

TEN CENTS A COPY

PUBLISHED TWENTY-THREE TIMES A YEAR

TWO DOLLARS A YEAR

The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

J. GRESHAM MACHEN • EDITOR 1936-1937

Notes From a Navy Chaplain's Log

E. Lynne Wade

•

A Spiritual Offensive

Charles L. Shook

•

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

Edward J. Young

•

The Church and the American Council

A Committee Report

•

How to Interpret the Bible

Richard W. Gray



Official U. S. Navy Photograph

"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."

May 10, 1945

VOLUME 14, NO. 9

The Passing Parade

NEWS

By THOMAS R. BIRCH

EIGHT of radio station WPEN's gospel broadcasters (see THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, April 10, 1945, p. 98), whose contracts had been abruptly terminated early last month, were refused any relief through a civil complaint. The preachers first sought a temporary injunction to compel the station to complete present contracts. When this was not granted, they filed suit for a permanent injunction to force WPEN to sell radio time to any religious broadcaster able to pay for it. The court failed to find sufficient cause to support the plaintiffs' contention, and dismissed the case. WPEN, in this battle with the gospel broadcasters, has consistently maintained that the one real issue is attempted monopoly. "One small group," they say, "whose members have controlled all of the Sunday time available for use or sale, insist that they shall continue to do so to the exclusion of all others." Religion has not been discriminated against, for the station still plans to sell some time to religion, while giving other time without charge. But WPEN does object to the fact that, under the previous set-up, "no other Gospel preacher, no other Protestant group, no Catholic program, no Jewish program, no program of Army and Navy chaplains could be placed in the 7.30 A.M. to 11 P.M. Sunday hours of WPEN because of this monopoly."

* * *

For sheer bureaucratic audacity, we think nothing can equal the recommendation to be made by the General Council to this year's assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. concerning a new streamlined method of insuring that only good, dependable machine men will henceforth be elected to the moderatorship of the assembly. "The recommendation," says *The Presbyterian* of March 15th, "proposes an amendment to the Standing Rules providing for appointment of a nominating committee, consisting of the Moderator and his four nearest living predecessors, to receive during the preceding year any names of possible nominees that may be suggested by groups of ten ministers or ten elders or by church sessions throughout the Church, and with these as a nucleus to make its own selection of three men to be placed in nomination by it at the Gen-

eral Assembly for Moderator, no other names to be presented to the Assembly." Under such an arrangement, Auburn Affirmationist Henry Sloane Coffin and four other "safe" machine men would pick three more of the church's most outstanding liberals, using names submitted "as a nucleus" only, and commissioners would have to accept one of the three. In turn, that moderator also would join the electoral college and for five more years do his part to continue the unbroken chain of modernist moderators. No conservative, no anti-machine man, could ever crash the gate; no conservative could ever appear on the moderatorial ticket.

At the notorious Syracuse assembly in 1936, Dr. J. Gresham Machen and a handful of others knew just one bright and happy moment. It was the moment when they were able to cast their votes for the Rev. Samuel J. Allen as moderator. It was a futile thing, they knew, but in that vote they at least were able to give testimony to their opposition to Modernism and their love for the truth of the Word of God. Under the new plan of the General Council, even that small morsel of consolation would be removed from any lonely and wistful "conservative" who, due to a slip-up on the part of some careless presbytery, might have been allowed to become a commissioner. Henceforth, the well-lubricated denominational machine would be free from the slightest danger of evangelical sabotage. Peace! It's wonderful!

* * *

On the first Friday in Lent many women met throughout the nation for a day of prayer. Among them were Christians who, without much serious consideration of the issues involved in united prayer, assumed that such a meeting could not possibly be anything but good, and worthy of their hearty support. Into their hands was placed the program of the "World Day of Prayer" sponsored by the United Council of Church Women. And on the back of that program were listed the organizations and causes for which the offerings were to be used. They were not such movements as the American Bible Society or the Gideons, which could properly be supported by such heterogeneous groups as those which gathered for the Day of Prayer. Instead, these were the purposes to which the offer-

ings were to be devoted: (1) To provide clinics, nurses, playgrounds, child-care centers, and religious services for migrants and sharecroppers in twenty-four states; (2) to provide "enlightenment . . . for seven government Indian schools through the radiant personalities of our religious directors. Their daily presence bridges all the distance between pueblo or tepee and the sophistication of school or city or army life." (At this point, the Christian lady with her head bowed in prayer might well be thinking that, after the radiant personalities had bridged the distance between pueblo and sophistication, there still remained the necessity of someone bridging the gulf between tepee and God.) (3) To provide "Christian literature," which, it turns out, does not mean the Bible, the Word of the living God, but *The Star*, *The Women's Magazine*, *Happy Childhood*, *The Christian Farmer*, and *The Treasure Chest*, "endorsed by the Boards of Education in different provinces" of India. (4) To support "Union Christian Colleges." Cheeloo University and Yenching are the two specifically mentioned, and Christians who know the trends in union colleges on the mission field in general, and in these two universities in particular, will be shocked at this use of money dedicated to God.

* * *

Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius has announced the names of six religious organizations which will be among the forty-two groups invited to send representatives as consultants to the American delegation to the Security Conference in San Francisco. The six are: The Federal Council; National Catholic Welfare Conference; Church Peace Union; Catholic Association for International Peace; American Jewish Conference; and American Jewish Committee. No prayer was arranged for the opening of the conference—a fact that drew sharp criticism from several clergymen. Instead Mr. Stettinius, presiding as temporary chairman, called for an opening moment of "solemn meditation" as the parley got under way.

☪

Woe to us if we merely shine!
When we shine men honour us. But
to me the judgment of men is a small
matter. It is the Lord Who judges me,
and what He expects from all of us is
not radiant brilliancy but fiery heat.

—BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

Notes From a Navy Chaplain's Log

EVANGELISM

By CHAPLAIN E. LYNNE WADE, USNR
Senior Chaplain, U.S.S. *Consolation*

PART ONE

DECEMBER 6, 1941! I stumbled through the dark at 7.00 P.M. from the manse to the little postoffice of the crossroads that marks the village of Kirkwood, Pa., to get the last mail.

"What on earth does all this mean?" asked the old postmaster, in true rural neighborliness, as he handed me a single letter bearing all the stern marks of officialdom, and addressed to "Lieutenant (jg) Edwin Lynne Wade, ChC-V(G), USNR." My heart skipped a beat as I tore open the envelope. I had been commissioned a Chaplain in the United States Naval Reserve!

But what of that? America might not get into the war at all—at least not very soon. And if she did, I might never be called. It was a good thing, however, that I was already prepared for the services of the next day. Anything might happen. What did the future hold? Praise God for being a Calvinist!

DECEMBER 7. We don't listen to the news on the Sabbath, but others do. Arriving at the evening service I learned it had happened. Pearl Harbor! Well, still I might never be called—we would lick the Japs in six months and polish off Germany in another six—or a year at the most. That is what I told Cal Cummings when he arrived a few days later to preach for our evangelistic services. He agreed about Japan, but thought the whole job would take longer. Anyway, I told the congregation I might have to leave.

The week and a half of special services which followed were such busy ones that no one, including myself, thought much about the war, the Navy, or anything else except reaching souls for Christ in the community. And God wonderfully blessed some of the best preaching I ever heard from anyone anywhere. But the Monday morning after the closing service brought another official envelope—"You will report Norfolk the end of December—"

I appreciated the joy of my ministry at Kirkwood in the week that followed more than I ever had before. I

drank deeply of the beauty of those rolling hills carpeted with the green velvet of winter wheat, and I almost resented the thought of being uprooted from such a lovely spot and from my service among some of the dearest Christians I had ever known. Give me a rural pastorate every time! How strongly Christian love had bound our hearts together in less than two years.

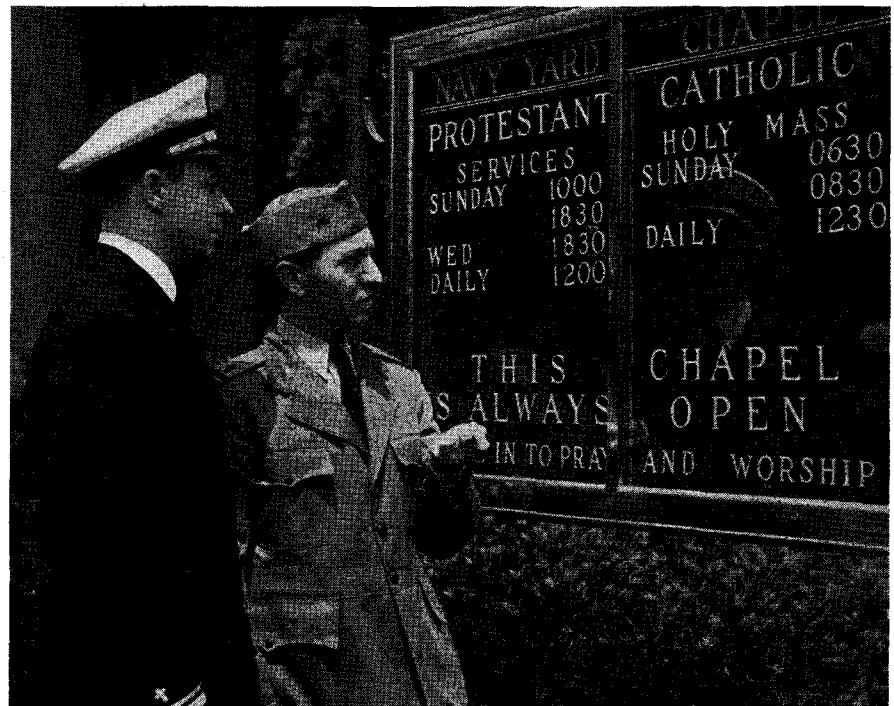
So now I did not want to go! I wanted this—my wife and children, service to my Lord in my beloved Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Who could want more, or have more? But it is written, "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." If I had only known then how increasingly precious that verse would become. Calvinism is iron in the soul as is nothing else. "The decrees of God are His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby for His own glory, He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." Amen!

Sovereign and gracious providence

gave me one more blessed Christmas with my family and flock—the last one for three years, if I had only known it. And then Norfolk! Only a Navy man who has been there can appreciate what it means to go to Norfolk. What a contrast to my beautiful Kirkwood! Norfolk—a dirty, crowded city with the Navy sprawled all over the place; that is the most charitable description I can give of it.

Then began a sudden, awkward and bewildering transformation from the quiet ease of a civilian life and pastorate to a regimented existence under strict military authority. Oh well, the uniform was good-looking, and it was fun to have fine young American boys saluting you everywhere—for the first week. After that you would cross the street, or turn aside and pretend not to see them if you could, and just wish they could say, "Hi there!" instead of saluting.

No Chaplains' School in those days! Just three or four greenhorns under the personal supervision of some old-timers. The Senior Chaplain gave each



Official U. S. Navy Photograph

Two chaplains read the bulletin board at the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

of us a desk in the little office and we went to work as though we had known all the answers for years. Now I know the significance of the term "School of Hard Knocks" or "School of Experience." But you can learn some things better that way, I discovered, when bright young graduates of the Chaplains' School were sent out to me later at my station near-by for their two weeks of "field work."

Less than one month after my arrival, the Senior Chaplain took me out to a new station a few miles away where they had not as yet had a Chaplain. Only a few months before, the place had been a typical Virginia kale patch. Now there was a "mosquito fleet" base and a thriving young Armed Guard School. Soon thousands of young men, snatched as abruptly as I had been from the quietness and joys of normal American life, would be going through intensive training in the hideous art of war. Many would never return to their homes again. And what of the eternal destiny of those thousands of souls?

The hectic activities of establishing the first Chaplain's office in a new station, combined with teaching "Navy Regulations" in the early classes of the newly-established Chaplains' School, left little time for thinking of anything except Naval matters—always, however, keeping such activities in their proper relationship to the things of the kingdom of God.

Beside all this, and the conducting of regular worship services at my station, I was soon given complete charge of the religious activities in Merrimack Park—a bustling community of five hundred homes for the families of enlisted men. My wife and children had moved down to be with me, but in spite of this, in spite of being busy night and day in this distinctly missionary type of the Lord's work, what time I did have to think—especially when I arose each morning to begin a new day's activities—revealed a constant struggle with an inner rebellion against it all, an unmistakable feeling of dissatisfaction.

I was living in an entirely new world and I was not sure I liked it at all—or that I belonged. But I had perfect liberty in my work and could preach the gospel freely. And I found opportunities undreamed of, and utterly impossible in any other situation, for personal evangelism. Here was a case where the missionary did not have to

go to the world. The world flocked in droves to the door of his office.

"Tell your troubles to the Chaplain" is an old Navy saying, and it seemed the whole world was troubled and followed the advice. Often I had fourteen or fifteen private interviews in the space of two hours. "A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." But those adversaries were the Christian's ancient enemies—the devil and all his works—and God's grace is sufficient to defeat them in any circumstances. Gradually the sense of dissatisfaction faded entirely away and the joy of serving my Saviour in this unique way thrilled my soul each day as I contemplated the task at hand.

It was well that God had given me a strong body and also that experience in previous pastorates had accustomed me to four or five services a Sunday, with almost nightly activities throughout the week. For a long while I would have to arise on Sunday before dawn to be at the great, beautiful David Adams Memorial Chapel on the Naval Operating Base for a 6.30 or 7.30 service, to minister to eight hundred or more men, then dash back to my own station for an 8.30 service. Then another wild chase to Merrimack Park for Sunday school at 9.45, followed by morning worship at 11.00.

I had instituted evening worship at Merrimack Park the very first Sunday, and that rounded out the day which, as likely as not, had also included an afternoon service in a brig or somewhere else. The rest of the week developed permanently into the following nightly schedule: Monday—putting out the station paper (taking until midnight or after); Tuesday—Bible Class; Wednesday—choir practice; Thursday—Bible Class.

Saturday evening was the only time for real preparation for the Sunday services and the Bible classes, necessitating a heavy drawing upon the "barrel" accumulated in almost ten years of preaching, with revision and adaptation to suit the message to my special audience. This left only Friday evening in which to enjoy the blessings of family life, but often special meetings, such as the monthly Sunday school teachers' meeting at Merrimack Park, took even Friday evening away. The unsung heroes of this war are not all on the battlefields; many are in the homes of America, where lonely women and children just wait.

Personal work proved to be the most effectual and blessed way of reaching souls with the gospel. Daily personal visits with the men in the brig and sick bays and hospitals yielded a rich harvest. Many were the men who gave clear evidence, before my very eyes, of being gloriously born again behind prison bars or with the familiar scent of the apothecary's odors filling our nostrils—and many more behind the closed door of the Chaplain's office. Here are several typical cases—too typical, as concerns the boys' troubles.

Jack had been brought in drunk and slated on a morals charge. He was sixteen, and from a little town in Tennessee. He had been made a PAL (Prisoner-At-Large within the confines of the station), but had violated his privilege and gone outside the Base to indulge in his old sins. Now he was in "solitary" on bread and water.

Two interviews, plus reading the New Testament and tracts that I left, prepared his heart for the Sunday when I again called on him and asked him if he would receive and confess Christ as his personal Saviour. The plan of salvation had been carefully and simply explained to him over and over again, and he had been an attentive and respectful listener. At last we kneeled together on the hard deck of that bare, tiny cell and in his own words he gave his heart to the Lord, thanking God that He had given His Son to die for his sins.

He rose from his knees with his face radiant from the joy of sins forgiven. He spent the rest of his time in the brig poring over his New Testament and other Christian literature. Daily visits were times of instruction. He wrote his mother and told others what the Lord had done for him. After his release, he remained on duty at the station for several months and proved the genuineness of his faith. He never once reverted to his former sins and was exemplary in all his conduct. Finally he was shipped to sea, secure in his Lord.

(To be continued)



Do not be deceived, my friends. This notion that it does not make much difference what a man believes, this notion that doctrine is unimportant and that life comes first, is one of the most devilish errors that are to be found in the whole of Satan's arsenal.

—J. GRESHAM MACHEN

A Spiritual Offensive

SERMON

From "The Orthodox Presbyterian Pulpit"

By the REV. CHARLES L. SHOOK

Pastor of Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Rochester, N. Y.

"Go . . . preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15).

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh" (II Cor. 10:2).

AS THE grade of material determines the quality of the fabric, so the spiritual calibre of its people determines the character of a nation. As the church advances, the state, in its God-given ends, is not the loser. The better the church, the better the nation. Let us understand, then, that we are dealing with a foundational and fundamental matter when we speak of launching a spiritual offensive.

There is urgent need of a spiritual offensive. The people of God are not confronted with a trivial matter nor with a passing fancy. We are face to face with spearheads of world-wide movements away from God. The forces of "spiritual wickedness" would sweep us before them in their rising tides of Modernism and materialism. We must wrestle against them or become engulfed by them.

We are living in a scrap age. In a land of plenty when things could be easily obtained, the scrap piles grew into mountains. Scrap collections are now fashionable—scrap iron, scrap rubber, paper, fat, silk, tin, zinc, and what have you. This has its more serious counterpart. Man, in the land of plenty, thinking he had need of nothing which he could not supply for himself, discarded not only the material things which were no longer useful to him, but cast off spiritual realities also. He forgot his Creator and Provider and lived as though there were no God. He scrapped the Bible, throwing it on the literature heap of by-gone centuries. With it went the faith of his fathers. He was too "wise" to believe all of that. At last we are living in an enlightened civilization, he said to himself. And his ego was soon inflated to his self-satisfaction.

So looking within—for when God is dethroned the throne does not long remain vacant—he vainly and blindly directed his frail raft into the shoreless billowing waters of eternal doom,

expecting the shifting quicksands of human experience to give him sure anchorage, saying proudly with Henley: "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul!" Man became enraptured with himself, with money, pleasures, machines, and inventions, with keeping up with the Joneses, with movie stars and baseball fans, with carousing, with filthy literature, with the philosophy of fools, with the making of a new world, a new Bible, a new church and even a new Jesus.

Though he has discarded what he can, he has not, thanks to the common grace of God, been able to scrap his religious impulses. Even though man has religious instincts at one time or another, in one form or another, he may be far from being a Christian. One can be an active member of a church, an officer and even a minister and still be a citizen of the kingdom of darkness. Here is the God-revealed fate of such as the psalmist described: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17).

Are there not thousands, even millions of people 'round about us, like these who have been in part characterized? Some of them are in open defiance of the Word of God and the God of the Word. Some are middle-of-the-roaders who deceive themselves and others. There are millions who are simply indifferent to the eternal issues. Thousands of these are church attenders, while the remaining millions never darken the door of a church. How great is the spiritual darkness in our land!

Brethren in Christ, we are debtors. We, who have received the riches of God's grace in Jesus Christ, are with Paul "debtors both to the wise and to the unwise." We can do no more than earnestly, faithfully and prayerfully sow the gospel of Christ and water it in the hearts of people out of love, but let us be assured we should certainly do nothing less, trusting in God to give the increase.

Are not the fields white unto harvest? Let us carry the analogy of the scrap heap a little further. During

the war, when raw materials are scarce, there is need of scrap. Scrap of various kinds is being salvaged and put to use. When things go well with man, he turns from God, thinking he has no need of the Almighty. But God in His fathomless love, mercy and grace sends a judgment upon man wherein, in despair, he sees his helplessness, his sin and his need of and dependence upon God; God stays his wandering and returns His people to the fellowship of His fold. Oh how wonderful are the works of God and His ways past our finding out! "Whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

How can we know that a spiritual offensive will meet with success? Here are some of our assurances. Consider first the advantages we have. Our Captain, the Captain of our salvation, is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, Jesus Christ, the Son of God into whose hands has been committed all power in heaven and earth. As the "all-knowing One," He knows completely the equipment, plans and abilities of the enemy. As the "all-powerful One," He is able to inflict complete and total destruction upon the enemy. The last enemy He will destroy is death.

It is required of us that we, His followers, cast out all fifth-column and subversive activities in our own hearts and minds, and that we yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto Him. As citizens of His eternal kingdom by grace through faith, it is ours to hear and expedite the commands of our great Commander-in-Chief who is seated at the right hand of God on high. We need not be afraid of defeat when we follow such a Captain.

Our equipment is infinitely superior to all. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of

Christ" (II Cor. 10:2-5). Listen to God's description of the invincible equipment He provides for His armor-clad citizens: "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:14-18). That is the equipment of victory even against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. It was the conquering power of those of old "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens" (Heb. 11:33, 34).

Here is the divine formula for spiritual victory which God gave to Solomon at the dedication of the temple: "If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chron. 7:14). Notice God did not say, "Wait until there are so many," nor, "Wait until the time seems most advantageous," but He said, "My people, no matter how many or how few you may be, whoever and wherever you are, you are to humble yourselves, to turn from your wicked ways, to pray and seek my face." Then He promises them victory.

Our King has charted the plans and prescribed the methods of accomplishment. The Christian soldier's equipment is never rendered obsolete, nor are his plans and methods of warfare ever outmoded. Let us not grope after new plans and methods but let us see that we use well the tried and true ones.

The command has been given to study. "Study to shew thyself ap-

Introducing Mr. Shook

In the spring of 1932 Mr. Shook was graduated from Grove City College, Grove City, Pa., and in the spring of 1935 from Westminster Theological Seminary. In the following summer he accepted a call from the Olivet Presbyterian Church of Volga, S. D., in which church he was both ordained and married.

In October, 1936, about eighty per cent. of the congregation joined Mr. Shook in withdrawing from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. because of that denomination's official



apostate action at the notorious Syracuse Assembly. The formation of the present Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Volga was the result. After a court case the new group left the Olivet buildings and immediately constructed a new church building and manse at a cost of twelve thousand dollars. The debt was completely liquidated five and a half years later.

For several years Mr. Shook conducted the young people's summer Bible camps as chairman of the Christian Education Committee of the Presbytery of the Dakotas. He also served the Rutland Fundamental Church during most of his stay in Volga.

Mr. Shook accepted a call to the Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Rochester, N. Y., and took up the duties of his new pastorate last October.

proved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Every spiritual awakening has been accompanied by an earnest and diligent searching of the Scriptures. Shall we not faithfully study the Bible so we will be able to scatter abroad its heaven-sent message of "good news"?

The more it rains, the farther the flood waters flow. The more our hearts, which hunger and thirst after righteousness, are flooded with the "water of life," the farther the "light of life" will shine into the valley of death and upon the dry bones. The spiritually lifeless forms will arise by the power and grace of God, as the church goes forth conquering and to conquer under the blessing of its invincible Commander.

Let us launch forth then, whether we be many or few, and hold high the Word of light and life. We can, for example, sponsor public Bible-reading campaigns. By advertising what the Bible is and what God through it has accomplished, the theories of vain philosophers will fall before its crushing power. Helpless men, women, young people and children, whom Christ has purchased with His own precious blood, will be translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.

While the guns of the enemy are pouring out their soul-destroying blasts of deadly poison, the calm but assuring command comes, "Go preach the gospel to every creature." There is one product, and only one, which can deliver the victim from the fatal poison of Modernism, from every false religion and irreligion. This one product is infallibly guaranteed by the seal of God's blood to cure the patient for all eternity. This one cure for the sin of unbelief is "the gospel of Christ which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." The human instrumentality for this cure is preaching, while the divine injection is faith by the Holy Spirit. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God."

We are, as it were, spiritual doctors. It is ours, who are called of God to preach, to administer the gospel of Christ, that the divine ingredients may restore to life those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Every person in the world is in desperate need of

(See "Shook," page 143)

The Presbyterian
GUARDIAN

1505 Race Street, Philadelphia 2, Pa.

EDITORIAL COUNCIL

John P. Clelland
John Patton Galbraith
Leslie W. Sloat
Ned B. Stonehouse

Thomas R. Birch, *Managing Editor*

EDITORIAL

The Coming Assembly

WE ARE divulging no secrets in intimating that the Twelfth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church will be one of controversy. The Clark case, the matter of our future attitude toward the American Council of Christian Churches, the relationship of Westminster Theological Seminary to the church are apt, in our judgment, to call forth certain differences of opinion among the commissioners. Some people think that orthodoxy compels a deadening monotony of belief and opinion. Certainly we have never been troubled with such monotony in the assemblies of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

We have noticed that the reaction of most laymen to controversy in the church is one of irritation. They regard the quarrel as a preacher's affair, indicative of the ministers' lack of sanctification. Mothers are ashamed when their children quarrel, especially in public, and the members of the church seem to experience somewhat the same emotion when their leaders disagree publicly.

We agree that controversy is regrettable. It shows the frailty and limitations of man. We wish that as Christians we could always agree upon the truth and unite in following it. But as long as the church of Christ is made up of poor fallible mortals, controversy will remain with us. This does not mean that we are to indulge ourselves in petty quarrels. But it does mean that we must be prepared to face differences of opinion in the church.

There are certain differences of opinion within The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. These differences are not mainly personal but doctrinal. We appeal to our readers not to turn away

in disgust saying, "A plague o' both your houses," but to recognize that it is our duty to resolve these differences through discussion. In that sense, controversy is a good thing. Through debate and discussion, the matter is clarified and the issues resolved. All the great doctrines of the church were hammered out on the anvil of controversy. If controversy leads us to the truth, it is a good thing.

We have high hopes for the forthcoming assembly. Those hopes are based upon the conviction that the commissioners to that assembly will be men who submit themselves to the Word of God. Where men submit to that rule, they will discuss their differences together with patience and sympathy, combined with a great determination to be loyal to the truth. We believe that the men of the Twelfth General Assembly are of this stamp, that they will rise above personal feelings, that they will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If such be the case, we are sure that God will lead us to His truth in His own time and that we shall dwell together in that good and pleasant unity of which the psalmist sings.

—J. P. C.

The Docket

AT THE time of going to press, no complete docket of the Twelfth General Assembly has been received. However, it is possible, on the basis of information supplied by the clerk of the Eleventh Assembly and on the basis of reports of meetings of presbyteries, to give some information that will be of value to the commissioners.

Commissioners will be registered at 10.30 A.M. Thursday, May 17th. At 11.00 A.M. the usual service of worship will be held, with the sermon by the Rev. Edwin H. Rian, moderator of the Eleventh Assembly. Business sessions will begin after luncheon. The tentative docket will call for recess at 12.30 P.M. Saturday and for reconvening at 11.00 A.M. Monday.

There will be one overture from the Presbytery of New Jersey, asking the assembly to request the Foreign Missions Committee to reduce its overhead and in particular to eliminate its subsidy to THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN.

Two overtures will come from the Presbytery of Philadelphia. The first

calls for a committee to investigate the possibility of union with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, General Synod. The second requests the assembly to urge pastors, with the assistance of the Committee on Christian Education, to provide their children with adequate instruction in matters of sex.

The Presbytery of California sends three overtures, one concerned with the personnel of the assembly, another with the meetings of standing committees, and a third with the division of the Presbytery of Philadelphia.

The complaint against actions of the Presbytery of Philadelphia leading up to the ordination of Dr. Gordon H. Clark will come before the assembly on appeal by the complainants.

There will also be a complaint from the Presbytery of the Dakotas against an action of the Committee on Home Missions.

It is hoped that this brief notice concerning some of the business of the assembly will be used by the members of the church in their prayers for God's blessing upon the coming sessions.

—T. R. B.

Two Presidents

FRANKLIN Delano Roosevelt had risen to the pinnacle of human greatness and power. Four times elected president of the United States; wartime leader of a nation which had become not only the arsenal and larder of democracy but also the world's greatest military power; idol of the common people of America; the hope of millions of liberated peoples—he was an outstanding figure of our times.

His passing reminds us anew of the frailty and finiteness of man. He was the prime figure in the shaping of a new world but He who "maketh the judges of the earth as vanity" sent His messenger and death came to Franklin Roosevelt even as to all men.

God has called President Truman to rule in a most critical time. We were much impressed, despite our tendency to discount the pious statements of politicians, by his reference to Solomon's prayer for "an understanding heart" and by his concluding sentence in his address to congress: "I ask only to be a good and faithful servant of my Lord and my people." May the Lord of Hosts give him grace to be exactly that!

—J. P. C.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

TRAVELOGUE

"Walks In and About Jerusalem"—PART 4

WE ARE about to visit one of the most interesting churches upon earth. It is a church which is said to be built over Calvary and the Tomb. We are told that a strong tradition vouches for the genuineness of the church's location. At this place Christ died and here He was buried. The empty tomb may yet be seen. However, for this visit we must prepare ourselves.

We must prepare ourselves for a shock as we approach this building. If we are not prepared, our previous mental pictures of Calvary will be destroyed by a rude awakening. The church which we are about to enter is not an attractive building, and we are likely to be repelled by it.

The façade of the church is of brown sandstone, and is two stories in height. There are two doorways, one of which is walled up. At the door sits a Moslem caretaker for, strangely enough, this building, so sacred to some Christian sects, is in the custody of the Mohammedans. This office of custodian is hereditary in one of the Jerusalem families, and one of the principal tasks of the custodian is to keep order among the "Christian" pilgrims. The thoughtful believer cannot but note all this with sadness of heart.

The Stone of Uncion

As we enter the church, we see before us a large flat stone in the floor over which are hanging many lamps. As I recall it, this is a large marble slab. It is called the "Stone of Uncion," for upon this stone the body of Christ is said to have been anointed for the burial. One wonders at the credulity that could accept such a tradition. Pilgrims are constantly approaching the stone, kneeling before it and kissing it. Here is an old lady, who feverishly kisses the stone, repeatedly makes the sign of the cross, and rises with tears in her eyes. A young American, his hands filled with rosaries, rushes up to a priest, and asks him to bless them. Others come and go, kneeling to kiss

the stone. This is the tragic piety of ignorance. About the sincerity of many of these pilgrims there would seem to be no question. But how sad to be sincere when one is sincerely mistaken.

Near the Stone of Uncion is a second stone which is said to mark the spot where the women stood when they beheld the anointing. Of course the Stone of Uncion is not genuine. Baedeker relates that the stone has often been changed.* In the 15th century it was the possession of the Coptic Church. In the 16th century it belonged to the Georgians who, for a sum of five thousand piastres, gave permission to the Romish Church to burn candles over it. The present stone was placed there in 1808.

The Sepulchre

Beyond the stone is the great rotunda of the sepulchre. The high dome is supported by eighteen pillars, and under the center of the dome stands the supposed sepulchre of Christ. Over the sepulchre a chapel is built—a small building which, in its present form, dates back to 1810. The chapel proper is very small. From the ceiling hang forty-three lamps, four belonging to the Coptic Church, and the remainder being divided among the Greek, Romish and Armenian Churches. The tombstone itself is about five feet in length, and is now used as an altar.

"Miraculous Fire"

At Easter a strange event regularly occurs, the so-called Miracle of the Holy Fire. On Friday and Saturday before Easter a crowd begins to fill the church. On Saturday evening the priests move in procession about the Chapel of the Sepulchre, and the lamps are extinguished. After a time, during which the crowd waits in rapt suspense, the supposed miracle oc-

* In this brief description I have relied to some extent upon Baedeker: *Palestine and Syria*, Leipzig, 1912.

By the REV. EDWARD J. YOUNG
Assistant Professor of Old Testament
in Westminster Theological Seminary

curs. A lighted taper is extended through a window of the chapel. This is the Holy Fire which, we are told, has come down from heaven.

A mad rush follows, as each strives to be the first to light his candle with the "miraculous" fire. One after another, candles are lighted, and the sacred fire is carried to distant climes. Before ikons in the peasant huts of Russia and Siberia burn candles which have been lighted with this fire from heaven. Many are the stories which are told about the fire. For example, according to some, it will not harm the human body.

One asks why the church authorities—and it is the Greek Orthodox Church which is responsible for this deception—permit such a fraud to be practiced unchecked. And the question becomes the more compelling when we realize that this practice has been in existence for centuries. Some educated members of the church, while freely acknowledging that no miracle occurs, nevertheless feel that the practice must be continued in order to impress the uninstructed. But the heart of a true Christian cries out against this fraud. The kingdom of God is not to be advanced by bluff and fraud. When we learn of the superstition and credulity which greet this "miracle," we yearn for a vigorous campaign of educational evangelism.

More Superstition

Perhaps we Protestants should not be too severe in our censure of the ancient eastern churches. Have we ever done anything to instruct them? The great need of these churches is for instruction in doctrine. They must become acquainted with the principles of vigorous, aggressive Calvinism, if they are ever to be freed from the dead weight of ignorance and superstition. Would that God might open our eyes to the great need which here exists!

In the center of the nave of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is a
(See "Young," page 142)

The Church and the American Council

THE OPC

A COMMITTEE REPORT

To the Twelfth General Assembly of
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second and last portion of the report of the committee elected by the Eleventh General Assembly to study the matter of cooperation and to investigate The American Council of Christian Churches. The first portion, which concerned primarily the passages of Scripture bearing on the subject, appeared in the issue of March 25th, pages 87, 88.)

THE usual method of ecclesiastical coöperation in this country is through what may be called a federation of churches. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, The American Council of Christian Churches and The National Association of Evangelicals may be described as federations of churches. That in some instances provision is made to receive also individuals as members does not alter essentially the fact just stated. While other methods of coöperation among churches are conceivable, there is good reason to think that the Eleventh General Assembly had especially this method in mind when it drew up its charge to this committee.

What are the proper functions of a federation of Christian churches? That question must be considered with some care.

The general secretary of The American Council of Christian Churches, of which we were charged to make a special study, has informed us that the Council does not intend to do that which is properly the task of the organized church. The committee is pleased with that statement. Obviously, the American Council—or any similar federation of churches—is not itself a church. It is not a particular church or congregation. It is neither a presbytery nor a synod. Nor is it a denomination. In short, it is not an organized church. From this obvious fact, two important conclusions follow. In the first place, a federation of churches may not presume to perform those tasks which Scripture assigns to the special offices of the organized church. It may not administer the sacraments, exercise

ecclesiastical discipline, ordain ecclesiastical officers, conduct ecclesiastical worship, or perform the work of the deaconate. And, while it is clear that by virtue of the universal office of believer any individual Christian and any voluntary organization of individual Christians may, and even must, bring the Word of God to men, a federation of churches may not engage in the official preaching of the Word, but must leave that task to the ordained ministry, the office of teaching elder. A second conclusion, just as obvious as the first and inseparable from it, is that the organized church has no right to delegate ecclesiastical authority to a federation of churches.

By way of elucidation of this matter, something must be said concerning the Scriptural doctrine of the organized church and its offices. The church as an organization has indeed fallen on evil days. Modernism has pantheistically wiped out the distinction between the Creator and the creature and thus has left no room for objective authority. Following in the footsteps of Schleiermacher, it has reduced the relationship between the officers and the other members of the church to the status of a contract based upon the consent of the parties involved and voidable at the pleasure of either. Ecclesiastical authority is said to derive its sanction, not from the objective will and command of Christ, the head and king of the church, but solely from the subjective willingness of the members to obey. That this view makes of the church an exceedingly loose and unstable organization is evident. But certain fundamentalist circles too hold a low view of the organized church and its offices. Due to such influences as that of Darbyism and modern Dispensationalism, membership in the organized church is deemed to be of slight—if indeed of any—value, one denomination is said to be as good—or as bad—as another, the special offices in the church are to all practical purposes stripped of authority so that in not a few instances the offices of ruling elder and deacon have ceased to exist, while the distinction between

“exhorting” or witnessing by a layman and preaching by an ordained minister is erased and almost any group of Christians feels at liberty to celebrate the Holy Supper. Thus it has become a matter of the greatest importance that the church of Christ be reminded of the Scriptural teaching that the organized church is an institution of divine origin and that the offices in the church were ordained by Christ.

When Christ declared, “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Matt. 16:18), He referred not merely to the invisible church, but definitely to the New Testament church as an organization. In commenting on this passage in his excellent little book, *The Teaching of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God and the Church*, Dr. Geerhardus Vos says: “The body of disciples previously existing must now take the place of the Old Testament church and therefore receive some form of external organization. This the kingdom had not hitherto possessed. It had been internal and invisible not merely in its essence, but to this essence there had been lacking the outward embodiment. Jesus now in speaking of the house and the keys of the house, of binding and loosing on earth, and of church discipline, makes provision for this” (pp. 152, 153). The Westminster Confession of Faith is on Biblical ground when it says: “Jesus Christ hath appointed a regular government and discipline in his church” (XXIII, III), and so is the Form of Government of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church when it says: “That our blessed Saviour, for the edification of the visible church, which is his body, hath appointed officers, not only to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments, but also to exercise discipline, for the preservation both of truth and duty” (I, 3). Ephesians 4:11, 12 tells us that the ascended Christ “gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” The apostles acted in Christ’s name when they instituted the office

of deacon and "laid their hands" on the men who had been chosen to that office in Jerusalem (Acts 6:6) and when they "ordained elders in every church" (Acts 14:23). Paul exhorted the elders of the Ephesian church: "Take heed . . . to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Acts 20:28), and he wrote to the church at Thessalonica: "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (I Thess. 5:12). The author of the epistle to the Hebrews admonished his readers: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves" (Heb. 13:17). The three offices in the organized church derive their authority from the head of the church, the minister representing him as prophet, the ruling elder as king, and the deacon as priest.

It is very significant that, when the sixteenth-century reformers stressed strongly the universal office of believer by way of opposition to Rome, which emphasized the authority of the special offices so as practically to rule out this universal office, they by no means went to the extreme of minimizing the value of the special offices. Calvin especially was extremely zealous to uphold the authority of these offices in accordance with the clear teaching of the New Testament. What is noteworthy too is that he did so in opposition to the Anabaptists of his day.

At this point the two conclusions that were already drawn may well be repeated. As a federation of churches is not itself an organized church, it may not do the work which Scripture assigns to the special offices of the church, nor may the organized church delegate ecclesiastical authority to a federation of churches. That being so, a practical difficulty arises. Is there anything for a federation of churches to do? Scripture definitely prescribes the functions of the organized church. It must preach the Word of God, conduct corporate worship, administer the sacraments, elect and ordain officers, exercise ecclesiastical discipline and care for its poor. It is a matter of the greatest moment that the church adhere to these functions and do not go beyond them. It is equally important that the organized church refuse to delegate these functions to

another organization. *Let the church be the church.* Then what remains for a federation of churches to do?

In view of this difficulty, it is not surprising that The American Council of Christian Churches has done a number of things in common with the organized church. For instance, it has issued a denunciation of Modernism and exposed the anti-Christian character of Communism. Moreover, the by-laws of the Council count among its "authorized departments" one on Evangelism and others on Home Missions, Foreign Missions and Christian Education. Must we then take the position that the American Council is in error in all that it has done, is doing, and proposes to do? In other words, are we driven to the conclusion that there is no room for a federation of Christian churches because there is no work for it to perform? We think not.

The Missouri Synod Lutheran distinction between the proper task of the organized church, which may not be performed by a federation of churches, and "externals," to which a federation may attend, is helpful. The Westminster Confession of Faith speaks of "circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed" (I, VI). While this quotation is not directly applicable to the case in hand, it does suggest that there may be "circumstances" concerning the work of the church as an organization which may properly be ordered by a federation of churches. We believe that such circumstances actually do exist. For example, a federation could be instrumental in arranging that there be a fair distribution of radio time among its constituent churches, that no two constituent denominations occupy the same corner of a large neglected mission field, or that the constituent churches save money by purchasing Bibles unitedly in large lots. Numerous other examples could easily be adduced. The fact that in making such arrangements the federation may not infringe upon the ecclesiastical authority of its constituents, but is in duty bound to recognize their autonomy, need not detract from the value of its service in such "circum-

stances" or "externals."

From a somewhat different viewpoint it must be said that, while there are activities which are properly performed by the organized church only, there are other activities which are properly performed either by the church or by other Christian organizations. Only the church may administer the sacraments, for instance, or ordain ministers, elders and deacons. But either the church or another organization of Christians may, for example, distribute Bibles and sound religious literature. It follows that in the performance of the latter type of activities the constituent churches of a federation may well employ the federation as their agent. Under the same head mention must be made of an extremely valuable service which a federation of churches may perform. We have in mind the issuance of united testimonies or manifestos against such prevalent evils as Modernism, Communism, state totalitarianism, suppression of religious minorities, race prejudice and general lawlessness. It is the solemn duty of each organized church to witness against such evils, but it can hardly be denied that there is a unique value in united witnessing by a number of churches. When an organization seeks to influence the general public or the government, its size or numerical strength determines to a considerable extent whether or not it will get a hearing. Nor may it be forgotten that the old adage "In unity there is strength" contains more than a modicum of wisdom. For such united witnessing a federation of churches may well serve as a sort of clearing-house. To be sure, also here the autonomy of the constituent churches must receive full recognition. It will never do, for instance, for the officers of a federation to draw up a manifesto and to send it out over the names of the constituent churches with no assurance of the approval of these several churches. Allowance must be made for the possibility that not all the constituent churches may care to subscribe to a given manifesto. If that be the case, it must be sent out only over the names of those churches which do subscribe to it, and not over the name of the federation. While such procedure may sometimes occasion delay, it must be adhered to in the interest of the principle that a federation of churches may never

be permitted to function as a sort of super-church. At the same time it is clear that for the bearing of united witness by a number of churches a federation of churches should prove extremely useful.

As to The American Council of Christian Churches, it is not at all clear that the council adheres to the principles of coöperation advocated in this report. As was already pointed out, the specific activities in which the American Council means to engage are very vague. On the one hand, it declares that it would not engage in work which properly belongs to the church as an organization, and, on the other hand, its by-laws speak of departments for activities which do properly belong to the organized church. Under these circumstances it would be unwise, to say the very least, for The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to apply for constituent membership. For our church to seek constituent membership in the American Council so long as further guarantees have not been given as to the exact bounds of the council's activities would, we believe, be inconsistent with the Reformed theology, particularly with Reformed ecclesiology.

There are certain practical considerations also which make it impossible for the committee to recommend that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church apply for constituent membership in the American Council at this time. While we rejoice on the whole in the witness which the Council has raised in its attack upon the pretensions of the Federal Council, its defense of the right of the gospel to be heard on the air, its denunciation of Modernism and Communism, and its representations to the Federal Government in behalf of evangelical Protestantism, yet attention must be called to the following difficulties. First, it is unlikely that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church would grant to a committee power to act to join with the American Council in many actions, statements or protests which had not been discussed and decided upon in the General Assembly. In some matters power to act might possibly be given, but in a great many instances this could hardly be done. Take, for but one example, the highly controversial issue of universal military training after the war, on which the council might well think it its duty to make a deliverance. In a word, the slow,

but ordinarily sure, method of procedure of our church would almost certainly prove a hindrance to its active participation in the work of the American Council. In the second place, at times sensational methods have been employed to further the cause of the American Council. Specific instances could easily be cited. Occasionally these methods have been not only undignified but even unfair. It would be unwise for The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to permit itself to become associated with such methods in the minds of the Christian public. Thirdly, while doubtless all of us agree substantially, or even enthusiastically, with many of the pronouncements of the American Council against Modernism, Communism, etc., it can hardly be denied that there

is a tendency in the Council to issue strong declarations on questions which permit of a difference of opinion among Bible-believing Christians. For instance, in attacking the social views of the Federal Council, statements have been made which seem to reveal an uncritical identification of the presuppositions of bourgeois capitalism with those of orthodox Christianity.

In view of the foregoing considerations the committee can do no more than recommend that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church explore the possibility of a consultative relationship to The American Council of Christian Churches to the end that in the future our church may coöperate with the Council in certain restricted fields.

How to Interpret the Bible

BIBLE STUDY

By the REV. RICHARD W. GRAY

Pastor of Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church, East Orange, N. J.

PART THREE

Figurative Language

DO YOU take the Bible literally?" This question is frequently asked of the Bible-believing Christian. But it is difficult to answer in a few words, because it is ambiguous. If the questioner means, Do you take the words of the Bible in their natural or customary meaning, the answer is yes. In this sense, literal is the antonym of mystical or allegorical. In our first study, we pointed out that Christians reject the mystical and allegorical methods of Bible interpretation in favor of the grammatical-historical-theological method.

However, if our questioner means, Do you take the words of the Bible according to their primary or etymological sense, the answer is sometimes no. In this sense, literal is the antonym of figurative. Refusal to recognize some of the language of the Bible as figurative in the interest of taking every word in its primary sense would mean that when Christ said, "Ye are the salt of the earth," He meant that the church was an aggregation of sodium chloride particles. This would be crass literalism.

Confusion results if we do not dis-

tinguish between these two meanings of "literal" when interpreting the Bible. For example, some Christians charge amillennialists with rejecting the literal meaning of Scripture for an allegorical one because the amillennialists claim that the word millennium in Revelation 20 refers to an indefinite period of time. Even one who does not agree with their interpretation should see that such a charge is unfounded. Revelation 20 is a vision. Like all the visions of the Apocalypse, it employs figurative language. To recognize some of the language of the Bible as figurative instead of literal is not to reject the literal or grammatical-historical-theological method of interpretation for the allegorical method. Both amillennialists and premillennialists sing

"We're marching to Zion,

Beautiful, beautiful Zion,

We're marching upward to Zion,

The beautiful city of God."

Obviously neither group of Christians takes "Zion" in its literal sense. They do not refer it to the earthly Jerusalem. They regard it as figurative or symbolical, referring it to the heavenly Jerusalem.

Man has always employed figurative language in his effort to make himself

understood. Patrick Fairbairn, that prince of Bible interpreters, shows the necessity for this when he says: "All languages are more or less figurative; for the mind of man is essentially analogical, and delights to trace resemblances between one object and another, and embody them in forms of speech. In strictly mental operations, and in regard to things lying beyond the reach of sense or time, it is obliged to resort to figurative terms;—for only through the form and aspect of sensible objects can it picture to itself and express what lies in those hidden chambers of imagery. And the more vivid its own feelings and conceptions are respecting spiritual and Divine things, . . . the more also will it naturally call to its aid the realistic language of tropes and metaphors." How greatly our Christian experience has been enriched because the divine writers used figurative language?

A rich reservoir of imagery for making God and His ways known to man was found in the physical features of the Holy Land, the habits and customs of its ancient tribes, and the forms of Israelitish worship. An incomparably beautiful passage from W. M. Thomson shows how prominently these things entered into the writing of holy Scripture: "It is neither fiction nor extravagance to call this land a microcosm—a little world in itself, embracing everything which in the thought of the Creator would be needed in developing the language of the kingdom of heaven. Nor is it easy to see how the end sought could have been reached at all without just such a land furnished and fitted up, as this was, by the overruling providence of God. All were needed—mountain and valley, hill and plain, lake and river, sea and sky, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, trees, shrubs, and flowers, beasts and birds, men and women, tribes and nations, governments and religions false and true, and other things innumerable; none of which could be spared. Think, if you can, of a Bible with all these left out, or others essentially different substituted in their place—a Bible without patriarch or pilgrimage, with no bondage in Egypt, or deliverance therefrom, no Red Sea, no Sinai with its miracles, no wilderness of wandering with all the included scenes and associated incidents; without a Jordan with a Canaan over against it, or a Dead Sea with Sodom beneath it; no Moriah with its

General Assembly

THE Twelfth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church will convene at 11 A. M. on Thursday, May 17th, at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. At the opening service, the sermon will be preached by the Rev. Edwin H. Rian, moderator of the Eleventh Assembly, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered. There will be two evening services to which the public is cordially invited.

Commissioners who have not yet secured housing accommodations should communicate immediately with Dr. Cornelius Van Til, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia 18, Pa., giving full details of the accommodations needed. Commissioners staying at the seminary will be required to bring their own sheets and blankets. Housing requests will be filled in the order they are received.

temple, no Zion with palaces, nor Hinnom below, with the fire and the worm that never dies. Whence could have come our divine songs and psalms, if the sacred poets had lived in a land without mountain or valley, where were no plains covered over with corn, no fields clothed with green, no hills planted with the olive, the fig, and the vine? All are needed and do good service, from the oaks of Bashan and the cedars of Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall. The tiny mustard-seed has its moral, and lilies their lessons. Thorns and thistles utter admonitions, and revive sad memories. The sheep and the fold, the shepherd and his dog, the ass and his owner, the ox and his goad, the camel and his burden, the horse with neck clothed with thunder; lions that roar, wolves that raven, foxes that destroy, harts panting for water brooks, and roes feeding among lilies, doves in their windows, sparrows on the housetop, storks in the heavens, eagles hastening to their prey; things great and small; the busy bee improving each shining hour, the careful ant laying up store in harvest—nothing too large to serve, too small to aid. These are

merely random specimens out of a world of rich materials; but we must not forget that they are all found in this land where the dialect of God's spiritual kingdom was to be taught and spoken."

Common sense will generally dictate what is figurative and what is literal in Scripture. However, several rules are helpful for the doubtful cases.

First, anything said of an object which would be at variance with its nature must be figurative. For example, Scripture speaks of Christ being exalted to the *right hand* of God. Shall we take "right hand" literally? No, for this would be at variance with God's nature. He is a Spirit and consequently does not have a hand. "Right hand" is therefore figurative for the place of honor to which God has raised the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, anything said which, if taken literally, would involve something *incongruous* or *morally improper*, must be figurative. Jesus' words, "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out," would involve something morally improper if taken in literal sense.

Thirdly, when in doubt after applying the first two rules, consult the *context* or *parallel passages*. Luke records Jesus' words, "Blessed are ye poor." Are we to take this in the literal sense meaning that poverty is bliss? The first two rules are not much help in determining this. But as we search for a parallel passage, we find that Matthew records that Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." The man who is conscious of his spiritual poverty is blessed. He is in a position to receive one of the greatest gifts God offers—membership in the kingdom of heaven.

Dakotas Presbytery Meets at Omaha

THE Presbytery of the Dakotas of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church met on April 10th and 11th in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, formerly the First Church, of Omaha, Nebr. Four ministers and five elders were in attendance. The popular meeting was held on the first evening and the sermon was preached by licentiate Delbert Schowalter, a candidate for ordination.

The business sessions of presbytery consumed the entire following day. The Rev. Reginald Voorhees, pastor

of the host church, was elected moderator, and the Rev. Dean W. Adair temporary clerk. Mr. Schowalter was received as a licentiate from the Presbytery of Philadelphia. He was examined in theology and his examination sustained. Arrangements were made for his ordination and installation at Lincoln, Nebr., on May 1st. Mr. John Alexander, a member of the First Church of Denver, Colo., was taken under care of presbytery as a candidate for the gospel ministry.

One of the important actions of presbytery was its decision not to release the Rev. Dean W. Adair from his present pastoral charge at Hamill, S. D.; Mr. Adair had received a call to the pastorate of Calvary Church, Cedar Grove, Wis.



Your FAMILY ALTAR

MAY 20TH. JAMES 1:1-11 (5)*

AS THE general assembly of our church pauses in its deliberations to refresh itself in the worship of God today, let us pray that God will give the commissioners great wisdom. Remember that the world may be affected by some of the decisions reached. The day of small things is not past. Each member and friend should pray, "asking great things of God," and then "attempting great things for God."

21ST. PSALM 90 (12)

Man's day, withal, is very short. It is as Jacob said, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are . . . few and evil." Hence pray for and apply your heart unto wisdom; heavenly wisdom which trusts in the redeeming work of Christ. That alone is wisdom. Then pray that the work of the general assembly may be established (v. 17).

22ND. HEB. 12:1-11 (1)

Life is often likened to a race. In a track meet, the runners wear the lightest of clothing in order that nothing shall hinder them in the race. Christian friend, are you weighed down with the things of this life that are hindrances to the spiritual race in which you are an active participant? Lay aside these weights; be willing to assume the strenuous contest; faint not in the way! Christ has covered the

* Verses printed in the headings in parentheses are to be memorized.

ground before you, through much suffering; by which means He has made the way both easier and plainer. Keep your eye on the finish line—looking unto Him who is the Author and Finisher of your faith.

23RD. PSALM 37:1-17 (4)

As this whole psalm is full of rich counsels and consolations, we shall study it tomorrow also. Observe the counsels set down here: Fret not, trust in the Lord, delight thyself also in the Lord, commit thy way unto the Lord, rest in the Lord. What progression they indicate in the Christian life! Think upon them today and your heart will be filled with joy.

24TH. PSALM 37:18-40 (23)

There are over fifteen different consolations to the believer in this psalm, among which is the thought of our memory verse. The man who commits his way unto the Lord and trusts in Him will find every step ordered by the Lord. Who then will fear to step forth by faith to the subduing of strongholds? To perform some menial task? To the furthering of the vast work of missions?

25TH. EX. 20:1-17 (3)

If you come to the larger meaning of the Commandments as they are seen with their implications in the Larger Catechism of the Westminster Assembly, you will have an excellent rule for the Christian life. Secure a copy of this helpful catechism and study it. Your understanding of the whole of Scripture will be enriched. Pray that God will give you such love for Him that obedience will be rendered with joy.

26TH. PSALM 121 (8)

This is an excellent psalm for our boys in the service. It is also an encouragement to us to place full confidence in the Lord at all times. God, in Christ, has not only secured our reconciliation but He has also assured us of His unceasing care. The constant vigilance of Him who is our Creator and Preserver, our Sovereign and our Saviour, guarantees our safety.

27TH. REV. 21:1-9 (4)

The holy and happy prospects of the Christian are such as to enable him to endure the sorrow and sufferings of this life. No wonder Pilgrim pressed on, despite the trials and temptations on every hand, for he had his eye on the goal, the Celestial City. If you are full of heaviness, remember that there will be no tears there.

Strengthen your heart this Lord's day with this thought.

28TH. PSALM 46 (10)

If, in the midst of conflict, we are still, we shall know that God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. How hard it is to take the time to be still, to meditate upon His precepts, to wait for the evidence of His good pleasure! O Lord, teach us to cherish the quiet place where Thou dwellest.

29TH. JOSHUA 1:1-9 (8, 9)

Any leader who follows the admonition of verse eight will find courage for his task, guidance for his way and good success for his efforts. Every Christian, young and old, has the promise of God's continual presence and the privilege of His good pleasure if he will meditate in God's Word day and night.

30TH. PSALM 91 (11)

There are times when we are little conscious of danger, yet our lives have been in imminent peril. How comforting to know that God has given His angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways! How encouraging is this knowledge to us also when we know that danger threatens and we must yet go forward in the face of it! Above the angels there is the all-seeing eye of God focused upon us. Neither the arrow by day nor the pestilence that walketh in darkness will hold any terror for us.

31ST. ISA. 55 (6)

The gracious invitation and free offer of the gospel is written large in this chapter. Who can listen to the repeated and insistent call to come to the Lord and yet continue to spurn His mercy? God's Word is designed to bring men to Christ and it shall accomplish the thing whereunto God has sent it. Ask God to open your own heart to respond.

JUNE 1ST. PSALM 23 (1)

This is one of the most precious and best-known passages of God's holy Word. Yet I do not hesitate to say that it is also the most grossly perverted. Only the one who has taken Christ as Saviour can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd." But once we have the right to say it, how wonderfully warming it is to know that our Shepherd is none other than the living and true God!

2ND. ROM. 8:1-11 (1)

One of the great joys of the Christian life is the knowledge that in

Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. Upon the cross Christ bore our condemnation, thus freeing us from it forever. A second cause for joy is the life which we now have in the Spirit—a life unencumbered by the demands of the law, the lusts of the flesh and the trifles of this transient existence. Rather, there is life, peace and the hope of the blessed resurrection in the Spirit.

3RD. PSALM 103:1-9 (8)

As we contemplate the mercies of God over the winter months and look forward to His continued favor this summer, this psalm is especially appropriate. We are urged to bless the Lord wholeheartedly in remembrance of His benefits—forgiveness, healing, redemption and every evidence of His lovingkindness. Let us not forget His longsuffering for He has not dealt with us after our sins. Great is Thy grace, O our God!

4TH. ISA. 40:1-17 (7)

As in the Gospel record, so here the comfort of redemption is first proclaimed in conjunction with "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." These good tidings based upon the unshaken Word of God were fulfilled in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Have you received the lasting comfort of the gospel? Pray God to visit your heart and the hearts of those in your family circle.

—HENRY D. PHILLIPS

Young

(Concluded from page 136)

stand which, according to a very early tradition, is said to occupy the center of the world. To the north is the throne of the Patriarch of Antioch and to the south that of the Patriarch of Jerusalem.

To reach the exact location of Calvary, the visitor must mount a staircase to the second floor of the church. Here a spot is shown where the cross of Christ is said to have stood. We find ourselves in a richly decorated chapel. The air is filled with incense, and candles are burning. We are repelled—for it is all so different. We are disgusted. Can this place of mummery and superstition be the actual place of our Lord's death?

We must ever keep in mind that no man knows the actual site of Christ's death. The Bible does not identify the location of Golgotha, and

some three hundred years passed before Christians began to turn their attention toward the site. This ancient Church of the Holy Sepulchre may be near the location of Calvary—but we do not know.

Underneath the chapel in which we are standing is the so-called chapel of Adam. According to a very old tradition, Adam was buried at this place. When Christ died, His blood flowed down and touched the skull of Adam, thus reviving him. That is why, in many paintings of the crucifixion, a skull is shown at the base of the Cross.

But enough! We desire to leave the dark air of the church and to enter the fresh sunlight outside. It is refreshing to come away from this hotbed of superstition and priestcraft which is called the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and to seek peace and relaxation on the Judean highlands. Here the hillsides are covered with little red anemones, the pipe of the shepherd boy may be heard, and a gentle breeze sweeps over the highlands. Here we may pause to reflect and meditate.

Why Visit Palestine?

Why should a Christian desire to visit Palestine? Will it strengthen his faith? Will it make him a better Christian? These questions must be answered with an emphatic negative. Palestine is not a means of grace. One reason why many Christians receive such a rude jolt upon encountering the superstition of the ancient churches is that they have journeyed to Palestine under the erroneous impression that a visit to Calvary and to Bethlehem will strengthen their faith. Hence, when they come face to face with the actual situation, it is too much for them.

He who desires to visit Palestine should have it impressed upon him in advance that the mere trip to this land will not make him a better Christian. He who wishes to become a better Christian should depend, not upon external observances, but upon the means which God has ordained—the sacraments, prayer and the holy Scriptures. These will bring the soul closer to God; these will cause the soul to hate sin; these will point our eyes to the Lamb of God.

Just because a visit to Palestine does not make a man a better Christian, however, it does not follow that

such a visit is of no benefit. For one thing, such a visit will go far toward destroying our previous misconceptions. And it will help us to get straight in our minds the geographical location of Biblical places. Also, it provides the proper background for the understanding of much Biblical history. Too, it serves to acquaint us with the ancient eastern churches. And all of this is of value.

We can learn much, even from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But we shall not learn from it the meaning of the Saviour's passion. Really to come to Calvary we must come to God's Word, there to read the old, old story of how the Saviour shed His blood for His own. To have seen the alleged site of Calvary is worthwhile; to have looked with the eyes of faith upon the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world is far better.

Philadelphia Presbyterial Meets at Willow Grove

THE Presbyterial Auxiliary of the Presbytery of Philadelphia held its spring meeting on April 19th at Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Willow Grove, Pa. Presiding was Mrs. John P. Clelland of Wilmington, Del., president of the auxiliary.

Mrs. Clelland, in her opening words, stressed the essential unity of effort that should characterize the goal of all members and organizations throughout the denomination. Regardless of whether tasks be small or great, said Mrs. Clelland, God accepts our kingdom efforts if we give of our best and from a loving heart and faith in Him. Greetings were extended to the group by the host church.

Afternoon devotions were in charge of Mrs. Eugene Bradford of Philadelphia and were based on the text "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The address of the afternoon was delivered by Mrs. Charles H. Ellis of West Collingswood, N. J., on the subject "Interesting the Youth in Missions." She discussed the Christian's reasons for being interested in missions, the principles underlying missionary endeavor, and the means to be used in carrying out those principles. She stressed the fact that missionary enterprise is the duty of the entire church.

After a social hour, dinner was served by the ladies of the Willow Grove church, and this was followed by a musical program including violin selections by Mrs. Robert Strong of Willow Grove and selections from an Easter cantata rendered by the choir of Calvary Church.

The evening address was by the Rev. Francis E. Mahaffy, missionary under appointment to Eritrea. His text was a portion of Joshua 13:1, "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." Just as the children of Israel had been ordered to enter Canaan in obedience to the divine command, said Mr. Mahaffy, so our Lord orders us to carry out His great command to reach the lost world with His saving gospel. But, warned Mr. Mahaffy, we must not go in our own strength, but in His might and with the Sword of the Spirit.

Closing prayer was offered by the newly-elected president, Mrs. Charles Richardson of Willow Grove.

California Presbytery

By Robert B. Brown

TWO important conferences have been held in April in the San Francisco area. The first, the United Nations Security Council, is adequately reported in your daily newspaper. The other was the spring meeting of the Presbytery of California of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, held on April 11th at Covenant Church, Berkeley, and on April 12th at First Church, San Francisco.

It is a custom in California Presbytery to give over each morning session of presbytery to a season of prayer for the specific needs of the churches. I know of no other presbytery in our church which has this custom, though I would be only too happy to be corrected. The Rev. James B. Brown, presbytery's missionary to the Pacific Northwest, was the first to report on the problems and blessings which have attended his opening of Seattle, Wash., to the denomination. He told of the renting of a hall at 8534 Phinney Street and of several who have there given their hearts to the Lord. He also told of the opportunity to preach in an independent Presbyterian church which is anxious to hear more of our denomination. Following his report,

two of the ministers were appointed by the Rev. Dwight H. Poundstone, newly-elected moderator, to pray for the Seattle work. We then heard of the need in Portland, Ore. The Rev. Lawrence Eyres told of growth—his own family increased by one—and of the pressing need for a building adequate to house his Sunday school. The Rev. Robert E. Nicholas told of the work in Bend, Ore. We then heard from the Bay Area and from Southern California's four churches and three chapels. After each report, prayer was made by two ministers or by the elders who were present. This exercise caused us all to realize our common needs and to know that God answers our prayers.

The afternoon hours were given over to the routine business of presbytery. Provision was made to take Elder Robert Sander of Westminster Church, Los Angeles, under care of presbytery; we petitioned the Office of Defense Transportation not to interfere with the freedom of Christians to assemble without permit; Mr. Poundstone was named our delegate to general assembly; we voted to continue our monthly OPC News—which is sent out among our California, Oregon, and Washington churches; we voted that our fall meeting be held in Los Angeles at Westminster and Beverly Churches; that the women of San Francisco and Berkeley be commended for their deftness in the culinary art; and that we adjourn.

There were two popular evening meetings. On the evening of April 11th we heard the Rev. Henry W. Coray speak at Berkeley on "Why the Orthodox Presbyterian Church?" An elder was installed at this service, and the church was well filled.

The second popular meeting was held in the First Church, 1823 Turk Street, San Francisco. The occasion which was celebrated was the dedication of the new building, and the Rev. Bruce F. Hunt gave a Bible exposition of the meaning of the word "Church." The new building was formerly a large home. It has been completely renovated to provide a fine auditorium and adequate Sunday school space. The new hardwood floors, fine lighting fixtures, cathedral glass windows, sunny pastor's study, and splendid location make this new church building a good addition to our work in this section.

The women of presbytery held their meetings during the session of presbytery. The work of the Christian Stu-

dent Club at the University of California was presented very ably. The second speaker was presbytery's missionary, Dr. James B. Brown.

We were happy to welcome Chaplain William T. Strong to our meeting. He entered with news of the death of President Roosevelt. Members of our presbytery feel that our Orthodox Presbyterian Chaplains have not been receiving enough attention from our churches. Don't forget to write letters to our Chaplains.

Shook

(Concluded from page 134)

our services, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Through the preaching of Christ's gospel, some are brought to see their frightful, sinful state before God, and recognize that they are deserving of His eternal wrath and curse. Some precious souls come to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as their sin-bearer, their righteousness, their Saviour. How we need to take the gospel to every creature, that as many as are ordained to eternal life may be saved!

Let us then fearlessly preach the Word, the whole Word, and nothing but the Word, for it alone is the power of God unto salvation. May the truth of God be preached in churches, homes, factories, streets, from hamlet to hamlet and over the air from housetop to housetop throughout this land and every other!

Is it not the prerogative of every disciple of Christ, who has been purchased with His precious blood, to be a personal worker for His Lord? "Come ye after me and I will make you fishers of men," He said. Did not Andrew bring his brother Simon Peter to Jesus, and Philip, Nathaniel? After they left their nets to follow Jesus, did they not launch out into the deep for souls and become fishers of men? Is it not your heaven-given privilege to do likewise?

Again the clarion sound of the trumpet is heard. The Commander-in-Chief issues the order—"Go teach!" Here, too, the program of the church has been sorely deficient. The Sunday schools and vacation Bible schools have proved woefully inadequate, especially when these agencies of teaching have not been assisted by parental instruction in the home

and public school. Is it not too generally true that Bible instruction in the home has all but ceased? Is not the instruction of the public school quite generally anti-Bible, anti-Christ, anti-God? Can it be that the Lord's people sat idly by and permitted the Lord's foes to capture and firmly fortify this strategic stronghold? It is high time to launch a spiritual offensive in the educational sector. This can be done by reestablishing Bible instruction in the home and by establishing Christian day schools for our children. When parents are inadequately prepared to teach the Bible in the home, let us conduct night Bible classes in the church, so that parents and young people may soon be ready to enter on the spiritual offensive, at least on the home front. In time a faithful and courageous offensive will crumble the hollow fortifications of infidelity. Truth must

triumph over error, right over wrong.

We should not forget the striking power of the printed page in this offensive. Millions of incendiary bombs should be scattered to set guilty consciences aflame. Thousands of block-busters should be dumped to make ready for the balm of Gilead resulting in peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Above the din of battle and the confusion of bewildered minds, the unmistakable voice is heard again. The order is clear and brief: "Watch and pray!" There is need for a strong defense, but wars are not generally won by defensive warfare alone. See how the eagle secretly watches his prey, and then suddenly descends upon it. We need to watch the movements in the dark and under cover, the traps, the half lies, the counterfeits. Is not the good soldier alert for defense and offense alike? To know when to strike, and where, and to have the knockout punch ready is more than half the game.

Open communication lines are an important factor in any war. Especially is that true of the spiritual conflict. Our deadly foes are spiritual and powerful. Our God alone knows them and can defeat them. We can hope for victory and be assured of a successful spiritual offensive only as we fervently pray for it and as God accomplishes it through us. A good soldier of Jesus Christ can keep in constant touch with his Captain. It is a very important phase of his campaign. Through prayer the almighty arm of God accomplishes the impossible, the superhuman. The three hundred soldiers of Gideon slay the host of Midianites, the sun is brought to a standstill, the windows of heaven are closed that it rains not for three years, the walls of Jericho fall to the ground.

Oh, let us call upon the name of the Lord that His name may be magnified! According to God's clock,

the time of judgment is the time to launch a spiritual offensive. A severe judgment is upon the world today. The judgment prepares God's people to launch the offensive and the hearts of the people are made ready to receive the glad tidings of salvation and light. Let us lose no time in launching a spiritual offensive.

News of the Christian University

THE Board of Trustees of the Christian University Association of America met in Philadelphia early last month and completed its membership roster of thirty-three by adding the following persons to the Board: Dr. John R. Richardson, pastor of the Southern Presbyterian Church at Alexandria, La.; Dr. William Childs Robinson, professor in Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga.; Dr. Howard D. Higgins, bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church; Dr. Ruth Eckert Paulson, Associate Professor of Education and head of Educational Research in the University of Minnesota; and the Rev. William Haverkamp, pastor of Bethel Christian Reformed Church, Paterson, N. J.

The Board of Trustees took an important forward step in the appointment of an acting librarian. Dr. Lawrence B. Gilmore of Cincinnati, Ohio, will take up the duties of librarian on September first. Dr. Gilmore, a graduate of Geneva College, received his master's degree at Princeton University, the degree of Bachelor of Theology at Princeton Seminary, and the degree of Doctor of Theology at Louisville Baptist Seminary.

The Board is also at present engaged in choosing a faculty for the University. There is urgent need for contributions at this time. If the budget is to be met, seventy-five thousand dollars must be secured between now and January 1, 1946.

The Rev. Edwin H. Rian, general secretary of the Association, plans an extensive midwestern tour from June 15th to July 15th. Individuals and churches in that area interested in discussing the proposed University with Mr. Rian may arrange to meet with him. Correspondence should be addressed to him in care of The Christian University Association, Elkins Park, Philadelphia 17, Pa.

Money for Your Treasury

Over 2,000,000

SUNFLOWER DISH CLOTHS

were sold during 1942 by Ladies' Aids, and members of Sunday schools and Young People's Groups. Finest quality cloths. An easy, pleasant way to raise funds for your treasury or for the purchase of WAR BONDS.

Sample Free to Official
Sangamon Mills—Est. 1915
Cohoes, N. Y.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

PAPERS

Edited by Reformed Bible Teachers

Bible Lessons in Bible Order

Beautiful Colored Pictures for the
Primary Classes

Large Amount of Help for the Teachers

Ask for samples

CHRISTIAN REFORMED PUBLISHING HOUSE

Grand Rapids, Mich.

Announcing

OVERNIGHT CONFERENCE

The Machen League of Philadelphia Presbytery

at WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Tuesday and Wednesday, May 29th and 30th

Excellent Instruction . . . Good Fellowship . . . Games and Campfire