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"... God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, . . ." — I JOHN 1:5—7.

God is clothed in the glory of holiness and truth. In him there is neither vestige of corruption nor trace of ignorance, confusion, or folly. He dwells in light unapproachable and full of glory.

All who have been permitted any glimpse of his glory since the fall have been overwhelmed, and have found strength to stand before him only in the reassurances of his grace and mercy. Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, are witnesses of personal experiences that make clear this truth.

The distress we experience in his presence is not due to our creaturehood, for we were created for the presence of God and enjoyed it at one time. It is due to our sins. And this points up the argument of John that fellowship with God and with his children requires that we walk in the light.

Christian fellowship is a practical impossibility apart from a holy life. It is true that a pretense of fellowship can be made by those whose delight is in the shadow and the dark corners, and who move in the hidden places where their evil deeds will not expose them to shame and disgrace. But it is one thing to make claims and to pretend. It is another thing to possess and to make good what is professed.

God is light. In him is no darkness at all. We have fellowship with him only in the path of light. He walks no other road. Only there can we meet him.

It is not unusual to hear adherents of cults and sects that travel the way of the darkness of religious confusion lay claims to wonderful religious fellowship. Some of our modern clergy professing to be Christian seem to think they find wonderful fellowship in the cult of pagans. But John has the answer to their claims: they lie! There

is no Christian fellowship in the darkness of superstition. There may be indeed some experience of fellowship in this kind of association because of a certain community of minds. But not every fellowship is Christian. And only Christian fellowship is fellowship with God, for only he that has the Son has the Father.

It is a serious mistake to judge the value of religious activities and associations by whether a great time is had by all. You can find excitement and thrills in quite a variety of social circles. The fellowship of God is for those only who come into the light of truth of holiness.

Sin is of the Devil. A life of sin shows harmony with his will, and therefore intimacy with him. "Who-soever doeth not righteousness is not of God." We do not know God if we keep not his commandments. And neither does he recognize us nor give himself to us, if we continue in the service of Satan.

Neither can we have fellowship with God's people, if we live in the dark. Just because they are his they are no longer children of darkness. They have chosen light, and have forsaken the hidden works of darkness. The light of the Gospel of Christ and his holy government are their joy. The sun of righteousness has risen upon them with healing rays. They have come to know a new day! The world can no longer understand them nor stomach them, and they cannot any longer feel a part of it. The man who is still in the darkness of sin, superstition, and folly, has no fellowship in their company. Not even if he tries hard to keep up a show and to make believe.

The troubles we have in Christian circles have here their explanation more often perhaps than we may be able to guess. Too many professing the Christian faith and belonging to the church that we see still love the darkness. Their distastes for the will of God and their determined efforts to promote their own ends are due to their love of the kingdom of darkness.

But even among true Christians, the strife we sometimes see would die a sudden death, if all concerned could make their way more perfectly in the path of light.

So also would the emptiness of our

hearts disappear and a new fullness be ours in the sense of the Father's love, if we put away the works of darkness that somehow seem to cling to us.

HENRY P. TAVARES

Westminster Seminary To Open September 26

THE OPENING EXERCISES for the coming academic year at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, will be held Wednesday afternoon, September 26, at 3 p.m. in the auditorium of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, adjacent to the Seminary campus. The address is to be delivered by the Rev. Fred Kuehner, Professor of New Testament in the Reformed Episcopal Seminary, Philadelphia.

All friends of the Seminary are cordially invited to attend the opening exercises, and the reception immediately following.

Present indications are that the student body will number between 65 and 70 this fall. All members of the faculty will be in residence.

During the summer members of the faculty engaged in a variety of activities. Professor C. Van Til taught a course for a month at the Winona Lake Summer School of Theology, Winona Lake, Indiana. Following this he spent several weeks on the west coast.

Professor Stonehouse attended the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, as fraternal delegate from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He also attended the General Assembly of his church, and the latter part of August spent several days in Providence, Rhode Island, as an observer at the conference of the World Evangelical Federation.

Professor Clowney was on the faculty of the Ministerial Institute held at Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids. On three successive Mondays in September he is giving lectures at the Third Christian Reformed Church in Paterson, N. J., under the sponsorship of the North Jersey Alumni Association of Westminster. He was guest speaker at the Deerwander Bible Conference in New England.

Professor Kline received his Ph.D. this past spring from Dropsie College in Philadelphia.

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The Lord's Resting Place

A Sermon

By LAWRENCE R. EYRES

"Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou and the ark of thy strength."

PSALMS 132:8

It seems strange, at first thought, that God should desire a resting place among men. Does He not say to man, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee . . ." ? And did not the Apostle say of Him, "Neither is (He) worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing . . ." ? It is of the nature of God that He is in no wise dependent upon His creatures; rather, they are always dependent on Him.

Still the psalmist intreats this self-sufficient One to enter into the resting place prepared for His habitation amidst His people, and the petition is confirmed by the Lord's own response, "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it" (verses 13, 14).

The difficulty vanishes when we remember that God has freely and graciously given Himself to His people to be their God. Nowhere does His glory shine in more resplendence than in this: that the abode of the God of all the earth is to be found among the men of His sovereign good pleasure.

This psalm was most likely written by Solomon, or an unnamed psalmist near Solomon, who composed it to be sung at the dedication of the temple. We read of that great dedicatory service in II Chronicles, that the Levites bore the ark of the covenant into the most holy place, accompanied by priests and singers. Then the cloud of glory, symbol of the living presence of the living God, descended upon and filled the house. After this Solomon offered up his prayer of dedication concluding (in part) with these words, "Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength" (II Chronicles 6:41). These words of our text, whether taken in this context or that of the psalm, voice the realization of the longing of God's true people for centuries. There is in them something of climax — the fulfillment of the

hopes of many generations. The words of our text have significance for the church of Solomon's day, and as well for the church of our day—especially for this happy occasion.

I. The Years of Wandering

But to appreciate this climax of fulfilled hopes we must go back and trace the wanderings of the ark of the covenant from its beginning in the wilderness of Sinai to the event signalized in our text.

Israel wandered forty years in the wilderness. Those were years of sinful murmurings and rebellion against the God who had redeemed them from

THIS SERMON was preached at the dedication of the addition to the building of First Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Portland, Oregon. Mr. Eyres, who is now pastor of Westminster Chapel in Westchester, Ill., was the first pastor of the Portland Church. His successor, the present pastor, is the Rev. Carl Ahlfeldt.

The dedication service was held on Sunday evening, July 22. Others in addition to Mr. Eyres, who participated in the service were the Rev. Robert K. Churchill of Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, the Rev. Gerald Latal of Portland, and Dr. C. S. Tunnell of the Western Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary, Portland.

Egyptian bondage. Nevertheless, as a mark of divine condescension, the ark of the Presence continued among them. During this time Israel enjoyed no rest, but neither did the ark of God. At long last it preceded the wanderers into the waters of the Jordan opposite Jericho and led in the conquest of that city until its walls lay in rubble at the feet of Israel's men of war. Then, after the conquest, the ark dwelt at Shiloh. But those were inglorious days, the days of the judges, when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." And they came to an inglorious end when Eli permitted his two wicked sons to minister before the

ark in the priestly office; and worse, when the symbol of God's glory (never to be made a spectacle before profane crowds) was dragged to Aphek in the hope that the God of Israel could be compelled to promote an undeserved victory over the Philistine armies. How sad a day when no effective voice was raised against such sacrilege! Any wonder that Jehovah should permit the sacred ark to be carried off to the temple of the Philistine fish-god rather than to allow such a lie to be perpetrated—that God can be drawn into unholy conflict in the interests of those who falsely or hypocritically profess the true religion!

Still it was a dark day for Israel. There were at least two who knew what a tragedy it was for the sign of God's presence to be removed from the church of the old covenant. Eli, hearing that the ark of God was taken, fainted away and fell to his death; while the wife of Phinehas, giving birth to a son at the time that the sad news was received in Shiloh, with her dying breath named her child Ichabod (which means *inglorious*) saying, "the glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken."

And if its abode in Shiloh was far from glorious, the ark fared no better among the Philistines: carried from one city to another till, under the scourge of divine vengeance, it was returned to Israel and came to rest in remote Kirjath-jearim, the city on a wood, not sought out by God's priests and people. There it abode all the days of Saul. What did Saul care for the sacred Presence so long as he could go before his people admired and praised for victories which the Lord gave? Saul sought the Lord as often as he needed Him, but there did not seem to be in Israel, in those days, any desire for the benediction of the divine Presence. Sad days indeed!

And when David came to the throne his first years were consumed in establishing his rule over all Israel and in subduing her enemies around him. Although it is not clear when God first made choice of Jerusalem as the place where His name should be called, it is clear that it remained for David to evince any great zeal for driving out its heathen inhabitants.

But at last the day arrived that the ark of the covenant of Jehovah was borne into Jerusalem with shouting and singing and dancing—David him-

self leading the procession as he danced in holy ecstasy before the Lord. At last the ark of the Presence had come to rest within the holy city, and yet it dwelt in a tent of curtains while the king lived in a house of cedar, and even the people enjoyed permanent dwellings. The loving heart of David was troubled; ". . . he swore unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob; surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eyelids, until I find a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob" (Psalms 132:2-5). So David proposed to build a glorious temple for God's dwelling, but God restrained him, a man who had shed blood. His son, a man of peace, would build the Lord's house. So David died without having fulfilled that holy longing—that God should find a worthy resting place in Israel.

After Solomon ascended the throne he built the temple which bore his name—fitting and glorious for the dwelling place of the ark and symbol of the Lord's presence. The day of dedication came, sacrifices were offered, the shekinah glory descended and filled the temple. Then Solomon prayed his mighty prayer and called upon God to arise into His resting place. Then "fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house" (II Chronicles 7:1). At last the departed Glory had fully returned, not to a lowly tent in Shiloh but to its zenith in the holy city, to a temple resplendent with a beauty and glory befitting its divine Occupant. The years of wandering were over, the ark of God had found its resting place.

II. His Resting Place in Israel

Looking once more at our text, the psalmist prays, "Arise, O Lord . . ." The ark must find its rest in a place of exalted eminence so that eyes must be lifted to behold the place where God's glory dwelt. How perfectly fitting that the hill and temple, which later became known as Zion, should be exalted above all else. How appropriate that such glory should be seen, as it were, near the gates of heaven. "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." A church lifted up before the eyes of men must manifest the perfections of her

Lord. And when she does, what praise and glory does she not bring to the name of her God. As it was in the days of Israel's glory, so ought it to be said of "the Israel of God" today: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces that ye may tell it to the generations following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (Psalms 48:12-14).

Still our text guards against the age-old mistake of confusing the *symbol* of God's presence with the divine Being himself: "Arise, O Lord, into thy resting place, thou *and* the ark of thy strength." Solomon understood this distinction, for we hear him say in the dedicatory prayer, "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built?" The relationship between the ark and the divine presence is admittedly mysterious, but God's people then and now could and should know the difference between God and a box capable of being carried on the shoulders of a few men. But even more wonderful than the difference we have noted between the Lord and the ark is the closeness of the two. The mighty God of Jacob was pleased to give His covenant nation this mark of the reality of His good pleasure toward sinful, backsliding Israel—a mark of gracious favor far surpassing anything yet known in Israel: the God of all the

earth is content, even eager, to dwell for ever amongst an earthly, unworthy people no better than we! Had God here climaxed His dealings with men, still it could be said, "He hath not dealt so with any (other) nation."

And this sacred symbol was "the ark of thy *strength*." Whatever may be said of the mere symbol of His presence, men are not lightly to esteem the ordained symbols of God's presence and power. The whole house of Eli was destroyed for his irreverence. The Philistines were slain by the thousands in a terrible plague for their possession and display of the ark. Others of the men of Beth Shemesh perished as a reward for their unholy curiosity when they looked within the ark. Uzzah was smitten for no greater offence than the putting forth of his hand to touch the ark when the oxen stumbled. The presence of God is a fearful thing. In all ages of the church saints and sinners alike have had reason to fear God and hold in holy reverence every sacred thing by which His name and His Gospel is made known among men. God is a God of strength — mighty to save and fearful in His judgments!

And yet we must never forget the accompanying Glory. It was that cloud, which hovered over the mercy seat between the cherubim, that inspired the godly to come year after year to worship at the beautiful temple. Our text is taken from one of the psalms "of degrees," or of ascent. This title seems to apply because these psalms were



Portland
Church,
showing
new
addition.

customarily sung by the pilgrim bands travelling from all corners of Israel to Jerusalem for the great feast days. Bear in mind that, from whatever direction they came, pilgrims had to go up to get to the holy temple God had chosen as His resting place. With what joy and holy exultation must these pilgrim bands have sung this psalm as they climbed to the summit of Mount Zion.

III. His Resting Place in His Church

But Solomon's temple was not the ultimate. Tragic as were the circumstances surrounding its destruction, the temple and the ark had to be destroyed to make way for a larger and more glorious dwelling of God among men. Had that temple still stood, housing that ark, how could men have known the meaning of these words, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory . . ."? The lesser glory had to make way for the greater, the more symbolical had to give place to the more real. No longer was God's presence signified by a house of wood, stone, gold and precious gems: but that Presence came to dwell in a Man of flesh and blood and shone through all the exercises and activities of a human soul. The sweet, yet awful presence of God was manifested in Him who spake as never man spake, who cleansed the lepers, healed the sick, fed the multitudes, stilled the storm, cast out devils, raised the dead and preached the Gospel to the poor.

And even this was not God's ultimate. God's resting place was first among His people, then it was in a Man; but the ultimate was when the Lord of men and angels took up His abode within His chosen temples — the bodies and souls of His saints. God incarnate shed forth a greater glory than the cloud that hovered over the mercy seat. It may not seem as clear that "Christ in you" is greater glory than "God manifest in the flesh" as seen and heard and handled by those who knew Him in the days of His flesh. And still it is true: for that eternal Son who was born of a woman, born under the law, lived, suffered, died and rose again has, through His Spirit, made His eternal resting place in His church. Herein is a glorious truth, who can comprehend its greatness?

We have come here tonight to dedi-

cate a portion of this building. In a very literal sense, *we built this house*. But we must not forget the greater truth: *God built this church!* This house has no glory apart from the glory God saw fit to bestow upon you, His elect and redeemed people when He chose you for His resting place. Christ dwelling in you *is glory*. No fiery, cloudy pillar can excel this glory. This church is a lampstand, and the Spirit of Christ in you is the Light. May you be a city set on a hill! May you be a holy temple of God!

And if this be true, what of your time and talents, your possessions and aspirations, hopes and dreams? What of these is too good for Him? And how can you claim that the holy God has found a home in your soul while so much of filth and lust and greed seem still to be at home there too? Beloved in Christ, let us call upon the Lord more fully to take up His resting place in our bodies and souls. Know assuredly that, in the measure that He fills the citadel of our heart, all these foul
(See "Eyes" p. 128)

General Assembly Report

Hymnal Approved; Little Progress on Form of Government

Next Assembly at West Collingswood

By LESLIE W. SLOAT

PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS WORDS spoken at the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which met in Littleton, just south of Denver, Colorado, July 26-31, were the words of the pastor of the host church, the Rev. W. Benson Male. Looking at the cloudy sky, and feeling the slight drizzle of Thursday afternoon, Mr. Male reassured those who were scheduled to sleep in tents: "Oh, it is not going to rain. We haven't had any rain in Denver in two months." To the immense joy of farmers in eastern Colorado, to the discomfort of Denver residents who had to evacuate their homes in boats, and to the confusion of tenters who had to move indoors, Mr. Male was wrong. It rained. It poured. A day would start out with sunshine, but in the afternoon the roar of the rain on the tabernacle roof several times compelled the Assembly to take a temporary recess. Well, in so far as the days brought relief to a drought ridden area, we ought not to complain.

The Assembly met for its opening worship service and the observance of the Lord's Supper on Thursday morning, July 26, at the designated campgrounds just south of Denver. The Rev. Robert L. Vining, Moderator of the previous Assembly conducted the service. In administering the Communion he was assisted by the Rev. Elmer Dortzbach of Franklin Square,

N. Y. and the Rev. Bruce A. Coie of Volga, S. D., and by Ruling Elders Leonard Brown of Baltimore, Henry E. Wade of Los Angeles, J. A. Durrenberger of Valdosta, Ga., and Rollin Whitehead of Denver.

Business sessions began at 2 p.m. The roll call showed about 60 delegates present. A few more appeared the next day and the final tally indicated that 68 delegates attended. Of those, however, only 8 were ruling elders, a very small proportion of the Assembly. This continues to be one of the problems confronting the church. Every effort should be made by all concerned to have a substantial number of the ruling elders present for the assemblies. Only so can we avoid the charge of clericalism in the courts of the church.



Clerks Marsden and Oliver work on Minutes between Assembly sessions.

Officers

The Rev. Robert S. Marsden, clerk of the previous Assembly, was re-elected to that position, and the Rev. LeRoy B. Oliver, who was his assistant last year, again received that post. This team did an excellent job in getting the Minutes of the 1955 Assembly printed and published, and the Assembly felt they should be retained.

Six men were nominated for the position of Moderator. They were the Rev. Messrs. L. W. Sloat, James Moore, R. M. Meiners, E. J. Young, Egbert Andrews, and R. L. Eckardt. On the second ballot Dr. Young, Professor of Old Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, received the nod, gaining a bare majority of the votes over Mr. Moore. Dr. Young proved a competent Moderator. However, in the large assembly hall his rather modest voice, even with the help of the loud speakers employed, did not always secure the attention it deserved. There were times when the Moderator needed a "booming" voice to bring the debate into order.

Communications

In addition to overtures from Presbyteries, most of which have previously been reported in our pages, there were a number of communications. The Japan Mission, through the Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine, sent its greetings and assurance of its prayers for the Assembly. The Synod of the Japan Reformed Church sent a letter of greeting, reminding the Assembly that this was the 10th anniversary of the founding of that church, stating the needs and problems confronting the church, and expressing appreciation for the missionaries the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination has in Japan. There was a letter from P. D. Kuyper of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Nether-

lands, expressing regret that there was no member of that church at present in America, who might attend the Assembly as a fraternal delegate. The Reformed Church in New Zealand expressed its satisfaction that our Assembly had in 1955 accepted her invitation to enter into a corresponding relation, and regretted that it was unable to have a fraternal delegate present at our Assembly. This church also requested that copies of our church literature be sent for her perusal.

A few more incidental items occupied the attention of the Assembly before it got down to serious business. The Committee on Arrangements had not made any plans for a Saturday afternoon sightseeing trip, since it was uncertain how the time of the Assembly would be limited. The Commissioners, however, seemed to feel that they could afford to take Saturday afternoon off, and asked the Committee to suggest some trip. The Committee suggested that those who desired might journey to Devil's Head Look-out Station, a mountain peak some twenty five miles from town. A number of the delegates did this, and found the trip worthwhile, in spite of the half-hour or more of climbing up the trail after leaving the cars, which was necessary to reach the 9234 foot summit. Others chose to go to the top of Mt. Evans, or to various scenic spots in the area. The environs of Denver certainly offer scenery to satisfy the most demanding taste.

The travel committee gave a preliminary report which indicated it would be able to pay delegates up to about two cents per mile for most of their travel. The final figure proved to be two cents a mile for travel over 600 miles round trip. This was a substantial help to the commissioners, though by no means meeting actual travel expenses.



Moderator E. J. Young

Christian Education

It was late on Thursday afternoon that the first major report, that of the Committee on Christian Education, was placed before the Assembly. The report was read by the Rev. John Galbraith, chairman of the Committee. The highlights follow:

Personnel: Since September 1, 1955 the Rev. Robley J. Johnston has been serving as General Secretary of the committee. On November 7, 1955, the Executive Committee, which previously had been directing the work, was dissolved, and since that time Mr. Johnston has been responsible for carrying out the program of the Committee. The Rev. Lewis J. Grotenhuis of Phillipsburg, N. J. continues as Publications Secretary, and much of the actual printing is done by him. Mrs. Robert W. Anderson (the former Dorothy Partington) is employed on a half-time basis as a writer, and is devoting her time to completing the series of workbooks on the Shorter Catechism.

Publications and sales: Most of the publications, including vacation Bible school materials, tracts, books, and catechetical materials, are well known to our readers. It is of interest that the vacation Bible school materials were used this year by 115 churches outside the denomination, a substantial increase over the previous year. Also the sales of tracts published by the committee increased this year by (See "Assembly Report," p. 123)



Heat and humidity made informal attire appropriate. Here delegates await report of tellers counting committee election ballot.

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Leslie W. Sloat

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All correspondence should be addressed to The Presbyterian Guardian, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia 2, Pa.

United Presbyterians At the Cross-roads

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH is at the present time confronted with two decisions of tremendous importance for its future as a body bearing witness to the gospel of Christ.

The first is the decision of whether or not to merge with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The proposal for this merger has been approved once by the General Assemblies of each denomination. It is now before the presbyteries for their approval, before being finally adopted.

Though all the indications might seem to be that the merger will be carried out with little opposition, there are some in the United Presbyterian Church who do not favor this outcome. A committee of laymen has been organized in Pittsburgh, and is seeking the support of ministers and elders throughout the church, with a view to promoting and preserving the work of the United Presbyterian Church and resisting the merger.

Though there are many reasons against the merger, there would seem to be just two that are really weighty. The first is that the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has to such an

extent departed from the historic Christian faith in the area of its corporate witness in this land and throughout the world, that to merge with it is to involve one's self in being unfaithful to the Gospel of Christ. The evidence for this is clear both from the history of the church in the past three or four decades, and from the actual present state of the church. Thus, for a single example, the present Charles Hodge Professor of Systematic Theology in the Theological Seminary at Princeton flatly repudiates the Westminster Confession's doctrine of the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures. This is the leading Seminary of the church, and this a chief professorship in that Seminary.

The second weighty reason against the merger is the nature of the treatment which the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. through its official machinery and general procedures accords to minority groups within its bounds which may have occasion to disagree with officially sponsored views and programs. The denomination has never withdrawn the statement accepted a number of years ago, that ministers or members of the church who will not support the authorized agencies and programs of the church are as guilty as if they refused to partake of the Lord's Supper. There are today within that church certain individuals who do not agree with the church's official programs, who have opposed those programs publicly, but they have no weight in the life of the church. The machinery simply rolls over them and goes on, and they are left to pick up the pieces.

The 250,000 United Presbyterians would be in the same minority position if they found cause to raise any real argument with the 3 million plus U. S. A. Presbyterians on any issue of significance.

But the United Presbyterians have another decision, one not without some bearing on this matter of merger. This other decision concerns their school program in Egypt, where a dictatorial government is requiring that all schools shall teach Mohammedanism to Moslem pupils.

It was on the foreign mission field that departure from the faith first became an issue for the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The United

Presbyterian Church now has that issue before it. The decision has been made to open the mission schools in Egypt for the teaching of Mohammedanism to the Moslem pupils attending. According to this decision the Church seems in effect to have abandoned its mission to the Moslems.

If the United Presbyterian Church is content to allow this decision to stand, if it is content to allow its mission schools in Egypt to serve the Egyptian government through the teaching of Mohammedanism to the Moslem pupils attending those schools, then indeed is there any purpose, in the long run, for the separate maintenance of the United Presbyterian denomination. If its testimony in Egypt is to be destroyed, then its testimony everywhere else is also compromised and it might as well allow itself to be swallowed up by the larger, more efficient, more wealthy, more influential organization within whose bounds it will have freedom to carry on a testimony no longer distinctively Christian.

The issue before the United Presbyterian Church in both of these questions is one of simple loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel of His sovereign grace. If the Church will be loyal to her Lord at the one point, then she ought to be loyal to her Lord at the other also. But if she is content to be disloyal to her Lord in Egypt, there is little expectation of her resisting another act which would involve an equal disloyalty in this country.

Members of the United Presbyterian Church will probably receive with little enthusiasm the comments we choose to make here. They may think we should just keep our hands off. But the Christian faith is not the private possession of one church or another. They, and we, believe, as we confess, in one "holy catholic church," and in the "communion of the saints." Developments in one church influence and affect the whole of Christendom. The issue of loyalty to Christ sometimes presses here, sometimes elsewhere, sometimes in one denomination, sometimes in another. But the interests of the church catholic are always at stake.

Just now it is the United Presbyterian Church which is in the center of the picture. Would God that there might be such a declaration of loyalty to our one Saviour through the de-

cisions of that body, that the whole of Christendom might be encouraged in its faith, and strengthened in its obedience to God's holy Word. Perhaps it may be that the United Presbyterian Church has come for such a time as this.

L. W. S.

Are Pastoral Exchanges Practicable?

CONTACTS WITH CERTAIN PASTORS at the recent General Assembly in Denver have encouraged us to offer certain reflections on the subject of pastoral tenure. In particular we wish to raise the question whether presbyteries may not adopt practical measures to remedy situations where it may appear, perhaps both to congregations and pastors, that an exchange of pastors might be welcome to all concerned and might advance the spiritual well-being of both ministers and people.

In many instances, no doubt, a long pastorate is by no means disadvantageous. There are cases where pastors have devoted their entire ministry of four or five decades of service to a single congregation with the utmost blessing and satisfaction to all. It is also widely recognized, however, that, even when a pastor is an able and faithful minister of Christ, there might be mutual benefit if a new pastor could be secured and a minister were provided with a new challenging field of service. Where such problems exist they may be aggravated by a paucity of calling churches. This is true, in particular, of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church where several pastors have served well over a decade and where there is little prospect of change.

We are not suggesting here an abandonment of the traditional approach to questions of vacancy and supply. The liberty of a congregation, when a vacancy occurs, to call any man of its own choice, subject to presbyterial approval, will be recognized. Likewise, the liberty of ministers to consider favorably or unfavorably calls that may be extended to them will be acknowledged. The question raised here, however, is whether it is not desirable and possible to effect greater flexibility of procedure with regard to churches which have pastors and with

regard to the pastors of such churches themselves. If, as seems to be generally recognized, an extremely long pastorate may prove disadvantageous to a church, and if both church and minister might benefit immensely from the establishment of a new pastoral relationship, should not the churches and presbyteries be earnestly concerned to deal constructively with this problem? Scripture does not prescribe an order of procedure in this regard nor does our form of government lay down the procedures that are to be followed. There are, however, general principles of Scripture that apply to such situations and among them none that is more far-reaching and decisive than the declaration of Paul: "Let all things be done unto edifying."

If, therefore, there can be no questions but that we must do all things that are right and necessary for the edification of the church and the churches, how shall we proceed in this matter? It hardly requires mention that we would regard a system of episcopal superintendence as wholly repugnant to our principles. Nor would we be willing to assign executive authority to a committee of presbytery. Our specific suggestion is,

however, that the presbyteries consider the possibility of establishing a committee to serve as a kind of clearing-house for churches and pastors which, on the background of information brought to their attention, could make suggestions to the parties concerned. Such committees would have to act with tact and discretion. In some cases at least the problems involved would have to be handled with great delicacy. Since a plurality of churches and pastors would be involved in any decision great care would have to be taken that the rights and liberties of all concerned were fully protected.

Considering the difficulties involved we do not suppose that pursuance of this suggested plan would have far-reaching results so far as numbers of churches and pastors are concerned. If, however, it should prove successful in only one or two cases, and thus the life of such churches would be strengthened and the ministry of such pastors given new impetus, it would be fully worth the effort. We, therefore, invite discussion of this subject in our columns and hope it may receive consideration in the presbyteries.

N. B. S.



Park Hill Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Denver. Sunday morning worship for Assembly was held here, business sessions elsewhere.

The Presbyterian Guardian

Hards Report from Korea

A CIRCULAR LETTER from the Rev. and Mrs. Theodore Hard, missionaries to Korea, tells of progress in the work in that country.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Hard were ill with hepatitis early in the year. Mr. Hard's case was the more severe because of another illness last fall. However, following complete rest for more than a month, and then a vacation away from Pusan, he recovered sufficiently to resume his work.

At Korea Seminary Mr. Hard has been teaching Hebrew two hours a week — exercise in both Hebrew and Korean. He has also been helping with the Library. And he has advanced sufficiently in his knowledge of the Korean language to preach in that language in the churches.

The Seminary was able, the first of April, to move into the new buildings which have been erected through the American army's donation of materials and the sacrificial labor and giving of the Korean church. Calvin College, in its second year, had about 110 students. Through the gifts from friends in America, and from the Army, the college has some 1,400 books in its library.

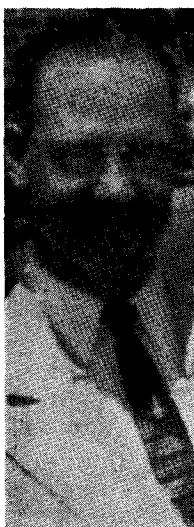
Sunnyvale Group Buys Property

THE FIRST ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN congregation of Sunnyvale, California, of which the Rev. Henry W. Coray is pastor, has made the final payment on a piece of property there, and the plans for the first unit of a church structure have been submitted to architect and contractor. Recent guest speakers at the church were the Rev. Henry Phillips of Gresham, Wisc., and the Rev. Egbert Andrews, missionary to Formosa.

Several Churches Now Vacant

PASTORAL CHANGES AND RESIGNATIONS during the summer have left several churches without pastors.

The Rev. H. Wilson Albright resigned in June as pastor of First Church, Manhattan Beach, California. He informed the Presbytery of California that the poor state of his wife's



Mr. Andrews

Rev. Egbert Andrews Announces Engagement

DURING THE COURSE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY in Denver, the Rev. Egbert W. Andrews, missionary to Formosa, announced to the delegates his engagement to Miss Elizabeth Heerema of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Miss Heerema, a sister of the Rev. Edward Heerema, was formerly a missionary in the Orient, having served two years in Pakistan and one year in China. She is at present Dean of Women at the Reformed Bible Institute.

The couple expect to be married in Formosa next summer. Miss Heerema will continue at R.B.I. for the current year. Mr. Andrews left from California, to return to missionary work in Formosa, on August 4.



Miss Heerema

health had made the step necessary.

The Rev. Robert Morris resigned from the pastorate of the chapel at Garden Grove, California, and will be teaching during the coming year in the Christian School at Bellflower, California.

The Rev. W. Benson Male has resigned from the pastorate of Park Hill Church in Denver, Colorado, and will be teaching Bible and other subjects in the Denver Christian High School during the coming year.

The Rev. Elmer Dortzbach of Franklin Square, N. Y., has been called to the Denver Church and expects to take up his work there in October.

The Rev. V. Robert Nilson has resigned the pastorate of First Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Lincoln Nebraska and will teach in a Christian School this year.

The Rev. Raymond Commeret has accepted the call to Grace Church, Fair Lawn, N.J., and moved to that field. He was installed there on September 12. His former charge in Kirkwood, Pa., is now vacant.

Spooner Sails for Korea

THE REV. A. BOYCE SPOONER and Mrs. Spooner, with their two younger children, sailed on September 15 from Houston, Texas, aboard the S.S. Margaret Sykes, on their way to Korea, where Mr. Spooner is to serve as a missionary of The Orthodox

Presbyterian Church.

A "send-off" for the family was given at Grace Church in Westfield, N. J., on Thursday evening, September 6. A service of worship was held, followed by a time of Christian fellowship.

During the summer Mr. Spooner directed the work at the Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, N. J. He was in Korea a number of years ago, but at that time was employed as an engineer by a power company. So the country will not be strange to him, though the work will be new.

David Hunt in America

DAVID HUNT, son of the Rev. and Mrs. Bruce Hunt, missionaries in Korea, returned to America the latter part of August, in order to take his final year of high school in this country. He will be living in Pittsburgh with the Rev. and Mrs. Calvin Cummings, and will attend school there. His twin sister Mary is remaining in the Far East this year, and will attend school in Japan. The three older children, Lois, Bertha and Katherine are already in this country. Lois has completed her schooling and expects to be employed in Philadelphia. Bertha has completed her nursing course, and has some college work to finish. Katherine is attending Calvin College. Mr. and Mrs. Hunt will be in this country on furlough beginning next summer.

Christ's Substitutionary

Atonement

FOLLOWING is the substance of the sermon preached at the opening of the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The preacher was the Rev. Robert L. Vining, Moderator of the previous Assembly, and pastor of Bethany Church, Nottingham, Pa.

IN DECIDING the sort of message to bring at this time, I have been faced with three factors. It is customary in such annual sermons to be concerned with the state of the church. Also there is the celebration of the Lord's Supper, which must be kept largely in view. Then this year we are reminded that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is celebrating an anniversary. The church is now twenty years old.

I have decided that my message to you should be definitely related to the saving work of Christ. Yet I shall also keep in view the historical situation. Some thirty years ago the doctrine that Christ died as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice gave offence to Modernists in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Along with other doctrines it was specifically opposed by the signers of the Auburn Affirmation. And we know that the spirit of unbelief represented by that Affirmation finally triumphed in that church.

My text is one which teaches the substitutionary atonement of Christ:—*"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."* Isaiah 53:5.

At the outset we are confronted with two problems. First, who is the author of these words? Is the writer Isaiah himself, or someone else? Dr. Roy L. Smith, writing in the *International Lesson Annual* for 1956 (a volume described as the Methodist Commentary on the Sunday school lessons) says that an unknown prophet of the exile wrote Isaiah 53. The person who writes on Isaiah in the new *Interpreter's Bible*, edited by Dr. George A. Buttrick and hailed by leaders of the ecumenical movement as the latest and best in modern scholarship, divides Isaiah into three parts with three dif-

ferent authors. Chapters 1-39 are attributed to Isaiah; 40-55 to an unknown prophet, a second Isaiah; and the rest to a disciple of this second Isaiah. Neither of these works, in other words, holds that Isaiah wrote the 53rd chapter of this prophecy.

But may the Modernists thus take Isaiah 53:5 away from the prophet who bore that name? How thankful we are that in the New Testament the prophecy of Isaiah is more frequently quoted than any other book of the Old Testament. And in twenty-one of these quotations Isaiah is expressly named as the writer. Some of these quotations are from the first part of the book, some from later parts. The New Testament knows nothing of a second or a third Isaiah or an unknown prophet author. These words are the words of the prophet Isaiah himself.

The second problem that confronts us in this text concerns the identity of the servant of the Lord who is the subject of the prophecy. Dr. Smith in the book already mentioned raises the question of whether the expression refers to the nation of Israel, or the prophet himself, or Jesus Christ. He gives no clear answer to the question. In the *Interpreter's Bible* the comments on this section are by Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, late President and President-emeritus of Union Seminary in New York. Dr. Coffin says some kind things about the view that this chapter is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, but in his actual exposition he refers the term to the nation of Israel.

But here again we are not left in doubt, as we appeal to the witness of the New Testament. In the Acts of the Apostles we have the account of Deacon Philip being directed by the Holy Spirit to join himself to the chariot of the Ethiopian eunuch. He found the eunuch reading from Isaiah 53. And straightway he preached to him Jesus. By the blessing of God the eunuch was converted, and baptized. Surely the Holy Spirit who brought Philip to this experience, also guided him in interpreting Isaiah 53. And so Philip was certainly right when from

that passage he preached Jesus.

We turn then to the text itself, and we read, "But he was wounded for our transgressions. . . ." The word "but" sets a contrast with what precedes. "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." But—we were wrong. But, instead, he was wounded for our transgressions.

A Christian physician has stated that there are five types of wounds the human body suffers, and that Christ suffered each of them. There are wounds caused by blows, by tearing, by penetration, by perforation, and by cutting. The word used in the original here means "pierced through." And it can have reference, not only to the piercing by the spear, but more generally to the emotional "piercing" of the heart involved in the experience through which Jesus passed. He was pierced through for our transgressions.

For what transgressions? Transgressions against men, or against society? Certainly we have been guilty of such transgressions. Perhaps some of us even transgressed the laws of men regarding speed as we travelled to this Assembly. But the transgressions the prophet has in view here are our transgressions against the law of God. That law is holy. And we must confess that we have broken it. And the breaking of God's laws must be followed by a severe penalty. That penalty is death. But, in order that that penalty might not come on us, Jesus died. He suffered the stroke that was due us. He was pierced through for our transgressions.

And "He was bruised for our iniquities." This again suggests a violent death. The original might be rendered, "crushed." I once lived near a mining community, and I think of mining disasters, when through some accident or mishap tons of rock and coal would fall on the miners. Often the life would be crushed out of the victims.

Who can measure the weight of our iniquities, the burden of our sins, which fell upon Jesus. We on our part are used to sin. But Jesus hated it with a holy hatred. Yet in order to redeem us, he suffered under the weight of that burden of sin. He was, the apostle says, "made sin for us."

Again the text says, "The chastisement of our peace was upon him." Our world seeks peace. Even Communist leaders profess to be peace-loving, and they release their doves of

peace. We are warned that another war would be suicidal for civilization. Peace among nations is demanded in our time.

But there is even greater need for peace of another kind, peace between God and man. Man unsaved is in rebellion against God. He is not and cannot be at peace with God. He flees the true God, tries to avoid Him, and wants to get as far away as he can from Him. Isaiah says, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." And again he says, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." As the waves on the shore of the ocean are always rolling, never still, so is the heart of the unsaved man. In rebellion against God, he has no peace in his heart.

How can he come to know such a peace? God is holy. We are sinners. Humanly speaking, there can be no peace between us. But from God's viewpoint, there can be, and there is such peace. The chastisement which produces that peace fell upon Christ. The wrath of God against sin was visited on him. Paul says, "He is our peace." And again, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." With this peace established, we are no longer afraid, even of the judgment. Conscience no longer torments. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. And therefore, we are at peace with God through him.

The text concludes, "And with his stripes we are healed." Because of sin we experience sickness and sorrow. The nature and degree of this suffering varies, but we all experience it. Yet there is healing. From whence does it come? From the stripes of Jesus, the literal scourgings to which men subjected him, but also and even more the inner sufferings he underwent when "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye are healed."

So it is that this text from the prophet Isaiah points to Jesus the Servant of the Lord, as the substitute for sinful men, the one who underwent in the place of his people that wounding, that chastisement, that bruising, those stripes—that death—that we who trust in Him might not perish but should have everlasting life.

What of this precious doctrine of Scripture, that Christ died as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice. Will the Modernist rob us of it? It seems so.

Dr. Coffin in his comment on this passage applies it chiefly to the nation Israel. He does not accept the doctrine. Instead, in a book entitled "The Meaning of the Cross," written a number of years ago, he charges that such a theory of the atonement is founded on an unchristian view of God. He declares that a father who had to be reconciled to his children, whose wrath had to be appeased and whose forgiveness had to be purchased is not the father of Jesus Christ. Rather he asserts the God of Jesus Christ is a God who freely forgives all who turn to Him in penitence. At least Dr. Coffin was forthright in his opposition to the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement as taught in Scripture.

But what happened? When in 1943 Dr. Coffin was a candidate for the moderatorship of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., conservatives who opposed elevating to that position a man with such heterodox views as Dr. Coffin circularized the church publicizing his views. Did it have any effect? No, for Dr. Coffin was elected. If the church had had any true zeal for this and other Scriptural doctrines, it would not have chosen a man who rejected them for its highest office.

And on November 4 of this year, in those Sunday schools that use the International Lessons and the Methodist commentary on those lessons, the children will be taught that "life comes to its highest level when we suffer for others." They will be taught that by the sufferings of the innocent the world's hurt is healed. But they will not be taught that only through the substitutionary sacrifice of the historic Christ is divine justice satisfied. In Modernist theology there is no real atonement.

But millions are perishing in sin. Though many of the large denominations oppose or keep silent about the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, the Scriptures teach it, and through it alone is there deliverance from sin. It must be proclaimed clearly, winsomely, unashamedly. It is the eternal truth. And once again we are persuaded and we rejoice that God has raised up the Orthodox Presbyterian Church,

which believes and seeks to preach the whole teaching of Scripture, for such a time as this.

Assembly Report

(Continued from p. 118)

\$1,000 over the previous year. It may well be that the denomination will have a greater influence on the country through its printed materials than through the preaching in its local congregations, for many years to come. This is one of the most fruitful areas of our endeavor.

Two new tracts were published during the year, *Are You a Biblical Baptist?*, and *The Ordained Lampstand*. Each has had a wide distribution. The weekly "church bulletin" covers prepared by the Committee have a weekly sale of over 5,000, and are used in several churches outside the denomination.

Program: Two special matters have concerned the Committee. The first has been the need for a series of home study courses. The Committee hopes to publish a course in elementary Bible study soon, as an addition to the course, *Old Testament Prophecy*, which is already in use. Also, the Committee has given serious attention to the preparation of Sunday school materials, as requested by the 1955 Assembly. Initial steps in preparing a course for nursery departments have been taken, and tentative plans for a complete Sunday school curriculum have been formulated.

Promotion: For the past couple of years the Committee has, each spring, sent a catalogue of its materials with an appropriate tract to the Middlers and Seniors of selected theological seminaries. There is some evidence that this has attracted some new users of the Committee material. The Committee has also submitted its materials to periodicals for review, and has prepared some advertising copy which can be used in connection with church ads in newspapers.

Budget: The Committee has a budget of \$38,000 for the coming year, of which it expects to receive \$20,000 through contributions, and the rest in business operations.

Discussion

Following the reading of the report, discussion of its contents was in

order. Two specific matters seemed to concern members of the Assembly.

The Rev. Robert Graham of Middletown, Penna., was disturbed that the Vacation Bible School materials did not contain any study of the Shorter Catechism or the Catechism for Young Children. After some discussion of this, he moved that the Committee be instructed to include in future editions of summer school material the specific study of the Catechism. His basic argument was that children attending these schools, often children who do not attend regular church or Sunday school services, while they might learn many things yet did not go away having memorized any doctrinal teaching, such as would come through the Catechism. Thus an important opportunity was lost.

Those opposed to the proposal held that catechetical materials were available and could be fitted in as the Bible school staff desired (this procedure is being followed in many schools), and also held that since these schools were more for the non-covenant children, the memorizing of the Bible was even better than memorizing of the catechism. The proposal of Mr. Graham was rejected, chiefly on the ground the Assembly did not consider it necessary.

The second matter of discussion concerned Machen League material. The Rev. Bruce Coie introduced a motion that the Committee be instructed to commence the preparation of materials for Machen League groups. It became apparent that many of the ministers felt there was a distinct lack here, that Machen Leagues had difficulty in developing a satisfactory program for their meetings, and that the committee should meet this lack. On the other hand, it was pointed out that in 1955 the Committee was instructed to begin the preparation of Sunday school material. With its limited facilities and personnel the Committee could not do every thing at once, and it was not efficient for the Committee to start on one program and then be instructed to shift to another. There were substitute proposals, such as that the Committee prepare a bibliography of materials already available, which might be used by the young people. It was also held that in fact the Sunday school was far more important than the Machen Leagues, since it reaches more people

etc. One speaker urged individual pastors to devote their energies to providing such material and offering it to the church, instead of expecting everything to be handed down from the Committee. A motion that the Committee be directed to give priority to Machen League materials over Sunday school materials was lost. The original motion was carried by a slight majority. The Committee will have to determine for itself the measure of priority to give to the two areas.

Two other motions, which occasioned but little discussion, were passed. The first requested the Committee to give consideration to the most effective means of educating the constituency of the United Presbyterian Church concerning the peril of union with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The second asked the Committee to investigate the possibilities of denominational advertising. In this latter connection some of the men asked about securing permanent church signs that might be erected at the entrance of towns where Orthodox Presbyterian Churches are located. And before the Assembly ended it was reported that definite progress had been made on this matter.

Ministers Clowney, Eyres and Reitsma and Ruling Elders Leonard Brown and Arthur Armour were elected to the Committee on Christian Education for the class of 1959.

Dr. Stonehouse presented his report as fraternal delegate to the 1956 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. He had attended the Synod for about 10 days, had been cordially received, and had delivered a brief address to the Synod. The decision of

of the Synod which was of greatest interest to the Assembly was its erection of a committee of four to confer with a similar committee of the Assembly on matters of fellowship between the two denominations. At a later point the Assembly appointed its committee for this purpose.

Home Missions

The Report of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension was next presented. This committee reported that during the past year it had assisted in financing work in nineteen different localities. In some cases it provided full salary for a missionary, while in other cases the local congregation had contributed to that support. The fields listed are Baltimore, Md., Bangor, Me., Cincinnati, Ohio, Crescent Park, N. J., Evergreen Park, Ill., Fair Lawn, N. J., Fall River, Mass., Garden Grove, Calif., Gresham, Wisc., Hialeah, Fla., Lincoln, Nebr., Ludlow, Mo., Manoa, Penna., National City, Calif., Philadelphia, Pa., Stratford, N. J., Thornton, Colo., Westchester, Ill., Whittier, Calif. Of these the work in Fall River, Mass. under the Rev. G. I. Williamson, and that in Stratford, N. J. under the West Collingswood and Crescent Park churches, were started during the year.

The Committee continues to be much impressed by the opportunities which are open for starting new work, and it continues to be hampered by the lack of funds for the work. Contributions to the revolving fund for buildings have totalled about \$10,000 so far, and this is being used, but is not sufficient for the building needs.

It was noted that the Rev. LeRoy Oliver had begun work as Associate



Delegates wait in line at dining hall. Men wearing coats were visitors at one session from Bible Presbyterian Church.

Secretary for Home Missions on April 1, 1956. Mr. Oliver gave a brief report of his activities, which have consisted chiefly in visiting groups which might find in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church a true denominational home.

Discussion or criticism of the report was brief, and of a minor nature. Ministers Marsden, Churchill and DeVelde and Ruling Elders C. Ferguson and W. Moses were re-elected to the committee in the class of 1959, and Elder Gooch of W. Collingswood was elected to fill a vacancy in the class of 1957.

Other Churches

The Committee on Correspondence with Other Churches reported that the only matters that came before it during the year related to the Christian Reformed Church. In view of certain attitudes manifested in that church toward the Orthodox Presbyterian Church during the year, the Committee arranged to send each minister of that church a copy of two pamphlets, *The Free Offer of the Gospel*, and *Christ or the Lodge*.

In connection with this report, it was moved that the Assembly proceed to elect a committee of four to confer with the committee of the Christian Reformed Church, and to report regularly to succeeding Assemblies concerning the progress of the conversations. This motion was approved by the Assembly. Ministers Stonehouse, Murray and Atwell and Ruling Elder Bert Roeber were elected to this Committee.

The Committee on Correspondence with other churches was instructed also to give consideration to other Reformed Churches throughout the world with which the denomination might seek correspondence. Certain churches in Scotland, in the Netherlands, and in this country were mentioned, but the Assembly refrained from identifying any particular bodies to be approached.

Christian Reformed Delegate

A pleasant interlude in Assembly business was provided at this time when the Rev. John Zwaanstra, pastor of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Denver was introduced. He was present as fraternal delegate from the Christian Reformed Synod.



The Rev. John Zwaanstra

Mr. Zwaanstra delivered a brief informal message. He indicated his joy at being able to attend the Assembly. His church has always been interested in the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination. There is a similarity of experience in the two churches, as both are concerned for loyalty to the truths as they are set out in the confessional standards. He said that he rejoiced in the establishment of committees to confer, and hoped this would further the unity of the two churches. He concluded by expressing his prayer that the Lord would bless and prosper the work of the Orthodox Presbyterian church.

The Rev. Robert K. Churchill was asked by the Moderator to respond to Mr. Zwaanstra. Mr. Churchill said that he rejoiced in the fellowship between the two churches that was based on convictions concerning the truths of the Word of God. He acknowledged that the relationship might be strained through a tendency to emphasize small differences. We must, he said, keep our vision large. And he was encouraged by the "largeness" of outlook contained in the speech of Mr. Zwaanstra.

Foreign Missions

Next came the report of the Committee on Foreign Missions. The foreign work of the church continues

in the same fields — Korea, Japan, Formosa, and Eritrea, and with the same personnel. However the committee reported that a number of persons, both single persons and married couples, had indicated their desire to serve under the Committee. The Rev. A. Boyce Spooner, already under appointment to Korea, is expected to go to that field this fall, with his wife and two younger children. The engagement of Miss Dorothy Diedrich resulted in the committee's deciding not to send her as a nurse to Eritrea for the present. Her fiancé has indicated a desire to enter missionary service.

The missionaries are engaged in evangelistic and literary work, and in certain areas in medical and teaching work also.

The Rev. Egbert W. Andrews of Formosa and the Rev. Clarence W. Duff of Eritrea were at the Assembly, and each spoke briefly following the report of the Committee. There was a short discussion of an agreement that had been entered into by the Japan Mission with the Japan Reformed Church, but otherwise the report evoked little comment.

Ministers Edwards, Murray and Graham and Ruling Elders Jorgensen and Roberts were elected to the class of 1959 of the Committee.

Following the report of this Committee, the Rev. E. Lynne Wade, formerly a chaplain with the U. S. Navy, secured the floor on a request of privilege. He had been approached by the "DeWolfe" faction of the Protestant Reformed Church which was interested in having him do mission work in Guam under their financial auspices. Mr. Wade, who received an honorable discharge from the Navy in June, indicated that if he accepted this position, he would continue to serve the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Assembly voted to inform the Presbytery of California that it had no principal objection to Mr. Wade's serving in Guam under this financial arrangement. The Presbytery will have to grant final approval.

General Benevolence

The Committee on General Benevolence reported that it had carried on the work assigned it, had been well supported by the churches, and had ended the year with a larger cash balance than at the beginning. During

the year it had been able to increase the assistance being granted a retired home missionary.

The Committee asked that the churches be urged to contribute 50 cents per communicant member to its work. The Assembly approved this, with the understanding that the sum was to come from special offerings or from the deacon's fund, rather than from benevolence contributions. The Committee also asked that boards of deacons in local churches be urged to contribute to the denominational committee any funds they might hold as surplus above their local needs. This also the Assembly approved, though some felt it was ambiguous. The Committee is interested in building up a reserve against future contingencies, but that is also the reason local diaconates may allow their balances to increase temporarily.

The Rev. Robert Vining and Deacon Triggs of the Franklin Square church were returned to this Committee.

Text of Confession

The Assembly was informed by the Clerk that sufficient Presbyteries had approved the proposal of the 1955 Assembly for the adoption of a specific text of the Confession of Faith, and the Assembly therefore declared that text to have become the official text for the church.

There was a minor sidelight at this point. Dr. William Young had indicated a certain dissatisfaction with a change which had been made in the text, and asked to have his negative vote recorded on the motion adopting the text, with the reason, which he stated simply as the "untimeliness of the action." The Moderator refused to permit any reasons to be attached to the simple oral recording of a dissenting vote. For a statement of reasons, even a minimal statement, he said that a written dissent or protest must be entered. The Moderator was sustained in the ruling. Obviously the clerk cannot be expected to place in the record an oral statement of reasons for a particular negative vote. If that practice were once started, there would be no end to it.

Another point occasioned some discussion. It was an overture from California Presbytery asking that the average Sunday school attendance be given with the statistics, along with the Sunday school enrollment. It was

argued that there was no uniform basis for enrolling pupils in the Sunday school, that such enrollment was not kept up to date, and that giving the average attendance would provide a far more accurate picture of the Sunday schools, than to give simply an official "enrollment."

The Clerk maintained there was not enough room on the page for this extra column of figures. However, the Assembly seemed to feel it wanted this information, and voted to ask the clerk to secure it. Local Sunday schools will therefore be asked to keep a record of attendance each Sunday, and at the end of the year to figure the average for the year. Sunday school secretaries better sharpen their pencils!

Form of Government

Finally, late Friday afternoon, the Assembly turned to the *Form of Government*. The proposal of the Committee, together with the minority report of the Rev. Robert Marsden, and a minority report concerning certain sections supported by Professor Murray and Professor Clowney, were placed on the floor. There was some parliamentary maneuvering, but finally, after the supper hour, the first main test came up — the proposal to substitute the minority report of Mr. Marsden for the report of the Committee. The immediate question was a decision as to which proposed Form of Government the commissioners preferred to work on, as it was evident neither would be accepted without changes.

Speaking in support of his proposed *Form*, Mr. Marsden said that he felt the present *Form of Government* of the church was basically sound, and that the changes needed were simply those designed to make it more complete and efficient in operation. Much of the Committee's work had been adopted in his proposals, he said, but he had avoided those radical innovations that the Committee had endorsed.

Dr. Stonehouse, speaking in support of the Committee's proposed version, stated that the Committee had been working on the project since 1948, and that its studies should not be discarded. He felt that Mr. Marsden's proposal represented a superficial treatment of the problems involved, and a holding to tradition for tradition's sake, rather than a real

concern to get at the teaching of Scripture.

Numerous others spoke on each side of the question. It was evident that many felt the Committee report contained elements to which they objected, but they also felt they would rather start with it and amend it, than start with the minority version. The debate was finally stopped, and the motion to substitute the minority for the majority version, as the basis of consideration, was lost, by a vote of nearly three to one.

Parity of Elders

Following this, Mr. Moore moved the substitution of an earlier California proposal asserting the parity of the eldership, for Chapter III of the Committee's version, which recognized a distinction between elders who rule (ruling elders) and elders who also teach (commonly called ministers).

Mr. Moore spoke for fifteen minutes in support of his position, claiming that it was the position of historic Reformed theology, and the teaching of the New Testament. He denied that the New Testament distinguished between classes of elders, or knew any elders who were not to teach. His speech was probably as good a presentation of the arguments for his position as the Assembly has heard.

Leaders in opposing his position were Professor Clowney and Dr. Stonehouse. Mr. Clowney held that Charles Hodge, for example, did not understand the modern "elder" as being the "presbyter" of the New Testament, but rather the person signified by such a term as "governments". There are differences among those who govern in the church, because there are differences of gifts specified in the New Testament. Mr. Clowney also maintained that there were elders of the Old Testament government who did not teach, and that this arrangement was taken over into the New Testament church.

Dr. Stonehouse said that a proper understanding of the Reformed tradition demanded a recognition that arguments advanced were often directed at the episcopal position. Hence the repeated assertions that there was no difference between elder and bishop. But this did not mean that within the eldership itself there were

not in fact significant distinctions. Mr. Moore's position would involve a very complete recasting of the *Form of Government*. He also said he thought support for the position of the Committee rested not on particular "proof-texts" alone, but also on the entire structure of New Testament church government. The New Testament does not at some point establish government by elders, but such an arrangement was there and is recognized by the New Testament.

The debate on this issue continued over to Saturday morning. Many of the arguments have been rehearsed in articles previously appearing in the *GUARDIAN*. Finally the debate on this issue was brought to a close, and the proposed substitution was defeated. Though the debate had been long, the vote showed only about ten commissioners in favor of Mr. Moore's proposal.

Other miscellaneous proposals on the matter of the eldership were introduced, but none gained the approval of the Assembly. This debate carried over into Monday morning. Finally it was decided that the Assembly plan to adjourn Tuesday at noon, and that the debate on the *Form of Government* be stopped at 3 p.m. Monday afternoon.

Then some order was brought into the discussion by the passing of a motion to consider the proposed version of the *Form of Government* chapter by chapter. This led to the adopting of the "Preface" of the proposed *Form*, but the Assembly got no further. The chapter on "Basic Principles" was discussed and changes proposed, but just before the time limit, a motion to adopt the chapter on "Basic Principles" was put and resoundingly defeated. It looks as though the church will be laboring with its *Form of Government* for some time yet.

The Committee studying the *Form of Government* was continued and directed to report to the next Assembly. At one point the Rev. Robert Marsden reported he was resigning from the Committee. The Assembly urged him to reconsider, and before adjournment he informed the Assembly he would continue on the Committee. Other members are Dr. Stonehouse, Professors Murray and Clowney, and Mr. Kuschke.

Hymnal

The way was now opened for the other major item before the Assembly, the report of the Committee on a Hymnal. This Committee reported it had substantially completed its work, and asked that the Assembly give approval to the list of hymns and other contents of the Hymnal as proposed to the churches in an earlier report, and authorize the committee to proceed to publication.

The only major debate here concerned the matter of Psalmody. There are a few ministers and churches in the denomination which hold to the position that only "inspired songs", meaning chiefly Scriptural psalms, may properly be sung in the public worship of God. A report setting forth some arguments in support of this position was presented to the Fourteenth General Assembly, and is printed in the Minutes for that Assembly. Professor John Murray and Dr. William Young were the chief exponents of this position at the present Assembly. Professor Murray maintained that the Standards of the Church authorize only the use of the Psalter. At one point Dr. Young urged that the entire "Scottish Psalter" be included in the hymnbook, on the ground that eliminating any portion of the Scottish Psalter was taking away from the church a portion of the Word of God given for its use in song. When Dr. Young was asked whether he equated the Scottish Psalter with the Word of God, he replied that in effect he did.

Other discussion concerned such matters as whether the Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, or the forms for the sacraments, should be included. No instructions on these matters were given, and the Committee indicated it probably would not include them. One hymn, "Faith of our Fathers," was ordered included, on a very close vote. Another, "Nearer My God to Thee," was ordered excluded. It is the opinion of the present writer that the Assembly was not at this point in either the mood or the competence to determine the inclusion or exclusion of particular hymns. Factors which might determine the propriety of a particular hymn are of such a nature that an assembly in the midst of business and proceeding under parliamentary rule is just not able to evaluate them adequately. It is perhaps fortunate that the Assembly itself quickly realized

this. It determined that suggestions concerning particular changes in the list of hymns might be sent the Committee for its consideration before October 1, and left matters pretty much at that. The specific name to be given the hymnal was also left to the Committee's decision.

A third recommendation of the Committee was adopted, "*That this General Assembly summon the attention of the churches to the principles that praise of God is the privilege and duty of the church; that God is well pleased that the materials of praise offered to him shall be in conformity to his Word; and that no Bible-believing church can expect healthy development unless the materials of its praise be Biblical; and furthermore that on these grounds this General Assembly recommend to the churches that the Hymnal be generously subsidized, as an offering toward the worship of God, to make publication possible. . .*" There was some objection to this, on the ground that it professed to state "principles" concerning public worship, and this was neither the place nor the way to adopt such principles. The objectors filed a protest against the Assembly's adoption of the statement.

Another protest, against the whole use of uninspired materials of song, was also entered. It reads as follows:

"We the undersigned respectfully protest against the action of the 23rd General Assembly in giving approval to the list of hymns and other contents of the hymnal as proposed in the report to the churches, as suitable for publication. We do so for the following reasons:

1. *In giving approval to hymns other than those derived from the Scripture itself the General Assembly has exceeded the warrant of Scripture and of the subordinate standards of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.*

2. *In approving no more than a limited selection of the metrical versions of the psalms the General Assembly has deprived the church of a very large part of divinely authorized materials of song for use in the public worship of God and has thereby seriously impoverished the worship of the church.*

Signed—G. I. WILLIAMSON
JOHN MURRAY
WILLIAM YOUNG

The Committee reported that it had some \$1,200 on hand toward the expense of publication. It estimated publication costs in the neighborhood of \$30,000. A suggested plan of financing was that each member of the church purchase for the local church one copy at \$2.50. This would bring in perhaps \$15,000, and with subsidization and other sales, the cost of publication would be met. The actual publication remains in the hands of the Committee. It is not expected the book will be available before 1958 at the earliest.

Close of Assembly

There were several invitations for the 1957 Assembly, but the decision was that next year's meeting would be in Immanuel Church, West Collingswood, N. J. beginning on July 17.

Adjournment came right on schedule Tuesday noon, and the commissioners packed up and departed soon thereafter—just in time, it seems. For reports were that South Denver was flooded and several thousand forced to evacuate their homes Tuesday evening, as a result of heavy cloudbursts.

Eyres

(Continued from p. 117)

idols will go. His presence and theirs, in the same dwelling, are simply incompatible! And know this also, that we are destined for a complete, ravishing indwelling of God as portrayed by John the Apostle, else He does not dwell in us at all: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Revelation 21:1-3).

All this is said of the church which is the glory of this house. But what of this building? I once heard a popular minister say of the edifice in which he was preaching that, when the congregation should leave, that building would be no more sacred than a barn. May we say this of this portion which we have just dedicated? I hardly think so. This sanctuary was

dedicated to the service of God more than ten years ago. Many of you that are here tonight were present then. We were conscious that this was to be a house of God, a place of beauty and usefulness for the promotion of His praise and glory. That was the meaning of the tears of profound thanksgiving and joy we shed then. That is their meaning tonight. These rooms were just now dedicated: "For the diffusion of sacred knowledge, for the promotion of righteousness, for the extension of the kingdom of God, for the sanctity of the family, for the nurture of the young, for the perfection of believers." These halls must always be dear to us for these reasons.

The glory of the tabernacle and the later temple was the ark of God. And just what was the ark? Just a box. That is, a box containing two tables of stone on which had been inscribed with the finger of God His moral law. And, symbolically, from the law there came the ever-accusing finger of God pointing to sins both original and actual. There could be no peace and rest to the people of God so long as that great Accuser was in their midst. But that was not all. The box had a cover of pure gold, and of one piece with it were two cherubs with wings outstretched over the mercy seat. And on the day of atonement each year innocent blood was sprinkled on that mercy-seat. Against those for whom the blood was sprinkled the law had no further claim—the accusing voice was stilled. Only the blood spoke to those it had redeemed, saying, "Delight ye to do these commandments and live in them."

It's all there in symbol and type: the Law to convict and condemn those

who have sinned, the *Gospel* of the redeeming blood of Christ to reconcile men to God. Solomon built a house, and we have built a house. In Solomon's temple was enshrined the symbol of the Law and the Gospel. It is my prayer that the glory of this house, as long as it stands, be that from this pulpit and in these classrooms the Law of God and the Gospel of sovereign mercy be proclaimed in their divinely revealed relationship and balance.

Impossible as it seems to many minds, there are a host of so-called churches in these three categories around us on every hand today: There are those that have neither law nor gospel. Their "law" is man's invention and their "gospel" has no good news for weary sinners. Then there are those who have the law but not the Gospel. Strive though they may, and futilely, to please God with their dead works, the Law still cries out against them to a just and holy God. Still others have a gospel of sorts, but with only a minimum of law. Just enough law to say "You are a sinner, and need to take Christ as your Savior," but not that high and holy sense of the Law that makes a man, though one of the saints of God, to feel that he is still the chief of sinners. And those under this gospel are not exhorted to delight themselves in the precepts of that holy Law both day and night.

May the glory of this house of God be always and only this: that from Sabbath to Sabbath and from day to day the fearful message of God's holy Law, the great, good news of a blood-bought redemption and the sweet savor of holy living be laid upon one and all who enter these doors.

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