

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Vol. 25, No. 48

130 Gerrard Street East, TORONTO, MARCH 27, 1947

Whole Number 1297

Dr. Shields Answers Halifax-Lunenburg Presbyter Rev. R. MacLeod

IT is the rule of THE GOSPEL WITNESS scrupulously to regard the expressed wish of correspondents who desire that their names should not be published. We never publish a communication, however, without having, for our own information and protection, the name of the writer. And we say now to our corres-

pondents that if they desire their names withheld we shall faithfully regard their wishes.

There are, however, exceptions to all rules. The letter published below is one of those exceptions. The writer, as it will be observed, marked his letter

(Explanation continued on next page)

Letter of Rev. R. MacLeod, Elmsdale, N.S.

Rev. J. S. Shields
Toronto Ont.

Elmsdale,
Hants County,
Nova Scotia,
Mar. 20/47

For your information only, and not to be published.

Dear Sir, I have been supporting the Gospel Witness for some considerable time and I have encouraged others to do likewise. On receiving your last copy I have come to the conclusion that this paper is not serving the cause of Protestantism in this country. It seems to me that the policy of the Gospel Witness is ~~now~~ defeating its own purpose by its readiness to display schism and certain peevishness within the Protestant Church, and by publishing articles of a controversial nature not in harmony with the best interests of the Protestant cause.

(Explanation continued from page 1)

"not to be published"; but pinned to the letter, was a newspaper cutting with a two-column headline, containing a statement by the Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery, which we have elsewhere described as a malicious attack upon Rev. Perry F. Rockwood. That newspaper cutting was marked in Mr. MacLeod's own handwriting, "for publication".

Thus, Mr. MacLeod asked us to give publicity to what is almost a libelous statement by the Halifax-

Lunenburg Presbytery, while at the same time behind a proposed veil of silence, he sent us a private, nasty, epistle against Mr. Rockwood, full of uncharitable suggestions, and innuendoes; and this he labeled "for your information only; not to be published".

In our extended answer to Mr. MacLeod, we include a copy of a long telegram we sent him, which he did not see fit to answer. But it will be observed that we gave him due warning of our reserving the right to publish his letter with, or without, his permission.

(Continuation of Rev. R. MacLeod's Letter from page 1)

It seems to me, that the aim and policy of this paper ought to be first of all, to create confidence instead of destroying it among non-Protestant readers who might be looking to the GOSPEL WITNESS for proof and guidance as to why they should adopt the Protestant faith. This was one of the reasons why I was eager to support the WITNESS. I looked upon your paper not only as a strong defence of Protestantism, but also as a strong "tower of defence" against Romanism.

I am a member of the Halifax Presbytery whose actions you readily condemned in your last issue, in regard to Mr. Rockwood's trial. I fail to see why this publicity is necessary. It has received already more publicity than many of our murder trials in this country. After all is said and done, there is nothing unusual about church discipline, and we as a church reserve the right to discipline without interference from any other church or religious group. Our church always exercised discipline over its members, elders and ministers and we are in a better position to know what is to the best interests of our church and the spiritual wellbeing of our people. We can do this because we have a standard of doctrine and a principle of church government based on democratic ideals, that is more than some churches can do or say. By these standards Mr. Rockwood has been judged which he claimed we have forsaken.

I have discovered much of what you published in your last issue of the GOSPEL WITNESS appears somewhat misleading and inaccurate. I don't suppose you would possess all the facts "as there are two sides to every question." However, I would point out that we know Mr. Rockwood better than

those who have been only too ready to condemn our action as a church court. We had to deal with him as a member of that court, and we always found him rather a difficult person to work with. We were always ready to cooperate with him in his work and often commended him on the good work he was doing. We have a right to defend those who were loyal to our church and her standards in the disruption of 1925. Mr. Rockwood was tried on the ground that he accused some of these men for being disloyal to the church and her teaching. He was not tried on all he said in his sermons. There were statements in his sermons with which we were in agreement, but the church has to have some authority to define her position otherwise each and every minister and congregation will become a law unto themselves.

Mr. Rockwood was not persecuted for preaching the Gospel and we rejoice that the Gospel is being preached, besides he is not the only one who preaches the Gospel of grace and salvation. I am the one who claimed the church is not "sick unto death," and not Mr. McKinnon, and I have reason to believe this, of, I believe in the Sovereign Grace of God. To say that the Protestant Church is dying is to sound the familiar note of Romanism and to play the game of the R.C. Church.

I resent very much your attacks on the chaplains. I have met many of these men over in England and on the Continent and believe me they were not there to escape the arduous duties of the pastorate. This can be said of them all, for I know that many of them in this country were disappointed when prevented from going overseas that they might be near the scene of action.

(This letter is continued in the facsimile below)

I would again remind you that the situation in Toronto called for action on the part of the Presbytery & since Mr. Rockwood refused to listen to advice and wise counsel of elders men in the Synod, then the Presbytery had to seek another the only course left open to deal with Mr. Rockwood. In any case the door was left open for his return & we were hoping he would see things in the light of Christian humility and common sense. He was free to appeal to the General Assembly if he was anxious to remain faithful to his Church and her Ministry. He is now at liberty to dictate his own policy and that is what he desired most of all.

Respectfully Yours
Rox MacLeod

A facsimile of the clipping sent by Rev. MacLeod as marked in his own handwriting.

For publication

“Delusions Of Greatness And An Itch For Fame,” Laid To Truro Cleric

Halifax, March 20 (CP).—The Halifax-Lunenburg presbytery of the Presbyterian Church said in a statement today that those who knew Rev. Perry F. Rockwood, who resigned his St. James Church at Truro, N.S., after being found guilty of making an attempt to split the Presbyterian Church, “declare that he suffers from delusions of greatness and an itch for fame.”

The statement added that Mr. Rockwood “has taken as his master Dr. Joseph Goebbels and works on the principle that if a lie is big enough and told often enough some people will believe it.”

Rev. Frank Lawson, moderator of the Halifax-Lunenburg presbytery, announced earlier today that the pulpit of St. James would be declared vacant Sunday after acceptance of Mr. Rockwood's resignation.

The presbytery said the youthful minister had been tried for his attack on the teachers of the Presbyterian College at Montreal and not for his insistence upon preaching the Bible, expressing his mind freely or criticizing weaknesses of Church government and people.

At Truro, Mr. Rockwood, who preached last Sunday to a large congregation in a hall, said he had no comment to make on the statement at present, other than that he still adhered to what he had said in the four sermons which got him into trouble with his Church.

Termed “Pure Fabrication”

Mr. Rockwood had said in his sermons—and later at his trial here before a Church court—that professors in the college had torn leaves from the Bible and he had cited an alleged conversation with one professor to back up this “chief sport.”

The presbytery said letters from the professors concerned proved Mr. Rockwood's story was a “pure fabrication,” and since it had been thought fit that Mr. Rockwood should leave at the end of his first year in theology, that was his way of trying “to get back at the Montreal college.”

Mr. Rockwood also was tried for the specific charge made against Prof. David Hay of Knox College, Toronto, that he (Mr. Hay) “did not believe the Book of Genesis to be a text on science—an infallible book in its commas, dots and dashes,” the presbytery said.

The presbytery asked where Mr. Rockwood had acquired his “profound knowledge” to say that the Protestant Church was not preaching the Gospel since his summer holidays “are spent in a seaside cottage in Nova Scotia and his orbit of movement is within a radius of 50 miles of Truro.”

Deny “Trumped-Up Charge”

“Alas,” the statement added, “he has led astray some few and innocent people in the Maritimes and when their eyes are opened they will see Mr. Rockwood for what he is.

“We hope that the good people of the Maritimes will understand that nothing in the nature of a trumped-up charge has been launched against an innocent man or an attempt made to persecute one who is bold and fearless in preaching unpleasant truths. This is not so.

“We conceded to Mr. Rockwood the right to preach the truth in all its fulness, but not the right to stay within a church, enjoy its privileges, while at the same time seek by fifth-column methods to destroy it.

“Outside a church and in a pulpit he has built we concede his right to say whatever he feels like saying.”

WELL DONE, BROCKVILLE PRESBYTERY!

FROM the beginning THE GOSPEL WITNESS expressed its conviction that the Presbyterian Church in Canada would be by no means unanimous in approving the action of the Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery respecting Rev. Perry F. Rockwood. To-day, Monday, mail has poured in to THE GOSPEL WITNESS office which has made it impossible, notwithstanding an extensive staff, to tabulate the results. Letters are reaching us from all over Canada from Presbyterian ministers and elders and members of Presbyterian churches, not only approving our stand, but cordially thanking THE GOSPEL WITNESS for giving publicity to a matter which could not otherwise have been publicized. We know of no Presbyterian paper with a continent-wide circulation that could give such space to the Rockwood matter as we have given. This is not a Presbyterian question. Neither Presbyterians, nor Anglicans, nor United Churchmen, nor Baptists, nor anyone else, has a monopoly of the gospel, and, unfortunately, not one of them can claim immunity to the plague of Modernism; and the believer who is truly loyal to Jesus Christ will always put loyalty to the word of God, and to Jesus Christ as Lord, before all denominational considerations.

The Editor of this paper is a Baptist, and he makes no apology for it, and though he may differ from many of his brethren in respect to the ordinance of baptism, and New Testament ecclesiology, he is ready always to extend the hand of fellowship to every man, to whatever Denomination he may belong, who is true to the central verities of Evangelical Christianity. For this reason THE GOSPEL WITNESS considers itself set for the defence of the gospel, of “the faith once for all delivered to the saints,” not in Baptist churches only, but in all churches, and feels it a solemn duty to expose error wherever it is found.

We have before expressed the opinion that not a few Presbyterians throughout Canada will be found in disagreement with the Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery. We say that because we have heard from such a host of Presbyterian ministers commending our support of the stand of Rev. Perry F. Rockwood, of Truro.

We gladly publish the following from *The Prescott Journal*, which reports a meeting of the Brockville Presbytery, and their action in respect to the Rockwood matter.

Here follows the item:

Meeting in Prescott on Tuesday, Brockville Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Canada went on record as

disapproving the action of the Presbytery of Halifax and Lunenburg for censuring Rev. Perry Rockwood, of Truro, who was charged with pursuing a divisive course in his congregation. Brockville Presbytery has asked a committee of General Assembly to review the matter as being contrary to Presbyterian tradition.

At this writing, late Monday afternoon, there are such piles of letters before us, which we have not yet had time to read much less digest, from which we hope for this issue to make copious extracts. Without counting, it is enough to say that the requests for individual copies of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, containing Mr. Rockwood's sermons received in two mails today alone cannot be less than a thousand. One good Presbyterian sent us an approving letter, enclosing twenty-five dollars toward the expense of this special issue, and one hundred and eighty-seven names of good solid Presbyterians to whom he desired copies of THE GOSPEL WITNESS sent.

MR. ROCKWOOD RETURNS THE "SOFT ANSWER"

"Itch-for-Fame" Charge Personal, Pastor Says

Truro, N.S., March 21 (CP).—Rev. Perry F. Rockwood, 29-year-old minister who resigned his St. James Church pulpit here after being found guilty of attempting to split

the Presbyterian Church said tonight he regretted that an official court of the Presbyterian Church "should descend to make such personal references and authorize such a statement" as made yesterday by the Halifax-Lunenburg presbytery.

The presbytery said in its statement that those who knew Mr. Rockwood "declare he suffers from delusions of greatness and an itch for fame" and that he "works on the principle that if a lie is big enough and told often enough some people will believe it."

"I am surprised," Mr. Rockwood said tonight, "that the presbytery has set me forth as a liar, as a social climber seeking fame and attention and as a false leader."

"Such remarks are personal and are not based on the real issues at stake. They have to do with my character and my character was not on trial. During the trial (before the Halifax-Lunenburg presbytery at Halifax early this month) no proof was given that my statements were false."

Mr. Rockwood said he had left the church because he "was no longer permitted to criticize where she has departed from the Bible. I wish the blessing of Almighty God in separating from them (the church). I am ready to allow time itself to be the judge of what has been said and in the meantime I shall continue to build up an independent church in Truro where the people shall have a voice and for which the people everywhere may give support."

PRESBYTERIAN LETTERS

From a Saskatchewan Letter

Pambrun, Sask.
Box 49
March 22, 1947

THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

Dear Sir:

Thank you for the copy of your paper containing Rev. Rockwood's sermons. I'm enclosing a small contribution to help with the expense and would appreciate very much if you would send a copy to each of the following.

I'm an elder in the Presbyterian church and agree 100% with Mr. Rockwood. I only hope all this publicity etc., will not fill him with pride and that he keeps humble that he may be useful.

I'm disappointed in that no Presbyterian Publication championed this worthy cause so far but thankful to God that you did.

We hate to leave our beloved church because sin dwells within her. We also are grieved to see such fearless men as Mr. Rockwood driven out of her. But should our General Assembly see fit to uphold the decision of the Truro Presbytery it will be hard to stay in and support a church that is doomed because Christ and His Gospel have been given less than first place.

Either He is Lord of all,
Or not at all.

I intend to pass my copy of THE WITNESS along to others to read. And I earnestly hope and pray that out of all this a stronger, purer, truer Church will emerge. And that God's Holy Spirit will completely control and keep Rev. Rockwood and all his faithful servants as He always has done.

Sincerely yours,
John Brell.

Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Willow Grove, Pennsylvania
Rev. Robert Strong, S.T.D., Pastor

March 18, 1947

Dear Dr. Shields:

I cannot too heartily express my appreciation as a Presbyterian minister of your stand in behalf of the valiant Rev. Perry F. Rockwood. The fight for the faith cuts across denominational lines and calls upon all true believers to

come to the help of the Lord against the mighty when as in the present instance a true servant of His has been most unjustly condemned. It is cause for thankfulness that you have ever been quick to proceed upon this principle. I enclose a check to assist your efforts.

Sincerely,

Robert Strong.

305 Washington St.
New Glasgow, N.S.

March 19, 1947

Dear Dr. Shields:

I wish to thank you for the copy of GOSPEL WITNESS dated March 13th. The one copy is worth more than the subscription price.

I am glad to know that you are standing behind Rockwood. I was in charge of the Thorburn Congregation when he was called and settled there. In the short time he was there he did more for them than any other minister that they have had in recent years, especially in having the two churches renovated, one at Thorburn and the other at Sutherland's River. While he had enemies it was due to his aggressiveness in getting needed repairs done, rather than doctrine. As far as I know, Pictou Presbytery is solid for him in this matter of controversy with the Halifax Presbytery.

You will appreciate this from the late Principal Allen Pollock of Pine Hill, Halifax, N.S., when he said on the occasion of the late Dr. James Robertson's visit to the College, "These Old Country Ministers play the Devil with our congregations." Well that is about what happened in the Halifax Presbytery.

Success and best wishes, I am,

Yours sincerely,
W. A. Cunningham.

Presbyterian Writes From Calgary

10213, 124th St.

Edmonton, Alberta

March 18, 1947

Dr. T. T. Shields,
Jarvis St. Baptist Church,
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Dr. Shields,

The Lord bless you for putting out this special edition

of the GOSPEL WITNESS. I am wiring today for 300 copies for we want them for Sunday.

I am a former member in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, but trained at Faith Theological Seminary and am now a Bible Presbyterian minister. We have been holding Bible Presbyterian services here now for six months.

Commenced a series on "The Church Sick Unto Death" taking up Mr. Rockwood's sermons, trial and resignation and we are having a real response. Now here's something for your paper.

The editor of the religious page here told me that they have had a conference and decided not to enter this issue. Our ad was accepted this past week, and one paper gave us a very brief writeup simply telling of the commencement of the series, the other said they were going to but didn't.

Thanks for what you are doing. May the Lord bless you.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. R. Allan Killen.

From Torrance, Ont.

Torrance, Ont.

March 24th, 1947

Dr. Shields,
130 Gerrard St. E.
Toronto, Ont.

Sir:

As a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal saviour and an elder in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, I am glad to accept your invitation to protest through the GOSPEL WITNESS the action of Halifax Lunenburg Presbytery against Rev. Perry F. Rockwood, until recently minister of St. James' Presbyterian Church, Truro, N.S.

When I first heard the voice of Gordon Sinclair over CFRB announcing the trial of Rev. Rockwood by Halifax Lunenburg Presbytery, I thought it must surely be for denying the faith once delivered to the Saints, but after reading his sermons in your instructive weekly, I was hor-

rified to find that the reverse was the case and I could see the hand of the serpent behind the scenes.

That most of our (Pres.) Ministers, (many of whom I know personally), are still true to the faith, as it is in Christ, and believers in Democratic Church procedure, I have no doubt, but there are others, (if only a vociferous minority), as is evident by attempts to link our Church with the Canadian Council of Churches. The Church of Christ in China, (once Christian and Presbyterian), now indefinite if not modernist, and the attempt of certain individuals to get around the Barrier act, the Presbyterian safe-guard against minorities imposing their will on majorities.

That the Canadian Council of Churches is a spiritual fifth column, I have not the slightest doubt despite the honeyed phrases of its defenders, as witness the attempt to co-operate with the Vatican, that satanic institution, which during the late war, did its utmost to help the Axis powers destroy the Democracies and is still fomenting trouble wherever it can, despite the superb lying and deceptive propaganda of its agents in Canada and all other countries.

Furthermore, if the recently elected head of the above named Council, i.e. Professor Gilmour, of McMaster University, is the same man against whom Dr. Shields waged war twenty-five years ago, for his, Gilmour's, denial of the essentials of the faith as it is in Christ, then what need we of further witnesses? (*The present Chancellor of McMaster is a son of the Professor Gilmour referred to. Ed. G. W.*)

I would suggest that all Presbyterian ministers and elders, petition the General Assembly, not so much for Mr. Rockwood's sake, who has now resigned, but to prevent possible future aggressions against Evangelical ministers.

Thanking you for the opportunity of protesting against what looks to me like Ecclesiastical Fascism.

Mr. Alex McBain.

Dr. Shields' Answer To Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery Spokesman — Rev. R. MacLeod

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED WEEKLY

T. T. SHIELDS, EDITOR

130 GERRARD STREET EAST, TORONTO 2, CANADA

March 25th, 1947

Rev. R. MacLeod,
Presbyterian Minister,
Elmsdale, Hants, N.S.

Dear Sir:

On receipt, yesterday, of your letter of March 20th, I sent you a telegram direct as follows:

"REV. R. MacLEOD,
Elmsdale, Hants, N.S.

MUST CONFESS AMAZEMENT AT YOUR EXTENDED LETTER RE ROCKWOOD MARKED QUOTE FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY AND NOT TO BE PUBLISHED UNQUOTE WHILE INCLUDING A NEWSPAPER CUTTING HEADED QUOTE DELUSIONS OF GREATNESS AND AN ITCH FOR FAME UNQUOTE AND CONTAINING THE SCURRILOUS ATTACK OF YOUR PRESBYTERY UPON MR. ROCKWOOD AND MARKED AS BY YOUR OWN HAND FOR PUBLICATION STOP YOU REQUEST PUBLICATION OF PRESBYTERY'S LIBELOUS ATTACK ON ROCKWOOD AND IN A LETTER WHICH YOU DESIRE NOT PUBLISHED YOU WOULD SERVE ME PRI-

VATELY WITH FURTHER MALICIOUS ASPERSIONS UPON MR. ROCKWOOD'S INTEGRITY. YOUR ACTION SUGGESTS YOU ARE NOT PROUD OF YOUR PART IN THE PRESBYTERIAN SANHEDRIN'S PERSECUTION OTHERWISE WOULD NOT SEEK TO HIDE YOUR MALICIOUSNESS UNDER A VEIL OF SILENCE STOP HAVE STRONGEST FEELING YOU HAVE NO MORAL RIGHT ADDRESS EDITOR OF PUBLICATION ON SUBJECT OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION ESPECIALLY WHEN INVOLVING A PERSONAL ATTACK UPON A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AND REQUEST YOUR LETTER BE WITHHELD FROM PUBLICATION STOP REQUEST YOU WIRE ME OUR EXPENSE YOUR PERMISSION PUBLISH YOUR ENTIRE LETTER WITH SIGNATURE. BUT RESERVE TO MYSELF THE RIGHT IN DEFENCE OF ROCKWOOD TO PUBLISH YOUR LETTER IN EXTENSO WHETHER YOU GIVE PERMISSION OR NOT. SHALL APPRECIATE IMMEDIATE TELEGRAPHIC REPLY.

T. T. SHIELDS"

No Telegraphic Reply Received

As I have received no reply to my wire, I am assuming you have no intention of replying, and, therefore, I am publishing your letter of March 20th, notwithstanding you marked it "for your information only, and not to be published".

In analyzing your letter I think I shall furnish suffi-

cient justification to all right-minded people for my decision to disregard your request "not to be published".

I am glad to know that you "have been supporting THE GOSPEL WITNESS for some considerable time". We appreciate the goodwill and cooperation of all our readers, and are always exceedingly sorry at any time to find ourselves in their disfavour. For over a somewhat extended period in my pulpit ministry, I have never withheld unpalatable truth because it might be displeasing to some of my hearers. The whole counsel of God must be declared, whatever the cost.

The same principle has governed the editorial policy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. We have been obliged to champion unpopular causes; and by so doing have often lost valued friends; although we have found that for every friend lost to us by telling the truth, we have gained a dozen new ones of a more enduring quality.

"Protestantism" Defined

Your statement that you have concluded THE GOSPEL WITNESS "is not serving the cause of Protestantism in this country" requires some clarification and definition. You charge THE GOSPEL WITNESS with a readiness to "display schism and certain weaknesses within the Protestant Church, and complain that we publish "articles of a controversial nature not in harmony with the best interests of the Protestant cause." I am wondering what you mean by "Protestantism", and whether you have learned the necessity of sharply distinguishing between Protestants, and mere non-Romanists. I suppose it would generally be admitted that what is usually called *Protestantism*, that is, that body of truth represented by the doctrines of the Protestant Reformation, is really based upon the principle of justification by faith, upon which Martin Luther so insisted. But behind that doctrine of justification, and underlying it, is the truth of the essential Deity of Jesus Christ, involving His virgin birth, His supernatural life, and death, and resurrection. It involves His expiatory sacrifice as the One and only Sacrifice for sin; and all that rests upon the divine inspiration and supreme authority of Holy Scripture. Surely you must recognize that when all, or any one, of these doctrines are, or is, denied, no Protestantism remains? What you conceive of as "the Protestant Church" is merely an aggregation of organizations of various Denominations, which call themselves, "Christian", many of whom are still true to the faith once for all delivered to the saints; but some of them have wholly departed from the principles upon which any true Protestantism must rest. The denial of the doctrines to which I have alluded, involves the denial of Protestantism; hence the repudiation of its protest against the anti-Christian tenets of Romanism.

Do Mr. Rockwood and Gospel Witness Serve Protestant Interests?

We shall see a little later in this letter whether the stand Mr. Rockwood has taken, and our support of him, tends to the consolidation of real Protestant interest and conviction, or the reverse.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS is not published with the object of making what are usually called "Protestants". The purpose of THE GOSPEL WITNESS is to endeavour to lead its non-Christian readers to a personal acceptance of Christ; and to lead them, and all others, so far as it has any influence, to a recognition of His absolute Lordship over the life of the individual, and over the church; with its inevitable corollary, the acceptance of the divine inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture.

I am sorry you disagree with the policy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. I think you were quite correct in looking upon our paper "not only as a strong defence of Protestantism, but also as a strong 'tower of defence' against Romanism". What you thought it to be, it really is; but that does not mean that it regards Denominational unity, or the solidarity of so-called Protestant Denominations as necessarily promoting the cause of Protestantism. In the last analysis the only people who can be depended upon to stand uncompromisingly against the Antichrist are those who are born again: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world".

You identify yourself as a member of the Halifax Presbytery, and say,

"I fail to see why this publicity is necessary."

Who Is Responsible for Rockwood Publicity?

It was not THE GOSPEL WITNESS, neither was it Mr. Rockwood, which gave such publicity to the Rockwood matter. It was the leaders of the Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery, who, so unwisely, made Mr. Rockwood's sermons an issue, which brought the matter out into public view. It is evident to any one of pastoral experience that a disgruntled minority group in St. James Church succeeded in getting the ear of the Presbytery. The Presbytery ought to have known that no plan could have been devised to give greater publicity to Mr. Rockwood than to put him on "trial", and find him "guilty" of following "a divisive course". After having blown the trumpet, and summoned all the news-gatherers to their side, the Presbytery actually advised Mr. Rockwood to shun publicity in the press, and to burn his sermons! Such a decision was like setting fire to prairie grass in a dry season. But seeing that publicity had been given to the matter on the one side, and Mr. Rockwood had been put in an ecclesiastical pillory, it would have been the quintessence of unfairness for men, sharing Mr. Rockwood's convictions, to keep silence.

A Vile Aspersion on Rockwood's Integrity

At this point I may justify the publication of your letter, notwithstanding your request that it "not be published". You deplore the publicity given, and yet you enclose in your letter an official attack upon Mr. Rockwood issued by authority of the Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery, and marked the newspaper cutting "for publication". That is to say, you actually ask me to give publicity to the Presbytery's truly vicious statement. That statement said that Mr. Rockwood "suffers from delusions of greatness, and an itch for fame". Technically, a person who has delusions, is mentally unsound. But who and what is your Presbytery to presume to judge of a man's motives? But it went further, and said that Mr. Rockwood,

"has taken as his master Dr. Joseph Goebbels, and works on the principle that if a lie is big enough, and told often enough, some people will believe it."

Can anyone imagine a viler aspersion on the character of a minister than this jibe? It plainly calls Mr. Rockwood a liar, and implies that he deliberately employed a policy of lying to further his own interests. There is more poisonous piffle of the same sort in the Presbytery's statement; and the Presbytery sarcastically asks, "where Mr. Rockwood had acquired his 'profound knowledge' to say that the Protestant Church was not preaching the Gospel, since his summer holidays 'are spent

in a seaside cottage in Nova Scotia, and his orbit of movement is within a radius of fifty miles of Truro."

Who Is The Ecclesiastical Yellow-Jacket Scribe?

We wonder what sort of an ecclesiastical yellow-jacket, an insect that stings but makes no honey, wrote those lines? Would the Presbytery charge Mr. Rockwood with inability to read plain English? A man's movements may be confined to a radius of much less than fifty miles from a given spot, while being one of the most thoroughly informed men in the world. The statement continues:

A Wicked Implication

"Alas, he has led astray some few and innocent people in the Maritimes, and when their eyes are opened they will see Mr. Rockwood for what he is."

Very probably the so-called "few innocent" people know Mr. Rockwood for what he is, far better than does the Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery. But as a minister of the Gospel, I am ashamed of your Presbytery's venomous innuendoes! You imply that your Presbytery is in possession of some dark secret respecting Mr. Rockwood which some day, when it becomes known, will make his friends ashamed!

Reason For Lengthy Quotations of MacLeod Letter

My reason for quoting at such length from this malicious statement is the fact that a newspaper-cutting containing it, although I had received many other copies, was attached to your letter, and over the two-column headline in your own hand was written, "For publication". While deploring my defence of Mr. Rockwood in giving further publicity to this matter, you send me this poisonous statement and ask me to publish it, but to keep your letter private!

Nobody questions the right of the Presbyterian Church to exercise discipline; but whether the elders and ministers are in the best position

"to know what is to the best interest of our church and the spiritual wellbeing of our people" must depend wholly upon the spiritual qualities of the elders and ministers concerned. But no church can be a law unto itself; and what any church does is likely to be a matter of public interest; and the public have a perfect right to form their own judgment of the right or wrong of church decisions.

Wherein Is The Gospel Witness Inaccurate?

You say that much of what was published in THE GOSPEL WITNESS

"appears somewhat misleading and inaccurate but you do not inform us of what this 'much' is."

You say that you know Mr. Rockwood better than some others; that you had to deal with him

"As a member of that court, and we always found him rather a difficult person to work with."

Any man of pronounced convictions, possessed of the courage of his convictions, will be found hard to work with by ecclesiastics who, in reference to doctrinal matters, pursue a policy of *laissez faire*.

You say,

"We have a right to defend those who were loyal to our church and her standards in the disruption of 1925."

We Were Not Regarded As Meddler by Presbyterians At Time of Disruption

May I humbly claim that I ought to be included in that list of the elect, for when Church Union was under

discussion I preached a series of sermons showing why Baptists could have nothing to do with it; and that no other churches ought to have anything to do with it, who were loyal to the word of God. I was not then criticized by anyone as an enemy of Presbyterians, although I did incur the displeasure of "Unionists" of all sorts. At that time little was being published on the subject apart from the newspaper reports, and when the instrument of incorporation was passed by Parliament, I printed it, and analyzed it, and showed its vicious character. The result was we had to publish special editions of that series of sermons to supply the demand made by many Presbyterian churches, and those sermons were distributed in Presbyterian churches, and I was informed of more than one instance in which my exposé saved the Presbyterian church property for the Presbyterian church.

Rockwood Really Best Friend of Presbyterian Church

Again I quote your letter:

"Mr. Rockwood was tried on the ground that he accused some of these men of being disloyal to the church and her teaching."

Rockwood's Charges Proved by Presbyterian Writings

Let us, for a moment, see whether there was any ground for Mr. Rockwood's statement. So far as the Montreal College was concerned, a columnist in *The Globe and Mail*, dealing with the text book which Mr. Rockwood had criticized, that of Professor Gifford, entitled, "The Story of the Faith", says:

Undoubtedly Prof. Gifford does not accept the story of the Virgin birth, for he says: "The 'virgin birth' appears now to have been the best explanation that simple folk could give, long after the event, of the origin of one who seemed to them to be more than human." It will be observed that Prof. Gifford is rather sparing in the use of capital letters. The rebellious Truro pastor believes that the church has lost its authority with the multitude because of the higher criticism and modernism in the pulpits today. He is by no means alone in this belief, and, believing what he does believe, it was not only his right but his duty to protest against the preaching that is popular today.

Quotations from Dr. W. W. Bryden, Principal of Knox College

We have before us a Presbyterian publication published in the Maritime Provinces, and it contains several quotations from a book by the present principal of Knox College, Dr. W. W. Bryden, M.A., D.D. The date of the book entitled, "The Christian's Knowledge of God" is 1940, and we quote as follows:

"Nothing in the form of purely academic insight will ever explain why Scripture remains ever a life-giving source to men of faith, even when criticism can show that it is perhaps replete with numerous discrepancies, is characterized in places with what are said to be dubious moralities, and, when its earlier records seem to present much which does not stand the test of historic or scientific inquiry." (Page 25)

You say, "We have our standards". I always supposed the statement of the Westminster Confession of Faith was the Presbyterian standard. What have you to say of this, as set over against Dr. Bryden's statement?

"We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture, and, the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the

consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole, (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of man's salvation, the many incomparable excellencies and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God. . ." (Westminster Confession, Ch. 1, Sec. 5.)

In the same book in his chapter on New Testament Revelation, Dr. Bryden has this to say:

"The New Testament in short, is no place to go if we are in search of religious solutions, if we desire a rationale of things earthly and things heavenly. It is moreover not a place to go if we are desirous of knowing what precisely we must do, or refrain from doing, in this particular concrete situation or that. There is nothing in it to produce a legalism, or to encourage people to look for religious recipes for difficult problems of life and existence. Rather it is a place in which tantalizing riddles, baffling antithesis in thought, obvious contradictions in statement, sharp unresolved and unresolvable paradoxes, things suggested but never completely described, confront us. This book is replete with common sense, yet is just as full of nonsense to the 'practical' mind. It always assumes responsibility, and demands initiative, on the part of man, but at the same time affirms just as emphatically that Salvation is of God's grace alone. It is forever making demands upon men under terms and conditions obviously impossible to those who take them seriously." (Page 97)

Once more, from the same book we quote Dr. Bryden:

"Of course, the religious value of mythology is never to be discounted. Such has its legitimate place even in the Biblical record of the Word of God"—and in the footnote on same page—"Biblical mythology, however, is never to be identified with Biblical revelation. The myth does not reveal—Biblical mythology, however, is man's attempt to point, with the aid of pictorial or symbolic forms to what God's Word signifies in certain concrete contacts it has made with the life of man." (Page 201)

And yet, again, as a final quotation, I give you this:

"Surprising as it may seem to modern church-goers, the New Testament does not stress as we do 'the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men!' In fact, the stoics and others had constantly spoken of this long before the New Testament was in existence, and indeed had emphasized it in itself as the New Testament never does. This book, of course, does not ignore the truth and the corresponding claim for men expressed therein, but it seems to assume that such can never be truly or profitably understood by the natural affections of man. Only by the revelation which had been made in Jesus Christ could its profound significance be perceived." (Page 92)

Is The Church "Sick Unto Death"?

You object to Mr. Rockwood's saying the church is sick unto death. I agree with you most heartily that the true church, the purchase of the blood of Christ, being part of the Body of Christ, cannot, in the nature of the case, be "sick unto death". But Mr. Rockwood is not speaking of that spiritual entity only, but more particularly of the organizations which profess and call themselves Christian, and bear almost no resemblance to the church of the New Testament. That these organizations are, in a spiritual sense, and by all biblical standards, very largely "sick unto death", "having a name to live and are dead" no one of spiritual discernment can question.

Chaplaincy Included "Quick and Dead"

You say:

"I resent very much your attacks on the chaplains." I did not attack the chaplains as such. I gladly

acknowledge the splendid quality of many of them, and the great work they did for God and the souls of men. I did say that there were not a few who sought the chaplaincy as an escape from the arduous duties of the pastorate, and that, to my certain knowledge, was true. In speaking thus, I am not speaking of those who stayed in this country, but of those who went overseas. Few churches had such a large proportion of its manhood in the Armed Services as Jarvis Street; and it was my pleasure and privilege to keep in regular correspondence with all of these men wherever they were, whether in England, or Africa, or Palestine, or Italy, or France, or other parts of Europe and many of them sent me the most glowing testimonies in respect to some of the chaplains and their spiritual qualities. But there was a vast number of chaplains who, obviously, had never been converted, who were wholly destitute of spiritual life, and utterly useless for the exercise of the duties they were appointed to discharge.

A chaplain who wins a VC is undoubtedly a brave man, and one who prefers service to his men rather than his own freedom, cannot be too highly commended. But all that may be true of one who is ignorant of the essentials of the gospel of grace; indeed, I fear that it may have been true.

"Great Men Are Not Always Wise Neither Do The Aged Understand Judgment"

In your last paragraph you say:

"Mr. Rockwood refused to listen to the advice and wise counsel of older men in the Synod."

How well do I remember such words as these in the early years of my ministry when I was offered the "wise counsel" of older men in the ministry than myself, who rather patronizingly pitied my youthful ardour, and said, "You will know better by and by". Whose advice was:

"Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?"

I must frankly confess that I have seen no evidence of "Christian humility and common sense" on the part of the members of the Presbytery of Halifax-Lunenburg, yourself included.

You terminate your letter by saying:

"He was anxious to appeal to the General Assembly if he was anxious to remain faithful to his church and her ministry."

I think there is little doubt that Mr. Rockwood earnestly desired to do that very thing, so far as that might be consistent with his primary duty to be faithful to Christ and the truth of the gospel. Whether there was any likelihood of the General Assembly's reversing the decision of your Presbytery I do not know; but I can well understand why, having felt the lash of ecclesiastical tyranny, Mr. Rockwood decided immediately to free himself from further subjection to it.

Your letter ends with this sentence:

"He is now at liberty to dictate his own policy and that is what he desired most of all."

I have little doubt that that is true. Why should not a minister of Christ be absolutely free to "dictate his own policy"? Why should he be subject to any sort of ecclesiastical restraint?

Lawyer With No Case Abuses Witness

It is common practice for a pettifogging lawyer who has just enough sense to know that he has no case, wanting evidence, to abuse, and to try to discredit the witnesses of his opponent. This is exactly what the

Halifax-Lunenburg Presbytery has done. It did not deign to examine the evidence which was open to its inspection in Mr. Rockwood's printed sermons; but instead they first of all patronized Mr. Rockwood; said he was "a nice young man, and no doubt very sincere". And when they had rapped him over the knuckles, they postponed his "sentence": told him to go home; think things over; burn his sermons; avoid publicity; yield the direction of his church to his session; and, generally, to be a quiet, good, little boy. But when they found Mr. Rockwood was not a little boy, but every inch a man, who would stand by his convictions, and defend his rights, and state his position before all the world, then they issued a statement that he fancied himself "a great man"; he had an "itch for fame". He was "a liar like Joseph Goebbels", etc. We have passed through it all. Whenever the written word of God, or its human witnesses are brought to trial for their faithfulness, the trial of the Word Incarnate before the high priest, and Herod, and Pontius Pilate, is re-enacted. History has repeated itself in Mr. Rockwood's case; and I do not envy you your position in the train of the high priest, and scribes, and Pharisees.

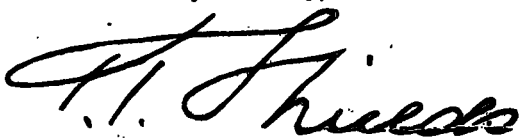
I have thus commented upon your letter. I have reproduced the first and last paragraphs that I might publish them in facsimile.

No Fellowship With The Unfruitful Works of Darkness

I must frankly confess that your action in marking the Presbytery's scurrilous statement "for publication", and your own letter, so full of veiled suggestion and innuendoes, and marked "not to be published", seems to me to manifest an utterly unChristian, not to say, unethical, spirit. For myself, I have no fear whatever of open enemies. I can respect them, and give them a Roland for their Oliver, and gladly receive the same from them; but I can say with the Psalmist, "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off". I covet the friendship and fellowship of no man who will work, or speak, or write, in the dark.

I am,

Yours very sincerely,



T. T. SHIELDS.

LAST SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

SUNDAY evening Rev. H. C. Slade preached to a great congregation practically filling the auditorium of Jarvis Street, on the subject: "What is 'The Church'? Is It Really 'Sick unto Death'?" The Editor only re-

grets that it was physically impossible for him to be present. But we have heard the most glowing accounts of the general appreciation of Mr. Slade's great message.

At the close of the service there were swarms of people, including ministers of several denominations, and Presbyterian elders, who came forward to greet the preacher, and to express approval of his exposition of the subject. As a native of the Maritime Provinces, and one thoroughly conversant with religious conditions there, Mr. Slade contended that what Mr. Rockwood had said was all too true of all Denominations.

Rev. John Cunningham, of Calgary, who assisted in the service, remarked to us to-day, "There is no doubt that Mr. Slade has a spiritual quality few men possess, and he is certainly a great preacher."

At the morning service Rev. W. S. Whitcombe preached an able sermon on the theme, "The Self-Centred Christian", which address it is unnecessary to say was also greatly appreciated. Altogether it was a great day in Jarvis Street.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON

DR. SHIELDS did not preach on Sunday, and we are reprinting in this week's issue a sermon preached in 1928 when the Baptist World Alliance held its meeting in Toronto. The subject then discussed, though nineteen years ago, is so perfectly in keeping with the principles at issue in the Rockwood controversy that we republish it without any amendment, as setting forth the true philosophy of Modernism.

JOHN MILTON ON THE HALIFAX-LUNENBURG PRESBYTERY
On the New Forcers of Conscience Under the Long Parliament

1647—Just 300 Years Ago!

"Because you have thrown off your prelate lord,
And with stiff vows renounced his liturgy,
To seize the widow'd whore Plurality
From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd,
Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
To force our consciences that Christ set free,
And ride us with a classic hierarchy
Taught ye by mere A.S. and Rutherford?
Men whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
Must now be named and printed heretics
By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call:
But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent,
That so the Parliament
May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
Clip your phylacteries, though bauk your ears,
And succour our just fears,
When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
NEW PRESBYTER IS BUT OLD PRIEST WRIT LARGE."

ORDER FORM

THE GOSPEL WITNESS,
130 Gerrard St. East, Toronto 2, Canada.

Please find enclosed \$ _____ for which send _____ years' subscription to THE GOSPEL WITNESS

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"A Lying Spirit From The Lord"

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Friday Evening, June 29th, 1928, (simultaneously with the closing meeting of the Baptist World Alliance.)

(Stenographically Reported)

PERSONALLY, I had some misgivings as to the wisdom of attempting to hold extra services here during the progress of the Baptist World Alliance meetings. When men are gathered from all parts of the earth, among them many men of great distinction, it seemed almost absurd to open our doors, especially when it was known that our testimony would not be in agreement with the general trend of things at Exhibition Park. And yet many hundreds have attended our services every evening, and I think we may reasonably hope that the testimony given has not been in vain.

What is the situation? I think it has been demonstrated that many men have occupied positions of prominence in the programme of this Alliance who reject the authority of Holy Scripture. Some of them reject the cardinal doctrines of the gospel: the essential Deity of Christ, carrying with it His virgin birth, and the great central truth of the gospel, His expiatory death, or, the expiatory value of His death, His literal resurrection, and His coming again. I think that is not open to question. No one having any appreciation of the value of language at all will dispute with me when I say that men who deny everything fundamental to evangelical faith have occupied positions of prominence on the Alliance programme; and, so far as I know, no word of public protest has been uttered against her teaching.

I do not believe that the delegates to the Alliance accept that teaching in any general way. I am confident that brethren from Russia, and Germany, and Sweden, and some from England, and many from the United States, and from the Islands of the sea, reject and repudiate these doctrines. Notwithstanding, it is the way of Modernists to obtain positions of prominence in the programmes of large meetings, get themselves and their utterances into the press, and create the general impression that the great company have credentialed their views. But for our protest in this place, nobody would ever have suspected from anything that has appeared in the press, or from any word uttered from the Alliance programme, that the Baptists of the world were not one in their rejection of the authority of Scripture. And it will be published to the ends of the earth that the Baptist World Alliance has approved of these radical views.

Our own papers described the meeting in Yorkminster Church as being under the leadership of Professor Marshall and Dean Shailer Mathews, and the impression goes abroad that these men were the mouthpieces for great multitudes of Baptists, who, if they are driven to a choice between science and the Bible, will accept science. The truth is, there are great multitudes of Baptists, numbered by the million, who still hold to the faith of Christ.

But what is the explanation of this defection here and elsewhere? The very best explanation to be found anywhere is always to be found in the Word of God, and I

desire to show you that these heresies are not new. Let me read you a portion of the eighteenth chapter of the second book of Chronicles, or rather the whole chapter:

"Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead. And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war.

"And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to-day. Therefore, the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand. But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. And the king of Israel called for one of his officers, and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla. And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah sat either of them on his throne, clothed in their robes, and they sat in a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them.

"And Zedekiah the son of Cheneanah had made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the Lord, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed. And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, Behold, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one assent; let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs; and speak thou good. And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak. And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand. And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the Lord? Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil? And he said, Therefore hear the word of the Lord; I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he

may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee. Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see on that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself. Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace. And Micaiah said, If thou certainly return in peace, then hath not the Lord spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, all ye people.

"So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle. Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight; but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord helped him; and God moved them to depart from him. For it came to pass that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him. And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even: and about the time of the sun going down he died."

You have in that bit of history an inspired record of present-day apostasy, of every apostasy. It is entirely up-to-date, and I should like you to look at three or four simple elements in this history, and I think it will minister to the strengthening of your faith.

I.

You have, first of all, in Ahab A PICTURE OF THE NATURAL MAN, an illustration of what human nature really is, and of what human nature will do. The Bible does not concern itself so much with principles in the abstract: the principle of the incarnation is to be found on every page. That is why the Bible is so largely occupied with the biographies of men, good men and evil men, in order that in the characters and destinies of good men we may see the value of the principles of righteousness; and that in the characters and gradual—sometimes gradual, sometimes sudden—destruction of evil men, we may see the great principle that "The wages of sin is death," exemplified. As a matter of theory some of our Modernist friends deny utterly the old-fashioned doctrine of total depravity, but while they deny it theoretically, they exemplify it almost to perfection. They are themselves the proof of the very doctrines they deny.

Look at Ahab, a man who was wrong at heart. That was the trouble with Ahab. It would be useless to at-

tempt to amend his character from without, to bring to bear upon him any reforming principle. If Ahab was to be changed, if his character was to be developed, and ennobled, and made God-like, then the remedy must be more than an external one, it must be radical, it must go to the root of the trouble; for no one can read Ahab's record without seeing that he was a man who was bad at heart. His desires were of the earth, earthy; he was a fleshly man, a worldly man, a man who lived for time and sense, and who had no conception of spiritual values whatsoever. That is the state of the natural man who has been untouched by the Spirit of God. That is true notwithstanding Professor Marshall's sneer at the scripture quoted to him respecting the carnal mind, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," and his coarse and vulgar rejoinder, "Well, did I say there was any good in the liver? Did I say there was any good in the lights?" That from a professor! But the Scripture is perfectly explicit when it says that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

You cannot rightly appraise the value of any religion—and I use that broad and comprehensive term—unless you view it in its relation to human nature as it is; for what is religion for if it is not to help us, to enable us to do what we of ourselves are unable to do? That is our problem to begin with; whatever the professors may say, it is true, for all history, all observation, and all experience, confirm the truth of it, that human nature is hopelessly depraved; and no kind of religion is of value to any of us unless it can remake us at heart, unless it is sufficiently radical to change our whole nature and make us new creatures. That is axiomatic. You cannot walk down the streets of Toronto without seeing that that is what man needs, a religion that will make him, by some means, a new creature.

Ahab was a man whose will was strong in the direction of his own desires. His evil affections determine the course of his will. He wanted things that were wrong; and because he wanted them, he was determined to possess them. The truth is, my friends, that the minds of men and the wills of men are against God. That is what the Scripture says—not that we are at enmity with God, but that human nature in its very essence, in its warp and woof, in its inherent qualities, is a bundle of enmity against God; that its very nature is opposed to God, so that you cannot bring the two together unless you change the carnal mind, and make it like unto the nature of God Himself. That is the miracle, and no other religion is of value to us than that which can thus bring our rebellious natures into agreement with the holy nature of God. Ahab was set against God, against the law of God, against the plans of God, against the purposes of God. He is described as a man who "did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord."

That is true of everybody. Some men get drunk, some men steal, some men wallow in all kinds of iniquity; but there are some people, like Ahab, whose sin is of a very respectable order, for Ahab's sin was that of covetousness. There is nothing especially to indicate that Ahab was given to the grosser sins of the flesh, but he coveted Naboth's vineyard, he coveted Ramoth-gilead—he coveted everything he could get, and was determined to have it at all costs, even at the price of blood. He was determined to have things that were not his own. There are no two people who have identically the same weaknesses, the same besetments, the same temptations; but

human nature is alike in this, that sin,—sin that is inherent, finds some expression in the life; it finds one expression in one character and another in another; but no man, if he knows his own weakness, can afford to hold in contempt a man whose sin is more apparent than his own. We may be delivered from these grosser sensual sins, and yet be inordinately proud, and envious, and covetous; and all these sins are just as much sins of the flesh as the sins that men reprobate so strongly. But the sin that is in our hearts will find expression somehow in every one of us, and there is no man here, or up yonder in the Alliance, that, apart from the grace of God, does not want to have his own way. Is not that what the Scripture says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." That is our state, that was Ahab's state, and that is the state of the carnal mind always. It always wants to have its own way, to map out its own course, to be independent of God, to be itself as God knowing good and evil. It is the age-long temptation, my brother, there is nothing new about it at all.

That is human nature, and the worst of it is that *Ahab sought religious sanction for his own wilfulness*. Ahab wanted no change of heart, no change of character, no change of course, but to do just exactly according to his natural desires. "Yet," said he, "I must, in the doing of it, be a religious man; I must have my own way approved by religion." Therefore Ahab devised a religion that would let him have his way, and he had four hundred prophets paid to approve of everything he did, to cheer every time he appeared, and to promise him success in the way of his own desires. That is what Ahab did, and that is what men want to-day; men want to be religious—everybody wants to be religious—but they want a religion that will not disturb them overmuch. They want a religion that will permit them to go to their offices from Monday till Saturday and do exactly as they please, make money, get on at anybody's expense—they desire a religion that will not be inconvenient. That is what young people want—some young people, and older people too—a religion that will permit them to find their own pleasure in their own way, and that will require no sort of reformation or repentance on their part. That is a picture of human nature.

Do you think that is true? I know certain people talk much about universal brotherhood, especially when they go to religious meetings, but you do not find it in the business houses of the city. It is all talk. There is no reality in it at all, it is sheer cant. The guiding principle with the natural man is to shape his course with a view to obtaining the greatest good for the greatest number, as I heard someone say, the greatest number always being number one!

II.

This story tells us of **TWO KINDS OF RELIGION**. One was represented by four hundred prophets. A majority is very impressive. It is a great thing to say, The majority are on our side. It may sound very egotistical to say it, but the truth is, in respect to religious matters, the majority are invariably wrong. You cannot determine ethical questions, much less spiritual matters, by a majority vote. And I have the greatest authority for that statement, for He Who is our Master said that there is a wide gate and a broad road, and many there be that go in thereat. If you want to be on the majority side, my friends, you will go by the wide gate and the broad road, for the majority are always there. On the other

hand, there is a straight gate and a narrow way, and few there be that find it. But our Lord promised His benediction to the few that find it. "Fear not," notwithstanding the talk about "this great Denomination! This GREAT Denomination! This great Congress!"—"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

You are not going to get the kingdom by legislative processes, nor by any kind of political manipulations. Ahab had the majority on his side, and they were all prophets, four hundred of them, private chaplains—and when a man needs four hundred preachers to keep him straight, he is naturally pretty crooked. I confess myself to be not without some suspicion of those movements which need so much credentialing. A certificate of character is a very good thing for those who need it.

What was the outstanding characteristic of this religion that was so popular? What was it? Well, it promised Ahab success in the direction of his own desires. It said to Ahab, "Certainly, certainly; if you want Ramoth-gilead, take it, and God will help you take it. Whatever you want, take it, and the Lord will be with you." I heard a man say once that the natural man is a Roman Catholic. By which he meant that Roman Catholicism was agreeable to the natural man. Whether that be true or not I do not say, but I do know that Modernism is agreeable to the natural man, and that every natural man is naturally a Modernist, in the sense that he wants no restrictions, no heavenly directions, no prohibitions; he wants to do his own way, and his own pleasure, and to prosper in the direction of his own desire, and his own will.

In other words, *this religion is the product of evolution!* It comes out of the man himself; it is the kind of religion he wants, and that is evolution. Men can adopt that religion without any revolution of life, or repentance, or reformation, of any kind. Never from the beginning did the devil ever devise anything more popular, more agreeable to the natural mind, than the doctrine of evolution. It nullifies sin, and every element of divine revelation, and comes to congratulate man on his upward progress, and tell him if he keeps on long enough he will arrive at Ramoth-gilead, and it will be his. I do not wonder that Modernism, which rejects the Word of God, which rejects the supernatural character of the Book, which repudiates the doctrine of man's fallen estate, but, on the other hand, magnifies human nature, and tells men we are a fine lot, we are getting on splendidly, and that in ten millions of years from now we shall arrive—I do not wonder that men like that religion; it is the most palatable thing in the world. And while it has a new name, it is exactly the same religion that Ahab had, that every apostate has—it is a religion that is agreeable to the natural man, and is evolved out of man's natural desires. It is a religion of naturalism as opposed to a religion of supernaturalism.

When Ahab asked the judgment of four hundred prophets, and they said, "Go and prosper," what difficulty, what intellectual difficulty, had Ahab in the way of believing the testimony of those prophets? Look at the psychology of the thing. Here he is, his army is all ready, and he says to his neighbour, "I am going to war with the king of Syria, and Ramoth-gilead is the prize. I am going to call the prophets and see what they say." And they said, "Go!". Was there any difficulty with Ahab's believing that message? No, he had nothing to do in order to believe it. He was going that way, and

the four hundred prophets came along to give him a push in the direction of his own desire. Sometimes you wonder why it is that the tenets of the times are so readily imbibed. Why is it that men with intellects can believe in Modernism? Because that nonsense is agreeable to their own minds. When that is planted in the natural man it is planted in a soil that is congenial; in fact, it is indigenous to the natural mind. It requires no repentance, no reformation, no humbling of the heart; man can go on in his own sinful way.

That is what men are asking for to-day, and that is the kind of religion that is being provided, a religion that will never disturb anybody's conscience, a religion that will not keep anybody awake on Sunday because of what happened last week, a religion that will not bring up the records of the past for divine adjustment; but a religion that says we are all climbing the golden stairs; we have nothing to fear from the past, and everything to hope for the future. We are better than our fathers, we are at the top of the race, the acme of evolution, or, at least, the last product; and we are going on. I do not wonder when people have been flattered after that fashion that they clap one another on the shoulder and say, "You are a fine fellow"—hail fellow, well met. There is no bowing of the head, no breaking of the heart, no humbling of the spirit, before God. "Go up to Ramoth-gilead; for God will deliver it into the king's hand." The only god the Modernists know is the god that promises to reinforce their own wills in the direction of their own carnal desires. It is no wonder men like Fosdick come out in defense of companionate marriage, and proclaim the doctrine of self-expression. That is what Modernism is; disguised with all sorts of scholastic camouflage, at heart it is the upgrowth, the outpouring, of the natural expression of the corrupt hearts of men.

Put beside that *another kind of religion*. Micaiah the son of Imla was its representative. What did he know about Ahab's going up to Ramoth-gilead? What was Micaiah's opinion about the wisdom of Ahab's course? He had no opinion. He expressed no opinion. What he said was, "I do not know what I shall say yet, but as the Lord liveth, whatever he saith unto me that will I speak." They said, "Do not be revolutionary, do not be singular, do not be eccentric, do not be egotistical, do not set up your judgment against the rest. We will tell you something quietly: the king has already asked four hundred prophets, and the majority are on his side. Come on, join the majority." Did you ever hear that? (Laughter.) Join the majority! Why should you stand up and make yourself singular? Everybody else is doing it, therefore you do it. Everybody else believes it.

I remember an old minister once, when that argument was brought forth in a ministerial meeting, "Everybody believes it, everybody is saying it. All the theological seminaries teach it, all the text-books state it—join in with the majority"—the old man said, "That may be good advertising"—by the way, he was a Methodist not a hundred miles from here—"but as I came to this meeting this morning I saw on the billboard, 'Everybody smokes ——— tobacco' (naming it, but I am not going to advertise it for them). Now that may be good advertising, but it is not true, because I am somebody, and I do not smoke that kind of tobacco—or any other kind. You cannot win me by saying that everybody believes it. Here is one servant of God who testifies against the whole business, for I do not believe a word of it." Mod-

ernism carried in McMaster, it carried in our Convention with proxy votes, for that is the trick of Modernism to make it carry always. They did the same thing in the Baptist World Alliance, and are publishing abroad that all the Baptists of the world believe and teach Modernism.

This prophet said in effect, "I do not know a thing about Ramoth-gilead, and I know nothing about Ahab, but I am the mouthpiece of God, and whatever He tells me I will repeat." And when this preacher came—we shall have more to say about him in another connection—when he came, and Ahab asked him exactly the same question that he asked the four hundred, and received from Micaiah exactly the same answer, why did he not turn around to Jehoshaphat and say, "There now, Jehoshaphat, it is unanimous. Four hundred prophets, plus Micaiah. Now we are on safe ground"? Ahab did not expect the same message from Micaiah, and he suddenly became possessed of a passionate desire for the truth and said, "How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me, in the name of the Lord?" Why did he not say that to the four hundred prophets? Some people talk about us here in Jarvis Street as though we were seeking prominence. Do you know what? I could put myself on the front page of every city newspaper in the United States and Canada Monday morning. How? By borrowing one of the Modernists' sermons and preaching it, by telling men to go up to Ramoth-gilead and prosper. They do not expect me to say that! They expect it somewhere else. But were a Fundamentalist to say the same thing they would wonder if he were ill! Or if he had suddenly become converted by the Baptist World Alliance! It is a fact. There are fifty pulpits that could preach such a sermon next Sunday without comment, but if it were preached from this pulpit, the whole Continent would hear of it. Why? Because in their heart of hearts they know that they are asking for a religion that will leave them alone in their sins, that is why. That is the philosophy of Modernism.

Then Micaiah delivered his second message. There was a tone of irony in that first one. Ahab knew that was not the final word. But the prophet came as though he would mock him: "I know what you want. You have asked four hundred prophets, and they all said, parrot-like, what you wanted them to say. Let me be a parrot and say the same thing." "But," said Ahab, "I did not expect you to be a parrot. Come on, now, what have you to say?" "Just this: I had a vision. I saw the Lord and I heard Him say, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace. If you go up to Ramoth-gilead, you will never come home again." He spoke the very opposite from that spoken by the four hundred prophets; one man against four hundred. And Ahab said, "I told you so. I never did hear that preacher preach that he did not scold. Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?" Yes, that is the attitude of the natural man. But, my friends, when the prophet gets a revelation from God, and speaks God's word instead of his own word, it always smites the human conscience, it always breaks the human heart, it always humbles human pride, it always forbids men to do their own wills, and it always tells them that in the way of self-will is death. People do not like it, and because they do not like it they want the testimony of the four hundred. Can you see those two religions?

III.

Then look at HUMAN NATURE, for a moment, IN ITS RELATION TO THESE TWO POSSIBILITIES.

First of all, there are two men concerned, Ahab and Jehoshaphat, and I have spoken only of Ahab. Jehoshaphat was a good man in the main, and *when he was at home he behaved himself*. And here was a proclamation for the Israelitish king—no, the Israel-Judean Alliance! It was an alliance between Israel and Judea, and these two are arranging the programme. Ahab, Chairman of the Committee, put four hundred prophets of Baal on the programme, and if it had not been that Jehoshaphat attended the Convention, Micaiah would not have had a chance to speak at all. Is not that up-to-date? Why is it that there is here and there an evangelical note sounded? Why are a few evangelicals put on the programme? Because Jehoshaphat, who believes God's Word, has no more sense than to join affinity with Ahab who denies it. Jehoshaphat is a type of the Fundamentalist who is a Fundamentalist at home, and a practical Modernist abroad. When he is at home he worships God: when he attends the Convention down in Samaria, and Ahab makes a complimentary speech, Jehoshaphat replies: "I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war. We are all one, we enjoy a glorious unity." Do you see it? That is the Baptist World Alliance exactly!

Now look: *Ahab could believe the testimony of the four hundred prophets without repentance or reformation*, but here is a psychological principle, and it is a profound doctrinal principle, because the doctrinal principles of the Word of God inhere in the nature of things. What had Ahab to do in order to believe the message of the Fundamentalist Micaiah? What had he to do? What was it? It was this: Ahab, demobilize your army. Set aside your ambition, go home; and stay home, and desist from the course upon which your heart is set.

That was the message. What had he to do in order to believe it? He had first of all to repent, and without repentance he could not believe. What is the psychology of saving faith? That no man can possibly believe until he has first repented. Do you see that? The gospel challenges you. It lays the axe at the root of the tree, and unless you are ready to have the whole tree down and cast into the fire you cannot believe. But if you are willing to give up your old life, the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof, and nail it to the cross of Christ, then it is possible to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. "Repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" always go together, and you cannot have saving faith without heart repentance. The reason some men do not believe is because they will not repent. The secret of evangelical faith is just there: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." With the head you can believe anything. Anything! But with the heart you can believe that which is akin to the nature of the heart, and while the heart is deceitful you can believe only that which is not true. If you have a heart that is quickened by the Divine Spirit and made like unto God, then with the heart you can believe unto righteousness; you can receive the truth "in the love of it." But "faith and a good conscience" go together. Part company with a good conscience, and you part company with faith. If you set your heart upon Ramoth-gilead, and resolve, "I will have it no matter what the prophets say, I will have it no matter what the Bible says," you will never be able to

believe the Bible while in that attitude, but you will find it easy to say, Amen, to whatever the prophets of Baal declare.

IV.

I come now to the MOST SOLEMN PART OF ALL. I have touched upon this principle before perhaps, but I tell you frankly that for years I was afraid to read in public the scripture I read to-night. I did not understand it. I believed it, but I did not understand it. If anybody had asked me to explain it, I could not have done so. What is it? Micaiah said, "I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the hosts of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left hand. And the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead"—the day of judgment for Ahab had arrived, and the Lord said, "Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against them."

I wonder Professor Marshall did not stumble on that passage and give it as one of his objections to the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. That is one of the profoundest passages in the Scripture, and it proves the inspiration of Scripture. No man would have dared to write that who wanted to magnify the Lord. Listen: left to himself, wanting to exalt Jehovah, without divine inspiration, no man would ever have represented God as releasing a lying spirit to go into the mouths of all Ahab's prophets.

What is the explanation? It is just this. What was Ahab's record? Read it, and you will find that *the one thing against which Ahab had set himself was the hearing of the word of the Lord*. Ahab did not want to hear the truth, and he destroyed the men who dared to tell him the truth. And if—now mark this well—if Ahab had had his own way up to this hour there would not have been left on earth a single man who would have dared to tell him the truth. He cut off the head of every witness to the truth so far as he had power to do so. He spent his whole life saying to God in a thousand ways, "I hate the truth. I will not hear the truth. I want a lie, give me a lie, let me live a lie. Let me live after the bent of my own deceitful heart." And at last *God let Ahab have what he wanted!* Hear this solemn truth: If God were to let you and me, any one of us, have what we want, we should be in hell. The worst judgment that can fall upon any man is for God to withdraw all restraint, and to allow the man to gallop headlong to the precipice. He will go to Ramoth-gilead every time. And four hundred prophets will encourage him in his going!

Is there anything in the New Testament like that? Oh yes.—"For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Ask God for a lie, and you may get what you want. I believe sometimes judgment falls upon a church like that, a church that resists every

true prophet that is sent to it. There are modern Jerusalems to whom it might be said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee: how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." God withdraws His Spirit from some churches; He removes, to use the New Testament phrase, the candle-stick out of its place, and the church dies. Instead of witnessing for Christ, it is given a prophet possessed of a lying spirit. The people ask for it, and at last they get it.

A denomination may do the same thing. A denomination may reject the truth of God's Word and say, "We do not want prophets to preach the truth to us. Give us a lie"; and the Lord will let them have their own way at last. I believe the Lord has allowed the Convention of Ontario and Quebec to have its own way, and while they supposed they were getting victory, the judgment and the withering curse of Modernism, fell upon them; and with accelerated speed they have been going down the hill ever since, and where they will be five years from now only the Lord can tell. Individuals, churches, educational institutions, denominations, are all parts of the great movement, and the general principle will operate, so that at last when this sinful world has utterly rejected the gospel, they shall have a strong delusion, and believe a lie, and they shall not see the Judge until He rends the heavens and comes down to take "vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Do not be disturbed, my dear friends, by the present apostasy. It cannot last forever. "Our God is a consuming fire": let us take heed to be always on His side of every controversy.

Let us look at the situation as a whole for a few minutes. Here are Jehoshaphat and Ahab and the four hundred prophets; and "Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the Lord, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed." What a big man he was! Afterward when Micaiah had borne his testimony, "Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?" Yes, this is the day of Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah. What an important man he is! Yes, he is a little bit of a McMaster student, two by four, who votes with the hierarchy, and thereby suddenly becomes a big man! Micaiah was alone, but I think he looked and said, "Oh Jehoshaphat, oh Jehoshaphat, in the camp of the enemy, fighting on the side of the enemies of the Lord. I came to speak because you asked for me, and when I had given my testimony in the presence of Ahab, you had not the courage to say, 'That is the truth. Let us listen to Micaiah'." Ahab said, "We will dismiss this Fundamentalist." So he called the captain of the guard and said, "Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace. I shall be back, and will attend to you, Micaiah." And the loyal preacher simply lifted up his voice and said, "If thou certainly return in peace, then hath not the Lord spoken by me." So they took him away.

The battle started, and Ahab said to Jehoshaphat—the Modernist said to the Fundamentalists—"I will disguise

myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes, and everybody will think that the whole battle is being led by the Fundamentalist. Nobody will know where I am." So Jehoshaphat, with all his royal robes, got into his chariot and went to the battle. The king of Syria had given commandment to the captains of his chariots, "Fight ye not with small or great, save only the king of Israel. Get him, and you will get the crowd." When therefore they saw Jehoshaphat with his royal robes, and all the marks of royalty upon him they said, "There he is", and every man drew his bow to bring Jehoshaphat down. But Jehoshaphat was not such a brave man after all! What cowards these Fundamentalists are when they go to battle with Ahab! Really one would have supposed he would take his medicine! But when he saw all the enemy were concentrating upon him he said, "I am not the king of Israel. I am not a Modernist. Do not shoot me"! Did you ever hear that? You say the Bible is out of date? They have not got that in the evening papers, but I am sure it happened this afternoon!

But a certain man drew a bow at a venture; putting his hand to his quiver and putting his arrow to the bow, he shot at a venture, but as he did so, an unseen Hand was laid upon his, and, guided unerringly, the arrow shot on its way. Then the disguised Modernist said, "He has found me. Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded." And "about the time of the sun going down he died", and they took the chariot down to the pool of Siloam, and as they were washing the royal blood away, the dogs came and licked his blood "according to the word of the Lord" that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." And Modernism, naturalism, in religion,—Sadduceeism of old times, and the Modernism of our day—inspired by a lying spirit, took a man from the proud position of king of Israel, and brought him literally to the dogs. That is what it always does. Always!

What shall we do? My friends, we do not fear for the Book.—"About the time of the sun going down"! When the sun at last shall set upon this earth's long day of trial and conflict, and the dark night shall fall whose thick blackness shall be broken at last by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings—"about the time of the sun going down" it will come to pass according to the word of the Lord. Not one jot or tittle of this Word shall fail till all has been fulfilled. "Let God be true and every man a liar"!

Meanwhile, did I know that some teacher, having lost his reason and possessed by some evil, destructive, spirit, were putting poison into the drinking fountain of which the children will drink; did I know that behind the drug-store counter there was a disguised murderer who changed every physician's prescription, and instead of compounding a healing draught, were putting in a poisonous drug, thus digging a grave; did I know that on the train there was an engineer determined to pass all signals, to court danger, and to destroy himself and his cargo of living freight; did I know that a company of men were now conspiring to break into some household to-night when father and mother and a family of beautiful children are locked in slumber, and to despoil the house of all its treasures, and fill it with some poisonous gases that would prevent their ever waking to see the light of another day—if I knew that men were thus

abroad poisoning the springs of life, turning health to disease, planning plunder and murder, ought I to whisper polite things to men of such criminal instincts? Or ought I to report it to the police, and, failing help in that direction, ought I merely as a man if I had to do it alone, leap into the breach, and by some means endeavour to put an end to their fiendish programme?—"Peace, peace, when there is no peace"? God helping us, we will never so prophesy.

I heard some years ago, before the West had developed as it has since, a story of a transcontinental train crossing our western prairies in the dead of night, and in the midst of winter when the thermometer registered twenty or thirty below zero, and a blizzard was raging. On the train was a woman with four little children going home. She was sitting in the car with her children, not much used to travelling. She was rather nervous about her station, and as the conductor came through she said, "Conductor, I am to get off at such a station, will you please tell me when I come to it?" "Certainly, madam, your station is the next stop." "Thank you, sir." After a while the train slowed down and came to a standstill. The woman said to a passenger nearby, "Is this where I get off?" "Yes, madam, the conductor said the next stop." She gathered up her parcels (it was in the days before vestibule trains), and with her children got off the train. The train sped on into the zero night for nearly an hour. Presently as it was slowing down the conductor came in, and looking around, he said to this man, "Where is that woman with her children?" "She got off." "Got off! Where?" "She got off at the last station. I told her that was the place." "You told her! Man, that is out on the prairies miles from human habitation. A woman with four little children alone in a prairie blizzard thirty below zero!" He pulled the rope, ran through the train, gave his directions to the engineer, and the train pushed back for nearly an hour, until they came to the place; and there beneath the snow they found a woman and four little children frozen to death—because some man undertook to direct them when he did not know the way.

Brethren, our pulpits are filled with men who do not know God, who do not know His Word, who do not know the gospel of the blood, blind leaders of the blind, verily they are the devil's executioners. Our theological seminaries are turning them out by the hundred. To say nothing of being Christians, if we are men, we will swear before high heaven that to the last drop of our blood we will oppose this damnable traffic in human souls; and expose not only the Ahabs, but the cowardly, conspiring, Jehoshaphats who help Ahab on in his work. We need not be troubled though we stand alone, for our God is with us, and some day, some day, God pity us! some day we shall have to give an account. I could pray that God would terminate my life to-night rather than suffer me to live ever to say one word that would destroy men's faith in the Word of God, or to turn men away from their only Saviour. This is no child's play, my brethren, it is the war of the ages that will end only when Jesus Christ rends the skies and comes down. May He help us to live for that great and glorious day!

**SUBSCRIBE FOR
THE GOSPEL WITNESS
\$2.00 per year**

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Published every Thursday for the propagation of the Evangelical principles of the Protestant Reformation and in defence of the faith once for all delivered to the Saints.

\$2.00 Per Year. Postpaid, to any address. 5c Per Single Copy.

•
Editor

T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editors

W. S. WHITCOMBE, M.A. (Tor.)

W. GORDON BROWN, M.A. (Tor.)

Contributing Editor

OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)

S. S. Lesson and Exchanges

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

•
Address Correspondence:

THE GOSPEL WITNESS

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada

Telephone RAndolph 7415

Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada

A TEN DOLLAR BILL ON THE PLATE

March 20th, 1947.

Dear Dr. Shields:

Having a copy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS as I pen these few lines, and reading that you are having an offering taken for Rev. Perry F. Rockwood, will you please put a ten dollar bill in the offering from a sympathizer in _____, who thanks God for a Christian Pastor who is brave enough to stand up and speak out for our Protestant faith. God grant that thousands of our ministers may take the same stand, and be true shepherds of the sheep, and not hirelings.

I am enclosing one dollar, and wish you to send some copies of the Rockwood edition to some of my friends, whose name I enclose.

I also enclose thirty dollars toward your own evangelistic work.

Please acknowledge this in THE GOSPEL WITNESS; so that I may know you have received it. May it be used for our Saviour's glory in opening the eyes of the blind.

—"Inasmuch".

ONLY FOUR DAYS MORE

From the date of the issue of this paper there will be only four more days before the closing of our books on March 31st. We remind the members of the church that a very generous thankoffering is urgently needed. All the funds but the General Expense are reasonably sure of being able to balance their account; but at this writing we still need about seventeen hundred dollars in our General Fund.

Will every member do his or her best on Sunday?