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A Notable Tercentenary

By the REV. JOHN MURRAY

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JULY 1, 1943, is a date that marks one of the most notable tercentenaries in the history of the Christian church. It was three hundred years ago on July 1, 1643, that the Westminster Assembly of Divines convened at Westminster, London, England.

That Assembly would have been a notable event even apart from the work that it produced in the four or five years that followed. The circumstances under which it was called and under which it met would have made it significant. But it is the work of the Assembly throughout the years that followed that makes this particular date of such lasting importance. It was the Westminster Assembly that gave to us some of our most priceless possessions, for it gave us the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. Language fails to assess the blessing that God in His sovereign providence and grace bestowed upon His church through these statements of the Christian faith. The influence exerted by them is beyond all human calculation. We should indeed be remiss if we did not make this tercentenary the occasion for grateful remembrance of God's inestimable favor. Other men labored and we have entered into their labors. Truly the lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places and we have a goodly heritage.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms are the flower and fruit of some fifteen centuries of creedal or confessional formulation of the Christian faith. This is just saying that the West-

minster divines, when they sat at Westminster in the fifth decade of the seventeenth century, were the heirs of the labors of God's servants for fifteen centuries as these servants of God had striven to set forth the truth of the Christian faith and guard it against error and distortion. The Westminster Assembly did not abstract itself from the history of the church but willingly and gratefully recognised itself as the debtor to all the wisdom and light that God in His providence had caused to be deposited in the expositions and formulations of the past.

More particularly, the Westminster divines were the heirs of all the other evangelical creeds of the Reformation period. The Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was peculiarly prolific in the production of confessions of faith. It was an age of ardent and polemic faith and the framing of creeds or confessions was the natural result. Nearly all of these creeds are notable and valuable exhibitions of Christian truth, and not a few of them are of priceless value. Many of them are to this day the accepted creedal symbols of the faith of the Protestant churches.

It is noteworthy, however, that the Westminster Confession and Catechisms are the last in the series of the great Reformation creeds. This fact of chronology is itself of great significance. The rich repertory of Protestant confessional statement covering more than a hundred years lay open before them. It was their happy lot to compare, to sift, to select and to evaluate in the

full light of more than a century of faithful and devoted labor on the part of others. But perhaps of even greater significance is the fact that no other Protestant or Reformed Confession had brought to bear upon its composition such a combination of devotion, care and erudition as was exhibited in the work of the Westminster Assembly.

The Westminster Confession and Catechisms are, therefore, the mature fruit of the whole movement of reformation throughout fifteen centuries of Christian history and, in particular, they are the crown of the greatest age of confessional exposition, the Protestant Reformation. No other similar documents have concentrated in them, and formulated with such precision, so much of the truth embodied in the Christian revelation.

This estimate of the Westminster standards might seem to accord to them a place so high that dishonor is paid to the Word of God, the Scriptures. Indeed the accusation has sometimes been made that, when we thus appraise the Westminster standards and appeal to them, we are placing the Confession and Catechisms in the place of the Bible. Such an accusation, to say the very least, is due to gross misunderstanding. It goes without saying that the Bible is the supreme standard of faith. The Bible alone is the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Westminster Confession and Catechisms have no normative character or authority in and of themselves. Their whole value resides in the conformity of their teaching with the Word of God, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The only reason why we give to them so high an appraisal is that they, more than any other similar documents in the history of the Christian church, set forth in precise and well-guarded language the truth of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures. They are, indeed, human documents. In that they differ absolutely from the Bible. They should never be regarded as sacrosanct. The Westminster divines were not infallible and they were not inspired as were the writers of Holy Scripture. The teaching of the Confession and Catechisms must always be subjected

to the scrutiny of the Word of God. If we ever regard them as in themselves sacrosanct and authoritative, then we have committed idolatry and have fallen into the error of the Church of Rome.

But the reason why the Confession and Catechisms should be so highly honored is that, to an amazing extent, their teaching does stand the scrutiny of the Word of God. They bear the marks of human infirmity and fallibility, but no other statements framed by men so adequately express the confession of Christian belief. For this reason they have been the confessions of faith of some of the most faithful churches upon earth since the Reformation.

Every branch of the visible church must confess its faith both as testimony to the Lord and as the bond of fellowship among believers. It is surely to be expected that the church will confess its faith in the form that is most adequate and competent. When Presbyterian and Reformed churches adopt these Westminster standards as the symbols and confessions of their faith, they are but using the instruments with which God in His providence has furnished the church for proclaiming, inculcating and preserving the truth revealed in the Word of God, they are but using these means for maintaining the purity of the church and they are but insur-

ing that the bonds of fellowship be those of well-proven soundness and stability. Let us prove all things; but let us also hold fast that which is good.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a series of articles by Professor Murray in observance of the tercentenary of the Westminster Assembly. The second will appear in an early issue.)

QUARRYVILLE CONFERENCE FEATURES FAMOUS SPEAKERS

THE Seventh Annual Young People's Conference at Quarryville, Pa., will be addressed by such prominent ministers of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church as Professor R. B. Kuiper of Westminster Seminary; Bruce F. Hunt, returned missionary, Floyd E. Hamilton of the Committee on Christian Education, Edward L. Kellogg, Donald C. Graham, Richard W. Gray, and Everett C. DeVelde. The conference will be conducted from June 28th to July 5th on the spacious conference grounds of Faith Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Quarryville, whose pastor, the Rev. Franklin S. Dyrness, is executive director of the conference.

The daily program is composed of Bible study hours, devotions, mission studies, evangelistic services, and recreation, and every delegate is assured a pleasant and refreshing vacation as well as a time of rich spiritual profit. Counsellors have been provided for the boys and girls, and a registered nurse will be in attendance. Music will be under the direction of Mr. Graham, and special music will be furnished by Mrs. Edward L. Kellogg and Mrs. Robert Strong.

Total cost for the eight days is eleven dollars, which includes a non-returnable registration fee of two dollars. Delegates should send their registrations at once to the Rev. Franklin S. Dyrness, Quarryville, Pa.

Another conference, designed especially for adults, will be held over Labor Day week-end. The speakers will include Dr. Robert Strong, the Rev. Robert S. Marsden, and the Rev. James W. Price.

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The Scriptures

By the REV. LESLIE W. SLOAT

Librarian in Westminster Theological Seminary

IT IS the Christian conviction that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments occupy a unique place in the literature of humanity because they are, in a special sense, the very Word of the living and almighty God.

The Christian church throughout its history has recognized this uniqueness by asserting the absolute divine authority of Scripture in matters of faith and life. Even when interpretations of the writings varied, and even when, as in the Romish church, tradition was given a place alongside Scripture, still the church has been careful to maintain that these writings were immediately inspired by God Himself. Because any other view of Scripture was looked on as heresy, a doctrine of Scripture was formulated and given a place with other doctrines in the creeds of the church, so that it formed a part of the total "system of doctrine" to which the church adhered.

The doctrine of Scripture to which Presbyterians have subscribed is stated in most excellent particularity in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. We shall quote a few portions from the first chapter of the Confession in order to indicate the chief features of the doctrine itself. ". . . it pleased the Lord . . . to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his Church; and afterwards . . . to commit the same wholly unto writing. . . . Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the Books of the Old and New Testaments. . . . All which are given by inspiration of God. . . . The authority of holy scripture . . . dependeth . . . wholly upon God . . . the author thereof. . . . The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from scripture, unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. . . . The Old Testament in Hebrew . . . and the New Testament in Greek . . . being immediately inspired by God

. . . are therefore authentic. . . . The infallible rule of interpretation of scripture is the scripture itself . . ."

Notice now that in these statements the Confession is speaking just particularly of the writings, the Scriptures. The Confession makes a distinction between the giving of revelation by God in history, and the writing down of that revelation. And it is the latter which is involved in the doctrine of Scripture. It is paragraphs and sentences and words, and even letters—and those in the original languages—which are said to have been immediately inspired of God and therefore to be authentic. It is God, not man, who is said to have been pleased to commit His revelation to writings. And it is just the sixty-six books of the two Testaments, which the Confession names by name, that are said to comprise the "Word of God written".

Nor does the Confession stop at that point. It goes on to assert that the revelation was committed wholly unto writing, and in consequence it is complete in these sixty-six books. So complete does the Confession conceive these books to be, that it goes on to assert that nothing is at any time to be added unto them—nothing even by "new revelations of the Spirit". Scripture, in other words, is both inclusively and exclusively the written revelation of God to men, the total deposit of divinely communicated truth which God would have to be the permanent possession of His people.

On the other hand, there are some features related to the doctrine which the Confession does not undertake to expound. It does not say anything, for example, concerning the mode of that operation of the Spirit by which the result of an inspired Scripture was obtained. Those people are therefore in error who accuse creedal Presbyterianism of holding to a "dictation" or a "mechanical" theory of inspiration. Such theories claim that man was treated merely as a machine, an automaton, his own personality completely submerged under the divine activity. But the Confession does

not say nor suggest this. And Presbyterianism has historically rejected such a theory. Rather it is held that the Spirit operated in connection with the individualities of the human authors, so that the individual characteristics are everywhere apparent in language, style, and method of treatment. In some cases, the very material itself was obtained in natural fashion. In some cases, there was direct communication of new information. In some cases, notably the Revelation of St. John, there does appear to have been much that was practically dictation. But the doctrine of the Confession does not attempt to describe the method of the Spirit's operation. It limits itself to stating the net result of that operation, which is that the Scriptures are the Word of God written.

Again the Confession clearly refers its doctrine primarily to the original autographs of Scripture, not to translations of it, least of all the English Bible of our day. The doctrine is true in the strict sense of the documents as they came from their human authors. The value of translations into the "vulgar language of the people" will consequently depend upon the accuracy with which they reproduce the thought of the original. So that it is not claimed, for example, that the wording of the English Bible is inspired by God in the sense that the words of the Greek and Hebrew were. Arguments based on words and grammar must be established from the Greek and Hebrew. But on the other hand, because our standard English versions do with great accuracy reproduce the thought and sense of the original, we may very properly speak of them as the Word of God, and we may read with confidence, assured that we are indeed reading the Word of God.

It follows, from the position thus far presented, that the original Scriptures were completely without error in all their parts. Since God purposed their existence, and by special activity secured the execution of that purpose, the conclusion necessarily follows that what was written was completely and

infallibly accurate. God who is truth itself cannot be conceived of as author of even the slightest bit of a lie. The simple fact that something "is written" in Scripture establishes its final authority as a word of God. What Scripture says, God says.

That this view of Scripture which is stated by the Confession is the view which has been traditionally held in Presbyterian and Reformed circles will hardly be denied. However, we shall present a few quotations from recognized authorities to support the assertion.

In his *Systematic Theology*, a work standard among Presbyterians, Charles Hodge says that "inspiration was an influence of the Holy Spirit on the minds of certain select men, which rendered them the organs of God for the infallible communication of His mind and will. They were in such a sense the organs of God, that what they said God said" (vol. 1, p. 154). This statement occurs in a section the heading of which is "The Scriptures are infallible, i.e., given by inspiration of God", in which section as a whole Dr. Hodge presents the Biblical support for the doctrine he states.

Benjamin B. Warfield, for many years professor of systematic theology in Princeton Seminary, speaks of the "church doctrine" of Scripture, to which he of course holds. He says that it looks upon the Bible "as an oracular book,—as the Word of God in such a sense that whatever it says God says—not a book, then, in which one may, by searching, find some word of God, but a book which may be frankly appealed to at any point with assurance that whatever it may be found to say, that is the Word of God" (*Revelation and Inspiration*, p. 52). And again he says that the church "has always recognized that this conception of co-authorship implies that the Spirit's superintendence extends to the choice of words by the human authors [verbal inspiration], and preserves its product from everything inconsistent with a divine authorship—thus securing, among other things, that entire truthfulness which is everywhere presupposed in and asserted for Scripture by the Biblical writers [inerrancy]" (*idem*, p. 173).

Again, Dr. Archibald A. Hodge sums the matter up in these words: "The doctrine is, that while sacred writers thought and wrote in the free exercise of all their powers, neverthe-

less God exerted such a constant influence over them that, 1st, they were always furnished, naturally or supernaturally, with the material necessary; 2nd, infallibly guided in its selection and distribution, and 3rd, so directed that they always wrote pure truth in infallibly correct language" (*Outlines of Theology*, 1867, p. 71).

The importance of Scripture then is clear. These writings stand apart from all other literature not only in degree, but absolutely in kind. These writings are specially inspired of God. They are a supernatural product. They constitute in themselves a distinct element in the sum total of the redemptive activity. By his natural powers, man could never have produced them. Even in consequence of saving grace, and out of the depths of an

overwhelming religious experience, he could not have written them. Nor yet by any of those gifts which the Spirit bestows upon the church as a whole. This was an activity separate from them all. God wrought specially in order that man might have an infallible deposit of truth.

The message then that comes to us in Scripture is the message of God, and is to be received on the authority of God. That message consists principally in what we are to believe concerning God, and in what God requires of us. In short, that message is the content of the Christian religion. And so it follows that the Christian religion is likewise distinct from all other religions. It was given by God and it rests upon His authority. Every other religion on the earth is man-devised. Christianity is God-given. Its content is determined by God in Scripture. And they who preach it among men, in so far as they are true to that Scripture, are the very "ambassadors" of God and speak with His authority back of them.

Moreover, the Scriptures are themselves an instrument—perhaps we should say the instrument—for the accomplishment of the divine purpose of redemption. It is just the message of Scripture, the good news of redeeming grace in Christ, which Paul declares to be the "power of God unto salvation" to those who believe. The events of history could all have taken place—those events of nineteen centuries ago in Palestine—and yet their significance for us remain unknown and their benefits unreceived, had not God in His mercy given us an authoritative declaration and interpretation of them. To base a religion upon those events, except God so authorize, would have been the height of presumption. But God has given us the sure interpretation of them, in Scripture, and so with confidence we rest our eternal hope in Him who died and rose again. As Abraham Kuyper says, speaking of the Holy Spirit, "Not as though He had lived in the church of all ages, and given us in Scripture the record of that life, its origin and history, so that the life was the real substance and the Scripture the accident; rather the Scripture was the end of all that preceded and the instrument of all that followed" (*Work of the Holy Spirit*, p. 60).

Such being the case, it becomes apparent also with what earnest zeal we

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should labor to bring this written Word to all the corners of the earth. Not a part of the Word, not its moral ideals or its social concepts apart from its more basic matter, but the whole glorious message of redemption through Christ is the Word of God to man. The Scriptures are essentially a missionary work. There is the mes-

sage men must hear if they are to believe unto salvation. For faith is resting on Christ for our salvation as He is offered to us *in the gospel*. The Christ of the message is necessary, but also the message of Christ. And that is what we have in Scripture: God's message of Christ.

So it is that Paul says, "For what-

soever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope". So also John declares, "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name".

"In the Cross of Christ I Glory"

The Christian Faith and Mental Health: Part IX

By the REV. EDWARD HEEREMA

Spiritual Advisor at the Christian Sanatorium, Midland Park, N. J.

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (Rom. 8:32).

JACOB'S moral and religious life was in eclipse. The leaven of worldliness was at work in his heart and in his home. His daughter Dinah had been defiled by Schechem, son of Hamor. Wreaking fearful vengeance, the sons of Jacob slew the men of that city of the Hivites by engineering a plot marked by murderous duplicity and dishonor. In reaction to that dark deed, Jacob, grown fat in prosperity, was concerned about his reputation with the people of the land, not about the grossly immoral quality of their act. And even worse—there were strange gods in the household. Jacob was forgetting God, and his vow to God had lost the warmth of a devoted heart.

It was then that God came to Jacob with a command at once divinely imperious and merciful: "Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there". Bethel was the house of God for Jacob. Bethel was that specific place where Jacob had seen the glory of the Lord and tasted the richness of His grace. Yes, God was truly God to Jacob, but with peculiarly forceful meaning God was the God of Bethel to Jacob. Jacob had to return to that particular place and to none other to behold the glory of the Lord once more, to drink anew at the fountain of His grace, and to pour again the oil of consecration upon the stony pillar.

Jacob was but a man, creature of time and place. As such he could not worship God apart from the history of which he was a piece. God must come

to tabernacle with men, for in God life finds its true meaning. But where can man meet that God? There must be a particular *then* and *there* at which God has tabernacled with men, a *then* and *there* which by the ever active and irresistible work of the Holy Spirit becomes a *here* and *now* to men of this age and of every age. Is there, then, any one single point to which the human soul can go where he can receive an inescapable total impression of the reality of God, of His sovereignty and of His grace? Where is there a definite place of which I can say to man: Go there, and meet thy God? The soul of man needs a simple, clear reference point around which the whole complex of saving truth clusters. Man needs a Bethel, house of God, shrine of that grace by which alone man can live, to which the burdened soul of man can go—O tremendous thought—to hold rendezvous with the Lord of life. Where is that particular point in the stream of history? Where is the grace of God displayed in all its effulgence and power; grace which intertwines God's glorious sovereignty and His compelling love in perfect embrace; grace of whose overwhelming richness the thirsty soul may drink, and having drunk deeply, cry with the intense fervor of the whole saved being,

"Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all"?

To the ages, to generations of hoping, yearning, sinning, stumbling men, Christianity has given the clear and unhesitating answer: *the Cross!* Indeed, Sir John Bowring, though hardly a paragon of orthodoxy, showed no

small penetration into Christian truth when he penned the lines,

"All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime".

What is the dynamic of the Cross so that in a very real sense that single tragic but glorious fact carries within itself the whole impact of saving truth? Rather, what are the dynamics of the Cross that the simply-believing Christian consciously or unconsciously carries within his soul and mind, dynamics which propel him victoriously onward through life and through death, dynamics which give him blessed release from the relentless wheel of human frailty and failure, of sin and guilt, of shadowy vicissitude?

Does God Care?

"God doesn't care about me". Or, "How do I know that God cares for me?" Or, "How can I know that heaven is interested in the troubles and affairs of earth?" That is the letter or the spirit of complaints that come constantly to my ears from troubled souls. Anyone who has worked much with the sick and afflicted knows that in distress and sickness the souls of men begin to feel their spiritual hunger and need. They ask for a cup of water, but even more they yearn for the cup that brims with the water of life. That is certainly true of the mentally and nervously ill. Such people are commonly lonely and defeated. They have lost step with life, and life goes on without them. Life's direction is not clear and the road ahead is not marked.

In tears a patient, unable to find

the strength to conquer the habit of drink, says that he wishes he could find the faith in God that alone can fortify him in the face of his weakness. But a lifetime of conditioning in a family where God was not truly known but rather mocked made it impossible for him to see the light. Yet, in the doldrums of despair and defeat, his soul reached out beyond the world's bounds, seeking treasures that are in heaven. He in his own way gave expression to the profoundest fact of life, namely, that the soul's true abiding place is in God.

But how can we know of a surety that God is interested in human affairs, in "life's dark maze"? How can we know that God is anything more than the cold, impersonal fate that plagued the Greeks in even their sublimest reflections about "God"? How can we know that God is anything more than some Supreme Architect, quite aloof from the cares, disappointments and fears that stalk the sin-cursed earth? These are deep questions, but the answer to them has much to do, yes, has everything to do, with the peace and the surety that are essential to mental health and stability. Let history and life testify in unmistakable language to the fact that, apart from God, life has no light, the soul has no bread, and the heart has no peace. The outreach of man's immortal soul is greater than the earth's bounds. Only when man can know of a surety that God cares can he find the secret of the peace that passeth understanding. Only when the earth-bound creature that is man can abide in the assurance that heaven has regard unto his cares and needs does his immortal soul gain fundamental rest.

Ah, would that every soul we meet had been thoroughly schooled in the great and determinative doctrines of creation and providence. Then all such questions would be quite superfluous. But hosts of those we meet do not walk on that solid ground. In fact, very few men do. Man must be confronted with the essential meaning of God's purpose and ways in a much more dramatic and compelling form.

Yes, "Does God care?"—that's what it all boils down to. How can we know that He does? As we poor earth-bound creatures crawl about in life's labyrinth of problems, cares, failures and sins, how can we know that

heaven is concerned? Christianity has the triumphant answer to that most burning question that rises from the depths of the human soul. That answer is not one of mere words, or of vague mystery. It is an answer of palpable fact, the fact that stands at the peak of history—the Cross!

What is the Cross, "the old rugged Cross, emblem of suffering and shame"? Whose suffering and whose shame? It was the suffering of one whose proper home is heaven where there is no suffering. The shame is of one whose proper portion is glory. Heaven's supreme gift, Jesus Christ the Son of God, is there displayed as the utterly free gift of God's grace. Yes, God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all". Does God care? Is heaven concerned? Behold the Cross! There, in terms of the blood of God's only begotten Son, is the answer. On the road to that Cross, Christ ministered unto men, healed their diseases, shed tears over their sorrows. And on the Cross He bled and died in order that His children might live—abundantly, eternally. Truly, "God so loved the world".

That is the first dynamic of the Cross that fills the heart of the Christian with a strength and a hope that nothing else can possibly give. And that is why, when the Cross is enshrined in the human soul, that soul will not soon ask the despairing question: Does God care? For him heaven has laid itself on the altar of earth. The Son of Glory has died for him on the accursed Cross. Dare he ever doubt the good pleasure and favor of God? Christ has left mansions of glory, has made Himself of no reputation, has been lifted on the hill of shame. That sets the pattern of divine grace, the grace that unflinchingly sustains. With that certain pattern of grace in his heart, the Christian can be strong even in weakness. And though life's cares and perplexities would threaten to undo him, still he sings, beholding the Cross,

"O yes, he cares; I know he cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, and long
nights dreary,
I know my Saviour cares".

As one talks with any nominal Christian who has not truly humbled himself before the Cross of Christ, he

soon discovers that that person does not really know God. God is to him some vague, distant being who in some way has to do with his life and the world. God may be to him a supreme architect, a great spirit, or a supreme ruler—all epithets of a lifeless paganism. There is in his religion no vital breath. Rather, there is only the deadening chill which Unitarianism visited upon parts of this land. Truly to know God and to drink freely at the perennial spring of His grace, man must abide in the shadow of the Cross, God's appointed citadel of His sovereign righteousness and His unfathomable grace.

Forgiven!

When, by God's grace, we go through life without any serious blemish on our moral record, it is relatively easy to avoid the treacherous abyss of spiritual crisis and despair. But life does not treat all alike. There are factors of family and environment which can lend to certain temptations a peculiarly compelling force so as to seduce a soul into sins which most of us are spared from committing. Or the moral hothouse of prudishness can develop guilt feeling where normally they would not develop at all. Unless the grace of God intervenes, the stretching process of memory or the unsettling impact of adverse circumstances or keen disappointment will blow up the moral failure into a choking guilt complex. We have already described in a previous article what is meant by that, by the illustration of the faucet whose constant drip-drip covers the entire surface of the kitchen sink with spray—because the water does not drip into the drain of forgiveness.

The idea can be illuminated by another figure. If there is in the heating system a defect which permits smoke to escape into the house, every room of the house will soon be full of smoke if the windows are not open so as to allow the fresh air from the outside to drive it out. In the same way, a moral lapse may in time fill the whole soul with guilt so that every chamber of the soul is filled to the point of asphyxiation. That is figurative language. But it is an accurate figure. The intimate record of hosts of crippled souls treated at our hospital displays just such asphyxiated personalities. A profound sense of

guilt for past sin and failure has finally completed its conquest. There is nothing that can tear down the citadel of self-respect and self-confidence quite so effectively as this all-pervading sense of guilt. The youth with his preoccupation with failure to deal satisfactorily with new biological drives recently come unheralded into his life, the unmarried woman concerned over the means to which she has resorted to assuage the loneliness of her life, the middle-aged man distressed over certain business irregularities in the burning quest for success of earlier years—all are personalities whose initiative and self-confidence have been throttled by the paralyzing sense of wrongdoing.

What is the crying need of such souls? *Forgiveness*—that is the answer that comes from every quarter, even from those quarters where only the terminology of the Christian faith is known but not its power. All will agree in a chorus—the fresh air of forgiveness must drive out the stagnant, choking sense of guilt. To change the figure somewhat, the refreshing stream of divine forgiveness must purge the soul of its sin and guilt so that it can once more enter into life.

Very true all of that is. But here we must ask a question, and then point out the peculiarly rich glow of the Christian faith as the church of Christ has always preached it. Is it enough to say that such a soul needs the blessed experience of forgiveness? Before me sits a man who is suffering mental anguish and breakdown as a result, in the final analysis, of premarital sins. His soul is choked by the heavy sense of wrongdoing. The phrase "unpardonable sin" ceaselessly haunts him. Is it enough for me to regale him with the glories of the experience of forgiveness? Is it enough for me to urge that upon him, and to resort to clever psychological tricks so as to get the stream of forgiveness started, to prime the pump, as it were? Book after book tells us of the value of forgiveness, and of its efficacy in purging the soul of all this destructive sense of guilt and wrongdoing. But only too commonly the thrust of such writing is to place the initiative for the obtaining of that experience with the tortured soul. But how can that be? The whole of the personality is in the grip of those destructive

forces. The psychological solution is plain—some force outside of the human soul must purge that soul. The soul is helpless, undone, defeated. God, who alone is the holiness and righteousness before which the soul is trembling—He must purge that soul and He alone.

That, however is not yet the peculiar and powerful dynamic in the Christian conception of forgiveness. We do not merely come to such a soul and say, "God must forgive you". No—much more than that—we come with a tremendous announcement! We come with the statement of a great and glorious fact. We declare to sinful men that God has acted already, acted with distinct and unmistakable finality, and in that act lies forgiveness, full and free. We point men to Calvary! There the perfect sacrifice for human sin was rendered, a sacrifice that makes wholly unnecessary a continuance of the sharp pangs, the salty tears and the crippling dread of the sin-cumbered soul. What happened at Calvary? The sins of men were laid on Him "who knew no sin". The lamb without blemish was slain, the "lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world". What took place there? The curse that rends the sin-laden soul to tatters has been lifted, for He was "made a curse for us". A transaction took place there. That is why, in an earlier article, we stated that, in the Christian idea of sin, man's sin and guilt are related to God and hence can be "transactionally" dealt with. Here is the transaction, definite and decisive. The price has been paid. The curse has been taken up. Sinner, the transaction is closed! By the grace of God, enter into the joy of the Lord!

There is no room for carnal pride here. In many a mental picture of despair over failure and sin, the element of pride and its rebellion at personal failure is more prominent than the element of humble penitence before God. Pride with its self-centered vanity is always the enemy of the true and abundant life. And there is no place like the Cross to drop that heavy weight of ballast. As already pointed out, at the Cross the sovereign justice of God is perfectly knit with the unspeakable grace of God. If man is to drink at the fountain of life-giving grace, he must first of all bow in self-emptying contrition be-

fore the divine justice there displayed by confessing in utter self-abnegation that he should bear the terrific punishment there meted out to the Son of Glory. Then his distraught spirit can be surcharged with the dynamic of the Cross. To him we cry exultantly, "Look! look to the Cross! There on that hill of infamy hangs the Son of Glory, purveyor of grace far exceeding your sin. O soul, undone on the rack of failure, sin and guilt, flee to the Cross, where heaven's greatest gift has been freely offered to purge the souls of sinful men and to give them the abundant life in which the thralldom of sin has been nullified. Sinner, fly to the Cross, for there at the place where heaven as it were offered itself on the altar of earth is a stream of crimson grace that can wash away your deepest stain and heal your broken heart. Sinner, arise, see the Cross and adore your Saviour! And, adoring Him by the grace of God, let that very adoration teach you that you are the object of a love that did not begin at the Cross, but that stretches its enfolding arms from the mysterious reaches of a grace that is eternal, sovereign, and therefore utterly unfailing".

We Christians speak of the atonement wrought by Christ as a *satisfaction*—satisfaction, not of man's needs, not of Christ's sense of loyalty to a great cause, but of God's perfect justice. That idea is often sharply contested. It construes the atonement too much in penal terms, we are told. Right now I want to say that this point in orthodox Christian thinking strikes a note that is psychologically most clarion. The soul that is in the throes of despair because of some haunting sin reaches out for a judgment that shall have ultimate validity. It must hear the opinion of the highest court of appeal. A feeling of forgiveness is not enough. The willingness of men to forgive is not enough. The only forgiveness that truly satisfies is the declaration of the most high God: "Thy sins be forgiven thee". Ultimate justice, than which there is no greater justice, must be satisfied. The holiness of God, than which there is no higher holiness, must be satisfied. The tremendous dynamic of the Christian doctrine of forgiveness here takes on its true, compelling force. Let the tortured soul look for higher righteousness. There is none

higher than that of the living and eternal God. And, by the atoning work of Jesus Christ the exacting terms of that righteousness and that justice have been fully met. And for that reason the Christian can enter into the immeasurable joy and solid peace of the sweeping terms of the first verse of the eighth chapter of Romans: "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus". There is none, absolutely none, because whatever there may be of justice and of holiness, highest holiness and highest justice have been satisfied, and God graciously pronounces His unimpeachable, His final judgment: "Forgiven".

Most effective use can be made of this aspect of the dynamics of the Cross when pointedly applied. The soul troubled over its sins and shortcomings must be faced with the question: Do you believe that Christ died on the Cross for you to forgive your sins? Should that person say "Yes", but continue to grieve over his sins, he must be made to see what he is thereby doing. He is simply making himself holier than God. The faultless, the perfect holiness of God has been satisfied. Dare he still say that justice has not been done? Dare he still grieve over his sins and failures? Let him hear the words of Eliphaz addressed to Job: "Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker?"

Or does the sinner still worry about the attitude of others? Does he feel the sting of the pointed finger of shame? Let him drink more deeply at this fountain. With God he believes his slate is wiped clean. Ultimate goodness has said, "Forgiven—Restored." Let the keen joy of that forgiveness and the sweet peace of that restoration show themselves in his whole personality and bearing, and the sting of the pointed finger will change into the warmth of the glad hand of fellowship. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. 8:33). In the highest court of appeal the supreme Judge has pronounced the verdict: "Justified". Out of that court let the sin-harassed soul walk by the grace of God, in his heart peace, in his bearing courage, and on his lips a song, "In the Cross of Christ I Glory".

(To Be Continued)

A Calvinist Answers the Critics

By the REV. EDWARD J. YOUNG, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Old Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary

THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES, A Re-examination of the Theory that the Pentateuch is a Late Compilation from Diverse and Conflicting Sources By Authors and Editors Whose Identity is Completely Unknown. By Oswald T. Allis. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 1943, \$3.

READERS of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN well know that the Old Testament has been under severe attack by men who are often referred to as "higher critics". Briefly stated, this attack consists of a denial of the claims which the Old Testament makes for itself. Instead of regarding the Old Testament as a direct revelation from God, many critics consider it to be a purely human composition. Particularly manifest among certain scholars is a desire to discard traditional views of the date and authorship of the individual books of the Old Testament.

Possibly one may ask whether it matters what view is adopted as to the date and authorship of a book. Is this a matter of faith? The answer is that it makes a great amount of difference what viewpoint one holds on such subjects. For example, Christ said, "Moses wrote of me". If, however, we believe that Moses did not write, we are setting ourselves up as wiser than Christ. It is impossible to divorce these questions from one's attitude toward Jesus Christ. The phenomenon which is popularly known as higher criticism is in its very genius hostile to the orthodox Christian faith.

Nor is such criticism an isolated phenomenon. Rather, critical tenets are being inculcated in many of the colleges and universities and most of the theological seminaries of the land. Doubtless we all know young people whose faith has been shaken or whose minds have been upset because of the severe mental struggles which they have undergone due to contact with critical views of the Old Testament.

Has the Christian an answer to criticism? There are some who say, "Read your Bible and never mind what the higher critics say". But such a solution will not satisfy those who take their Christian profession seriously. They will want to understand the nature of criticism, so that they

can meet it face to face. Are there, however, books which will enable them to do this? Most of such books are today antiquated, but at last there has appeared a work which deals with the critical problem from the only legitimate standpoint, that of the historic Reformed Faith.

The work of which we speak is called *The Five Books of Moses*, and has just been written by Dr. Oswald T. Allis, who is probably the greatest living conservative Old Testament scholar. Dr. Allis has produced a book which treats the subject in a thorough manner. At the same time it is clearly written, and no technical knowledge is necessary in order to follow the argument. Material of a particularly technical nature is presented in smaller type. The work is divided into sections and paragraphs which greatly facilitate the progress of the reader. It is, therefore, a book which is well adapted to the average reader.

Dr. Allis subjects the claims of the destructive critics to a thorough scrutiny and examination. He first deals with the theory, so widely prevalent, that the Pentateuch is a compilation of diverse documents, produced during various periods of Israel's history. Next he discusses the position that the institutions of ancient Israel were the result of an evolutionary development. Lastly, he considers the findings of archaeology and the present status of Old Testament studies. The reader who is interested in archaeology cannot do better than to purchase this book.

It remains to be seen whether the critics will give serious consideration to Dr. Allis' arguments. To many critics, the issue is a closed one—they believe that the tenets of criticism are settled facts. But dogmatism will not overcome truth. In the end truth will prevail. The arguments which Dr. Allis has presented ultimately will compel a hearing. Here is a veritable arsenal of defense for the Bible-believer. This book should be in the hands of every college student, of every ministerial student, of every minister and of every thoughtful Christian. To readers of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN who wish to be informed, we sincerely commend it.

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITORIAL

National Association

FIVE hundred evangelical leaders throughout the nation assembled in convention at Chicago last month and organized the National Association of Evangelicals with the Rev. Harold J. Ockenga, pastor of the Park Street Congregational Church of Boston, as president. The purpose of the Association is to represent evangelical Protestants who are unwilling to be represented by the modernist Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, to negotiate with the federal government as the representative of evangelical Protestantism in such matters as free radio time and chaplaincy quotas, to carry out a united program of evangelism and publication of Sunday school materials and, in general, to make through united action a strong impact upon the public mind for true Bible-believing Protestantism.

We confess considerable sympathy with many of the objectives of the Association. It is high time the American public and the federal government were informed that the Federal Council is not the spokesman of all Protestants in the United States. We resent the Federal Council's pontifical claims and sweeping pronouncements. It represents many large denominations and may even represent a majority of Protestants but it cannot speak for Protestantism *en masse*. Also we have become alarmed at the privileged position given by both government and radio chains to the Federal Council. Why should it have sole control of all free time, while evangelical broadcasters must pay? Why should it exercise such a controlling voice in the appointment of chaplains for the army and navy? Furthermore, Protestantism suffers from the want of a united voice on public and ecclesiastical matters. When Rome speaks, she speaks with one voice and the world gives heed. We Protestants are so divided that our influence is greatly weakened. Thus we see the desirability of an association of evangelicals.

However, we are convinced the National Association will never, on its present basis, become a worthy spokesman for the Bible-believing Christians of America. In the first place, it has not taken a consistent stand against the Federal Council. Of talk and public criticism there has been plenty, but the National Association has not, in convention assembled, repudiated the Council nor has it forbidden membership in the Association to those represented denominationally by the Council. So we have the spectacle of its president, Dr. Ockenga, heading an organization that is logically a deadly enemy of the Federal Council while he himself is actually represented by the Federal Council by virtue of his membership in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. If the Federal Council is a modernist, unscriptural, unprotestant octopus—and we think it is—then let every evangelical shake off its tentacles completely and at once. "If Jehovah be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him". Evangelical Protestantism will never amount to a hill of beans as long as it consists of scattered groups of believers remaining in modernist denominations. The National Association of Evangelicals will never have a reason for existence until it declares unremitting, uncompromising total war on the Federal Council.

In the second place, if the Association undertakes any ecclesiastical functions such as evangelistic campaigns or publication of Sunday school literature, its broad basis will become a source of confusion and weakness. Suppose the evangelicals of Chicago unite in an evangelistic campaign and the evangelist preaches on the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. What is he going to say? That God hardened Pharaoh's heart or that Pharaoh hardened his own heart? We suspect he will say only the latter. Shall Calvinists support this Arminianism? Or, if by any chance, a Calvinistic evangelist were employed by the Association, should Arminians be expected to support him? Let no one say the problem need not arise, for no evangelist can preach for one week without preaching either Calvinism or Arminianism. Or suppose the Association published a Sunday school lesson on the Ten Commandments. If that lesson declares that the law is still binding, what will Donald Grey

Barnhouse and Lewis Sperry Chafer and kindred dispensational evangelicals say? If it says that it is not binding in this dispensation, what will non-dispensationalists say? And so it goes. This is the dilemma in which all general evangelical organizations and institutions find themselves. They try not to adopt any specific interpretation of God's Word, but they cannot help doing so. Wheaton College cannot tolerate Dr. Gordon Clark's Calvinism, but it will tolerate the Arminianism of Dr. Clark's successor. The National Association is trying to be "inclusive" but it will eventually follow some "line", and it is our guess that the line followed will turn out to be the Arminian, baptistic, anti-intellectual line of the greater part of American Fundamentalism. Such a position will bar all historic Presbyterians and Lutherans, to say nothing of others.

For these reasons we do not believe the Association can effectively fight Modernism or unite evangelicals. We still believe there is need for coöperative action among evangelicals in certain limited non-ecclesiastical spheres, but we remain convinced that the National Association of Evangelicals does not meet that need.

—J. P. C.

Westminster Tercentenary

THE Rev. Professor John Murray of Westminster Theological Seminary begins in this issue a series of articles on the Westminster Assembly. We are sure that Professor Murray needs no introduction to the GUARDIAN audience, but it might be well to say a few words about his subject.

There has been quite a hue and cry lately in the public press over the ignorance of young Americans of their national history. Social studies were substituted for history. The past was ignored and the teaching of historical facts treated with contempt. As a result, many college freshmen did not know the most elemental facts of American history. We hope henceforth our youth will be more intelligent patriots because they will again be taught the story of our history.

Likewise Christians are often ignorant of the history of the church. Now church history is not a dry and useless record of past events but the story of

the unfolding of God's grace in time. The Westminster Assembly was the body of learned and devout men who over a period of years formulated the

Westminster Confession of Faith which is the creed of Presbyterianism. It was a great body of men who under the Spirit's guiding did a great

work. Professor Murray has devoted much study to this Assembly, and we await his articles with interest.

—J. P. C.

The Federal Council: A Common Denominator

A Review by the REV. EDWARDS E. ELLIOTT

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WE ARE NOT DIVIDED, by John A. Hutchison. Round Table Press, New York, N. Y., 1941. 336 pages. \$3.

THE title of this book is ambitious. Not yet is the Federal Council a super-denomination, though *The Christian Century* and others would like it so. The unity it has is a unity of action—a negative unity against sound doctrine. A super-denomination, however, seems on the way, with the coming to America of the European refugee-theologies, which seem to be supplanting the original liberalism of the Council, and which may well provide a more substantial rallying point.

Evangelical Alliance

Interdenominational currents began to flow in the nineteenth century, forming several obtuse whirlpools before they found their true center. Among these currents were Anti-Slavery, Temperance, the Congregational-Presbyterian plan for evangelizing the frontier, the Bible and tract societies, the Y.M.C.A., Salvation Army, Finney revivals, and the Student Volunteers. It was in England, however, that the "Evangelical Alliance" was organized in 1846. A Fundamentalist type of doctrinal statement was adopted which, Mr. Hutchison says, "proved for the American branch to be a straitjacket". After the Civil War, the American branch began to function and soon was faced with the huge problem which the Federal Council has adopted as its very own: "How can we reach the new masses of people?" Heavy industry was coming in. Immigration was unrestricted. The cities of the Eastern United States were being filled with new types. Downtown churches were moving to better sections.

In 1886 Josiah Strong was employed as full-time secretary of the Evangelical Alliance. "Preaching a new gospel which 'changes environ-

ment' as well as individuals . . . applying the teachings of Jesus to human society and building the kingdom of God on earth, Strong was a pioneer in the social gospel and social service. . . . Other-worldiness was repudiated for a frankly this-worldly religion" (p. 17).

Philip Schaff, in 1893, at the Chicago World's Fair Conference of the Alliance, defined the hopes for federal union, as against organic union: ". . . each [church] retaining its freedom and independence . . . but cooperating in general enterprises such as the spread of the gospel at home and abroad, the defense of the faith against infidelity, the elevation of the poor and neglected classes of society, works of philanthropy and charity and moral reform".

Strong in 1898 resigned from the Alliance because of its hampering theology, and the Alliance shortly gave up the ghost. The age was anti-theological.

Open Church League

Downtown church buildings, emptied by the exodus to the suburbs, were opened as institutions for the new populations by the "Open and Institutional Church League", manned by a group of liberal leaders such as Elias Sanford, later the spark plug behind the Federal Council, Charles L. Thompson, later Home Missions Secretary for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., who "veered away from the severe tendencies of Charles Hodge", and Frank Mason North, who later wrote the Federal Council hymn, "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life".

National Federation of Churches

Ideas of evolutionary progress, combined with a liberalized postmillennialism and a total disregard for human depravity, now comprised the "Christianity" of the churches: "the

Social Gospel was . . . the response of American Christianity to the new urban and industrial society in which it found itself" (p. 25). Thus, social service and interdenominational cooperation on a non-doctrinal basis were the parents of the Federal Council. The Open Church League soon proved too small a channel for these things. In 1900 "The National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers" was begun. Its structure resembled the present-day American Council of Christian Churches, for individuals could belong, as well as churches. The first chairman, J. Cleveland Cady, "advocated a moratorium on theology in favor of cooperative service of practical ends". This organization in 1905 succeeded in calling delegates from twenty-eight denominations to Carnegie Hall, New York City, to organize the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Sad to say, one of the three who drew up the plan of federation was William H. Roberts, for thirty-six years Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., a conservative who later balked at the social gospel.

Federal Council

At that time there was a lively discussion on the question of including the word "divine" before "Lord and Saviour" in the preamble. It was approved. The Federal Council now gags on this, for it excludes the Unitarians. If it is removed, the Lutherans will leave the Council, for they are trying to achieve unity in their own ranks. So it remains, a meaningless concession to expediency.

From the first, religion for the sake of man dominated the Council. Many were the social problems with which the Council tried to deal. If only these were solved, the millennium would be upon us. At this point, Mr. Hutchison is plainly derisive of the

early liberalism. From the Federal Council Report of 1912 he quotes, "not the Holy Land of Holy men, but a Holy Earth . . . a Holy United States bringing down the holy city from heaven decked as a bride for her bridegroom".

Is it any wonder that, when Franklin D. Roosevelt brought in practically all the social reforms demanded by the Federal Council (and he knew it), there was confusion in the council's committees? "We do not suggest that the national recovery program embodies the full social ideal of Christianity . . ." Yet it did take a lot of wind out of their sails. The millennium was not yet here, however, for the churchmen were not all Democrats.

World War I gave the Council its big chance. It grew from a small, ineffectual body to become a real influence on the American scene. Committees were organized, victory churches were built in boom areas (the Council still supervises Protestant churches in the Canal Zone), relief funds were raised, and the Council beat the holy war drums with unthinking glee. The poor conscientious objector was left out in the cold. The Council took the "war to end war" idea seriously, and after the war plugged for the League of Nations, the World Court, and disarmament.

At its start, the Federal Council tried to get along on dues from member denominations. These came so sparingly that the Council turned to private sources of income. To this day, practically seventy-five per cent. of the income is from these latter sources. This gives the Council a balance of independence over against its official ecclesiastical standing. It can afford to retain "prophets" on its committees who would be fired by any conservative denomination. Keeping ahead of the New Deal reforms required some fast stepping in the 1930's, and suspicions of radicalism were often voiced by "unkind" critics.

Disarmament

Admiral Standley, now our outspoken ambassador to Soviet Russia, in 1935 publicly accused the Federal Council of communism. His criticism is very easily understandable in the light of the 1928 campaign of the Council to disarm the United States. "In coöperation with other peace or-

ganizations a protest movement was launched which finally succeeded in cutting the \$1,000,000,000 program to \$274,000,000, from seventy-one proposed new ships to sixteen" (p. 204). To cap this, in 1938 the Executive Committee issued this statement: "If Japan is deprived of some of her bombing planes by an American government embargo, she is being coerced and threatened, not by a disinterested party, but by a nation which has mobilized its weapons of violence in practice for making war upon her. . . ." Sanctions, thought the Council, were not the right answer. For Japan to make a voluntary withdrawal from China had much the higher moral value.

When Shailer Mathews and Charles F. Wishart gave the Stockholm Conference a taste of the social gospel in 1925, there was sharp dissent voiced by the German delegation. The Bishop of Saxony spoke of a "sinful and lost humanity". It sounded like orthodoxy to the Americans, but it is doubtful that it was. It probably resembled the modern neo-orthodoxy, with its pessimism regarding human nature.

The disillusionment caused by approaching war was sufficient to show even Americans the hollow character of liberal optimism. The alternative was the "more realistic" European type of theology. By the time of 1937's Oxford Conference, the new theology was triumphant. Barth, Brunner, Tillich, Niebuhr, Mackay, Homrighausen, Piper—these are the newer prophets.

Impact

Has the Federal Council been effective? Its claim to be the one voice of Protestantism has enabled it to grab all the Protestant allotment of radio time. It has blanketed the country with Labor Sunday messages, movie censorship, and pamphlets. But are its views understood and held by the average church member? This is interesting. The Council's much-heralded National Preaching Mission, weighed by Time magazine was found wanting, and hardly effective. A recent survey of church members has discovered that only a small minority have followed the social philosophy of the Council. But it is like a dog in the Protestant manger. It barks its claims, but allows no one to feed on

the true food. It has no place in its program for worship of the real Jesus, and service for Him who died for us and rose again. The members of the churches are obliged to fill their hearts with husks of "values" instead of solid truths. But the true sheep in these folds have no ear for the voices of strangers. They know the voice of the true Shepherd speaking in Scripture, and though they fail to sense their danger in their denominations, they will hear and understand if we call to them with the true gospel, with its implications for all life, not only for the present but also for that which is to come.

Supreme Court Reversal

IN what may well be regarded as a significant victory for the principles of the Bill of Rights, the United States Supreme Court by a vote of five to four reversed itself last month and ruled that municipalities may not pass ordinances compelling members of Jehovah's Witnesses to pay a license fee for the distribution of religious literature. The ruling climaxes a steady tendency in recent months toward reversal of the court's earlier denial of such rights, and came as a result of a petition supported by briefs filed by the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists.

The court division was exactly the same in numbers as that which ruled against the sect last June except that Mr. Justice Rutledge, newest member of the bench, voted for the Witnesses whereas his predecessor, Mr. Justice Byrnes, had voted against them a year ago. Holding the city ordinances restricting the distribution of religious literature to be invalid are Chief Justice Stone and Justices Black, Douglas, Murphy and Rutledge. Opposing them are Justices Roberts, Reed, Frankfurter and Jackson.

Four cases were involved in the court's action, three of them arising from state courts. The latter three were the famous cases involving Witnesses in Opelika, Alabama, Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Casa Grande, Arizona. (See THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, July 10, 1942, page 200.) The fourth case concerned the question of whether Jehovah's Witnesses

could sue in a federal court to prevent prosecutions in the town of Jeannette, Pa.

Acting for the majority in the Jeannette case, Mr. Justice Douglas held that the form of evangelism illustrated by pamphlet distribution "occupies the same high estate under the First Amendment [to the Constitution] as do worship in the churches and preaching from the pulpits. . . .

"It has", he stated, "the same claim to protection as the more orthodox and conventional exercises of religion. It also has the same claim as the

others to the guarantees of freedom of speech and freedom of the press".

Mr. Justice Reed, author of the Opelika decision last year, entered a combined dissent in the Jeannette and Opelika¹ rulings of the present court.

"Even if the distribution of religious books was a religious practice protected from regulation by the First Amendment", said Mr. Reed, "certainly the affixation of a price for the articles would destroy the sacred character of the transaction. The evangelist becomes a book agent.

"The rights which are protected by the First Amendment are in essence spiritual—Prayer, mass, sermons, sacrament—not sales of religious goods".

This dissent was approved by Justices Roberts, Jackson and Frankfurter but the latter submitted further views of his own.

It is confidently hoped that the present ruling of the court may be a forerunner of a new era of more careful regard for the principles of religious liberty upon which the nation was founded and for which its sons have died.

Of Sanctifying Grace

The Seventh in a Series of Studies "Of Things Most Surely Believed"

By the REV. HENRY W. CORAY

Pastor of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Long Beach, California

WE HAVE endeavored to point out in two earlier articles* that common or universal grace is received, in greater or less measure, by all men everywhere and that saving or special grace is granted only to those, but to all those, whom the Father has given the Son (see John 17:2, 6, 9, 11, 12, and 24). We desire now to dwell briefly on the blessed doctrine that God continues to lavish upon His children grace that renews and enables them to die more and more unto sin and to live more and more unto righteousness.

In John 1:16 it is recorded, "Of his [Christ's] fulness have all we received, and grace upon grace". Waterland thinks that this verse was designed to correct the notion of the Cerinthians of the Gnostic school who taught that there was a fullness or plenitude of Deity into which only "spiritual" or "separated" men, including themselves of course, could enter. Others less "spiritual" were excluded from this inner circle of holy ones. "St. John", Waterland goes on to say, "here asserts that all Christians, equally and indifferently, all believers at large have received of the plenitude or fulness of the divine Word and that not sparingly, but in the largest measure, even grace for grace".

This is a tremendous truth and should be accepted with all readiness of mind. The newest convert to the

* See THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, August 15, 1942 and October 10, 1942.

Christian faith as well as the most mature saint has been made heir to the superabounding grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. The poorest pauper in the community of the redeemed is a multimillionaire in the Son of God. Insects and animals of the meanest order living above the earth's surface obtain the full benefit of the sun's rays. So all who have been raised to newness of life, whether despised Jews in Poland or wretched Hottentots in Africa, are blessed by radiant beams from the Sun of righteousness. With Christ is a fountain of life. In Him is wealth unsearchable, inexhaustible. He is the pearl of great price. His knowledge cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir. His wisdom is above rubies. And with all His marvelous perfections and merit—His obedience, His righteousness, His covenant, His sacrifice, His moral purity, His resurrection power—He is ours. Let each child of the King exclaim then with all joy, "This is my Beloved and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem".

We should also observe that sanctifying grace flows progressively. In principle every believer has, in the Giver of grace and truth, obtained all fullness. Nothing is to be added to this precious inheritance. Christ has opened unto us the treasury of heaven and placed in our hands the key of faith. Still it is true, is it not, that often because of wilful disobedience, or doubt or the neglect of the means of grace,

we impoverish our spiritual state. Therefore, in God's all-wise plan we take the land of promise by gradual conquest. John concludes the text with the words "and grace for grace". He simply means "grace in place of grace" or "grace upon grace" or, as Thayer has noted, "grace perpetually succeeding grace".

Go down to the sea and watch the waves sweep in with the tide. One wave moves up and hurls itself on the shore. The waters recede. Another comes up higher, a third and a fourth still higher. This is the process until high tide has been reached. In this manner God operates with His elect. Grace succeeds grace until glorification.

Look at it this way. Yesterday's grace has, in a sense, passed. But today there is new favor. "He giveth greater grace". You and I dare not try to feed on yesterday's hidden manna. The Israelites discovered that their manna when stored had a way of spoiling. "We are never more in peril than when we are trusting to a past experience". The grace that sanctifies is new every morning. Faith is not only a past acceptance, it is also a present attitude. In the words of the great French Reformer Monod, it is a continual "looking unto Jesus—during all the time which is allotted us here below—unto Jesus ever anew, without allowing either the remembrance of the past, which we know so little of, or the cares of an unknown future, to distract our thoughts; unto

Jesus now, if we have never looked unto him; unto Jesus again, if we have ceased to do so; unto Jesus alone, unto Jesus still, unto Jesus always, with a more fixed and steadfast gaze, 'changed into the same image from

glory to glory', and thus waiting for the hour when he will call us to pass from earth to heaven, and from time to eternity: the promised, the blessed hour, when at last we shall be 'like to him, for we shall see him as he is'".

princes of Judah, arrogant and tyrannical rulers. Two princes are lamented. The one captured and carried to Egypt is Shallum, or Jehoahaz. The one carried away to Babylon is Jehoiachin. In this allegory, on this interpretation, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah are passed over. It may be that Ezekiel looked on them as mere creatures of Pharaoh-nechoh and Nebuchadnezzar rather than as true kings of Judah. Besides, Jehoiakim died in Jerusalem, and Zedekiah was still reigning at the time of Ezekiel's lament.

Some writers think, however, that the lioness is Hamutal, one of the wives of Josiah, and the two whelps her sons Jehoahaz and Zedekiah. This difference of view does not essentially change the meaning of the allegory.

Ezekiel is teaching us that in the providence of God wicked and oppressive kings are taken captive by nations no more righteous than they, for God judges and overrules. God is in history. Indeed, He is above history, and controls history (Psalm 46:10).

The Lioness and Her Whelps

A Meditation on Ezekiel 19:1-14

By the REV. LAWRENCE B. GILMORE, Th.D.

Stated Supply of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, Ohio

AS WE contemplate the history of this earth's rulers, the ending of a long line of kings is a solemn and melancholy event. Much more solemn and mournful is the fall of the royal house of Judah and the termination of the earthly representatives of the Davidic line. Here devout minds find relief only in the supernatural restoration of the Davidic line through the divine-human Messiah, born indeed of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:3, 4).

Ezekiel the prophet marks the fall of the royal house of Judah with an inspired lament. This lament is expressed in a twofold allegorical parable: (1) the lioness and her two whelps that are successively caught and bound; and (2) the vine with lofty branches, which is ruined by a fire proceeding from one of them.

The Historical Situation

Ezekiel, prophesying in far-away Babylon where he had been taken captive in 597 B.C., sees the kingdom of Judah abandoned to violence and oppression. Good King Josiah had been slain in battle at Megiddo in 608 B.C. Jehoahaz his son, also called Shallum, scarcely was enthroned before he became a tyrannical oppressor (II Kings 23:32). He reigned only three months, until Pharaoh-nechoh dethroned him, and took him to Egypt, where he died. The Egyptians then put Jehoiakim, an older brother of Jehoahaz, on the throne of Judah, where he reigned from 608 to 597 B.C. Jehoiakim likewise became an idolatrous, arrogant oppressor. He was attacked by the Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, and finally taken captive by the Babylonians. He died in Jerusalem unmourned. His son Jehoiachin

became king, but reigned only three months, and was taken captive to Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar appointed Zedekiah, another of Josiah's sons, vassal-king, who reigned from 597 to 586. Ezekiel prophetically sees the final disaster that came when Zedekiah broke his oath to Nebuchadnezzar and was taken captive, with Jerusalem destroyed, and the land laid waste (cf. Ezek. 17:18-21).

The Lioness and Her Whelps

In this allegory a lioness brings up her whelps among lions. One of the whelps becomes a young lion and learns to catch the prey and to devour men. The nations hear of this, and capture the young lion in their pit, and take him to Egypt.

Then the lioness takes another of her whelps, and he also learns to catch the prey, and to devour men. The nations then surround him also, and capture him in their pit. They put him in a cage, and bring him to Babylon, so that no more is his roaring heard on the mountains of Israel.

The Vine with Lofty Branches

The mother, now called a vine, is planted beside abundant waters. The vine grows strong rods for the sceptres of rulers. But the vine is then plucked up in fury. It is cast down to the ground, and dried up by the east wind. The strong rods of the vine are broken off, and withered, and consumed by fire. And now the vine is replanted in a dry and thirsty land. But fire proceeding from the rods (or, a rod) of the branches finally destroys the fruitfulness of the vine.

The Meaning of the First Allegory

The mother lioness is the people, Judah itself. The young lions are the

The Meaning of the Second Allegory

The mother, now called a vine, is Judah. The vine flourished in well-watered Canaan, with every advantage for growth and fruitfulness. It had thick branches, that is, the people were great in numbers and resources. Corresponding to the sceptre-like rods, the house of David had many valiant princes fit to bear rule. But the vine was disturbed, and plucked up, especially by the eastern nations, Assyria and Babylonia, comparable to the blighting east wind. Judah is transplanted to Chaldea, to a barren state of existence. The branch from which destruction spreads to the vine is Zedekiah. His ill-advised revolt against Nebuchadnezzar will occasion the ruin of the royal family and the Jewish nation. Never again will any of his family bear rule. Only the supernatural Messiah can restore the glory of the Davidic line (II Sam. 7:12-17; Psalm 110:2; Isa. 11:1; Ezek. 17:22, 23).

Again God is seen to be guiding history. The anger of the Lord against Judah for its sins is specified as the reason why Zedekiah was permitted to rebel against Babylon (II Kings 24:20). We seem to hear God saying: "By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth" (Prov. 8:16).

Lessons for Us

Many reflections crowd into our minds as we meditate on Ezekiel's lament:

(1) The consequences of individual and national sin are not only awful, but mournful. Ezekiel could truly mourn the ruin of princes he had to regard as wicked idolaters. Jeremiah mourns in like manner over Jehoahaz: "Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country" (Jer. 22:10). And just as God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, so the godly man views God's judgments not with casual curiosity but with sad and pious regard. Even today we must heed Ezekiel's lament, for it is to be not a transient but an abiding one (10:14). Besides, we should note the difference between this God-regarding sadness of the prophet and the bitter sorrow of those Jews who bewailed their miseries but did not acknowledge their sins as the cause.

There comes a time in individual and national history when prophets can no longer warn evil-doers, but only mourn for them. The Apostle Paul speaks of his task as that of "warning and teaching" (Col. 1:28). It is for us to heed before warning turns into mourning (Phil. 3:18).

(2) States come to an end not by accidental collisions of rulers, or by the mechanical operation of historical forces, but by the judgments of God. It is just and common for unjust and oppressive rulers and nations themselves to be terrified and enslaved. The devourer is himself devoured. In this we see the righteous judgment of God.

(3) We see also how evil descends to succeeding generations. "Note, Those who fill up the measure of their fathers' sins, are laying up in store for their children's sorrows, and furnishing them with matter for lamentation; and nothing is more so than the overthrow of government" (Matthew Henry).

(4) Rulers can involve not only themselves but also others in ruin. The bramble-bush ruler causes not only himself, but also those who follow him to be destroyed (Judges 9:15).

(5) God's judgments are not merely negative but also positive. When He overturns earthly powers, He does this not merely to execute judgment, but also to provide for the

bringing in of the true ruler and His glorious eternal kingdom (Ezek. 21:27; Dan. 7:13, 14). While we lament the tragedies of earthly sin and failure, we can look with assurance and comfort to the ultimate coming

of the rightful and just King. He is our divine-human Saviour and Lord; not the fretful and tyrannical monarch of an earthly Canaan, but the Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5-9).

David's Test

A Story for the Children's Hour

By HARRIET Z. TEAL

GOOD-BY, Davy-boy. Try not to miss any of your spelling words today".

David looked back and waved to his mother, as she stood on the top step, in the sunshine of the beautiful spring morning, smiling after him. Then he turned and walked rather slowly down the street toward school. He was not in any hurry to get there—this morning there was to be a spelling test and David was not at all sure that he could spell the words. Daddy had said last time that if David failed in his spelling test again he would have to be punished: He would have to stay in the house every afternoon for a week and there would be no trip to the museum or hike in the woods with Daddy on Saturday afternoon.

Last evening his Daddy had had to go out and Mother had been more than usually busy, and so no one had noticed that David was playing with his airplane models when he should have been studying the spelling words. Now he was sorry he had wasted his time.

Several other little boys were running along the other side of the street. They saw him and called, "Hi, Dave! Come on over". But David shook his head and kept on walking slowly along on his own side. "Oh, all right. Don't, then. What do we care?" they cried, and the whole group scampered off to school, leaving David far behind. These boys were also third grade pupils, and David was sure that most of them would beat him in the spelling test this time. He hated to be last in anything—the teacher said he was as bright as any of the others and could have as good grades if he would only work a little harder.

David was thinking hard. What could he do? It was too late to study the words now. Oh, if only he could

have them where he could glance at them during the test, when he was uncertain whether the "e" or the "i" came first, or whether to put two "t's" or one. Suddenly an idea popped into his mind. It made him stop short in the middle of the sidewalk. Should he? Just this once! No one would know, and after this, he promised himself, he would really study.

David ran all the rest of the way to school and upstairs to his classroom. The teacher was not there at the moment. Quickly taking out his book from the desk, he turned to the page where the words for today's spelling test were—there were just seven that David was not sure of. Rapidly he copied these, very small, on a tiny scrap of paper, then looked up with a start as Miss Brooks, the third grade teacher, walked into the room. He slipped the scrap of paper into his pocket, and slid the book back into the desk and dashed out of the room and down to the playground.

David's heart was still beating fast when the bell sounded a few minutes later and he marched back with the other children and took his seat.

Presently the test began. Miss Brooks gave out the words one by one and the children wrote them down on their papers. "Mountain," "together," "capture"—Yes, David knew those. "Furniture"—he was not sure of that one.

Under his left hand, as it lay on the desk, was the little scrap of paper. David moved his fingers a bit so he could see it—and copied the word. This he did several times with other words he was not sure of. At last all the words were written down. The papers were collected and the test was over.

When David went home to lunch his mother asked, "Well, son, how did you get along with the spelling

test?"

David answered, "I don't know," shortly, and did not look up.

His mother glanced at his downcast face and thought, "Oh, dear, David has failed again, I'm afraid".

But she was surprised and pleased the next afternoon when he brought home his paper to find a grade of 100 marked on it. For once, David had the highest mark in his class! Daddy, too, was very pleased and told his son he should be rewarded for his good work. Somehow, David himself was not very happy. He knew he did not deserve all this praise. But, he told himself, at least no one knew what he had done and they never would know!

The next day was Saturday and, true to his promise, Daddy took David and a few of his boy friends on a long hike in the woods. They built a fire and cooked supper and had so much fun that school and everything connected with it seemed far away and forgotten.

On Sunday morning David went to Sunday school. He liked to go; his teacher made the Bible stories so interesting and so real. Today the story was about some of the Christians in the early church who loved the Lord so much that they sold their lands and gave all the money to the apostles for the church. And then a man named Ananias, and his wife Sapphira, sold *their* land and pretended to give all the money to the church too, but really they kept back part of it for themselves, for they thought, "No one will know, and all the church will think we gave all we had. They will think we are very generous and will praise us for it".

But God knew what Ananias and Sapphira had done. And God caused the apostle Peter, who was a minister of the church, to know that Ananias and his wife had lied and cheated.

Peter said to Ananias, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God".

It took David's breath away and he felt himself grow pale as his teacher went on to tell how that man who had lied to God, and a little later his wife also, fell down and died because of their awful sin.

The Sunday school teacher told the class that deception and lying is always a sin against God and deserves punishment as much as the sin of Ananias and Sapphira did, and that

God can see into everyone's heart, and knows all our thoughts as well as all our actions. Then she read the following verses from the Bible that say so:

Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord. (Jer. 23:24).

Behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sins will find you out (Num. 32:23).

For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: neither hid that shall not be known (Luke 12:2).

David was trembling when Sunday school ended. The morning church service was about to begin, and he hurried to his parents' pew in the church auditorium and sat down close to his mother's side. He was frightened; he had lied and cheated and sinned against God and God knew all about it. God had looked into David's heart as he planned the deed, and then had seen him do it. And now David wondered, "Am I going to die? Will I fall down dead for my sin?" Oh, he was afraid!

David could hardly wait to get home from church. As soon as they were in the house he took hold of his mother's hand and whispered, "Mother, let's go to your room. I want to tell you something".

Mother looked down at the pale face and saw that he was almost in tears, and thought, "Something is wrong with my boy". She led him gently upstairs to her bedroom and there, with his face buried in his mother's shoulder, David poured out the whole, sad story.

Gravely his mother listened, silently she lifted her heart to God for wisdom in answering her child, and then she reached for her Bible and said, "David, once there was another David who committed a terrible sin against the Lord. Then afterward he was very sorry and prayed to be forgiven. I want to read you some of his words, which God caused him to write down. They are a part of the Bible".

And now David's mother began to turn the pages of her Bible and to read to her David some of the lessons that God had taught the Psalmist David long ago:

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom . . . (Psalm 111:10).

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"When we have sinned it is right that we should be afraid of the holy God whose law we have disobeyed, for,

... God is angry with the wicked every day (Psalm 7:11).

"and in the New Testament we read,

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31).

"But God is very tender and merciful to those who are sorry for their sins.

The Lord is nigh unto those that are of a broken heart and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit (Psalm 34:18).

"King David confessed his sin to God; he prayed,

For I acknowledge my transgression and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight . . . (Psalm 51:3, 4).

"In the New Testament we read,

If we confess our sins, he is faithful

and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9).

"King David prayed to God for forgiveness and cleansing,

Have mercy upon me, O God, according unto thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow (Psalm 51:1, 2, 7).

"From the New Testament we learn,

The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin (I John 1:7).

"And the Lord Jesus Christ Himself holds out His loving arms to the sorrowful sinner and says,

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matt. 11:28).

"When God had forgiven his sin, the Psalmist David sang unto the Lord songs of praise and thanksgiving, and he told out to other people what great things the Lord had done for him. Here is part of his happy song,

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven and whose sin is covered (Psalm 32:1).

Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart (Psalm 32:11).

When his mother had finished reading these words from the Bible, little David was crying. "Mother", he sobbed, "I want to tell God I'm sorry, and ask Him to forgive me".

And so, kneeling with his mother beside the bed, the little boy poured out his heart to the Lord, confessing his sin and pleading for forgiveness and cleansing in the precious blood of Christ. When he rose to his feet, David's face was shining. "Oh, I'm so happy", he cried, stretching out his arms. "I feel like shouting like David in the Bible. I'm going right downstairs and tell Daddy all about it".

"And what about telling your school-teacher tomorrow?" his mother asked.

David stood still and looked sober for a moment, and then he straightened his shoulders and said, "I'll tell her, too. It won't be so easy, but God will help me. And after this I mean to study hard and get 100 without cheating!"

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