

# Third Anniversary Number

# 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

### 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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# Samuel G. Craig, Editor of Christianity Today

His Record and The Work at Hand

By the Rev. Frank H. Stevenson, D.D.

[The Managing Editor has taken the responsibility of the publication of this brilliant piece of writing. In doing so it is only fair to say that he has not sought the consent or advice of Dr. Craig, whose modesty, in such an event, would doubtless have caused him to forbid its appearance. The Managing Editor hopes that he will be forgiven. Dr. Stevenson needs no introduction to the international constituency of Christianity Today.]



**C**HILDREN, according to an imperfect adage, should be seen and not heard. Editors reverse the precept, which remains imperfect however, and endeavor to be heard and not seen.

Usually the very editors we want to know about are most scrupulous in observing this unwritten law of journalism, printing columns about ditch-digger and king, but never a word about themselves.

Two contemporary magazines, *Time* and *Fortune*, offer an example of the peculiarity of many of their kind. One is a news weekly candid to the point of excess about matters and people; the other a magazine *de luxe* whose jewelled pages display, in a wealth of illustrations and text, the romantic personages of the world's business and commerce. Mr. Henry Luce presides over both publications with such originality and ingenuity that if either *Time* or *Fortune* were to vouchsafe a few words about his walk and conversation every subscriber would be interested. But although they describe men and women of all degrees of importance and news value, neither magazine spares a line for the slightest hint of the character and habits of Mr. Luce; he is sacrosanct.

Editors of leading newspapers are equally sensitive to publicity. How many readers of *The New York Times* know even the name of its editor? I do not refer to Mr. John H. Finley, the member of the staff whose duty it is to make public addresses, but to the editor-in-chief. He is the Rev. Rollo Ogden, once a prominent Presbyterian pastor in Cleveland, Ohio, and subsequently a rather well known missionary in Mexico. When he entered journalism he dropped out of sight completely. On the powerful *New York Herald-Tribune* the chief editorial writer happens to be a Mr. Geoffrey Parsons who is that phenomenon in Manhattan, a native New Yorker in command of a paper in his own city. But in a remote room of the *Herald-*



THE REV. SAMUEL G. CRAIG, D.D.

*Tribune* Building on West Forty-first Street he molds the opinions and judgments of half a million people, very few of whom will learn what manner of man he is before his obituary is printed at some, let us hope, distant day. Several years ago it was the writer's privilege to meet a professor of history in a university near New York City. I knew him in a casual way for months before discovering that from 1918 to 1923 he had been an editor of *The New York Sun*. The career of the best editors is a tunnel of oblivion with rare exits to the light.

There is no guarantee therefore that the editor of *CHRISTIANITY TODAY* will violate the custom of his profession and permit the use of his story and his portrait in his own paper. He was not consulted when the article was prepared and when he sees it he probably will recall how Charles A. Dana said that

a forehead of brass is necessary to an editor who features himself in the news columns he controls. But an exception can be made even in the sacred traditions of the press, and for the sake of a cause which he always has valued above convention, Dr. Craig may be induced to yield this one time.

He ought to yield. Defenders of the old Faith and the old Book are too few in number to stand on formalities with each other. Following the violent controversies and misrepresentations of recent years, some of the men and women who are his friends will be reassured if they are given a glimpse of his frank Cromwellian face and it will be helpful to others if they are furnished with a more intimate knowledge of his background, motives, and attainments than they can find in his extremely impersonal writings, self-revealing as these occasionally are. I am submitting this sketch largely on the assumption that the sound wisdom of the staff of *CHRISTIANITY TODAY* will avail to see that it is printed unabridged, with a not too inconspicuous photograph attached. Together we may render a considerable service to the Presbyterian Church.

## II.

Dr. Craig is a son of the prairies of Illinois and Missouri and his youth was spent on the farm. He is as familiar with seed-time and harvest, with hazards of weather, uncertainties of markets, over and under-production and the rest of agricultural economy good and bad, as he is with the troubled progress of Christianity in this perplexed and cynical generation, and that takes in an unusual amount of territory.

Tales such as he might tell of boyhood experiences on the plains of the Middle West are the stories of rugged pioneering to which countless popular books testify. Distinguished citizens brought up in the same region continually are laying claim to virtues secured from the prairie soil, or failing to make the claim for themselves, their biographers do it for them, as Carl Sandburg did for Lincoln. General Pershing ascribes a portion of his prowess to a boyhood spent in a Missouri rural community where the environment taught him to meet recurring emergencies, and to endure hardness, as a patriot and Christian should. A volume of ex-President Hoover's campaign speeches shows the effectiveness of allusions to the blacksmith shop and farm at West Branch, Iowa. The open spaces of the country are commendable places for Presidents and Generals—and Editors to come from. Dr. Craig hails from this hardy hinterland and has had occasions to thank God for it. At times he has needed the patience and persistence which only the most rigorous discipline in youth could give him.

From the farm he went to college; first in Missouri and then in Princeton, New Jersey. Quite accidentally this winter I found an article on intercollegiate football at Princeton University in an issue of *The Cosmopolitan* magazine. In the center of a picture illustrating the article is the figure of Samuel Craig, unmistakable in proportions, appearing as resolute and dependable in the football armor of 1899 as he does in a business suit at his desk in the office of CHRISTIANITY TODAY. That picture really suggested the writing of this attempted appraisal of his life.

The article compares the modern game with the style of play used thirty years ago, and contrasts the open and closed methods of attack. Yale and the other universities were as hard to beat then as now, but the Princeton eleven of 1899 went through to victory with the flying-wedges and the bone-crushing devices in vogue in football's Homeric age. According to old graduates' accounts, those fabulous players had the strength, speed and skill which are commonplace among athletes; but in addition they had qualities which are not commonplace among athletes or elsewhere.

They had a willingness to bear pain without undue display of wounds, and a do-or-die determination available for desperate situations.

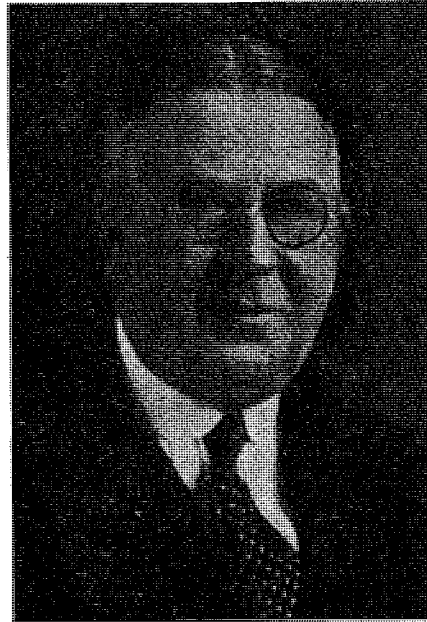
If it is interesting to see the Princeton pictures and to read the record, it is especially gratifying to associate hard-earned victory with Dr. Craig. The arena's corruptible crown is not a chief objective in life; its lustre is temporal and its glory passes away. But there now must be substantial cheer for a man engaged in a struggle seemingly endless, to be able to recall far-off happy days and battles long ago when contests were neither draws nor defeats, but were won. In early manhood God was preparing His servant for his future just as surely as He prepared him when a boy.

After completing five years of study at Princeton in the University and Theological Seminary and enjoying a share of play, the academic education of Dr. Craig was concluded in the rigid intellectual atmosphere of Germany, at the University of Berlin. His pastorates were in Ebensburg and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. From the North Presbyterian Church, the neighborhood church of Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh, he was called in 1915 to be associate editor of *The Presbyterian*, at the time the militantly conservative journal of our denomination. Since then with scarcely an interruption he has been a Presbyterian journalist.

## III.

Dr. Craig's home is in Princeton, New Jersey. His residence is the old-fashioned red brick house on Stockton Street which was built many years ago for Francis Landey Patton as an inducement for him to leave Chicago and take a professorship in Princeton Seminary. He wanted to stay in Chicago and the new house may have been a lure that persuaded him eventually to enter the scene of his great achievements. When Dr. Patton in 1888 was elected President of the University (then a college), and moved to the campus, the residence was occupied by a succession of other eminent men, among them George T. Purves, the famous preacher and New Testament teacher, and Robert Dick Wilson, the authority in Old Testament languages, both titans in the realm of evangelical scholarship.

The house, of course, is so located in Princeton that from the tall windows of his study Dr. Craig, if he chooses, can cast a reflective eye across the street to the spacious grounds of the Theological Seminary with which he used to be associated as a student, as a close friend of the Faculty, and finally as a member of the Board of Directors. While it might be natural for him to waste himself in meditating upon what that magnificent and venerable seat of Christian



THE REV. MAITLAND ALEXANDER,  
D.D., LL.D.

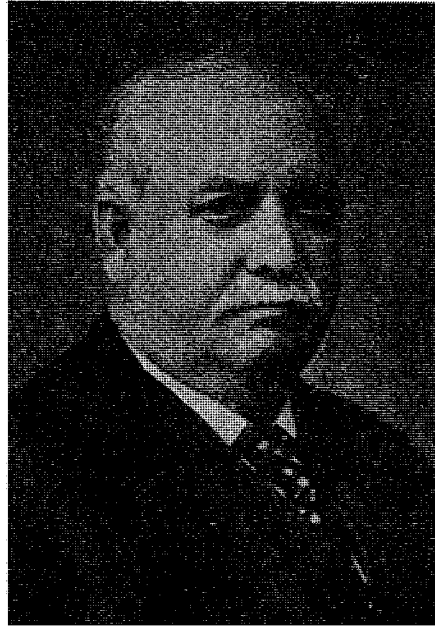
learning once was, what its builders and givers of endowments intended it forever to be, and what it now is, he seldom indulges the melancholy contemplation. Christians are out of place at a Wailing Wall.

Much of Dr. Craig's work is done at his home. On all sides of his study shelves are lined with books from floor to ceiling, and tables fitted to corners and alcoves of the room are piled with magazines. Over the fire-place is a portrait of Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. Near the east windows is a desk covered with correspondence, and on the corner of the desk is a worn typewriter plainly accustomed to hard usage. The editor's working hours are from eight in the morning to an indeterminate time of the night.

Actual labor involved in preparing material for a magazine making pretension to authority in the field of Christian literature is prodigious. It means a painstaking effort to select the best of a vast array of church news, discussions of preaching and teaching, sermons, articles on Bible interpretation, and correspondence from America, Europe, and foreign mission fields; beside writing volumes of editorials, book reviews and accounts of current events as they relate to Christian faith and life. Such labor is unremitting and yet it is far from the total of a publisher's task.

Repeatedly Dr. Craig has faced the inevitable problem of paying bills when due, and of raising funds to meet perennial deficits. When necessary, and this has been often, he himself has furnished the funds to insure the printing of the next issue. He has given much and received little, and if the papers under his direction have been a success it has been because, ungrudgingly and unhesitatingly, he has put both his time and whatever money he could command at their disposal. Some devoted people have stood by him financially through the years, but many times the number ought to be sharing the burden willingly. There is no better investment for the Lord Jesus Christ; no contribution to the protection and projection of the Gospel more direct and productive.

Fortunately Dr. Craig has assistance in his editorial work. A competent Managing Editor has come to the staff of CHRISTIANITY TODAY in the person of Mr. H. McAllister Griffiths, a young Presbyterian minister from California, who has a reporter's insight and a natural gift for clear, concise and spirited writing. His reports of recent General Assemblies and of the current Laymen's Appraisal of Missions have been exceptionally fine. Mr. Griffiths is a Calvinist of the Covenanter type, with no love for compromise either in doctrine or in practice. By talent and inclination he is admirably adapted to further the paper's policy.



THE REV. DAVID S. KENNEDY, D.D.

#### IV.

The motives and results of Dr. Craig's career possess a significance beyond any personal interest we may have in him. They summarize for us important principles at issue today and are a catalog of most of the accomplishments of the whole company of contenders for the Christian faith during two decades of upheaval within our Church.

Motives are mentioned first, for a majority of Presbyterians may now be numbered among those unpredictable Christians who refuse to be convinced that journalism as exemplified in Dr. Craig has a legitimate place in the shifting streams of modern thought. It is common knowledge that a few Presbyterians have gone out of their way to denounce such journalism as worse than futile, and as essentially wicked. On both counts they are wrong. Certain varieties of religious papers indeed may not be needed, and if they conform to the fashion of the world, unquestionably they are wicked. But the journalism Dr. Craig expresses, for all its disturbance to our complacency, is so absolutely right and so immeasurably valuable that the Christian Church must have it in some form within its wide frontiers or risk the surrender of its corporate testimony and invite degeneration into religious tribalism.

It should be remembered moreover that criticism which once was aimed at the old *Presbyterian* and now finds a target in CHRISTIANITY TODAY, can be applied to the New Testament itself. When Dr. Craig announces the purpose of "stating, defending and furthering the Gospel in the modern world," he is following a pattern. Read the prologue to Luke's writing, or the first chapter of Paul's letter to the Galatians, or the last two verses in John XX, or the Second Epistle of Peter, or the concluding words of Revelation XXII, and see the pattern. It runs all the way through the New Testament. The proclamation of the Gospel in the early Church encountered opposing views. They were met and dealt with in the Apostles' vigorous and widely circulated writings until the churches were delivered from danger.

By a form of journalism, the Apostles built up and preserved primitive congregations as churches of Christ instead of churches of a hundred varying allegiances. Therefore a Christian editor in the tumultuous twentieth century who persists in the duty to "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine" is actuated by motives derived from the commands and example of the Word of God.

This must be the explanation of antagonism to Dr. Craig. When he went to *The Presbyterian* the editor-in-chief was the able, resourceful and lovable Dr. David S. Kennedy.

They were of one mind in standing unflinchingly for the Christian belief as that belief is Scripturally stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith. The motive that marked their association together, and upon Dr. Kennedy's retirement, the motive that was to distinguish Dr. Craig as he went forward alone, is solely a tenacious loyalty to consistent and Biblical Christianity. To the natural man such a motive is exceedingly offensive, and has been always. Some men who are prominent in Christian churches find it difficult to forgive the calm assurance that is based on a mere "thus saith the Lord," and whenever controversy grows warm, or lines of division have to be drawn between out-and-out believers in the Gospel and advocates of popular and plausible substitutes, their attitude has to be reckoned with.

#### V.

Results of the seventeen years of Dr. Craig's journalism are to be seen primarily in help given to thousands of pastors, Sunday School teachers, Missionaries, parents, churches, and homes. These results can be taken for granted; they testify to themselves. What we are to review are the extraordinary results of an editorial policy that did not falter during a series of gravest emergencies affecting the doctrinal integrity of the Presbyterian Church. Although the emergencies and everything connected with them are fading from the recollection of evangelical Christians, we need to remember them. One thing the matter with us is, we are entirely preoccupied with the stupendous drama of current developments and we rarely look back even to the very recent past. We have forgotten the promise that "thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way; walk ye in it."

The word behind us that speaks here, issues from the journalistic experience of Samuel G. Craig. For younger ministers and students in theological seminaries this particular word not only is a means of guidance but it will help solve the problems of two decades of important history. Theological students and recent graduates are more bewildered by the doctrinal disruption of the Presbyterian Church than most of us imagine. They have a legitimate claim upon any facts that may bring them into touch with reality. I shall try to state these facts briefly, avoiding the danger of over-simplification as much as I can. God grant the truth may "have free course and be glorified."

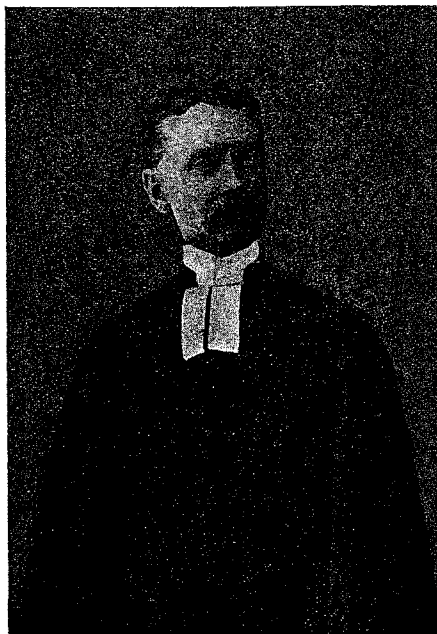
When Dr. Craig joined the staff of *The Presbyterian* in 1916, the Church faced a critical situation in which he at once was involved. We might call it the opening engagement of the present controversy; certainly it contained all the elements which were to be extended into the general conflict.

For several years Presbyterians in New York City had been licensing a procession of candidates for the ministry. These candidates had been recommended for qualities that were obviously engaging; they had well-trained minds and were attractive individually. Everybody liked them. It was the examination of their belief that revealed the one thing lacking in their fitness to preach the Gospel of Christ. Asked, for example, if they believed the Gospel narrative of the miraculous birth of Jesus, the answer was: "We neither affirm nor deny." Asked if they thought several other of the essential doctrines of Christianity were true, they would answer again: "We neither affirm nor deny." The reply was repeated until it began to sound like a prepared countersign to a fixed challenge. Holding to one of the prime theories of Modernism, namely that Christian doctrine is relatively unimportant in the equipment of a minister, these men had determined to introduce the theory to the Presbyterian Church by becoming ordained to teach it.

A small minority in New York Presbytery stood with Dr. W. D. Buchanan, pastor of the strong Broadway Presbyterian Church, and refused to approve applicant after applicant whose faith was abysmally negative just where the New Testament is most positive. The majority overruled objections with appalling regularity. They were splendid young men, and since they were sincere, let them preach. Union Theological Seminary, a fountain of unbelief, sent many a graduate into Presbyterian

pulpits during the period when New York Presbytery opened wide the gate of entrance. In they came. They may have turned out to be mystics, pragmatists, skeptics or agnostics; but in they have remained.

*The Presbyterian* warned the Church. Editorially and through news correspondence, week in and week out, the record was unfolded. Eventually the paper's vigorous hammering home of responsibility made an impression. Presbyterians were beginning to wonder why the government of the Church had grown suddenly helpless when relief came. Cincinnati, Fort Wayne, and Northumberland Presbyteries submitted overtures to the General Assembly in May, 1916, demanding action. Cincinnati actually suggested that New York Presbytery be excised from the Presbyterian Church unless some indication of obedience to the Constitution could be given forthwith. Other Presbyteries sent up overtures. Only Nashville Presbytery resorted to the protest that it was "discourteous, unwarranted and un-Christian" for one Presbytery "to assert" that the ministers of another Presbytery were "untrue to their ordination vows." Out in Cincinnati a great Southern and Western paper, *The Herald and Presbyter*, replied to the arguments



THE REV. W. D. BUCHANAN, D.D., LL.D.

of Nashville. Its editors, Drs. Frank C. Monfort and E. P. Whallon, never for a moment failed to contend earnestly for the faith.

The General Assembly convened in Atlantic City. Considerably embarrassed and anxious to be diplomatic, the Committee on Bills and Overtures arranged hearings.\* Out of prolonged conferences came a form of covenant known as "A Gentlemen's Agreement." In the relative quietness of a room in the Hotel Chalfonte, a quarter of a mile distant from the uproar in the auditorium on the Steel Pier, a compact was drawn largely at the dictation of representatives from the Presbyteries of Cincinnati and Fort Wayne, pledging the Presbytery of New York to explicit fidelity to Presbyterian law. It was a drastic document, but one by one the New York Commissioners signed it from the least unto the greatest of them. Two representatives from Cincinnati witnessed the signatures. For a number of years the agreement was carefully observed.

That was seventeen years ago. Presbyterians in the main acted as Christians should act when avowed doubters of the Gospel of Christ take possession of the Church's pulpits. Even *The Presbyterian Banner* rejoiced at the outcome, the editor writing characteristically: "This unanimous action, crowned with the prayer and song of thanksgiving and brotherhood, was a historic scene, and it was universally felt that it ushered in a new day of peace for the Presbyterian Church." When *The Presbyterian* received congratulations for pressing hard for the verdict, Dr. Kennedy wrote simply: "The action of the Assembly on the New York case is one of the weightiest and most important conclusions reached without judicial process, ever recorded in the history of the Church." Thus ended a preliminary skirmish, a mild foretaste of major engagements in store.

#### VI.

The Great War is blamed with many disasters. How it broke down the standards of sound management in nearly every human enterprise is the commonest of daily recriminations. The Presbyterian Church was not to escape. Restlessness was everywhere after 1918. The Inter-Church World Movement, born in 1918, was our Church's star exhibition of post-War eccentricity.

Here was an attempt to do away with New Testament missionary methods and substitute for them the practices of Big Business in the evangelization of the world. It was advanced by full-page advertisements in the press, by spec-

\*A vivid recollection of the position of four men (mentioned later) at the opening of the General Assembly of 1916 may warrant a footnote. Dr. Courtland Robinson, the present editor of *The Presbyterian* was angered by the zeal of representatives from Cincinnati and gave one of them (myself) a scathing lecture, ascribing the defeat of Dr. William L. McEwan in the election for Moderator directly to the Cincinnati overture. Dr. Charles R. Erdman, it is a pleasure to record, told the writer that the Church could not do otherwise than proceed resolutely with disciplinary action. Dr. J. Ross Stevenson, Chairman of the Committee on Bills and Overtures, seemed to be alternately annoyed and unconcerned, nothing more. It was a minister from Northumberland Presbytery, Dr. William C. Hogg, who galvanized the Committee on Bills and Overtures into action.—F. H. S.

tacular outdoor displays on billboards, by public teas, dinners and banquets, and by whirlwind drives for the funds of "friendly citizens." Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., approved it and spoke for it. Among Presbyterians Dr. Robert E. Speer and Dr. William Hiram Foulkes were its sponsors. Doomed as it was to quick collapse from wild extravagance and over-expansion, the Movement was not detached from the Boards of the Church without heroic efforts at rescue, and most of the Boards were entangled in the wreckage.

A year's running commentary in *The Presbyterian* and the two speeches by Dr. Maitland Alexander addressed to the 1920 General Assembly in its sessions at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia, proved sufficient to take the Church out of the organization. The debts would have to be paid, but there would be no additional liability. These debts, colossal in size, are a memorial for posterity's inspection. In addition to demonstrating the ease with which money can be spent before it is collected, they go far to show that efficiency is decreased with the pooling of management in the great Protestant Churches. The Inter-Church World Movement was impressive in magnitude, but unwieldy, ungovernable, and in the end, grotesque.

*The Presbyterian* played a part, possibly the most effective part, in steadying the Church in this and similar upheavals during the rash days following the War. Elementary Christian convictions and ordinary prudence usually prevailed in the General Assemblies and when the votes were counted the Church's views and *The Presbyterian's* views as a rule coincided. Conservative sentiment was strong and came to the front invariably.

#### VII.

How far one paper went to rally Presbyterians to the defense of their heritage probably is still better shown in the events of 1922 and 1923. It was then that Drs. H. E. Fosdick, W. P. Merrill and H. S. Coffin, with a co-operating press within and without the Church, formed an apparently invincible leadership that threatened to break down permanently the Presbyterian Church's corporate testimony to God's Word. It is difficult to describe the turmoil and passion that culminated in this onslaught.

*The Presbyterian* focused attention upon reports of the ebb and flow of opinion. The words of evangelical pastors like John F. Carson, Maitland Alexander, Clarence E. Macartney and W. D. Buchanan were printed, imploring the Church to stand firm; and space was wisely given to the replies of their at last confident opponents. There was good news from mass meetings held for the defense of the faith, and bad news from sections of the Presbyterian Church which turned to Drs. Fosdick, Merrill and Coffin as the Children of Israel turned to Aaron at Mount Sinai. Letters from aroused and devoted Christians were as polemic as the Epistles of Paul and they were published in every number, five and six a week. Editorials were on fire with messages of faith and courage.

Both sides looked to the General Assembly of 1923 for a decision that should determine the question put by Dr. Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" By "Fundamentalists" he meant orthodox Christians who believe the Bible,

and by "win" he meant particularly the enforcement of Presbyterian standards upon ministers like himself who thought fragments of God's Word contained the truth but considered a great deal of it, perhaps most of it, to be pious folk-lore and myth. We are not boasting of an understanding of the conscience of Dr. Fosdick and his champions but only their outstanding purpose. That purpose was ecclesiastical anarchy.

Dr. Fosdick was not a Presbyterian minister. Strictly speaking, he was a "guest-preacher" at the First Presbyterian Church in New York. But by reason of the notoriety usually attaching to shouts of defiance he had attracted a following and his pulpit had become a sounding-board, a national broadcasting station which Presbyterians throughout the nation were compelled to heed whether they wanted to or not. His supporters contended for Dr. Fosdick's right to preach as he pleased to the constituency they had established for him. This was the Liberal proposal in 1923 and the prospect of securing for it at least the tacit approval of the General Assembly, was favorable. Strong influences were working in its behalf; against it stood *The Presbyterian*, immovable, unbending; backed by evangelical churchmen.

When the decision came at last, it was a sweeping vindication of Gospel preaching and teaching, and was all that earnest Christian people had prayed for. The General Assembly solemnly enjoined the Church to a strict observance of its basic law and reaffirmed every article in the Confession of Faith which Dr. Fosdick had disputed. When Dr. Merrill, a Fosdick leader, subsequently sought re-election to the Board of Foreign Missions, Dr. Carson was chosen in his stead and Dr. Fosdick himself presently withdrew to the welcoming and congenial fellowship provided by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., where he belongs and whence he needed never to have strayed. The crisis had passed.

The summing up of results in 1923 might stop with this resounding Presbyterian answer to Dr. Fosdick's rhetorical question. It is the proper climax of the episode. A great denomination had been saved from open default to the most formidable and consequential invasion of unbelief in our times. If *The Presbyterian* owned a Covenanter flag, and if that flag floated from the office window on a certain afternoon in May, 1923, there was justification for it. On our earthly pilgrimage there are occasions when

" . . . Strife is fierce, the battle long,  
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,  
And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong."

It is right to make the most of them.

One minor incident, however, marred the ultimate results of the otherwise satisfactory General Assembly of 1923. Two ministers were candidates for Moderator in 1924, Dr. Clarence E. Macartney, who had honored the Church and distinguished himself in the Fosdick discussions, and Dr. Charles R. Erdman, who then was estimated as a man opposed to meeting the thrusts of Modernism with anything approaching Dr. Macartney's positive action. Individually the two men were regarded with esteem by all evangelical Presbyterians; in policy they were accounted leagues apart.



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Dr. Fosdick's adherents and some staunchly orthodox Commissioners gave their voice and vote to Dr. Erdman's candidacy, but Dr. Macartney, as unpliant in the situation as John Knox, manifestly was the man for the hour and he was elected Moderator. Sad to relate, the victory was bought at a price. From that day the friends of Dr. Erdman walked no more with the friends of Dr. Macartney. The next crisis in the Church was to find the former group aligned with President J. Ross Stevenson in the re-making of Princeton Theological Seminary. Upon this almost incredible contingency a tragedy was to take root and bear bitter fruit. The tragedy's prelude was the rise of *The Auburn Affirmation*, and the white-washing of that heretical pronouncement by the Committee of Fifteen appointed by Dr. Erdman when he attained the Moderatorship in 1925. Its aftermath is a weakened Church.

#### VIII.

It is profitless to thresh over the old straw of the Princeton controversy. The field is gleaned and the grain garnered. But Princeton Theological Seminary looms so large in Presbyterian history and Dr. Craig came so close to prevailing upon the Presbyterian Church to continue the maintenance of Princeton in its former glory, that considered simply as a feat in journalism the achievement deserves a thorough-going examination.

*The Presbyterian* now stood practically alone among other papers. In all the prolonged struggle newspapers and magazines in general realized no more than that at Princeton was a flourishing theological school, very famous, very old, very rich and most influential; and that its President was in disagreement with the Board of Directors, with the Faculty and with a large majority of the students. Because of the Seminary's prominence various accounts of current developments were published, as reporters understood them. But the reason for President J. Ross Stevenson's campaign against his colleagues never was made quite clear in the newspapers. An ordinary reader had to guess at causes; and one guess was as good as another.

Religious papers were more illuminating. They presented an occasional idea of the issue involved. But the religious press as a whole was so deeply sympathetic with Liberalism, and editors were so enthusiastic in anticipating the overthrow of a stronghold of Calvinistic theology that references to Princeton took on the finality of a sentence upon a convicted prisoner. In *The Presbyterian Advance* and *The Presbyterian Banner* the case was settled almost before it began. Princeton's prestige, and Princeton's aggressive advocacy and defense of the Reformation Faith had been irritating them for years. If President Stevenson wanted a different Seminary they were glad; if he desired to discipline Professor Robert Dick Wilson and Assistant Professor J. Gresham Machen, they were delighted; if his purpose was to neutralize Princeton for the duration of the Church's conflict with Liberalism, that suited their plans precisely. They were for anything that was against the time-honored position of Princeton Seminary in the van of contenders for the faith. So they joined the hue and cry for complete reorganization.

Unhappily much of the Presbyterian Church's opinion of Princeton was formed without the aid of Journalism. Stories which the tellers were careful to keep out of print attacked the reputation of members of the Board of Directors and the Faculty until it appeared that the President of the Seminary had understated his case. These tales had no guarantors; they were a by-product of the intensity of men's feelings and were repeated with blind and unreasoning prejudice, and as might be expected, they also were repeated with progressive exaggeration. Contradiction did not overtake them. Only the perspective of time would be able to demonstrate their absurdity, and meanwhile they ran their baleful course.

Dr. Craig and Dr. Kennedy addressed themselves to the defense of the Seminary. They could not deal with whispered slander, but they were resolved to meet every responsible statement with full information. If they could publish the facts they thought the Church would not act with the instincts of a mob clamoring for frontier justice. With humility and a sense of their own inadequacy, once more they put on the armor of God and enlisted as Christ's soldiers in love's battle for the truth. Both of them knew they would suffer before the battle was done.

*The Presbyterian* was printed accordingly. And for three years the Church did refuse to re-make Princeton despite the activity of every agency of persuasion and emotion known to church politicians. Princeton was safe in the debates of 1926, 1927 and 1928. Three years of assault, and the institution was standing like an impregnable rock.

Christians who remember only that "Fighting Fundamentalists" (a designation of honor, by the way, as the term was applied) lost Princeton may have forgotten why they lost. Princeton certainly was not lost as long as Dr. Craig was given a reasonable opportunity to print the truth. The old Seminary had more friends in 1928 than in 1926; on the other hand supporters of President Stevenson steadily decreased in number. In 1928 the Reorganization's Chairman, Dr. W. O. Thompson, was ready to quit, and said so.

It scarcely could have been otherwise. With *The Presbyterian* to consult, a substantial proportion of Commissioners at each Assembly knew: (1) That President Stevenson's definite objective was a complacent Seminary conforming to, not opposing, the drift of the times, and suggesting some model in his mind which may have been McCormick Seminary in Chicago where he himself had studied and taught. Whatever the model, it was very unlike the doctrinally aggressive Princeton of the Alexanders and Hodges and their successors. (2) That the Board of Directors was under fire because the majority of its members were adhering loyally to the Seminary's purpose and design. (3) That Professor Wilson as Student Advisor occupied a position created by the students themselves, and that they appreciated to the utmost the difference in attitude of Dr. Wilson and President Stevenson toward Princeton's standards. (4) That Dr. Machen was within his rights in pointing out a breakdown in faith in the pulpits, boards and schools of the Presbyterian Church. (5) That the League of Evangelical Students was obnoxious only to those who disliked its straight-forward evangelical stand. (6) That President Stevenson, Dr. Erdman, Dr. Mudge, Dr. Speer and Dr. Thompson represented a pronounced minority opinion on the Board of Directors, Faculty and Student Body and had a majority opinion in their support only on the Board of Trustees. And (7) that the plan of reorganization, in the judgment of qualified lawyers, was illegal. These were telling facts. And they were prevailing as facts have a way of prevailing ultimately, when press and speech are free.

Success was in sight in 1928, and then came one of the strangest bi-partisan measures ever agreed to on this earth by a body of men who have contended for the truth. In Tulsa, in 1928, the conservative forces who dominated the General Assembly voted to postpone action on Princeton for yet another year. Bad though this was, it was not the worst. Indeed it sounded fair enough, for at the rate at which the friends of Princeton were multiplying, victory was probably more certain a year ahead, and meanwhile steps could be taken to deal with President Stevenson and his revolutionary plans through Princeton's own authorities. But in addition to the postponing resolution was the fatal provision of another resolution. *Presbyterian papers were asked to withhold comment on Princeton during the intervening twelve months.*

When the veterans in the long struggle for a great cause fell into the double trap which we must hope was set for their feet unwittingly, their gallant fight was over. They had surrendered. Absolutely to prevent adjustment of the internal differences at Princeton, all President Stevenson and his associates had to do, and did, was to refuse to co-operate. Internal troubles were to be accentuated, piled mountain high, before the year rolled around. The faithful Board of Directors had been chastised with whips; now they were to feel the lash of scorpions. Informing publicity was shut off; nothing could be written about it. The bare disclosure of confusion and deadlock was all that was to be exhibited to the next General Assembly.

Dr. Craig had been prompt to announce that a General Assembly resolution could not bind privately-owned papers



and that he considered himself free to print whatever news would promote the welfare of the Church. Shortly before the twelve months had elapsed he did publish several reports. But the pledge of secrecy hung over Princeton like a thick cloud and no publicity was possible in time to do good.

Removal of a Board of Directors apparently unable to direct, was a foregone conclusion at St. Paul in 1929. Platform debate, limited to a few minutes, was perfunctory. Commissioners were impatient. If ever they had known the real meaning of reorganization as it had been explained to other Assemblies, they had forgotten it. They acted as wisely as men could act in the circumstances.

Would the same Commissioners vote today as they voted in 1929? Of course, not. In justice to them we cannot write on the tombstone of the old Princeton, "This institution died because the General Assembly of 1929 condemned her witness to the Westminster Confession of Faith." To use one of Dr. Machen's penetrating phrases, Princeton's death sentence was pronounced by men who were compelled "to think with an empty mind."

#### IX.

Four months after Princeton was reorganized, Westminster Theological Seminary was established in Philadelphia. Twenty-nine young men left the two upper classes at Princeton Seminary to become the nucleus of its student body; four teachers from Princeton volunteered to start the Faculty, and a fifth soon joined them. The new Seminary prospered, thanks to an outpouring of prayers and gifts. Seventy-nine students, seven professors, and not a dollar of indebtedness, March 1st, 1933, revealed an assuring stability in the unparalleled conditions of the fourth year of the new institution's life.

Dr. Craig was a founder of Westminster Seminary. He made *The Presbyterian* its unofficial press representative; gave the Church every paragraph of news about the ministers' and laymen's first meetings in its behalf; and printed a complete account of the opening exercises which some day may have historical value. The response to the publication of the truth again confirmed his faith in the inherent worth of a free press that reaches the homes of God's people.

Meanwhile there were developments on *The Presbyterian*. After the St. Paul General Assembly Dr. Craig became aware of a shift in attitude on the part of the paper's majority stockholders. They did not say a great deal, but he felt that they no longer approved the editorial policy he had consistently maintained. Dr. William L. McEwan, the President of *The Presbyterian's* Board, soon was to be

elected President of the coalition of widely varying elements that constitute the new board of control of Princeton Seminary, and he surmised that, too. He was not deterred. He had a duty to perform, a cause to plead, and his was Esther's stout motto: "If I perish, I perish." It was impossible for him to praise the re-made Princeton without sheer hypocrisy; and as an evangelical editor he was under the plainest obligation to promote Westminster. He followed a straight course; was perfectly open about it, and took the risk of dismissal. Six months passed before he was summarily removed. In June, 1930, he began the publication of *CHRISTIANITY TODAY*. On *The Presbyterian* he was succeeded by Dr. Courtland Robinson.

#### X.

Experiences of seventeen years fairly well prove four points.

First, every controversy dividing the Church has been doctrinal. Carefully calculated and far-seeing efforts to change the Presbyterian Church into an organization that would countenance an unbelieving ministry were on the march. Such forces as were available opposed them. This was the reason for conflicts of such moment that they set ministers at variance against ministers, elders against elders, churches against churches, shattered the unity of mission stations in every foreign field, and left us at war in the House of God.

Second, having a paper capable of taking the lead, Bible-believing Presbyterians overcame the defection of the Presbytery of New York; resisted the Inter-Church World Movement; stood steadfast during the Fosdick invasion; and were on the threshold of victory at Princeton.

Third, a conscientious and fearless journal made history; sound, honest, Christian history. Until the journal was silenced, Princeton did not succumb. And until Dr. Craig was dismissed as editor and placed, as his adversaries trusted, beyond the pale, the doctrinally indifferent section of the Presbyterian Church did not reach its present political ascendancy.

Fourth, the record is encouraging. Conservatives may be too innocent to match wits with skilful Church politicians and they may be helpless in the arts of strategy and intrigue, but they have yet to lose a case when the laity and eldership of the Church have been informed fully of the issues. The problem is to get the information to the people.

#### XI.

Is there a prospect that *CHRISTIANITY TODAY* will approach the record of the old *Presbyterian* in upholding the standards of the Presbyterian Church? Some observers are



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pessimistic. Writing along this line just three months ago, a paper in another denomination prophesied dismally: "Will the Presbyterian Church set up its ancient banners again? We fervently hope it will, but we know nothing in history which furnishes ground for hope. When Churches decay they seldom, if ever, return to their original purity. One might point to the Established Church in the Netherlands where the forces of orthodoxy are stronger and more numerous than fifty years ago, yet even in this Church heresy thrives in the congregations and councils. Conservatives seem to be fighting a losing battle in the Presbyterian Church. The establishment of Westminster Seminary by several former leaders of Princeton was a heroic effort to create a new educational stronghold for orthodoxy, but . . ."

All of which is indubitably true. Conditions in the Church are bad and the precedent cited is against hope. Moreover any influence which CHRISTIANITY TODAY may have, perhaps is less exercised horizontally over this period than vertically over coming years. But ten years hence, if God spares him, Dr. Craig's labor and fidelity may show rewards like those of 1916, 1920, 1923, and 1928. Historically the Presbyterian Church is a faithful Church and certainly within ten years should respond again to the call of its own blood. God repeatedly has healed backslidings worse than ours and re-established His people in other generations. Some indications of His purpose seem to be manifesting themselves even now, demanding attention and work.

Professor Henry P. Van Dusen, of Union Theological Seminary in New York, who ought to know, says that Liberalism is done for. He is quoted as follows in the *New York Herald-Tribune* of January 21st, 1933: "Liberalism stands condemned. Its premises are being subjected to devastating criticism. . . . It is significant that those who stand somewhere between radicalism and traditionalism, are today as loath to be labeled Liberal as they were to be called Modernist some years since." This authority may not wholly represent the body of ideas he presumes to voice but Liberalism, a foe familiar to Presbyterians, can be subdued, and there is no better instrument to help finish the needful work as far as Presbyterians are concerned than CHRISTIANITY TODAY. Dr. Machen regularly contributes to CHRISTIANITY TODAY and Dr. Machen is a man the Liberals have yet to answer.

How shall Presbyterians deal with Buchmanism, the so-called Oxford Movement? Print the facts. CHRISTIANITY TODAY in its February issue had illuminating articles on the fascination of Buchmanism for its disciples, with endorsements from two conspicuous Presbyterians, President

Stevenson of Princeton Seminary and Secretary John A. Mackay of the Board of Foreign Missions. Another side is described by Dr. A. C. Gabelein and Dr. W. M. Rochester. We read of its fashionable convocations at luxurious hotels, the intimate meetings at house parties, and the insistence upon the interchange of confessions that shall have no reserves.

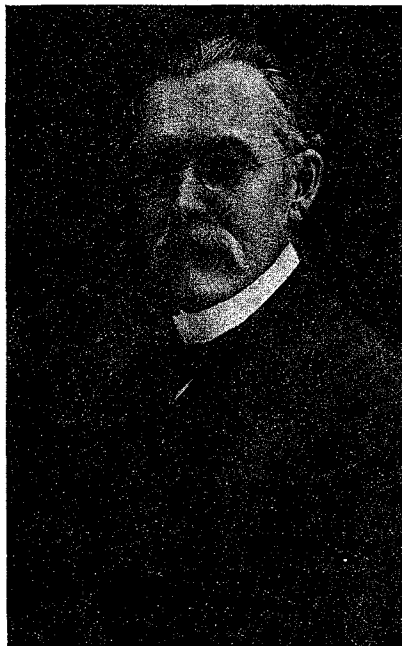
Two truths emerge. The social embellishment of the fellowship is a new departure in Christian practice. By the widest stretch of interpretation it cannot be said to be

derived from Apostolic example notwithstanding the Oxford Group's claim to First Century authorization. And new is the theory that it is wholesome for young people, or older people, to share confessions bound to lead to topics which Paul declares are "not once (to be) named among you . . . for it is a shame even to speak of those things." Mr. Edward D. Duffield harshly calls Buchmanism soul-baring, "Christian nudism," and until a more delicate metaphor is provided it will warn unwary enthusiasts of the danger to their minds and memories in the "sharing" factor of the cult. A sinner may and must go straight to God with his sin (Psalms XXXII and LI), and the safeguards limiting human interchanges are specific (Matthew XVIII, 15; Acts XIX, 18-19; James V, 14-16). Print the facts and Buchmanism will cease to operate in the fold of Christ.

This year our Board of Foreign Missions may be constrained to resume first principles. For months Dr.

Craig has been publishing news of a crusade for the purification of our missionary enterprise that will restore confidence to the Church if it can be carried to a length that will show the Board how in earnest we are about it. An unswerving faithfulness in the proclamation of the Gospel as it is contained in the Word of God, and an utter unwillingness to make common cause with any other Gospel, whether it goes under the Name of Christ or not, soon must become the announced principle of our Board of Foreign Missions or the Board's activities will defeat their own purpose on the mission fields of the world. Mergers with Modernists, Liberals, and Buchmanites; and compromises with heathenism, are suicidal missionary measures. The race is between orthodoxy and catastrophe in the mission stations of China and Japan and India, and the Board of Foreign Missions has not a great deal of time to halt between two opinions. Why should we falter in an honest attempt to restore the missionary enterprise to its elementary task?

Indeed can there be any discharge from the war against false teaching while it prevails in the Presbyterian Church? One would devoutly hope that at least some Presbyterians will be sufficiently intolerant never to tolerate it in pulpits



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and mission fields. Outside the Church, false teaching may be comparatively unimportant. It is the strong man armed guarding his own court, and his goods are in peace only until a stronger than he shall overcome him and take from him his whole armor wherein he trusteth. But within Christ's Church, even the shortest reign of heresy is ghastly in destructiveness.

Our ministers and missionaries are urged simply to preach the Word. CHRISTIANITY TODAY's appeal for a revival of old-fashioned Gospel preaching is the root of the matter. Ministers are spokesmen for God's Word or else they are nothing, just as the Presbyterian Church is a Church separated from the world, or nothing. Glossing over the miracles which tell of God's power lest some biologist raise his eye-brows in incredulity, does no honor to a Christian minister, and an honest-minded biologist probably would be the first to tell him so. Omitting the warnings of Christ about hell for fear of wounding a congregation's sensibilities is not a brave performance. Prevailing notions that the blood-bought atonement of the cross is a discredited tradition, have ruined much preaching and many a preacher. The Bible, as it is written, has satisfied generations of men. People are entitled to hear it today, and they want to hear it. Let us ministers have done with the idea that we must have a new thing to attract and hold people. Learn the Bible; proclaim it; let eternal truths ring out! Such preaching does not empty the pews of a Church but widens the Church's walls. Preaching the Word, the whole Word, and nothing but the Word, will demonstrate the power of God. When Paul told Timothy how to make full proof of his ministry, he said, "Preach the Word."

CHRISTIANITY TODAY is convinced that the key to the future peace, usefulness and prosperity of the Presbyterian Church is with the theological seminaries. Put young men under professors who themselves are believers and can give a reason for the hope that is in them. Build up theological students in their most Holy faith. Keep them in the love of God. Send them forth like Paul, not primarily with excellency of speech or of wisdom, but declaring the testimony of God. Results will take care of themselves.

## XII.

Thoughtful Christians are not minimizing the signs of the times. Days of increasing apostasy may be upon us, and ours may be the age of which Jesus asked the pathetic question, "When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?" Devout students of the Scriptures are among those who think so. They are not fanatics; they are awaiting the return of Jesus with an expectancy like Simeon's.

It ill becomes any reader of the New Testament to ask, "Where is the promise of His coming? for all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Jesus is coming. The Gospels and Epistles glow with the definite promise. Upon one of our long night-watches the day will break and the shadows forever flee away.

But whether He comes today or tomorrow, or tarries because He "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," we have much to do. In order to teach this, Jesus told the parable of the man who buried his talent in the ground, and was found idle when his lord returned. Wicked and slothful, he was cast into outer darkness. We are to be occupied. We can be occupied as Christ's witnesses individually. We can be occupied as witnesses in our Church's activities. And we can be occupied by making a paper like CHRISTIANITY TODAY the means of placing our united testimony before the world. The editor of CHRISTIANITY TODAY has proved that he will not falter because men mock. What can be done, he will do. On such an assurance evangelical Presbyterians can sustain him to the limit of their ability. Great revivals come when Christians pray, and then speak boldly.

## XIII.

While the Reformation was slowly gaining headway in Germany, Martin Luther often turned to his friend Melancthon with the abrupt command, "Come, Philip, let us sing A Mighty Fortress is Our God." Is there a

hymn like the Forty-sixth Psalm to suit our need today? Some might select Frederick W. Faber's familiar lines:

O it is hard to work for God, to rise and take His part  
Upon the battlefield of earth, and not sometimes lose heart.

But right is right, since God is God, and right the day must win;  
To doubt would be disloyalty, to falter would be to sin.

This is a good choice, but not the best. Two hundred years ago Isaac Watts wrote a Song of Zion that takes us into the presence of Christ. Thus far it has escaped the attention of modern hymn tinkerers in spite of its resounding call to maintain the honor of the Word of the Lord. Sung to the sonorous, swinging cadences of the tune in the old Scottish Psalter, it is pre-eminently adapted to the crisis we are experiencing.

I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, or to defend His cause,  
Maintain the honor of His Word, the glory of His cross.

Jesus, my God! I know His name; His name is all my trust;  
Nor will He put my soul to shame, or let my hope be lost.

Firm as His throne His promise stands,—

Christians who sing this hymn with a believing heart will know how to meet whatever tests the future holds.



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