

July 15, 1958

Vol. 27, No. 7

The Presbyterian
G U A R D I A N

CONTENTS

Reformed Ministers in a Secular Culture

By S. Bruce Willson

*General Assembly:
Concluding Report and Comment*

By Leslie W. Sloat

Editorial — Church News

The Presbyterian Guardian will not be published in August. The next issue will appear under a September 15 date-line.



The Rev. and Mrs. George Y. Uomoto and family, who leave on August 1 to resume their missionary work in Japan. Not in this picture, Hope K., born in February.

Missionary Travel Schedules

The Herbert Bird and Donald Taws families are to sail from New York on August 8, aboard the freighter Concordia Fjord for Eritrea, East Africa. Mr. and Mrs. Bird will be returning from a year's furlough, and Mr. and Mrs. Taws will be entering for the first time into foreign mission work.

The Rev. and Mrs. George Y. Uomoto will leave from the west coast on August 1 to return to missionary work in Japan.

The Rev. and Mrs. Bruce F. Hunt expect to leave the west coast about August 15, on their way back to mission work in Korea.

The Rev. and Mrs. R. Heber McIlwaine arrived in this country from Japan on June 28. At present they are living in Greenville, S. C.

Duffs Have Illnesses

Word from Eritrea is that both the Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Duff have recently suffered physical ailments.

In May Mrs. Duff entered the hospital in Asmara for a minor operation on one eye. Lashes were growing on the "third lid," a small piece of skin in the corner of the eye, and this kept the whole eye irritated. The operation was for the removal of this third lid. Mrs. Duff has returned home and resumed her usual work, though at last report she still suffered some soreness in the eye, and was continuing medication.

Mr. Duff has been troubled with what appeared to be a bronchial condition. Finally on advice of the doctor he entered the hospital for extended examination and treatment as might be required. The latest report is that

he is improving under the medication being provided. He expected to be in the hospital at least a month, possibly a little longer. In letters from the hospital he has indicated he feels much improved, and even feels a little "silly" at being in a hospital, but the X-rays show that the condition has not completely cleared (as of July 8).

Boardwalk Chapel Program

The summer activities at the Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, N. J., are now being carried on, under the general direction of Mr. Richard Hodgson of Marblehead, Mass. Guest speakers for successive weeks beginning July 28 are: July 28-Aug. 3 - Leslie A. Dunn; Aug. 4-10 LeRoy B. Oliver; August 11-17 Robert W. Eckardt; Aug. 18-24 Carl J. Reitsma; August 25-31 Calvin A. Busch; September 1-7 Leonard Chanoux.

The Chapel Committee continues to make improvements in the facilities at the Chapel. The locker rooms are being improved for the use of visitors. An apartment has been rented for the use of the guest speaker and his family. Groups from the Vineland and Bridgeton churches come on Wednesday and Thursday nights, to help with the services.

Visitors to Wildwood are cordially invited to attend services at the Chapel, held each night in the week. Those who may be able are invited to contribute to the work, to help defray expenses. The Chapel is a project of the Presbytery of New Jersey of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Westminster Opening

The exercises opening the next academic year at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia will be held on Wednesday, September 17, at 3 p.m. in Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church adjacent to the Seminary. The Rev. William D. Gray of Downtown Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee is to bring the message. The public is invited to be present for this occasion.

All members of the faculty are to be in residence during the coming year. Recent indications were for an entering class of about 25, and a total enrollment of about 80.

The Presbyterian Guardian is published monthly, except August, by the Presbyterian Guardian Publishing Corporation, 728 Sehoff Building, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia 2, Pa., at the following rates, payable in advance for either old or new subscribers in any part of the world, postage prepaid: \$2.50 per year; \$1.00 for four months; 25c per single copy. Entered as second class matter March 4, 1937, at the Post Office at Philadelphia, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Reformed Ministers In A Secular Culture

By S. BRUCE WILLSON

The invitation to share in this significant occasion in the life of the Seminary is a distinct honor, and for this privilege I thank you. Westminster Seminary and the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary represent the same general theological and religious perspective. We are not merely Protestant, we are Reformed. We share a common indebtedness to Calvin. We share a God-given burden to teach and proclaim the truth concerning the Sovereign God.

To those members of the class we honor this day, this is your "commencement day." It may not seem to be a time for historical retrospection. You may rightly insist that both the day and the occasion require a contemporary emphasis on the need of the world for the gospel today.

It is to be our concern to consider the advisability of taking inventory of the capital of our Reformed Faith with a view to investing it for our Lord.

Those of you who are undertaking the task of the ministry, either in a pastorate, as a missionary, or as a teacher have no doubt discovered already that your personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ is bringing you into conflict with the very world in which you live and which you hope to serve in the highest sense of the term.

To you is given the privilege and the duty, the satisfaction and the heart-ache, the exuberance and the discouragement

that is part and parcel of the work of the ministry.

For to us is given "an open door and there are many adversaries." We are to be REFORMED MINISTERS IN A SECULAR CULTURE.

The Meaning of Culture

What is this "culture" in which our ministry is to take place, and to which our preaching is directed? Is there any significance in the term "secular" that would distinguish our

task from those in other cultures who have been called to be God's prophets, apostles, missionaries, ambassadors, pastors, overseers, teachers, watchmen, lights, and angels. (To mention only a few of the titles used in Scripture.)

Our word "culture" is derived from the Latin "colere" which means literally, "the breaking up, the developing and cultivating of the resources of the earth." It is applied to both the process of breaking up the ground, whether done with a crude adze or a Tournapul earth-mover; or to the resultant condition, whether it is a plowed field, an experimental seed-bed, or the composite result of men's work to produce a human society.

The origin of "culture" is found in the first recorded command of God to man,

"Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and SUBDUE IT; AND HAVE DOMINION over the fish . . . the fowl . . . every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28)

God created all things. In this earth of created things, He proclaimed man to be king, to have dominion over nature. But this is to be no humanly autonomous authority. He is to be subject of the Sovereign God.

At this point Scripture describes the tragedy of all human culture. For the very kings who were to bring all nature under the dominion of the Living God, fail to subdue their own souls in love and obedience to their Creator. The task of "cultivating nature" is made infinitely more difficult and complex for man who is no longer in partnership with God. His "loss" is a loss of fellowship and

Dr. Willson is President of the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary in Pittsburgh. This is the text of the address he delivered on the occasion of the Commencement exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary in May.

more. And the loss of fellowship is made more acute by the pronouncement of a curse.

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return." (Gen. 3:17-19)

In this connection, Dr. J. H. Bavinck, Professor of Missions at the Free University of Amsterdam has said, "Man is at the same time *subject* and *object* in the process of cultivation: he cultivates and he needs cultivating himself. Culture is the subjection of the world to our purposes and it is at the same time the subjection of our hearts to God's purposes. It is our kingship over the world, and it is God's kingship over us. The first part of it may be called the agricultural and technical side of culture. The second part is the spiritual and moral side of it. All real culture is a well balanced unity of technical and spiritual forces." (p. 53, *Impact of Christianity on the Non-Christian World*)

Dr. Bavinck goes on to define culture in these terms: "The Culture of a people is that complex of spiritual, moral, technical and agricultural forces wherein a tribe or a people tries to express its basic feelings toward God, towards nature, and towards itself. The culture of a people is its common attitude toward life, its style of living and thinking, rooted in its apprehension of reality." (*Ibid.* p. 55.)

If we can use this definition as a basis for further discussion, we will note three things which are of significance to the Reformed Minister.

1. That each clan, tribe, nation, or civilization has certain qualities and attitudes which distinguish its thinking and living from other groups. Of this the minister should be aware.

2. Throughout all the history of human cultures, while recognizing these distinguishing features, there is revealed by God's word a basic need which is common to all.

3. Recognizing this basic need to be sin, God has taken the initiative in the redemption of His own. In His Sovereign Love, He has chosen to delegate men as His prophets, to "speak forth his word."

"That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not

imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." (II Cor. 5:19)

The humanistic and naturalistic disciplines of this mid-20th Century would describe differences of culture in terms of tools and weapons made of stone or flint, bone or ivory, copper, bronze, or iron. The use of fire and the wheel differentiates one culture from another. The types of pottery, of the weaving of fibres, of building, of paintings are all carefully noted. The differences of burial practices and the use of magic and ritual are considered as evidences of primitive religion, and form an integral part of culture. Over against the naturalistic evolutionary theory of cultures, there is the Christian culture as evidenced in the development in the cultivation of nature, while man is making his departure from the primitive knowledge of the true God and is continuing in rebellion against Him.

The Biblical record indicates some of the various types of culture to which His prophets were sent, their various degrees of rebellion. Moses speaks for God to a nation in process of being welded into a cultural unity under the benevolent providence of God and under His chastening afflictions. Elijah challenges Israel to cease to "halt between two opinions" and choose between the unifying loyalty to the One True God, as over against the attempted syncretism of the Baal Cult. Isaiah pleads with a covenant-breaking culture:

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward." (Isa. 1:2-4)

Jonah is told:

"Arise, go to Ninevah, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." (Jonah 1:2)

And here manifests God's concern for the repentance of a pagan culture. Ezekiel was commissioned to prophesy to a Covenant people in a non-covenant culture.

"Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and al-

though I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come." (Ezek. 11:16)

Peter, whether he preached to the Jews in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, or to the Italian Cornelius and his household in Caesarea was God's prophet to people in a given culture, but with a common need. Paul is Christ's ambassador whether he is speaking in Antioch of Pisidia, Athens' Areopagus, or writing to those "called to be saints" in Rome, and he carefully directs his message to the "culture" of those to whom that gospel is presented.

Need for the Gospel

The essential difference between cultures as seen in the light of the presentation of God's gracious gospel, has not been in the external artifacts of agricultural, technical, social or political attempts to cultivate the earth for his own use. It is found rather in the moral and spiritual attitudes of the human heart toward God. Modern man has succeeded wonderfully in "subduing the nature" that is outside himself, but is failing dreadfully in pacifying the nature within himself, for he will not acknowledge the ultimate source of his authority.

In spite of the differences in culture, the Christian minister cannot escape the conclusion that there is a basic simplicity to the message of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, because it is addressed to a need which is common to all.

Every culture is in need of the great commission.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20)

All nations (none excepted), including America, have need of the declared word of God. Bavinck titles his book: *The Impact of Christianity on the Non-Christian World*. His analysis of the problems of Christian missions is excellent. His description of the conflict that can be expected in mission lands should be studied carefully by every prospective missionary to a foreign field. Those of us whose lives and interests are "western" rather than "eastern," whose ministry is di-

rected to the American culture, should read such studies with care lest we conclude that ours is a totally Christian culture and therefore beyond the scope of the Christian impact of the gospel. It is for this reason that the preaching of the Biblically grounded, systematically developed Christian faith meets either a polite indifference or a hostile resistance in America today. A faithful presentation of the warnings, promises, and claims of the Sovereign God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit challenges the most zealously defended tenet of a popularly held "Americanism." Our culture may be distinguished in many ways from those found in Africa, Asia, Europe or Indonesia. Language, customs, religious traditions would all set us apart. Yet even the cultures of the non-Christian world today have their gods to whom their family and social customs are related.

While in the nominally Christian western world, our customs and traditions are closely linked with the Bible and the belief in and worship of God, yet in the field of economics, in education, in politics, and even in religion, there has been a gradual separation between a theocentric philosophy of life, and one which seeks to relate all our existence to "this world only." The meaning of the word "secular" is "of this world." The refrain of Kohaleth in the Ecclesiastes is pertinent to our day, as he sought to find the answer to the riddle of life "under the sun." Our American culture is largely determined by an "under the sun"--a "this world is enough to deal with" philosophy, which in turn sets the tone of our cultural life in home, in school, in state, and even in the institutional church.

As Hendrik Kraemer, in his *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* says, "The disquieting fact which every earnest Christian must face is that religion has become irrelevant in modern life, because God has become irrelevant . . . Religion has been banished from the center of life, whether individual or corporate life. This is the crucial point in the situation, because religion by the nature of the case must claim to be central." (p. 13)

Secularism is furthermore demonstrated in the rise of cataclysmic spiritual and social revolutions as seen in Communism, Fascism and National-Socialism. These social and political

movements are basically religious. They have their religious creeds, prophets, saints, and even gods. "Absolute allegiance to these gods is demanded with religious fervor."

But the secular governments—which exercise God-derived authority (Rom. 13), without reference to the Sovereign God—are potentially beastly (Rev. 13) no matter how well domesticated the lion or bear or leopard, or dragon—"nature" may be.

Kraemer summarizes by saying "The Christian Church, religiously speaking, in the West as well as in the East is standing in a pagan, non-Christian world, and has again to consider the whole world its mission field, not in the rhetorical but in the literal sense of the word." (p. 17)

What comfort is there for the Reformed minister in the face of the appalling situation in the world today? Like Israel's ten reconnaissance scouts, many in the church today are saying:

"There we saw giants . . . and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." (Num. 13:33)

Or others are saying with the Apostle Paul,

"Our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us . . ." (II Cor. 7:5,6)

We are indebted to John Calvin for the system of faith to which we are committed. Also for his emphasis upon the practiced attempts to apply that doctrine to the total cultural life. His *Institutes* and *Commentaries* and *Letters* have received renewed interest in recent years. One source of the mind and heart of Calvin not often mentioned are the *Dedications* of his various writings. It is possible that they are little more than a nod in the direction of convention. Others of his day dedicated their writings to prominent men, so he too followed the custom. (That is one view of their significance.) However a closer reading of them is rewarding. They breathe a spirit of genuine concern for the interest and support of those to whom they are addressed. Most of them are directed to princes and kings. Some to professors and teachers.

They include: Prince Henry Duke of Vendome, who later became Henry IV of France; King Gustavus, King of the Goths and Vandals (Sweden);

Sigismund Augustus, King of Poland, great duke of Lithuania, Russia, Prussia and the Lord and heir of Muscovy, etc., Edward VI, king of England, Lord of Ireland, Queen Elizabeth I, Queen of England (which would seem to indicate that Calvin did not share John Knox's jaundiced view of the "Monstrous Regiment of Women.") Perhaps the most interesting, from the point of view of Calvin's concern for the recognition and practice of the true Christian religion in the culture of his day, is that by which the *Commentary on Daniel* is dedicated to "all the pious worshippers of God who desire the Kingdom of Christ to be rightly constituted in France." He had longed for twenty-six years to return to his homeland. That had not been possible. He writes, "Since, therefore, throughout the whole of this period I have publicly endeavored to benefit the inhabitants of France, and have never ceased privately to rouse the torpid, to stimulate the sluggish, to animate the trembling, and to encourage the doubtful and the wavering to perseverance, I must now strive to the utmost that my duty toward them may not fail at a period so urgent and so pressing." [(p. lxiv) *Commentary on Daniel*. Thomas Myers edition. 1852]

The Minister's Task

Living and serving in an environment hostile to the Sovereign God who, having redeemed us with the precious blood of His dear Son, calls us to be His ministers, there is a continuing urgency in our calling.

1. That the minister *speaks* the Word of God as it is revealed in Scripture. Ezekiel received explicit instruction:

"Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, speak unto them, and tell them, 'Thus saith the Lord God;' whether they will hear or whether they will forbear." (3:10-11)

This is the essential difference between "prophetic spirit" and the true prophet.

2. There is also the urgency that we speak in the language of the people to whom we are sent. Ezekiel was given the task, and the implication is that it is the most difficult, to speak to a people who had once known the law, but had turned from it.

"For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language . . . whose words thou canst not understand." (3:6)

This is not a language problem in the usual sense. This is the more difficult barrier of hindrances of communication between people who speak the same language. Henry Zylstra, Professor of English at Calvin College touched on this problem in an article he entitled "The Peril of Jargon." "Jargon" is that technical vocabulary of a science, art, trade, sect, profession, or other special group. The very nicety of language with which we become acquainted during the years in Seminary, may if used without discrimination, be a wall of separation between the preacher and his hearers when he stands in the parish pulpit or in the classroom. Like Ezekiel, in order to communicate God's word to men, we must "sit where they sit," we must know those people to whom we preach well enough to speak their language.

3. The true minister of Christ will expect times when he will be misunderstood and experiences in which he will be rebuffed.

This will be true if he faithfully proclaims the whole counsel of God and lays before this generation the basic creed of the church, Jesus (of Nazareth) is the Christ (the Messiah-Redeemer), Lord (King, Master) over all things.

There is no more guarantee of popular success or acclaim in all this than was given Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or Paul. The satisfaction to the minister of God, is not in a subjective peace of mind, but in the assurance of God's cultivating our restless spirits, bringing them into subjection to His Will, in order that we may be his free-slaves in contributing to that culture of the nations whereby they may, by His grace and power, be brought under the authority of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness (asebeian) and world lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." (Titus 2:11-15)

Further Report of The General Assembly

Two items in our earlier report of the Orthodox Presbyterian General Assembly require correction. We indicated that the 1959 Assembly would meet in Glenside, Pa., on Tuesday, May 26, 1959. That was the state of the case when we left the Assembly. However in the concluding period, it was decided that the next Assembly will begin with a devotional service on Wednesday evening, May 27, business sessions to start on Thursday morning May 28. The Committee on Arrangements consists of ministers Atwell, Fikkert and Marsden. Westminster Seminary will be joint host with Calvary Church.

We also stated that the overture regarding sending but one delegate to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in South Africa was approved. Actually no action was taken on the overture, but it was the understanding of the Assembly that neither Mr. Duff, alternate, nor Mr. Clelland, second delegate, would go, and that Dr. Stonehouse would be the only delegate. (Dr. Stonehouse left New York on July 7 on a trip that would take him to conferences and speaking engagements in Europe and then to the meeting in South Africa.)

Other Churches

The Committee on correspondence with other churches reported it had conveyed greetings to the Korean Presbyterian Church, had appointed Mr. Clelland a fraternal delegate to the Bible Presbyterian Synod meeting in Lakeland, Florida, had not been successful in arranging meetings with a committee of the Bible Presbyterian Synod, had appointed Dr. Van Til a fraternal delegate to the Eureka Classis in their annual meeting, and had appointed Mr. LeRoy Oliver fraternal delegate to the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. The Committee was unable to prepare definitions describing the precise nature of relationships between churches, as

requested a year ago. There seem to be many variations in this area. The Committee also deemed it inadvisable to prepare a list of churches throughout the world with whom the Orthodox Presbyterian Church might seek correspondence. This should be done, said the Committee, by the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

Christian Reformed Church

On the matter of conferences with representatives of the Christian Reformed Church, the Committee recommended that delegates be appointed back and forth to attend the Synod and the Assembly respectively, and that these delegates have the privileges of the floor in the group to which they are delegated. Although we have exchanged fraternal delegates for several years, it has probably been the general understanding that such delegates came chiefly to make a brief speech of greeting, and not in any sense to take part in the deliberations of the meeting. This proposal, in so far as that the Assembly send such a delegate to the Christian Reformed Synod, was approved.

New Presbytery Formed

In response to overtures from Philadelphia and New Jersey calling for the establishment of a new "Presbytery of the South," the Assembly set up such a presbytery, comprising for the present the four churches in Fort Lauderdale, Hialeah and Maitland, Florida, and the church in Valdosta, Georgia. The Rev. John P. Clelland of Valdosta was appointed convener of this new Presbytery, which brings to eight the total number of presbyteries in the denomination.

Miscellanea

The Assembly approved the overture from the Presbytery of New York and New England in slightly amended form as follows: "to urge the sessions and presbyteries to be diligent in applying in their instruction and discipline the principles set forth in the

report submitted to the 17th General Assembly on secret societies."

The Committee on the Travel Fund reported a distribution of \$2,505.60 to delegates, on the basis of two cents per mile for travel over 200 miles, and slightly more for those who traveled the greatest distances.

A budget of \$1.15 per communicant member for the General Assembly fund was approved. Of this 50 cents is for Assembly expenses, and 65 cents for the travel fund for next year. Ministers Moore, Nicholas and Paul Lovik were appointed the travel fund committee for next year. All are from California.

An informal report on behalf of the liaison representative to the World Home Bible League was given by Mr. Eyres. Mr. Klokow was reelected to this liaison position.

A protest was entered by Mr. Nicholas, deploring the Assembly's granting excuses from full attendance at the Assembly, with travel compensation, to commissioners who had come not actually planning to stay to the end of the Assembly. It has happened before, and again happened this year, that a number of commissioners came with the tentative hope the Assembly would finish on Saturday, and with their plans made on that basis, so that they were unable to return for the Monday session.

A resolution of most hearty thanks was approved, expressing the Assembly's gratitude to the people of the Cedar Grove and Oostburg Churches for their most gracious hospitality to the commissioners.

Following final approval of the Minutes, the Assembly came to the point of adjournment at 12:50 a.m., Tuesday morning, June 10, and was formally dissolved by Moderator Clowney.

(We are indebted to the Rev. Albert G. Edwards III for notes on the closing hours of the Assembly Monday evening, June 9, from which the preceding material has been prepared.)

Some Comment on the Assembly

Our report of the General Assembly has so far been a rather objective story of events. Some comment and evaluation is necessary to make the report complete. We recognize that such comment will reflect the person-

al views of the writer, but even so we shall proceed.

On Attendance

First, then, we sincerely regret that so few ruling elders attended. Of a total of about 80 voting delegates, no more than eight or nine were ruling elders. Such a disproportion is unfortunate, for in these circumstances the charge of clericalism and self-interest of the ministers can hardly be avoided. For example, the Assembly adopted a pension plan. We do not oppose a pension plan. That is not the point of our comment. But it is unfortunate that the situation was such that an Assembly completely dominated by ministers adopted a plan designed to benefit the ministers, but a plan which will largely be financed by the laymen. Would it not have been better if a much larger representation of the ruling elders had been present for the consideration of this matter.

The Assembly is not a vacation time, nor something to attend if it be convenient. The Assembly is pre-eminently a time for doing important business of the Church. And the voice of the Church members, through their ruling elder delegates, should be heard at the Assembly. We cannot say the Church has reached maturity until Sessions make it their business to see to it that they are represented in the courts of the church, in appropriate numbers.

Secondly, we support the opinion expressed by way of a protest, that those coming to the Assembly should come prepared to stay for the duration. Unfortunately the length of our Assemblies cannot be accurately gauged beforehand. And it costs time and effort and often extreme inconvenience to attend. Nevertheless there is a responsibility to conduct the business of the Church at the annual Assembly in careful, competent manner, and it ought to be the intention of those coming to stay to the end.

On the Work of the Church

As for the work of the Church, seen through the various reports of committees, there seems to be evidence of some solid progress. Although the statistical report as to membership did not indicate satisfactory numerical growth, the report of the Christian Education Committee, for example, indicated that the message of the Church, through its printed materials,

is being heard in an ever widening circle. And the growth the Church desires is growth through greater knowledge of and commitment to the glorious redemptive truths set forth in Scripture. As the message of the Church is increasingly heard, we are confident that through the work of the Spirit the growth will come.

But we must be sure that our major concern, as a Church, is just that through our local congregations, through our agencies, through our missions at home and abroad, and through the actions of our Assemblies, the gospel will be made known in its pure form according to the Word of God. We must ever be concerned for the spiritual welfare of the flock, of those little ones God has entrusted to our care, of those weak in the faith who need nourishment in the truth, of those troubled by doubt and discouragement, and of those who come under the hearing of the gospel in our midst.

And right here we regret that we must say, that in our opinion at times in our Assemblies there seems to be more concern for the "job security" of the minister in his office, than for the flock and its spiritual needs. Like a labor union, it seems that once in a while we rise in wrath and take speedy action if the position of a minister is jeopardized, while we are willing to delay and debate for days or even years issues of doctrine so long as someone's actual job is not affected.

We say this happens at times. Only occasionally. But we fear very much that it happened this year.

On Peniel

This year the Assembly had before it one major subject, brought by way of two complaints. The first complaint was against the Presbytery of Philadelphia for having adopted a directive concerning certain doctrines and practices. The second complaint was against the action of the Presbytery in dissolving a pastoral relationship. The Assembly spent the good part of four days discussing the first complaint, and finally arrived at the decision to dismiss that complaint and allow the directive to stand. But then the Assembly sustained the other complaint, where the position of a pastor was involved, even though the reason Presbytery had dissolved that pastoral relationship was, in substantial part, because the pastor involved had declared he could not obey the directive.

There are those who insist no inconsistency exists between these two actions. But we find difficulty in accepting that viewpoint.

We believe our readers are entitled to a fuller exposition of the issues involved in this whole matter.

Presbytery's Investigation

The Presbytery of Philadelphia had found that certain doctrines and practices, held by persons who are adherents of the Peniel Bible Conference, obscured significant aspects of sound Reformed doctrine. Through sufficient and reliable testimony, as it judged, Presbytery had found that a certain pattern of sanctification and guidance was inherent in and frequently characterized the Peniel movement.

It was unfortunate that Presbytery had to discover this by a process of hearing witnesses and taking testimony. Within the church of Christ there is place only for complete openness and frankness. No individual who professes or seeks to be a teacher or preacher, no group which seeks recognition within the church, has any right whatever to hold in secret peculiar or special doctrines and practices. Whenever any individual or group is challenged as to their religious beliefs, if they expect to have good standing within the church they are under solemn obligation to withhold from the church nothing of what they believe, or of how they put their beliefs into practice.

Yet in this case it appeared that over a period of almost ten years, during which the Peniel movement has been subject to study in the church, the leaders and adherents of that movement had not at any time come out into the open to say frankly and publicly, "this is what we believe, and this is how we put our beliefs into practice; we want you to know fully our 'doctrine and manner of life' and want your approval on that basis."

Rather on the contrary, it was only when individuals who had been in this movement and had withdrawn from it came and gave testimony as to its doctrines and practices, that the Presbytery finally felt that it had arrived at a knowledge of what the movement really involved. And Presbytery's directive was based on this development. Leaders of the Peniel movement had been present at the meetings of the Presbytery. They had been given the floor, and had freedom to speak. But here again Presbytery

was impressed by the fact that while these individuals did speak, they criticized Presbytery for its procedure, showed irritation that Peniel was being criticized, but did not except in very limited fashion seek to state on their part what Peniel was.

Practices of Peniel

On the basis of its investigation, and the hearing of testimony, Presbytery came to understand that Peniel encouraged a pattern of Christian experience which in practice was applied somewhat as follows:-

If a person has some spiritual problem, or perhaps desires a deeper spiritual experience, he is invited to discuss his problem with a leader or counsellor of Peniel. In this discussion there is first an attempt to get at the basic problem, which is viewed as a remnant of the "old man" in the Christian. The problems in the life of a Christian seem to continually center about this "knowing the old man", and of necessity involve an excessive amount of introspection and morbid self-examination. Once it has been determined through this examination, carried out with the help of a counsellor, what the problem really is - that is, what characteristic of the "old man" it is which is causing the difficulty, then the individual is led to "crucify" that characteristic and claim the "victory of the cross" over it.

The objection to this procedure is that it obscures, as Presbytery noted, the once-for-all character of the believer's union with Christ through faith, and the fact that his death to sin and crucifixion with Christ are realized through his faith in Christ, not by a series of separate and continuing acts of self-crucifixion or mortification on his part. Leaders of the Peniel movement may - and some do - affirm their belief that it is indeed through faith that we receive the benefits of Christ's redemption, but their procedure obscures if it does not actually deny this glorious truth.

Peniel and Satan

However, Presbytery found also that there was more to the procedure than this. For it was the practice in Peniel also to deal directly with Satan.

It was held that Satan was in a distinct way controlling the individual through the characteristics of the "old man" which were causing trouble. Consequently Satan was rebuked directly. In the opinion of some of the

witnesses "railing accusations" were addressed to Satan, he was told to take his place of defeat, and he was, in almost a ritual fashion, "bound" - "We bind you, Satan . . .". Only when Satan was thus "bound" could the individual feel really free from the characteristics of the "old man" which had been troubling him.

Now while there may be difference of opinion on whether it is ever proper for the Christian to profess to address Satan directly, there is no warrant, in our opinion, in Scripture to suggest that any declaration of any individual has any actual effect in "binding" Satan. Adherents of Peniel appealed to the passage in the gospels about "binding the strong man" but we do not believe that passage or any other gives warrant for the view that anyone save Christ Himself can bind Satan. The Christian's deliverance from the power of Satan is through Christ and the work of Christ, and is enjoyed by the Christian through his faith in Christ, not by virtue of some declaration he himself has made directly to or concerning Satan.

This procedure of "binding Satan" also has other facets. It carries the implication that when one does something that is considered wrong, that person is in that thing being controlled by Satan. Now the question of what is wrong may not be so clear as one might think. For example the leaders of the Peniel movement might hold - and doubtless have held - that it was wrong for one who had been in the movement to separate from it. In discussions on this, it would be very easy to give the impression that the person desiring to separate from Peniel was doing so because he was being controlled by Satan. Such an impression, whether given intentionally or not, might well serve as a terribly powerful force to keep those associated with the movement under the control of its leaders. Moreover it appeared that there was the practice in Peniel of "binding Satan" in persons entirely separate from the movement, the purpose being to prevent Satan from controlling such persons and making them do what the adherents of Peniel considered to be wrong. Thus there was testimony that it was the practice to "bind Satan" in the professors at Westminster Seminary. There was evidence that it was at times the practice to "bind Satan" in members of the presbytery, before some meeting

at which matters concerning Peniel might come up.

It may be maintained that this was a completely innocent practice—simply one way of praying that people might not do that which was evil. But as was pointed out at the Assembly, the practice of "binding Satan" in the professors at the Seminary, for example, could well carry the implication to the minds of Peniel students that whenever a professor taught something that did not exactly agree with what was held at Peniel, that professor was acting under the control of Satan, and his teaching was to be disregarded. Thus adherents of Peniel could be sent to the Seminary in confidence that they would remain strong in their loyalty to Peniel, and would not be affected by teaching which might cast doubt on that movement.

The point is that this practice of binding Satan, whether in one's self or in someone else, carries the implication that specific evils, real or imagined, are the direct result of a form of Satanic control, or demon possession. The practice thereby provides a powerful impulse to keep those who have accepted this sort of teaching "in line" lest they be found to be controlled by Satan.

For this sort of thing there is no warrant whatsoever in Scripture. It is in fact a most abhorrent means of binding the consciences of men in matters entirely aside from the Scriptures. It is a matter of some satisfaction that, though belatedly, some in the Peniel movement have come to see this, and have disavowed the practice of "binding Satan." It is a matter of regret that the whole movement, through whatever voice it may speak, has not openly and publicly repudiated such a procedure.

Peniel and the Witness of the Spirit

But to return to the individual who was going through this "counselling therapy" as it was called, it was only after the characteristic of the "old man" had been crucified, the victory of the cross claimed over it, Satan told to "take his place of defeat" and "bound" with respect to that characteristic, that the individual might feel he was delivered from that besetting sin.

Moreover it was only now, that the believer might expect the Holy Spirit to take His "rightful place" in his
(See "Assembly," p. 110)

Editorial Staff

EDITORS

Ned B. Stonehouse
Leslie W. Sloat

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

John P. Galbraith
Robley J. Johnston
Robert S. Marsden

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Albert G. Edwards, III

CORRESPONDENTS

Calvin A. Busch
Edwards E. Elliott
Lawrence R. Eyles
Edward L. Kellogg
LeRoy B. Oliver

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

The Third Force in Christendom

The title of this editorial is that of an arresting article which appeared in the June 9, 1958 issue of *Life* magazine. By means of a striking picture story and an evaluation by Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, president of Union Theological Seminary, *Life* centers attention upon "Gospel-singing, Doomsday-preaching sects" which it characterizes as "a mighty movement in world religion." The publication of this feature article indicates that, while in the past it has been common largely to ignore with disdain these so-called "fringe-sects," it is no longer possible to do so. The article is well worthy of our attention, not only because of our general interest in the religious scene, but also because the phenomenal growth of the sects confronts us with the necessity of asking certain heart-searching questions.

One may well criticize the article because of the manner in which exceedingly varied religious groups are lumped together under the so-called "third force." It seems of doubtful propriety, for example, to group with the Pentecostals more conservative bodies like the Churches of Christ and the Independent Fundamental Churches of America on the one hand,

and sects like the Seventh-Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses which sharply deviate from the evangelical tradition on the other hand.

Nevertheless, the *Life* article is significant in showing that there are powerful forces of religious life outside of the more traditional churches which are marked by enthusiasm and astonishing growth. As one studies these various groups it may not be difficult to point out their defectiveness in the light of Scripture. We may, moreover readily discern among all or most of them a deplorable fanatical and sectarian spirit. Nevertheless, it would be a capital mistake largely to ignore these groups. The sects evidently draw much of their strength from members of churches who are inadequately instructed in the Christian faith and life and are dissatisfied with what they find in the churches. Should we not, in addition to exposing false teachings and claims of the sects, ask whether the astonishing growth of these groups does not point to features of Christian faith and life that are, at least in a measure, neglected among us?

President Van Dusen presents an interesting analysis of "sources of strength which have made the third force the most extraordinary religious phenomena of our time":

"Its groups teach a direct biblical message readily understood. They commonly promise an immediate, life-transforming experience of the living-God-in-Christ which is far more significant to many individuals than the version of it normally found in conventional churches. They directly approach people—in their homes, on the street, anywhere—and do not wait for them to come to church. They have great spiritual ardor which is sometimes but by no means always excessively emotional. They shepherd their converts in an intimate, sustaining group-fellowship: a feature of every vital Christian renewal since the Holy Spirit descended on the Disciples at the first Pentecost. They place strong emphasis upon the Holy Spirit—so neglected by many traditional Christians—as the immediate potent presence of God both in each human soul and in the Christian fellowship. Above all, they expect their followers to practice an active, untiring, seven-day-a-week Christianity."

All of these points are worthy of

consideration and we are tempted to comment upon them in turn. It seems better, however, considering the limits of our space and our interest in relating the subject more directly to our own immediate situation, to single out a few features which sometimes appear to be neglected among us.

In the first place, in spite of our intense interest in missions, the question may well be raised whether our missionary spirit is comparable with that which prevails among the churches and sects which are in view. In our preaching indeed one hears frequently a plea that all members of the church shall recognize their individual as well as corporate responsibility to witness before men. And we have no doubt that such witness is being carried on by many members of the church. In this respect, however, church members generally seem to fall considerably short of the energetic all-out commitment of members of many sects.

Is there not another fault present here for which ministers are largely responsible? Do not we who are ministers, both in theory and in practice, contribute to the perpetuation and development of a sharper distinction between minister and people than the New Testament maintains? The office of the minister is indeed a high office. But when we separate between the office and the service to which we are called and for which appointment to the office alone is justified, we encourage the other members of the church to conceive of their responsibilities and activities in sharply distinctive terms. While one must take pains to do full justice to what the Scriptures teach concerning offices in the church and diversities of calling, this may never be isolated from a basic insistence upon and recognition of the fundamental and common office of the believer.

Secondly, we have some serious doubts whether we do justice to the eschatological aspects of the Christian message in our teaching and preaching. No doubt orthodox views regarding eschatology prevail among us. We reject the modernist denials regarding the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the world to come. We may be thankful also that we largely avoid an exclusive obsession with these doctrines, as if they constituted the entire Christian message. Nevertheless, we gravely question

whether the full biblical perspective comes to its right in our preaching. In particular, does the kingdom of God, including especially the consummation of the kingdom, receive its Biblical emphasis? Is our presentation of the present salvation enriched by directing attention to the biblical perspective according to which it is an *anticipation* of the salvation which is to come? Our conviction is that our preaching generally would be greatly strengthened if we not only spoke on eschatological themes more frequently, but also set forth our entire message in eschatological perspective.

Finally, we are bound to raise the question whether our impact is one that does justice to the element of Christian experience. We have been engaged in a struggle with modernism which has given priority to experience and has regarded doctrinal formulation as secondary and even as expendable. In our reaction against such erroneous views, however, have we taken constant care that justice be done to the concerns of the Christian heart? Have not our sermons generally been marked by a somewhat too exclusive emphasis upon the correctness of our doctrine to the neglect of its application to the everyday problems of the Christian? And when we have been concerned to make the message relevant to human life, have we stressed, as we ought to do, the com-

fort of the gospel as it ministers to hearts which are crying out for peace and consolation? Should not we, as well as members of the enthusiastic sects, more commonly leave our services with the testimony, "Isn't it grand to be a Christian?" Should not more of the spirit of the Psalms and of the best hymns, the spirit of devotion, praise, thanksgiving and prayer, manifest itself in our preaching and teaching? The Bible itself is so pervasively a book that speaks directly to our deepest needs, and so centrally proclaims the message of redeeming grace, that we ought to inquire regularly whether our preaching ministers to the whole man, to his heart, as well as to his mind.

Our readers may not agree fully with the particular point which we have made. They may find other sources of strength among the sects more noteworthy and other neglected emphases among us more apropos. In any case, however, we ought not to disregard what is happening round about us in the religious word. And to the extent that sources of strength evident among the sects may be traced to the teaching of Scripture regarding the nature of genuine Christianity, we must be ready to change our own ways. A genuinely Reformed Church is one that is constantly undergoing reformation.

N. B. S.

copies of the correspondence referred to in the article, and other data on which the charges were based, and also the sources of his information, in order that they might be contacted for first hand information.

The Editor declined to supply any of the data, or the information requested, on the ground that it would be a violation of journalistic ethics. Naturally this has hampered the investigation to a considerable extent.

A general invitation was extended by circular letter to all persons whose names were mentioned in the article, and to all ministers of the Synod, to submit to the Committee any statement or factual information which might have a bearing upon the matters under investigation. In response to this invitation some twenty-five or more letters and communications were received containing considerable factual data, concerning a number of items covered in the Outlook article.

After some delay, photostatic copies of some of the letters quoted in the Outlook article were sent to the Committee by a member of the Synod.

THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CHARGES

The wide range of matters dealt with in the Outlook article, the indirect type of statement mainly employed, and the fact that the charges, insofar as they involve the Synod of Mississippi, are implied rather than definitely stated, make it difficult to reduce them to specific terms. However, the substance of the principal charge is fairly well summarized in the following statement found in the opening paragraphs.

"Would it surprise you to learn that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is seeking to infiltrate the Presbyterian Church, U.S., with declared purposes of drawing off churches and ministers if possible?" . . .

"The particularly chosen 'soft spot' for this approach seems to be Mississippi, but old line Presbyterians in that area are becoming deeply concerned about what they see happening in their midst, possibly with the help (conscious or not) of some of their own people."

In other words, what is here alleged, is that a definite plan or policy has been initiated by the responsible leaders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, to infiltrate the Southern Presbyterian Church for subversive purposes; and it is more or less clearly implied that the active cooperation of

Report on "Infiltration"

About a year ago the *Presbyterian Outlook*, a magazine published within the Southern Presbyterian Church and devoted to the "liberal" interpretation of Christianity, headlined a charge that leaders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church were deliberately seeking to "infiltrate" the Southern Church, with the avowed purpose of "drawing off" churches and ministers. There were reports of "photostatic copies" of letters, etc. At the time we commented on the matter in the *GUARDIAN*.

The Synod of Mississippi of the Southern Church appointed a committee to investigate the charges. This committee has now brought out its report, which was published in the June 18 issue of the *Southern Presby-*

terian Journal. We quote here the entire report as it appeared in that magazine, pp. 8-10.

Report of the Ad-Interim Investigating Committee to the Synod of Mississippi

The Ad-Interim Committee, appointed by the Synod of Mississippi to investigate charges made in the article "Infiltration—To What End?" published in the *Presbyterian Outlook*, June 17, 1957, submits this report for consideration and final action by the Synod.

Promptly upon notification of appointment of the Committee by the Moderator of the Synod, an invitation was extended to the Editor of the *Outlook*, asking that he make available to the Committee photostatic

certain individuals and organizations within the Synod is responsible for "the ease with which Orthodox Presbyterians 'infiltrate' to establish a bridgehead for further operations."

Having given careful consideration to the charges published in the Presbyterian Outlook, insofar as they relate to the Synod of Mississippi, and also to all available data pertinent to the charges, the Committee submits the following summary of findings, and recommends that it be adopted by the Synod:

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. The basic facts reported in the Outlook article, with the exception of a few minor errors, are found to be substantially as stated. However, other facts having an important bearing on the questions raised in the articles were not reported; consequently the article fails to present the complete picture necessary for a sound conclusion.

2. Although there are indications that there are some ministers in the Synod of Mississippi, who have been willing to assist in placing ministers from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in vacant churches, this in itself involves no reflection on their good faith or loyalty, or is necessarily a matter worthy of criticism. Moreover, the evidence available to this Committee, taken as a whole, does not warrant the conclusion, that an alleged "infiltration" of the Southern Presbyterian Church for ulterior and subversive purposes, planned and initiated by leaders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, has actually been aided and implemented by certain individuals and organizations within the Synod of Mississippi.

3. Inasmuch as the Constitution of our Church specifically provides: "Original jurisdiction in relation to ministers of the Gospel pertains exclusively to the presbytery"; (Book of Church Order, Par. 188).

Therefore the Committee has refrained from making any investigation having to do with the attitudes or activities of individual ministers named in the Outlook article, since to do so would, in effect, be usurping the functions of the Presbyteries. Assuming also, that the same general principle applies to a commission, or a committee, under the direct control of a presbytery, the only recommenda-

tion which the Committee makes concerning such matters, is that they be left to the discretion of the presbyteries of jurisdiction.

4. Regardless of the truth or falsity of the Outlook charges, the manner in which these matters were dealt with, and given publicity, raises serious ethical questions which cannot be ignored. In this connection, the following general principle of Presbyterian polity, stated in the report of the Council of Christian Relations to the 1955 General Assembly would seem to be particularly applicable: (See Minutes of General Assembly for 1955, page 168, par. 3)

"If any minister, or elder, or deacon, prove unfaithful to his ordination vow, a remedy is provided in our Form of Government and Rules of Discipline. If such cases arise, charges are to be laid before the responsible church court, where the accused will be given an opportunity to defend himself and where the Church itself can take any necessary action for the protection and defense of the Gospel. If charges are publicized without being laid before a court, they are in effect irresponsible charges against which there is no adequate defense; and they endanger rather than promote the peace and purity of the Church."

5. Finally, it is possible that this investigation will have served a useful purpose, if it helps to alert the Church to one of the gravest dangers which confronts us at this hour, namely, the growing spirit of factionalism and partisan feeling within the Church.

At a time when the nation and the world are torn with dissension and strife, and the threat of another world catastrophe darkens the horizon, surely it is no time for the followers of the Prince of Peace to be arraying themselves in hostile battle lines, with attitudes of mutual suspicion and distrust. For these conditions, all of us must share some measures of responsibility but Brethren, these things ought not so to be.

In view of the great common heritage which has come down to us from our fathers, and the common perils and obligations which we face at this crucial time, shall we not heed the Biblical injunction to confess our faults one to another, put aside our petty differences, let bygones be bygones, and close ranks to press forward with mutual respect and con-

fidence to achieve the great objective which has been set before us by The Captain of Our Salvation.

Committee: G. T. Gillespie, Chairman, E. G. Boyce, H. S. Henderson, W. B. Ludlam, W. C. Stinson.

COMMENT: *In our opinion, the above report is capable of varied interpretations. However, certain points should be noted. In the SUMMARY OF FINDINGS it is said that the "basic facts" reported in the Outlook article are in general correct. Those basic facts were the text—or a portion of the text—of a couple of letters, and the fact that some ministers formerly in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, are now ministers in the Southern Church. No one has ever challenged either of these facts. The Committee does not mention, as it might have done, that a lot of ministers now in the Southern Presbyterian Church were formerly in other denominations besides the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.*

The second point in the SUMMARY raises the most serious question, for it includes reference to "an alleged 'infiltration' of the Southern Presbyterian Church for ulterior and subversive purposes, planned and initiated by leaders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church . . ." It does say that there is no evidence that such an "infiltration" has been aided by individuals or organizations in the Southern Church. Perhaps this is all the Committee was concerned with. It has here cleared the name of individuals in the Southern Church, mentioned by the Outlook, of suspicions leveled against them.

But the language suggests the reality of such an infiltration planned by leaders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and that for subversive purposes. This language, taken from the current political scene, carries implications which put the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the general category of Communists. And we resent it.

First we challenge the suggestion of an "infiltration . . . planned and initiated by leaders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church." If the fact that a few ministers of that church have been given pastorates in the Southern Church—have been called to such pastorates by Southern congregations—and that a few letters have been written in connection with such trans-

fers, means "infiltration" then the fact that probably twenty times as many U.S.A. Presbyterian ministers have likewise transferred to the Southern Church means 20 times as much infiltration.

Then we challenge the expression, "for ulterior and subversive purposes." The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is concerned for the gospel as set forth in Scripture, for the historical faith including the so-called "Fundamentals," for the Presbyterianism and Calvinism of the Westminster Confession. If a concern to promote this is "ulterior and subversive" of what the Outlook wants for the Southern Church, then the Southern Church had better get rid of the Outlook (or the men who publish it, as it is an independent paper.). To the best of our knowledge, no minister has ever gone from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to any other denom-

ination, with the leaders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church wanting him to be anything other than loyal to the historic Presbyterian faith. Do the leaders of the Southern Church want it to be a "Presbyterian" Church, or not?

Finally, we regret the expression contained in the closing paragraph of the report—"let bygones be bygones, and close ranks to press forward with mutual respect and confidence . . ." If this means, as it seems to mean, that the Liberals and the Conservatives in the Southern Church should forget their differences and cooperate for the general advance of the Church then the Conservatives, at least, have forgotten that the Church exists for the promotion of the gospel, not for self-preservation. And to lose the "first love" is to bring one's self under the condemnation of Christ.

L. W. S.

Solis Installed in San Francisco Church

Mr. Salvador M. Solis, a graduate of Westminster Seminary in 1957, was ordained to the gospel ministry and installed as pastor of First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of San Francisco at a service held at 1823 Turk Street on Friday, May 23.

Participating in the service were ministers Henry Coray of Sunnyvale, Richard Lewis of Berkeley, Lionel Brown of Covenant Church, R. J. Rushdoony of Santa Cruz, and Mr. Arthur Riffel of Brentwood Church.

Before coming to San Francisco, Mr. Solis did evangelistic work for the Christian Reformed Church in Modesto. He was born in Monterey, California, and attended San Jose State College.

Westminster Faculty Members in Europe

Three members of the Westminster Seminary faculty are spending some time in Europe this summer.

Professor John Murray is vacationing in Scotland with relatives.

Professor Edward J. Young is on a lecture tour which includes stops in England, N. Ireland, and Germany. He was to return to this country on July 23.

Professor Ned B. Stonehouse left on July 7 on a trip which includes

various stops on the continent, and then attendance at the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in South Africa. He planned to attend meetings of the International Association for Reformed Faith and Action in Strasbourg, France the latter part of July, the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Potchefstroom, S. Africa August 6-15, and meetings of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, again in Strasbourg, September 2-5. He expects to arrive back in this country September 7.

A Wedding and Two Engagements

On Saturday, June 21 Mr. Bernard Stonehouse, son of Professor Ned B. Stonehouse of Westminster Seminary, and Miss Katherine C. Hunt, daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. Bruce F. Hunt, were united in marriage at Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Glenside, Pa. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Stonehouse, assisted by Mr. Hunt. Mr. and Mrs. Stonehouse will be completing academic work at Calvin College during the coming year.

Dr. and Mrs. Edward J. Young of Willow Grove, Pa., have announced the engagement of their daughter, Jean M. to Richard B. Gaffin Jr., son of the Rev. and Mrs. Richard Gaffin of Formosa. The wedding is to take place August 23. Mr. Gaffin will be

attending Westminster Seminary this coming year.

The Rev. and Mrs. Bruce F. Hunt have announced the engagement of their daughter, Lois Margaret, to Mr. John J. Mitchell of Cary, N. C. Mr. Mitchell is a student at Westminster Seminary. The wedding is to take place in December.

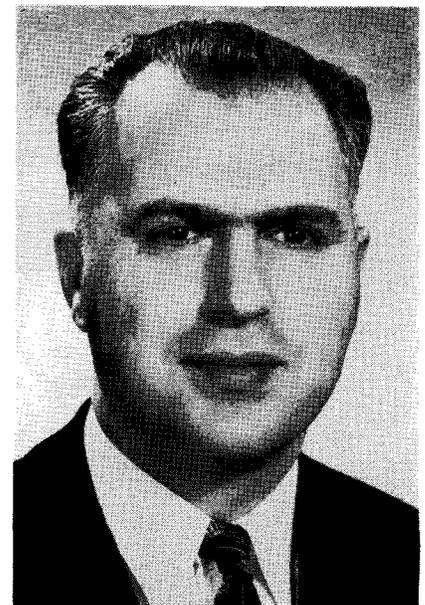
Santa Cruz Church Formed

At the meeting of the Presbytery of California held in Sunnyvale, Calif. on May 12 and previously reported in the GUARDIAN, the Rev. Rousas J. Rushdoony, pictured below, was received and a new Orthodox Presbyterian Church organized, consisting of a number of persons who had separated from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in Santa Cruz.

The new Church was organized in response to the following petition, signed by 66 individuals:

"We the undersigned, as charter members, do hereby petition to be organized as an Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Santa Cruz, California, and the Rev. R. J. Rushdoony ordained and called as our pastor.

"We affirm our faith in Scripture as the only infallible and inspired Word of God, the rule and guide of faith. We declare our belief in the sovereignty of God, and we find therein our security and refuge. We believe that man can only be saved by faith



The Rev. R. J. Rushdoony

The Presbyterian Guardian

in the atoning sacrifice of the virgin born Son of God, and, because our salvation is wholly of God, it is therefore wholly secure. We rejoice in the abiding presence and assurance of the Holy Spirit.

"We believe, not in a perfect church, but in a perfect Savior, and our trust is not in our holiness, or the perfection of any church or its standards, but in the holiness, perfection and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. But we cannot abide in any church which seeks to define righteousness or sin, salvation or sanctification, except in terms of the Word of God. We have witnessed, here in Santa Cruz, against modernism, man-made perfectionism, and church bureaucracy, and as a further step in that witness, desire admission into the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in order to unite with others in a common witness and as our expression of faith in the Presbyterian doctrine and government as biblical and there-

fore necessary. It is our hope and prayer that our fellowship will be to our mutual strengthening in Christ, and our stronger witness to His glory."

The Presbytery in receiving the church also examined Mr. Thomas Kirkwood and Mr. Kenneth Webb as prospective elders, and they with Mr. Rushdoony were constituted the session of the church.

Mr. Rushdoony has written a book entitled, "By What Standard?" which is to be published later this year.

Summer Conference on Church Music

The Fourth Summer Conference on Church Music is to be held at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, August 19-22. The program includes conferences on various aspects of choir and organ music, and has on the faculty in addition to members of the Calvin teaching staff Gerhard P. Schroth, director of the Lutheran choir of

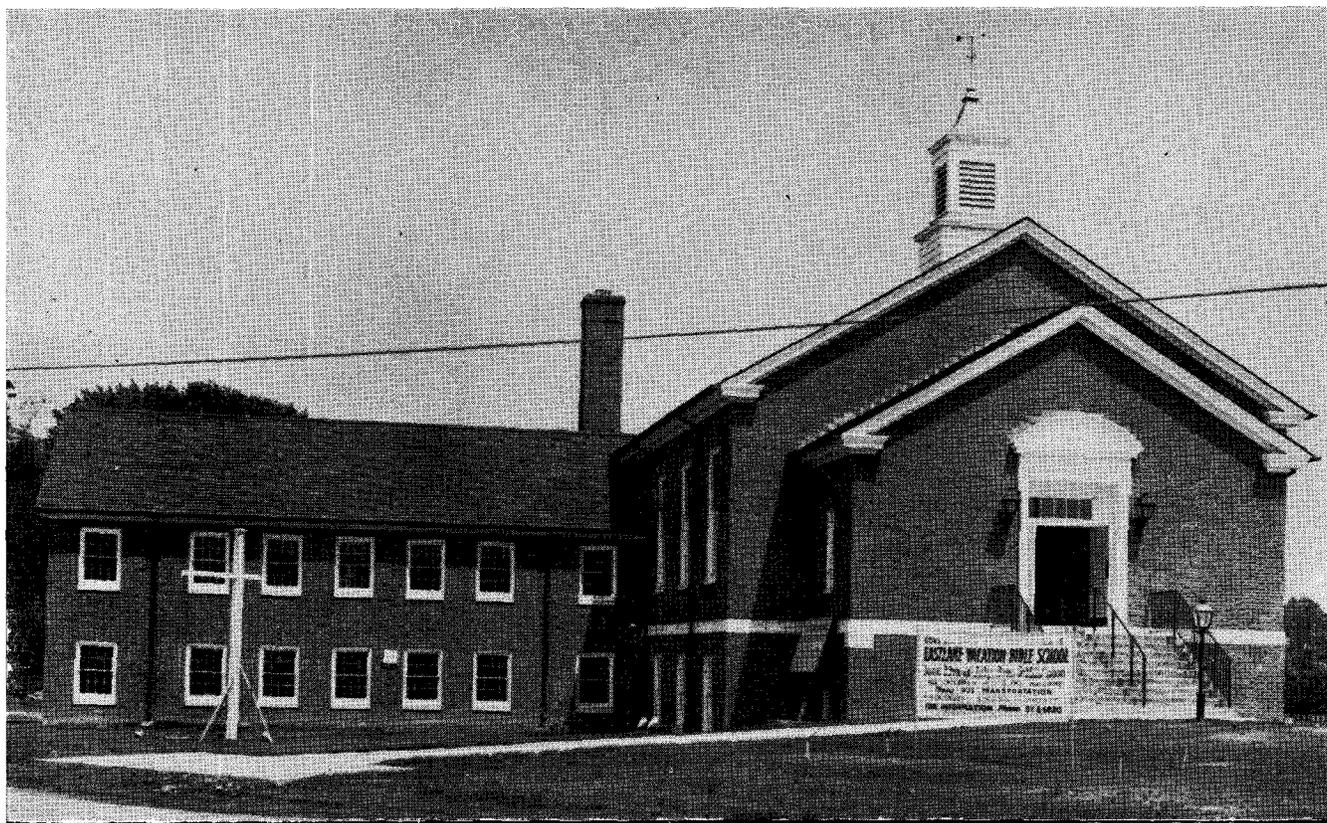
Chicago, and Marie J. Curtiss who will lead a study of junior choir methods. The full tuition fee is \$17.50. Further information may be secured by writing to Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Seek Information on Psalm Versions

Deputies of the Canadian Reformed Church for composing an English Calvinistic Psalter seek contact with everybody who disposes of information concerning rhymed versions of the Psalms on the 'Genevan tunes' of Calvin.

They also seek cooperation with all who are able and inclined to produce such versifications.

Further information will gladly be given, and expenses will be reimbursed if needed. Please contact Rev. G. Van Dooren, Minister Canadian Reformed Church, 541 Emerald Street, Burlington, Ont., Canada.



Photograph by Fred Weicht

Pictured above is the new building of Eastlake Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, Delaware. The new building is located at 1006 Wilson Road, several miles north and west of the former site. It was formally dedicated to the service of God on Sunday afternoon, June 22. Over 300 persons attended the dedication, at which the Rev. John P. Galbraith delivered the sermon. The Rev. Robert Eckardt is pastor of the Church.

Assembly

(Continued from p. 104)

life. And now, if the difficulties of the individual were related to questions as to what he should do, it could be expected that there would be an "inner conviction" which could be identified as the "witness of the Spirit" regarding the decision sought. Since Satan had been bound and could no longer interfere, the conviction arising within must be the result of the work of the Spirit alone. Consequently it was viewed as having a binding, moral force.

The significance of this "witness of the Spirit" lay in the fact that it appeared to provide identification of detail within the area of principle determined by Scripture. This appeared, for example, in the fact that such "witness" often concerned the particular "life-partner" a person was to take. There was substantial testimony to support this as a frequent practice within the movement. The idea, moreover, that one could receive and rely on such inner "conviction" as being the work of the Spirit and therefore authoritative, could lead and actually did lead in certain instances, according to the testimony, to an undue dependence upon such "witness" even in relatively minor and insignificant decisions of day to day living. And it also had the psychological effect of injuring a person's power to, as we say, make decisions for himself. Needless to say, it is our conviction that such teaching impinges seriously on the doctrine of the authority and finality of Scripture as the rule of faith and life.

Decision on First Complaint

The directive of the Presbytery of Philadelphia that certain teachings and practices, viewed as a system or pattern of sanctification and guidance, ought to be abandoned and resisted because they obscured significant elements of Biblical doctrine, was set against this background. Consequently the validity of the directive could not properly be challenged. It is true that the Assembly did not, as it could not, have before it all of the material which Presbytery had, but it did have a substantial portion of that material. And even though all members of the Assembly were not fully informed, the proposal that a decision on the propriety of the directive be put off to another year, or that the issuance of

the directive be not supported, was a proposal that could only have done harm to the church in general as well as to the particular church and presbytery involved. Once the Assembly came to see something of the doctrines and practices of this movement, as referred to by the directive, the Assembly concluded by a large majority that the complaint against that directive should be dismissed.

The appointment of a committee to study the matter further can serve a useful purpose, if that committee is able to get down to the actual practices and procedures of the movement, with even greater thoroughness. But if the leaders of the movement refuse to allow their beliefs and practices to be made the subject of study and analysis, or if the committee ignores the testimony of those who have been in the movement and have left it, the committee's labors will almost certainly be fruitless. A movement such as Peniel cannot be evaluated in abstraction from that which it actually involves in the life of the individual.

Decision on Second Complaint

The second complaint, relative to this same subject, was against the action of the Presbytery of Philadelphia in dissolving the pastoral relationship between an adherent of the Peniel movement and Redeemer Church, on the ground that the individual had indicated his inability to subscribe to and obey the directive. This also was a most important matter, because the welfare of the little flock in that church was at stake. Unfortunately, in our judgment, the Assembly at this point reverted to concerns more akin to those of a union, than proper for those of a church. For on the ground that the "procedure" of the presbytery had been hasty, or unjust, or had not given the individual sufficient opportunity to study the directive and an explanation of it, or for some other reason, Presbytery was ordered to restore the pastoral relationship "until just cause for such dissolution be established." If the refusal of a man to oppose that which obscures the true doctrine of Christ does not provide just cause for preventing his ministering to a flock of Christ's little ones, it is difficult to see what would be a just cause. In our opinion it is very difficult to discover any solid ground for this action of the Assembly. To many it appears to have repre-

sented a basic inconsistency in the Assembly, or a moment of irresponsibility when, having acted on one side of a question at one point, it now decided to act on the other side of the same question at another point.

We strongly fear, however, that our initial judgment is correct, that the Assembly at one point viewed a doctrinal matter in relative disassociation from persons and decided in the interests of the flock, but at the other point, where a man was "in the middle," lost sight of the interests of the flock in its concern over the individual, and acted for what it conceived to be his welfare without careful thought of the results for the flock of God's people. At any rate, whether this judgment be correct or not, we cannot avoid the conviction that there was a real inconsistency between the actions of the Assembly on the two complaints relating to the Peniel matter.

It is our hope and prayer that the day will come when the Orthodox Presbyterian Church will have matured to the point where it can face and deal with matters before it in terms of a true concern for the glory of Christ, for loyalty to His Word, and the welfare of His little ones, whether little in age or little in faith, and where "respect of persons" will be subordinated to respect for the Church of the Living God.

L. W. S.

Correspondence

To the Editor:

I note in the June 15th issue of the Guardian that it is stated on page 90 under Complaints that my recent one against the session of Calvary Church of Bridgeton, N. J., was "related to certain practices in the area of ecclesiastical fellowship . . ." This is true, but not wholly so, as it applies only to the first two specifications. The last two specifications were related to individuals who were outside the discipline of the Church, teaching in Sunday School for five or more years.

Respectfully yours,
G. A. Nitsche Jr., M.D.

To the Editor:

A paragraph about St. Paul's Cathedral which appeared recently in your journal has been brought to my attention, and I should like to correct some of the statements in it.

The Cathedral was not 'almost completely destroyed by Nazi bombs.' It received two direct hits and a considerable amount of damage from blast. The North Transept was severely damaged and the High Altar in the East End was demolished. The restoration of the North Transept will probably be completed next year and that will finish the work on the Cathedral.

On 26th November, the Queen will, once more, be present at a great service in the Cathedral, at which the American Memorial Chapel will be consecrated by the Bishop of London. This Chapel will contain the Roll of Honour of the United States of America forces. It records the names of all who lost their lives in the last war, when based upon Britain. I should like to make it clear that this Memorial Chapel has been provided by contributions made in this country. The American Memorial Committee has, in fact, refused to accept contributions from Americans, because the idea has been throughout that this should be a memorial made by British people in honour of their American comrades in the war for freedom. I do not think the existence of this Memorial Chapel is so widely known in the U.S.A. as it ought to be.

Yours truly,
W. R. Matthews,
Dean of St. Paul's, London

TO THE EDITOR:

I wish to express a word of thanks for the very helpful series of articles by the Rev. Lawrence Eyres on the "Conscience." I have read some of the articles several times and have received much good from them.

We read the Guardian regularly, practically from cover to cover, and always enjoy it. We pray for God's continued blessing on your work.

Sincerely yours,
Mrs. Jacob Kortenhoeven
Highland, Ind.

Bible, Reformed Presbyterians Consider Union

Long steps toward a possible union of two conservative church bodies were taken May 15 at Coulterville, Ill., when the Committee on Fraternal Relations of the Bible Presbyterian Synod, Inc., met with a similar committee of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in

North America, and formulated preliminary plans for such a Union in the form of a statement which was unanimously adopted the following day by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church which was then in session. The Bible Presbyterian Synod was to meet in Lakeland, Florida in June. This is the Synod with headquarters in St. Louis, Mo.

Taws Ordination Set

An adjourned meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia has been scheduled for Friday evening, July 25, at 7:50 p.m. at Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Glenside, for the purpose of ordaining to the gospel ministry Licentiate Donald Taws, who is to leave August 8 for missionary service in Eritrea.

Presbytery Bows to Assembly Decision

The Presbytery of Philadelphia, at an adjourned meeting held July 7, bowed to the decision of the recent General Assembly that it should reinstate the Rev. G. Travers Sloyer as pastor of Redeemer Church of Philadelphia, "until just cause for the dissolution of the pastoral relationship be established." The decision was reached over substantial opposition, by a vote of 9 to 6.

Presbytery also reminded the Session of Redeemer Church that the Directive of October 26, 1957, calling on the Session to resist certain specified teachings and practices, was still in force, and required the Session to report at the next regular meeting of Presbytery in September what its attitude to that directive was.

In another action the Presbytery, on the ground of lack of evidence, reversed a decision of the session of Kirkwood Church in a matter of discipline which had come to Presbytery by way of appeal.

Family Conference Cancelled

The Family Bible Conference, planned under the sponsorship of the French Creek Bible Conference Association, and scheduled for July, has been cancelled. The small number of reservations was given as the reason. The other Conferences, scheduled for August at French Creek Park, are to be held as planned.

Mahaffy Writes From Eritrea

The Rev. and Mrs. Francis Mahaffy, in a recently distributed letter from Eritrea, tell of life and work in that country. After telling of the arrival of Elizabeth Ann in February (seventh child), of political uprisings and riots finally suppressed by police, and of having five youngsters down at once with measles, the letter goes on concerning the work being done. We quote:

"Perhaps you sometimes wonder what your foreign missionaries do with their time. Arlena's part of this letter (summarized briefly above) will no doubt give you an idea of her full time job as mother, school teacher, and homemaker, along with a multitude of jobs helping her husband in his work. Recent weeks it has seemed the days are not long enough to keep up with all that should be done. There is always the pressing work of sermon and Bible class preparation in Saho, translating and duplication of tracts and Bible materials, distribution of tracts and selling Bibles and Scripture portions. A great deal of the remaining time is taken up in the actual teaching of the Bible in classes and at the preaching services. However another important part of our work is talking with individuals and small groups of people who come to discuss the Word with us or whom we meet in the market or elsewhere. Recently there have been a lot more callers at the house and we have had some profitable talks. Perhaps a description of some of these contacts will help give you a picture of a part of our work in Eritrea.

"The other day a Coptic priest came to borrow a Tigrinya Bible. As we sat talking over a cup of tea he asked me if it were true that when a man who had lived in adultery, lied, stolen, and lived a thoroughly bad life died, if he were buried in holy ground and earth blessed by the Abuna (head priest) sprinkled on his body, he would go to heaven. I replied that such teaching was inspired by the devil, and not found in the Bible given by the Holy Spirit. He said that he agreed with me, but because some of the priests were teaching that such doctrines were false, they had been called to Asmara to give account of their teaching to the Abuna and reprove. There seems to be evidence

that at least some people are coming to realize that Christianity is something more than keeping certain holy days and fast days, eating meat killed in the name of the Trinity accompanied by a life of complete disregard for God's law.

"One Coptic priest who has come to a more perfect understanding of what Christianity is has inquired recently about publicly confessing his faith and taking his stand as an evangelical Christian. Kedani Mariam appears to be a sincere believer and we pray that he may become a pillar in Christ's church here.

"The other day a Tigrinya speaking Moslem called accompanied by a young Coptic girl. When I inquired how it was that she was a Moslem and yet spoke the Tigrinya language I learned that she belonged to a large group of people who turned Islam during the great Moslem invasion under Ahmed in 1530. The Coptic Christians in the land were given a choice of confessing that there is one God, Allah, and that Mohammed is his prophet, or of being put to death. Most of the Coptic "Christians" chose to confess faith in Allah and live. When the Portugese drove back the Moslem invaders, most of the Coptic people returned to their former faith. Some, including the ancestors of this woman, remained Moslems. After a discussion with her of the religion of Mohammed and of Christ I asked the girl why she had not been coming to the young people's Bible class on Tuesdays and Thursdays any more. She replied that since her friend, Leta Berhan, quit coming, she had no one to accompany her. Upon inquiry I discovered the reason Leta Berhan (which means daughter of light) stopped coming was that she had turned Roman Catholic. After about two years of study with us, she was offered two new sets of clothes, a new pair of shoes, and the privilege of being enrolled in the Roman school if she would change her faith. So the "daughter of light" with the consent of her father, Bisheratta (good news) left the good news of the gospel to turn into the darkness of Rome. I told her friend that I had no new clothes or shoes to give to anyone who turned to the evangelical faith, but I did have the whole Word of God to teach them and that it offered them something far more important. This

girl has been coming since then.

"A week ago a Roman Catholic chief of a village some 60 miles away called. He said he had heard in his village that we taught the people clearly the Word of God alone. He said that he and others in his village were interested in my teaching them the Word. While he is in Senafe visiting his son who is headmaster of the primary school, I invited him to come daily for Bible study. He has been here a number of times now. Although he has been steeped in Roman Catholic teaching and knows very little of the Word, he at least seems open and interested and we trust the Word will bring fruit.

"Senafe and the neighboring village of Marara (where Birds live) have long been rivals. For years Senafe has had no Coptic church. A Coptic Saho chief, Gerezmach Tasfai, had sought unsuccessfully to get a Coptic church in Senafe. When we moved to Senafe in 1952, he thought that perhaps this would be his opportunity to gain a victory over his opponents who opposed a church in Senafe by building an evangelical church instead. When I rejected his suggestion that I purchase by gifts of money and clothes some 200 "converts" from his tribe along with his offer of land and materials for a church building for this group, he eventually succeeded in having a Coptic church built. However the rivalry continues. The ground and building have not been properly blessed by the Abuna and at times police intervene to prevent people from burying their dead in the common ground. Perhaps the Gerezmach has recently gained a partial victory

over his rivals (he seems expert in the effective methods) for Good Friday evening, when Teka, the woman who washes clothes for us, started down the road to attend the Marara church service, police stationed on the road stopped her and ordered her to attend the church in Senafe instead. Angered, she went home without attending any service. Separation of church and state, religious and other freedoms have yet to be learned in this part of the world. Since the people are not used to these freedoms but rather to accepting the decisions of the tribal leaders, or of the central government, individuals find it hard even though they may be attracted to the teaching of the Gospel to break the strong ties that bind them to their way of life. We believe that the power of the Gospel will change cultural patterns where these are opposed to God's law, but it will change them through the conversion of the individual. Hence there must be raised up individuals of true faith and great courage to stand the opposition that must come and to influence others. The communist philosophy of life is closer akin to their tribal setup, communal land, and lack of appreciation of basic freedoms. With its emphasis on coveting and stealing it appeals to a people who are not familiar with or who have rejected the basic principles of God's Word. The philosophy and propaganda of communism is gaining ground. The full Gospel alone can combat it. Pray with us that God's Holy Spirit may apply the Word to the hearts of hearers and that Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.'"

ORDER FORM

THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN
1505 Race Street, Philadelphia 2, Pa.

Dear sirs:

Enclosed find \$2.50 for which please send The Presbyterian Guardian for one year to:

Name

Address

.....
The Presbyterian Guardian is a monthly magazine committed to stating, defending, and promoting orthodox Presbyterianism as set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith.