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Whole Counsel of God

Charles H. Ellis

Calvinism and Art

**Glory of the Christian
Church**

R. B. Kuiper

**Unbelief in the Presby-
terian Church U. S. A.**

John Murray

**Orthodox Presbyterian
Church News**

**Guardian News
Commentary**



*The believer, according to Paul, is
in himself guilty in the sight of God.
But he is given a sentence of acquittal,
he is "justified," because Christ has
borne on the cross the curse of the Law
which rightly rested upon those whom
Christ died to save.*

-J. Gresham Machen



February, 1949

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Your FAMILY ALTAR

Daily Bible Readings

Week of February 28

Monday	Acts 11:1-14
Tuesday	Acts 11:15-30
Wednesday	Acts 12:1-11
Thursday	Acts 12:12-25
Friday	Acts 13:1-13
Saturday	Acts 13:14-25
Sunday	Acts 13:26-41

Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. What was the meaning of the vision that Peter received at Joppa?
2. Who was the second Christian martyr? By what means was Peter delivered from prison?
3. Who were the first missionaries sent out by the church at Antioch? To what places did they go?

Week of March 7

Monday	Acts 13:42-52
Tuesday	Acts 14:1-18
Wednesday	Acts 14:19-28
Thursday	Acts 15:1-12
Friday	Acts 15:13-29
Saturday	Acts 15:30-41
Sunday	Acts 16:1-13

Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. What was the reaction of Paul and Barnabas to the rejection of the gospel by the Jews at Antioch of Pisidia?
2. Which of the Gentiles in that city believed the word of the gospel?
3. How did Paul and Barnabas answer the attempt of the people of Lystra to worship them?
4. What important doctrinal matter was considered by the council of Jerusalem?

Week of March 14

Monday	Acts 16:14-24
Tuesday	Acts 16:25-40
Wednesday	Acts 17:1-15
Thursday	Acts 17:16-34
Friday	Acts 18:1-11
Saturday	Acts 18:12-28
Sunday	Acts 19:1-12

Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. Who was the first convert in Macedonia?
2. Why were Paul and Silas placed in prison? What happened during their stay in prison in Philippi?

3. What are the people of Berea noted for?

4. What position did Gallio adopt when the Jews brought Paul to the judgment seat? Was it a good one?

Week of March 21

Monday	Acts 19:13-22
Tuesday	Acts 19:23-41
Wednesday	Acts 20:1-12
Thursday	Acts 20:13-27
Friday	Acts 20:28-38
Saturday	Acts 21:1-16
Sunday	Acts 21:17-26

Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. What evidences of success did Paul have in Ephesus?
2. How did the townclerk at Ephesus quiet the mob which cried out against Paul?
3. What were some of the claims that Paul made about his ministry at Ephesus?

Week of March 28

Monday	Acts 21:27-40
Tuesday	Acts 22:1-21
Wednesday	Acts 22:22-30
Thursday	Acts 23:1-10

Miss Florence Handyside

OUR sovereign God has seen fit, in His inscrutable wisdom, to take to Himself Miss Florence Handyside, Orthodox Presbyterian missionary in Korea. Death came suddenly February 12 (Korea time) after an illness of less than a week. Miss Handyside was being taken to a hospital in Seoul, accompanied by the Rev. and Mrs. Bruce Hunt, and passed away on the train. Mr. Hunt's report indicates the cause to have been something in the nature of spinal meningitis, though definite information is still lacking.

Miss Handyside, a member of Covenant Church of Rochester, has been in Korea less than a year, and only recently came directly under the Foreign Missions Committee. She is survived by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry E. Handyside, 274 Vogt Road, Webster, N.Y., and by a brother.

Apparently aware that she was seriously ill, Miss Handyside indicated to Mrs. Hunt that if death came, she wanted to be buried in Korea. In accordance with this request, arrangements were made for interment in a missionary cemetery in Seoul. Services were held Tuesday, February 15.

Foundations

Our Lord Jesus Christ laid the foundation of the church when he said to Peter, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." The confessing Peter representing the disciples of Christ and his associates have laid down for the church in the epistles and the practice of the early church rules which are our guide today. We may be thankful that our Lord sent His Spirit to guide the apostles into truth.

How prone are men to pervert the teaching of the Word of God! Judaizers will not have a gospel wholly of grace; so they would mix in some works. But God will not permit the foundations to be destroyed; so the council of Jerusalem will deal with the question and reassert the fact of salvation by grace through faith alone.

How easy it is to compromise in the church for the sake of peace. Unpleasantness may be avoided. "Progress" may be made. But the Lord God will not suffer His Church to be destroyed from within. Paul withstands Peter to the face over the matter of the reception of Gentiles into the church. Once again the mortar stiffens as the Master Builder lays His stones.

In our day some would desert the old foundations and attempt to build on new. Modernism would deny that the word given by Christ through the apostles is law for our practice. And others who claim allegiance of the Bible often ignore the old foundations in an attempt to build the superstructure higher. But we shall never build a permanent house on insecure supports.

And as individual Christians and families we must not in our haste to get somewhere ignore basic truths. Study the book of Acts and learn what God led His people to do and say. That life or home or religious organization that is built on the quicksand of human opinion will never stand the storm from without or the corrupting influences from within.

A prayer suggestion

Pray for the Rev. Robert L. Atwell in his work of recruiting students for Westminster Seminary.

LEROY B. OLIVER.

The Presbyterian
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Let's Stick To Business!

EVERY minister and every church session must from time to time face the problem of just what they are trying to do. If their purpose is to build up a church, they may behave in one way. If their purpose is to win friends and influence people, they may behave quite differently. So the question of what we are trying to do must be faced, and answered.

We think that the Biblical purpose of ministers and churches is to proclaim the truth of God, to His glory. The standard of truth is the Word of God. Granted that this is the case, then let's stick to business. Let's do everything in our power to further our purpose, and let's do nothing that will tend to defeat our purpose.

The truth, of course, is not proclaimed in a void. While its ultimate design is the glory of God, it has as a proximate design the establishment of a church which will conform completely to the revealed will of God. In other words, our design in the work of the church is to establish truly Presbyterian churches, and to bring transformed sinners into them. Such churches will be true to the Presbyterian standards, both in doctrine and life. That being our purpose, let's make every item on our program contribute to that end.

There is a temptation for ministers and churches to dissipate their energies in various kinds of good things. An evangelistic effort in a neighboring church—let's support it. A rally for young people sponsored by a Bible-believing pastor in a neighboring town

—let's attend. A "sound" missionary available as a speaker—let's hear him. An evangelical agency carrying on useful propaganda—let's take a special offering for it.

No Presbyterian would contend that a minister and a church should shun all such activities outside his own denomination. Sessions and pastors must determine what activities of this type are to receive their endorsement. But if the pastor and session are agreed as to what they in particular are trying to do, they will not endorse outside activities which do not really contribute to their own purpose. The test is not whether such outside activities will do no harm, the test is whether they will do positive good, in terms of the local purpose. Will they actually contribute to the furtherance of the aim of the church? Will they promote the Presbyterianism of the church members, both as regards doctrine and life? There is no excuse for supporting agencies and activities which are relatively far from the truth to which we are dedicated, when similar agencies and activities that proclaim the truth more accurately are available to us. It cannot be true that agencies relatively far from the truth are more "spiritual," for true spirituality is witnessed by conformity to the truth.

In almost every congregation there are the well-informed, and the less well-informed. One cannot teach the ignorant by catering to their ignorance. If one were so ignorant as to think that two plus two equaled five, it would certainly be poor pedagogy to imply that he was right, and only once in a while to hint that actually two plus two equals four. Only the truth will overcome error, and only sound doctrine will dissipate error and ignorance of doctrine. If we want our congregations to be strong, truly Presbyterian congregations, we must give the proper teaching, and administer the proper doctrinal medicine. If medicine is needed, it may indeed have to be given in small doses, over a period of time, lest it kill the patient. But it is the medicine of truth alone that will cure, and the word of truth alone that will instruct. And if our aim is healthy and truly Presbyterian churches, such medicine and such instruction there must be, given in love and with patience, but given nevertheless.

Therefore let each minister and each church session that is determined to be faithful to the Lord review constantly

the activities and the agencies which are endorsed. Let us see whether, perchance, some of those which have hitherto been acceptable are not in the end encouraging error and falsehood, rather than truth. If such a review is carried out, the church will be strengthened, a true ecumenicity will be fostered, and the resources of the church, both spiritual and material, will be husbanded. These resources can then be used most effectively for the propagation of the truth which is the only business of the church. Let us not, in the name of "broadness" or "tolerance" act on the one hand in such a manner as to tear down that which in the name of Christ we are struggling earnestly to build. Let's do just one thing. Let's establish a truly Presbyterian church, one that is conformed to the revealed will of God. Let's do it through the proclamation of the truth, and let's make every activity and every agency of the church contribute to that great aim.

R. S. M.

The Journal Survey

THE beginning of a new year is a time to take stock of the past and give consideration to the future.

A recent issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal* provides us with some guidance in taking stock of the past. The November *Journal* carries a survey on the religious sentiments of the American people. The survey is designed to assess the intensity of our religious faith and the extent to which that faith has an effect on our behaviour. Unfortunately we are not informed as to the number of individuals questioned, other than that the poll was conducted "by Gallup-poll methods." Also there are from the Christian viewpoint numerous weaknesses in the content of the questions submitted. While they deal with religion, God, and ethics, there is little if anything relative to the specifically Christian faith.

However that may be, the survey is interesting and revealing. Most of the people questioned declared that they believed in God, three-fourths of them said they were members of a church, though only 41% attended regularly. Ninety per cent said they prayed, though a much smaller percentage prayed "frequently." About half the people said they received a "lot" of comfort and support from religion.

When an attempt was made to become more specific, however, the religious ignorance of the average American appeared. God was defined vaguely as power, or governor, by a few as Creator, and by a mere 7 per cent as "Spirit." When asked specifically, 40 per cent said they thought of Him as a Person, though over 70 per cent thought of Him as a judge who rewards and punishes. Other questions here confirmed the relative ignorance of those questioned in the field of religion. The *Journal* editor comments that the American public's knowledge in the field of religion "remains at Sunday school level." There seemed little difference between those with more or less education.

Finally the survey included questions related to the effect of religious beliefs on conduct in personal and business relationships. The large majority were willing to say that they were honestly trying to lead the good life. Allowed to set up their own standard of goodness, 18 per cent said they had perfect success in living up to the standard, and only 7 per cent felt that they failed to go at least half way toward meeting the standard. Over 60 per cent were sure they were going to heaven. But 54 per cent said their religious beliefs had no effect on their ideas of politics or business. And over three-quarters of them felt that they truly loved their neighbors when those neighbors were business competitors, or of a different race or religion.

A survey such as this is something like taking the national conscience to the confessional. Answers are frequently more inclined to be what is expected, than what is really individually true. But often neither the questions nor the questioners are concerned with a more explicit statement of the views of the individual, and religious convictions can't be stated in a word or a phrase. So such a survey is not too satisfactory.

However, it does bring out certain points of significance for those who are engaged in the service of Christ and His church. First is the great need of a teaching ministry. There is truth in the field of religion, more explicit than in many other fields. That truth is given man in Holy Scripture. It is the work of the church to present that truth to people the world over, to instruct them in it, to point out its application in their lives. Where there is a faithful teaching ministry, the people will not

be in such a depth of ignorance concerning spiritual things.

Secondly, there is need for the preaching of the law and the holiness of God. Hypocritical Pharisaism is destructive of true morality. The man who thanks God that he is not like others, and attributes his success to himself rather than to the grace of God, has never come face to face with the reality of a holy God. The business of the church is to call sinners to repentance. You can't call the righteous to repentance. The message of the grace of God in Christ finds an opening only as there is the conviction of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

Thirdly a survey such as this suggests the extent to which Modernism has become the prevalent faith of our country. Religion is thought of in terms of vague ideas about God, and good works, especially love of one's neighbor. For this success of Modernism we may credit the work of the

great denominations and religious agencies, which have turned away, and turned the people away, from the glorious faith of our fathers, the faith of Scripture, the faith which is true.

And finally such a survey indicates the challenge which lies before us in the work of the church. Who will dare say that in his own little congregation a religious survey might not indicate much of the same conditions as were found to be nation wide? For a church which seeks to be true to the Word of God, as does The Orthodox Presbyterian Church for example, there is an open door of opportunity for the preaching of the whole counsel of God, including His sovereignty, His holiness, His mercy and redeeming grace. There is the opportunity to present a faith which is a world and life view, reaching into every sphere of human endeavour and applying the truth of God to every aspect of life. Such is the Calvinism we hold dear.

Calvinism and Art

Less Awe . . .

TO THE EDITOR:

In the December *Guardian* we published a picture by Mr. Rene Grove, to provide a foil for a discussion on the relation of Calvinism and Art. We also carried an article by Professor Van Til of Westminster Seminary, dealing with the subject, and invited comment from our readers.

We present here some of the letters received. We warned Mr. Grove before publishing his picture, that he was "sticking his neck out." He agreed, but said that was what he intended to do. He felt that the field had been neglected, and that it was high time some progress was made in it, through discussion of the question openly and frankly.

There is considerable negative comment in these letters. It is always easier to suggest "better ways of doing things," when something is offered to work on. However, in the midst of the negative comment there is, we feel, much of constructive suggestion, both in matters of principle and of execution.

I enjoyed Dr. Van Til's account, in the December issue, of the discussion at the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Grove concerning Calvinism and art. However, I am inclined to think that the explanation of the hush which Dr. Van Til reports fell upon the group is somewhat different from what has been imagined. Perhaps the reason was that the bearing of saving grace on the problem at hand was so obvious that those present were well-aware that everyone in the room knew the application and hence hesitated to mention it. Saving grace has a clear bearing on every phase of life. There is nothing that is not to be done to the glory of God. Why make a special fanfare about that fact in applying it to art any more than to, say, practicing medicine. There is not one iota of difference in the two instances.

The difference between painting pictures and practicing medicine is that (1) the techniques and media are different and (2) the things which can be accomplished and taught are different. There are no techniques or media

(See "Art" page 27)

The Whole Counsel of God

*Substance of a Sermon Delivered at the
Dedication of the Crescent Park Chapel*

By CHARLES H. ELLIS

EVERY once in a while as I greeted the congregation at the close of the evening service in West Collingswood, one man, with big, dark, laughing eyes, would shake my hand and say with a grin, "Well, Chuck, all through now for another week!" However seriously or jokingly he meant it, that does represent the view some people have of the ministry. To that conception of the ministry our theme of the evening gives the lie. Our theme—The Whole Counsel of God. Our text, Acts 20:27, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Or, as it is in the new Revised Standard Version, "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God."

Paul reminded the Ephesian elders gathered with him on the shore of the burdens and joys of his ministry among them. For the space of three years he had ceased not to warn the people of Ephesus with tears, night and day. From house to house he had taught them. And publicly, too, of course, he had set forth the message. What message? The Counsel of God. What Paul proclaimed was not after man, nor had he learned it of men, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Not Human Wisdom

Had he so desired, this man Paul could have given wonderful addresses on the basis of human wisdom. Had he been of a mind to do it, he could have written some of the most eloquent treatises ever composed on the basis of human learning. But did he so choose? Listen to his words, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified . . . and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I once had a most interesting conversation in the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. It was with a rabbi who had fled to this country during the Nazi regime in Germany. A real

scholar, this man was, mark you, an historian, an author. Inevitably our conversation turned to the subject of the Messiahship of Jesus. Nor could I refrain from asking the gentleman how he could account for it that Paul, trained in the strictest form of the Jewish faith, a recognized scholar, of brilliant intellect, could come to regard Jesus of Nazareth, a contemporary of his, as Lord in the fullest sense of the term. All that the man could offer, to a question that was obviously too much for him, was this: "He must have 'cracked up!'" How utterly inadequate was that reply! For after all, the only answer that really answers is that Paul came to regard Jesus as the Lord Christ simply because as a matter of fact that is who He is.

Found in Scripture

Some churches today (I shudder to apply to them the name "church") are wrapped up in what they call "new thought." Others are proud to take to themselves the term "modern," and they do their best to be modern, modern in doctrine, modern in practice. But such modernity is as old as sin. It is simply old-fashioned unbelief, which first found expression in the rebellion of our first parents in the Garden of



The Rev. Charles H. Ellis of the Covenant Church of East Orange and Pastor Robert W. Eckardt at dedication of Crescent Park Chapel. The pulpit desk was made by Mr. E. S. Mahaffey, a resident of the community, and donated to the Chapel.

Eden. That is not for us. We dare not curry the favor of men when to do so means to disobey God. We must obey God rather than men. And so our church, this church, is unreservedly committed to the foundation principle of the Christian faith that in this book, the Holy Bible, we have unfolded "the whole counsel of God," all that we need to know to be instructed in what we are to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of us. When our church ceases to stick by this principle as the foundation of its superstructure of faith and practice, it shall have departed from the only undergirding upon which man may safely build. Abandon this book, and you abandon everything.

A Big Job

It is good to dwell upon and preach the counsel of God. But that is not enough. What we must dwell upon and what we must preach is the whole counsel of God. That, brethren, is no small order. It is a big job. An American Oil company was once seeking to have a representative in China. Qualifications for the position were high. The man must be under 30, well educated, an organizer, and able to speak Chinese. It soon became apparent that the only person meeting these requirements was a missionary. The oil company offered this certain missionary a salary of \$10,000 a year if he would leave his little mission station and go to work for them. When he refused they offered him \$20,000 and still again \$30,000. When he had rejected every offer, the company officials asked, "What is the matter? Isn't the money big enough?" "Yes," he replied, "but the job isn't big enough." That young missionary surely must have had a good conception of the task that was his already, a job that certainly was big enough, for it involved preaching the whole counsel of God.

Repentance and Faith

Part of the whole counsel of God which Paul proclaimed in Ephesus he

mentioned in the very context from which our text comes. He spoke of the way in which he went from house to house, "testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Certainly these two truths, the truths of repentance and faith, are basic to any kind of presentation of the gospel. I dare say that the counsel of God cannot be proclaimed except in terms of repentance and faith.

We ought to notice the manner in which Paul introduces the words of our theme. "I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God." No shrinking violet was this apostle. No Casper Milquetoast was he. Paul did not withdraw himself, he was not timid, he did not cower, nor did he conceal any part of the message of grace. Does not that expression indicate that there are considerations which conceivably might make a man shrink from declaring the whole truth of God to men? Yes, indeed. At the very heart of the gospel there is that which might cause a man to hold back from a full declaration of divine truth. Man is a very proud creature. He thinks highly of himself, wants other people to do the same, and wants God also to think well of him. But the gospel comes to him telling him that he is dead, not simply indisposed, not just sick, not even desperately sick, but *dead* in trespasses and sins, at enmity with God, and bound for endless destruction except for the interposition of the hand of divine grace. Does the natural man like that kind of teaching? He does not. He would rather be told that he is a good fellow and that if he continues to do his best, surely God would be ashamed to bar him from heaven at last. How many there are who like to hear that type of thing in church! And how many ungracious, faithless pastors there are to accommodate proud hearts with such prattle.

Dare Not Shrink Back

But what did Paul do? He shrank not from declaring the whole counsel of God. To those who trusted in themselves he declared that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. To Jews and Gentiles alike Paul preached repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. He shrank not from declaring that

man can do nothing to save himself, but must cast himself altogether upon the mercy of God in Christ for salvation.

So must it be today. The minister of Christ dare not shrink from preaching the whole counsel of God. Once in a while we hear of a minister who is said to be evangelical himself, a believer in the fundamentals of the faith himself, but he does not come out too strongly in that direction in public because he has a church organization over his head that would not look kindly on that type of preaching. What kind of an evangelical believer must he be? What if Martin Luther had been made of that kind of stuff? The ambassador of Christ has no business engaging in such pussyfooting. Such pusillanimous preaching the Christ cannot bear. Listen again to Paul, "I shrank not from declaring to you the whole counsel of God."

The Simple Gospel

Included in the whole counsel of God are simple themes. A man must not be too proud to preach on the simplest of them. How the world needs the simplicity of the Gospel. In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son. Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Let not the doctor of divinity turn aside from such simple themes. Let not the doctor of philosophy frown upon the presentation of the gospel in such simple terms. The unschooled in Christ must hear this simple gospel, and the trained in Christ will love to hear it again and again.

More Difficult Themes

Included in the counsel of God are also difficult themes. The ambassador of Christ may not decline to preach on them, either. The people must have the meat of the Word, they cannot thrive forever on its milk alone. Pabulum is good, isn't it, for babies. Strained vegetables are good, aren't they, for babies. Comes a time, however, when these foods are put aside and in their place is put the diet of men and women. So it ought to be in the things of Christ. We need the milk of the Word. We must also have its meat.

So, for example, the Apostle Paul

could speak of the decrees of God as they existed in the mind of the Eternal before the world was. He could write to his beloved friends in Christ at the Church in Ephesus, and exclaim: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will . . ." And again, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

In such words of Holy Scripture we have some of the more solid meat on which to chew. The divine decree of election—God's foreordaining all things—the Lord's ordaining paths of righteousness in which His people are to walk. In the midst of the revelation of such sovereign grace we stand amazed. The truth we would not deny. The truth we must proclaim. Even as Paul, we may not shrink from, we may not conceal the mind of God as He has seen fit to reveal it in His Holy Word. Brethren, it is our portion to go on from strength to strength seeking to understand, as best we can with our finite understanding, the mind of God as He has been pleased to reveal it in the gospel.

A Word That Cuts

The whole counsel of God—what a concept! What a task! And the ambassador of Christ may not shrink from the declaration of truth which may be displeasing to careless professors of Christ in every church, this church not excepted. If the preaching of the Word never results in stepping on the toes of the people, the chances are that it is pretty weak preaching. If you and I go to church regularly and are never smitten between the eyes by the accusations of the Word of God, then either our consciences have lost their edge, or the Word of God is not being faithfully proclaimed. This Word is a two-edged sword, you know, yea sharper even than that, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and

spirit, and is the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. A sword cuts. When the Word of God is faithfully wielded, it will cut. It will cut into the heart of careless professors of the name of Christ, those who before the church have acknowledged His name but whose lives cannot be distinguished from the lives of the world. This Word will cut. It will cut into the conscience of those whose witness and testimony among men do not reflect the light of Him who is the Light of the world. This Word will cut. It will cut into the heart of those who erect a god of pleasure, or any other kind of god, to occupy the place of the One who said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." This sword of the Spirit will cut. It will cut into the heart of those who profess the name of the Lord but who stubbornly persist in violating the commandment with respect to His holy Sabbath day. This sword of the Spirit will cut. It will cut into the heart of those who call themselves the children of God, but whose bosoms harbor hatreds, animosities, ill-feelings, jealousies. When the whole counsel of God is proclaimed, our hearts do cringe under the piercing searchlight of divine truth.

A Word That Heals

If the Word of God cuts, it does so that it might also heal. The Word of God cuts into our sinful, diseased soul in order that out of the same volume may be poured the balm of healing. Is there no balm in Gilead? There is. Is there no physician in Israel? There is. Listen to Paul's description of the way in which the Ephesian Christians had come to be a peculiar possession of God. He describes them as "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Yes, there is a Great Physician for our sinful, diseased hearts—the Lord Jesus Christ. Surely there is balm in Gilead for the healing of the sinner's wounds, even the blood of Christ.

An awful burden weighed down upon Paul—the burden of lost, sinful men to whom he was responsible. Therefore, he exclaimed, "I am debtor, both to the Jew and to the Gentile . . . for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." With such a weight of solemn responsibility upon his heart Paul pursued his ministry in the proud city of Ephesus, warning men and women day and

night with tears, preaching Christ to them from house to house. And as he addressed the Ephesian elders on the shore at Miletus he, reminded them in these sobering words, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

In conclusion, I would press home upon you the two-fold duty of repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. We are sinful men. I dare not hold before any one of us the slightest hope of heaven apart from repentance, earnest, sincere repentance, and faith in Christ. The whole counsel of God assures us that we are lost, utterly, helplessly so, of ourselves. But the whole counsel of God also tells us of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who stands ready to save to the uttermost all who call upon Him in humble faith. Let us with joy submit to the whole counsel of God, and in doing so, commit ourselves to the all sufficient Saviour, the Word of God incarnate, Christ Jesus the Lord.

Art

(Continued from page 24)

in art that are peculiar to Calvinists. Calvinism should teach the artist to do a better job because he has a worthier goal, just as, for the same reason, it should teach the physician to do a better job.

When it comes to the truths which can be taught there is an obvious differentiation of function. An artist is primarily presenting beauty, and in so doing can call to men's minds the marvels of God's creation whether in superficial inanimate nature, in man, in the structure of materials or in numerous other ways. The Christian physician is primarily demonstrating that wise honest medicine makes it possible for people to be healthier and thus more capable of honoring God in all sorts of ways. He also can be calling to the attention of men the marvels of God's creation. But the first objective of both of them is to do their particular service in the best possible way to the glory of God.

It is a waste of time to select the fine arts as a field where there is some peculiar or mystical bearing of Calvinism on the subject matter. The fine

arts are noble fields of work. Calvinists would do better in them if they approached them with more common sense and less awe, applying to them the same grand principles that they apply, or should apply, elsewhere.

PAUL WOOLLEY
Philadelphia, Pa.

Toy of a Cross . . .

SIR:

I thank you for having published Mr. Grove's "Mother and Child." No picture or painting of that kind has ever caught my eyes and set my mind athinking like this one. That child makes it easy to believe that the rule will be upon his shoulders! And speaks without uttering a word, "Come unto me!" It is not a helpless babe, but the Creative Word in flesh, the Earnest of a Future, the appearance of the second Adam, heading the new race, the new family, in which He is the Head, the Firstborn, the Elder Brother. —All this, and much more, the painting told me without one look at the cross. It is a needless remnant of conventionalism. What the artist wishes to convey with the toy-like cross, Christians know from the Bible more fully and effectively. An inviting motion of the hand—instead of holding, I repeat, that toy of a cross—with Matthew 11:28 behind it, would make the painting more eloquent and would bring it more tellingly and definitely within the orbit of Calvinism. It is not that I am against the cross as a symbol, but rather that it seems to be just superfluous in this great composition. Please convey my respects to Mr. Grove. May he live a long, creative, inspired life!

CHARLES VINCZE
Perth Amboy, N. J.

Still Roman . . .

DEAR EDITOR:

Upon your invitation let me offer a few comments on Mr. Grove's painting in the December issue of the GUARDIAN. Mr. Grove will, of course, be assured that all criticism is offered in the same spirit which prompted the invitation to comment.

Mr. Grove is fortunate in the choice of his aesthetic medium in that its representational possibilities allow him to be much more specific in portraying Reformed conceptions. The purely musical forms of expression offer much less by way of specification. For example, how could one distinguish a

Reformed symphony from any other on first hearing. The purely musical mediums build up their conceptual content largely by association. If you heard a piece of music in the chorale style, coming to a half close and a full close on alternate phases, you would have no reason to make any religious associations except that you are accustomed to hearing that kind of music in church. Conversely, if you hear a Billy Sunday adaptation of a popular tune, it fails to qualify as sacred music because of its shady past. We are not concluding here that certain forms are not more appropriate than others. It may be maintained that the rhythmic patterns of jazz are not appropriate to worship because its kinesthetic contagion is not congenial to the repose of worship and reverie. In contrast Mr. Grove's medium offers him the possibility of being much more specific but it is also in this area that he failed us.

In the first place, Mr. Grove's mother is of the Mona Lisa type. As such she recalls Italian pre-reformation art, and puts us in mind of Roman Catholic domination. The cowl worn by the mother further puts the painting in the medieval period and covers the woman's hair, her crowning glory, though here Mr. Grove's purpose may have been to lead the interest away from the mother, as the comments stated. The total effect, however, is to lend a Madonna and child impression which again puts the painting in the Roman Catholic tradition.

Secondly, though we wish to deny the Roman Catholics any monopoly of the cross as a symbol, nevertheless, we cannot deny that in the history of art they have held that monopoly. By so much, therefore, it adds to the general impression already gained by the Madonna motif on the mother. Using a medium that is rich in representational possibilities it should not be necessary for us to be told that this is to be a Reformed painting in spite of the Roman Catholic impression which it gives.

Let me suggest the following changes in order to give the mother and child subject a more Reformed appearance. Instead of a cross in the hand of the child, place a Bible on the table in front of the mother. Since the child does not understand the symbolism of the cross, it may be argued that he will also have no understanding of the meaning of the Scriptures. But if

the child retains the same pose which suggests the future, and the mother has her attention divided between the child and the Word, her arm around the child and her eyes on the Bible, giving this representation of divided interest, there will immediately follow the idea of Christian nurture which is so fundamental in realizing the implications of the covenant in Reformed theology.

Further, though we do not deny the artist the right to idealize his subject, the very exquisite hands of the mother do not suggest that kind of self-sacrifice which is necessary generally in the fulfillment of the vows which Reformed parents make at the time they present a child for baptism. Let me also suggest that the mother be taken out of the pre-reformation period. Perhaps removing the cowl would effect that change. A less Latin model might also have the same result. Since the Reformation was effective mostly in Northern Europe a non-Latin mother would assist in putting the painting in its proper place both as far as the history of art is concerned, and as it might reflect the history of Christian thought.

In conclusion let me reaffirm my introductory remark. These comments do not come as carping fault finding, but only register the reactions which come to me in viewing Mr. Grove's painting. I am fully cognizant of the fact that it is much easier to speak in generalities about Calvinism and art as Kuyper does in his "Stone Lectures" than to express it through an actual medium as Mr. Grove's worthy work attempts to do. Whatever may be said concerning the Reformed motif, there certainly is no denying that Mr. Grove is an artist of the first order. As such the first expressions of a Reformed art can do no better than to come through his hands.

NICK R. VAN TIL
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Violently React . . .

DEAR MR. EDITOR:

In your brief article on page 273 of the December issue of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN you have extended a highly commendable invitation to readers to contribute to what you call "a sort of symposium on the subject of Calvinism and Art." The subject is provocative of thought and fruitful discussion may result. May I be permitted to offer a few reflections re-

lating to the picture reproduced on the same page.

It is gratifying to know that the artist did not intend the picture to be one of Christ and Mary. That somewhat relieved the shock received when the picture first caught my eye. I am one of those who violently react against pictures which purport to represent the Saviour. One reason, among others, for this reaction may be mentioned.

It is supremely imperative that every conception we frame respecting our Lord should be true and every emotion we entertain pure and holy. If we hold that pictures of Christ are legitimate then it is because we consider that to some extent they minister to the framing of a proper conception of Him and to the cultivation of devotion to Him, in a word, that intelligent devotion is in some way promoted thereby.

We must also avow that our knowledge of Christ and of the devotion owing to Him is derived from the Scripture. Now it so happens that the Scripture does not provide us with data respecting the physical appearance of our Lord. No one today knows what His appearance or likeness was. Any picture, therefore, is the work of the artist's imagination and there is no norm or test by which we may determine its correspondence with the reality. This is an exceedingly serious matter. We all know how our conception of a person may be influenced by that person's physical appearance. The same holds true with reference to pictures purporting to represent the Saviour. Particularly is this true in the case of children and also of adults with certain types of mentality. In certain instances we may be sure that the conception entertained is very deeply affected by the picture or pictures. The conclusion is surely apparent. By pictures of Christ we are laying ourselves open to the influence exerted by something that has no warrant in the only source we possess from which our conceptions of Christ are to be derived and the only norm by which they are to be determined and corrected. It is surely criminal to subject ourselves or others to such an influence. Deflection from truth in our conception of mere men is bad enough. But deflection from truth in the conception we entertain regarding our Lord is the sin that lies close to idolatry.

But to get back to the picture concerned. It does not purport to be a picture of Christ and Mary. On that assumption, however, does not the picture defeat the purpose it is alleged to serve? If the child does not represent Christ, why should the child have the centrality and why should the child be "the source of the light which streams from the picture?" Why play down the mother? Is a child more important than a mother? To play up a child in contradistinction from a mother is not *itself* Christian or Calvinistic. Surely two motifs were at work in the artist's mind and they are scarcely compatible with one another.

Again, the cross in the hand of the child "is intended," you say, "to illustrate the fact that even from His birth Christ had the cross in view." The child, then, after all, does represent Christ. For how can a child holding a cross in his hand represent the fact that Christ from His birth had the cross in view unless the child in question is intended to represent Christ in the days of his infancy? Besides, there appears to be dangerous confusion at this point. Our Lord was divine and in His divine knowledge He always knew that He was to suffer upon the accursed tree. But surely the picture is intended to represent Christ in His human nature, and what is represented is what came within the compass of His human knowledge. Now, what evidence do we possess that there came within the compass of our Lord's human consciousness from His birth, or even from the age represented by the picture, the knowledge of what is represented by the cross? To say the least, this is dubious theology. I fear that this is an example of what we are liable to slip into when we resort to improper media for conveying the truth concerning Him who is the mystery of godliness.

Others features merit comment; but I have already trespassed my limits. I have no doubt, Mr. Editor, that the artist's intents were noble. But I am also convinced that he has not been successful. Insofar as the picture of the child represents Christ, it is open not only to the principal objection stated at the outset, but also to a serious theological objection. Insofar as it does not represent Christ but only a child and his mother, then as a medium of conveying truth respecting Christ and His work it is something of a monstrosity.

With thanks for your indulgence, Mr. Editor, and with high esteem for Mr. Grove as a Christian gentleman and as an artist, but with little respect for the picture concerned.

JOHN MURRAY
Philadelphia, Pa.

Excerpts from other letters:

"... Art is so subjective that it could not possibly be called 'Calvinistic art,' or any other kind of art... even a picture representing the sovereignty of God very vividly to a Calvinist might confirm the skeptic in his unbelief... Art is the first step beyond the written word. . . ."

BRYCE T. SENTER
Denver, Colorado

"... The thousands upon thousands who saw Jesus of Nazareth in infancy and adult manhood, heard His words and viewed His works, could never discern the Lamb of God except through the eye of faith implanted by the Holy Spirit... It has pleased the Holy Spirit to employ but one implement, the ministry of the Word, to work in man knowledge leading to salvation... Be on guard that the preacher is not relegated to the background."

J. A. MERIZON
Grand Rapids, Michigan

"... It seems to me that Mr. Grove has taken a Madonna painting and has changed it around a little bit; he has placed the emphasis differently. But by rearranging and changing several objects we do not get a Calvinistic composition... Why on earth do we have to put up with the Roman Catholic pattern of mother and child, instead of taking our pattern from the Scriptures? Joseph, the son of David, who took his wife unto him at the command of the angel, there-with making his adopted son the legal heir to the throne of David is consistently missing in Roman Catholic paintings for obvious reasons: they put the emphasis upon the blessed one among women and her child... Joseph is in my opinion just as important a link in the divine revelation in the fulness of time as Mary is... Joseph and Mary ought to be in the picture with the Child in order to tie it in with the whole of God's revelation; only that will give, in my estimation, perspective to our artistic, Calvinistic evaluations of the Christ Child... Let us not try to reform the disorder of Rome, without attacking their dis-

ordered background, for the two are inseparably tied together..."

BERT MULDER
Philadelphia, Pa.

"... It seems to me that God's requirement, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy,' would demand that the Christian, if so qualified by the Holy Spirit, give expression to the sanctification which is of God, yes, in Calvinistic art. In that respect too the Calvinist is to think the thoughts after God, be it in actual production or in the appreciation of art. I believe Mr. Rene Grove has succeeded admirably in his painting *Mother and Child* to use art forms and media under the governing influence of the Calvinist world view. . . . In that Child I see portrayed the story of the Gospel. It is my cross-bearing Saviour, my glorious Lord..."

JOHN EHLERS
Willard, Ohio

Grace Church Missions Minded

THE Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles has recently been placing increased emphasis on the missionary work of the denomination. Says the pastor, the Rev. Robert H. Graham, "We feel it is sinful for our church to neglect its servants abroad. The entire offering of the Sunday school on the last Sunday of each month goes to Orthodox Presbyterian missions. A missionary dinner is held on the first Friday of each month. This is a pot luck dinner, so that no one is put to great expense for it. An offering is taken at each of these dinners, and this is given to Orthodox Presbyterian missions. Besides the duplex envelope on Sunday there is an offering plate on the table at the front door marked 'for missions.' The mission offering of this Home Missions church exceeded \$180 in the month of November, and all of it was sent to the Orthodox Presbyterian missions."

On Sunday, December 12, five persons were received into communicant membership in the church. During the pastor's absence December 19, the Rev. Louis Knowles conducted the services.

During 1948 the congregation was able to pay off over \$2,000 of its indebtedness on the church, as well as to make many noticeable improvements both to the exterior and interior of the building.

Beverly Church Buys Manse

LAST month we reported the dedication of the new church building of the Beverly Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles. Just too late to be included with that report, we received word that the church has also determined to purchase a manse. The building which for eight years has been rented and used as a manse was sold and it became necessary to secure new quarters. At a meeting January 6, the congregation approved a plan submitted by the trustees, calling for the purchase of a house located about five blocks from the church. The house is a three bedroom structure, with living and dining rooms adjoining in the shape of an "L" to make a large front room. There is also an attractive fire place.

Total cost of the new manse is \$11,500, which the congregation expects to meet through a down payment and monthly payments. Since the build is a G.I. resale, interest is at a low rate.

Old Stockbridge Dedicates Building

ON December 16, 1948 the new building of the Old Stockbridge Orthodox Presbyterian Church near Gresham, Wisconsin, was dedicated to the worship of God. The pastor of the church, which serves Indians on the neighboring reservation, is the Rev. John Davies.

At a service in the afternoon the Rev. Robert K. Churchill preached on the theme, "Christ the Chief Corner Stone," and the Rev. John Verhage of Bethel Church, Oostburg, brought the greetings of the Presbytery of Wisconsin. At a service in the evening the Rev. Harold Hillegas of Wausau, Wisconsin, gave an address on "The Importance of the Church." Mr. Hillegas was shepherd of the people of Old Stockbridge shortly before they left the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

In spite of icy roads, about fifty people attended the afternoon service, and there were 80 present in the evening. Many of them partook of a supper prepared by the ladies of the church and served in the manse.

The people of Old Stockbridge church are grateful to Almighty God for the church building He has given them, and they wish to take this oppor-

tunity for thanking all who had a part in helping to finish the building. Though the basement is not completely finished, and the furnace not yet installed, they are willing to wait for these.

On Christmas night about 110 people gathered in the new building for the Sunday school exercises. And about 30 people were present for a Watch Night Service New Year's Eve.

Hamilton to Korea Under Independent Board

THE Rev. Floyd E. Hamilton and Mrs. Hamilton have been appointed to foreign mission service in Korea by the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. The appointment is of a general character, with the understanding that the Korean station will determine the actual field of Mr. Hamilton's work. Mr. Hamilton has tentative reservations on the *President Buchanan* sailing March 10th, but these arrangements may be cancelled, as this ship does not go beyond Japan, and transportation for the remainder of the trip may be difficult to secure. Mr. Hamilton resigned his position with the New England Christian School Association as of February 1.

The Reverend and Mrs. Hamilton served under the Independent Board in Korea for several years prior to the World War II. The threat of war forced their return to this country in 1941, and shortly thereafter their service with the Board was terminated.

In 1946 they were placed under appointment for service in Korea, by the Foreign Missions Committee of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Shortly before the 1947 Assembly the Committee, having received a request from the Korea Theological Seminary for Mr. Hamilton to be sent there to teach, considered the question and decided that at that time they would not send Mr. Hamilton out for that purpose. The decision occasioned extended discussion at the 1947 Assembly, but members of the Committee were re-elected by the Assembly. When this decision, apparently interpreted by many as approval of the Committee's action, was announced, Mr. Hamilton indicated that he was withdrawing from his appointment by the Committee. Although the Committee endeavored to resume talks with Mr. Hamilton on the matter of his going to

Korea for general missionary service, and although the 1948 Assembly urged Mr. Hamilton to reapply to the Committee for this purpose, Mr. Hamilton refused to renew his application to the Committee.

During his stay in this country Mr. Hamilton served in a home missionary project in California, then for a time as general secretary of the Committee on Christian Education of the denomination. More recently he has been field secretary of the New England Christian School Association. In doctrinal discussions in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church recently, Mr. Hamilton took an active part in advocating the general positions represented by the views of Dr. Gordon H. Clark, and as a member of the Assembly's Committee on Doctrines, submitted a minority report to the 1948 Assembly.

Evergreen Park Work Progresses

ALL bids necessary for the erection of the proposed semi-colonial structure to be used as the church building of the Westminster Chapel in Evergreen Park, Illinois, have been received, according to the Rev. George W. Marston, pastor. Present plans call for breaking ground for the structure the first of March. The building is to be located on the north end of the lot on St. Louis Avenue. By its location and well planned design the building can, if desired in the future, be easily modified into a parish house, a 5 room manse, or a doctor's residence with consultation rooms. The south end of the lot, facing the village park and Christian school, affords a splendid location for future expansion.

In the Sunday school on December 19 the mercury shot out the top of the "Building Fund Thermometer" when \$216 was turned in from the church banks. The aim had been \$200 by Christmas. A new building fund aim of "\$200 by Easter" has been set. Each one dollar given colors a brick on a poster of the proposed church.

A mission band has been started in the Primary department of the Sunday school. Children bring offerings, and pray for the missionaries each Sunday. A Go-to-Church brigade was organized in the fall, and on January 9 seven of its members received gold cross pins for attendance. There are 35 pupils enrolled in the brigade.

The Glory of the Christian Church

By the REV. PROFESSOR R. B. KUIPER

XVII

THE CHURCH AND SALVATION

The Christian church is usually defined as the communion of believers. That amounts to saying that those who are saved constitute its membership. To be sure, the visible church has ever had unsaved persons among its members, but these are merely *in* the church, not *of* it.

On this view of the church there is considerable agreement in Christendom. But when it comes to the question precisely what is the relationship of the church to salvation, there is much disagreement. Can the church impart saving grace to men? Is church membership essential for salvation? Or does the Scriptural teaching of justification by faith alone imply that membership in the church is of little importance? To such questions various answers have been given.

Two Extreme Views

The teaching of the Roman Catholic church on this score is arrogant in the extreme. It says that Christ has indeed wrought salvation by His atoning death, but that He has committed the dispensing of salvation to the church. As a Leyden jar is used to store electricity, so, it is said, the church is a storehouse of saving grace, and but for this storehouse there is no way for one to receive the blessings of salvation. To change the metaphor, the church is a middleman between Christ, the author of salvation, and the sinner as the recipient of salvation, and God has ordained that the sinner can obtain salvation only through this middleman. In a word, the church has a monopoly on saving grace. Particularly through the instrumentality of the sacraments the church is said to impart saving grace. Therefore no one, not even an infant, who dies without the benefit of Baptism can be saved; and without the use of the Eucharist, or Holy Supper, no adult may expect to be saved.

This teaching of Rome can be understood only in the light of its basic error concerning the church—that the church is divine. It is said to be nothing less than Jesus Christ Himself in His earthly form, a reincarnation of Christ to the end of the continuation and completion of His redemptive work.

However, it can hardly be denied that the church consists of human beings. That being the case, Rome places a human mediator between God and the sinner. It denies Christ as the one and only Mediator. It causes the sinner to fall into the hand of faulty and fallible man rather than into the hand of the God of all grace.

Over against this teaching of Rome, the theological term for which is *sacerdotalism*, the Protestant reformers placed the doctrine of *evangelicalism*. In its simplest terms it is that God imparts the benefits of salvation to men directly, without the mediation of the church.

However, among the Protestants of the Reformation age were certain extremists known as Anabaptists. Rejecting the Roman Catholic claim that the church is divine, they went to the opposite extreme of belittling the church. According to them, if one believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, it matters little or nothing whether one is a member of the church.

To the present day the leaven of Anabaptism continues active in Protestantism. It is much in evidence among Darbyites, Dispensationalists and others. They like to play up Christianity against "churchianity." Many of them hold that the present church age is a relatively insignificant interlude between Christ's death and His second coming. Some of them go so far as to refuse to name a communion of believers a church. In their evangelistic preaching they often speak disparagingly of the church, and since they are less than insistent that converts unite with a church, it is not unusual for their converts to be satisfied to be affiliated with a mission rather than a

church, or even to remain altogether unaffiliated.

There is another large group that goes under the Protestant name and conceives of the connection between the church and salvation as exceedingly loose. The Modernists ridicule as quite outmoded the notion that church membership and salvation go hand in hand. While they do not deny that by and large it is a good thing to be a church member, they insist that the one requirement for entrance into the kingdom of God is nobility of character, and they are very certain that a host of men and women who have never committed themselves as undone sinners to the Christ crucified and have no desire to be members of His church, yet are loyal citizens of the kingdom. That, of course, is rank heresy.

Two Scriptural Truths

What does Holy Scripture teach concerning the relationship of the church to salvation? Without an attempt at a complete answer, it may be said that two truths stand out prominently.

In the first place, Scripture teaches unmistakably that all who are saved should unite with the church.

The Roman Catholic view that membership in the church is prerequisite to salvation has no basis whatever in Scripture. When the Philippian jailer asked what he should do to be saved, Paul said only: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The apostle did not command him to join the church. However, when he did believe he was at once baptized (Acts 16:31-33). As soon as the Ethiopian eunuch confessed Christ he likewise was baptized (Acts 8:36-38). Now baptism signifies reception into the church according to Paul's words: "By one spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Cor. 12:13). It is clear that in the days of the apostles it was universal practice to receive believers into the visible church.

What could be more logical? He who believes on Christ is united with Christ. Faith binds him to Christ.

He is a member of Christ's body, the invisible church. But the visible church is but the outward manifestation of that body. Every member of the invisible church should as a matter of course be a member of the visible church.

Extremely significant in this connection is Acts 2:47—"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Not only does Christ require of those who are saved that they unite with the church; He Himself joins them to the church.

Does it follow that he who is outside the visible church is necessarily outside Christ. Certainly not. It is possible that a true believer because of some unusual circumstance, might fail to unite with the church. Conceivably one might believe on Christ and die before receiving baptism. But such instances are exceptional. The Scriptural rule is that, while membership in the church is not a prerequisite of salvation, it is a necessary consequence of salvation.

A second teaching of Holy Writ on this subject is that it is the God-assigned task of the church to dispense the means of grace—the Word and the sacraments.

Rome is in grievous error when it asserts that the church dispenses *saving grace itself*. But so are they in error who overlook the fact the church dispenses *the means of saving grace*.

God employs but one means to impart faith to men. It is His Word, the Bible. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Now God has committed His Word to His church. As pillar and ground of the truth the church must uphold the Word of God (I Tim. 3:15). It is the no less sacred duty of the church to proclaim that Word to all nations (Matth. 28:19,20). When it pleases the Holy Spirit to call sinners effectually by the Word as preached by the church, believers come into being. It is because of this important role of the church in the birth of believers that the church deserves to be denominated *the mother of believers*. Believers are born of God through the church. To that truth the apostle Paul gave expression when he said: "Jerusalem which is above . . . is the mother of us all" (Gal. 4:26).

It is the function of a mother also to feed her children. The church does that too. By the preaching of the Word and the administration of the

sacraments the church nurtures her members and builds them up in the faith. And that, too, is an integral part of their salvation, for salvation is not merely a momentary experience but a process that continues to the very close of the believer's earthly life. To be sure, for results the church here also is utterly dependent on the grace of the Holy Spirit. Only when the sovereign God blesses the means of grace will they prove effective. But the fact remains that God has committed to the church the means for the spiritual growth of His children and that by faithfully dispensing these means the church, under God, makes a real con-

tribution to the salvation of God's elect.

We conclude that all the glory for man's salvation belongs to God and that none belongs to the church. But it is also true that it has pleased God to honor the church highly by committing to it the means of saving grace. The church plants and waters, but it is God that gives the increase. On the one hand, neither he that plants is anything nor he that waters, but God that gives the increase. On the other hand, the church has the glorious distinction of laboring together with God unto the salvation of men (I Cor. 3:6-9).

Unbelief in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (4)

Significant Lapses in the New "Outline of the Christian Faith"

By JOHN MURRAY

THE Shorter Catechism prepared by the Westminster Assembly is an incomparable compendium of Christian truth; of its kind and size it stands by itself. For this reason anyone who undertakes to prepare another Catechism of this type is at a great disadvantage; he is placed under the necessity of attaining to very high standards indeed if his work is to compare favorably with the Shorter Catechism.

It should not, of course, be maintained that the excellence of the Shorter Catechism renders entirely superfluous and presumptuous any further attempts at catechetical composition or simplification. Catechisms even simpler than the Shorter Catechism have been made, have performed great service and have had an honorable history. Any criticism that may be offered of the catechetical *Outline of the Christian Faith*, referred to in the title of this article, is not based on the assumption that it is unnecessary or wrong to prepare for the use of children and the un-instructed a catechism that will be shorter or more simplified than the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly. It is not the attempt or the undertaking that is being criticized; it is the character of the product.

In the criticism of the *Outline of the Christian Faith** which follows some of the language of more advanced theology will be used. In doing so it is not maintained that the *Outline* should have used such terminology. What is intended, rather, is to show how the *Outline* at certain points impinges very gravely upon the requirements of a sound Christian theology and therefore will create in the minds of those who receive its instruction conceptions which are at variance with the truth on matters concerned.

What Does the Bible Teach About God?

The answer of the *Outline* to this question is: "The Bible teaches that there is only one God, the living and true God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Regarding the distinction between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit it is noteworthy that the term "persons" is not used here, though it appears in the Children's Catechism, the Shorter Catechism, and the Intermediate Catechism of which this is a revision. Moreover one misses any

*Considerations of space make it inadvisable to include in this article a comparison of the *Outline* with *The Intermediate Catechism* (1913) of which the *Outline* is a revision.

statement regarding the attributes of God. Particularly is this the case when we are told in a preceding question that the Bible "was written by men who were guided by God to teach us about Himself and His will" and when the question here is: "What does the Bible teach about God?" We should certainly expect and would anticipate that even young people would look for some statement regarding the attributes of God. But we may allow this to pass. The "Commentary" on the *Outline*, written by Earl L. Douglass, chairman of the committee which prepared the *Outline*, quotes the Shorter Catechism answer to the question, "What is God?" and says that "human words and thoughts can probably not describe the nature and existence of God in clearer or more understandable language than this" (p. 9).

It is when we examine the way in which the doctrine of God is unfolded in subsequent questions that we discover what is patently defective and implicitly a deflection from the Christian position. This appears in connection with the answer to the question: "Who is God the Father?" The answer is "God the Father is the Creator of man and of all things, and He provides for His creatures and rules over all in wisdom, righteousness, and love." There are several strictures required in connection with this answer.

1. It indicates that the Father is to be distinguished by His creative, providential and governing activity. So the distinguishing property of the Father is defined in terms of His activity in connection with the created order; speaking in theological terms, the distinguishing property of the Father belongs to the economic sphere, to the *opera ad extra*. This goes directly counter not simply to Reformed and Protestant theology but also to Catholic (ecumenical). Ecumenical Christianity recognizes that the distinguishing property of the Father is immanent and eternal. There is here therefore a distinct deviation from one of the basic tenets of Christian theology.

It is not urged that a catechism of this sort should embody any *express* reflection upon the properties by which the persons of the Godhead are distinguished. That is not the point. The Shorter Catechism does not do that. It leaves such express formulation to the Larger Catechism and to the Confession. But omission is one thing; a statement which is overtly faulty and

IN 1947 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. approved for use in the home, the church school, and communicants' classes a new "Outline of the Christian Faith." This document is really a short catechism, designed to be intermediate between the Children's Catechism, and the Westminster Shorter Catechism. In form it constitutes a revision of an Intermediate Catechism adopted by the Church in 1913. It is published both separately, and with a "Commentary" which was written by Dr. Earl L. Douglass, chairman of the committee.

In the space at his disposal, Mr. Murray, who is Professor of Systematic Theology in Westminster Seminary, could deal with only a few points in this new *Outline*. That they are significant points, however, and that they clearly indicate a trend away from the truth, will be plain to the reader.

The sub-committee which prepared this new *Outline* consisted to a large extent of members of the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary, the leading seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

erroneous is another. One wonders how an answer which so obviously distinguishes the Father simply in terms of His relation to the created order could ever have been framed by Presbyterians and, particularly, how it ever could have been authorized by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Is it because theological discrimination has ebbed? Or is it due to carelessness? Or is a baneful theological bias at work?

This fault is not corrected by the answer given to a later question, "Who is Jesus Christ?" Here the answer is: "Jesus Christ is God's eternal and only begotten Son who, having humbled Himself to become man, is both God and man." Implied, of course, in the eternal Sonship of Christ is the eternal Fatherhood of the Father, and that is the property by which the Father is distinguished. But there is no explicit indication of the recognition of this on the part of the framers of this *Outline* and, more to the point, there is nothing explicit to this effect that will correct in the mind of the catechumen the conception derived from

the answer to the question: "Who is God the Father?" The catechumen, if he is to be guided by this *Outline*, will have to interpret that which distinguishes the Father in terms of His creative and providential activity.

2. This answer represents the Father as the agent in creation and providence. If it were said simply that the Father is active in creation, providence, and government this would be a true and all-important statement. But since these activities of the Father are mentioned in answer to the question: "Who is God the Father?" the idea is distinctly created and conveyed that the Father, in distinction from the Son and the Spirit, is the sole agent in creation, providence, and government. This notion and the conception created by it are not corrected or even modified by the "Commentary" at this point. They are rather confirmed.

It is true that, in reference to the Holy Spirit, this notion is modified later on. In answer to the question: "Who is the Holy Spirit?" it is said that "the Holy Spirit . . . is God active in the world." And the "Commentary" says at this point that "the Holy Spirit is God performing a certain office in the divine economy. He is God present and active in the world in which we live . . . The Holy Spirit . . . moved upon the face of the waters in the beginning and brought a created order out of chaos" (p. 27). But such statements cannot be said to offset entirely the erroneous conception created by the earlier answer given to the question: "Who is God the Father?" To say the least, the catechumen is going to be rather confused.

It is, however, in reference to Christ, the Son of God, that the seriousness of representing the Father as the sole agent in creation, providence, and government appears. In this connection it is surely necessary to be reminded that it belongs to the very essence of the doctrine of Christ as the Son to maintain that "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3), that "by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:16,17). We are not insisting that in a brief catechism or outline there must be reflec-

tion upon the agency of the specific persons of the Godhead in the work of creation and providence. But since this *Outline* attributes this work specifically to the Father and intimates that the Father is distinguished thereby, grave prejudice is done to the agency of the Son in creation and providence, and the conception framed in the mind of the learner is one that involves a marked deviation from Christian doctrine. Furthermore, the "Commentary" when it deals with the doctrine of Christ does not correct or modify this deviation.

We are not prepared to say that these deflections which appear in answer to the question: "*Who is God the Father?*" were deliberately intended. They compel us to ask serious questions. And we must say that if the requisite theological discrimination had been exercised and if jealousy for careful definition had been maintained, the committee could never have fallen into such censurable formulation.

What Is Sin?

The answer of the *Outline* to this question is: "Sin is that evil nature within us which leads us to disobey God or fall short of what He would have us be and do." In the most elementary instruction it is well for us to be reminded of the corruption of our whole nature and it is necessary, and wholesome to avoid the notion that sin consists simply in overt acts of transgression. Nevertheless one cannot but wonder why in answer to the question, "*What is sin?*" we should be told that it is the "evil nature within us," and we are compelled to ask the question if this is really a precise and proper answer. It is significant that the Scripture itself, notwithstanding all its emphasis upon the depravity of the human heart and its insistence that it is out of the heart all sins proceed, nevertheless defines sin in terms of the transgression of the law. The Shorter Catechism has given us a faithful transcript of this teaching when in answer to the same question it says, "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." However much of a gain it may appear to be to lay emphasis upon the inwardness of sin, we cannot but regard this definition of the *Outline* as a lapse rather than as a virtue. For when the Scripture focuses attention upon the principle of sin, in other words, upon its definition, it concentrates our thought upon sin as

a violation of the law or commandments of God. How eloquent in this regard is the first reproof that God addressed to man. Adam had fallen. He became corrupt and afflicted with an evil nature, and that was the fountain of his overt act of sin. But when God addressed him in reference to his sin He said, "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" (Gen. 3:11). This is fallen Adam's first lesson on the question of sin. And it is characteristic of Scripture to define sin in terms of transgression of the law. Of course there is a good reason for this. Sin has no meaning except as it has reference to a divine norm and as the violation of that norm. In other words, sin can never be reduced to lower terms than transgression of the law of God, and even the nature within us cannot be categorized as evil except as we presuppose that law of God by which it is to be measured and condemned as evil. The nature within is only evil because it is out of conformity with and in violation of that law. While, then, the emphasis upon the inwardness of sin in this definition and in the "Commentary" is to be appreciated and such emphasis regarded as altogether necessary in its own place, we cannot regard this definition of what sin is as any improvement but, instead, as a divergence from the orientation supplied by Scripture itself and followed so commendably by the Shorter Catechism.

In connection with the section in the *Outline* which deals with man and his sin, one misses any express allusion to the fall of Adam and of the race in him. It is surely important that the fall should be placed in this historical setting. But that is not done in this *Outline*. Is this a concession to the widespread rejection of the historicity of the story of the fall? The "Commentary" does say truly that "man has fallen from the perfect state in which God created him" and that the fall applies to all men (pp. 10f.). But, in dealing with this matter, it is not at all sufficient to say that "man's fall from divine perfection is not something that only a portion of humanity or certain classes of human society have experienced; it is the fate of all men. The twist of human frailty afflicts us all" (p. 10). We cannot but suspect the theology here, especially the concluding sentence. And this is just saying that the teaching of this section

both in the *Outline* and in the "Commentary" is quite inadequate for even elementary instruction, and, just because of this, is suspect.

What Is Salvation?

In the section in which this question appears, under the caption "Christ our Saviour," there is a great deal that is worthy of hearty endorsement, particularly in the "Commentary." The emphasis, for example, upon the Godhood of Christ, upon His unique and eternal Sonship, upon the virgin birth, is truly gratifying. And we would not wish to appear lacking in the proper appreciation and commendation of all that is Scriptural in this exposition. It is for that reason that the necessity of criticism is regrettable.

The answer of the *Outline* to the question, "*What is salvation?*" reads: "Salvation is the forgiveness of sin and the new life which God gives to those who believe in Jesus Christ." No person who has any intelligent understanding of the gospel would depreciate the significance of these aspects of salvation, and that they should receive distinct prominence in any Christian catechism is certainly to be granted. However, it is another matter to say that salvation is adequately defined in these terms. To be very pointed, one misses both in the *Outline* and in the "Commentary" any reference to justification. And this is quite amazing. The *Outline* and "Commentary" at this point betray an affinity with a great deal of present-day theology in which justification is thrust into the background or even discarded in favour of an emphasis upon the more restricted article of forgiveness. However important forgiveness is, whether viewed as the forgiveness dispensed once for all in justification or as the remission continuously administered to the believer, it is nothing less than a marked departure from the Christian gospel to suppress or discount the great article of justification. And that is precisely what is done here. It is thoroughly inexcusable. It is to omit from the gospel of salvation one of its most central and precious elements. The statement in the "Commentary" to the effect that forgiveness "gives us a new condition of righteousness before God, not because we are worthy but because God is willing to accept us for Jesus' sake as His children" (p. 15) cannot be regarded as remedying this conspicuous omission.

In line with this omission of justification in reference to salvation bestowed, the *Outline* contains not a word that would plainly express a forensic interpretation of the work of Christ. It is surely not asking too much that the *Outline* itself should contain something similar to the answer of the Shorter Catechism: "Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God: and in making continual intercession for us." Although the "Commentary" remedies this defect to some extent when it uses such terms as "reconciled to God through Jesus Christ" (p. 16), "the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross was a perfect sacrifice, a divine sacrifice" (pp. 19 f.), yet it will have to be said that even the "Commentary" is rather distinctly lacking in exposition and definition that would set in the forefront and unmistakably express a truly expiatory and redemptive interpretation of the meaning of Christ's death. One wonders what theology underlies such statements as the following: "The sin of man put Christ on the cross. He died because He would not yield to the ways and desires of a sinful world. By His death He removed the barrier that stood between sinful man and holy God.

"His death defied sin and broke its power. The death of Jesus Christ was on our behalf. It was for us. It manifested the eternal heartbreak of God. And because the Son—even in the face of great anguish—gave Himself unto death, our whole relationship to God has been changed. Men may now know Him as a loving Father" (p. 19).

Another striking fact is that neither in the *Outline* nor in the "Commentary" do we have any reference to election or to the covenant of grace. God's saving provision for lost men, therefore, is not oriented to that which is its source nor conceived of as the fulfillment of God's covenant purpose. This is not a peripheral defect. The more we study the Biblical revelation the more we become convinced that God's redemptive and saving action in the world is covenantal and that no true account can be given of salvation in any of its aspects except as it is grounded in an appreciation of God's covenant provisions and purposes.

There are other features of this *Outline* that merit comment. However we

cannot extend this appraisal any further. Many true and fine things are said in the *Outline* and "Commentary," but if we were to assess both in a few words we should be compelled to say that they evince that decline which has been developing in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. for a long time. Though this decline may not be as obvious in these documents as in the others being considered in this series,

yet certain symptoms are here present. To change the figure, the deep and wide breakthroughs in the line of witness to the truth of the gospel may not be as apparent in the *Outline*. But the line is broken, and it is sad to know that the witness to be borne in "Communicants' Classes," in the "Church School" and in the "Home" is a broken line and therefore open to alien incursions.

Orthodox Presbyterian Church News

Franklin Square, L.I.: On Sunday evening, January 2, Mr. Walter Vikestead, a student at Houghton College, was speaker at the Franklin Square church . . . Three persons were received into church membership on January 9 . . . The Loyalty Fund drive is meeting with a good response.

Portland, Me.: The Second Parish Sunday school has decided to meet before the church service, instead of after. The changed schedule began on Sunday, January 16, and it is hoped that an increase in attendance will result . . . A fellowship dinner was held at the church, Tuesday, January 11, at which plans for the re-decoration of the church building were discussed . . . The pastor, the Rev. Calvin Busch, with some of the young people, conducted services at the City Hospital on Sunday afternoon, January 16 . . . Three persons were received into church membership on January 9.

Fairlawn, N.J.: At the Bible School program on December 23 there were 80 persons in attendance, some of whom were visiting the Grace Chapel for the first time. On January 20 a sub-committee of the denominational Committee on Home Missions visited the community and met with representatives of the Chapel to discuss the future of the work. Considerable enthusiasm is being aroused for the building of a church home. A member of the church, Mr. Van Putten, who is an engineer with a construction firm in Paterson, has drawn revised plans for a beautiful colonial type of building . . . Miss Barbara Shepard, a member of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Hamden, Conn., who is now teaching in the North Fourth

Street Christian School of Paterson, is part time pianist for the church.

Hamill, S.D.: The Westminster Church enjoyed a visit from the Rev. John P. Galbraith, general secretary of the denominational Committee on Home Missions, the second week of December. Though the weather was unfavorable and attendance at the scheduled meeting small, Mr. Galbraith was able to visit most of the homes, and new interest and confidence in the work of the church at large was awakened . . . A men's society has been organized and meets twice each month. A period of Bible study begins the meeting, followed by a 15 minute recess during which light refreshments are served. Then there is a discussion of some topic of current interest, suggested and introduced by the leader of the evening.

Schenectady, N.Y.: On Sunday, January 9, three covenant children were baptized at Calvary Church . . . On Sunday, January 2, the pastor, the Rev. Raymond Meiners, was assisted by the Rev. Herbert DuMont of Rochester, in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

Albany, N.Y.: The Machen League of the Church of the Covenant sponsored the New Year's Eve service, which was featured by the playing of recorded selections from Handel's *Messiah*. The pastor, the Rev. Herman T. Petersen, has been conducting a communicant's class for persons desiring to unite with the church.

Oostburg, Wisc.: At the service of Bethel Church on January 2, the Rev. Egbert W. Andrews, missionary to China now home on furlough, was the guest speaker. On Monday evening

he showed slides of the work in China. Bethel conducts services each month at the Park Lawn Home in Sheboygan and at the County Hospital. A catechism class, composed of 27 youths of high school age, meets on Wednesday evening, and some 50 children of grade school age meet in 3 classes on Saturday morning. During 1948 the congregation had a record number of births—16 infants arrived and all doing well!

Los Angeles, Calif.: The Rev. Robert H. Graham of Grace Church has accepted a call to become the pastor of the Covenant Church of Berkeley, whose pastor until recently was the Rev. Robert K. Churchill. Grace Church is interested in hearing from ministers or licentiates interested in candidating. The secretary of the pulpit committee is Mrs. Paul Archer, 9964 So. Hobart Blvd., Los Angeles 44.

Bend, Oregon: The Westminster Church is making a special effort to extend the practice of the family altar. Pledge cards have been distributed, containing a declaration of intention to maintain or re-establish the practice of family and private worship in the home daily. The example of Westminster Church might be followed in other congregations. The Rev. Robert Nicholas is pastor of Westminster.

New Jersey Presbytery

THE Presbytery of New Jersey of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church met at Crescent Park on January 18 with thirteen ministers and elders present. Among various items of business, the following are of special interest.

Presbytery heard the report of its special commission appointed to visit Immanuel Church of West Collingswood. The purpose of this Commission was to consider the request of Immanuel church that it be divided, and the portion of the congregation worshipping in Crescent be established as a separate church. The Commission had met with the elders of the proposed new church and examined them, and being satisfied had established the new Immanuel Church of Crescent Park. A call from that church for the pastoral services of the Rev. Robert W. Eckardt was approved, and plans were made for his installation on February 18, 1949.

One hour was spent in a considera-

tion of the first doctrine in the report on doctrines sent down by the General Assembly. Presbytery also spent nearly two hours discussing the question of the Assembly's proposal concerning affiliation with the American Council of Christian Churches. It was finally decided to approve the proposal authorizing the next Assembly to seek such affiliation.

The Moderator appointed a committee of three to investigate the propriety of granting letters of dismissal to ministers desiring to transfer to the United Presbyterian denomination. The committee appointed consists of Dr. W. H. Bordeaux, the Rev. B. A. Coie and Elder DeJonge of East Orange.

In the evening Presbytery proceeded to the examination of Candidate Theodore J. Georgian for licensure. The examination was satisfactorily sustained, and Mr. Georgian was licensed. He is at present serving as supply of Grace Church, White Horse.

The Moderator and Clerk of Presbytery were appointed a committee to arrange for the next meeting of the presbytery.

Philadelphia Presbytery

THE January meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia was held at the Eastlake Church, Wilmington, Delaware on Monday, January 17. In addition to routine matters, two items of special interest occupied the attention of delegates.

Some time ago the congregation of New Covenant Church in Philadelphia made certain proposals to other Philadelphia churches concerning a merger. The New Covenant congregation also ceased holding services, and its members attended other churches. More recently services have been resumed, with most of the former members in attendance. However, the one elder and his family have continued attending another church. Mr. Bradford, Moderator of the session, reported on the situation to the Presbytery. After some discussion, Presbytery passed a motion declaring "its conviction that it is expedient for the welfare of the New Covenant Church and the furtherance of the gospel for the members of the New Covenant congregation to unite with another Orthodox Presbyterian

Church in Philadelphia. If the members of the New Covenant Church feel that conscientious scruples prevent their so uniting, the Presbytery urges them prayerfully to review and examine the adequacy of such scruples." This congregation maintains in worship the practice of the exclusive use of psalms without instrumental accompaniment, and the use of wine in communion.

Presbytery had before it information that elders of Calvary Church, Willow Grove, and of Faith Church, Quarryville, had called meetings of their respective congregations, apparently with a view to considering the possibility of withdrawing from the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination. On the basis of this information Presbytery appointed two committees of three members each to visit the respective churches. A meeting of the session of each church was called, in accordance with provisions of the *Form of Government*, to be held prior to the congregational meeting, at which the sessions were to be urged to maintain the peace and unity of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The committees were also to attend the congregational meetings and to urge the people to remain loyal and active congregations of the denomination. In addition a communication was ordered sent to the pastors of these churches, asking them at the earliest opportunity to instruct their people in the nature and sin of schism in the church of Christ.

The committees appointed consisted of Ministers Stonehouse, Clelland and Coie to visit Willow Grove, and Ministers Marsden and Philips and Elder Windle to visit Quarryville.

Elder Lewis Roberts of Calvary Church, Middletown, Penna., was elected treasurer of Presbytery, to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Walter P. Smyth from that office.

Other items of business included the passing of an overture asking the Assembly to appoint a committee to prepare a hymnal for the church, the passing of an overture asking the Assembly to appoint Dr. Stonehouse as a delegate to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Amsterdam this summer, and referring to pastors and sessions certain doctrinal papers sent down by the last Assembly. Presbytery postponed to its next meeting consideration of the Assembly's proposal concerning affiliation with the American Council.

Quarryville, Willow Grove Churches Withdraw

IN response to a call from the elders of Faith Church, Quarryville, a congregational meeting was held at the church on January 26, at which time the congregation, by a reported vote of 31-3, determined to withdraw from The Orthodox Presbyterian denomination. A committee appointed by Presbytery to attend this meeting was denied permission to attend by the session of the church.

A congregational meeting of Calvary Church, Willow Grove, was held on the same evening. Representatives from Presbytery were present at this meeting, but only one of them was permitted to speak. After about a three hour session, the meeting recessed for two weeks.

The congregational meeting of Calvary church reconvened on Wednesday evening, February 9. Presbytery's representatives were again present, and were permitted to speak for a limited time, and then withdrew before the meeting closed. Following further discussion, the meeting, according to information from the pastor, Dr. Robert Strong, voted "overwhelmingly" to withdraw. Other information indicates that there were less than 75 persons present for the meeting, and that the vote to withdraw was 58-14. The Minutes of the 15th Assembly indicate the last reported communicant membership of the church as 336.

Dr. Strong also informed us that the session of Calvary Church had been authorized to enter into association with the session of the Quarryville Church. Such action, if consummated, would constitute the beginning of a new denomination.

Travel Fund Committee Issues Appeal

THE Committee on the Travel Fund for the 16th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has issued the following appeal, which we gladly print.

"For a number of years the churches and ministers of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church located on the Pacific shore have strongly urged that a General Assembly meet in that area.

"On July 21, 1949, for the first time in the history of our church, the G. A. is scheduled to meet within the bounds of the Presbytery of California, prob-

ably in the vicinity of Los Angeles.

"We believe it is wise and proper that the Assembly should have made the above decision, for we remember the great inconvenience and expense to which the western Presbyters have been put for many years. It will be fine for the ministers from other areas to see first hand the rapidly developing western territory, and the promising field it constitutes for our church, and to get acquainted with some of the finest congregations in our entire assembly.

"Great emphasis has been placed upon urging commissioners to make this a vacation trip for their families. If this is done, it will mean a smaller number of commissioners traveling in each car, and greater expense to the commissioner because of the family members accompanying him and the lack of commissioners along to share in the costs.

"The Committee on Travel Fund of the 16th General Assembly believes that each congregation will recognize the imperative need for the largest travel fund this year which we have ever had. The Committee likewise believes that there will be an extraordinary expression of generosity on the part of the people, so that every financial encouragement they can offer will be given to assure excellent attendance at this important Assembly.

"All gifts of individuals and congregations intended for this purpose should be plainly so indicated and mailed to either of the two following addresses: The Rev. John P. Galbraith, Schaff Building, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia 2, Pa.; or The Committee on Travel Fund, the Rev. Wm. Harlee Bordeaux, Suite 411-412, 15 Park Row, New York 7, N. Y.

"A receipt will be promptly sent from whichever office receives the contribution. It will be of great help if donations might be received as soon as possible, so that information concerning receipts may be made known by the Committee, thereby encouraging larger attendance."

Van Bruggen at West Collingswood

DR. JOHN VAN BRUGGEN, Educational Director of the National Union of Christian Schools, was the guest at a meeting of the Christian School Association of West Collings-

wood held in Immanuel Church January 25. The evening meeting was preceded by a covered dish supper, attended by members of the Board and friends. Speaking briefly at this time, Dr. Van Bruggen reported that the recent campaign for a fund for text books and a headquarters for the Union had gone over the top. The goal set was \$100,000, but this figure had already been exceeded in actual cash, while a considerable amount in pledges was still outstanding. Committees are already at work on various aspects of the textbook program.

A feature of the evening was the presentation of a series of musical numbers by the chorus of the Christian Day School, under the direction of Mrs. Gorgodian. There was a duet, and a trumpet solo, as well as group singing.

In his address in the evening, Dr. Van Bruggen declared that the Christian School movement seeks to act in terms not of a one-story intellect, or a two-story intellect, but of a "three-story intellect with a skylight." It consists of those who want to teach their child concerning not only the present, or even the present and the past, but also concerning the future, and the child's relation to God. There are many forces in our current life which oppose this effort at God-centered education. But Dr. Van Bruggen declared he thought it especially significant that just at the time when secular forces were so extensively invading all of life, even the church, the Christian School movement was showing unprecedented growth all over the country. Continually, said Dr. Van Bruggen, he is hearing of additional schools he never knew about, and he has information concerning a number planning to open this fall.

In conclusion the speaker emphasized the fact that we must let our Christian convictions speak loudly. Those convictions are the centrality of God for all of life, the fact that our children stand in covenant relation to God and should be trained in terms of the precious promises to which they are heir, the fact that as children of the King they should want to live as such, and that we should in all things labor to bring up our children in an environment where God is truly honored.

About sixty persons attended the supper, and over 100 were present for the evening meeting of the Association.

The GUARDIAN NEWS COMMENTATOR

VUEWING THE NEWS FROM THE RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE AND THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR PRESS

Church Union Programs Meet Apathy and Opposition

TWO specific programs for church union are currently attracting attention in their respective denominations. For several years the United Presbyterians and the Reformed (Dutch) Church of America have been talking merger. A joint committee of the two denominations which recently met in Kalamazoo completed final revisions of its plan of union, and voted to submit the proposal to the General Assembly and General Synod of the two churches this year. It is hoped that the plan will be sent down to local presbyteries and classes, but a request was made that the voting on it not be done until after January 1, 1950.

Recently the *United Presbyterian* has carried several articles both for and against the proposed union. The argument against the union, as voiced by one writer, was that there was a general apathy and indifference on the part of the members to the whole thing, that it was largely planned and motivated from the top, and especially that the natural course of union for the U.P. church should be with the Presbyterians North and South, rather than with the Reformed church. In reply another writer maintains that attempts are being made to "get acquainted" and that since union with the Southern Presbyterians was rejected in 1912, and with the Northern Presbyterians was rejected in 1934, either the union with the Reformed Church must go through now or the U.P. church will be settled in its path of isolation. He also suggests that if union with the Reformed church is consummated, the newly merged body will be in a good position to renew negotiations with the Northern Presbyterians, because "union seems to beget union." Neither of these writers gives much attention to the doctrinal bases of such a union.

Another union negotiation currently under consideration is that between the Congregational-Christian denomination and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Here the chief opposition seems to be on the part of a minority of the Congregationalists who have organized into an "antimerger" group and have indicated that they are prepared to fight to the finish, even to the extent of going into court to claim the property in case a merger takes place. Here there is perhaps more of an issue of principle at stake. For the Evangelical and Reformed Church is more inclined to recognize synodical and denominational authority, while the Congregational denomination historically adheres to the idea of local autonomy. *The Christian Century* is doing its best to promote the union cause, denouncing the opposition as "diehard obstructionism at its worst."

The particular problem in this union is that the proposed merger has received the approval of only 72 per cent of the Congregational Christian churches, while a decision made some time ago required the approval of 75 per cent. The General Council met the first week in February to decide what to do in view of the missing 3 per cent. The urge to "go ahead anyway" was strong.

One D. P. for Each Congregation

THE American Council of Christian Churches has adopted the slogan of "One D.P. Family for each congregation." The Council feels that the need for bringing D.P.'s to this country and freedom is so great that each congregation should try to work out arrangements to care in some way for one D.P. family. The U.S. Government defrays the cost of transportation

to America, but requires that there shall be guaranteed to the D.P. work which will not deprive another, housing which will not deprive another, and wages in agreement with the prevailing rate for the type of work done. Persons interested in further information may communicate with the American Council, 15 Park Row, New York 7, N. Y.

26,000 Church Fires

DURING the ten years ending in 1947 there were 26,000 church fires in the United States and Canada. Cost of the average church fire was over \$65,000. A study of a sampling of these fires indicated that over half occurred during the winter months, suggesting defective heating equipment as the cause. However fires occurred in all months, and apparently also in all localities, cities as well as rural areas. Those having the oversight of church property would do well to maintain a constant watch for fire hazards, and defective heating or wiring should be corrected immediately upon discovery.

If the Klan Comes

THERE have been several instances recently in southern states of the Ku Klux Klan visiting the services of local churches. In one case when the hooded crowd appeared children screamed, the pianist fainted, and a number of persons announced their withdrawal from the church.

The minister's Association in Chattanooga has recommended that if the Klan visits a church service, the presiding minister should ask them to remove their hoods, or leave the church. If they refuse, then he should close the service promptly and call the police. Pastors were also asked to refuse any money gifts the Klan might offer the churches, as this was in the nature of "bribe money."

Presbyterian Historical Foundation

THERE exists in Montreat, N.C., the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Inc. This foundation maintains a building in which are housed items of interest to historically minded Presbyterians. Though the chief interest of the organization appears to be the Southern Presbyterian Church, materials collected at the Foundation cover all churches of Reformed persuasion, including those of Scotland and the Netherlands.

One project of particular interest is the history of women's work in the Southern church. It comprises more than four hundred volumes, and is growing through constant additions prepared by local historians.

The Foundation also possesses numerous old Bibles, including a Latin Vulgate printed in 1478, a Great Bible of 1540, and a copy of the King James Version printed in 1611. Among recent "Acquisitions of Interest" the *Foundation News* lists the "Minutes of the 1948 General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church" which includes "a 96-page Appendix dealing with certain theological matters that were before that body."

Missions Conference Rejects Merger

THE Foreign Missions Conference of North America has refused to participate in a proposed merger of nation-wide religious organizations seeking the formation of a National Council of the Churches of Christ. By a decision of 63 to 51 it voted against affiliation. The proposed Council was to include eight interdenominational agencies, one of which was the Federal Council. Opposition to affiliation apparently stemmed from the Southern Baptists.

Lutheran Union Endorsed

REPRESENTATIVES of the eight members of the National Lutheran Council have approved the union of their denominational groups, and have appointed a committee to make a structural plan for the merger. The proposed plan is to be submitted to a second meeting of representatives, and

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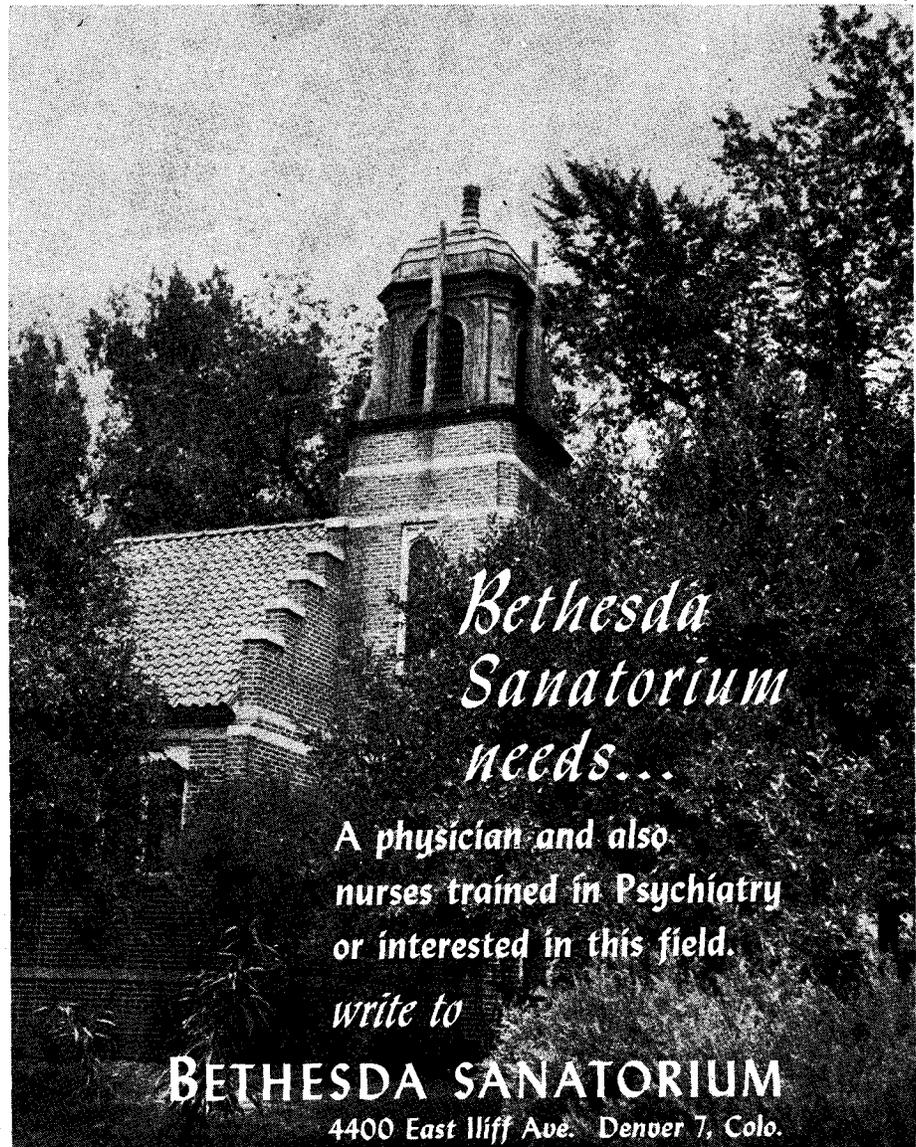
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then referred to the 1949 conventions of the participating bodies.

Churches included in the program are the American Lutheran, United Lutheran, Augustana Lutheran, United Evangelical Lutheran, Danish Lutheran, Evangelical Lutheran, and two other bodies. Notably absent is the Missouri Synod. The participating churches have a combined membership of about four million.

Air Rate Discount For Clergy

UNITED AIR LINES has filed notice of a plan to grant a 25 per cent discount on basic airline fares to clergymen. The proposed tariff is to be filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board and if approved would become effective March 1. A clergy card certifying ministers for this reduced fare would be available for an annual fee of \$3.

Wade Visits China Missionary

CHAPLAIN EDWIN L. WADE, Orthodox Presbyterian minister aboard the U.S.S. *Henrico* and at present in the western Pacific, has had a

number of opportunities to visit the Rev. Richard B. Gaffin, missionary stationed in Shanghai. Chaplain Wade was in Peiping for a week in October, and was at Shanghai for two periods of three weeks each in November and December. In his letter, dated January 13, he spoke of the wonderful work which Mr. Gaffin was doing. Chaplain Wade feels that the people over here little realize their privileges and responsibilities in the matter of foreign missions. He suggests that the best way to wake us up would be a 2 or 3 weeks visit to the field. "Such an experience results inevitably in an overwhelming burden for the desperate need of these multitudes without Christ, and the infinitesimally and pitifully small forces on hand to meet the need—yet, at the same time, an unbounded joy and pride in having the least part in meeting that need through having one's own representative on the field in such a person as Dick Gaffin. I spent weeks—days and nights—chasing all over that part of China with him to all the different places he goes and watching him at work; and I'd get so proud of him some times I'd feel like I was going to burst from inside . . ."

Chaplain Wade was scheduled to leave for San Diego on February 12.

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