribune Passes

THE PRESBYTERIAN TRIBUNE, independent monthly magazine published in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. by the Presbyterian Churchmen's League, has passed from the scene through the process of being merged into *The Presbyterian Outlook*, unofficial Southern Presbyterian publication issued from Richmond, Va.

The *Tribune* has been in financial difficulty for some time. Several years ago it was radically revised and reduced in size. It has been an advocate of the liberal or modernistic viewpoint. And this fact makes its union with the *Outlook* a logical development. For the *Outlook* is also sympathetic to the modernistic viewpoint. Moreover the *Outlook* has been favoring the Presbyterian union plan from the start. So, whether or not the churches unite, the two papers of like mind are merging.

The editors of the *Tribune*, while lamenting its passing, take comfort in the thought that its "message will be so eloquently and courageously expressed by the *Outlook*." The publication will continue to be produced in Richmond by the staff of the *Outlook*, and will certainly not be any less an advocate of theological inclusivism than it has been.

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The Presbyterian Guardian

Do You Believe In The Catholic Church ?

By ROBERT L. ATWELL

"There is one body." EPHESIANS 4:4

TH**ERE** is one body." Each Orthodox Presbyterian ought to ponder this statement of Scripture concerning the Church. What does it mean? Specifically, how does it apply to me? How ought it affect the program, the direction, the activity of our church. It may be that the answers to these questions are so painful, so embarrassing, that we have, at least in many respects, neglected to face them.

In any event the author of this article must confess that he has neglected the aspect of the Scriptural doctrine of the Church which is set forth in this succinct expression. It may be that his brethren in the ministry have also neglected it; that as a result the denomination as a whole has been shamefully guilty in its negligence. It may be that by this very omission the slow growth of our church is largely explained. Certainly it is needful that we humbly implore the Holy Spirit to open our eyes to the truth which is here presented, and enable us to apply it aright in the life of our church.

Paul on the Church

It will help to understand the significance of the statement if we recall that it occurs in that book of the Bible which is largely devoted to the doctrine of the Church, and in that chapter which sets forth the unity of the Church. It is commonly said that the first three chapters of Ephesians are doctrinal—that the first sets forth the origin of the Church, the second the material out of which it is constructed, and the third its mission. The Church has its origin in the counsels of God; its members are "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world," they are "redeemed by the blood" of the Son and "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" who is the earnest (down payment and guarantee) of their final and full redemption. The stress in the first chapter is that the work of planning and building the Church is not a work of men or of angels but a work

of God, in Christ, through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

The second chapter of Ephesians underscores again the fact that men can, of themselves, contribute nothing to it. They constitute the most worthless material imaginable, being "dead in trespasses and sins," actually living in sin and in bondage to Satan. Verses 1-3 and 12 especially show that, as respects his place in the church, man can have nothing in which to boast.

The third chapter clearly indicates that "the unsearchable riches of Christ" which constitutes the church's message, is also altogether of God.

Having noted these things we can recognize the propriety of Paul's "Therefore" when, at the beginning of chapter 4 he beseeches, "Therefore, walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and

The Rev. Robert L. Atwell is pastor of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Glenside, Pa. He was recently called by the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension to take the position of assistant secretary for church extension under the Committee. Mr. Atwell felt compelled to decline the call, but here presents a challenge to the church concerning its responsibility toward the "church catholic."

meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." For the flat assertion which follows, "There is one body," we have also been prepared by the prayer at the end of chapter 1. There the Apostle exults that Christ is "head over all things to the church, which is his body." Not only the figure but the whole teaching of Scripture on the subject demands that the Church be conceived of as one.

Perhaps ideally we should note the teaching that is contained here, and then consider its application. But since the teaching is so abundantly plain, and since we are so perverse as easily to ignore its application to our own lives, our effort will be to note its application as we recognize the teaching.

Living Church Unity

First of all, then, the entire second half of the Epistle is written to the end that members of the Church may behave themselves in a way that corresponds with the truths set forth in the first half—it is concerned with how they are to live in order that their lives might rightly contribute, to the building of the church and to the Church's performance of its work in the world. No time is lost, for in the very first three verses of the passage we are told what should characterize all our thinking and doing. I have labored the context of the first three chapters for it is precisely the truths set forth there which, if truly received, must produce that which is required here. How well we as individuals and as a denomination have obeyed, especially in our attitude toward other members of the body of Christ, I leave to your conscience. Has it been with "all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love," that we have approached those whom we would win from various errors in modernistic or dispensational communions? Or has there been in us an indication of self-righteousness, of pride, of spiritual conceit, or even worse, have our lives been marked by a self-sufficiency and an unconcern for those outside the fold. May the Holy Spirit use without sparing this sharp two-edged sword of the Word!

Secondly, let us note carefully the assertion, "There is one body." Neither Scripture nor our confessional standards allow us to escape from the responsibility which we have and the relationship in which we stand toward believers in other denominations. In this same chapter we are reminded that "we are members one of another." Our Confession of Faith, 25:2, defines the visible church as "catholic or universal under the Gospel," and as consisting "of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children." Does our conduct conform with our confession?

Unity in Truth

Paul's plea here is that our entire lives should contribute to and maintain the "unity of the Spirit." We do well to note that it is a unity of the Spirit. This already means that the unity must be grounded in and developed according to Scripture. Even as a "spirit led conscience" is nothing other than a "Scrip-

ture-filled conscience," so the unity of the Spirit must be conditioned by Scripture. The gracious Spirit speaketh "nothing of Himself," "He takes of the things of Christ, and makes them known" to us. Such unity can never be first of all an outward or organic unity brought about by man at the expense of the real life of the Church. The bond of peace which secures it can only be a God-established peace, not a false surrender on the part of men. We will find our way amid all the perplexities raised by modern ecumenical movements if we but remember that the unity of the church is, by definition, a unity wrought by the one Triune God, through the agency of the Third Person. This He is pleased to accomplish, so He Himself declares, by the truth. The work indeed is wrought by the members of His Church. But it is wrought only as they speak the truth. That unity depends upon and is furthered by the truth. The Church is "the pillar and ground of the truth." His own "shall know the truth, and the truth shall make them free." That both speaking the truth and living the truth are required is indicated by the one expression, "speaking the truth in love," and again in a word introduced by a necessary and humbling negative — "wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another."

It is quite impossible — to those guided by Scripture it is unthinkable — that the unity of the Church could be promoted apart from, much less at the expense of, the truth. Need I point out that this at once explains and requires that we remain aloof from the National and World Councils? Does it not also cause us to give humble thanks that we have been delivered from fellowship in communions where the sovereign truth of the Word is no longer supreme?

Unity in Faith

"There is one body." The context of the immediate chapter also makes it clear that this unity must be the "unity of the faith." The goal toward which all efforts must be bent, to which all believers are to attain, to which the whole body of believers is to attain—is the "unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God" (v. 13). There cannot be several kinds of faith. There is but one faith. All

place their confidence upon the atoning death of Christ, whereby they are justified and obtain salvation as their one hope. The goal of the Church catholic, which must be the goal of every member, is that faith and knowledge of the Son of God may be, in all, one and the same. There is here demanded nothing less than confessional fullness. Actually there may be less, but there can be no satisfaction, no resting, in anything less. This must mean that those who hold the system of doctrine contained in Scripture and set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith have the responsibility of doing all they can to bring every Christian to the same rich fullness of faith.

Unity in Love

"There is one body." This unity, finally, is a unity which manifests itself in love. Our walk is to be marked by "forbearing one another in love." Our speaking the truth, is to be always in love. The Church is so to develop that it "may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of

every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love." The chapter closes with the charge, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Apart from love all labor in the church, rather than resulting in edification, in building up, must result in scattering! Love is the sphere, apart from which the growth of the mystic body, whose members are held together by love, does not and cannot take place.

Though we have, for the most part, recognized that it is utterly impossible to do justice to the above teaching and in any way countenance independency we may still have failed to grasp its total significance for the life and testimony of our church. But let us not pass without giving thanks for the degree to which we have been delivered from tendencies toward independency in our congregational life. What havoc it has wrought! What has been a greater affliction to the evangelical movement of our day! Along with other features of the dispensationalism from which it springs, it accounts for the ease with which believers have turned over great churches and denominations to the in-

(See "Atwell," p. 14)

Presbyterian Dissent

Condensation of an Address by The Rev. John P. Clelland

WESTMINSTER Theological Seminary was born in dissent. Hence she is an institution that walks in the great tradition of Presbyterian and Reformed dissent.

Those who are associated with Westminster have adopted a certain philosophy — a certain philosophy of the church, a certain philosophy of the authority where truth is to be found.

The Right of Dissent

We have set ourselves consciously and deliberately against the idea that a visible organization of the church is the exact equivalent of the Church of God, or that the Church of God is exhausted within the forms and institutions of the visible church organization.

Roman Catholicism leads inevitably to the dogma of the infallibility of the church. For those who hold such a view, the great and unpardonable sin

is to leave the church organization. To leave the church is to be unfaithful to God, disloyal to Jesus Christ, to become an enemy of God's appointed instrument.

This view of the organized church is found not only in Rome. It is found in a great deal of Anglicanism today. It is also common in much of the propaganda for the modern ecumenical church. The unity of the visible church is of preeminent importance. And if this unity is more important than the purity of the church, than the doctrines

The Rev. John P. Clelland, pastor of Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Valdosta, Georgia, and president of the Board of Trustees of Westminster Seminary, delivered the address at the 25th anniversary opening exercises of the Seminary in September. This condensation of the address was prepared by the editor, from a recording of the original.

it professes, are we not back to the position against which our reforming forefathers stood, that the visible church organization is exhaustively the Church of God on earth. In the vacuum which Modernism has created through its denial of the Scriptures and its taking away of their authority, this catholicizing conception of the church and its authority will creep in. We who are in the tradition of Presbyterian dissent reject that philosophy.

The Westminster Confession of Faith says that all councils since the apostles' time may err. A church may so degenerate as to be no church of Christ but a synagogue of Satan. We hold the basic Protestant position that fidelity to the Word is that which is required in a church. If a church fails to maintain that faithfulness, we are not bound to that church.

Furthermore, Catholicism maintains that the Roman church is older than the protestant churches, and that because it was first in the field, it must be the true church. But we have also rejected that position — a position which exalts historic continuity, the dogma of the apostolic succession, for example. We do not put primary store by age, tradition, or continuity of organization.

I do not deny the importance of these things. The Holy Spirit has worked in and through the church, the visible church, and we do not ignore the operations of the Spirit in the church, through centuries of Christian history. I am afraid some of the fringe sects of our day are guilty of disregarding the church's long history. Not only heretical groups such as the Mormons and Christian Science, but even the Pentecostal groups disregard completely tradition and continuity in the church. But I remind you of how many times Calvin, for example, quotes from the church fathers. And our principle is the principle of the Reformers in their break with Rome. They went back to the Bible, they appealed to Scripture as the only infallible rule of faith and practice. And the churches of Presbyterian and Reformed secession are in that respect descendants of the Reformation.

But they have also carried their principle further, perhaps sometimes wisely, perhaps sometimes unwisely. They have carried it to the point of withdrawing from churches describing

themselves as Protestant and Reformed, in protest against errors they contended these churches were embracing. They withdrew from these churches that they might bear witness to the truth of Scripture as they believed it to be.

But when they took this step, they formed new church organizations. They did not deny the importance and necessity of the organized church. They took seriously the place occupied by the church in the New Testament. They avoided that rank individualism which is the bane of much evangelicalism today, that view which says, We're believers; Let's hold fellowship with other like believers; Let's stress our invisible fellowship, rather than the visible church organization. People who hold such an individualistic position may protest against corruption in a church, but they remain in, and go along. There is no real campaign for reform. The invisible fellowship is more important than the visible.

Those who join in Presbyterian dissent long for the true church of Jesus Christ on earth, for the visible church, organized, with confessional and institutional life and organized worship.

Westminster Seminary was born in this spirit. She is completely committed to the Westminster Confession. It is her function to serve Presbyterian and Reformed churches. Though closely associated with the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination, she is not identified with it nor under its government. In a broad way she seeks to serve the cause of the Reformed Faith, which in our day means she seeks to serve the cause of Presbyterian dissent and secession.

The History of Dissent

Now I wish to say a few things concerning the history of Presbyterian dissent.

In Scotland the Covenanters defended the cause of Presbyterianism against the episcopacy of the English king. Their deep loyalty to Presbyterianism has left its mark on Presbyterian churches of Scotland, of Ireland, and so of the United States. In the fourth decade of the eighteenth century the seceders of Scotland left the state church in protest against the denial of the right of the congregation to choose its minister, and against the growing rationalism of the state

church. Somewhat later the Relief Presbytery was organized, also in protest against interference with the rights and powers of the local congregation. In 1843 there took place an historic disruption in Scotland, carrying on this same protest in defense of the freedom of the church from state interference. In that disruption the Free Church of Scotland was born in 1843. The main streams of this Scottish dissent came, by way of Ulster, to the American colonies, and are found in the United Presbyterian Church and in branches of the Covenanter church.

In the Netherlands in 1834 a man named de Cok and his followers left the state church in protest against the rationalism of that church and the denial of freedom. De Cok and his followers were persecuted and went through a period of much struggle and dissension. In 1886 in the Doleantie Abraham Kuyper and his followers left the state church, and a few years later the dissenters of 1834 and those of 1886 — or most of them — united to form what is now known as the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. And so the Church of Jesus Christ was maintained through this tradition of dissent. The Christian Reformed Church of America is the direct descendant of these secession movements in the Netherlands.

And so our Seminary stands in the closest association with Calvin Seminary and the Christian Reformed church, because we share a common tradition of dissent. And I am happy to have on the platform with us this afternoon also the president of Korea Theological Seminary, for that Seminary also is associated with and a part of a seceding movement in Korea, which calls for repentance for the sin of shrine worship, and contends for a pure doctrine and a pure faith. And that Seminary joins with us, as well as the Free University and Kampen, and the Free Church College of Edinburgh, in the association of those colleges and seminaries which belong to the great tradition of Presbyterian dissent.

I believe the history of Presbyterian dissent has been glorious. The dissenters have raised the banner of truth. They have been loyal to God and to Jesus Christ, and have stood for the Word of God. They have had an influence far beyond their immediate

(See "Dissent," p. 13)

Orthodox Presbyterian Church News

Portland, Oreg.: On December 17 the construction of an addition to the building of First Church was started. The addition is a "wing" to the present building, and will house 13 classrooms for the Sunday school, an enlarged kitchen and other needed facilities. Mr. Frank B. Smith, a trustee of the church, is the architect, and Mr. William Wechner, husband of a member of the church, is the contractor. Estimated cost of the addition is \$15,590. The Rev. Carl Ahlfeldt is pastor of the church.

Rochester, N. Y.: At a recent congregational meeting, the people of Memorial Church voted to increase their mission offering to about \$2,000 per year, a substantial increase over the amount given in previous years. It was also decided to build a parish house next to the church, to be used for Sunday school and other purposes. Mr. Charles Remein and Mr. Hubert Schoonhagen were elected elders for a term of three years.

Fair Lawn, N. J.: Mr. William Wilkens was ordained to the office of ruling elder in Grace Church on December 5. Mr. Herbert Oliver, a former member of the church who is now serving as missionary in rural Maine, was a guest at the church on November 28, and spoke of his work at Ludlow. The Women's Society has been collecting clothing to be sent to the mission in Wisconsin.

Wildwood, N. J.: Twenty-five men attended the Men's Fellowship of Calvary Church on December 16. Mr. Frank Camillo, a converted gambler and former Roman Catholic, was guest speaker. The morning worship service on December 19 was broadcast over station WCMC.

Berkeley, Calif.: The pastor of Covenant Church, the Rev. Robert H. Graham, is conducting a Bible class each Thursday morning in Concord, a city about 20 miles east of Berkeley. The class is being held in the home of Mr. Hernandez, a member of the San Francisco church, who recently moved to Concord. Several other families have been attending the class. One afternoon a week is being spent in canvassing homes in a new develop-

ment, with a view to starting a branch work as soon as advisable.

National City, Calif.: The Rev. Robert S. Marsden, while on a recent trip to California, conducted a three night series of meetings at First church December 10-12. The Rev. E. L. Kellogg is pastor of the church.

John D. Voskuil

CALVARY Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, recently suffered loss in the death, on November 27, of Ruling Elder John D. Voskuil, who passed away at his home. He was 74 years old.

Mr. Voskuil had been an elder, and clerk of session, of Calvary church for many years. He was most active in the work of the church during the formative years of the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination, and was on several occasions a delegate to the General Assembly.

Funeral services were conducted by the Rev. Robert K. Churchill, pastor of Calvary Church.

Catherine Kudobe

MISS Catherine Kudobe, a member of First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Waterloo, Iowa, was called to her eternal home on December 23. She was 84 years of age.

Miss Kudobe had been a resident of Waterloo since 1937. She was a faithful member of First church, and a friend of Westminster Seminary and of the Presbyterian Guardian.

Funeral services were conducted by the Rev. Oscar Holkeboer, pastor of First Church.

Johnstons Report on Mission Work

THE Rev. and Mrs. John D. Johnston, Orthodox Presbyterian Missionaries in Formosa, shortly before Christmas sent a letter to a number of friends in America. We are happy to quote portions of this letter as a report for our readers on the work in Formosa.

Writes Mr. Johnston:

"These past few months have been

very busy ones with many opportunities for work and witness, and in so far as we have been able we have sought to make full use of them. We rejoice that there is still liberty to proclaim the Word of God in this the only remaining province of Free China, and trust that this freedom may continue in spite of the loud threats of evil men against Formosa. Time is rapidly running out and we must work while it is day.

"While continuing with the study of the Mandarin language, a full time job in itself, I conduct four Bible classes each week in English. The students' knowledge of English is so limited that we sometimes read the Chinese Bible in class and I encourage them to carry on with the study of their Chinese Bibles at home, praying that the Word of God may reach deep in their hearts and find fertile ground in which to grow. The Sunday evening class is held in a Presbyterian Church and for the last few weeks one of the elders has been acting as interpreter. There are a number of university students attending, besides some very bright young army officers. We soon begin a new series of studies in Romans, and hope to see a real response to the message of this searching portion of God's Word.

"I continue to go to Chung Lee each Friday, spending the afternoon in visiting and the evening with a Bible class in the Presbyterian Church. The increasing interest in the class and among the people there has been an encouragement. We hope to reach more of the children through the afternoon Sunday school that has been started in a section of the town where a number of families from the Chinese mainland live.

"These past three months I have had the further privilege of teaching the book of Romans to the fourth year class in the Presbyterian Theological College. This has meant much preparation, all the lectures being mimeographed beforehand. The student knowledge of English is so limited that it is important to have the lectures in this form that they may study them at leisure. I feel the work with these twenty students is the most important that I am doing. . . .

"We continue to hold our Sunday morning service in Chinese in the auditorium of the Tam Kang English College where there are about a thou-

sand students. So far only about 50 or 60 people attend and many of these are not students of the college. Please pray earnestly that the Spirit of God will work in their hearts that many of the students may be brought to a knowledge of the Saviour. Mr. Andrews and Mr. Gaffin have been teaching here for some time and I now have a class two hours each week. We have finished studying the booklet by the Rev. Henry Coray, 'A Message to Thoughtful Inquirers,' (an excellent presentation of the Gospel) and have commenced the study of 'Pilgrim's Progress.'

"In addition to the teaching there are quite often opportunities to preach in the churches in Taipei. Last Sunday I had services in three different Presbyterian churches. The messages are, of course, interpreted. A few Sundays ago I spoke in a large Leper hospital to some 160 patients. . . .

"Our family is well, and enjoying the cooler weather. Ruth Helen attends a Chinese kindergarten and seems to enjoy it. John Benjamin is growing up quickly and is a good playmate for his sister. . . .

"Please remember in prayer: The students in the seminary; the students in the English College; the students in the Bible classes; the need for a spiritual awakening in the Presbyterian churches; our spiritual needs, that God will give to us the grace, wisdom, and power for reaching people with the gospel."

Have You Heard About "Katie"?

MR. BOYCE SPOONER, formerly of Korea and now a student at Westminster Seminary and chairman of the missionary committee among the students, recently sent a letter to a number of friends telling about "Katie."

"Katie" is K-T, or Korea Theological Seminary, and the purpose of Mr. Spooner's letter was to encourage friends to contribute to a fund designed to provide more books and literature for Korea Seminary.

Mr. Spooner writes: "Since much of the base work has been done as far as volumes in English are concerned, we are now interested in several other projects closely allied to the work of the library. We would like to add several volumes each year to the library, a

dozen each of Greek New Testaments and Hebrew Bibles for Senior Class members, and we want to contribute to what the Rev. Theodore Hard calls a 'rotating fund' for the purchase of volumes by Students, Faculty, and pastors. . . . Beyond this work lies the serious labor of making scholarly translations of important literature into the Korean language, of publishing sections of books or whole books where possible, so that the church may be armed for the conflicts of the modern world."

Any one who wishes to help "Katie" with a contribution, may send it to Mr. Boyce Spooner, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia 18, Penna.

Report on Korean Literature

IN connection with the item about "Katie," we have a letter from the Rev. Mr. Hard, Orthodox Presbyterian missionary in Korea, telling us something of the publication work being done there. Mr. Hard writes:

"This year has seen in our movement the publication of three valuable books. Professor Park, Yune Sun, of Korea Seminary, published his commentaries on the Synoptic Gospels and on Romans, each a large volume. Besides this the Rev. Mr. Yu, a graduate of Korea Seminary, has published the first concordance of the Korean Bible, not at all exhaustive, but a good sized volume, well done, and of inestimable value for the Bible students.

"These books were printed on a small printing press at our own Bible Institute in Pusan. It has done good work, and is now busy printing tracts, a Sunday school quarterly, a quarterly church magazine, and a hymn book.

"About \$2,000, channeled through the Rev. Edward Kellogg, and another \$2,000 donated by people of the Christian Reformed church, made possible the publishing of these commentaries. Money from their sale made it possible to print the concordance. A second 1,000 copies of Romans is being printed, matching the original 2,000 copies of the Synoptic Gospels. To the best of my knowledge, these are the first commentaries on these books of the Bible written by a Korean."

Boettner's *Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* has been translated (by Park, Yune Sun) and published. Meeter's *Calvinism* is now being printed in Seoul.

Mr. Hard adds, "The only unprinted manuscripts awaiting publication that I know of in our movement are Berk-hof's Manual of Reformed Doctrine, and Berk-hof's History of Doctrine. Meeter's Calvinism and Berk-hof's History of Doctrine were translated by Kim, Chin Hong (Westminster 37-39) and Berk-hof's Manual was translated by Lee, Sang Keun (Westminster 1949-51)."

Corrections in Statistics

THE Rev. Raymond Meiners, stated Clerk of the 1954 General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, has sent us some corrections of figures appearing in the statistical records of the *Minutes* of that Assembly.

Without publishing all the details of the corrections to be made in individual cases, we present here the corrections in the totals and summaries appearing on page 62 of the *Minutes*.

Total membership of the denomination 3/31/54 should be 8,604 instead of 8,611.

Communicant membership should be 5,950 instead of 5,768.

Baptized children should be 2,654 instead of 2,648.

Special receipts should be \$126,391 instead of \$131,601.

Total receipts should be \$644,234 instead of \$649,444.

Average contribution per communicant member, 1954, should read in the four columns left to right, \$63.80; \$23.21; \$21.24; \$108.25.

Those possessing copies of the 1954 *Minutes* may wish to note these corrections in their copies.

Daughter to Elliotts

A DAUGHTER, Barbara Lynne, was born December 5 to the Rev. and Mrs. Edwards E. Elliott of San Francisco, Calif. The Elliotts have three other children, named Ned, Nancy and Beth. Mr. Elliott is pastor of First Church of San Francisco.

Johnstons have Daughter

A DAUGHTER, Priscilla Anne, was born on December 3 to the Rev. and Mrs. John D. Johnston, missionaries of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Formosa. This is the third child in this family.

The Revision of the Form of Government

Third in a series of articles by members of the Revision Committee

By JOHN P. GALBRAITH

TWO articles have been written in recent months concerning revision of the Form of Government of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. They were written by Professors Murray and Stonehouse, members of the General Assembly's Committee on Revisions. The Committee is seeking to acquaint the church both with the nature of some of the revisions it is presenting to the church, and certain explanations of them. This brief article is a continuation of that effort. We intend first to make some general observations about the revisions and then, insofar as space permits, comment on particular features of the *Version*.

It should of course be obvious that it is not possible to state in the brief space available in such a publication as this all the detailed alterations in a document as lengthy as the *Form of Government*. Nor is it possible, in the nature of the case, for any one member of the Committee to state all the reasons which underlay the various decisions of the Committee as a whole. Nevertheless the more salient features of the revisions which the Committee plans to propose to the church can be pointed out, as well as the more prominent reasons for such revisions.

In the earlier articles the following specific proposed revisions were among those pointed out: the addition of a Preface taken practically verbatim from the Westminster Assembly's *The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government*, the change of Chapter I from Preliminary Principles to Basic Principles which deal more pointedly with government of the church and its Scriptural warrant, the matter of the parity of the eldership (ruling elders and ministers) with regard to their function of ruling (e.g. in Chapters III and IX), and the provision for ministers to be members of congregations (IV: 4). All of these proposed revisions were contained in the *Version of a Form of Government* which was distributed a year ago to the sessions of

the church (where references are made in this article to the proposed revisions they pertain to the *Version*). Since the *Version* was prepared and distributed a year ago, the Committee has spent much time reworking the entire manuscript, and part of the results of this were reported to the Twenty-first General Assembly last May. Further revisions of the *Version* have been made since that time but we are confining ourselves for the present, in this article, to the *Version* which has been submitted to the church.

By way of further general comment the Committee's aims should be noted. If these are understood, one will have gone a long way toward an understanding of the revisions themselves. In the first place, revision of the *Form of Government* was undertaken because certain features of the *Form* needed clarification. A request to the General Assembly from the Presbytery of Philadelphia in 1947 and an overture from the same presbytery in 1948 asked for clarification of ambiguities and omissions at several different points. A Committee on Revisions, consisting of three members of the present committee, was appointed by the General Assembly in that year. That committee sought suggestions from the sessions of the church, and although the resultant suggestions were not numerous it was clear that a revision of many parts of the *Form* was needed and desired. In addition to clarification of the terms of the *Form* the Committee's careful study made it progressively clear that it had to be re-examined in the light of the Scriptures. Professor Murray's references to Basic Principles, and Professor Stonehouse's references to the parity of elders with respect to ruling, in the two previous articles of this series, are illustrative of this fact. During most of the Committee's work, therefore, it has had two aims: to clarify and to bring into closer conformity with the Word of God.

The latter is of course by far the

more important of the two and it is our hope that in the discussions and decisions attendant upon the recommendations which the Committee will make the Word of God will continue to be our church's supreme standard, and that traditions may not be permitted to supersede it. As Dr. Stonehouse stated it earlier, it is our hope that "the Church will demonstrate that it has risen above the sheer traditionalism and expediency which have so often sapped the vitality of denominations!" The question before us is not, "Is this the same as our fathers?" but rather, "Is it consonant with Scripture?"

With these aims in mind—greater Scripturalness, and clarification — the question may now arise, Where have these aims brought us? The answer to that question is that they have caused us to apply certain Scripture principles in as consistent a fashion as possible through the various chapters of the work. But what are these principles? As said above, it would hardly be possible for one to attempt to enunciate here all of our guiding principles, for there is not space to enlarge upon them or explain sufficiently their application to the book of government. However, the following principles, some of which already have been mentioned in the earlier articles, ought to be mentioned as prominent: the presbyterian form of government is the Scriptural form of church government, presbyterian government is rule by elders over the particular congregations and the church as a unit, presbyterianism is a true hierarchy (God the king), the Church exists as both many and one, and that there are two offices in the church—elder and deacon. Upon these principles much of the Committee's work is based. Where they may not be according to the Word, there the Committee's work should be rejected. But if they be Scriptural, then the work is valid. But the Scriptures must be the test.

But someone says, can you demonstrate where these principles come into expression in the *Version*? We shall not attempt an exhaustive glossary of the points at which these principles are expressed, but it will now be our aim to cite a few examples of the way in which the above-mentioned principles have been applied. We hope that by thus putting some of the changes in their larger contexts the church will have a clearer understanding of the

details which are observed as the *Version* is studied.

1. The presbyterian form of government is the Scriptural form of church government (stated in I:3, 5). This principle underlies not only our entire conception of church government, but also its broader details. Only because God has prescribed government in the church may we presume to have government. And then not merely *may* we have government but we *must*. Furthermore, not just any kind of government is desirable to God, but He has prescribed that the government in the church shall have a certain general but definite form — by presbyters under Christ. This is expressed in such places as II:1 (Christ rules the Church); II:5 (members of the church submit to a "certain form of church government"); III:1-3 (at proper times Christ gave to the church apostles, prophets, elders, deacons); IV:1 (some elders are "designated" pastors and teachers); V (Christ also gives other men the gift of ruling); VI (the Scriptures point out deacons as officers).
2. Presbyterian government is rule by elders over the particular congregations and over the church as a unit (stated in I:3, 6). Government expressed, by mention either of the elders themselves or of their functions, in nearly every chapter of the document. This point hardly needs to be labored in our circles, so in order to save space we merely mention a few references — III:3; IV:1; V; VI; VII; VIII: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, etc. And that these elders rule in their particular congregation and also over the church as a whole (by means of presbyteries and general assembly) is displayed in such places as VIII:1 (elders rule in congregational, presbyterial, and synodical bodies); IX (session rules in congregation); X, XI (elders rule in presbytery and general assembly); it is also implied in all those matters in which judicatories exercise authority (licensure and ordination, discipline, etc.)
3. Presbyterianism is a true hierarchy (stated in I:1, 7, 9). The church is ruled not by men in an autocratic fashion, nor by men under a democratic regime, but by God himself,

the autonomous King. Men indeed rule in the church, but only as His servants and subject to His pleasure, which is perfect and without mere whim or fancy. This principle comes to the surface, e.g., in II:1 (Christ rules church as its Head and King); III (Christ established the offices and prescribed their functions); V (Christ gives to men the gifts necessary for government).

4. Presbyterianism exhibits the fact that the church is both many and one; a number of particular congregations, but each congregation dependent upon and supporting all the others in true unity; many individual members, but all one church, subject to one authority (stated in I:3). It comes to expression in such places as II:4 (the church [one] is made up of different particular churches [many]); VIII:2-7 (corporate unity expressed through presbyteries and general assembly). Also X:1-2, 5, 9 (presbytery); XI:1-2, 4-5 (general assembly); XIV, XV, and XVI (presbytery and general assembly have oversight of establishing a man as pastor of a congregation); XIX, etc.
5. There are two offices in the church, elder and deacon (stated in III:2). Over the years the impression has been gained by some that there are three offices in the church—ministers, elders, and deacons. The *Version* seeks to clarify the issue. Professor Stonehouse has discussed this in his article, so we merely mention here some of the places where our reconstruction seems to clarify: III:3 (New Testament shows that there are different functions performed by elders with different gifts); IV and V (teaching and ruling elders); IV:4 (teaching elders, like ruling elders, are to be members of particular congregations); IX:3 (not requisite that the pastor of a congregation be moderator of the session).

The few references here given indicate somewhat the extent to which Presbyterian principles are woven into the warp and woof of the *Version* prepared by the Committee. However, we make no claim that the *Version* is perfect. We do believe, though, that it is a decided improvement upon our present Form of Government, and the Committee has worked hard since the

last General Assembly at the task of improving it still further. The Committee plans to make known to the church at the earliest possible time, and as long before the next General Assembly as possible, the final revised form of the *Version* and the action it will recommend to the General Assembly. Also further articles on specific matters in the *Version* will appear in this paper in the next few months.

Those who are making a study of the *Version* should by all means do so on the background of the principles stated in Chapter I, and taking into consideration the discussion of these and other principles in this series of articles by members of the Committee on Revisions. Our object in this article has not been to discuss, evaluate, and sustain a few of these principles, but in a limited way to state them and show how they are applied in the *Version*.

The thing that we wish to stress in closing is that our discussions and our decisions alike, should view the whole matter, where our principles are involved, on the basis of the Word of God. It is the desire of the Committee, and we are sure that of the church also, to have the government of God's church founded upon and agreeable to the Word of God.

Calls Issued

IMMANUEL Orthodox Presbyterian Church of West Collingswood, N. J., has issued a call to Licentiate Carl Reitsma of Philadelphia Presbytery, a graduate of Westminster Seminary, to become her pastor. Mr. Reitsma has been student supply at Mediator church, Philadelphia, for the past year.

Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Evergreen Park, Illinois, has issued a call to Mr. Robert Nuernberger, a senior at Westminster Theological Seminary, to become her pastor.

Uomotos in Sendai

THE Rev. and Mrs. George Y. Uomoto, missionaries in Japan, have moved to Sendai to carry on their mission work. Their new address is 61 Kita 6, Bancho, Sendai, Japan.

Goals To Be Attained

By LAWRENCE R. EYRES

THE story has been told of an employee in a certain large railroad yard. He had held the same job since beginning with the railroad—just going up and down each train originating in that center and tapping the wheels with a hammer. And he had not missed a day of work in more than forty years! Now his fellow employees were giving him a farewell dinner. After the usual speeches and presentations he was asked to tell why he had considered it so important to be at his post of duty faithfully every day throughout his years of service. He answered simply that he could never figure out *why* he had to tap those wheels, but he believed in doing what his superiors told him to do!

It's a little like this in some of our time-honored religious institutions. The Sunday School is an institution of long standing in the Protestant churches. Of course a church is hardly a church that doesn't also have a Sunday School. In some churches baptism, or "christening" as they like to call it, is administered to all children whose parents request it just as a matter of course. It's just the thing to do. And the practice of confirmation also takes its place among the time-honored, sacrosanct customs in certain denominations. But the *reasons* for insisting on these things within the context of modern church and family life are often times a little vague. This general vagueness points up the need for a new evaluation of the goals of our efforts at evangelizing the children.

And here I want to make an important distinction between *goals* and the supreme *goal* of our evangelizing. *The goal can be nothing less than the bringing of all children, without distinction of race, condition or religious background, into full citizenship of the kingdom of God and of His Christ.* I doubt that any professing Christian would take serious issue with this definition of the supreme goal. But when it comes to the roads they would take in *reaching* this goal, there would be tremendous divergence. And yet it is not simply a distinction between *means*

and *ends*. (We shall treat of the question of the means of evangelizing the children later.) It is a question of *goals* which we must aim at in order that we may be assured of attaining the supreme goal. It is these which we wish to consider here: first *negatively*, and then *positively*.

What They Are Not

In the first two articles in this series I have been somewhat critical of the modern child evangelism movement. This criticism was not directed toward its general intentions or over-all accomplishments. Certainly many children have been reached and won to Christ by their dedicated efforts. They have preached Christ, not out of envy or strife, and God's Word has not returned unto Him void. Yet it is at this point of lesser goals that my criticism is largely directed against a great proportion of that movement. We are not aiming at the following goals. When such are the immediate objectives of the work of child evangelizing, spiritual harm can and often does come to the children thus evangelized.

(1) *We are not out to get stars for our crowns.* Professional evangelists often advertise in religious periodicals for openings for their campaigns. And they advertise figures of the number of conversions and reconsecrations they have chalked up to their record. It is worth hazarding the guess that many of these conversions are decisions on the part of children. We will attempt to show next month why such decisions cannot be reckoned even as probable conversions. Besides this, the whole business of counting those whom we have won for Christ in order to establish a reputation as an effective soul winner seems reprehensible in the extreme, and unworthy of those who would emulate Him "who made himself of no reputation."

(2) *It is not getting and keeping of children in a perpetual state of subjective agitation lest the child find himself outside the kingdom of Christ.* This is often done. Children are sent to Christian schools where a great pro-

portion of the supporting churches believe that the Christian school exists for the sake of evangelizing the children. The daily "chapel" exercises are used for visiting evangelists of both sexes and varied theologies. The children are subjected to a form of emotionalism which they are unable to combat. The overall effect is a lack of certainty which will, if continued, cause an emotional imbalance which they can never throw off. The effect of the Gospel is just the opposite. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 5:1 & 8:1.) And mark this: young children *may* be justified by faith and have peace with God just as surely as adults!

(3) *It is not a simulated conversion followed by hasty union with the visible church.* Usually this type of approach to children is posited on the Arminian view of the new birth. Here is what is believed and taught: If a sinner, young or old, can be brought to see his sin and to believe the Gospel, then a simple, verbal confession of his sin and a verbal confession of his faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior sets in motion a divine operation which is called regeneration or the new birth. It follows that whoever can be brought to make such a confession in the presence of witnesses may be presumed to be born again. But there are two fallacies in this reasoning. *First*, saying that you are sorry for your sins is not necessarily *being* sorry in the highest sense. Saying that you accept Christ is not necessarily an initial act of faith. This is certainly true in adult evangelism, and it is even more certainly true in evangelizing children. If it is true that he that endures to the end shall be saved, it hardly accords with the fact that children thus converted today are tomorrow's backsliders. This is almost always the case where these "converts" come out of and return to unbelieving homes.

Secondly, this reasoning is fallacious because it holds that one repents and believes *in order that* he may be born again. Yet the new birth in Scripture is everywhere and always the work of God. Neither the will of man nor any other human agency enters in at all to our being born again. (See John 1:12, 13; 3:3, 5; Titus 3:5, Romans 9:11-18.) According to the Biblical teach-

ing, the Spirit of God works sovereignly in the heart, removing the source of our natural defilement and implanting a new nature to the end that the renewed sinner is *able* to know himself a sinner and turn from his sinfulness to Christ with his whole heart in true and saving faith. All repentance and faith which does not proceed from such renewal of the whole nature by the sole instrumentality of the Spirit is just worthless counterfeit.

It is at this point that a wrong approach to the task of evangelizing the children can, in spite of the best of intentions, do incalculable harm. If a child, whose memory is far more developed than his understanding, is led to believe that, because he admitted himself a sinner and repeated a certain prayer of repentance and faith, he is therefore *and even thereby* born again, he is going to go through life believing that he is a true child of God all evidence to the contrary notwithstanding. When asked if he is a Christian he will point to a certain experience in his life as evidence that he is right with God. Instead of being taught to look to his possession of a living faith in the living Christ, he will point to an experience he had in his childhood—and experiences cannot save!

Next month I want to present the two *positive* goals of the Scriptural approach to evangelizing the children.

Dissent

(Continued from p. 7)

borders. In Scotland, in Ulster, in the Netherlands, in America and in other places, Calvinism, the Reformed Faith, has been kept strong through those of the secession churches.

On this 25th anniversary of the first Convocation of Westminster Seminary, however, I think it well for us not only to boast of the past, to glory in the heritage which is ours, but also to be aware of some of the perils which confront us.

Perils in Dissent

And the first peril that confronts seceders is the loss of faith. This may seem impossible. Now, after twenty-five years, for example, it may seem impossible that this seminary should ever become lax and latitudinarian, should ever tolerate heresy or depart from the way of orthodoxy. But remember what we read concerning the

days of Joshua, how after he and his generation died, there arose another generation which knew not the Lord, and forgot the works He had done in Israel.

There is a human tendency toward the downward drift. Seceders take their stand strong in faith and courage and devotion. They know what they stand for. But that generation passes on. Another takes its place. The men are weak and frail, and imperceptibly a decline may set in.

Those who were sons of Erskine left the established church of Scotland and became ancestors of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland. But in the next century German higher criticism and rationalism began to enter there. Modernism came into the secession church. Within sixty years after the disruption of 1843 the Wellhausen theories were taught in the Seminaries of the Free Church and creedal subscription was relaxed.

In our own country New England was settled by Calvinistic Puritans but the old faith was not maintained, puritanism degenerated into a religion of duty and precept, and Unitarianism. And New England is spiritually the deadest part of these United States.

Dr. John Kromminga in his study of the Christian Reformed Church, which he prepared for his graduate degree, raises the question whether that church, now that the days of her isolation are past and she must mix more and more with the American world, can continue to stand fast to the principles on which she was founded.

And how about us here at Westminster. We are certainly not to consider ourselves exempt from all the processes of degeneration which we have seen in other secession churches. Twenty-five years have gone by. There have been great changes in the theological climate since 1929. The Modernists won the controversy which raged at that time, in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. We were in a sense left on the sidelines. But now Modernism too has changed. Modernists have found that man is not as virtuous as they thought, that the evils of society are not as easily eradicated as they thought, that there is more to the Bible than they thought, with their emphasis on the Sermon on the Mount and the Golden Rule. Barthianism has

come in. And the spirit of Evanston was not a crusade against us defenders of the faith, but a concern to reconstruct the Christian faith and to present Christ as the hope of the world.

We stand in the midst of a powerful ecumenical thrust, a stress on unity. Must we forever remain apart? Can we escape the forces that beat upon us? Is it possible for us to remain true, or may there begin a process of rapprochement with the great organized body of Christendom? The great decline of secession churches has not been a sudden descent into Modernism, but a slow development, small, insidious.

Thomas McCree said in 1820, "A vague and indefinite evangelism mixed with seriousness, into which it is the prevailing disposition of the present age to resolve all Christianity, will, in the natural progress of human sentiment, degenerate into an unsubstantial and incoherent pietism; in which case the spirit of infidelity and irreligion which is at present working and spreading to a more alarming extent than many seem to imagine, will achieve an easy conquest over a feeble and nerveless and exhausted adversary." This prophecy came true in Scotland. It is the peril we face here.

A great responsibility rests upon the faculty of this Seminary to maintain the faith upon which it was founded. I personally feel that I bear no greater burden, no greater responsibility in my life, than that which rests upon me as a trustee of this Seminary to see that it shall continue to stand. Brethren, pray for us.

The first peril of dissenting movements is loss of faith. There is a reverse peril, which I would call the peril of traditionalism.

At first in secession movements there is a defense of the truth of God, of the honor of Christ, of the purity of the church. A distinctive church is formed. That church develops a certain pattern of institutional life. But as the church ages almost inevitably there comes a hardening of the arteries, a sort of ecclesiastical arteriosclerosis. Some in Scotland came to be more concerned with the Solemn League and Covenant than with the covenant of Grace. I once was present in a group of ministers of one of the seceding churches here. They maintained their distinctive principles that they would use no organ and sing no hymns. But

they seemed completely oblivious to the peril of Modernism.

This peril of exalting traditional patterns of institutional life rather than the truth upon which seceding movements were founded is real. It faces the Christian Reformed Church. It faces the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and Westminster Seminary. I'm glad, myself, in a way, that Dr. VanTil has been called a reconstructionist. It is an indication that he is not content just to parrot the words of Kuyper and Bavinck. I'm glad other men on our faculty have not been content just to accept the traditional answers. We must ever strive against the tendency to petrify in a given mould.

And finally, there is a third peril closely akin to the second, a peril related to the spirit of presbyterian dissent. A dissenting church starts out as a minority group. It is criticized and slandered, and of necessity turns in upon itself. And there develops a critical spirit toward those without. Now we must be critical. We must be able to discern between truth and error. But there can also be a critical attitude that is not good. In some people the faculty of criticism is too highly developed, and we just condemn in a harsh and rather unchristian spirit those who are around us. A certain grimness sets in and takes over. And this spirit may manifest itself in the elevation of minor issues and the loss of the ability for calm and patient discussion of questions. The break up of secession churches has often come, I think, as a result of this faulty spirit.

The spirit may manifest itself in another way, in a sort of isolation from the world about us. There is a necessary isolation. We have been forced into isolation. But we can accentuate this for ourselves. We withdraw from fellowship, break off communication with men around us, appear to be distant and reserved and unconcerned. There develops an austere attitude, a lack of warmth in our preaching, a coolness in the welcome we give those who visit among us, and as a result evangelistic appeal is killed and the outreach of the church stopped.

This wasn't true of the New Testament church. They were cut off from Jewish and pagan society, but somehow that apostolic church maintained a warm, glowing life of brotherhood. Machen was accused of being a man of harsh spirit, but we who knew him

knew something of his marvellous warmth of spirit, and sincere compassion. He longed for the souls of men. And in the work of Seminary and church we must strive to keep this warm, gentle spirit.

Twenty-five years have passed, and we raise today our Ebenezer. Hitherto the Lord hath helped us. How wonderfully God has blessed Westminster. In our troubles and our need, He has ever preserved her. I have spoken of many dire possibilities. But our hope is in God. God raised this seminary up. He has preserved her. And we know that He will continue to keep her and use her according to His will. Let us pray God's blessing on Westminster.

Atwell

(Continued from p. 6)

roads of unbelief. But precisely here we are in danger of that smug attitude which points out with self-satisfied pride the errors of others. Have our hearts always gone out in loving concern for believers enmeshed in the tangles of dispensationalism or endangered by the poison of modernism? Have we thought of them as members, with us, of one body? Have we escaped independency as congregations only to espouse in practical effect an independency of aloofness and proud isolation in the relation of our denomination to the Church catholic? How seldom in the past fifteen years has there been in our movement evidence of that truly catholic spirit so prominent in Dr. Machen.

An Application of the Principle

It is the central thrust of the teaching of this passage that we have so largely missed. We point out the falseness of the modern ecumenical movement. We decry the errors of independency. We point with scorn to the crude methods of other evangelicals who conduct a militant fight against error in circles outside their own and who, on what we are persuaded are not consistently Scriptural grounds, attempt a united front. And what do we do? Very nearly nothing. Perhaps there was some realization of this sin and some effort to correct it, back of the overture of the Presbytery of Wisconsin to our 1954 General Assembly. The Assembly referred that overture to the Committee on Home Missions and

Church Extension for "sympathetic consideration." That overture called for the employment of a full-time field representative whose duties should be:

"a. To foster the organization of new congregations.

"b. To cultivate friendly relations with individuals and congregations which may have a potential interest in membership in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church;

"c. To cultivate friendly relations with and present our missionary program to individual congregations of traditionally Reformed persuasion who need a missionary program which is in accord with their doctrine, which they can conscientiously support;

"d. To present the challenge of home missions to the local congregations and presbyteries of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church."

The Committee gave the matter the required consideration at its first meeting after the Assembly. A tentative arrangement was worked out whereby the man called would share in some of the present work of the General Secretary, who in turn would also do additional field work. This was to avoid asking a man to be away from his family practically all the time. The Rev. LeRoy B. Oliver of Fair Lawn, N. J. was called to the post. But his presbytery, in answer to a plea from the Fair Lawn congregation, refused to approve the call.

Subsequently the Committee asked me to undertake the work. Now, while it is true there were also other deterrents to my accepting the call, a very weighty consideration was the conviction that the church as a whole was anything but eager to have such a full time employee.

This conclusion was inevitable after conversations with various officers and laymen of the denomination during the months that Mr. Oliver and I were considering the call of the Committee. Questions were raised as to how the Committee could justify another staff salary in view of the crucial needs of the missions fields. Statements were made to the effect that enough was already being spent for overhead. My thoughts turned to a time a few years ago when a considerable proportion of our members and even congregations were less than wholehearted in

support of the work directed by our Committee. I found myself unable to take a position which might be a source of misunderstanding and unhappiness on the part of many who now find joy in supporting the wider aspects of the Kingdom work assigned to our church.

But I dare not decline that call without asking the denomination to re-evaluate its responsibility to the Church catholic. If it be said that the work envisaged by the Wisconsin overture is not mission work the answer is that it is very closely akin to mission work. It is church extension work. It could conceivably result in a great expansion of our missionary outreach and the expense would not be merely overhead. What the immediate fruit of such work would be is impossible to measure beforehand. But the question must not be solved on the basis of expediency, nor on guesses as to what might or might not be the result, but on the basis of principle, on the basis of the plain teaching of the Word of God.

It is such teaching that I have sought to set forth in this article. In the light of such passages as that in Ephesians, is it not requisite that the attitude of our church become such as to make it unnecessary for the man who does answer the committee's call to undergo the embarrassment of spending his first several months in an attempt to "sell" our own church on the propriety of his task? By the grace of God may each of us be good Orthodox Presbyterians and by that I mean conscious, responsible, humble, loving, zealous members of the Church catholic.

Released-Time Upheld in Oregon

THE Attorney-General of the State of Oregon has ruled that school boards cannot arbitrarily refuse to excuse children to attend outside religious education classes. The question had been raised in the board of a county school system. The present state law on the subject, passed in 1925, provides that application must be made by parents for such an excuse. The Board cannot refuse the application, insofar as the absence does not interfere with the regular work of the school.

Braille Bibles for Chinese

A COURT ruling in Edinburgh, Scotland, has opened the way for a Scottish organization to distribute Braille Bibles in Chinese in any part of the world. The ruling was necessary because the charter of the organization has limited its activities to North China.

The organization involved is the Hill Murray Institute for the Blind. Its founder, William Hill Murray, worked for 40 years as a Bible colporteur in China. He devised a system for adapting Braille to a representation of the sounds of Mandarin Chinese.

Under the court ruling, the activities of the organization can now be exercised on behalf of Chinese on Formosa, and in other areas.

Schweitzer Reaches 80th Birthday

DR. ALBERT SCHWEITZER, world famed theologian, organist, and missionary in Africa, reached his 80th year on January 14. Years ago Schweitzer was best known for his studies in the New Testament, and particularly for his book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, an historical study of efforts to get at the "real Jesus" behind the Jesus of the Gospels. In it Schweitzer also presented his own views, which were not sympa-

thetic to the truth of the Scripture.

Since then, however, Schweitzer has become most famous for his work as a missionary in Lambarene, French Equatorial Africa, where he has established a hospital in the jungle. He was recently awarded the Nobel Prize for his medical work.

Boy's Right to Choose Religion Upheld

THE New York Court of Appeals has upheld the right of a 12-year-old boy to choose his own religion, despite a pre-marital pact by his now separated parents.

The boy, Malcolm Martin, Jr., is the son of a Roman Catholic father and a Christian Science mother. Before the marriage of the parents, there was the agreement that children of the union be brought up as Catholics. Malcolm was baptized as a Catholic, but later the mother refused to abide by the agreement, and she and the father separated. Mr. Martin sought custody of the boy or the enforcement of the agreement. In the court, the boy himself said he preferred public school to the parochial school, and would become a Christian Science member if his mother desired. The court ruled he was old enough to decide, and that the lower court decision was in his own best interest and welfare.

NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL PAPERS

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Soviets on Christmas

ACCORDING to a London report, a radio broadcast over a Russian station (Odessa) told listeners that Christmas was imposed upon the church to prove the existence of the "invented Son of God, Jesus Christ." Science, the broadcast continued, has proven that Christ never existed. The broadcast was one of a series denouncing the Christmas celebration.

The very existence of such broadcasts, however, bears stronger testimony than anything else to the fact that the people of Russia still adhere to their Christian practices, and observe Christmas, in spite of the official "line."

More Bible Balloons

ANOTHER campaign is under way to raise money for sending Bible-carrying balloons behind the Iron Curtain. During the past two years some 30,000 balloons carrying Bibles or portions have been floated into East European countries from fields in Western Germany. Radio Evangelist Billy James Hargis has carried on this program, under the sponsorship of the International Council of Christian Churches.

Protestants Criticize Military Agreement with Spain

A PROPOSED agreement between the United States Air Force and the Spanish Government has received criticism from Protestant sources because of certain provisions regarding intermarriage. In Spain Roman Catholic law is recognized in civil law. The Church law requires a church dispensation for the marriage of a Baptized Catholic and a non-Catholic, and the non-Catholic must sign a premarital agreement to rear all children of the union as Catholics.

Hence under the agreement which recognizes the validity of the Spanish civil law, American Protestant chaplains would be authorized to officiate at weddings only when both parties were baptized Protestants. All other weddings would be performed by Catholic chaplains or Spanish priests.

Among those entering protests against the agreement, which is being studied in Washington, were several leaders of the Southern Baptist Con-

vention, and Dr. Glenn Archer, executive director of the Protestants United organization. Said Dr. Archer: "To propose that an American's relation's with his marriage partner be a matter of 'military regulations' is . . . a monstrous departure from the basic American heritage of freedom."

Thomas H. Mitchell

WE have received word of the death, on December 8, 1954, of the Rev. Thomas H. Mitchell of Cary, N. C. Mr. Mitchell was a graduate of Princeton Seminary in the class of 1925. He was a minister of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and at the time of the formation of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He had his membership transferred to the new denomination, and for several years served in home mission work in the Youngstown, Ohio, area. Later he transferred to the Southern Presbyterian denomination and made his home in Cary. He was 65 years of age at the time of his passing.

Book Notes

Alexander Ross: *Commentary on the Epistles of James and John*. Eerdmans. 249pp. \$3.50. Another in the series of The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Volumes already published are on Luke, by N. Geldenhuys; on First Corinthians, by F. Grosheide; on Galatians, by H. N. Ridderbos; and on Acts, by F. F. Bruce. Alexander Ross is now a pastor, but was formerly Professor of New Testament in the Free Church

College, Edinburgh.

Preston J. Stegenga: *Anchor of Hope*. Eerdmans. 271 pp. \$3.50. The history of Hope College, Holland, Mich. Hope is a school of the Reformed Church in America, hence this book deals with the struggles of the early Dutch immigrants in Michigan. The initial steps toward the founding of the college occurred in 1851, but it took several years for the ideal to be realized.

Helen R. Mann: *Gallant Warrior*. Eerdmans. 309 pp. \$3.00. A novel about Hannah Dustin, pioneer woman who was taken from her home in Haverhill, Massachusetts, by the Indians in 1697, and who planned and helped carry out escape from the captors.

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