

Third Anniversary Number

CHRISTIANITY TODAY



||| A PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL DEVOTED TO STATING, DEFENDING |||
||| AND FURTHERING THE GOSPEL IN THE MODERN WORLD |||

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Published monthly by
THE PRESBYTERIAN AND
REFORMED PUBLISHING CO.,
501 Witherspoon Bldg., Phila., Pa.

MID-MAY, 1933
Vol. 4 No. 1

\$1.00 A YEAR EVERYWHERE
Entered as second-class matter May 11, 1931, at
the Post Office at Philadelphia, Pa., under the
Act of March 3, 1879.

Editorial Notes and Comments

THREE YEARS



WITH this issue CHRISTIANITY TODAY begins its fourth year. To its many readers and friends, scattered over the face of the earth, it sends greetings. The Editors believe they are developing a paper second to none in its sphere. Its world-wide news service is being brought to fuller completion each month. No other American religious periodical is, so far as we know, attempting anything like it. We have recently added other special features. The Editors pledge anew their determination to contend militantly for the faith, and, in so doing, to keep their readers informed of what is happening in the Church, either above or beneath the surface. They will try to "hew to the line and let the chips fall where they may."

57 TO 16



THE title of this comment is the poll of the vote on the "Machen Overture" on Foreign Missions when it was passed in the Presbytery of Philadelphia at an exciting session held on May first. A complete account of the action is found in our news pages. The decision of the oldest Presbytery in the Church in thus passing the same overture that was rejected by the Presbytery of New Brunswick under the pressure of officialdom, means that the issue is very much alive,—so much so that it will perhaps over-

shadow all other issues at the approaching Assembly. And so it ought. We believe that the action in Philadelphia, showing the greatest conservative majority in years, portends a great evangelical reaction. Elders and lay people are in revolt against Modernism and those who, while giving lip-loyalty to the faith, have supported and permitted anti-Christian propaganda in the Church. Judgment is beginning at the House of God.

MRS. BUCK OUT



EARL S. BUCK, famous novelist, has resigned as a missionary of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. Her resignation has been accepted (see the next comment). There have been suggestions, one even attributed to Dr. CHARLES W. KERR, Moderator of the 1932 Assembly, that this will end the controversy over foreign missions in the Presbyterian Church. Nothing could, of course, be more absurd. Objections were not mainly to Mrs. BUCK, but to the Board of Foreign Missions for continuing Mrs. BUCK as a missionary long after it knew of her rad-

ically anti-Christian views. Mrs. BUCK's novels had little or nothing to do with the matter, contrary to some newspaper reports. The resignation of Mrs. BUCK does not absolve the Board of any responsibility,—in fact the manner in which the Board accepted it rather increases knowledge of its looseness in facing its responsibilities to a degree hitherto unsuspected by most. The Board was only ungracefully forced, by a rising tide of indignation, into an awkward situation from which it emerged with even less grace. And it should also be remembered that the case of Mrs. BUCK is only one of many matters and policies for which the Board must give an accounting. For example, in Dr. MACHEN's printed brief, the incident concerning Mrs. BUCK took up only six out of one hundred and ten pages. This should dispose of the idea that the whole protest revolved around this one missionary. Even had the incident of Mrs. BUCK never arisen, the responsibility of the Board would be essentially the same.

WE CANNOT SUPPRESS THE TRUTH



HERE are some requests that no man has a right to make, and to which no man has the right to assent if they are made. The Editors of CHRISTIANITY TODAY issue this paper with one dominant purpose: to bring to their readers, and to the whole Presbyterian Church, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so far as in them lies, about what is going on in the Church. No one has the right to give to the Editors of this paper information that belongs to the whole Church and

then to ask the Editors to be a party in suppressing that information in such fashion as that the Church may gain an erroneous impression of what has occurred. Therefore, as our solemn duty, and as in the presence of the great Searcher of all hearts, we publish below two letters recently received from Dr. CLELAND B. MCAFEE, a secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions. No doubt there will be those who will criticize us for publishing these letters. To them we only reply that we had to choose between assenting to a request for confidence which the writer had no right to make as against the Church he serves, and the claims of truth. Knowing what these letters told us, we could not be a party to suppressing that knowledge. The letters themselves need scarcely any comment. They speak for themselves. Intelligent readers will be appalled at what they reveal. That a secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions should wish to be quoted accurately, is natural. But that he should consider it his right to forbid quotation while making absolutely no effort to correct, publicly and through the same sources, reports that he himself described as so "erroneous that they need correction" is almost unbelievable. The second letter convicts the Board through the mouth of its spokesman of desiring to conceal from the Church its exact action with regard

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Board is co-operating, is, to say the least, extremely unsatisfactory.

In the sixth instance, Dr. Machen charges that the Board is co-operating with union enterprises in China which have been implicated in anti-Christian activities of the most thorough-going kind. This charge is documented with a great deal of material sent by Dr. Albert B. Dodd, of the North China Theological Seminary, and Chancellor Arie Kok of the Netherlands legation in Peiping. The material is so overwhelming that it can hardly be seriously denied.

Here then is the case against the Board. This reviewer, at least, must confess that to him it is simply overwhelming, both in detail and cumulatively. Unless the Board can answer it frankly and fairly, the Board is doomed. This reviewer recommends to his readers that they secure this pamphlet, which is sent free upon application to Dr. Machen at the address given above, and read it for themselves. There is much in this pamphlet that could not even be noticed in this review.

J. A. G.

The Laymen's Report, the Foreign Board and the New Hymnal

By The Rev. Prof. Oswald T. Allis, Ph.D., D.D.

THE Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has just issued a leaflet, "Human Hearts and Hands in the New Hymnal," which gives advance notice of the new Presbyterian Hymn Book, which is to be presented to the General Assembly at Columbus for final approval. The announcement of a new Hymnal is always of interest, but this one acquires more than ordinary significance because of the wide and vigorous discussion of "Rethinking Missions."

It is noteworthy that the only representative, if he may be called such, of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. on the Appraisal Commission is Dr. W. P. Merrill of New York City: noteworthy, but in no wise surprising to those who are conversant with the events of a decade ago. After serving as a member of the Board of Foreign Missions for about twelve years, Dr. Merrill retired because of the opposition to his continuance on the Board aroused by his vigorous advocacy of the doctrinal position of Dr. Fosdick, then guest preacher at the First Presbyterian Church of New York City. Dr. Fosdick is the pastor of Mr. J. D. Rockefeller, Jr., who financed the Laymen's Inquiry. The choice of Dr. Merrill was hence an obvious and natural one. He had fought and suffered for the modernist cause, he had a wide acquaintance with missions and missionaries; no better advocate of the new conception of missions was to be found in Presbyterian circles than he.

The leaflet, above referred to, gives the names of Dr. Erdman, President of the Board of Foreign Missions; Dr. McAfee, a secretary of the same Board, and Dr. Merrill, as three of the eight members of the "Content Committee" on the new Hymnal. In view of Dr. Merrill's membership on the Appraisal Committee of the Laymen's Inquiry and the failure of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions to repudiate "Rethinking Missions" in clear cut and vig-

orous fashion, it will be strange if the new conception of missions urged by the Appraisal Committee is not reflected, to some extent at least, in the new Hymnal. It was announced as "news" by the metropolitan press last summer that Dr. Erdman and Dr. McAfee had been appointed a special subcommittee to edit "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" with a view to eliminating from it such features as give offence to the growing national spirit and pride of the non-Christian nations. What progress has been made in the revision of this grand old missionary hymn has not yet been disclosed.

In view of the close connection which thus exists between the Laymen's Inquiry, the Board of Foreign Missions and the New Hymnal, it is to be hoped that it will be carefully scrutinized before it receives the approval of the Assembly. Next to the Bible, the hymnal is probably and perhaps properly the greatest factor in forming the beliefs and arousing the enthusiasms of Christian people. No effort should be spared to make it conform fully to the teachings of the Scriptures and to our Standards.

Why Does the Board of Foreign Missions Approve Modernist Books?—(Continued)

"The theme for foreign mission study for 1932-33 will be CHINA. The following books have been prepared to meet the needs of all age groups:

"For adults—'Living Issues in China,' by Henry T. Hodgkin" et al. This is the book that we are to examine.

By its own admission, our Board has a part in the planning of these books.

(2) Our Board of Foreign Missions commends these books by every possible method to the churches, and urges most strongly that they be used as study books. Turn

again to page 24 of the Board's report as contained in General Assembly minutes and read, "It is hoped that every church will plan for study classes, and schools of foreign missions in connection with the zoning periods of 1932 and 1933." In addition to this, our Board, together with the Board of National Missions and the Department of Missionary Education of the Board of Christian Education, issues yearly a little pamphlet which lists these study books and urges the churches to use them. Further, charts are sent out to Presbyteries, Presbyterian Societies and Synods, which list the study books in display form and which Directors of Missionary Education of Presbyteries and Secretaries for literature of Presbyterian Societies are told to use in urging every church to study these interdenominational books. Besides all this, the Board sends out a packet of leader's helps to be used in connection with the study books by the leader. This packet contains usually several pamphlets prepared by the Board of Foreign Missions which are thought to illustrate the teaching of the study book. In these and other ways, our Board of Foreign Missions urges every church in our denomination to study these approved books.

Now the regular study book for 1932-1933 (the 1933-34 material is not yet available at this writing) was "Living Issues in China," by Henry T. Hodgkin. This book, while entertaining and instructive, is a thoroughly Modernistic book. Whole pages of it read like "Re-Thinking Missions." It is absolutely unthinkable that our Board could be ignorant of its character or that our Board could imagine that a careful reading of this book could do anything other than promote the destructive and Modernistic view of missions that is the message of the report of the Appraisal Commission. Let us examine some typical statements made by Mr. Hodgkin in his book. Our objections to this volume might be summarized under six heads.

(1) The book suggests, like "Re-Thinking Missions," that education should be thought of, on the mission field, as an end in itself and should not be used as a preparation for evangelization. He says that mission schools used to be "a kind of bait for bringing boys and girls to Christ, although that conception has been transcended long ago in most cases" (p. 34) and he complains of the "tendency to subordinate education to proselytism" (p. 59). Bible-believing Christians used to suppose that education was a means to evangelization on mission fields. Modernists think differently.

(2) The book treats Christianity and Pacifism as synonymous, its author apparently holding to a very mistaken view of "the gospel of peace" (p. 148).

(3) The author of "Living Issues in China" holds the view that it should be the aim and purpose of the missionary to unite with adherents of the heathen religions in