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# CHRISTIANITY TODAY



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

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## Editorial Notes and Comments

### AN UN-OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN



THE opening issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY stated that it "will not only be free of all ecclesiastical control but its editors will be free to determine its character and policy according to their convictions." There has been no change in the situation since the statement, just cited, was printed. We mention this because apparently there are those who have gotten the impression that we are more or less of an official spokesman for Westminster Theological Seminary and the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. Such is not the case. Neither of these organizations are in any wise responsible for what appears in our columns. It is true that Westminster Seminary has our whole-hearted support and that we view hopefully the newly organized Board for Foreign Missions. But that does not mean that we exist to further their interests. We are just as free to criticize them as we are to criticize any other organizations—and will not hesitate to do so if the occasion, in our judgment, requires it. It should be remembered, moreover, that approval or disapproval of one of these organizations would not necessarily involve approval or disapproval of the other. As we understand the matter Westminster Seminary sustains no closer relations to the Independent Board for Foreign Missions than Princeton Seminary does to the official Board of Foreign Missions. Be that as it may, CHRISTIANITY TODAY is a publication that sustains no official relations with any other organization.

### A NEW PRESBYTERIAN WEEKLY?



THE PRESBYTERIAN ADVANCE of February 22nd gives publicity to the fact that "definite and earnest movement is on to establish a new Presbyterian weekly." The occasion of this otherwise premature publicity is the fact, frankly stated by its editor, that *The Presbyterian Advance* is itself facing discontinuance because its income from subscriptions and contribution is no longer sufficient to meet the costs of publication. It had been tentatively decided to discontinue *The Advance*, we are told, at the end of February, but when it was learned that an effort was being made "to start a new paper, somewhat different, but standing for the same principles and spirit which *The Advance* has sought to manifest" it was decided to continue *The Advance* "until the outcome of the new effort is definitely known." In case the effort is successful *The Advance* "stands ready to turn over to it its list and 'good will'." We are told that most of the sponsors of this proposed new paper

are in New York and Philadelphia but apart from that we are left in ignorance as to their identity.

We cannot say that we share the eagerness of the editor of *The Advance* to have the new paper established but that is only because this new paper, if established, will be modernistic in character. In our judgment there is no legitimate place for such a paper in a Church that is definitely committed to the Bible and the Westminster Standards as is the Presbyterian Church. No doubt, if the new paper is established, it is planned to make it an even more effective organ of Presbyterian modernism than *The Advance* has been. This means, it seems to us, that those who still hold in all earnestness and sincerity that the Bible is the Word of God, and as such the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and who think that the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechism contain the best summary of its teachings yet penned by man, should redouble their efforts to maintain our heritage and to pass it on undiminished to those who shall come after us. CHRISTIANITY TODAY stands ready to be used more fully for the furtherance of this end. In order that it may do so, however, additional funds must be supplied us. We are in no immediate danger of being forced to discontinue but we lack funds for anything like adequate promotion work. CHRISTIANITY TODAY is not operated for private profit; in fact, is so organized that it cannot be. We have no hesitation, therefore, in urging those who are in sympathy with our efforts to aid us by special contributions, in as far as they are able, and in any case to do what they can to bring the attention of the paper to others. What we want more than money is more subscribers. In fact, we want more money mainly because it will help us to get more subscribers. We are confident there are many thousands who would appreciate CHRISTIANITY TODAY who as yet are ignorant of its very existence. Extra copies will be sent free to those willing to place them in the hands of possible subscribers. Please help us to lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes (Isaiah 54:2).

### THE PROPOSED MERGER WITH THE UNITED PRESBYTERIANS



IT is with mingled emotions that we view the proposed merger of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and the United Presbyterian Church of North America. We hold the United Presbyterians in high esteem. In our opinion, as a group they are more soundly Evangelical and probably more soundly Calvinistic than those who constitute the more common variety of Presbyterians. We believe, therefore, that the merging of these two churches would result in a single church in which there would be a somewhat larger proportion of truly Bible-believing Christians than exists in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. at the present time. Hence we could well wish that the pro-

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however startling, in which we do not see God at work and which does not call from us praise, is just a meaningless marvel. Did I not in plain words denounce Loisy's position as the very evaporation of Christianity? Do I not say that "a paradox in Scripture is an exhibition in works of power and mercy of God's saving and redeeming purpose"?

You object to my saying that miracles are not to be explained physically or historically, but theologically and redemptively. Why? Do you mean to say that miracles are explained by purely physical or historical laws without God, or do you not agree with me that only the operation of God in such events alone explains? What you affirm on this point I also affirm.

Then (4) you object to my statement that "the day may come when the scientific view of natural selection and the New Testament view of an election of grace may be seen to be, both, sides of God's activity"; and in so objecting you say that a man cannot maintain "natural selection" and the New Testament doctrine of grace. Indeed! Dr. A. Hodge maintained both, for he says: "There is no doubt that the laws pointed to by Darwin and Wallace exist and are at work with beneficial results everywhere. They are divinely appointed laws and they explain very clearly the variations of species." Have you become so orthodox that Dr. Hodge is anathema to you? Do you not lay yourself open to the charge not only of heterodoxy but of dishonoring the fathers?

And (5) lastly, you find fault with me for pointing out the common danger and defect of Augustinianism and Calvinism as held by many more Calvinistic than Calvin himself. But listen again to Dr. Hodge: "I am afraid of

Calvinism when it is alone. A mere Calvinist who is not a man and a Christian had better be shut up in Bedlam. But if he is human and Christian, then his Calvinism is a good thing. In this day we require perhaps to emphasize man's free-will rather than God's sovereignty. At the same time we must not lose sight of the latter or allow our theological system to centre wrongly."

What would you do with Dr. Archibald A. Hodge? I think I know what he would be tempted to do with you. Was he an opponent of Reformed theology as you affirm of me, for asserting in some sense free-will? Would you call him an Arminian for doing this? Would you doubt his evangelical position and exclude him from the congregation of the people of God as, in your inquisitorial fury, you would exclude me? If you did, then he might well relegate you to the category of "objectionable orthodoxy."

You see then into what a plight you have brought yourself in your Jehu-like zeal against your own ungrounded inferences regarding me. You are in danger of making plain men suspicious that Westminster is a nest of illogical heretics in the guise of orthodoxy—heretics in the very truth—and that your only test of orthodoxy is the ululatus which utters at each and every turn only one cry, viz: "Princeton delenda est."

There is a more excellent way than that—the prophetic way of working for the coming of the day when Ephraim shall not envy Judah or Judah shall vex Ephraim.

I am,

Yours in all courtesy and charity,

DONALD MACKENZIE,

Princeton Theological Seminary.

## Dr. Thornwell Jacobs' New Religion: A Book Review

By the Rev. Samuel G. Craig, D.D.



UNDER the title "Not Knowing Whither He Went," Dr. Thornwell Jacobs has written and the Oglethorpe University Press has published a book of more than passing interest. Dr. Jacobs is a minister of the Southern Presbyterian Church as well as President of Oglethorpe University. He is distinguished not only as an educator but as an author in the fields of science, religion, poetry and fiction. He also has the questionable distinction of having been a classmate of the writer in Princeton Theological Seminary some thirty years ago. The copy of the book that lies before the writer has on its fly-leaf, in the handwriting of its author, the words: "To my classmate and friend, Samuel G. Craig, with the compliments and admiration of the author." The writer could well wish, therefore, that its contents were such that he could commend it without reserve to the attention of his readers. Since he is unable to do this, he is glad to find justification for his comments in the fact that Dr. Jacobs describes the hero of his book as one who taught that "perfect candor is perfect kindness" (p. 20). While there may be cases when this is not altogether true, it does not seem that this is one of them.

While this book is a novel in form, its aim is not primarily to please and entertain. It is a novel with a purpose. It has been

written not so much for the sake of the story that supplies its framework—interesting as that is in itself—as for the thoughts about religion, the church, the radio, the press, the schools and the movies—especially the thoughts about religion—that are attached to this framework. If we mistake not, the book is largely autobiographical in nature. The Dr. John Roderick of the story, in as far as he has been drawn from life, is, we are disposed to believe, the Dr. Thornwell Jacobs of actual life.

The plot of this book—it is the second novel Dr. Jacobs has written—is simple. Dr. John Roderick, pastor of the leading church of Atlanta, Ga., and an outstanding figure in the Southern Presbyterian Church, influenced (1) by the words and acts of a young man, trained to reinterpret "the faith once delivered to the saints" at a New York seminary, when he sought licensure at the hands of Atlanta Presbytery; (2) by "the glow of a woman's eyes" and the "power of a woman's words" in a cinema play, and (3) by a radio sermon by a preacher who talked very much like Harry Emerson Fosdick, is led to realize that he is no longer in sympathy—either in mind or heart—with the orthodoxy in which he had been reared and of which for some thirty years he had been a conspicuous and trusted advocate and that his place must henceforth be with the religious liberals whom previously he had not even regarded as Christians. Dr. Roderick's conversion to religious liberalism, while



in a sense sudden, had long been pending. For years he, great church leader though he was, had been in a desperate struggle with himself (p. 78). "A storm that had long been brewing, broke suddenly upon the Gennesaret of his soul, sweeping down from the great mountain tops of his philosophy, his sociology and his science. An April storm delayed since his adolescence, was flashing its lightning in the autumn of his life" (p. 29).

Dr. Roderick's first step was to go to Hollywood to thank the actress who had been the more immediate occasion of his conversion. This not only brought him into contact with some of the leading characters of Hollywood but resulted in the conversion of this movie star to the view of religion and life that he had embraced. Thenceforth the story deals with what befell Dr. Roderick at the hands (1) of his church, (2) of a radio station controlled by an elder of the church, (3) of a newspaper, (4) of a college and seminary, and (5) of the cinema when co-starring with the actress, referred to above, he devotes himself to giving world-wide influence and popularity to his "new gospel." It will be seen that the story has been so ordered as to afford Dr. Jacobs a convenient series of pegs upon which to hang his views of things in general—especially of religion.

We are particularly interested in the religious significance of this book. In confining ourselves more or less closely to this phase of the book—the limits of our space forbids our doing more—we are dealing with what Dr. Jacobs himself regards as of central importance. Speaking through Dr. Roderick, he says: "The most vital need in American public life is a new religion, stripped of creeds and theologies; the kind Jesus had, modernized; the kind that will affix the Golden Rule to every entry of every bookkeeper in the United States and infuse it into every word from every pulpit, newspaper, radio, teacher and actor in our country. With such a religion universally practiced any government would work well; in fact, no government at all would be necessary. Without it any government is merely the accepted code of social warfare and economic cannibalism" (pp. 214-215).

The passage just cited tells us three things about the religion that the world needs according to Dr. Roderick. It needs (1) a creedless religion, (2) a religion of the kind Jesus had, and (3) a religion that is essentially a manner of life. Other passages in the book tell us the same things but we cannot take space to cite them. Still other passages tell us, not to mention other matters, that the world needs (4) a religion that teaches that man is his own saviour, (5) a religion that is a product of the evolutionary process, (6) a religion in which the object of faith, God, is man-made, and (7) a religion the test of whose validity is its practical results.

That man is his own saviour is indicated, for instance, on page 105 where we read: "There is nothing more tractable than the human soul. It needs but to will, and the thing is done; the soul is set upon the right path: on the contrary it needs but to nod over the task and all is lost. For ruin and recovery alike are from within."

That religion is a product of evolution, not of revelation, is indicated by such passages as: "My religion began when life began hundreds of millions of years ago" (p. 128) and "All the world needs or has needed—yesterday, today and forever—is for its citizens to find and live by the Will of God, which is the Will of the Universe, which is the directional evolution of mankind, which is progress, which is religion" (pp. 137-138).

That the God of this religion is a man-made object is made clear by such passages as these: "Even 'time-space' and 'God' we may find to be literally anthropomorphic, existing in our brains only" (p. 94) and "I have, of course, created Him in my own mental image just as truly as my ancestors created him in the image of bull or hawk or ibis and later in that of the animal man. He is my best and greatest, my highest, my widest, my deepest" (pp. 129-130).

That practical results are made the one and all-sufficient test of a religion's validity appears in such passages as these:

"If when and as religion works, it is so" (p. 95) and "Pragmatism is of the essence of religion. A religion that does not work is not a religion; it is a superstition" (132).

Some comments in which further exposition is combined with criticism follow. We begin with the second of those mentioned above.

The kind of religion Dr. Roderick commends is "the kind Jesus had." Since Jesus lived some 1900 years ago it seems clear that when Dr. Roderick speaks of his religion as "new" he merely means to contrast it with the religion he had professed and taught as a Presbyterian minister. Be that as it may, the religion he commends is that religion of Jesus in distinction from the religion about Jesus that enjoyed such a vogue two or three decades ago. If Dr. Jacobs really thinks that this "religion of Jesus" is "new" in the sense that it is the latest and most-up-to-date kind of religion that passes under the name of Christianity, it must be that the South is more theologically belated than we had supposed. And that because this "religion of Jesus" is already regarded as out-of-date in the intellectual centers of Europe and America (Cf. *The Theology of Crisis*, by Walter Lowrie, p. 54). If Dr. Jacobs had come out for Radicalism or Barthianism there might be some warrant for calling his religion "new" in this sense but that is hardly the case in view of the fact that what he commends is little more than the moribund Liberalism of the late Adolph Harnack (for instance) and of such living preachers as Harry Emerson Fosdick.

Of course the "religion of Jesus" advocates have never alleged that their religion was absolutely new since its underlying historical assumption, is that "the gospel about Christ has for centuries obscured the gospel of Christ" (p. 138). What they have alleged is that almost immediately after his death the religion of Jesus was transformed, refashioned, made over under the influence (1) of the beliefs of his earliest followers and (2) of the theological constructions of Paul (derived in large part from the mystery-religions) with the result that the religion about Jesus—Paulinism rather than primitive Christianity—prevailed in the Church until original Christianity was re-discovered by the Liberals, dug up as it were out of the debris that had covered it for nearly nineteen centuries. A sounder scholarship has shown, however, that there is no such cleavage between Paul and the first Christians or between the first Christians and Jesus, as the Liberals had maintained; and that as a matter of fact not only in the mind of Paul but in the minds of the first Christians, and not only in the minds of the first Christians but in the mind of Christ himself, the religion that He established was a religion that centered in His own person as the God-man and in Him as crucified.

It is perfectly obvious, at any rate, that the "religion of Jesus" which this book advocates is something altogether different from Christianity as it was all but universally understood until the spread of Modernism within the last fifty or seventy-five years. Jesus himself occupies no essential place in this "religion of Jesus." He is at most the first to teach and practice it. He is not an object of worship or one to whom men look for salvation from the guilt and power of sin. He himself might be forgotten and the religion He taught and exemplified thrive (p. 133). And so we find a Christian defined by one of the characters of this book as "one who accepts the way of life taught by Christ to be his way of life; one who practices his teachings, enjoys his hopes and trusts his faith" (p. 21)—a definition that completely obliterates the distinction the Lord and His disciples, between the Saviour and those He saves. Here the words of Herman Bavinck are much to the point: "Jesus was not the first Christian; he was and is the Christ. Christianity is not the religion of Jesus, still less Jesus-worship (*i. e.* worship of him as merely human) but Christ-religion. Christianity is now as dependent on him, from moment to moment, as when he trod the earth. For he is not a person who lived and worked only in the past, but he lives and works still,



is still Prophet, Priest and King, and himself upholds the church, which he established, from age to age" (Philosophy of Revelation, p. 227).

In full harmony with his advocacy of the "religion of Jesus," Dr. Roderick advocates a religion that is essentially a mode of life and in which man is his own saviour. According to the "religion of Jesus" advocates, the faith that saves is a faith like Jesus had, not a faith in and on Jesus. They know nothing of faith in Jesus Christ as a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the gospel (*Shorter Catechism*, Q. 86). For them Jesus is at most a teacher and example. Believe as Jesus believed and act as Jesus acted and we will be saved is the sort of gospel they preach. Such a gospel would have pleased Pelagius and Socinus but it would have been abhorrent to Augustine and Luther and Calvin and the Westminster fathers. It may be a source of temporary comfort to the pharisee but it leaves the publican in despair.

Of Dr. Roderick's reiterated assertion that religion needs to be "stripped of creeds and theologies" it may be said, in the first place, that it is grounded in a mistaken notion of the relation between religion and theology. There is as a matter of fact no such things as a creedless or non-theological religion. No doubt some religions have a minimum of creed and theology but in none are they wholly lacking. It could not be otherwise since "religion and theology are parallel and interactive products of the same body of facts" which being interpreted means that religion is the effect which the facts concerning God and His relation to the universe produce in the individual and collective life of man, while theology is the effect which these same facts produce in the sphere of human thought. To say, therefore, that we can have religion without theology is to say that we can have religion where there is no knowledge concerning God and His relations with His creatures which, working in the hearts and lives of men, produces what is called religion. The difference between religions at this point is not that some have theologies and some have none, but that some have more or less true theologies and some more or less false theologies. Dr. Roderick himself has a theology in its true sense as the science that has God as its object. He even says "my religion consists of what I think about God, how I feel about God and what I do about God" (p. 130), but as his conception of God and of God's relation to the universe, including man, is false his theology is also false. Like all those who decry creeds and theologies, he has a creed and theology of his own. In this connection it may be said, in the second place, that even if it could be shown in the abstract that there can be religion without theology, it would still be true that this is not the case as regards the concrete religion known as Christianity. For religion according to Christianity is not merely a manner of life, but a manner of life that is based upon a message about God, particularly about Jesus Christ conceived as a divine being who voluntarily came into this world on an errand of mercy to sinful men. It is absolutely certain therefore that any religion that is "stripped of creeds and theologies" is a religion other than the Christian religion. Since Christianity is a religion that is grounded in facts (events that happened) and doctrines are the explanations of these facts, a non-doctrinal Christianity is just no Christianity at all.

Little need be said about Dr. Roderick's allegation that religion is the product of an evolutionary process and that pragmatism is of its essence. These two are closely related. If the one is true, the other is probably true also. We think that both are false and that both are products of inadequate knowledge. We have no space to argue the matter, however, and would content ourselves with barely mentioning them were it not for the fact that Dr. Roderick's apostasy from the faith of his fathers apparently had its roots in his acceptance of the theory of evolution as an adequate explanation of things. Telling the actress of his conversion to the "new" religion he tells her that

he does not know just when or how long ago his dissatisfaction with the faith of his fathers began, but adds: "I know it had begun after I read my first book on evolution" (p. 78). It does not seem strange to us that a man who accepts a thorough-going theory of evolution (p. 150) should reject Christianity. We would not be understood as saying that the theory of evolution is wholly devoid of truth. For aught we know it deals with one of the most important factors that must be taken into consideration in any attempt to give a satisfactory explanation of things as they now are. But we would be understood as saying that a thorough-going theory of evolution—that is one that represents it as setting forth the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth—precludes belief in Christianity. And that because it denies in principle the reality of those great redemptive acts that God has wrought for the salvation of His people—acts which culminate in the supernatural birth, atoning death and triumphant resurrection of the God-man—apart from which there is and could be no such religion as Christianity. No doubt there are multitudes who tell us that, if this is the case, Christianity can no longer be held by intelligent men. In our opinion, however, that is only because they have been over-hasty in thinking that the theory of evolution affords an adequate explanation of things. For proof of this we refer our readers to Mr. Van Dusen's article, "The Great Delusion," in the January issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY. At any rate, it ought to be as clear as day to all that no *thinking* person can be at the same time a "thorough-going" evolutionist and a Christian. A "thorough-going" theory of evolution allows no place for the supernatural in the form of the miraculous. Such a de-supernaturalized Christianity, however, is Christianity extinct.

Little need be said about Dr. Roderick's assertion that God is a man-made object. He here appears in the role not so much of a religionist as of an irreligionist or at any rate of an idolater. He takes his place among those who worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator (Romans 1:26). He who worships such a God as Dr. Roderick commends is as much of an idolater as those who worship stocks and stones. It is basic to all true religion that man is a creature of God and as such dependent upon Him for life and breath and all things.

More might be said in exposition and explication of Dr. Roderick's religion. It might be pointed out, for instance, that it attaches no unique significance to the Bible seeing that he not only classes it with the Golden Sayings of Epictetus and the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius as "means of grace" (p. 93), but as the "Word of God" names it along with books on astronomy, geology, biology, mathematics, history, psychology, together with the poets and the lives of saints and criminals (p. 135). Enough has been said, however—more than enough, we suspect—to make clear that it both lacks everything distinctive of the Christian religion and is positively hostile to all that makes the Christian religion a source of hope and consolation to men and women conscious of their sin and guilt in the presence of the God of reality as He has made Himself known through prophets and apostles and especially through His Son.

We do not expect Dr. Jacobs to agree with the judgment expressed in the last sentence of the paragraph above. He claims in fact that *Not Knowing Whither He Went* is the story of the conversion of an old-fashioned Southern Presbyterian minister and of an outstanding Hollywood movie star to primitive Christianity. If what they were converted to was Buchmanism as Dr. Jacobs also alleges, that can only mean, in our opinion, that Buchmanism itself can not be regarded as a Christian movement. Dr. Jacobs himself certainly thinks that his views are quite in harmony with those of the "Oxford Groups." Not only are we told on the jacket of the book that his contact with these groups in England was influential in determining its contents, and not only in the book itself is Frank Buchman classed with St. Francis of Assisi, Calvin, Luther, and John Wesley (p. 131), but the movie star is repre-



sented as having obtained a "sense of well-being," of having become "clean" through confessing her sins to those she had wronged (pp. 120-121) with no mention of the cross of Christ or the regenerating activity of the Holy Spirit. We do not know as that any members of the "Oxford Groups" have expressed approval of this book, but unless they condemn it as in effect a libel of their teachings it seems to us that it confirms the judgment expressed by Dr. N. B. Stonehouse in his article entitled "Buchmanism and the Gospel" in the January issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY to the effect that the gospel of Buchmanism is other than the Gospel of Christ.

Perhaps something should be said about the charge of intolerance that this book makes against the Southern Presbyterian Church for not permitting men like Dr. Roderick to occupy its pulpits. If what we have said about the book is even approximately true, this means that its author holds that a church established for the worship of Almighty God and instruction in the Christian religion according to the Westminster Standards is sinfully intolerant if it does not allow individual ministers to preach their own gospel (p. 94) even though their gospel be quite other than that taught in said Standards. The mere statement of such a position is its sufficient refutation. Suppose a paid lecturer of the Association for the Advancement of Atheism should be converted to historic Christianity. Is it supposable for a moment that this Association could be justly chargeable with unwarranted intolerance if it refused to permit this paid lecturer to preach such Christianity under its auspices? To talk about suppression of free thought in this connection (p. 164) is merely an attempt to confuse the issue. The Church makes no attempt to prevent a man speaking "the truth as he sees it" (p. 171), but in as far as it is loyal to its Great Head it will not allow a "gospel which is not another" preached under its auspices. Men are as free to preach what they regard as truth as the winds are to blow, but why they should think that their liberty is curtailed because they are not permitted to be paid for preaching it under any and all auspices, we are quite at a loss to understand. Liberty of speech is gained at too great a cost if gained at the price of honesty.

It is natural, no doubt, that Dr. Jacobs should picture his heroes as superior in courage, honesty and intelligence to those who believe that the Bible is the Word of God and that the system of doctrine taught in the Bible finds its best expression in the Westminster Standards. The former may be the equals of the latter as far as courage and honesty are concerned *if*—but only *if*—they forsake the Presbyterian Church in all its branches. If, however, such men as the Dr. Roderick of this story remain, or even attempt to remain, in the Presbyterian Church, we think they are conspicuously lacking in both courage and honesty. That as a class they are intellectually the superiors or even the equals of orthodox Presbyterians we do not admit. The Dr. Roderick of this story does not impress us as a man of great intelligence or as one who is intellectually alive in any marked degree. Had he been, he would hardly have said after having passed his fiftieth year, "I have never really believed in anything, in anybody, or in myself" (p. 80). Not only that, but he would not, under the influence of a callow theological student, a movie actress and a superficial popular preacher, have embraced as "new" a type of religion that is no longer honored by leaders of religious thought. Men like Dr. Roderick to the contrary notwithstanding, the orthodoxy they condemn is and, we are sure, will continue to be a vital factor in the religious life of mankind long after the "religion of Jesus" they commend has only an historical interest. Be that as it may, it is our contention that the greater our knowledge and the stronger our powers of thought the more probable it becomes that we will accept the Bible as the Word of God and the Westminster Confession of Faith as setting forth the system of doctrine taught in God's Word. It is, in our opinion, little more than buncombe to allege that the fact that men

reject the Reformed Faith is evidence that they are "brilliant thinkers, well educated; in fact, too well educated" (p. 99).

It is Dr. Jacobs' contention that "the movie can be made the most powerful agency for good on earth" (p. 236). Clearly this statement as understood by Dr. Jacobs includes the notion that the movie can be made the main agency in spreading true religion since he regards religion as the world's most vital need (pp. 214-215). The measure of our agreement with this notion will be determined by the measure of our agreement with his notion of what the essence of the Christian religion is. If the Christian religion is essentially a way or manner of life and if all that man needs is noble ideas and ideals, it is conceivable that the movie offers the best means of commending these ideas and ideals to the world of which we have any knowledge. But if the Christian religion be not merely a manner of life but a life based on a message—a message that has to do with Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour in the New Testament meaning of those words—and man needs in addition to ideas and ideals relief from the guilt and power of sin in and through the God-man, it is utterly impossible to commend what is most essential to this religion by means of the movie, that, in fact, it cannot even be attempted without sacrilege. This is not to say that the movie may not be made a potent factor in shaping the culture and civilization of the future, but it is to say that it can never become a real substitute for the Bible and a witnessing Church. Here as elsewhere our basic difference with Dr. Jacobs has to do with the question, What is Christianity? What he regards as Christianity is something diametrically different from what we call Christianity. If what he calls Christianity is true, what we call Christianity is false.

We regret the necessity—provided we were to write about this book at all—of writing as we have written. Sufficient justification would seem to be afforded if it be true, as we think it is in a case like this, that "perfect candor is perfect kindness" (p. 20). Dr. Jacobs was the youngest as well as one of the most brilliant of his class. He is therefore still a relatively young man. This encourages us to hope that further thought will lead him to come to himself, that long before reaching the end of the road he will be found feeding his soul not on the husks of Liberalism, but on the fatted calf of evangelical Christianity.

## An Important Archaeological Discovery

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



AT Khorsabad, in the vicinity of ancient Ninevah, a discovery has recently been made which is of great interest to Bible students. It is a cuneiform tablet which contains the names of the ninety-five kings of Assyria whose combined reigns cover a period of about fifteen hundred years (cir. 2300-750 B. C.). The special value of this tablet lies in the fact that it is perfectly preserved and gives the length of the reigns of these kings as well as their names. It should therefore furnish the material for an exact chronology of this long period which begins several centuries before the time of Abraham and extends to the birth of Hezekiah. A good deal is already known about the chronology of this period from other sources. But the material hitherto discovered has been both fragmentary and incomplete. Just how far the new tablet will confirm the more or less tentative conclusions which have been already arrived at with regard to the chronology of the early period and to what extent it may necessitate the revision of some of them will not be known