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A PLEA FOR PEACE

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
They shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls,
And prosperity within thy palaces.
For my brethren and companions' sakes,
I will now say, Peace be within thee.
For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God
I will seek thy good" (Psalm 122: 6-9).

HOW proper a Psalm for any church to sing—also for The Presbyterian Church of America.

When our church was organized on June 11th of last year, that Valiant-for-Truth, Dr. J. Gresham Machen, heaved a sigh of relief and expressed his great joy at now at last being privileged to breathe in an atmosphere of ecclesiastical peace.

Alas, disappointment was in store for him. Even before the Second General Assembly convened, it became evident that perfect harmony was not found in The Presbyterian Church of America. At the Assembly Dr. Machen's strength was taxed to keep the ecclesiastical ship balanced. And, sad to relate, during the last months of his life he was greatly disturbed and deeply grieved by growing evidence of differences, not to say strife, within the church.

The first day of this year his Lord came to him and said: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast fought long enough; now mayest thou join the church triumphant and enter upon the rest that remaineth for the people of God."

Few things are more needful for The Presbyterian Church of America at this time than that we who remain give "diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). Failing to do

that, we shall break down the work of our great deceased leader, endanger the very existence of our church, offend Christ's little ones, give comfort to the modernist enemy, and, worst of all, bring dishonor upon the Name of our blessed Lord.

Then may I not in all meekness and humility make a plea for the peace of Jerusalem?

SOME DIVISIVE INFLUENCES

Merely naming a few divisive forces that are more or less operative in every church, our own included, should serve as sufficient warning against them.

In a Church of Jesus Christ no artificial distinctions among the members may be tolerated. For instance, to play up in our midst the differences between East and West, charter-members and later arrivals, Scotch and Dutch, is not only uncalled for, but is sure to prove divisive because un-Christian. "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

That misrepresentation of brother by brother is perhaps Satan's most effective method of destroying the peace of a church need hardly be said. It is self-evident. But perhaps the remark is not altogether superfluous that such misrepresentation frequently results from the evil practice of impugning one another's motives. Is it not perfectly clear that the judging of motives should be left to the Lord God, who alone knows the hearts of men and tries their reins? The Saviour's warning, "Judge not that ye be not judged" (Matthew 7:1), is plainly applicable here. For one Christian to ascribe unworthy and evil motives to another is heinous sin. And yet, who has never done this? Does it not behoove each of us to hang his head in shame and to plead guilty on this score?

Our church calls itself Presbyterian, and most of us are extremely insistent that it shall be Presbyterian, not only in name but in very deed. Then may we not forget that one of the outstanding principles of Presbyterian polity is the parity of the clergy. Let no minister presume to exalt himself above his brethren, and let no group of ministers anywhere presume to dominate the church. In the councils of the church the young minister in his first charge, somewhere in the back woods, is on an absolute par with a professor of theology or a moderator of the church's highest judicatory. Bearing that principle in mind will prove conducive to the unity of our church. Ignoring it cannot but spell division.

And yet it may not be denied that some office-bearers and members of a church are more talented than others. In consequence, not all can be, or for that matter should be, equally prominent in the work of the church. But here an evil trait of human nature often asserts itself. Unholy rivalry and petty jealousy raise their serpentine heads. Again the question may well be asked: What servant of God can wash his hands in innocence of these sins? We still have much to learn from the apostolic admonition to do nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each to count other better than himself (Philippians 2:3).

One other divisive influence I would mention. Perhaps lack of proper perspective is as good a name for it as any. Failure to distinguish between important matters and relatively unimportant matters often leads to serious complications. Popularly expressed, to make mountains out of molehills is a far from innocent pastime. To be more specific, let us beware of placing so much emphasis on certain little differences within our own ranks as to weaken our attack on the common enemy—Modernism.

Truth and Peace

However, it is possible that important differences exist among us. If so, we may not close our eyes to them, for to do that were dishonest.

The prophet Zechariah in his day commanded God's people to "love truth and peace" (Zechariah 8:19). The order of his words is significant. Truth is named before peace. The reason is perfectly obvious. Truth is

the only sure foundation for peace. Peace which rests on anything but truth is not only an unstable peace, but a false peace. It simply is no peace at all.

In that realization Dr. Machen lifted up his voice against error and heresy in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. For so doing he was charged with disturbing the peace of the church and was cast out. But in reality he disturbed but a false peace, and this he did in order to establish a worthy peace. Far from being a trouble-maker, he was an apostle of peace, for he sought to re-establish the church on the truth of God's Word.

We of The Presbyterian Church of America must make sure that we build our ecclesiastical structure not on the sandy and sloping soil of error, but on the solid rock of truth.

That we may tolerate no out-and-out Modernism among us goes altogether without saying. Not one of us wants to. The settled conviction that Modernism is not Christianity but anti-Christianity constitutes the very reason for our existence as a church.

But it is just as obvious that we may make no compromise with Modernism. And that deserves emphasis.

The difference between Christianity and liberalism may be described as the difference between supernaturalism and naturalism. Now Christian supernaturalism when applied to the subject of salvation yields the doctrine of salvation by grace. And it is the distinction, nay the glory, of the Presbyterian and Reformed churches that of all churches they have embodied this doctrine in its purest form in their confessions and have clung to it most tenaciously in their preaching. It is no exaggeration to assert that this doctrine is the hall-mark of the Reformed Faith. With it a Presbyterian church stands or falls.

The history of Christian doctrine tells of outright denial of the doctrine of salvation by grace. It is commonly called Pelagianism. And present-day Modernism is thoroughly Pelagian. But the same history also speaks of numerous attempts to compromise this doctrine. Perhaps the best known of these is Arminianism. And it is extremely prevalent in our day. Sad to say, it has adherents even in fundamentalist circles.

Space does not permit an adequate description here of the Arminian her-

esy. Suffice it to say that he who teaches that God from eternity chose certain persons to salvation because He foresaw that they would believe in Christ, or that Christ by His death on the cross merely made salvation possible for sinners and did not actually save anybody, or that unregenerate man, instead of being dead in trespasses and sins, is able to make a contribution to his second birth, or that the grace of God in the new birth is dependent for its efficacy on man's consent, or that the ultimate salvation of true believers is not absolutely secure,—has broken with the consistent teaching of salvation by grace as embodied in that great Presbyterian creed known as the Westminster Confession, and has gone over to the Arminian camp.

Another more or less prevalent attempt to dilute the truth of salvation by grace must be named. There is a type of dispensationalism which teaches, either explicitly or by implication, that, while in this age sinners are saved by the grace of God in Jesus Christ and can be saved in no other way, salvation was not by the same grace before Christ's death nor will be by the same grace in the coming kingdom age. I do not say that all who call themselves dispensationalists so believe and so teach, but some who go by that name undeniably do.

And now it should be clear to every one why Dr. Machen much preferred the name Presbyterian or Reformed to the name fundamentalist. He knew that some fundamentalists tamper with the exceedingly precious truth of salvation by grace, and it was his firm conviction that the system of doctrine taught in the Westminster Confession and Catechisms admits of no such tampering. Therefore also he was extremely insistent that The Presbyterian Church of America should be "not just another fundamentalist church, but a church truly Presbyterian."

May God forbid that The Presbyterian Church of America should seek peace at the expense of the doctrine which lies at the very heart of Holy Scripture—that salvation is solely by the grace of God in Jesus Christ. If we permit our ministers or elders or deacons to compromise that truth, we shall in principle have returned with the dog to our own vomit and with the sow that was washed to the wal-

lowing in the mire. The errors alluded to are stations on the road back to Modernism.

Godliness and Peace

If peace purchased at the price of truth is unworthy of its name, that is no less true of peace procured at the price of godliness.

Our enemies in the modernist camp have a way of charging us with dead orthodoxy, that type of faith which fails to manifest itself in good works and may even be accompanied with a godless life. Well may we pray that this accusation shall never be based on fact.

The church which is less insistent on holiness of life than on purity of doctrine can have no peace.

Therefore we must be on our guard against every form of Antinomianism. He who teaches that the Christian, being under grace, may ignore God's moral law is treading on the thinnest possible ice. If we use our Christian liberty for an occasion to the flesh, forgetting to serve one another through love (Galatians 5:13), we have plunged through the ice. If with a show of piety we seek to discover God's will for our lives through special guidance by the Spirit apart from Holy Scripture, we are floundering about in the muddy waters of unholy mysticism. If, brushing aside the great commandment of brotherly love, we bite and devour one another, we are at the point of drowning.

If we would have peace, no such offences may be tolerated among us.

An Area of Tolerance

While historic Presbyterianism has never given quarter to heresy or sin, but has always been uncompromisingly severe in its denunciation of both, it has not insisted on perfect unanimity and uniformity in matters either of doctrine or of life. It has always been broad enough to permit certain differences of opinion among its adherents. In fact, such tolerance may be said to be characteristically Presbyterian. It is of one piece with the Scriptural teaching of Christian liberty, which the Presbyterian churches have ever stressed so strongly.

A few concrete examples are in order.

All good Presbyterians believe in Christ's visible return to earth. That truth is an essential element of the system of doctrine with which Pres-

byterian office-bearers are wont solemnly to express agreement. But on certain questions concerning the second coming there has been in the past and is today a wide divergence of opinion among serious Bible-students of Presbyterian persuasion. The views known as Premillennialism, Amillennialism, and supernaturalistic Postmillennialism are all three of them held. And, while it cannot truly be said that the Confession of Faith gives equal support to each, yet, so far as my knowledge goes, no Presbyterian church has ever in anything like an official way put up the bars against any one of these views as such. The exponents of each view have respected the adherents of the other two as fellow-Presbyterians.

For another example, no Bible-believing and Bible-loving Presbyterian will take the position that the moderate use of wine is in itself always and everywhere sinful. To teach that would obviously be to cast serious reflection on our blessed Lord, who, the gospel tells us, on occasion drank wine (Luke 7:33, 34) and at the wedding in Cana made wine (John 2:1-11). Nor is the view at all tenable that the wine which He drank and made was unfermented. But on the other hand it is just as clearly taught in Scripture that even the most moderate use of wine may in certain instances be unwise, inexpedient, and even wrong. For instance, the express and emphatic command of God's Word to take heed lest our liberty become a stumblingblock to the weak (I Corinthians 8:9) without doubt is applicable to the Christian's liberty in this matter. Now in view of these teachings of Scripture some Presbyterians have thought it wise, or even necessary, in their own case to abstain from the use of wine, while other Presbyterians

have not felt it their personal duty to become teetotalers. And Presbyterian churches have historically respected both positions. To seek to force one or the other of these positions on the officers or other members of a church would plainly be contrary to the best Presbyterian tradition. That it would be contrary to Scripture is just as evident. The liberty of one Christian may not be judged by the conscience of another (I Corinthians 10:29). No one may judge another's servant. To his own lord he stands or falls (Romans 14:4). "God alone is lord of the conscience" (Westminster Confession XX:2).

It appears then that historic Presbyterianism has recognized what may be called an area of tolerance. It was led to do this by the Scriptural principle of Christian liberty, which is so clearly set forth by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians. And may I not remark here in passing that without doubt Dr. Machen's thorough acquaintance with this epistle made him the ardent defender of Christian liberty that he was?

The recognition of this area of tolerance is absolutely essential to the peace of a Presbyterian church. Failure or refusal to recognize it is certain to result in serious disturbance.

Theological Debate

Many church-members go so far in their desire for peace in Zion as practically to rule out theological debate. As soon as two ministers, let us say, differ on some point of theology and publicly try to convince each other, these folk are irked and perhaps give expression to their displeasure by discontinuing their subscriptions for the periodical in which the debate is published.

That this type of ecclesiastical pacifism is far from healthy is clearly proved by the history of the Christian Church. Throughout the centuries theological debate has played a large part, in the development of Christian doctrine. As the pressure of milk brings forth butter, so the clash of opinions has time and again brought the truth to light. Through theological controversy the Church of Christ has progressed in its understanding of the Scriptures, and without controversy little or no progress was ever made.

Then let there be free discussion in our church of theological differences

The Next Issue

THERE will be an interval of three weeks, instead of the usual two, between this and the next issues of "The Presbyterian Guardian." The next number will be dated May 15, 1937, and will be mailed in Philadelphia on May 10th.

within the system of doctrine taught in the Confession. There is no good reason why such discussion should do injury to the cause of peace. On the other hand, lack of such discussion is sure to do untold injury to the cause of progress in the truth.

However,—and this I deem worthy of much emphasis at this time—may those who engage in debate with their brethren never lose sight of the apostolic admonition to speak truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). How noble an ex-

ample of that our highly esteemed Dr. Machen has left us. Even in debate with enemies of the gospel he invariably showed himself a Christian gentleman. Then how respectfully it behooves us to comport ourselves in argumentation with brethren beloved in the Lord.

Conclusion

"So then, let us follow after things which make for peace and things whereby we may edify one another" (Romans 14:19).

Failing to do this, we shall "be found even to be fighting against God" (Acts 5:39). Doing this, we shall be "laborers together with God" (I Corinthians 3:9) in the building up of The Presbyterian Church of America, which we trust to be His work.

And then we may expect the Lord to add to our number daily such as shall be saved (Acts 2:47).

—R. B. KUIPER.

The Propagation of the Reformed Faith in New England

By JOHN MURRAY



Mr. Murray

THE harvest truly is plenteous but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." How fitting are these words of our Lord to the situation that has now for long existed in New England. The currents of unbelief and indifference have left in their wake spiritual devastation. The multitudes are scattered abroad as sheep not having a shepherd. They are destitute of the ministry of that gospel which is the only power of God unto salvation.

It is the burden of this great need in the field that was once the home of the godly pilgrim fathers who there sought refuge from hierarchical tyranny, that constrained a small group of men to form, less than a year ago, "The Committee for the Propagation of the Reformed Faith in New England." The purpose was to launch humbly, yet in confident reliance upon divine grace, upon the task of sending men imbued with intelligent devotion to the gospel into these needy fields.

The result was that during the course of last summer and early fall nine men were sent to this work. The number of weeks for each man ranged from sixteen to four. The average number of weeks for each was eleven. And in addition, during the course of the winter to the date of writing, two men have labored

continuously on the field.

As regards personnel, all of the men who worked either in the course of the summer and fall or throughout the winter have been graduates or students of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

The fruits of these endeavors have been in a signal sense gratifying. To the committee one of the most gratifying features was the self-sacrificing devotion and enthusiasm of the men and, to the men themselves as well as to the committee, the evidence given of the Lord's hand and blessing upon their labors.

Now, as our session at Westminster Seminary is drawing to a close, we are making plans for summer work to begin not later than May 15th, and to continue to the end of September. We are hoping that, in addition to the two men who are already on the field, we shall be able to place at least ten men from among our graduates and students. Various circuits are being arranged so that with the aid of automobile or bicycle each man may be able to cover a fairly wide area and thus have as many as four or five preaching stations at which services and Bible classes may be conducted either on the Lord's day or on week days. Much attention will also be devoted to house visitation. By the arrangement of these circuits and by the provision on the part of the committee or of the men themselves with adequate means of transportation, one man will be able to cover four or five times the territory

that one man covered last year, and that without any necessary diminishing of attention to each particular town or village.

It will have been noticed that the phrase, "Reformed Faith," appears in the title of this committee. There is nothing for which the committee exists other than that which is comprehended in that phrase. It is for the propagation of the Reformed Faith, and that means simply the propagation of the whole counsel of God as revealed in His holy Word, the whole counsel of God as it respects faith and life. Its purpose is the evangelism which is not only consistent with the Reformed Faith but the necessary expression of it wherever it really exists as the controlling thought of the mind and passion of the heart. It is evangelism in pursuance of the Lord's command, "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all the nations."

In these times there is much evangelism that is clap-trap, much so-called evangelism that does not have the gospel, and much also of evangelism that, though evangelical in its general spirit and result, is not true to the whole counsel of God. It is the aim of this committee to foster and further evangelism that will not be dependent upon the sensational for its appeal or success, but evangelism grounded in the conviction of the absolute sovereignty and efficacy of the grace of God, evangelism among the degraded and ignorant, the indifferent and hostile, that does not fear to declare the whole counsel of

God and to proffer to men lost and dead in sin the full and free salvation that is in Jesus Christ our Lord. It is confident evangelism because, though not given in the persuasive words of human wisdom, it depends for its efficacy upon the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. And thus the faith of men will come to rest not upon the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

We are conscious of weakness. We know something of the infirmities of others because we are conscious of our own. But grace overcomes infirmity. And most gladly, therefore, will we rather glory in our infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon us.

We are hoping this summer to send ten, perhaps fifteen, men. We trust that the needs of these men will be met, for "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." We wish we had sufficient funds and men so that we could send a hundred. Even then we should only be touching the fringe of the need in this greatly unevangelized field. A great door and effectual is opened unto us. We pray for consecration in ourselves. We pray for the same in the men who will be sent, and for the baptism of the Spirit upon them. May they in true apostolic fashion turn that world upside down. But we also with deep earnestness solicit your prayers and interest. Precious seed has already been sown and, we believe, will be sown. And may we not remind you as well as ourselves that "he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:6).

The members of the committee are the Rev. W. P. Green, 1626 Columbia Road, South Boston, Mass., *Treasurer*; the Rev. John Skilton, 371 Congress Street, Portland, Maine, *Secretary*; the Rev. David Freeman, 429 Wellesley Road, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, *Vice-Chairman*; and the present writer, of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, *Chairman*. Such gifts as have been received for the work have gone in their entirety to the support of the missionaries. Committee members have themselves borne all the incidental expenses, and have given their services without charge. This same policy and method will continue to be pursued.

God's Call to Separation

By JAMES C. CURNOW

Westminster Seminary, Class of 1937

ONE of the most, definite and pointed passages in the whole of God's Word on the great doctrine of sanctification is Paul's earnest appeal in II Cor. 6:14-18. Even though the passage may be one of the best known of the whole New Testament, we believe that it has been too often neglected and even denied by those who name the name of Christ! Yet it

is probably more needed today than at any other time in history! It must be proclaimed! It must be heeded! It must be obeyed by everyone who believes and loves the eternal Word of God!

We have often heard this passage referred to as if it dealt exclusively with the marriage of believers and unbelievers. But the truth is that neither the verses themselves nor the context, both immediate and distant, refer even in the slightest to the question of marriage. The same is to be said regarding secular business associations of believers and infidels. We do not mean to say that the passage cannot be applied to these two subjects, but we do deny that the reference is directly and exclusively to either one or both of them.

Further, it is to be noted that the message is very definitely to and for believers. Verse 14 says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." And one need go no further than to verse 15a, "What part hath he that believeth with an infidel," to see that the "ye" of verse 14 refers to believers. They must of necessity heed and obey its commands!

We come now to a point which we wish to emphasize with all the power we can command. We have reference to the combined force of the phrases in verses 14-16, "For what fellowship . . . and what communion . . . and what concord . . . or what part . . . and what agreement . . . hath the temple of God with idols?" that is, believers with unbelievers? The full force of the intended meaning is more clearly shown by inserting the word "possible" in each phrase. For then it is, "For what possible fellowship . . . and what possible communion . . . and what possible agreement . . . hath a believer with an unbeliever?" Therefore, because it is impossible—absolutely and completely impossible—for any conceivable common meeting point to be established, believers are admonished to be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

But, one is immediately led to ask, in what respects are believers admonished to cut themselves absolutely off from unbelievers? A cursory examina-

Radio Contest Prize Winners

THE Presbyterian Guardian takes great pleasure in announcing the winners in the Prize Letter Contest conducted in connection with its recent radio broadcasts of religious news. The judges wish to thank all the contestants for their enthusiasm and interest, and for the uniformly high quality of the letters submitted.

FIRST PRIZE

Clifford S. Smith,
Bridgeton, N. J.

SECOND PRIZE

Robert H. Graham,
Middletown, Del.

THIRD PRIZE

Harvey K. McArthur,
Phila., Pa.

FOURTH PRIZES

David S. Clark,
Phila., Pa.

Miss Louise Conrad,
Phila., Pa.

Mrs. M. V. Harmon,
Jamison, Pa.

Miss Agnes Irwin,
Kennett Square, Pa.

John H. Raymond,
Phila., Pa.

tion of the words used in the passage will convince one that there is one thing especially which believers must not do in common with unbelievers. That is: *anything of a religious or spiritual nature*. For instance, we have in mind such words and phrases as "righteousness and unrighteousness," "communion," "Christ and Belial," "believer and infidel," "the temple of God and idols." There can be no doubt, in the face of such expressions as these, that God is speaking of the worship together or communion together, *in order to gain a common end*, of children of Christ and the children of Satan. The plain intent and force of the passage as a whole is beyond denial on this point, and, we repeat, Christians everywhere must heed God's voice in this matter!

But one final point, with respect to the degree of the separation, remains to be considered. It is found in the phrase "touch not . . ." We are not told to "be careful" in our dealings with unbelievers in things spiritual, or not to have "much" fellowship with them, or any such relative phrases as these. We are plainly admonished not to "touch" that which in their unbelief they have made unclean. The separation is to be complete and absolute! The command is ultra-definite and plain! There is just no room for compromise of any sort or degree!

In passing it is interesting to note Thayer on this word for "touch." He says that it alludes to the Levitical precept, "Touch not the unclean thing", that is, "have no intercourse with the Gentiles, no fellowship in their heathenish practices." The connection with and substantiation of what we have been maintaining is plainly evident in these words of this great authority.

In the face of this explicit and definite portion of God's Word on this very vital matter of the spiritual fellowship of believers and unbelievers, we find it extremely difficult and even impossible to understand the present-day actions of many Christians. We refer to those who continue to be associated, that is, "yoked together," with denominations which are commonly known to be, yes have been proven to be, deeply if not almost completely apostate and untrue to the living Word of God, even our Lord Jesus Christ. They who comprise and control these organizations have flaunted God's Word and dethroned

His Christ, yet Christians continue on in communion with them! We cry out in amazement! How can this condition exist? How can Christians possibly thus deny the word of their God? How can they so grieve the One who died for them? They must hear! They must heed! They must "come out from among them and be separate!"

And how precious is the Father's

promise to them that, when they do come out, "He will receive them, and will be a Father unto them, and they shall be his sons and his daughters." Thus saith the Lord Almighty, even "he who holds sway over all things, the ruler of all, the almighty" (Thayer). Of what can His children possibly fear who hear His voice and take a stand for His dear name's sake.

The Confession of Faith

As Adopted by The Presbyterian Church of America

CHAPTER II

Of God, and of the Holy Trinity

I. There is but one only¹ living and true God,² who is infinite in being and perfection,³ a most pure spirit,⁴ invisible,⁵ without body, parts,⁶ or passions,⁷ immutable,⁸ immense,⁹ eternal,¹⁰ incomprehensible,¹¹ almighty,¹² most wise,¹³ most holy,¹⁴ most free,¹⁵ most absolute,¹⁶ working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will,¹⁷ for his own glory;¹⁸ most loving,¹⁹ gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;²⁰ the rewarder of them that diligently seek him;²¹ and withal most just and terrible in his judgments,²² hating all sin,²³ and who will by no means clear the guilty.²⁴

II. God hath all life,²⁵ glory,²⁶ goodness,²⁷ blessedness,²⁸ in and of himself; and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made,²⁹ nor deriving any glory from them,³⁰ but only manifesting his own glory in,

by, unto, and upon them: he is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom, are all things;³¹ and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, and upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth.³² In his sight all things are open and manifest;³³ his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature,³⁴ so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain.³⁵ He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands.³⁶ To him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, he is pleased to require of them.³⁷

III. In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.³⁸ The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father;³⁹ the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.⁴⁰

¹ I Deut. 6:4; I Cor. 8:4, 6.

² I Thess. 1:9; Jer. 10:10.

³ Job 11:7-9; 26:14.

⁴ John 4:24.

⁵ I Tim. 1:17.

⁶ Deut. 4:15, 16; Luke 24:39. See John 4:24.

⁷ Acts 14:11, 15.

⁸ James 1:17; Mal. 3:6.

⁹ I Kings 8:27; Jer. 23:23, 24.

¹⁰ Ps. 90:2; I Tim. 1:17.

¹¹ Ps. 145:3.

¹² Gen. 17:1. See Rev. 4:8.

¹³ Rom. 16:27.

¹⁴ Isa. 6:3. See Rev. 4:8.

¹⁵ Ps. 115:3.

¹⁶ Ex. 3:14.

¹⁷ Eph. 1:11.

¹⁸ Prov. 16:4; Rom. 11:36; Rev. 4:11.

¹⁹ I John 4:8; John 3:16.

²⁰ Ex. 34:6, 7.

²¹ Heb. 11:6.

²² Neh. 9:32, 33. See Heb. 10:28-31.

²³ Ps. 5:5, 6.

²⁴ Nahum 1:2, 3. See Ex. 34:7.

II. ²⁵ John 5:26.

²⁶ Acts 7:2.

²⁷ Ps. 119:68.

²⁸ I Tim. 6:15; Rom. 9:5.

²⁹ Acts 17:24, 25.

³⁰ Ps. 1:12. See Isa. 40:12-17.

³¹ Rom. 11:36.

³² Rev. 4:11; Dan. 4:25, 35. See I Tim. 6:15.

³³ Heb. 4:13.

³⁴ Rom. 11:33, 34; Ps. 147:5.

³⁵ Acts 15:18; Prov. 15:3.

³⁶ Ps. 145:17; Rom. 7:12.

³⁷ Rev. 5:12-14.

III. ³⁸ Matt. 3:16, 17; 28:19; II Cor. 13:14. See Eph. 2:18.

³⁹ John 1:14, 18. See Heb. 1:2-6; Col. 1:15-17.

⁴⁰ John 15:26; Gal. 4:6.

Does God Neglect Us?

A Meditation on Psalm Thirteen

By the REV. DAVID FREEMAN



Mr. Freeman

IT MAY sound strange to us to hear a man say in the pages of Holy Writ that God had neglected him. But David was a man of like passions with ourselves, and the Holy Spirit has accurately preserved for us this man's opinion and feeling in his troubles.

Is it not true that when we are beset with adversities for a long time, there comes the thought that God has forgotten us? It is natural for man so to think, for the capacity of man's reason extends not beyond his senses and the things of this world. Man grovels in the dust, and in himself he can never attain unto the grace of God. The judgment of the carnal mind excludes God from its affairs.

Yet it was not on a bare natural plane that the Psalmist stood, for he cried out to God for help. There must be faith when a man sincerely cries to God in his woes. How can one see his safety in God, without trust in Him? The very cry of helplessness and dependence upon God raises the soul to Him. God hears not those who seek help in their own resources. God is a mighty Saviour, and those who believe themselves humanly strong and self-sufficient will not sense their need of such a One.

The Arm of Flesh

There is always the temptation and danger of leaning on the arm of flesh in our troubles. This will always fail us. What is it that makes people more miserable than the casting of their eyes on human powers and trusting to worldly counsel! Certain it is that in this way no relief can ever come. Cares and trials will never be borne with fortitude and quiet minds, when the eyes are away from the Lord. He keeps only those whose minds are stayed on Him, in perfect peace. Yes, there is a peace that passeth all understanding, but it comes not

apart from the possession of the Lord Himself.

How Long Will Saints Suffer?

David did not think of the suffering of the saints as for a day. He knew that to be called into the family of God meant tribulation continually. There will never be a path of ease for the children of God. Knowing that they are called to suffer and to perpetual warfare, they should not count it strange when they enter into divers temptations. It is because many forget that, as disciples of the Lord Jesus, they are to take up their cross and follow Him in His sufferings, that they are not able to take their hardships patiently. Because they expect what the Lord has not promised, many are ready to forsake Him at the first sign of struggle.

It is better to cry to God in our troubles than not to cry at all to Him, because we have no troubles. If through our troubles God gives grace to implore His mercy, we shall have cause to thank God for our griefs some day.

The heavy laden need to look into God's plan for His people. There they shall see their ultimate victory. Short-sightedness leads to much misery. To comprehend God's glorious purpose for His elect will lighten the burden so that it will be easy to bear.

Stand Fast

The Psalmist and all the true children of God are determined to stand fast in God's grace and saving help. Because that is their position they are wont to pray with groanings that cannot be uttered. They are confident they will stand unto the end, even though dangers beset them on every side. Surely they know that they shall yet rejoice in God. With the Apostle Paul they say, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Again they say with the same apostle, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ: shall tribulation, or distress,

or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Not yet do the saints obtain the promises. It is the grace of God that makes them content to wait for the realization of them. Where steadfastness and perseverance is wanting, then is there the absence of God's grace. When the Patriarchs were endowed from above they sought a country whose maker and builder is God, not taking any delight in any earthly city or habitation.

God Remembers His Own

Is it because we are able to hold on to God that we cry unto Him in our distresses? Not at all. God has revealed Himself as good and gracious, and as dealing with us not according to our deserts. God answers not on the necessity of the sinner, for all sinners are in need, yet He sends them no help. But He sends deliverance according to His own promise and faithfulness to those whom He delights to save.

It would be no cause for joy or thankfulness if God paid the sinner his due. No self-righteous man ever yet rejoiced in God. Here the Psalmist exhibits unfailing reliance upon God.

If God does not shine upon us with the light of His countenance, there is nothing but death and darkness for every sinner. The Psalmist knew this well, therefore he hoped only in what God would do for him. The Lord would yet make him glad and brighten his life.

How God delights to restore and raise up, when the world thinks it has vanquished one of His saints! Can God abandon His servants? For their sakes He will check the bragging of all enemies.

Let only the godly be sure that they are in the way of holiness; that their cause is just and good, and have respect unto God's commandments.

"Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" (I Pet. 3:13).

The Sunday School Lessons

By the REV. EDWARD J. YOUNG

Instructor in Old Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary

May 2nd, Abraham, a Man of Faith. Genesis 12:1-9; 13:14-18.

ABRAHAM lived about two thousand years before Christ. With him the history of the Hebrew race definitely begins. In the Bible he is portrayed as the father of the faithful, one who truly exercised faith in the promises of God. His home was originally Ur of the Chaldees, which is probably to be identified with the modern site of El-Mugheir. Here had existed a highly civilized race, the Sumerians, who reached their zenith about 3500 B. C. Thus, when Abraham left Ur, he had behind him a great people, rich in human culture, and before him the promised glory of a great seed.

Abraham is indeed an example of one who put his trust in God. In the eleventh chapter of Genesis his name is mentioned to prepare the reader for the narrative of chapter twelve. He is begotten by Terah, marries a woman named Sarai, who is barren, and travels with his wife and father to go into Canaan, but at Haran he stops, and there Terah dies. With this meagre information we are prepared for the story related in chapter twelve.

Now the Lord had said unto Abram. How the revelation of God here mentioned was communicated to Abraham we are not told. There seems, however, no valid reason for not holding that it was made to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees rather than while he was in Haran. Thus Stephen speaks in Acts 7:2-4, "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran. . . . Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell."

Thus, we must not say that Abraham only partially obeyed the first command (Acts 7:2-4) but now at Haran was more ready to obey God's second call (Gen. 12:1-3). The very language of Genesis seems to indicate that this command was given in Ur of the Chaldees. "Get thee out of

thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." It is extremely unlikely that such language would be employed, had this been merely a second call, addressed to Abraham, while he was in Haran.

Furthermore, the New Testament singles out Abraham as a hero of faith. To maintain that he obeyed the command of God only partially, and waited for a second call, before being ready fully to obey God does violence to the New Testament representation. "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." Such is the New Testament characterization. And again, Paul says in Romans 4:20-22, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised he was able also to perform. And therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness."

We conclude, therefore, that Abraham did obey God. There may be many reasons why he tarried at Haran. However, there seems to be no sufficient reason for assuming that such an action was due to wavering faith.

The promises are repeated to Abraham several times during the course of his life. In studying this lesson, there are three elements in the promises which we do well to consider.

Unto a land that I will shew thee. Thus, the first element is the promise of a land. Abraham leaves Ur, not blindly, but unto a land which God had prepared for him. It is true that "Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went," but it is also true that he was called to go out "into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance." This promise of the land was given several times (Gen. 12:7; 13:15, 17; 15:7, 18; 17:8; 24:7; 28:4, 14). Abraham's faith in this promise was tested. We note that he was a sojourner in the land, for it was occupied by others. Twice was he driven out by famine and once the land was invaded by distant rulers. His descendants were to be sojourners in a distant land

(Gen. 15:13), and lastly, Abraham must buy the cave of Machpelah as a burying place.

And I will make of thee a great nation. The second element in the promise was that Abraham should have a numerous seed. This element is often repeated (Gen. 12:2; 13:15; 15:5; 17:2, 4, 16; 18:18; 22:17; 26:4; 28:4; 32:12). His faith in regard to this promise was also tested (Gen. 11:3; 15:2, 3; 16:1; 17:17).

In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. This is the element of universalism (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18). In this element of the promise Abraham's faith was also tested, for he becomes the cause of contention.

The blessings of the promise were to be received by faith. Abraham did believe God, yea, he "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." This covenant made with Abraham has often been called the Abrahamic covenant. But it must be remembered that this Abrahamic covenant is in reality an administration of the covenant of grace, God's plan of salvation for a lost world. There had been previous administrations of the covenant, as, for example, Gen. 3:15. But now the plan of salvation is revealed more fully.

It is God's purpose to call out a people for His Name. These people would be characterized by the fact that the principle of their life is faith in the promises of God. They are said to be the children of Abraham (Gal. 3:7), and he is said to be their father (Rom. 4:11). He is the great hero of faith, for in hearing the promises of God, he believed them.

The blessings promised to Abraham come to him through his seed, Jesus Christ. Whereas Abraham doubtless did not have as complete knowledge of the saving work of Christ as do we, yet he did believe that which God revealed to him. Truly he was a man of faith.

May 9th, Abraham, a Man of Prayer. Genesis 18, 17-32.

IN THE previous lesson we considered Abraham as a man of faith. In Ur of the Chaldees God had appeared to him, promising to make of him a great nation. Abraham believed God and went out from his home, not knowing whither he went. He was guided by a principle of life, namely, faith. This was not faith in general,

but faith in God which impelled the life of Abraham.

It is customary to credit Abraham because of his faith. In believing God he had done a creditable thing, so we are told, and we should imitate him. But it must never be forgotten that faith itself is the gift of God to us. As Paul says about Abraham in writing to the Romans, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace" (Romans 4:16). Hence, although man does indeed exercise faith, yet it is the regenerate man who exercises this faith. Faith is the gift of God. Thus, while we consider Abraham as a hero of faith, nevertheless his example should cause us to stand in admiration of the grace of Almighty God. For in the promises which were made to Abraham we see clearly the plan of salvation. God enters into a covenant with Abraham, promising to him a Seed through whom would come salvation. Abraham would receive these blessings through faith. Thus he becomes the father of those who believe. All, in all ages, who are saved, are saved by the grace of God received by faith alone. Thus, Abraham was saved just as men today are saved.

In considering Abraham as a man of prayer, we must remember that he was a sinner saved by grace. The Golden Text of this lesson says, "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (James 5:16). Abraham was indeed a righteous man, and by this description we understand not only that he did righteously, but that he stood in a right relationship to God. Hence, the prayer of Abraham was the prayer of a redeemed soul.

It was the plan of Jehovah to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, two cities which lay in the Jordan valley, by the Dead Sea. Often they are called the cities of the plain. Their inhabitants were sinners, very wicked before the Lord. The description of Sodom's inhabitants, presented in chapter nineteen, pictures vividly the perverseness of these men. Such was the city which God intended to destroy.

God had appeared to Abraham (18:1) while Abraham was at the door of his tent. Such an appearance of God is called a "theophany," a word which means an "appearance of God." We know well that God is not limited by form, as is a man.

However, there were appearances of God as the Angel of the Lord, which we believe to be pre-incarnate appearances of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such is the theophany described here.

After the promise given to Abraham that Sarai shall have a son, the Lord departs for Sodom (verse 16) and Abraham goes with Him. In these verses there appears a deep and tender fellowship, and Abraham is rightly spoken of as the "friend of God" (cf. II Chron. 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23). On this journey God purposes to make known to Abraham His intention regarding Sodom. The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah has been very great, and their sin very grievous. For this reason God will see whether they have really done according to their cry.

Abraham knows well enough what the outcome of this visit will be. Yet he loves Lot and desires him to be spared from destruction. Hence, his prayer to God arises from his knowledge of God's purpose and from his belief that God will hearken unto him.

Abraham pleads with God. Surely the Judge of all the world will do right. Surely He will not destroy the righteous with the wicked. Of course the Judge of the earth will do right, but the standard of right by which He abides is indeed one which derives from Him, and not a standard of man's devising. Then Abraham suggests that if fifty righteous be found within the city, God will not destroy it for their sake. This was doubtless far too high a number, yet Almighty God hearkens to Abraham's request. For fifty righteous He will not destroy the city.

Abraham then proceeds to reduce the number bit by bit until he speaks of ten righteous. In all this dialogue, the patience and longsuffering of God is apparent. He hearkens to the prayer of His servant.

The question then arises: Did God keep His promise? A careful reading of Scripture shows that He did. It was not until Lot had left Sodom and there were no righteous therein that "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven."

There is no contradiction in the story. God carried out His purpose, and the righteous for whom Abraham prayed were saved. A careful reading of Abraham's prayer shows that he is concerned not primarily for the

safety for the city, but for the safety of the righteous. Faithful and just is God in the execution of His purposes, yet He hearkeneth to the prayer of His servants.

May 16th, The Forbearance of Isaac. Genesis 26:12-25.

OUR lesson is based upon an event in the life of Isaac which is followed by the giving of the promise of a great seed. Isaac is in some respects a passive character. In his life are incidents which apparently parallel incidents in the life of Abraham. For this reason, some destructive critics assert that the stories about Isaac are really based upon the Abraham stories. This, of course, is not the case. Isaac was indeed the promised son of Abraham, from whose seed the promised One would come. The incident which we are to study reveals some light upon Isaac's character.

Verse twelve. Although the patriarchs are pictured as those who traveled up and down the land, yet their mode of existence was not wholly nomadic. As this verse shows, Isaac sought to cultivate the land, and apparently was quite successful. We may describe his life, then, as being semi-nomadic. His success, however, is not attributed merely to his own ability, for it is said that Jehovah blessed him.

Other references to cultivation of the land may be found in Genesis 30:14 and 37:7. Even in the present day the Bedouins engage in cultivation to a small extent, and it is being revived by the Jewish Zionists.

Verse fourteen. Apart from cultivation of the land, Isaac was wealthy in that he possessed flocks and herds. This is indeed a true picture of oriental life. Furthermore, as the spade of the archaeologist is revealing, we find mirrored in the histories of the patriarchs not the eighth century B. C. but the time when these events are really supposed to have occurred.

Isaac's prosperity led to jealousy. The Philistines, living in southwest Palestine, found in Isaac one who might prove to be a menace. Hence, they envied him.

Verse seventeen. The jealousy of the Philistines took the form of actual expression. In the days of Abraham, the servants had dug wells, which now were in the possession of Isaac. Due to their jealousy, the Phil-

istines had stopped the wells. The seriousness of this act will appear when one considers the importance of water in desert lands. Water is scarce in the Holy Land, particularly in southern Palestine. A well of water was a treasure of inestimable value, and he who possessed it was indeed fortunate. To stop the well would be to cut off the source of life. In southern Palestine today there are wells which by tradition are said to be the wells of Abraham. They are indeed very old, so old that grooves in the stones may be seen which the ropes have made when used to draw water. Even today the well is the source of life.

The presence of Isaac and his herds was annoying. Abimelech asked Isaac to go. The surprising thing is that Isaac did indeed go, "And Isaac departed thence, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there." This was certainly an unheard-of procedure. Isaac, apparently, had the right to stay and fight, yet for the sake of peace he was willing to go more than halfway. There are times when it is advisable to yield for the sake of peace, provided that principle is not thereby sacrificed.

Verse nineteen. At Gerar Isaac found water by digging for it. However, this did not solve the difficulty. There were already herdsmen at Gerar, who strove with Isaac's herdsmen, claiming that the water belonged to them. Gerar is quite possibly the modern Gurf el-Gerar which is west of Beersheba, near the Mediterranean coast. Here several valleys converge, so that it was quite a large place.

Because of this strife the well received the name of Esek, which means annoyance. Isaac apparently did not contend for this well but dug for another, over which the herdsmen also contended. This was named Sitnah, which means hostility. Again Isaac exhibited forbearance, and removed from Gerar to dig another well for himself. Apparently this well was far enough removed from Gerar so that no contention was held over it. For this fact Isaac was thankful, calling its name Rehoboth, and saying, "For now Jehovah hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land." From thence Isaac departed to Beersheba.

The land had been promised to Abraham and to his seed. Apparently,

however, Isaac is a mere stranger in the land. Wherever he goes, he is not wanted. Would God's promise indeed come to pass? The closing verses of our lesson are truly words of comfort.

Jehovah appears to Isaac and repeats His promise, "Fear not, for I am with thee," are the gracious words which Isaac hears. Although the land seems hostile, and Isaac must wander here and there to find water for his

flocks, yet Jehovah is with him. The promise cannot fail, for it rests on sovereign, unchanging grace. The promise will be fulfilled. God will give to Isaac a great seed. This lesson does reveal to us a glimpse of Isaac's character, not only his forbearance, but also his trust in God. Above all, however, we see the faithfulness of Him who, in His truth, is infinite, eternal and unchangeable.

Studies in the Shorter Catechism

By the REV. JOHN H. SKILTON

LESSON 28

Election

QUESTION 20. *Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?*

ANSWER. *God, having out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.*

The Good Pleasure of God



Mr. Skilton

WE have seen that the fall brought mankind into a state of sin and misery, from which no man could extricate himself. Adam had represented all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation. All sinned in him, and fell with him into an estate of guilt, pollution, and evil. Without any ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation, utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, man could rightfully expect nothing other than to receive the wages of his sin, to remain under God's just wrath and curse, in the toils of death, separated from the holy Creator and Judge of the whole earth forever.

Since all were dead, with no ability to produce life in themselves, there would have been no cause to wonder if all had remained dead. But the Bible tells us a story of grace that is veritably wonderful. It tells us that our great God Himself, out of His mere good pleasure, exercising His free and sovereign will, predestined

or elected from all eternity some men to everlasting life. In His eternal plan God had determined on the salvation of a multitude whom no man can number! (Daniel 4:35; Matt. 11:25-26; John 15:16-19; Gal. 1:15, 16; Eph. 1:5, 11.)

As the questions in the section of the Catechism with which we are now dealing call our attention to various phases in the eternal plan of salvation we shall be caused to marvel more and more at the grace of our great God. (It would be profitable for us to consult, at this point in our studies, Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield's book, *The Plan of Salvation*.)

Not of Works

Some persons erroneously hold that God elected those whom He foresaw or foreknew would repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and that their repentance and faith are the grounds rather than the consequence of their election. They believe, in other words, that some merit in the elect individuals is the reason for election, not the issue of it. Such a view runs counter to the teaching of Scripture concerning man's inability (see Lesson 26), concerning the gracious nature of salvation as a gift from God, and concerning the decrees of God, which are the only basis of foreknowledge (see Lessons 14 and 15).

See Matthew 13:11; John 6:37, 39; 10:26; Acts 5:31; 11:18; 13:48; 18:27; 22:14, 15; Romans 2:4; 3:23, 24; 6:23; 5:6, 8, 15, 16; 11:4-7; I Cor. 4:7; 15:10; Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 1:4-7; 2:4-10; II Tim. 1:9; Titus 2:11; 3:5; I Peter 1:2.

Consider also Romans 9:11-13.

In Romans 8:29 the word "foreknow" is used, not to designate mere

"prevision," but rather in the sense of to "set regard upon from before," to "fix the mind upon," to "have a loving, distinguishing regard." Those whom God foreknew in this sense He "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son."

Consider Psalm 1:6; 143:3; Jeremiah 1:5; Hosea 13:5; Amos 3:2; Matthew 7:23; John 10:14, 15, 27; Acts 2:23; Romans 11:2-5; I Cor. 8:3; Gal. 4:19; II Tim. 2:19; and I Peter 1:2, 20.

To declare that "foreknew" here means foresaw "meritorious" faith or the like is to advance a strange thought not expressed in the Scripture, to contradict the uniform representations of Paul that election is determined by nothing in man, and to do violence to the meaning of the very passage in which the word occurs.

Elect

The Bible abounds in statements about election. It makes it very clear that men are saved only if God has chosen them. Their salvation is to be referred to God's choice, not their own. They have faith and truly good works because God elected them. For an excellent example see Ephesians 1:4, 5.

See also Psalm 65:4; Matthew 11:25f; 13:11; 22:14; 24:31; Mark 13:20; John 6:37, 39, 44, 45, 65; 8:47; 10:26-29; 13:18, 48; 15:16; 17:2, 6, 9, 19, 24; Acts 2:47; 13:48; Romans 8:28, 29, 30, 33; 9:11, 12, 23; 11:5, 7; I Cor. 1:27, 28; Gal. 1:15, 16; Eph. 1:3-6, 11, 12; I Thess. 1:2-4; 5:9; II Thess. 2:13; II Tim. 2:10; Titus 1:1; I Peter 1:1; 2:1-9. Consider Deut. 4:37; 7:6-8; 10:15; Hosea 13:5.

It is heartening to know that God elected men as individuals and that there is a warm "particularity" in predestination.

Non-Elect

It is of course obvious that if God has chosen only some for salvation there are others whom He has passed by, whom He has not chosen, on whom His wrath must abide (John 3:18, 36; I John 3:14). Being liable to the pains of hell forever, and being justly permitted to remain in their estate of sin, the non-elect will experience those pains. And since nothing is excepted from the glorious, unchangeable, free and sovereign eternal purpose of God, it must be said that their punishment, like everything else that comes to pass, has been decreed from all eternity

to the glory of God (see Lessons 14 and 15).

The Westminster Confession of Faith says concerning the non-elect:

"The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice" (Chapter 3, Section 7).

See Proverbs 16:4; Isaiah 6:9-10; Matthew 11:25, 26; 13:10-15; John 10:2, 12; 12:39, 40; Romans 9:13, 17, 18, 21-23; 11:7; II Timothy 2:20; I Peter 2:8; II Peter 2:12; Jude 4; and Revelation 13:8.

We should not overlook Ezekiel 33:11 with its indication of God's attitude toward the death of the unrighteous: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live."

See also I Timothy 2:4 for a statement of the same type.

Election or Chaos

The denial of the doctrine of election directly or logically entails a disregard of the teaching and authority of Scripture, an ignoring of the lessons taught by providence and the inferences to be drawn from them concerning the sovereign eternal purpose of God in disposing of His creatures as He wills, a denial of God's whole plan of salvation and of the fact that God has any plan at all, a denial of the doctrine of God's eternal purpose, and an assault upon the sovereignty of God and on God Himself.

The objections sometimes raised against the doctrine of election, such as the assertions that it is likely to encourage moral irresponsibility and to cause men to regard themselves as mere pawns of fate, are based on a gross caricature of the doctrine itself and a misapprehension of the whole Christian system of truth. Any one who thinks that a holy doctrine of the Scriptures in any way should induce man to neglect holy things has not read his Bible aright.

If any one presumes to dispute the justice of God in choosing some and not others, if he in effect sets his own view of what is right against the teaching of the Scriptures and seeks to establish his own reason as the standard of truth, and to deny God the right to rule His universe for His own glory, let him read with rever-

ence Paul's chaos-dispelling caution in Romans 9:19-21. See also Matthew 11:26 and Luke 10:21.

SUBJECTS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Ask someone to review briefly Lessons 14 and 15. May all that is said of the decrees of God in general be said of election in particular?

2. Ask members of the Young People's Society to report on various sections of Chapter 3 of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

3. Refute from Scripture the contention that God elects those whom He foreknew would "merit" salvation.

4. What must one do to be saved? Is faith a gift of God?

5. Are we to marvel that, man having fallen, some are lost or that some are saved?

6. Is God obliged to give any man an opportunity to hear the gospel? Has any man a right to be saved? What is the meaning of the word "grace"?

7. Are the heathen who have never heard of Christ justly condemned by God? Who alone determines the way of salvation? What is that way? Consider John 6:53; 15:5; 14:6; 3:36; 5:12; 17:3; Acts 4:12; Romans 2:12; 10:13, 14; I Cor. 3:11; and Heb. 11:6.

8. Does God grant to certain nations and individuals more "advantages" than to others? Consider Amos 3:2; Psalm 147:20; Deut. 7:6-8; and 10:15.

9. Ask some one to report on the election of angels. Consider I Tim. 5:21; Matt. 25:31, 41; II Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Revelation 12:7.

10. If we hold that God has elected some to salvation must we logically hold that He has also decreed the punishment of others?

11. Are the decrees of God many or one? If we deny election must we logically deny that God has had any eternal purpose and must we deny God?

12. Do you think that many are elect? Consider Rev. 7:9, 10; Matthew 7:14; 8:11; 22:14; Heb. 2:10. Do you think that all infants dying in infancy are saved? What does the Westminster Confession of Faith say? See Chapter 10, Section 3. See THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, Dec. 26, 1936, pp. 120, 121. Do infants have evil natures? If they are saved what must occur?

13. What effect should the doctrine of election have on our lives? What feelings should be produced in us by the doctrine of reprobation?

14. Is it right for God to permit evil? Is it right for Him to decree it?

15. Have some persons review chapters 2-6 in Dr. Machen's book, *The Christian View of Man*.

LESSON 29

The Covenant of Redemption

QUESTION 20. *Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?*

ANSWER. *God, having out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did*

enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.

It is obvious that whatever God decrees must certainly come to pass. If He has ordained certain men to life, He will cause them to have life.

In this lesson and subsequent studies we are to deal with the general subject of the manner of God's deliverance of His elect out of the estate of sin and misery and His bringing them into an estate of salvation.

A Covenant Indicated

The Bible indicates that God the Father and God the Son from eternity—logically, after the decree of election—formed a covenant with regard to the redemption of the elect. They entered into an agreement involving promises and conditions to be fulfilled (review the lesson on the Covenant of Works).

Consider, for instance, some of our Lord's statements in His prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, verses 4 to 12.

See also Psalm 2:7-9; Luke 2:49; John 4:34; 5:30, 43; 6:38-40; 10:18; 17:18, 24; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5.

Examine again Romans 5:12-21 and I Corinthians 15:22. If these verses lend support to our view of a Covenant of Works would they not also support the view that there was a Covenant of Redemption?

The Parties

It is apparent from the verses cited above that the Covenant of Redemption was formed by the Father and the Son particularly. The Father may be said to stand for the Godhead and the Son to be representative of all the elect. The Holy Spirit, of course, was in agreement with this divine disposition.

The Conditions

In the Covenant of Redemption, Christ, as representative of the elect, was required, first, to become flesh, be born of a woman, taking to Himself a true human nature, but without sin (Gal. 4:4, 5; Heb. 2:10, 11, 14, 15; 4:15). Secondly, He was required, on behalf of His people, to be subject to, or made under, the law; to meet all its demands, fulfill all righteousness; and to pay the penalty

for their sins (See Psalm 40:8; Isaiah 42:21; 53:2; Matt. 5:17, 18; 19:17; John 8:29; 9:4, 5; Rom. 5:19; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 5:2; and Phil. 2:6-8).

The Promise

The Father promised the Son, on the grounds of His fulfilling the conditions of the Covenant, to provide for Him a body untouched by sin (Heb. 10:5); to give Him the Holy Spirit without measure (Isaiah 42:1, 2; 61:1; John 3:34); to help Him in His great task (Isaiah 42:6, 7; Luke 22:43); not to permit death to have dominion over Him, but highly to exalt Him and give to Him all authority (Ps. 16:18-11; Acts 2:25-28; Phil. 2:9-11); to permit Him to send the Holy Spirit to regenerate, sanctify, and otherwise serve the interests of His elect (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13, 14); and to cause all who were given to Him to come to Him, never to be lost (John 6:37, 39, 40, 44, 45).

The Father also promised, Dr. Charles Hodge says, that "through Christ, in Him, and in His ransomed Church, there should be made the highest manifestation of the divine perfections to all orders of holy intelligences throughout eternity. The Son of God was thus to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied" (*Systematic Theology*, Part 3, Chapter 11, 4).

Unending Praise

Our Lord Jesus fulfilled the conditions of the Covenant of Redemption. God the Father has fulfilled many of the promises—and of course is still fulfilling others.

How deeply it moves us who fell with Adam, our first representative, but who have been redeemed by our holy Representative, the Lord Jesus Christ, to think of what our great God and Saviour did for us whom He might justly have permitted to remain dead. Truly the One who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, must receive our adoration forever.

SUBJECTS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Compare the various elements in the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Redemption.

2. Why do we mention no penalty in connection with the Covenant of Redemption?

3. Is salvation in any way from man? Is it true that, as many say, all are bound for the same eternal destiny, that the roads travelled are various, but all lead to the same place? Who determines the way of salvation?

4. Have some one report on the content of Answers 21 to 28 of the Shorter Catechism.

5. Have some one report on the content of Answers 29 to 36 of the Shorter Catechism.

6. What attitudes and emotions should a study of the Covenant of Redemption encourage in us?

7. What effect should a study of the Covenant of Redemption have on our conduct?

A SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS NEWS

Germany

CONFESSIO^NAL churchmen have now stated frankly that they have no intention of remaining in the same church with the so-called German Christians, no matter how the elections turn out. It is becoming increasingly unlikely that the confessional church will take any part in the elections, and current confessional literature indicates a complete lack of confidence in the State's promises.

A further step in the rebellion against the government's attempt to control the church, even temporarily, was taken on April 8th when the Prussian church's governing commission announced that it had recognized the authority of the "interim church administration" created a few days

earlier by the Lutheran council in complete defiance of the Reich.

The open distrust expressed by confessional pastors was apparently well-founded, for the secret political police confiscated a pamphlet entitled "We Summon Germany to God," written jointly by the Rev. Martin Niemoeller and Superintendent Friedrich Dibelius, Confessional Synod spokesman. Apparently the principle announced by Chancellor Hitler in February, that the church would be allowed freedom of expression prior to the Protestant election, has been abandoned.

France

IN France the regional synods of the Evangelical Reformed Churches of France have been voting upon the

substitution of the Declaration of Faith of 1936 for the Declaration of Faith of 1872 in the constitution of the churches. This substitution is preparatory to the actual fusion of several Protestant churches in France. It is necessary to secure a Declaration of Faith which will be acceptable to at least a majority of the modernist and liberal party before the union can be consummated. The latest information available indicates that fifteen regional synods have favored the substitution of the new Declaration for the old and three have opposed the change. This vote is nearly complete, as only about three synods were unreported. A few of the synods approving of the substitution have attempted to salve the consciences of believers and to obscure the issue by retaining the 1872 Declaration as a parallel but subordinate declaration along with that of 1936.

Preliminary reports from the National Synod of the Evangelical Reformed Churches in France, meeting at Paris, indicate that the new Declaration of Faith was adopted by a vote of 57 to 9. The next steps will be to proceed with remaining details which must be brought into line before union can become a fact.

Russia

ON April 8th the Communist party of the Ukraine announced the adoption of a systematic program designed to stamp out all religion. A school for training anti-religious leaders will be opened in central Ukraine by the Party Provincial Committee, and sixty persons will there be given three months' instruction. They then will be sent out to the villages to organize anti-religious work. This campaign is the result of recent widespread alarm over the decline in membership of the League of Militant Godless and the reported revival of religious influences.

China

IN AN Easter message to the entire nation Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek testified to his belief in Biblical Christianity. General Chiang, who was baptized in the Methodist Church in 1929, stated that during his captivity in Sian from December 12th until Christmas, he read the Bible daily and "gained vital spiritual strength" therefrom.

ARTHUR W. MACHEN AND FAMILY FILE COMPLAINT IN PRESBYTERY OF THE SOUTHERN CHURCH AGAINST UNION SERVICES WITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN U.S.A.

Cite Apostate Nature of Northern Church in Protesting Against Summer Services with Auburn Affirmationist

WHAT is viewed by many as an action of far-reaching significance is the filing of a complaint before the Presbytery of Potomac of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. against the customary summer union services of the Franklin Street Presbyterian Church of Baltimore (a member of the southern church) with the First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore and the Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church of Baltimore (both of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.). The pastor of the latter church is the Rev. T. Guthrie Speers, a signer of the Auburn Affirmation and a noted Modernist.

The complaint was filed on March 30th by Arthur W. Machen, Esq., prominent Baltimore attorney and brother of the late Dr. J. Gresham Machen, together with his wife and son, after the session of the Franklin Street Church had refused to alter its plans for the union services. The complete text of this important document follows:

BEFORE THE PRESBYTERY OF POTOMAC.

ARTHUR W. MACHEN
HELEN WOODS MACHEN, and
ARTHUR W. MACHEN, JR.

vs.

THE SESSION OF THE
FRANKLIN STREET CHURCH
BALTIMORE

*To The Presbytery of Potomac;
Fathers and Brethren:*

The Complaint of Arthur W. Machen and Helen Woods Machen, his wife, and Arthur W. Machen, Jr., respectfully shows:

1. That the Complainants and each of them are communing members in good standing in the Franklin Street Church of Baltimore, and subject to the jurisdiction of the Session thereof.
2. That for a number of years past it has been the practice of the said Franklin Street Church to hold union services in summer with the First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore,

and with the Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church of Baltimore, both of which were and are connected with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The practice has been for services during the summer months to be held during approximately one-third of the time in each of said churches. Said union services amount, and are intended to amount, to a public representation that each of said churches was and is a true church of Jesus Christ. At the time said union services were originally instituted, this representation was perhaps not unjustified, but by reason of a series of events culminating in the year 1936 has become wholly erroneous.

3. That for a number of years past the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. has been riddled with, and controlled by, the heresy commonly known as "Modernism", which regards as matters of no moment such essential doctrines of any form of Christianity and particularly of the standards of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. as (1) That the Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, (2) That Christ died to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, (3) That the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead with the same body with which he suffered, (4) That the Holy Scriptures are free from error, and (5) That our Lord Jesus Christ, while on earth worked many mighty works which are not contrary to, but above, "nature".

4. That in the year 1925 nearly 1,300 ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. subscribed and published an heretical document known as the "Auburn Affirmation", whereby they affirmed that some of them did, yet others did not, believe in any of the essential doctrines of the Faith mentioned in Paragraph "3" hereof—although those who did so disbelieve did not have the manliness or decency to indicate their identity—and whereby all of them affirmed that they without exception believed that said doctrines, and each of them, are

unessential and not to be required to be believed by deacons, elders, or even ministers, in said Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

5. That said Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., so far from disciplining, or even reproving the signers of said heretical document, has retained them in high positions of official authority, including membership on its important boards and agencies, including even the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., which is virtually the Supreme Court of said so called "Church". Among the signers of said heretical document, destructive of the whole factual basis of Christianity, is the Rev. Guthrie Speers, pastor of said Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church, Baltimore (of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.). He has never retracted or qualified his adherence to said heretical document, so far as is known by the Complainants, but continues to affirm his adherence thereto.

6. That the boards and agencies of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., to which as aforesaid both said First Church and said Brown Memorial Church of Baltimore are subject and which they and each of them support, are honeycombed with said heresy of "Modernism" and are propagating and supporting not the Gospel of Jesus Christ but another gospel which is no gospel.

7. Nevertheless said Presbyterian "Church" in the U. S. A., by resolution of its General Assembly of 1934, purported blasphemously to require of all its ministers, elders, and members, support of its said heretical boards and agencies as a duty on a par with our Lord's command to celebrate his death by the Holy Communion. This blasphemous command was reiterated by the General Assembly of said "Church" of 1935, and its General Assembly of 1936 undertook to discipline and suspend ministers who in obedience to the commands of Christ dared (1) to send out missionaries to the Heathen to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and (2) to refuse support to its Boards and Agencies, which were and are propagating falsehoods instead of truth, and were and are denying the most essential doctrines of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S.

8. As stated above, the Pastor of the Brown Memorial Presbyterian

Church of Baltimore is a signer of said heretical "Auburn Affirmation". The Pastor of the said First Church, while apparently not a signer of said document, is yet, as the Complainants are informed and believe and therefore charge, in complete sympathy therewith. The said Brown Memorial Church has actually welcomed to its pulpit an unconverted Jew. Thus, while said Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. casts out true Christians from its communion for the "crime" of exposing and attacking Modernism and heresy, it yet welcomes unconverted Jews.

9. It is always a debatable question how far a true church shall tolerate heresy; but, as the Complainants are advised and charge, when a church not merely tolerates heresy but persecutes orthodoxy it ceases to be a church of Jesus Christ at all. Judged by this standard, the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has ceased to be a church of Jesus Christ. Shall a congregation of this Presbytery be permitted to unite with such?

10. For these reasons, the Complainants, through the Complainant Arthur W. Machen, requested the Session of the Franklin Street Church to cease and desist from said union services with the First and Brown Memorial Churches. But the said Session within ten days prior to the service hereof refused to do so, as will be more fully apparent from a letter dated March 22, 1937, from Mr. E. H. Norman, Clerk of Session, to said Complainant, copy of which is hereto attached as part hereof marked "Complainants' Exhibit A".

Wherefore the Complainants respectfully pray that this Complaint may be sustained.

ARTHUR W. MACHEN
HELEN WOODS MACHEN
ARTHUR W. MACHEN, JR.

"COMPLAINANTS' EXHIBIT A."

BALTIMORE BUSINESS
COLLEGE

Baltimore and Light Streets
BALTIMORE, MD.

March 22, 1937.

ARTHUR W. MACHEN, Esquire,
1207 Calvert Building,
Baltimore, Md.

My Dear Mr. Machen:

At a meeting of the Session held on March 21, 1937, I was directed to communicate to you the following extract

from the minutes, in answer to your letter of March 6, 1937:

"A letter was read from Mr. Arthur W. Machen, Jr., under date of March 6, 1937, suggesting certain alterations in the plan for Union Services with the First and Brown Memorial Churches during the summer months. After a thorough discussion, the Session declined to make any change in the present arrangement."

Sincerely yours,

(SIGNED) E. H. NORMAN,

Clerk of the Session,

Franklin Street Presbyterian Church.

PHILADELPHIA PRESBYTERY
REPORTS NEW PROGRESS

Adopts Memorial to the Late
Rev. William K. Fleck

FIRST action of the Presbytery of Philadelphia on Monday, April 5th, was to receive under care of presbytery four students of Westminster Seminary: Messrs. Edward F. Hills, Stanley P. Allen, James C. Curnow, and Christian G. Ter Maat. Each of the four gave a strong testimony of Christian experience and a call to the ministry of the gospel. Arrangements were made for the ordination of graduate student Jean H. Faurot on May 2nd, at the New Covenant Church, Philadelphia.

Highpoint of the meeting was the reception of the Covenant Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, whose rapid progress is reported elsewhere on these pages. The addition of this church was a cause for general thanksgiving. The work begun a few months ago among the negro population of Philadelphia received favorable comment.

Plans for a Young People's Rally were announced by the committee in charge. The rally was held on April 10th, at the Calvary Church of Germantown, with meetings both afternoon and evening, and it is hoped that other presbyteries will inaugurate similar rallies among the young people of their churches.

The following memorial to the late Rev. William K. Fleck was read by the Rev. George W. Marston and adopted by the presbytery:

Fathers and Brethren:

The Rev. William K. Fleck went to be with his Lord, December 13th, 1936. He

was the first minister of our denomination to enter into that rest which remaineth to the people of God.

We, the members of the committee appointed by this presbytery to prepare this memorial to the late Mr. Fleck, count it a privilege to have known him and desire to give a brief word of testimony concerning the grace of God manifested in him. He was an eloquent, Spirit-filled speaker, wondrously used of God on various occasions to stir the hearts of men. He preached the Word without fear or favor, even though it cost him a church and a livelihood. He was a consistent minister of the gospel, being true to the Word in presbytery as well as in the pulpit. In the struggle which preceded our exodus, he was one of the few men in Donegal Presbytery who contended for the faith. When the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. became apostate he departed from it although he had no prospect of a church or people to support him.

Here are a few salient facts concerning the life and ministry of this soldier of the cross:

William Keeler Fleck was born at New Kingston, Pa., July 20th, 1885. He was the son of the Rev. H. R. Fleck and Anna French Fleck. He began his college work at Susquehanna University, Selingsgrove, Pa., but transferred to the Gettysburg College in his Junior year and graduated in 1907. He then entered the Gettysburg Theological Seminary (Lutheran) and graduated in 1910.

The Rev. Mr. Fleck's first pastorate was a Lutheran church in Fairfield, Pa. He also served churches of the General Synod Lutheran Church in Lititz, Pa., and in Camden, N. J. At the time of the merger between the General Synod (low church) and the General Council (high church) his convictions forced him to withdraw and he united with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

As a minister of that denomination he first served the Pittsgrove Presbyterian Church at Daretown, N. J. It is interesting to note that some of these people are now members of The Presbyterian Church of America. From Pittsgrove he was called to Williamstown, N. J., where he also served acceptably until ill health forced him to leave the active ministry for a time. During this period Mr. Fleck and his family lived in Lancaster, Pa. Here he did secular work for his livelihood, but also did a great deal of supply preaching in churches of various denominations.

After his health improved, the Rev. Mr. Fleck accepted a call to the Chanceford Presbyterian Church, at Woodbine, York County, Pa. Here he labored amidst great opposition until the people defiantly rejected his preaching of the Word. Leaving the Chanceford Church in July of 1935, he moved to Delta, Pa. In July of 1936 he united with The Presbyterian Church of America.

Brother Fleck was stricken with pneumonia in the early part of December and died on the thirteenth of the month. The funeral services were held at the home on December 16th. The following ministers took part: the Rev. James L. Grazier, Slato Ridge Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Rev. Mr. Rulley, Methodist Protestant Church, of Delta, Pa., Mr. Frank Law-

rence, student pastor of the group that has withdrawn from the Centre Presbyterian Church of York County, Pa., the Rev. Franklin S. Dyrness, Faith Presbyterian Church of America, and the Rev. George W. Marston, Kirkwood Presbyterian Church of America. Another service was held in Gettysburg on the following day, which was conducted by the Rev. A. R. Steck, D.D., pastor of the First Lutheran Church of Carlisle, Pa. Mr. Fleck was buried in the Citizen's Cemetery in Gettysburg.

The late Rev. William K. Fleck is survived by his wife, Mary Sheads Fleck; three sons, Murray H., William K., and James G.; his mother, Mrs. Anna M. French Fleck, of Lititz, Pa.; three brothers, Charles E., of Dallas, Texas, Mervin, of Long Beach, Calif., and Robert, of Huntingdon, Pa.; and a half brother, Mazlin, of New York City, N. Y.

Respectfully submitted,
 GEORGE W. MARSTON, *Chairman*
 MILTON G. CAMPBELL
 FRANKLIN S. DYRNNESS.

HARRISVILLE CHURCH HOLDS DEDICATION OF NEW BUILDING

WITH hearts full of thanksgiving and praise the members of the Faith Presbyterian Church of America, Harrisville, Pennsylvania, gathered at 2.30 P. M. on Sunday, April 11th, for the dedication of their new church building. In an atmosphere of solemnity charged with a living spirit of joy and blessing the congregation proclaimed that "Christ is made the sure Foundation, Christ the Head and

Cornerstone." Following the service of dedication conducted by the Rev. Robert L. Atwell, pastor of the church, the sermon was preached by the Rev. Charles J. Woodbridge, Chairman of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension. Mr. Woodbridge spoke on the subject: What Mean These Stones?

In the evening Mr. Woodbridge chose as his topic: A Miracle of Grace. Special services were held during the week following the dedication, and on Sunday, April 18th, new members were received into the church, after which the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated.

AUBURN AFFIRMATIONIST RE-ELECTED MODERATOR OF PHILADELPHIA BODY

THE Rev. George Emerson Barnes, D.D., Auburn Affirmationist pastor of the Overbrook Presbyterian Church and Moderator of the Presbytery of Philadelphia of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., was re-elected for a second term at the regular meeting held on April 5th in Philadelphia's First Church. The "conservative" element in presbytery were backing the Rev. John Grant Newman, D.D., who was defeated by the small margin of 12 votes.

An attempt was also made to elect Auburn Affirmationist Edward B. Shaw as General Secretary of the Board of Trustees, in spite of the fact that there was already an acting General Secretary serving until next September. Plans of the protagonists of this move had apparently been well laid. Dr. Shaw's fellow-Affirmationist, Dr. J. A. MacCallum, nominated him after a half-hour eulogy which would have been amusing had its intent been less sinister. There followed a frank discussion, pro and con, of the highly questionable desirability of electing Dr. Shaw to any such position. Dr. Shaw was defeated.

Auburn Affirmationist Joseph B. C. Mackie announced that the modernist Commission of Nine had recommended re-alignment of the three presbyteries of Philadelphia, Philadelphia North, and Chester, into one large metropolitan presbytery.

The Judicial Committee, reporting in the matter of the Susquehanna

Westminster Seminary Commencement

THE commencement exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary will be held in the Witherspoon Auditorium, Walnut and Juniper Streets, Philadelphia, on Tuesday evening, May 11th, at eight o'clock. The address will be delivered by the Rev. Professor Thomas E. Welmets, of Hope College, Holland, Michigan. He will speak on the subject: The Ministry of Reconciliation. The public is cordially invited by the seminary to be present on this occasion.

Avenue Church, recommended that a commission be appointed and charges preferred against the Rev. James W. Price who, with his church, has renounced the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. A chorus of "What's the use?" greeted the suggestion. The commission was not appointed.

When Mr. William H. Kepler, of Affirmationist Mackie's Northminster Church, appeared for licensure many members of the presbytery were astounded to discover that he possessed a remarkable knowledge of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms and apparently believed in the system of doctrine which they contain. Being broadminded, however, they did not allow this to stand in the way, but licensed Mr. Kepler as readily as though he were one of their own.

SOUTH DAKOTA CHURCH IS HOUNDED BY PRESBYTERY

THE Olivet Presbyterian Church of Volga, South Dakota, which renounced the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. on October 26, 1936, is now the object of a bitter attack by Huron Presbytery which is desperately attempting to claim control of the church property. Decision has not yet been rendered in the suit in Equity Court calculated to expel the congregation from its building, but the manner in which the plaintiffs have conducted their part in the case thus far is worthy of special note.

At a *pro re nata* meeting of Huron Presbytery on November 17, 1936, action was taken demanding the withdrawing majority to surrender all church property within six days and to vacate the manse within thirty days of the service of the demands. Trial proceedings were also instituted against the Rev. George W. Heaton and the Rev. Charles L. Shook, pastor of the Olivet Church. At another *pro re nata* meeting held on January 5th, the names of both ministers were erased from the roll of presbytery and action was taken to bring suit against the church in Equity Court to acquire its property. This item of business was not included in the call for the meeting.

On March 5th the four withdrawing elders, together with Mr. Shook,

were summoned to court by the sheriff of Brookings County and given the scant time of one week to file answer to the demand for a temporary injunction. Answer to the plaintiffs' complaint was ordered filed within thirty days. At this hearing the five defendants were, according to one witness, declared to be "robbers, crooks, deceivers, and dishonest."

The complaint itself is an amazing assemblage of misrepresentation and even frank misstatement of fact. For example, it avers that "the persons and officers constituting the said purported 'The Presbyterian Church of America' have been by a Court of competent jurisdiction in the State of Pennsylvania, enjoined from using said name and title of 'The Presbyterian Church of America.'" This, of course, is utterly untrue.

Apparently the entire action has served merely to increase the zeal of the members of the Olivet Church. "In the meantime," said Mr. Shook, "we are enjoying the rich blessings of God. There has been a marked growth spiritually, numerically and financially. This was quite evident by the reports at our Annual Congregational meeting which was held on Tuesday evening, March 30th. That is reported to be the largest congregational meeting in the history of the church. More was given for benevolent purposes than in years. Sunday school attendance has almost tripled in the last few months, with 143 present on April 4th. Attendance at the Sunday evening service is almost as large as at the morning service. People who have not been interested in church heretofore are coming. The Lord has given us more than we could ever ask or think. To Him be all praise and glory."

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NEW PITTSBURGH CHURCH TAKES FORWARD STEPS

THE Covenant Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, held its first service about the Lord's Table on Sunday, April 4th. The service was in charge of the Rev. Robert L. Atwell, of Harrisville, who also ordained Mr. J. A. Grattan as elder, and installed him and Mr. R. R. Stuart as elders of the Covenant Church. Mr. Kunnen and Mr. Smith were installed as deacons.

After the evening service a congregational meeting was held, and a unanimous call to the pastorate of the church was extended to the Rev. Calvin Knox Cummings, General Secretary of the League of Evangelical Students. The congregation expressed the desire that Mr. Cummings assume his new duties on April 18th if possible. At this meeting the church also voted, in spite of the handicap of its very brief existence, to send \$50 as its contribution to the work of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension.

The Covenant Church was welcomed into the Presbytery of Philadelphia at its meeting on April 5th. It is expected by many that the new congregation will rapidly develop into one of the strongest churches of the denomination.

WILLOW GROVE CHURCH HAS UNUSUAL EASTER BLESSING

CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Willow Grove, whose pastor, the Rev. Robert Strong, is Moderator of Philadelphia Presbytery, is praising God for an outstanding Easter season. Easter was opened with a Sunrise Service with which Faith Chapel, Roslyn, cooperated; the Rev. E. J. Young gave the message to the more than one hundred early risers who had braved the cold. The Bible School broke its best attendance mark, the Men's Class, of which Mr. Young is the teacher, leading the way with 38 present. Notable was the fact that the morning church attendance well exceeded any mark ever reached in the years of the congregation's history, either before or after withdrawal from the old denomination.