

# 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

## 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*.