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Christianity and Shintoism

An Analysis by a Qualified Observer of the Japanese Missionary Scene

BELOVED, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

The epistles of Paul bear witness to the fact that heresies and false notions of Christianity were to be found in the church in the first century. The apostle exhorts his colleagues in the ministry to guard the true faith against the inroads of foolish speculation and false philosophy. It is the work of the true minister of the gospel to exercise diligence that the simplicity which is in Christ be not corrupted.

From a careful study of Paul's ministry to the pagan polytheists of the Roman Empire, we see that his first work was to inform the people that the deities they had selected to receive their worship were non-existent. It is interesting to note how adroitly the apostle presented his message to those cultivated Greeks who had summoned him to the Areopagus. Before he explained the plan of salvation, he corrected their notions of the deity (Acts 17: 15-34).

We next see him, in Acts 19:26, informing the pagans of Ephesus "that they be no gods which are made with hands." Not only in Ephesus, "but almost throughout all Asia," this type of preaching caused a persecution of Paul and his friends. Despite such persecution, Paul and his colleagues always denounced the idolatry of the people among whom they were working. Anyone who wished to become a Christian and

receive baptism had first of all to renounce every form of idolatry. Idolatry and Christianity were absolutely incompatible.

Fundamentally, the myths of the Greek and Roman pantheons were the same as in the older religions of Babylonia and Egypt. The mythological system of the Roman Empire received state support. Costly sacrifices were made to the gods from the state treasury. The Romans believed that the food supply, and the welfare of the empire as a whole, depended on a faithful recognition and worship of the Roman deities.

The shrines were places of ceaseless activity. Shrine festivals were continually being held. The shrine of Jupiter was the greatest among the Roman divinities. Consuls on entering their term of service reported their assumption of office to Jupiter and worshiped him accordingly. The gods of the Romans were a vast multitude. The emperors of Rome were deified, and portraits and images of them were made. Roman subjects were expected to bow before these images and render worship. At times incense was demanded.

First century Christianity began its ministry in such surroundings. It was inevitable that a clash between the Roman state religion and Christianity should take place. The Christians severed all relations with the state religion and dropped idolatry in every form. They stood firmly on the Scriptures as the Word of God and this Word forbade the worship of the Roman deities. The result was that for over two hundred years Rome persecuted thousands of her best subjects. She planned

the extermination of Christianity, but Christianity grew and spread in spite of all the ingenious methods of torture that the mind of man could devise.

With the fall of the Roman Empire, pagan state religion breathed its last. How the Christians leaped for joy when they saw it laid away beside the dead state religions of Babylonia and Egypt! Little did they know that on the other side of the earth another state religion was gradually forming that would persecute and torture their successors.

Shinto, or "the way of the gods," is the state religion of the Japanese Empire. Shinto is a fabric of myths much the same as those our ancestors discarded when they heard the Christian message preached by missionaries in Europe over fifteen hundred years ago. These myths are childish and many times revolting and disgusting, and anyone who will do an ounce of thinking must see that they are pure nonsense. Yet, strange to say, the Japanese national structure is founded upon these foolish myths. The *Kojiki* (712 A.D.), the *Nihongi* (720 A.D.) and the *Engi Shiki* (927 A.D.) are the books that list the gods of Shinto.

Shinto Theology

The *Kojiki* starts the Shinto pantheon with three deities who come into existence by themselves. The *Kojiki* begins thus:

"The names of the deities that were born in the plain of High Heaven when the Heaven and Earth began were the Ame-No-Mi-Naka-Nushi No-Kami [Deity Master of the August Center of Heaven]; Takami-Musubi-No-Kami [High August Producing-Wondrous-Deity]; Kami-Musubi-No-Kami [Divine-Producing-Wondrous-Deity].

"These three Deities were all Deities born alone and hid their persons.

"They all came into existence without being procreated in the manner usual with both gods and men, and afterwards disappeared, *i. e.*, died."

It is necessary, in the examination of a religious system, to investigate the deity or deities and to ascertain whether or not they are entitled to the worship and reverence they re-

ceive. Is the deity independently existent, or does he exist simply in the minds of the founders and devotees of the religion?

The god must be necessarily existent, self-existent, eternally existent, absolutely perfect, absolutely independent, and a personal being. There are other attributes of the deity that are necessary, but these six must be predicated in order to constitute God or the supreme Being.

Let us examine the attributes of these three first gods of the *Kojiki* to see if they ever have existed. The Chinese character used in the *Kojiki* to describe the coming into existence of these three gods means "that became." Such "becoming" is concisely defined by Motoori, the greatest of the Shinto commentators, as "the birth of that which did not exist before."

We see, then, that there was a time when these gods were non-existent. There was a time when they produced themselves. They were both existent and non-existent at the same instant. This is a manifest contradiction. Plainly they are not now, and

never have been, in existence. And this applies also to the many other deities of the Shinto pantheon. They have only existed in the speculative imaginings of the Japanese people.

Japanese mythology really begins to assume importance with the two deities, Izanagi and Izanami. They are the seventeenth generation of the *Kojiki* gods.

Creation and Procreation

The Biblical doctrine of creation from nothing is in sharp contrast to the fanciful notions supposedly promulgated by the multitude of Shinto deities. Shinto documents do not teach creation, but procreation.

The mind of man, unaided by divine revelation, has never ascended to the idea of creation out of nothing. Mosheim, in a learned dissertation annexed to his latin translation of Dr. Ralph Cudworth's *True Intellectual System of the Universe*, shows that none of the heathen philosophers taught that the world was created out of nothing. Shinto theologians are in that category.

Gods and islands, trees and rivers, all were procreated. The greatest and most revered deity of the Shinto pantheon, Amaterasu-Omikami (Heaven Shining Great August Deity), or the Sun Goddess, was born from the left eye of her father, Izanagi, as he was purifying himself in a river after a trip to Hades. Tsuki-Yomi-No-Mi-Koto (His Augustness Moon-Night Possessor), the Moon God, was born from the right eye of Izanagi. Take-Haya-Susa-No-Wo-No-Mikoto (His Brave-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness), the Storm God, was born from the nose of his father, Izanagi. These three deities play a big part in the subsequent mythology of the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi*.

Besides procreating the many gods, Izanagi and his wife, Izanami, produced the islands of Japan. The idea of procreation runs throughout the Shinto cosmology.

Polytheistic Shinto

Men have been polytheists for thousands of years. The gods of Shinto are many and have about the same attributes as the Romans and Greeks attributed to their deities. The
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Fifteen Cents a Week Will Do It

By the REV. ROBERT S. MARSDEN

General Secretary of the Mission Committees of
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

AMONG the interesting tasks which the general secretary of the mission committees has to perform is that of preparing the budget for the fiscal year. The easy part of the task is to determine what amounts should be allotted to each of the several departments of missionary administration and endeavor; the difficulty comes when he begins to consider how the funds are to be secured to carry out the budget requirements. Then he is impaled on one or the other of the two horns of a dilemma. He may recommend to the committees that they cut the budget to a figure which experience teaches there is a good possibility of raising, or he may recommend a budget that is in an amount consistent with the absolutely irreducible needs of the several departments, even though it may be an amount larger than experience justifies him in expecting to secure.

If he takes the first alternative, some work must be suspended. In the abstract, this means simply "cut thy coat according to thy cloth." It would seem easy to determine by statistics which work is the least productive of results, and through proper presbyterial procedure to take steps to discontinue support of it. It would seem easy then to resist all pressure to expand the work beyond the budget. But a human element and a divine compulsion enter in. Discontinuing the work means depriving some Orthodox Presbyterians of the ministrations of the gospel and of the sacraments. It means writing DEFEAT upon the efforts of a people and of a faithful missionary and his family to establish a strong church. It means pronouncing sentence of death upon a work which has been established through faith in Christ and in the power of the gospel. It means a judgment that large amounts of money, given sacrificially and prayerfully, have hitherto been misspent. It pronounces the sentence of failure upon a missionary and those laymen who have assisted him in organizing a work. Likewise, to refuse legitimate appeals for aid in expanding the work

is to reject "Macedonian calls"—a thing no faithful church may ever do. As a matter of fact, these elements are of such importance that it is now just three years since either of the mission committees of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has taken the initiative in discontinuing a work to which it was committed. The committees try to be most careful in undertaking support of a work, for once a work is begun it seldom has been found either possible or desirable to discontinue support of it.

On the other hand, if the general secretary recommends a budget which is consistent with the absolutely irreducible needs of the several departments of missionary work, a budget which provides for the work already undertaken and a modest amount for expansion, he recommends a budget which, experience shows, there is little hope of meeting. This is the kind of budget that he is submitting for the present fiscal year! In justification, it should be remarked that the committees have consistently operated under unbalanced budgets, for the work has always been undertaken by faith. This faith has been vindicated, for both the committees completed the work of their fiscal year without owing a cent to anyone! Neither committee, however, received enough from contributions during the year to satisfy all its obligations, and it was necessary to draw upon an inheritance to meet the needs. These funds are well-nigh expended, and the committees must now begin to secure contributions from month to month in amount necessary to carry on the work. The question arises as to how this can be done.

The sources of income for the committees are two—they receive direct gifts from a limited number of individuals and they receive contributions through churches and church organizations. The gifts from individuals have been invaluable, and most of the individual donors have indicated in one way or another that they will continue to support the work by direct gifts from time to

time. Our dependence, however, is increasingly upon gifts from churches and church organizations. It is encouraging to note that the percentage of income from this source has steadily increased. For the past four years we have received 54, 56, 59 and 61 per cent., respectively, of our income from churches and church organizations. The churches gave well—not one church in the denomination failed to contribute to the mission committees during the past fiscal year, and contributions were received from a number of churches outside our denomination. *But with all this fine showing, the average contribution per communicant member, from the churches and from all church societies, was less than seven cents per week.* To be sure, this compares favorably with contributions which other church mission agencies receive; other leading denominations report missions gifts from the churches of only about four cents a week per member.

What a revolution in the financing of missions there would be if the churches would contribute an average of fifteen cents a week per member! If the average church member would contribute to missions each week the price of one gallon of gasoline, or about half what his daily newspapers cost, the enterprise would be on a sound financial basis! That this is within the realm of possibility is shown by the fact that a few churches already contribute this amount, and all the pastors to whom the general secretary has spoken agree that it would be possible for their churches to do so. In a closely-knit church such as ours, where practically every member is in deep sympathy with the objectives of the denomination and with the agencies provided to attain those objectives, certainly it is within the realm of possibility that so modest a goal can be reached.

It is hardly necessary to state that no church will consider this in any sense a tax, and it is just as unnecessary to emphasize the fact that no individual should regard a gift of

fifteen cents a week as the ultimate in missions giving. For widows and orphans who can give but a mite, but who are as welcome in our churches as the most affluent of members, this amount may be impossible. Most of the adult wage-earners will consider the sum trifling, and obviously they will want to give much more than that amount to make up for fellow-members who cannot give as much. The amount will also vary with churches. Churches just beginning may not be able to give as much as churches which are well-established. The size of the church, however, probably will have little to do with the proportionate amount it can contribute. Past experience shows that, in general, large churches do not contribute as well in proportion as do small churches, although one might expect their proportionate giving to be greater.

A very practical question arises as to how this money can be raised in the local churches. *Any sound financial method which will insure regular contributions to missions from a large majority of the communicant members will produce the fifteen cents a week average which is the goal.* Obviously the method used is a matter for each church session to decide for itself. Most of the churches have found that if each communicant member is supplied with duplex envelopes—envelopes with one pocket for support of the local church and the other pocket for benevolences—the problem of missions giving is largely solved. If the members can be persuaded to use these envelopes, few will put into the benevolent side of the envelope less than ten cents a week, and most of the members will give much more than that. The problem here will not be to secure the suggested amount, but to insure that each member gives something. If each member gives something, the amount will seldom be less than the fifteen cents a week needed.

Missionary societies are likewise a large source of income of the mission committees, and many active societies account for half the missions giving of their churches. It is the general secretary's impression, based upon some observation, that the members of these societies are already giving sacrificially to the mission projects of our church, and that any emphasis upon an increase in giving should in

most churches be made among the members of the church who are not members of the missionary society.

A few churches give a definite proportion of all their receipts to missions, and some of them will be willing to increase the percentage so that the fifteen cents per member will be approximated. Some churches have a missionary service once a month, and give all the loose offering at that service to missions. These churches are giving only a small proportion of their membership—those who happen to be in church at the missionary service—an opportunity to contribute to missions, and perhaps a way can be found by which other members who do not attend that particular service can also contribute. For these churches, special envelopes for the

members will prove useful, and the committees will be glad to supply envelopes in sufficient quantity.

If the churches would really support this attempt to raise an amount equal to fifteen cents a member each week, what a missionary program could be carried out! All the present work to which the committees are obligated could be cared for, and a healthy expansion program could be undertaken. Recent seminary graduates could be placed on home mission fields, and new churches could be started at a rate hitherto impossible. Won't you do what you can to enable your church to attain this goal? It is possible to attain it, if we all prayerfully and sacrificially support the work regularly, as the Lord has prospered us!

The Spirit's Work in Regeneration

By the REV. ALEXANDER K. DAVISON, S.T.D.

Pastor of the Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Vineland, N. J.

THERE is among some of the sons of men a life that is not native to them. It is different from the life of natural man. It breathes the atmosphere of heaven. It draws its nourishment from God. Its hopes are not for this life but for the world to come. Whence comes this life that so alters a man and changes his course? The answer is, This new life is from above, it has been implanted in man's heart by the Holy Spirit. The Bible calls it "regeneration." The aim of

this brief article is to set forth the Spirit's ministry in man's regeneration.

Preliminary Considerations

First of all, we must have clearly in mind what is meant by regeneration. Frequently a good way to learn what a thing is, is to find out what it is not. Regeneration is not to be confused with *reformation*. Painting the pump does not cure the bad water in the well. Tying good apples to a corrupt tree does not make the tree produce good fruit. Nor is regeneration to be identified with *education*. Some of the greatest criminals have been highly educated. The wolf chained is not necessarily a wolf tamed. Nor must we confuse regeneration with *formalism*. Formalism belongs to the outward act, whereas regeneration involves the renovation of the center and citadel of man's heart. Regeneration is the immediate and sovereign work of the Holy Spirit on the soul of man, whereby that soul, dead in trespasses and sins, is made instantaneously to live in newness of life.

A second preliminary remark is in the nature of a presupposition. The presupposition is that man is a fallen creature. The fall of man is in solution in every page of Holy Writ as

Young People's Topics

THE article on this page will be an aid in studying the young people's lessons published by the Committee on Christian Education of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which may be secured from the Rev. Burton L. Goddard, Box 73, Carlisle, Massachusetts. Topics now being studied are:

June 1st—THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD.

June 8th—THE SPIRIT AND CONVERSION.

June 15th—THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT.

June 22nd—THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT.

June 29th—THE SPIRIT THE COMFORTER.

salt is in every pail of ocean water. And apart even from the testimony of the Bible, human experience attests the fact that man is a fallen creature. Look out over the world of humanity and what do we find? Bloody and cruel wars of aggression, greed, worldliness, lust, murder, drunkenness and many other crimes.

A third preliminary remark is a corollary to or inference from the one just mentioned. The fallen condition of man necessitates regeneration. If fallen man is to enter Heaven, he must be renewed, for there is no place in Heaven for unrenewed natures. Besides, flesh is flesh and never can be anything else. Spurgeon said on one occasion that if it were possible for the unrenewed thief to gain entrance to Heaven he would begin his sojourn there by picking the pockets of the angels. The categorical necessity arises from Christ's declaration to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again."

First Proposition

The ground of the Spirit's regenerating work is the atonement of Christ. There never has been, there is not now and there never will be a soul regenerated by the Spirit apart from the merit and sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ. In regeneration the Spirit simply works *in* us what Christ has done *for* us in His life and death. Christ's death is surely the sinner's rest, but it is just as surely the ground of all the Spirit's work in the sinner. Any man who thinks he can be saved and go to Heaven apart from the sacrifice of Christ is hopelessly deluded. He cannot be saved unless the Spirit regenerates his heart and the Spirit will not, under any consideration, regenerate the sinner without appealing to the sacrifice of Christ for that sinner.

Second Proposition

The Holy Spirit is the sovereign agent in man's regeneration. The key to the explication of this proposition is to be found in the word "sovereign." This means first of all that the Spirit is *almighty* in His power. Prescribe limits to His power and He ceases to be sovereign. Let Him cease to be sovereign and His deity is impaired. The power that regenerates the dead soul is nothing less than the almighty, irresistible power of

God. It is the power that raised up Christ from the dead.

In the second place, to say that the Spirit is the sovereign agent in regeneration is to declare that He is the *sole* agent. If it be true that man is dead in trespasses and sins, not just sick or indisposed in trespasses and sins—and it most surely is according to the Bible—then it follows that, if he is to be made alive, it must be by some power outside of himself. And that power is the Spirit's alone. The unborn child does not say, "I refuse to be born," or, "I will assist in my birth." No, the birth of the child is dependent upon the mother and the physician. The fallen nature of man can no more give itself life, or assist in the matter, than the dead man in the grave can give life to his dead body. Plutarch has a parable of a man who tried to make a corpse stand upright on its feet. Each time it fell down when left alone. The man finished up by saying, "*Deest aliquid intus*," something is lacking inside. This is true of man spiritually dead. He lacks something vital—he lacks life! It is this that the Spirit alone can furnish in regeneration.

That the Spirit is the sole agent in regeneration is clear from the regeneration of the child dying in infancy. We have reason to hope that our little child dying in infancy has gone to be with Christ. But that child was born a *fallen* creature and therefore needed to be born from above ere it could enter Heaven. If it is regenerated, then it must be the sole work of the Spirit. We pray that God may do a saving work in the hearts of the unregenerate. This very prayer means that we believe the Spirit to be the sole agent. Otherwise what we ought to do is not to pray to God but to the unregenerate man.

Yet side by side with this truth it must be maintained that the Spirit works no violence to man's freedom. The fact is that the Spirit works in the sinner to will, and to do of His good pleasure. It is the Spirit who melts the hard heart of the sinner and alters his perverse will. It is the Spirit who puts the prayer for salvation upon the sinner's lips, who causes him to feel his miserable estate and to cry out, "God of mercy and of grace, I am blind, give me sight; I am deaf, make me to hear; I am in darkness, O give me light; I am unbelieving, help me to believe; I

cannot save myself, do thou save me and I shall be saved." The Spirit answers His own prayer which has become the sinner's, and saves him. The Spirit finds man in his grave and raises him to newness of life.

Thirdly, to say that the Spirit is sovereign means that He works according to His *good pleasure* and not according to anything in the sinner. The Spirit blows where He wills. Why He moves in one direction and not in another; why He blows over some graves and not over others we cannot say. We accept the fact and rest the mystery with God.

Third Proposition

The Spirit's regenerating work in the sinner produces real effects. When Jesus raised Lazarus there was a real effect. A dead man came back to life. So it is with the Spirit's work on the dead sinner. These effects are separable in thought, but not to be sharply sundered in the experience of the renewed sinner. The first effect is the *quicken*ing of the dead soul. Two stages are to be noted. The first is that of the Spirit's sole work when He infuses new life into the dead soul. In this stage the sinner, because he is dead, must be passive. But the first stage is followed by a second called *conversion*. Conversion is the conscious act of the sinner, wrought on by the renewing power of the Spirit, which causes him to see his lost estate and to turn away from sin to Christ. Regeneration is the spiritual change, conversion the spiritual motion. In regeneration a power is conferred, in conversion that power is called into play. In regeneration a principle to turn is conferred, in conversion that principle becomes operative in the conscious life of the sinner. However these may be separated in thought, and although one does not necessarily *immediately* follow the other, they are not to be sundered in experience. They are joined to each other as lustre to the diamond or heat to the sun's rays. A man cannot be converted without the renewing work of the Spirit and he cannot be renewed by the Spirit without turning away from sin to put his trust in the Redeemer. The converted sinner is a regenerated soul and the regenerated soul must become a converted sinner.

A second effect of the Spirit's work in regeneration is *renovation*. If any

man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things are passed away, behold they have become new. The sinner has a new *state*. In death he was condemned; now in life he stands righteous in relation to law and justice. He has a new *understanding*. Prior to regeneration his understanding was darkened. But now, made to live, his eyes and ears have been opened to the truths of God. His *affections* are new. John Ruskin once

said that the closest question to a man was, "What do you like?" The true answer gives the true man. The renewed sinner loves what once he hated and hates what once he loved. His *will* becomes new. In spiritual death the sinner had a perverse and rebellious will that followed after its own desires and lusts. But in regeneration the Spirit has implanted a new will, a will to do the will of God and to serve Him.

women also hold a place. One of them, Marion Laird, was of humble birth, while the other two, the Countess of Huntingdon and the Duchess of Gordon, were members of the English and Scottish aristocracy. In these women, Mr. Collins endeavors to show us examples of true Christians who continually strive to show forth the glory of their Lord in all their ways.

The purpose of the book, according to the preface, is twofold. The author, like F. W. Boreham in his *Bunch of Everlastings*, wishes to set forth characters as examples, endeavoring to point out the keynotes of their lives, that others may be encouraged and admonished to fight the good fight of faith. But he desires to do even more than this, for he would present to us the many different types of personalities that are attracted to Christ and saved by His sovereign grace.

In this latter aim, Mr. Collins is undoubtedly successful, for he has placed in the portrait gallery many different types, varying all the way from Alexander Henderson, one of the Westminster divines, to Billie Bray, the Cornish evangelist. We do wish, however, that the author had not been quite so objective in his presentation, but had given some estimate of the relative adherence of his various characters to true Scriptural standards. We cannot but feel that Billie Bray would have had some difficulty in accepting the statements of doctrine and regulations for church worship promulgated by Gillespie, Henderson and the rest of the Westminster divines. There is a tendency to place all the characters on the same level as equally well-instructed Christians, which is vaguely reminiscent of the church-union anti-doctrinal attitude of our modern churches. Consequently we fear that the impression may be conveyed to the uninstructed that there is no essential difference between the most thoroughly Reformed and the most completely Arminian views. Some of the Scottish divines, we suspect, would not have been too well pleased to find themselves in such company as that in which Mr. Collins places them. For this reason we feel that the unity, and by it the power, of the book would have been greatly increased either if the portraits had been of men who agreed theologically, or if some attempt had been made to evaluate the relative faithfulness of the characters to Scripture.

"The Words of the Wise . . ."

A Review by W. STANFORD REID

"THE WORDS OF THE WISE . . ." by the Rev. G. N. M. Collins, B.D. Published by W. F. Henderson, 19 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, Scotland. 1940. 3s. 6d.

THE present age is one of mass-production, mass-meetings and mass-organization, with the result that the individual is frequently forgotten. "The greatest good for the greatest number" is often regarded as the final aim of all things, and the fact that minorities are composed of individuals who also have some right is entirely forgotten. This is the case even in the church, where not infrequently the body or mass of people seem to think that because they have the majority, they can accomplish what they please and can overrun any opposing minority, no matter what its position or rights.

Yet when we turn to Scripture and to history we find that great things have seldom been accomplished by the masses, or by mass movements. Well-learned, the determined and sincerely convinced minority of individuals, throughout the history of the world, has dominated the scene. It was Elijah, opposed by all the power of Ahab and Jezebel, who brought about reform in Israel; Nehemiah and a small remnant who brought about the return of Israel to Jerusalem; a small group of apostles and followers who spread the gospel throughout Europe. Then in later history we find that it has always been the individual and the minority who have ruled. Let us turn to the Reformation, or the liberal movements of the nineteenth century, and we shall see that this is true. Whether in specifically church history or in so-called secular history, the Lord uses as the fuse to set off ex-

plosions, not the masses, but individuals who lead, direct and form the actual power in accomplishing His providential plan.

On this account we welcome the twenty short, popularly written biographical sketches which the Rev. G. N. M. Collins has recently published. Since five of these pen-portraits have previously appeared in THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, many of us have already seen examples of Mr. Collins' writing. The book as a whole, however, attempts to give a cross-section of those who have formed the church in Great Britain from 1600 down to the beginning of the present century. It is very interesting for the many sidelights it throws on the characters, the majority of whom have previously remained in the middle distance of our knowledge.

In his selection of personalities for delineation, Mr. Collins has dealt with various types, most of whom were ministers of the gospel. He has given us short pen-pictures of such well-known figures as Samuel Rutherford, George Gillespie, Alexander Henderson, Charles Simeon, John Owen and Henry Martyn. Besides these, however, he has also presented sketches of men who, although not so famous, had considerable influence in their own circles and on their own times. If we may say so, these figures hold greater interest for us than their more famous companions for, besides being strangers to us, they at the same time represent people closer to ourselves, indicating that even men who do not possess extraordinary gifts can be used mightily of the Lord.

So far we have referred only to the men mentioned in this book, but three

Then too, Mr. Collins would have increased the appeal of his work if he had introduced more laymen into his sketches. The main emphasis, except in the case of the three women and William Quarrier, is placed on preaching and preachers. Because of this, one cannot but gain the impression that the only way in which a Christian can fulfill the will of God is to stand in the pulpit. There is little, if any, emphasis on the fact that God calls many to tasks other than that of the ministry, and practically no space is given to those working in the realm of common grace. It might almost seem that Mr. Collins regarded the office of preaching elder as the only

one in which a man can truly serve the Lord. Since an attempt is being made in this work to give a cross-section of the types who followed and served Christ, more stress might well have been laid upon those who followed their calling in other spheres than that of preaching.

In spite of these two criticisms, however, we feel that Mr. Collins' book is interesting and profitable for present-day reading. It shows clearly the importance of the individual Christian in spreading and establishing the Kingdom of Christ; and by so doing impresses upon us the necessity of firm and fast obedience, in all things, to our King and Redeemer.

Alice and the Rev. Humpty Dumpty

With Apologies to LEWIS CARROLL

PERCHED precariously on the top of a very thin fence, the Rev. Humpty Dumpty regarded Alice, who had just returned from Sunday school, with a mixture of patronizing contempt and professional benevolence. Alice, in turn, stared at the Rev. Humpty Dumpty with frank amazement. This is the first time, she thought, that I've ever seen an egg with its collar on backwards; in fact, it's the first time I've seen an egg with any collar at all.

"Don't you think," she ventured to ask, "that you'd be safer with your feet on the ground? That fence is so very narrow!"

"What tremendously easy riddles you ask!" the Rev. Humpty Dumpty growled out. "Of course, I don't think so! Why, if ever I *did* fall off—which there's no chance of—but *if* I *did*—" Here he pursed up his lips, and looked so solemn and grand that Alice could hardly help laughing. "If I *did* fall," he went on, "the stated clerk has promised me—with his very own mouth—to—to—"

"To make you a moderator," Alice interrupted, rather unwisely.

"Now I declare, that's too bad!" the Rev. Humpty Dumpty cried, breaking into a sudden passion. "You've been listening at closed doors—and at caucuses—or you couldn't have known it!"

"I haven't indeed!" said Alice very gently. "Everybody knows that's how they pick moderators. First you have

to be on the fence; then, when you fall, the Federal Council sends all its horses and all its men to put you together again. When they've done it, you're an expert and in much better shape than you were before. In your case, I suppose you'd be an eggspert."

"I don't think that's very funny," snorted the Rev. Humpty Dumpty. "When you're as close as I am to being a moderator, you can expect a little more respect than that from the laity. Do you know," and here his voice sank almost to a whisper, "how many of us there are who are really eligible for the moderatorship now?"

"Let's see," said Alice, who was really a very well-informed little girl. "There were twelve hundred and eighty-three of you in 1924, but they had to wait until after the Battle of Syracuse before they could start using you, so I suppose a lot of you got tired of waiting."

The Rev. Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. "Of course that's what you suppose," he said, "but you're dead wrong. We've had a lot of fun on all the boards and agencies for so long that most of us could straddle any issue you ever saw. Why, I wouldn't be able to remain on this fence five minutes without the training I had as a board member. That's Christianity for you."

"I don't know what you mean by 'Christianity,'" Alice said.

"Of course you don't," replied the Rev. Humpty Dumpty, "till I tell you.

I meant there's the way to 'teach men a high compulsion to do reverence to the Holy.'"

"But 'Christianity' doesn't mean 'a high compulsion to do reverence to the Holy,'" objected Alice.

"When *I* use the word," the Rev. Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said the Rev. Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

Alice was too much puzzled to say anything; so after a minute the Rev. Humpty Dumpty began again. "They've a temper, some of the words—particularly the doctrinal words. They're the proudest. Adjectives you can do anything with, but not doctrines—however, *I* can manage the whole lot of them. Inspiration! That's what *I* say!"

"Would you tell me, please," said Alice, "what that means?"

"Now you talk like a reasonable child," said the Rev. Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. "I meant by 'inspiration' that there is no assertion in the Scriptures that their writers were kept from error, and that the doctrine of inerrancy, intended to enhance the authority of the Scriptures, in fact impairs their supreme authority for faith and life, and weakens the testimony of the church to the power of God unto salvation through Jesus Christ."

"That's a great deal to make one word mean," Alice said in a thoughtful tone, "and it doesn't sound at all like what I was taught in Sunday school today. In fact, it doesn't sound at all like what the Bible says about inspiration."

"Maybe not," replied the Rev. Humpty Dumpty, "but it's what the Auburn Affirmation says, and if you want to get ahead in this game, that's the thing to go by. Besides," he added with a smug smile, "when we make a word do a lot of work like that, we always pay it extra. Ah, you should see them come around after the Sunday morning sermon, for to get their wages, you know. Some of them can hardly walk, poor things, they've taken such a beating."

Alice was too puzzled to make any comment, but she felt she ought to

say something. "You seem very clever at explaining words, sir. Would you kindly tell me the meaning of the word 'sin'? The Shorter Catechism says it is 'any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.' Is that what you mean by 'sin'?"

"Of course not," snapped the Rev. Humpty Dumpty. "The Shorter Catechism is an excellent mental discipline in its logical reasoning and rhythmical English, but many of its formulations are obsolete—and this is one of them. Nowadays we don't pay much attention to such things as the Ten Commandments. Conscience is the only real guide. The Still Small Voice is what you should really obey, not any moral code in Scripture. The Christian solution of any difficulty is revealed to him who lets Christ's mind dominate him day by day, and sees things as they appear to that mind. He has thus his ethical standard within himself. Here is the real secret of moral emancipation."

"Did you think that up all by yourself?" asked Alice, who by now was hopelessly bewildered.

"Well, not exactly," admitted the Rev. Humpty Dumpty. "I read most of it in the March issue of *The Presbyterian Tribune*. It's by L. Humphrey Walz, you know. That first part about the catechism was from Henry Sloane Coffin. But I might have said it, if I'd thought of it first."

Alice waited a minute to see if he would speak again, but as he had shut his eyes and was taking no further notice of her, she said "Good-bye!" and, getting no answer to this, started to walk away into the woods. But she couldn't help saying to herself, as she went, "Of all the unsatisfactory—" (she repeated this aloud, as it was a great comfort to have such a long word to say) "of all the unsatisfactory people I ever met—" She never finished the sentence, for at this moment a heavy crash shook the forest from end to end, and when she looked hastily back to the Rev. Humpty Dumpty's fence he was nowhere to be seen. I suppose that means he'll be the next moderator, thought Alice; anyway, I can be thankful I'll not be a commissioner. And she hurried off to the tea party of the Mad Hatter and the March Hare, knowing that there, at least, there would be comparative sanity.

—T. R. B.

What Is Sin?

By the REV. EDWARD J. YOUNG

Assistant Professor of Old Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary

HOW do we know when we are doing wrong? Who is to tell us what to do and what not to do? Should conscience be our guide? Or is there an absolute standard by which our actions may be judged?

We, as Orthodox Presbyterians, believe that there is an absolute standard. We have given expression to this conviction in the adoption of our secondary standards. Thus, the answer to Question 14 of the Shorter Catechism, "What is sin?" asserts that "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God."

This statement has the merit of being clear and concise, as well as true. It could never have been written by a Modernist, because the language of vague generality, so dear to his heart, is entirely lacking. The catechism teaches that our actions are to be measured by the law of God. If we transgress that law, or if in any sense we come short of it, we are sinning. That is plain enough, and it is Scriptural.

What, however, is this law of God by which our actions are to be judged? In the broadest sense, of course, it is the Bible. In answer to Question 2, "What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?" the catechism says, "The word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him." The catechism further tells us (Question 41) that "The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments."

This also is clear. If we are in doubt as to a course of action, we should turn to the Bible. If the Bible condemns such action, then we know that the contemplated action is wrong. In other words, the Bible is our final court of appeal. Thus, when the Bible says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," this command applies to everyone at all times and under all circumstances. It is wrong to tell a lie, therefore, not primarily because we may think it is wrong, but because God in His holy Word has told us that it is wrong. What does the Bible say? That must be the question by which our whole conduct is governed.

The Answer of Modernism

Very different, however, is the answer which Modernism gives to this question. *The Presbyterian Tribune* is running a series of studies in the Shorter Catechism by L. Humphrey Walz, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of New York City. In the issue of March, 1941, Mr. Walz discusses the question, "What Is Sin?" In his remarks he holds up conscience as the standard of judgment. He tells us, "Conscience, which is the consciousness of oneself as a moral being and therefore subject to moral law, is present in every one and any deliberate transgression of its revelations is sin." He should, therefore, amend the answer of the catechism to read, "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the revelations of my conscience."

Of course, Mr. Walz is cognizant of the fact that it is difficult always to recognize the voice of conscience. As given to us, he says, our consciences are "as small as Jiminy," which we suppose is fairly small, and they are "often as hard to understand as the chirping of the common-or-garden variety of cricket." Since this is the case, we wonder how anyone can possibly be expected to understand his conscience.

The situation is far more serious than this, however. In the early stages of our moral development we are not "clear in our discrimination of the real issues at stake." To make the matter worse, we are "also confused by social pressures, selfish inclinations, and repressed desires which mask their promptings as the Still Small Voice." Hence, a code such as the Ten Commandments and the Book of the Covenant is "extremely clarifying." The reason why these codes are "extremely clarifying" is not that they are the revelation of Almighty God but that in them "men of outstanding spiritual sensitivity have expressed their clearest insights into the law of God."

God's Law or Human Conscience

There is a danger, however, we are told, in substituting a law code for conscience. In fact, to do so is "rep-

rehensible," because "it enables one to get away from the spirit of the code." Let us see what this means. Suppose I desire to tell a lie. Should I do so or not? The Ten Commandments tell me not to bear false witness. So does my conscience. According to Mr. Walz, therefore, I should be guided by my conscience, rather than by the Commandments. I should not lean on the Commandments too heavily. Suppose, however, my conscience tells me that it is all right to tell a lie upon occasion. Such consciences are known to exist. Who then is to decide whether my conscience is right or wrong? Certainly the Ten Commandments cannot decide, since, according to Mr. Walz, they are only the "clearest insights" of certain men. Hence, in the last analysis it amounts to a contest between my conscience and the consciences of others. All of which leaves me in despair, if there be no final absolute Authority to decide what is right and what is wrong.

Hence, on Mr. Walz's view, the individual must look ultimately, not to the Ten Commandments, not even to Jesus as an outside standard, but only to his own conscience, or, as Mr. Walz calls the "ultimate in the development of conscience," to "having the mind of Christ."

Such teaching is, of course, Modernism of the most blatant kind. It rejects external authority and makes man the arbiter of his destiny. We might expect to hear such thoughts from open and avowed atheists, but when this teaching is put forth by a supposedly Presbyterian minister we are sick at heart. Here is but further evidence of the devastating inroads which unbelief has made in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Here is but further evidence of the need of a church, such as The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which is determined to take Presbyterianism seriously.

We who profess to love the Bible must pray to God that He will ever deliver us from the terrible sin of substituting any authority for His Word. When we answer the question, What Is Sin? may we not be guilty of answering it upon the basis of our conscience or our feelings or our emotions, but may we sincerely say and believe, "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God."

Twelfth Annual Commencement Exercises Of Westminster Theological Seminary

THE rolling campus of Westminster Theological Seminary, adjacent to Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, was, on Tuesday, May 6th, the scene of an inspiring and festive celebration that has not been surpassed in any recent year. At that time a throng of alumni and friends gathered to witness the twelfth annual commencement exercises of the institution and to take part in friendly and inspiring fellowship. The warm sunshine of a perfect spring day furnished the setting for an impressive ceremony in the open-air amphitheatre behind Machen Hall and, before the hour set for the academic procession, every available seat was occupied.

After the processional and the singing of the Doxology, the invocation was pronounced by the Rev. Henry M. Woods, D.D., retired missionary and minister of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (the Southern Church). The Scripture Lesson was read by the Rev. Samuel J. Allen, pastor of Gethsemane Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, and prayer was offered by the Rev. Richard W. Gray, pastor of the Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Orange, New Jersey.

Commencement Address

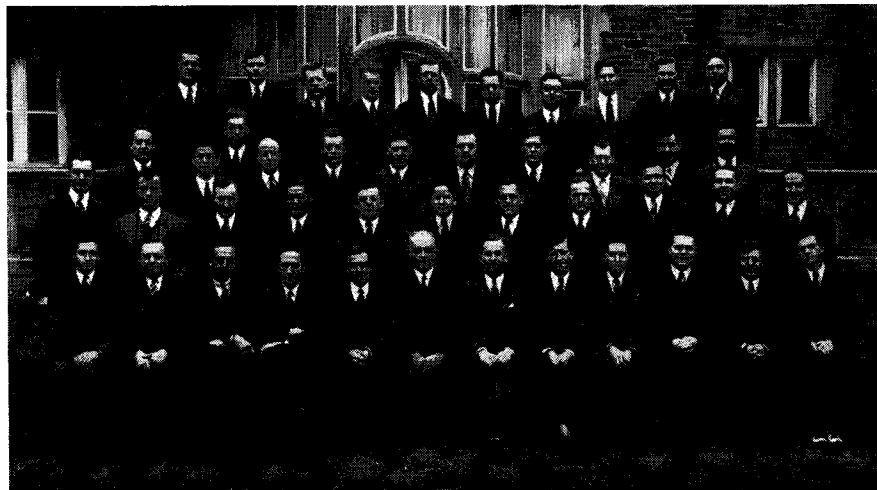
The commencement address was delivered by Gordon H. Clark, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Philosophy at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, on the subject, "A Protestant World-

View." Citing the present-day progress of Romanism and the popularity of Modernism, Dr. Clark declared that orthodox Christianity today faces extreme opposition. To have any effect on the outside world, he said, the adherents of the Reformed Faith must not be content with the mere repetition of Reformed principles, but must develop the detailed applications of those principles to every field of life. He urged the graduating students to make it the aim of their lives to contribute something of genuine scholarly worth to the thought of their generation, and thus to demonstrate in an intensely practical way the implications of Reformed theology in every facet of existence. As an aid in the accomplishment of that goal, he suggested the formation of a research society of Calvinistic philosophers for mutual assistance in the preparation of articles in the realms of science, literature, the arts, theology, sociology, politics, ethics, history and every other field of human endeavor.

The Graduating Class

The degree of Bachelor of Theology was conferred upon the following members of the graduating class, and upon four other alumni of recent years:

Everett Howard Bean
Dallas Eugene Bradford
William Lewis Hiemstra
John Charles Hills, Jr.
Angus Ross MacKay



Westminster's Faculty and Student Body

William Alexander Muir
John William Oosterhoff
Herman Thomas Petersen
Charles Alan Tichenor
Kohei Watanabe
William Young

Mr. Tichenor and Mr. Young also received the graduate certificate of the seminary and were awarded the Frank H. Stevenson Memorial Scholarships for graduate study.

In his address to the graduating class, the Rev. Professor R. B. Kuiper chose as his text the admonition of the apostle Paul to Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." Paul here combines piety and orthodoxy as inseparable, said Professor Kuiper. Some have tried to stress orthodoxy at the expense of piety, and the result has been orthodoxy; others have emphasized piety at the expense of orthodoxy, and the result has been pietism. But piety and orthodoxy, added Professor Kuiper, are not only inseparable but also interdependent. Orthodoxy begets piety of life, and orthodoxy is rooted in piety of soul. The more sanctified we become, the more orthodox will be our thinking and the greater will be our passion for truth.

After the singing of the hymn, "When I survey the wondrous cross," the closing prayer was offered by the Rev. Edwin H. Rian, President of the Board of Trustees of the seminary, who had presided at the service. Tea was then served in Machen Hall, and alumni and friends together enjoyed the rare privilege of renewing old friendships and exchanging the experiences of recent years.

Baccalaureate Service

On Sunday afternoon, May 4th, in the library auditorium, the baccalaureate sermon was preached by the Rev. John Murray, Professor of Systematic Theology. Taking as his text I Timothy 1:11ff., Professor Murray discussed God's dealings with Paul: His long suffering toward Paul's sin; His mercy in Paul's salvation; and His grace in Paul's commission. The largest crowd ever to attend a baccalaureate service at Westminster Seminary was present at this occasion.

Alumni Banquet

On Monday evening, May 5th, the Tenth Annual Banquet of the alumni was held in the Robert Morris Hotel. About one hundred and fifteen per-

sons sat at the banquet table and participated in the fellowship and inspiration of the evening. Presiding was the Rev. Franklin S. Dyrness, President of the Alumni Association, who welcomed the Class of 1941. The members of the class spoke briefly of their plans for the future. Following a short business session, five alumni told of unusual work in which they were engaged. The two principal addresses of the evening were delivered by the Rev. Samuel J. Allen and the Rev. Professor Ned B. Stonehouse. The evening ended with prayer by a large number of those attending.

Women's Auxiliary

Preceding the commencement exercises on Tuesday, a luncheon of the Women's Auxiliary of the seminary was held in Machen Hall and attended by about ninety persons. Mrs. Frank H. Stevenson, President of the auxiliary, presided. Another score of women were present for the meeting which followed the luncheon. At the business session, the following officers were elected for a term of two years: Mrs. Stevenson, President; Miss Marguerite Montgomery, Mrs. Arthur W. Machen and Miss Mary W. Stewart, Vice-Presidents; Mrs. A. L. Berry, Secretary; and Mrs. J. B. Griggs, Treasurer.

It was announced that more than eighty per cent. of the goal of \$25,000 set by the auxiliary for the current year had been reached. Despite the fact that last year's sum was not quite equalled, the treasurer's report was better this year than last, since the members' contributions were larger. The reason for the slightly smaller total sum was that a few large gifts last year were not duplicated in the year just ended. Mr. Rian spoke briefly to the members of the auxiliary, thanking them for their work and urging an increase in their membership. He also suggested that each church be visited by representatives of the auxiliary next year in the interests of the seminary.

Christianity and Shintoism

(Continued From Page 146)

Sun Goddess, of course, is the greatest deity of Shinto. Her shrine is the

Mecca of Japan and is the inner shrine, or Naigu, at Ise. The outer shrine, or Gegu, at Ise houses the deity Toyoukehime-No-Kami (Goddess of Food). As far as the national welfare is concerned, the shrines next in importance are the Nibu Kawakami (Rain Chief Shrines) situated in an isolated mountain retreat in Nara prefecture. The gods of these two shrines are Kura-Okami-No-Kami (Dark Rain Chief Deity) and Taka-Okami-No-Kami (Fierce Rain Chief Deity).

These shrines are government shrines of the first order (Kampei Taisha), receiving offerings from, and directly supervised by, the Imperial Household Department. Since rain is absolutely necessary to the growth of crops, appropriate sacrifices are made by the government at these shrines. In times of drought, a black horse is the sacrifice to the rain god and, in case of too great rainfall, when a cessation is desired, a white or bay horse is sacrificed. The horses are led in ceremonial procession before the altars of the deities. "Shinto," says Dr. Genchi Kato, "like the Greek and Roman religions, is a downright polytheism in contradistinction to the monotheism of the Christian religion or Islam."

Shinto supports a priesthood thoroughly trained in a central Shinto seminary and numbering thousands of priests. These priests officiate at the shrines, offering sacrifices, leading the stately ceremonies and making prayers to the Shinto deities. They also officiate at deaths, funerals and dedication ceremonies.

This short description of Shinto demonstrates beyond the possibility of doubt that Shinto is a religion. Dr. Kato's statement is right to the point. On page 3 of his *Study of Shinto, the Religion of the Japanese Nation*, he says, "The present writer, as his readers will soon be informed, advances the view that Shinto—the state Shinto as well as the sectarian Shinto—is in very truth a religion, *i. e.*, the original religion of the Japanese people from the very beginning down to the present time."

Dr. Kato is the only native investigator who has had the courage to compare Shinto with other religions. Shinto is so holy and sacred that to invite comparison is to endanger one's life.

(To Be Continued)

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITORIAL

God Bless America?

REARMAMENT is now the settled policy of our Government. The production of airplanes has reached nearly fifteen hundred a month and these, with the building of a "two-ocean navy," have shared the bulk of attention. But the output of munitions and arms has gone quietly on apace—all with the avowed purpose of defending the world, and with it ourselves, from the as yet undefeated Axis powers. To decry such preparations for the worst would be foolish and unsafe. It would be fatalistic, and indefensible from the moral point of view. The great reformer of Israel, Hezekiah, prepared systematically for defense when Jerusalem was besieged by the Assyrians. He built up the walls of the city and made weapons of warfare.

This, however, was not all that Hezekiah did in preparation for the attack. We are told that he "prayed and cried to heaven." Hezekiah realized that with the Assyrians was only "an arm of flesh," but that it was a very powerful arm, and that the power of Him who "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth" was needed for the successful prosecution of the battle.

America during the past winter months had upon its lips a prayer attuned to song—God bless America! There was a vague sense of a dependence like Hezekiah's on a higher power, in that song. We say "vague" because its popularity has definitely vanished and it is heard less and less each week. It was a passing fancy, due primarily to the singability of the tune. As our government officials, from the president down through the cabinet and congress, make speeches from day to day, it is evident that their sole dependence is upon a navy which will be larger than any other in the world, an air force which can sweep all opposition from the skies, and the mass production of tanks, guns and shells. The

living and true God is forgotten.

There is also another great difference between the America which is rearming today and the Israel which rearmed under King Hezekiah. It is a difference which would still exist, even if "God bless America" were on the lips of every man, woman and child in the nation every day of the week. The difference is that Israel's prayer for help and protection was preceded by a nationwide repentance for widespread apostasy under King Ahaz. There is nothing of repentance in those proud self-righteous words, "God bless America!" by a nation apostate from the faith of its fathers. God "forgetteth not the cry of the *humble*" and a broken and contrite heart He will not despise. The glorious victory of Israel over Assyria gives abundant testimony to that truth.

The armies against which the United States of America is preparing to battle are the most superbly trained that the world has ever seen, and are hitherto undefeated in any important engagement. We may be victorious, and we may not. We cannot claim the blessing of God, for we are "a people of unclean lips" and have apostatized from the faith of the Scriptures. Even our rulers take "counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed." God's attitude toward such is given us by the Psalmist: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." He shall "break them with a rod of iron." He shall "dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

America, awake! "The Lord hath respect unto the lowly, but the proud he knoweth afar off." Pray not "God bless America!", but "God save America!" Then can we say with Hezekiah, "With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles."

—J. P. G.

MAKE your arrangements now to attend the Eighth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church at Westminster Seminary beginning June 3rd.

Peace

THEY shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

In trying to find an explanation for the boiling cauldron of war now seething in Europe, most people have come to the conclusion that the tinder was the "unfair" and "excessively punitive" Treaty of Versailles. As we look ahead to the conclusion of the present war and its peace terms, our vision is filled with foreboding as we realize that the losers will again feel dissatisfied with the terms and will not rest until they are rectified. This may well be the explanation of the warfare which for centuries has been the bane of European life.

Such foreboding is not without warrant when we hear, in addition to the vengeful spirit of the war, Reichsmarshal Göring say that any suit for peace will have to come from Britain. Göring's purpose very clearly is to put Germany in position to dictate the terms of peace. Such a spirit would produce very harsh terms, and the war cycle would begin all over again.

We yearn for lasting peace, but we cannot envision it as the product of any war treaty. It will come to this battle-scarred world only when the "earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord." Then it shall be as the Old Testament evangelist has written, "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:4-9).

—J. P. G.

Three Impossible Things

A Meditation by the REV. BURTON L. GODDARD

Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil (Jer. 13: 23).

ONE cannot exaggerate the human interest which manifests itself on almost every page of the Bible. In a single verse from the Book of Jeremiah is found the record of three impossible things.

The first is the inability of a negro to change the color of his skin. He cannot do so. The dark pigment will not fade with washing; it does not disappear when the outer tissues are worn away with much labor. The child born of mixed racial strains, who finds himself black and his brothers and sisters white, might give anything to be like them, but nature says, No. The black slave of the South, before the days of Lincoln, might long to be white and free, but in vain. He who rides in the "Jim Crow" car today must do so tomorrow unless society changes its rules of ostracism, for the skin of an Ethiopian cannot change.

A second impossibility is that a leopard, that stealthy prowler of the forest, should ever become other than a spotted creature. As he is born, so must he die. Scratched by the thickets, stained with mud from the swamps, exposed to sun, wind and violent storms, the proud beast yet keeps the spots which distinguish him so well. He cannot lose them.

Would not even the sophisticated dwellers in Jerusalem listen when Jeremiah phrased a rhetorical question of so great pictorial interest? Can an Ethiopian change his skin? How absurd! They had seen one in the city just the day before. He was black as coal. Occasionally others had come to Jerusalem on commercial or political missions. They were *always* black.

Or a leopard? They had heard of this wild beast which roamed in the desolate areas south and east of the Dead Sea, along the banks of the Arnon River. They had seen skins brought into the city by traders. They could always identify them by the spots. Spots *always* belonged to a leopard!

The Related Doctrine

What was the preacher driving at, anyway? His preaching had been obnoxious on other occasions. Would it be different this time? Probably not, but their curiosity was aroused and they would give ear to what he had to say.

They had not long to wait. If impossibility was the keynote of his illustrations, so was it of that which they were designed to illustrate. Jeremiah lost no time in telling them that the nation had come to the point where it could neither separate itself from sin nor perform that which was good and acceptable in the sight of God. Sin had become, to all intents and purposes, a part of Judah's very nature. Her people had been taught to sin and had entered into sin until sin had enslaved them and they were no longer free. It was impossible for them to do good!

So said Jeremiah, but his audience would not receive such a doctrine. They did good! They treated their families well. They helped their friends. At least some of them were scrupulously honest in their business transactions. Why, they even supported the public worship of Jehovah and brought sacrifices to be offered at the temple! They could produce any number of witnesses who would testify to the good they performed. It was insolent of Jeremiah to pose as a prophet from God and accuse them of absolute depravity.

Jeremiah, however, was not thinking of mere kindness and justice and the fulfillment of social obligations. The "good" of which he spoke was not something external. By "good" he meant "the things of God," "things connected with salvation," "things of the Spirit," "true piety." Jeremiah was not concerned with what men regarded as good, but only with what was pleasing to God.

Now God does not commend a man for being honest with his friends if he cheats his neighbors. God does not reward a man for his gifts to charity if the gifts are from ill-gotten gains. God does not approve deeds of seeming goodness on the part of one whose heart is full of pride and self-

righteousness. Nor does God look with favor upon him who worships in the sanctuary, yet is guilty of gross immorality or is a worshiper of other gods as well. Therefore, Jeremiah spoke truly when he said: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."

The Logical Application

Three impossible things: An Ethiopian changing his skin; a leopard changing his spots; the Judah of Jeremiah's day performing that which was good in the sight of God! What does it all mean to you?

Perhaps it matters little whether a man can change the color of his skin or whether a beast can alter the figuring in its fur, but it ought to be a matter of real concern to think of a people so habitually engaged in sin that there was no possibility of their turning from it to do the will of God.

Too often we assume that the picture comes no closer than rebellious Pharaoh, or Jeremiah's contemporaries, or the heathen of whom Paul speaks in the first chapter of Romans. As a matter of fact, our own age has much in common with that of Jeremiah, and there are people out of the church and in the church who are incapable of doing any ultimate or eternal good. They do not love God. They have no desire to obey or honor Him. God cannot recognize any relative good that may be theirs, because of the cloud of their sin which blots it from His view.

As sin more and more dominates an individual or a group, there is less and less possibility of a change toward righteousness. Sin is a hard master. Its wages look attractive at first, but sooner or later utter slavery is demanded—slavery from which the victims are unable to escape.

Consider how prone we all are to sin. Satan gives us no peace. Who has not cried out with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Surely we have felt our own inability to bring about the necessary transformation.

Thank God, some have found that what is impossible with man is possible with God, and that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." He who has been born again knows that the work of God in his soul not

only prevents him from sinking to the helpless level of the Jews whom Jeremiah addressed but also, in spite of his shortcomings, enables him to do that which God regards as good.

Have you never experienced the regenerating power of God? Be admonished by Jeremiah's words as to your own sick and helpless condition of sin. You can no more save yourself than can an Ethiopian change his skin. But ask the great Physician for cleansing of heart and healing of soul. He is a God of unlimited power and exceeding great grace.

Have you already found victory over sin through the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, may the "three impossible things" remind you of the

sovereign grace which took you out of the pit, and may you abound in thanksgiving and praise unto the God of deliverance.

Erratum

IN publishing the overture of the Presbytery of New York and New England to the Eighth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church on pages 143 and 144 of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN for May 10th, a quotation from the book, *What is Presbyterian Law?* was credited to A. A. Hodge. The proof-reader was napping. The quotation should have been credited to Dr. J. A. Hodge.

Orthodox Presbyterian Church News

Presbytery of Ohio

TRINITY Chapel, Newport, Kentucky: The building which has housed Trinity Chapel for the past four years has proven inadequate in recent months, and its handicaps have added to the difficulty of the mission work among the destitute of Newport. Prayer was offered by the Rev. and Mrs. J. Lyle Shaw, who conduct the mission, and by many other interested persons, that God would supply the need for a new building. A short time ago a splendid brick building, centrally located, was offered for the mission's use. There will be double the space formerly available for flood refugees, a comfortable and sufficiently large sanctuary, room for the Bible school, and for the activities of a social center. The new address of the chapel is 514 York Street; it was dedicated on May 11th with three special services. The Rev. Robert S. Marsden, general secretary of the mission committees of the denomination, preached the dedicatory sermon.

Trinity Church, Cincinnati: Alterations on the new church home are nearly completed, and it is expected that the building will be ready for dedication the latter part of June. . . . The sacrament of baptism was administered to three adults on Easter morning.

Covenant Church, Indianapolis, Indiana: A new mission work has been started in Warren Park, a suburb of Indianapolis that has no

churches of any sort within two miles. A survey of the community showed there was a desire for such a mission, and two thousand workers will soon arrive for defense work in a naval plant adjoining the district. At present, Sunday school and an afternoon worship service are conducted by the Rev. Carl A. Ahlfeldt, pastor of the church.

Presbytery of New Jersey

AT A meeting of presbytery in Trenton on April 29th, the Rev. Leslie A. Dunn of Wildwood was elected moderator and Ruling Elder H. M. Partington of Westfield stated clerk. The Rev. Walter C. Jent of Paterson (See THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, March 25, 1941), who had applied for reception into the presbytery, made an excellent showing in a very thorough examination, and was welcomed as the most recent ministerial addition to the ranks of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. A commission was appointed to consider and act upon the request of Mr. Jent's church, Grace Presbyterian Church of Paterson, to be received into presbytery. The Rev. Edward Heerema of Midland Park was received by transfer from the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and the pastoral call issued by Grace Church of White Horse, Trenton, to the Rev. Lawrence B. Gilmore, Th.D., was approved and placed in Dr. Gilmore's hands.

Grace Church, Westfield: At a congregational meeting in April, the

"Penny-a-Meal" banks distributed on New Year's Eve for the building fund were opened and yielded \$111. In the past four months the fund has increased \$235. . . . The church was host to the New Jersey Presbyterial on April 30th, and about eighty-five women from all over the state were present.

Calvary Church, Ringoes: A record attendance on Easter morning wit-

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nessed the reception of eight new members—four on confession of faith and four by reaffirmation of faith. . . . On April 27th the Rev. Walter C. Jent of Paterson was the guest preacher. . . . The young people of the church are showing remarkable interest in a study of the Westminster Confession, and enviable progress in their indoctrination is being made. Some of them are but newly converted.

Faith Church, Pittsgrove: At the annual congregational meeting, a budget of \$1200 for the coming year was adopted, and three trustees and one elder were elected. After the business session, the congregation was addressed by the Rev. Professor R. B. Kuiper of Westminster Seminary. . . . On Sunday, May 4th, Dr. Gordon H. Clark of Wheaton College was the guest speaker.

Calvary Church, Wildwood: The Rev. Leslie A. Dunn, pastor of the church, reports that three building lots have recently been purchased as the site of a future church home.

Grace Church, White Horse, Trenton: Dr. Lawrence B. Gilmore has accepted the call to the pastorate of this church and has already taken up his new duties. During the time that the congregation was without a pastor, none of the regular services of the church was allowed to suffer curtailment. In addition, the congregation entirely redecored its church building, including both the chapel and the pastor's apartment.

As a pre-Easter service at Emmanuel Church (Independent) of Morris-town, whose pastor is the Rev. Donald C. Graham, "The Crucifixion," a cantata by Sir John Stainer, was presented. The Lord's Supper was celebrated, with the Rev. Richard W. Gray and the Rev. John Patton Galbraith officiating. The auditorium was filled with members of the local church and visitors from the Grace Church of Westfield and the Covenant Church of Orange.

Presbytery of the Dakotas

THE meeting of the presbytery at Bridgewater, South Dakota, on April 15th and 16th, was remarkable in several respects. One hundred per cent. of the ministerial membership was present, and delegates attended from Colorado 700 miles away, from Nebraska 300 miles away, and from North Dakota 450 miles away. Trinity

Church of Bridgewater, whose pastor is the Rev. Walter J. Magee, was the host. Mr. John Gray of Carson, North Dakota, was examined by the presbytery, and arrangements were made for his ordination and installation as pastor of the Carson, Leith and Lark churches. The Rev. Thomas M. Cooper of Lincoln, Nebraska, was presented with a call to the pastorate of Faith Church of Lincoln, which he has been serving for three years, and his installation will be held on June 4th. The work of the Rev. Clarence W. Duff in Denver was recognized by the presbytery, and permission was granted to him to use the name "The Lincoln Park Orthodox Presbyterian Mission" as the title of his mission. A call from the Redeemer Church of Philadelphia was found in order and placed in the hands of the Rev. Calvin A. Busch. Arrangements for summer Bible conferences were made, and a tentative itinerary for the visit of the Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine during July and August was drawn up. A feature of the two days' meeting was a gathering of the women to hear three special addresses. Mr. Duff discussed Ethiopia, his former mission field; the Rev. Jack Zandstra told of the work in Omaha; and Mrs. Charles L. Shook also addressed the gathering.

Faith Church, Lincoln Nebraska: Two former members of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. have recently united with Faith Church. . . . The congregation is making plans for the installation of its pastor, the Rev. Thomas M. Cooper, on June 4th.

Jennings Memorial Church, Omaha, Nebraska: A radio broadcast period over station KORN has proven a splendid opportunity for increasing the ministry of the church. The pamphlet, "Why the Orthodox Presbyterian Church?" by the Rev. John Patton Galbraith, is sent to those who write in response to the broadcast.

Aurora Church, Aurora, Nebraska: Seven persons united with the church on Easter morning. A mid-week meeting was conducted by the Rev. W. Benson Male, the Rev. Clarence W. Duff, the Rev. Thomas M. Cooper and Mr. Paul Bohn, after their return from the meeting of presbytery.

Dr. James B. Brown of Lincoln, Nebraska, conducted an outstanding Bible conference during the week after Easter in the Second Congregational Church of Denver, of which Mr. Male is the pastor, and was also

guest preacher on Easter day at the Congregational church at Yampa, Colorado.

Westminster Church, Hamill, South Dakota: The Easter service was postponed two weeks because of the weather. One covenant child and two adults were recently baptized, and a total of six communicant members were received. An attendance of ninety-eight persons has set a new record for the worship service of the church. . . . A program of special Easter music was rendered by the choir, and an offering received for the work of that organization.

The work under the Rev. C. A. Balcom at Wilton, Baldwin and Rock Hill, North Dakota, will include, in the next few weeks, about two weeks of summer Bible schools in each locality, followed by one week each of evangelistic services. After the school and the special services have been completed, Mr. Balcom hopes to be able to send a large number of young people to the Bible camp of the presbytery.

Presbytery of Philadelphia

FAITH Church, Harrisville: On "Family Night" three families consented to begin family worship in their homes. . . . The Dorcas Missionary Guild met recently for an all-day sewing and study session at the home of the pastor, the Rev. Charles G. Schaufele.

New Hope Church, Branchton: The Machen League is following the course of study prepared by the Committee on Christian Education, and the Women's Missionary Society is studying the Book of Acts, using materials prepared by Mrs. Schaufele.

Grace Church, Middletown, Delaware: The annual congregational meeting enjoyed the largest attendance in the history of the church. . . . A recent guest preacher was the Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine of Japan. . . . Plans are being considered for the erection of a Sunday school building behind the church.

Calvary Church, Willow Grove: On Easter the attendance at services totaled eight hundred and fifty, and offerings for the day were \$650. On the following Sunday, attendance at the Bible school passed the three hundred mark and, at the best attended communion service in the history of the church, eleven persons were welcomed into full fellowship.

Mr. John F. Gray of Carson, North Dakota, was guest preacher on April 27th and, on the following Friday, was united in marriage to Miss Eugenia Rothwell, an active and faithful member of the Willow Grove church.

Knox Church, Philadelphia: Large numbers, including many strangers, attended a series of evangelistic services held during the last week of March by the Rev. J. Marcellus Kik of Montreal, Canada. Elmore Byler was the song leader and soloist. Several persons made profession of faith. . . . Missionary rallies were held on April 18th and 20th, and the guest speakers were the Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine and the Rev. Robert S. Marsden. The Missionary Society is planning a Chinese Tea to be held on May 16th.

Knox Church, Washington, D. C.: Interest continues in the new project at Fort Dupont Dwellings, and it is the desire of many that a more adequate place be secured for the services there.

Presbytery of Wisconsin

THE presbytery held its spring meeting on April 22nd at Cedar Grove. The Rev. John Davies of Gresham was elected moderator and the Rev. Oscar Holkeboer of Oostburg was reelected stated clerk. A budget for presbytery expenses was adopted and plans for securing the needed amount were discussed. Atonement Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Decatur, Mich., was recognized as dissolved and its name was erased from the roll. The Rev. Jacob Mellem was reinstated, and a committee on young people's work was appointed.

Old Stockbridge Church, Gresham: The members are enthusiastic over the prospect of soon having their own church building. The programs given by the choir during the past three months brought a generous response and the funds received were placed in the building fund, which now contains about \$150. If this sum were trebled, the congregation would be able to build an attractive stone church, for the labor would be donated and second-hand material would be available. THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN is glad to place this appeal before its readers. The people of Gresham are barely able to eke out an existence and, although they are ready to make sacrifices, it may

prove impossible for them to raise the entire needed amount. They are willing to forego refinements that would add to their comfort and they are willing to sit on planks instead of comfortable chairs or pews, but after five years in a rented building they do feel the need of a church home dedicated to God's worship.

Presbytery of California

THE presbytery met in San Francisco on April 15th and, on the following day, in Berkeley. The presbyterial society also met on Tuesday, holding its business meeting and adopting a constitution in the morning, and having, as speakers at the afternoon meeting, Mr. Vernon Morgan who told of the Bible League work on the campus of the University of California, the Rev. Henry W. Coray who spoke on foreign missions, and Mrs. Robert K. Churchill who told of Westminster Theological Seminary.

At the presbytery meeting the recently-organized church in Long Beach, which is the result of the labors of Mr. Coray, was received. Hereafter it will be known as "The First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Long Beach." Mr. Coray was appointed as stated supply, subject to approval by the Committee on Foreign Missions. A committee appointed a year ago reported the organization of a congregation of the denomination in San Francisco and this congregation (Old Westminster Church) was formally received and a call to the pastorate placed in the hands of the Rev. Robert L. Atwell who has been serving the church for many months.

Representatives of the Machen Leagues of Westminster Church, Bend, Oregon; Beverly Church, Los Angeles; Covenant Church, Berkeley; and Old Westminster Church, San Francisco, held a meeting while presbytery was in session and organized the Machen League of the Presbytery of California, adopting a constitution and electing officers. Dr. Cornelius Van Til of Westminster Seminary addressed a popular meeting in the church auditorium where about fifty extra seats had to be installed to accommodate the crowd. His subject was "True Christian Character."

On Wednesday noon Dr. Van Til spoke in the recently acquired home of the Bible League on the University

of California campus. It is reported that at least two of the league's members this year will matriculate at Westminster Seminary next fall. In the evening Dr. Van Til spoke to a packed house in the Covenant Church of Berkeley on "The Church and Its Challenge."

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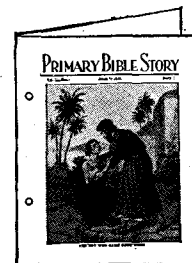
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MEMORIAL DAY RALLY

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Friday, May 30, 1941

PROGRAM

Early Afternoon: Recreation

3.30 P. M.—Rev. Robert H. Graham
Games and Picnic Supper

7.00 P. M.—Rev. John J. DeWaard

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Presbytery of New York and New England

COVENANT Church, Rochester: Four communicant members united with the church on Easter day, one of them a former elder in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The young people are meeting once a week to study church history, and it is hoped that this class may be the start of a Reformed Bible school in Rochester. The young people have also begun a campaign of tract distribution. Plans are being made for a summer Bible school.

The Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine preached at the church in Franklin Square, Long Island, on May 4th, and in the evening addressed more than a hundred persons at the Calvary Protestant Church of Baldwin. The Calvary Church withdrew from the Methodist Protestant Church when the latter body merged with the United Methodist Church.

The Rev. and Mrs. Dean W. Adair are rejoicing in the birth of Ruth Elizabeth on April 24th.

WOMEN'S PRESBYTERIAL HOLDS MEETING IN WILLOW GROVE, PA.

IN ITS semi-annual convention, the Women's Presbyterial of the Presbytery of Philadelphia met on April 24th at the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Willow Grove, Pa. The sessions were attended by about a hundred and fifty women from the churches of the presbytery, and encouraging progress in the work of the organization was apparent.

The morning devotional program, dealing with "The Need for Prayer," was conducted by Mrs. J. M. Kirkpatrick of Long Beach, California. Mrs. R. B. Kuiper, President of the Presbyterial, presided at the business meeting and, for her annual address, discussed "The Balanced Church." The properly balanced church, said Mrs. Kuiper, will be concerned both with those within the church and those without. The Christian education of covenant youth must not be neglected in a zeal for missionary work, nor must the evangelization of the lost be sacrificed to the work of building up the saints in the most holy faith. Both are essential to a balanced church program.

A discussion of intense practical value was concerned with "How to Conduct a Successful Missionary Society." Devotional services, the conduct of the business meeting, subject matter for talks by members, special programs and speakers were all featured in the discussion, and helpful suggestions for the solution of problems were made by the members.

An appetizing and well-arranged luncheon was served by the women of the host church and, following an organ interlude of inspirational music rendered by Mrs. Edwin H. Rian, the afternoon devotional hour was led by Mrs. A. B. Ferguson of Kirkwood.

The guest speaker of the afternoon was the Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine, Orthodox Presbyterian Missionary to Japan who is now in this country. Mr. McIlwaine reviewed the difficulties facing Christian missionaries in Japan as a result of the government's insistence upon obeisance at Shinto shrines and the increased spirit of Japanese nationalism. The outlook for missionary endeavor in the Orient, Mr. McIlwaine said, is not altogether hopeless, for opportunities for personal work still exist, Christian literature may still be distributed, and the gospel may be proclaimed in ways that are not contrary to governmental decree.

At the conclusion of Mr. McIlwaine's address, officers of the Presbyterial were installed for the coming two years. Mrs. Peter De Ruiter of Nottingham, Pa., the newly-elected president, received the gavel from Mrs. Kuiper.

PRESBYTERY OF WISCONSIN PLANS BIBLE CONFERENCE

THE Presbytery of Wisconsin of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has obtained permission to use Camp Minimani, the Milwaukee Y.M.C.A. camp twenty-two miles northwest of the city, as the site of a summer Bible conference from June 12th to 14th.

Study and recreation will be carefully planned by a competent committee to insure an ideal Christian vacation. Those interested should communicate at once with the Rev. Leland C. Jorgensen, 2117 North 42nd Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.