

The Covenanter Witness



A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO EXALTING CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR KING

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A Thought for Each Day

Sabbath, January 14. Not every one that saith unto me "Lord, Lord!" shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Matthew 7:21.

The men who are hindering the coming of the kingdom today are not the men outside with open raucous blasphemy, but the men inside who hurrah for Jesus and applaud the kingdom and say, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," and all the while refuse his claim, his call, his ideal, by declining to submit their lives to Him.—G. Campbell Morgan.

Monday, January 15. Though I have afflicted thee I will afflict thee no more. Nahum 1:12.

It is not hard for the Lord to turn night into day. He that sends the clouds can as easily clear the skies. Let us be of good cheer! It is better farther on. Let us sing Hallelujah by anticipation!—C. H. Spurgeon.

Tuesday, January 16. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about! Psalm 32:10.

God is not limited to one class of sorrow or penalty. The wicked man shall be mocked, tripped up, disappointed. He shall seize an egg, and find it a scorpion. God has set the universe against him.—Joseph Parker.

THE COMING OF TUKLA

(A TRUE STORY)

By Mrs. Janet Metheny Downie

EDITORIAL

Mark Time! Forward, March!

The Lord's Prayer

HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT GOD IS?

Rev. Frank D. Frazer, Ph.D.

RETHINKING THE TITHE

Rev. T. M. Slater, D. D.

SHOULD OUR TERMS OF COMMUNION BE SIMPLIFIED?

Rev. J. M. Coleman, D. D.

ALCOHOL A MENACE

F. L. FURRY, D. O., M. D.

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we will yet hear of some preaching the faith they once destroyed. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." "The opening of thy Word giveth light."

In what I say further on this subject

I intend to share with others the truth whereby my own eyes were enlightened, and about whose validity I am as fully persuaded as about any other part of God precious Gospel. And rejoicing in this I believe the whole Covenanter Church faces sunrise.

right of any other church to exist, while Parliament was influenced by the Independents (Congregationalists) to insist on toleration, which the Assembly refused to grant. So there was a deadlock over this issue of "Divine right."

We are told that instead of seeking to revise our Terms of Communion we should explain them to the people. I am going to be frank with the readers and say that I have never explained this Term to a congregation in its historical meaning, the only one which the text allows. I did not want the congregation to know that our great Scottish leaders, Knox and Melville and Gillespie and Henderson made any mistakes. If there had been any way of clearing the church of this dead hand of the past except this writing I would not have written now. My point is that these implications are dangerous to the future of the church, for others read history sometimes, as well as Covenanters. Our Scottish forbears did not persecute, as far as I know, in any case, but the National Covenant laid down the principle of persecution, and the Fourth Term carries the implication of that "Engagement." I know that it is possible for us to soft pedal these things, but I see no gain in handing a club to our opponents with which to smite us. As far as I know we are agreed on what our church should bear witness for in this land. Why not state it simply and clearly and unmistakably for all the world to read?

(To be concluded)

SHOULD OUR TERMS OF COMMUNION BE SIMPLIFIED?

In regard to this subject, the Synod of 1933 adopted the following resolution, "That the laity as well as the clergy be urged to express their views on this question by articles submitted to the Covenanter Witness". It seems to me that there are four objections to our present Terms that any revision should remove.

1. The Historical Objection

The first objection is from the standpoint of history. This has a special importance since the Terms misrepresents the belief of the American Covenanter Church to the people of other churches who know history. The present Terms represent the views and the issues of the seventeenth century and both issues and views have changed in the three centuries which have elapsed. The point of most concern to the American Church is that the Second, Third and Fourth Terms, by their language, meant an established church three hundred years ago and imply an established church now.

The Second Term reads, "An acknowledgment of the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith" All Presbyterian Churches are in agreement in accepting the Confession in general, but not the "whole doctrine". The Church of Scotland did not accept the "whole doctrine," since it revised the section on the right of the civil magistrate to interfere in church affairs by calling assemblies and controlling them, a doctrine always anathema in the Church of Scotland. Also this same section was revised out of our American Testimony some years ago. Does the fact that this objectionable section was written into the Testimony and is sustained by the Second Term indicate that the Terms and the Testimony had the same, or like, authors and that they brought the belief in an established church with them across the Atlantic, writing it into the Terms and the Testimony?

The Fourth Term reads in part, "(speaking of the Covenant of 1871)" in which are embodied the engagements of the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant, so far as applicable in this land". The National Covenant was written and signed to establish the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. The Solemn League and Covenant was intended to establish the Presbyterian Church in Great Britain and Ireland. All the engagements that I find in these Covenants were concerned with this establishment. ~~The Covenant of~~

1871, while it carries the principles of social covenanting, contains none of the "engagements" of the Scottish Covenants, for which I am glad. But unless to gain some support for this Term from some who wanted the old Covenants affirmed, why put in that statement, which seems to be contrary to fact? Or do the words "as far as applicable in this land" mean that none were put into the Covenant of 1871, for surely none were applicable? What is your answer? The question has also been raised as to whether these Covenants provided for conviction of heretics by the church and their punishment by the state, as was done by the Inquisition. Notice this section from the National Covenant, "And that they (the Kings and the Princes) shall be careful to root out of the empire all heretics and enemies of the true worship of God, who shall be convicted by the true Kirk of God of the aforesaid crimes" I suppose it was Henderson who wrote that and he left no doubt of the meaning. But times have changed and we do not care to imply "engagements" like that now, even to wipe out the Modernists. Also it might wipe out the Covenanters.

The Third Term of Communion contains the crux of a prolonged contest between the Westminster Assembly and the English Parliament. It is the "Divine right of an unalterable form of church government." To a member of the Roman Catholic Church that would mean the "Divine right" of the Papacy to the exclusion of all other forms of church government and ordinations. To the Episcopalians it would mean the Historic Episcopate with the non-recognition of all other churches and ordinations to preach. For "divine right" is not a Scriptural, but an historic term. Its meaning is as definite as the "Divine right" of kings. But the Third Term leaves no doubt of its historic meaning for it reads "as agreed upon by the divines at Westminster and received by the Church of Scotland." So if one wishes to get its meaning he does not go to the Acts of the Apostles, but to the records of the Westminster Assembly and of the Church of Scotland. I find nothing of church establishment in the Acts. But that was the crucial issue between the Assembly and the English Parliament. The "Divines at Westminster" insisted that the 'divine right' of Presbytery excluded the

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON TERMS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, 1932

Your Committee would respectfully report:

The paper placed in our hands has as its caption "Proposed Conditions of Membership in the Covenanter Church as an alternative or substitute for the present Terms of Communion." The proposal therefore means that our present statement of Terms of Communion be set aside and that the declarations in this paper or their equivalent shall take their place.

Your committee would recommend:

1. That whereas there is a growing sentiment throughout the church favoring a restatement of the Terms of Communion, and whereas some statements of our present Terms are complex and not easily understood, and whereas there is imperative need of extreme clarity in such matters, and whereas the proposed declaration comprises the entire substance of our present Terms and sets forth their essential principles in perfect frankness and clearness, we recommend that this Synod shall initiate the movement to make the proposed change.

2. That the proposed Declaration of Conditions of Membership in the Covenanter Church shall read as follows:

Conditions of Membership in the Covenanter Church:

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A Thought for Each Day

Sabbath, January 21. Arise and eat!
1 Kings 19:5.

Perhaps the prime duty of Christians today is to rise and eat—to take the living bread that alone will bring fulness of life and fitness for service.—B. T. Badley.

Monday, January 22. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Ephesians 2:10.

My life is but a weaving
Between my God and me;
I see the seams, the tangles—
The fair design sees He.
Then let me wait in patience
And blindness, satisfied
To make the pattern lovely
Upon the upper side!

Tuesday, January 23. He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. Proverbs 29:1.

Lapse of time does not cause crime to be forgotten or condoned. There is no statute of limitations with God!—W. L. Watkinson.

Wednesday, January 24. This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us. 1 John 5:14.

If we are wise, we train ourselves to be susceptible to the divine intimations. These can be turned into the most successful prayers.—A. W. Robinson.

THE COMING OF TUKLA (A TRUE STORY)

By Mrs. Janet Metheny Downie

EDITORIAL

Behold the Wood

Thirty Counts Against Secret Societies

THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

Rev. Frank D. Frazer, Ph.D.

SHOULD OUR TERMS OF COMMUNION BE SIMPLIFIED?

Rev. J. M. Coleman, D. D.

THE LID IS OFF

By Rev. F. E. Allen

THE SABBATH AND THE TITHE

Rev. C. A. Dodds

thought; no cross purposes in the writings. The method of its formation, piece by piece, during many centuries, by many authors, under many conditions, precludes human supervision. Yet it presents the unity of a living organism. It unfolds a single self-consistent conception of God, and of man, and of the relations between God and man, both actual and achievable. It has but one theme, God's Plan of Salvation for Sinners. This plan is offered as a covenant between God and man, with a divine promise and command, requiring, on man's part, faith and obedience. The promise is unfolded in prophecy, and fulfilled in history. The command reveals more and more the righteousness of God. Since no sinner can enter a covenant of God until the death penalty of his sin is paid, the paramount doctrine of the Bible is, Salvation by the blood of an adequate Substitute. That Substitute appears as Mediator of the covenant, and becomes the central figure of the book. His presence dominates all recorded action. Here is a complete synopsis of the drama of Time, an episode of eternity, as performed, and to be performed, on the terrestrial stage. It begins with creation, and ends in the dissolving views of old things passing away, and all things becoming new; even new heavens and a new earth.

This theme, drama, covenant, doctrine, plan, requires every part and portion of the Bible for its perfecting. If any part were left out, nothing would be complete. The Bible demands, for its explanation, a single, intelligent orderly, designing, Master Mind. There is a never failing analogy between creation and revelation.

Consider Its Scientific Truthfulness

Evidently, the Bible was not intended to teach science. Yet its presuppositions and particular statements are in perfect harmony with all the facts of nature discovered since it was written. Its words and sentences have somehow been so controlled that they fit accurately with nothing but the truth. How came it that, in the midst of the crudest human cosmologies, Job could write,

"He stretcheth out the north over empty space,

"And hangeth the earth upon nothing."

If we adopt the "new" conception of time, which modern science is formulating, we shall be able to translate the Hebrew verb more accurately than before, because it deals with action as complete, or incomplete, and is not burdened with our conventions of past and future.

According to Sir James Jeans, England's greatest astronomer, the concepts of modern physics "reduce the whole universe to a world of radiation, potential accuracy and completeness in the six words, 'God said, Let there be light.'" How could Moses, and all the other writers of Scripture, avoid the mistakes of human theo-

rising, and write a book that carries its message of the way of salvation without confusion, in a manner worthy of all acceptance, to men in all stages of scientific development; equally well to the learned and unlearned, provided only they be teachable?

The Bible, as a product of a certain period of history, is properly subject to the confirmed results of historical research. One supreme test of its trustworthiness is found in real historical parallels. Archeology has undertaken the search for these, for, "only real events leave anything to be dug up out of the ground." The late Dr. Kyle, than whom no man had better right to speak of historical parallels, said, "Every new one that appears certifies some event of Biblical narrative as a real event. But I am sometimes asked, 'Are there not sometimes Biblical narratives discredited by parallel history dug up in the land?' We are seeking to get the facts, whatever they may be; thus far all parallels attest the Biblical narratives."

One of the best equipped defenders of the Bible, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, said, in summing up his investigations, "I have now come to the conviction that no man knows enough to assail the truthfulness of the Old Testament." The life work of a long line of critics, now discredited, mutely but eloquently testifies as much for the New Testament."

Consider Its Beneficent Influence

All that is best in our modern civilization and culture, all that has made for real progress, is based upon Bible

principles; forms of government; standards of right; social relationships, customs, institutions; internationalism; arts; science. It does not follow merely, but breaks the way for all real spiritual and material progress. On the other hand, whenever this book, by any mistaken notion or evil influence, is neglected or refused, the result is degeneracy and decay. The modern experiment of doing without it, in school and life, is proving disastrous in every instance.

The Bible does not offer a theory merely, but a plan of salvation actually in operation. Wherever its offer is accepted in good faith, the result is as life from the dead. Men of every race and every class, high or low, have experienced a complete change for the better in heart and manner of life. Communities that were the abode of squalor, terror, and despair, have become centers of refinement, progress, and happiness. For, "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

No other book contains a message that has such an effect. The completely satisfying proof, that the Bible is the word of God, may be had by any one who will accept it as the word of God, not the word of man; who will trust the promise and obey the command. Then the joy of salvation fills his heart; the riches of the promise become his personal possession; and the peace and light of righteousness go out from him to bless the world. "IF ANY MAN IS WILLING TO DO HIS WILL, HE SHALL KNOW OF THE TEACHING WHETHER IT IS OF GOD."

SHOULD OUR TERMS OF COMMUNION BE SATISFIED?

By Rev. J. M. Coleman, D. D.

Part Two

II. The Ethical Objection

Now let us shut our eyes to the historical implications and consider taking some sixth grade children into the church. They know something of the Bible and accept that. They also know the Shorter Catechism. Are the elders so versed in the Larger Catechism and the Confession that they can ask questions on them? Have the homes from which the children come copies of these standards? Can they give assent if they have never seen them? Is it ethical to ask assent to what is unknown?

But the Third Term is more difficult, even if one surmounts the first obstacle. What do the children know about "divine right" as agreed upon by the divines at Westminster? Or, about how it was received by the Church of Scotland? Try the pastor with that one. Then we come to the Fourth What are the "engagements" of the Scottish Covenants? How many members of the Covenanter Church have ever seen the National and the Sol-

emn League and Covenant? It might be a fine thing to publish them so that we might know what the engagements are? I have spent much time in verifying what I have written and there is ground yet to cover, yet we are told we can explain this to a sixth grader if we try. I have tried. About thirty years ago I wrote what professed to be a history of the Scottish Covenants, paid for it and gave it away to more people than ever read it. Ever since I have been trying to get Covenanters acquainted with their history. Last year at Forest Park Dr. Patton gave us an excellent course of lectures on the Covenants. Incidentally he asked all who had any knowledge of those Scottish Covenants to hold up their hands and two out of an audience of over a hundred High School and College folks responded.

I think that would be a fair average. Unless one has given much study to the historical implications of the Terms of Communion he does not understand them and those who have studied them most

can not agree on their meaning. **Has the time not come to give the children a chance to know what they give assent to when they join the Covenanter Church?**

III. The Doctrinal Objection

The Covenanter Church builds its life around the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. That is the fact back of the references to documents in the Second Term. Yet the name of Jesus occurs in our Terms of Communion only in an incidental way in reference to the martyrs. Now we ask the nation to make explicit acknowledgment of both the Father and the Son. The Christian Amendment reads, "God the Source of authority, Jesus Christ the Ruler of Nations and the Bible as the standard for the decision of all moral questions in political life." In a time when the personality of the Father and the deity of the Son are called in question should the confession of the pagan nation be made more explicit than that of the Covenanter church? Have we asked too much of the nation? Would not owning the Bible be enough? Or, have we asked too little of the church? Also there is no explicit mention of the Holy Spirit through whom we believe the Kingdom of God is to be realized. The Holy Spirit was not an issue three centuries ago and those who wrote our Terms were facing the past, not the future.

IV. The Spiritual Objection

There is no explicit call in our present Terms to holy living, unless in the clause "a regular walk and conversation," which is too indefinite to meet our needs. I believe that the lack of a holy life is my chief lack and the chief lack of the membership of the Covenanter Church. We lack the Christ-likeness. Brought up as I was it is easy for me to observe the distinctive principles of the Covenanter Church. But I realize fully that one may keep these rules or life and still be a Pharisee in religion. The Pharisee kept the rules, at least Paul did. Our distinctive principles are intended to keep us separate from the world and we should have another to keep us out of pagan business as well as out of pagan politics.

But there is another phase of Christian Life quite as important as separation from the world and that union with Jesus Christ. When we hand our Terms of membership to a candidate the name of Jesus Christ should stand out like a diamond in its setting. We need partnership with Him as a foundation for our structure of faith. We are not satisfied with some reference to a document; we want **His Name**. If the proposed terms do not meet these demands they should be amended.

In raising these objections to the present Terms of Communion, I would have it understood that I am not questioning their fitness for the seventeenth century, when these Terms were a battle ground of the faith, but I am questioning their fitness for the twentieth century. Issues

have changed and men have changed in three hundred years, and if Covenanters have learned nothing in three hundred years, our day of humiliation and prayer in January should be faithfully observed. But we have learned something, and I doubt if there are a half dozen pastors, if any, in the church who believe in the Terms in their historical setting. We read modern meaning into the old text. The establishment of Presbyterianism and the denial of the right of any other church to exist was an issue then that seemed of vital moment. But not now. We recognize the other churches and the validity of the ordination of their ministers. But we falsify this action every

time we take communion and use the present Terms. I believe that the passing years have taught us, and others, that we may tolerate those of divergent views from our own, and respect freedom of conscience as was not done in the days of the Westminster Assembly. And if we keep our present Terms we are liable to have them flung in our faces some day as a reason why our dissent should not be tolerated. I wish to emphasize this fact, that the Covenanter Church with her unpopular views, for which she must ask tolerance, cannot afford in the forefront of her profession to imply intolerance of the conscience of others. "Caesar's wife must be above suspicion."

THE LID IS OFF

By Rev. Frank E. Allen

Today the lid is off! Prohibition is repealed! This was the shout in Canada ten years ago. It is the shout amidst the drunken revelry in the United States today, December 5, 1933. Nineteen states can drink to their full. The lid was knocked off a year ago, with the introduction of beer, but the liquor men were determined to kick it sky high.

A Crisis

This is one of the greatest crises in American history. Oh, the shame! The dishonor! The disgrace! Think of a land that has Christian enlightenment and is called Christian; a land which had adopted a strict national prohibition law; a land which had enjoyed unmeasured benefits from that law, opening again the flood-gates to drown itself in a tidal wave of intoxicating liquor!

The Lion Loose

What if word came to you that a lion had broken its cage and was loose in your neighborhood? The lion—the demon—the destroyer of destroyers has been let loose again in our land—entirely loose in nearly half of our states with others clamoring to cut the rope and it is within leaping distance of us all. A few minutes or at most a few hours' drive brings it into the midst of all our communities.

A Curse of Curses

From the days of Noah to Lot, to Solomon, to Habakkuk, to Al Capone, booze has been a curse of curses. It remains a curse no matter under whose auspices it may be sold or dispensed. It makes brutes of men and fools of women. It is the partner of the night club and of the "red light" district and of all that is vile and filthy and low.

Breeder of Poverty

Booze is a prolific breeder of poverty. My experience as pastor, in charitable work, and especially in a Children's Aid Society, has taught me that it is not the poverty of industrious moral parents that fills and overburdens our child welfare institutions, but primarily drink, and cou-

pled with that, immorality and neglect. In one of our neighboring counties, where the city of Cedar Rapids is located, the man who once owned the fertile land and the beautiful site where now the county poor-house stands, died an inmate of that poor-house, a miserable victim of drink. Since the sale of beer has been legalized there are wives and children in our community who would go hungry, were it not for charity, because the husband spends the money which he earns, for beer.

Promoter of Crime

In Noah's day drink turned a saint into an adulterer; in Solomon's day it turned otherwise respectable men into vomiting, cursing, fighting brutes. In Thomas Guthrie's day in Scotland it turned a father into a fiend who threw his little children into the raging river. Just a few days ago, in our own neighborhood, it turned a beer-drinking father into a would-be murderer who tried to kill his wife with a butcher knife and only the timely arrival of neighbors prevented the terrible deed. Clinton Howard said in the old days of the saloon, "The licensing of the liquor traffic by the government of the United States was the greatest crime since Judas Iscariot sold the Son of God."

False Security

Multitudes of our citizens rested on their oars and declared, even when the flood of liquor seemed at our doors, there is no danger, the Eighteenth Amendment will never be repealed. We heard it in church courts. We heard it from voters and politicians. Democrats who a year ago fostered the "wettest" party that ever attempted to guide our ship of state said to me, after the election of our president, "Our prohibition law will never be repealed." They should hide their heads in shame.

Is our generation of low mentality? Were it not that the younger citizens do not know the evils of the saloon from experience, I would be tempted to say that