

# General Assembly 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

### THE 149th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**A**NOTHER Assembly has come and gone. It was not so good an Assembly as we had hoped or as bad as we had feared. Nothing was done, for instance, to remove the dark and more or less disgraceful blot on the history of our Church brought about by the unwise and unconstitutional action of the General Council in 1934 in persuading an uninformed Assembly to endorse its mandate against the Independent Board. On the other hand it has been some time since we have had an Assembly more conscious of its own rights and powers and less disposed to sign on the dotted line whatever the platform might propose for its approval. It was a socially conscious rather than a doctrinally conscious Assembly and so an Assembly disposed to take a superficial rather than a deep view of the situation in the Church—a relatively peaceful but hardly a particularly constructive Assembly. Still all in all it was perhaps the most commendable Assembly of recent years. On other pages may be found a descriptive and in some degree interpretative account of its proceedings.

DR. FOULKES made an excellent Moderator. While he made no effort to conceal his sympathies he was fair and courteous and made no attempt to dictate or lord it over the commissioners.

We came away from the Assembly confirmed in our belief that the General Council plays too large a part in determining the policy of our Church. The Council has become more and more a super-body—sort of a hierarchy—that does not fit into the genius of Presbyterianism. More and more it has become not so much the servant of the Assembly as its master—too often its unwise master. Moreover, the composition of the Council is such as to favor the establishment and continuance of a dynasty, so to speak, by virtue of the fact that the Moderator, the retiring Moderator and his nearest living predecessor, the Stated Clerk, and four representatives of the Boards are continuous members of the organization, and who, it is safe to say, largely dominate its decisions. We do not at

present favor its abolition but we do think it should be reorganized and its rights and duties more clearly defined. In our opinion neither the retiring Moderator nor his nearest living predecessor or any paid employee of the Assembly or any of its agencies should be eligible to membership.

We also came away from the Assembly strengthened in our belief that the procedure in connection with the Permanent Judicial Commission needs revision. It is unfair to the commissioners and little short of a solemn farce to require them to vote on matters of which they are all but completely ignorant. Either there should be no submission of the judgment of the Commission to the Assembly or the vote on the judgment should not be taken until after the commissioners have at least had opportunity to consider it in printed form. As matters now stand final responsibility for the judgment rests on the commissioners and yet they are required to assume this responsibility without any real understanding of its significance. This ought not so to be.

### THE LEAGUE OF FAITH: A NEEDED TESTIMONY

**T**HE Presbyterian League of Faith held two meetings at Columbus preceding the Assembly, Dr. MACARTNEY presiding. The two meetings, especially the second, were well attended and their tone and temper such as to augur well for the future of this association. DR. DAVID DEFORREST BURRELL of Williamsport, Pa., was elected as President for the ensuing year and the REV ALBERT DALE GANTZ of New York City (730 East 225th Street), re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer. Its Constitution was revised and its machinery reorganized with the aim of making it broadly representative of the Church as a whole. The following Testimony, concurred in by the National Committee of the Ruling Elder's Testimony, was issued:

1. We testify to our deep affection for the Church of our fathers, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. We rejoice in its great history and the part it has played in the establishment, the development, and

transfer. If he was not orthodox enough to labor in Duluth Presbytery he certainly was not orthodox enough to labor in the Presbytery of Black Hills.

It should not be overlooked that this case is not necessarily ended. The Assembly's withholding of approval of the minutes of the Synod of South Dakota in approving the minutes of the Presbytery of Black Hills recording Mr. VAN DYKEN'S licensure means, if we understand the matter aright, that his status is still that of a candidate for the ministry. It is to be hoped that when his case comes anew before the Presbytery of Black Hills that said Presbytery will act in harmony with the recommendation of the 1935 Assembly, viz., "that the Assembly urge all presbyteries to thorough diligence in the examination of candidates for licensure and ordination with regard to their intelligent and sincere loyalty to our Church and her doctrinal standards" (Minutes p. 115). Otherwise it is devoutly to be hoped that the matter may again be carried to the General Assembly by way of complaint.

## MORE DISQUIETING NEWS FROM THE FOREIGN FIELD

**W**HILE it is now generally recognized that the establishment of the Independent Board was an ill-advised effort to promote distinctively Presbyterian Missions it by no means follows that there neither was nor is occasion or warrant for grave concern on the part of loyal Presbyterians over the situation in its mission stations or that the Board of Foreign Missions is justified in its course of minimizing even when it does not completely ignore current criticism of its work.

The immediate occasion of the following letter, as its contents will advise the reader, was the communication from the Rev. H. P. DUNLOP printed in our January issue. Miss GRACE L. ENRIGHT, a working missionary, believes that Mr. DUNLOP'S description of conditions on the foreign field (as apparently that of Dr. BARNHOUSE) is far more rosy than the facts warrant. It can hardly be denied that

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## "Bought With a Price"

By Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, Pa., and Moderator of the 136th General Assembly

Memorial Day Address delivered at the Devotional Service of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., Saturday, May 29, 1937.

"Bought with a price."—I Cor. 6: 20.



LAND without ruins," wrote a poet of the Civil War age, "is a land without memories; and a land without memories is a land without history. Crowns of roses fade—crowns of thorns endure. Calvaries and crucifixions take deepest hold of humanity—the triumphs of might are transient—they pass and are forgotten. The sufferings of right are graven deepest on the chronicle of the nations."

At this Memorial Service we are once more reminded that ours is a land of memories and of history. Those great memories and that great history rise now before us, and we think of those Calvaries and crucifixions through which the men of former generations passed that the nation might endure.

"Ye are not your own," said the Apostle, "ye are bought with a price." That was St. Paul's powerful and impressive way of appealing to the Christian believers at Corinth to keep themselves unspotted by the licentiousness and immoralities of the pagan world in which they lived. He appealed to them to remember that Christ had purchased them and redeemed them with His own precious blood. When they thought of that, when they remembered the unspeakable price with which they had been bought, it was Paul's earnest hope that they would keep themselves unspotted from the world.

Nothing sanctifies like suffering. What makes the flag of a nation so stirring and moving to the heart is that it is a symbol of what men have suffered and endured that the nation might live. The strongest appeal that can be made

to the conscience of a man is to remind him of the sacrifices that had been made for him and what a godly father or mother has suffered for him. This word, then, of St. Paul, "Ye are bought with a price," is one which fits in with the deep music of this Memorial Service at which we recall the citizens and patriots who gave their lives for the nation and the good soldiers of Christ, faithful ministers who, having served their day and generation, have now fallen on sleep. Whether we think of ourselves as citizens of the great Republic, or as citizens of the greater republic of faith and redemption, as members of the Church of Christ, let us not forget that we have been bought with a price, and that price makes its solemn and tender demand upon us, that we *should be true and faithful both to our country and to our Church.*

There is no Church of Christ in the United States of America which has such a right to make a service of commemoration for its departed ministers also a service of commemoration for those who died in behalf of the nation. No Church in the Providence of God has written such a record as ours in the establishment, the development, and the preservation of the Republic. Next year we shall celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the establishment of the General Assembly. But let us not forget that long before that in the Colonial Period and in the years of war and struggle for the independence of the nation, the Presbyterian Church played a grand and heroic role. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the rugged principles of Calvinism were the foundation stones of our nation. Two-thirds of the 3,000,000 inhabitants in the Colonies at the

outbreak of the Revolution were Calvinists, and nearly one-third of Scotch and Scotch-Irish descent. Presbyterians put the iron of Calvinism into our nation's life so successfully that the present deluge of foreign races and ideals and religions has not yet destroyed the handiwork of those early Calvinists and Presbyterians who, "abhorred as no body of men ever abhorred all conscious mendacity, all impurity, all moral wrong of every kind, so far as they could recognize it."

In every great crisis of our history, the voice of the Presbyterian minister has been uplifted on the side of human rights and against every form of tyranny, oppression and iniquity. When the colonies were stricken with panic after the disaster which befell the splendidly equipped army of General Braddock on the fords of the Monongahela on that July day in 1755, it was the voice of a Presbyterian minister, the eloquent voice of Samuel Davies, then pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Hanover, Virginia, and afterwards President of Princeton, that rang like a trumpet throughout the land and sounded the note of courage and resistance to the French and the Indian on the frontier. In the crisis of the Civil War the issue was undoubtedly determined by the stern and violent patriotism of the Presbyterians of the prevailing section. On the banks of the Little Antietam Creek there stands today a monument which fitly sums up and commemorates the national testimony of our churches and our people in that great crisis of human liberties. It is the monument to the Roundhead Regiment, the 100th Pennsylvania Infantry, recruited from the Psalm singers of the counties of Western Pennsylvania. With his back to the Antietam, his rifle firmly gripped in his hand, his brow high and lifted up, that bronze figure of the God-fearing and Psalm-singing Roundhead sums up the moral earnestness, the hatred of wrong and oppression, the love of truth and the fear of God which fought the Civil War through to a successful issue.

When Abraham Lincoln, standing in the East Room of the White House, looked down upon the body of his young and gifted friend, Colonel Ellsworth, the first casualty of the Civil War, he exclaimed, "My boy, my boy, was it necessary that this sacrifice should be made?" Little could Lincoln in his deep sorrow on that spring day have imagined how great a sacrifice was to be made and paid before the Rebellion was put down, slavery abolished, and the Union cemented with blood. Not one attractive youth merely, but 500,000 from the North alone were to give the last full measure of devotion. Yes, of a truth, we have been bought with a price! and how great that price!

This Memorial Commemoration is both a command and an invitation to you and me who have entered into this blood-bought heritage. Are we to maintain it? Are we to hand down to future generations what has been handed down to us at so great a price? I am one of those who still believe that the establishment and the maintenance of this Republic was well worth the price that was paid. There are some today who would discount the last full measure of devotion which was paid by those who have gone before us,

and would even have us believe that such a sacrifice is unnecessary, ignoble, and un-Christian.

On a bright October day last autumn, I drove to the town of my boyhood to visit the home of friends where the aged father lay dead.\* For more than fifty years he had been an honored minister of Jesus Christ in the Presbyterian Church, and in his young manhood had followed the flag of his country through the smoke of the battles of the Civil War. Over his casket and across his body was draped the beautiful flag of our country. As I looked down into the face of that aged servant of Jesus Christ, an aged soldier, too, of his country, I thought to myself, How beautiful and how appropriate! Both causes were sacred, for both were the cause of Christ. There is the best refutation, and the severest condemnation, too, of those who would tell us that it is unworthy and un-Christian to defend our country and to resist wrong and iniquity with embattled force.

Who will hear called today the long roll of the ministers of our Church who, since the last General Assembly, have finished their pilgrimage and accomplished their warfare without deep searchings of heart? Who will not say to himself, "One day my name, too, shall be called out in this long list"? And who, thinking of that, will not say within himself, "Let me work while it is called today, lest the night cometh when no man can work"?

On a summer day some years ago, I paid a visit to Andersonville in Georgia, that terrible stockade where 32,000 Federal soldiers were penned up in the narrow space of twenty-three acres, without any covering or protection from sun or rain, save such as they dug out of the soil with their own hands. Nowhere in America is there a place which will so impress upon your mind the price that was paid to redeem this nation.

The greatest of all their sufferings at Andersonville was the suffering of thirst. The stream which ran through the stockade was soon befouled and poisoned; and with their long poles, and their cups fastened to the end of the poles, the haggard scarecrows of prisoners would go as near as they dared to the dead line and fish for pure water in the unpolluted stream beyond. But one day, during a thunderstorm, there suddenly burst out in the very center of the stockade a pure and vigorous spring. The thirsty prisoners hailed it with delight, and regarding it as a direct intervention of Heaven on their behalf, named it Providence Spring. Today on the monument at Andersonville to the soldiers of Iowa who perished there, you can read this inscription, the beautiful words from the Apocalypse:

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Sitting on the grass under the pine trees by that monument with its beautiful inscription, one thought again of

\*Dr. T. B. Anderson, Beaver Falls, Pa.

## MORE DISQUIETING NEWS FROM THE FOREIGN FIELD

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she is in a position to give competent first-hand testimony on the matter. Our primary interest is in informing the Church concerning the actual situation believing that in the long run we can best serve the cause of missions by so doing. Hence we willingly accede to MISS ENRIGHT'S request that we give her letter the same publicity that we gave to MR. DUNLOP'S article. Her letter follows:

The Editor, CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Dear Sir: Under the caption "Presbyterian Missionaries and the Truth" there appeared in the January issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY an article by the REV. H. P. DUNLOP. The article is written in a very interesting way, but fails in one essential point. It is not in accordance with the facts.

MR. DUNLOP writes from the viewpoint of a tourist who has spent a few weeks at a time amongst various Presbyterian missions, and has observed the missionaries as a guest in their midst. Practically everyone who has had the slightest contact with modernists knows that while the fundamentalist may, and often does, wear his orthodoxy "on his sleeve," the modernist practically never does. Asked about his religious beliefs the modernist hedges and avoids definite assertions. We are convinced that if MR. DUNLOP had gone a little deeper in his search for the actual religious beliefs of some Presbyterian missionaries, he would have reached a very different conclusion.

We rejoice in the fact that there is, undoubtedly, a large body of Presbyterian missionaries who remain true to the Word of God and our historic Faith, and we thank God for a few such noble defenders of the Faith as the DR. WILEY MR. DUNLOP mentions, but alas! their numbers are comparatively few, for even the orthodox are largely content to be middle-of-the-road men and women.

It is also undoubtedly true that modernism has made terrible inroads in our Presbyterian missions and that those who are, in one way or another, untrue to the Word of God, are not, as MR. DUNLOP asserts, "one or two" here and there, but they are many and their numbers are increasing.

What the Presbyterian Church needs is not such a smoke screen as MR. DUNLOP'S article raises in this crisis, but a clear knowledge of the truth concerning these matters, that they may realize the danger which threatens the Church and its foreign mission work and may rally all their forces to meet that danger and conquer it in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,

GRACE L. ENRIGHT.

WESTERN INDIA MISSION, SANGLI, BOMBAY PRESIDENCY, INDIA.

## BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

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the price with which our nation has been bought; and today we think not only of the soldiers of our country, but of our friends, these good soldiers of Jesus Christ, whose work and ministry are over, and yet, in a sense, not over, for although they rest from their labors, their works do follow them. So we leave them in that better country, where "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light upon them nor any heat, but the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God, even our God, shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

## INSPIRED TRANSLATORS

By the late REV. CHARLES E. EDWARDS, D.D.



THE Christian Church has always believed the Scriptures to be the Word of God. But the doctrine of an inspired, inerrant Bible has often been misrepresented or misunderstood. When properly stated, it harmonizes with all relevant facts. Copyists, printers, translators are not infallible, though in most instances they bring to us the Word of God. They are not inspired. But in the original New Testament, there are translations and translators, and they are inspired and inerrant.

To begin with, there is Christ Himself. He spoke the language of the people, which was Syriac, or substantially, Aramaic. Some of His utterances are quoted, for instance from the 22nd Psalm, on the cross, and it is a Syriac form, a language sometimes called Hebrew in the New Testament, a similar, yet different dialect. He may have spoken Greek also. He quoted the Old Testament, and doubtless oftener than the occasions mentioned in the Gospels. Did He quote the Hebrew, or did He translate into Syriac, or did He sometimes speak in Greek, so that a part of His sayings are given in the Greek Testament in His very words? Such situations show that a considerable part of His sayings may be translated from Syriac into Greek. But all this is as inspired as the passages which are not translations.

The disciples whom Jesus chose as apostles had no professional education, but they could do what very many of our college graduates cannot do, speak and write two languages. They too, quote from the Old Testament, and of course, they translate it. And here our doctrine of inspiration has no change whatever, for the Holy Spirit directed them in translation as in anything else recorded in Scripture.

Now, what is involved in translation? There is some truth in the saying that one cannot translate anything. An idea is taken from one language and clothed in the words of another language. In Hebrew and Greek, the alphabets are different, tenses and verbs different, for the Hebrew verb has some feminine forms absent from the Greek. They have different idioms and synonyms. The verb "to have" is in Greek, but not in Hebrew. Both languages can indicate emphatic pronouns.

Inspiration does not change the human characteristics of the writers. Peter is different from James or John. The sacred writers in their translations from the Old Testament are free to fulfil an inspired purpose and use what suits that purpose. They are not slavish or unnatural in quotations. They even use the Septuagint version. They emphasize what they please. They may quote several verses together, from Joel, or Jeremiah or the Psalms. As we contemplate the whole range of their quotations, dozens and scores of them, we see how vast is their importance, and how true it is, that the New Testament is hidden in the Old, and the Old Testament is laid open in the New.

## SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD

She hath done what she could; she hath anointed my body beforehand for the burying. Mark 14:8.

Mary's act was one of self-denying, profuse love. The ointment was "exceeding costly"; she poured upon Jesus the entire box, filling the room with its incense.

In Mary's loving devotion Jesus sees both the fruitage and the reflection of His own love for sinners like Mary. Mary loves Him because He first loved her. That is the connection between Mary's glorious deed and the Gospel. Hence as a "memorial of her" her deed is rehearsed wheresoever the Gospel is preached. Jesus sees in Mary's love His love for her reflected. He loves to love us. Even when surrounded by our enemies.

He took His own body, "the alabaster box," and broke it on Calvary's Cross; and there He poured forth over all the world the "exceeding precious ointment" (Mt. 26), His own life-blood, "that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And the anointing aroma of that free love now fills the world.—O. HOLTROP in *Daily Manna*.