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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

CHANGES



READERS will notice that in recent months the pages of CHRISTIANITY TODAY have undergone alterations in arrangement and subject. With this issue, still further changes are made. Four new departments have been added. These are first, the introduction of a systematic news coverage; second, a treatment of the International Uniform Sunday School Lessons for February; third, the publication of our "one page sermon," and fourth, the first appearance of our "Columnist" who will comment upon unusual or significant happenings. While the Editors, of course, agree with his general position, the views he expresses will be his own. The news coverage is not complete in this issue, but we expect it to be so in February, and in subsequent months. When complete it is doubtful whether any American religious journal will be able to equal it. In trying to make CHRISTIANITY TODAY the very best religious paper anywhere, we will continue to add departments and make changes. At least one new feature—perhaps two—will be found in the next issue.

THE NEXT MODERATOR



THE *Newark Evening News* for December 10th contained an article that many regarded as a formal announcement of the fact that Dr. WILLIAM HIRAM FOULKES, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of that city, will be a candidate for the moderatorship of the next Assembly. "Presbyterian leaders," we read in the opening sentence, "are predicting the election of Dr. FOULKES as moderator of the 1933 General Assembly." "For several years," the article continues, "rumors have linked the name of Dr. FOULKES with the moderatorship, but he has been unwilling, because of pastoral and denominational duties, to permit his name to be placed in nomination. Now, however, there seems to be a general impression, not alone in the metropolitan area, but throughout the church, that Dr. FOULKES time to serve his denomination as its official head begins next May."

Dr. FOULKES' campaign manager (if we may so speak) is Dr. CHARLES LEE REYNOLDS, superintendent of church extension in the Presbytery of Newark. In commending his candidate Dr. REYNOLDS said: "At this time we need a leader with special gifts; one who is spiritually minded and possessed of a strong evangelical faith, and we have such a leader in our own presbytery in the person of Dr. FOULKES." That Dr. REYNOLDS, in his effort to secure the election of Dr. FOULKES, will have the support of those who have dominated the last eight Assemblies would

seem to be indicated by the fact that Dr. CHARLES R. ERDMAN and Dr. HUGH T. KERR reacted favorably when he put to them the question: "Do you agree with me that we need, at this time, the kind of leadership that Dr. FOULKES can give?"

Dr. ERDMAN replied: "Your letter affords me the very deepest satisfaction. There is no one in our church whom I should rather have elected as moderator of the coming Assembly than Dr. FOULKES. This choice is based not only on my personal friendship for Dr. FOULKES, but on the conviction that he is better fitted to fill the office at this time than any other man in the church."

Dr. KERR replied: "I certainly think that this is the year when Dr. FOULKES' name ought to go forward and be presented to the church as the next moderator. He has earned it, he deserves it, he is worthy of it, the church needs him. I am willing to proclaim this from the house tops if necessary and I would be glad to have you tell him the way I feel. I know there is a great many in the church who feel the same way."

It is possible that some of those who approve of the tendencies that have been dominant in the Presbyterian Church in recent years will, for personal reasons, prefer some candidate other than Dr. FOULKES. We do not see, however, how they can object to him in principle inasmuch as he epitomizes those tendencies as well as any man that could be named. We do not have the happiness to approve those tendencies and hence feel constrained to oppose the candidacy of Dr. FOULKES or any other man who may be expected to further those tendencies. In our judgment, what the church needs is a type of leadership very different from that which it has had in recent years.

DID THE PUBLICITY RELEASES GIVE A WRONG IMPRESSION OF THE LAYMEN'S REPORT?



THOSE responsible for the report of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry are still being criticised because of the press releases they gave out in advance of its publication. It is alleged not only that they broke their pledge, expressed or implied, to the Boards to keep the report confidential until after November 18 but that these press releases gave the public a false impression of the report and thus aroused unwarranted dissent and opposition.

Whether its sponsors acted unethically in giving the series of releases to the press before the report had been formally presented to the Boards we have no means of knowing. Be that as it may, it does not seem to us that these press releases were fitted to give a wrong impression of the actual character of the report. We read the releases as they appeared in the press from time to time. Our later reading of the report as a whole only tended to confirm the impression we obtained from the releases. At no time did we have the feeling that the press releases had misrepresented or even given a wrong slant to the Com-

"Renouncing Missions" or "Modernism Unmasked"

By the Rev. Clarence Edward Macartney, D. D.

Minister, The First Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa., Moderator of the General Assembly of 1924.

[We are glad to publish this trenchant article by Dr. Macartney. His devotion to the everlasting Gospel and his great ability to defend it are written indelibly in the history of the Presbyterian Church. In these excerpts from a sermon preached before his congregation on January 8, Dr. Macartney not only shows the true nature of the "Laymen's Report" but also courageously bears witness to the fact that the missionary leaders must bear their share of responsibility for the state-of-affairs today.]

And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." (Acts 15:36.)



AFTER nineteen hundred years of Christian Missions, the Laymen's Commission, headed by a Harvard Professor of philosophy, financed by Mr. Rockefeller, and broadcast by Mr. Ivy Lee, the same who in 1922 broadcast Dr. Fosdick's famous sermon, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" has made the interesting discovery that the whole foundation of Christian Missions must be changed if this work is to continue.

The Commission set before itself as the first question, "Shall these missions continue?" Their conclusion is that they ought to continue, but when we read what they are to do and to teach, it sounds like a complete repudiation of historic and evangelical Christianity.

The disqualification of this Commission to pass judgment upon the work of the churches in foreign lands is glaringly set forth in the Foreword to the published Report. In this they say that while to some of their members the "motive of Christian Missions can only be adequately expressed as loyalty to Jesus Christ—to others, this motive would best be called the spirit of altruistic service—to still others the desire for a deeper knowledge and love of God." All this is in striking contrast with the historic motive of Christian Missions, for it was not an altruistic desire to share certain benefits with mankind, nor was it a quest after God, which sent the first Apostles into the world, and after them, the great missionaries of the Cross.

According to the Report of this Commission, one would conclude that Christianity is not the Eternal Gospel, the



The Rev. Clarence E. Macartney, D.D.

only way of Eternal Life, or the Name of Christ the only name given under Heaven among men whereby we must be saved, but just *one* of the numerous religions of the world. These other religions are not to be assailed as false, but to be appreciated as other paths that lead in the same direction as Christianity. In the amazing statement of the Commission, we are to "look forward, not to the destruction of these religions, but to their continued coexistence with Christianity, each stimulating the other in growth towards the ultimate goal, unity in the completest religious truth."

The unique thing in the Christian revelation, so this Commission declares, is not any one of its great doctrines, in contrast with the heathen religions; but what they call the "grouping of these doctrines." "Christianity," they tell us, "proffers a selection which is unique." For Christianity, they tell us, to contest priority or uniqueness in regard to its great doctrines, is a "humiliating mistake."

The Commission commends to our modern churches and missionaries the methods of the Apostle Paul in the Greek and Roman world. But how strange their motive for missions is, and how different the qualifying beliefs of the missionary, according to this Commission, when compared with the commission which was given to St. Paul at the time of his conversion at Damascus. This was not to start out on a quest after God through the pagan world, nor to share with them some of the blessings of Christianity; but, as stated by the Lord Jesus Christ, to be a witness of the things which he had seen and heard; "delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified." (Acts 26:18.)

The real significance of this report lies not in its diverse suggestions about missionary methods, which may be sound or not, but in its confession as to the underlying motives of missionary endeavor, and its repudiation of Scriptural and evangelical Christianity. The Commission suggests the reduction in number of the Theological Seminaries on the Foreign Field, and the abolition of the word "theological" altogether. This is only natural, since the Commission seems to have abandoned all Theology, and reduced Christianity to a quest after God and a sharing of the higher way with others.

The Report of this Commission is, in its doctrinal statements, the most carefully elaborated creed of Modernism which has yet appeared. This is at once recognized as its chief significance by the Modernist paper, "*The Christian Century*," which, under the title "Is Modernism Ready?" enthusiastically endorses the report of the Commission and says, "This is the first time that Modernism has acted explicitly and upon its own initiative to effect the reconstruction of any primary function of the Christian Church."

The question now before the Christian Churches of America is this: Is the organized Church ready to abandon Scriptural and historic Christianity? Has it discovered better motives for Christian Missions than those which Christ gave to St. Paul, viz, to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins?

The published report of the Commission is a book of 350 pages. But in these 129,000 words, I can note just one mention of the word "sin." The omission is significant. Nor do I recall seeing a single mention of the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, by Whose authority Christian Missions commenced, when He said at Antioch, "Separate unto me, Barnabas and Saul," and by Whose guidance and under Whose dispensation the work of the Church is now done.

Most of the Missionary Boards of the Churches which had unofficial representatives on this Commission, while ready to accept and rejoice in any sound suggestions as to missionary methods, have made haste to repudiate the doctrinal statements as to missionary motives and as to the relationship of Christianity to the heathen religions.

The missionary leaders of the Churches have been conspicuous for their repudiation of the doctrinal implications of the report. Yet those who can remember back as far as ten years ago, will recall that when a Baptist clergyman was proclaiming from a Presbyterian pulpit practically the same ideas of Christ and the Christian religion as are found in this report, these men did not seem to be in the least disturbed. They gave no encouragement or counsel to those who, because of their protest, were bearing the heat of the battle, but by their silence gave comfort to the enemies of evangelical Christianity. Therefore, the ringing repudiation of the report by some of our missionary leaders has, to the minds of many in the Churches, come too late

to prove effective. Perhaps the better course for them now would have been silence, humiliating indeed, but consistent.

Nevertheless, the fact that this Commission's report has compelled the middle-of-the-roaders and the peace-at-any-price men to break their silence, reveals the fact that what is called Modernism in our Churches has now reached such a point of development that those who adhere to the standards of historic Christianity, can no longer pretend to ignore its presence or the fact that it is "another Gospel which is not another." Therefore, for this reason, evangelical Christians in all our Churches can thank the members of this Commission for their report. They have scattered the fog; torn off from the face of Modernism its mask and its disguise, so that he who runs may now know that there is an irreconcilable difference between the Christianity of the Scriptures, of the Apostles, and of the ages, and that vague and inchoate collection of human thoughts and fancies which has been masquerading as a new and higher interpretation of Christianity.

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!"

Is Christianity True?—Concluded

tian conceptions have only a subjective validity and incapable of validation in the forum of reason. If Christianity is to shape the future we must be able to maintain, as all the great heroes of the faith have maintained, that the Christian is the only true rationalist. All Christianity asks for, from an intellectual point of view, is a fair hearing and a just verdict. The first charge we bring against the non-Christian is that he is irrational. We believe in Christianity because such faith is rational, not in spite of the so-called fact that it is irrational.

Is Christianity true? We might answer this question in the negative and still have an interest in Christianity as a historical movement that has done much to mould the thought and life of mankind; but we would not allow it to move our hearts and guide our hands or hold that it would continue to mould the culture and civilization of the future. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this question. The question, What is Christianity?, has only an historical interest once it is seen that it is not true. Moreover the question, What is the value of Christianity?, is emptied of all real meaning. Our whole life and world view, our hopes as individuals and as members of society, are wrapped up in this question. We are the advocates of a Christian culture and civilization, and rejoice in the hope of a blessed immortality through the riches of God's grace as revealed in JESUS CHRIST, because we believe that Christianity is true. Others are the advocates of a different type of culture and civilization, and anticipate a very different future, because they believe that Christianity is false. It is our conviction not only that Christianity is true in the sense indicated but that it is capable of rational defense in the forum of the world's thought.