

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.

Vol. 26, No. 52

130 Gerrard Street East, TORONTO, APRIL 22, 1948

Whole Number 1353

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"There Followed Him a Certain Young Man"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, April 18th, 1948
(Stenographically Reported)

"And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him:

"And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked."—Mark 14:51, 52.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON

O Lord, Thou art the Father of all men, but especially of those who believe. We come this evening as being numbered among those who believe, and who, having received the Son, with Him have received eternal life. In the condescension of Thy grace Thou hast been pleased to make us Thy children, to make us heirs of a heavenly inheritance of infinite worth, even an inheritance that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

We thank Thee for this promise that Thou wilt keep the heirs of salvation. They shall be a preserved people, for a prepared and preserved inheritance; therefore while, and so long as we are pilgrims here below, we need the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit—for it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps—nowbeit, Thou hast promised Thou wilt direct our steps, if in all our ways we acknowledge Thee.

We are here as those who delight to acknowledge Thee as Saviour and Lord; and who are proud, even, with a holy pride, to be numbered among those whom Thou hast been pleased, by Thy grace, to call into fellowship with Thyself. We desire to be worthy of our vocation. We would avail ourselves of all the means which Thou hast provided for our growth in grace, and for our increase in the knowledge of Christ. Thou hast given to us exceeding great and precious promises that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust: we would learn ever more perfectly and more implicitly and unwaveringly, to rest upon these promises, that are so exceeding great and precious.

We are men and women in the flesh, subject to all our carnal limitations and disabilities. We are influenced altogether too much by the things we touch and taste and handle. Sometimes we live almost as though this were to be our permanent abode: we call our lands after our own names. But we pray that Thou wilt give us that spiritual sensitiveness which will make us responsive to all heavenly influences. May our hearts be attuned to

heavenly voices, and our wills so engaged and energized by the divine Spirit that they may move us to do the things that we know ought to be done. We would learn to look not at the things which are seen—oh, how present they are! How dazzlingly brilliant, and sometimes almost irresistibly attractive, especially to those who are of younger years! Oh Lord, enable us not only to look at the things which are unseen, but with clear spiritual vision to behold them, rightly to appraise them, and steadfastly to covet them, and to live for them,—for the things which are not seen are eternal!

We thank Thee for Thy Son, Who came out of the Unknown, Who, Himself, came in upon our darkness, saying, to us, I am come a Light into the world that whoso followeth me should not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. May everyone within this building be enabled to follow Thee, that we may not walk in darkness; for if we walk in the light, as Thou art in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ Thy Son cleanseth us from all sin. So help us to follow Thee, that we may live, nay, that we may luxuriate in Thy Light of life, and so, by faith, through the grace of Thy Spirit, be enabled to anticipate something of the felicities of that other life where, and when we shall see Thee face to face.

Thy word is very precious to us. It is a treasury of truth. We have come to it often; we would come to it again; make the bush, even the common bush, to burn with an unconsuming, but illuminating fire; and out of the bush may we hear the Voice of the Lord God.

As we, who know Thee, are enabled, as we trust we shall be, to worship Thee even as we give our thought to Thy holy word, may it come to pass that those who have been until now without the pale, who have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but who have never seen Thee, may they, like blind Bartimaeus, cry out, Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me. So may they also receive sight, that they may follow Thee in the way.

Look with grace this evening and touch with Thy saving power every assembly of Thy people. Be present in every place where the glorious gospel of the Happy God is proclaimed. May this day, and this hour, be one of exceeding.

blessing here and throughout the world; yea, and may it be a time of gladness in the place where time is no more, as the angels rejoice over sinners repenting.

In Thy grace, and of Thy sovereign mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord, grant the requests, we pray Thee, of this our evening prayer. In His all-prevailing name we ask it, Amen.

DURING the days of His flesh our Lord Jesus was often followed by multitudes. On one occasion He asked, "Who touched me?" His disciples answered, "Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me"—as though they would have said, "Everyone who is within reach is touching Thee". But of the multitude there was one afflicted woman who touched Him, for the healing of her body, and who received virtue from Him.

On another occasion the multitude followed Him to a desert place, attracted by His teaching, and eager to hear more. At that time He had compassion on them because they were hungry. There He exercised His miraculous power, and in the midst of want He gave them plenty, using but five loaves and two small fishes for His purpose. That same multitude, eager to witness more of His power, still followed Him; and you will recall how He said, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." It was then they sought to take Him by force to make Him King. But when He expounded to them the spiritual character of His mission, the multitude melted away like a late snow under the spring sun, until there were left but twelve, and Jesus said to them, "Will ye also go away?" Simon Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Again when He entered into Jerusalem the multitude acclaimed Him. They threw branches in the way, and spread their garments before Him that He might ride over them, as He came in fulfilment of an ancient prophecy, "riding upon a colt, the foal of an ass".

Now again He is in the midst of a multitude. He had sought privacy. He had gone to a place called Gethsemane, taking with Him three of His disciples; but He had withdrawn some distance even from them, saying to them: "Tarry ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed. Scarcely had He finished that prayer when about the midnight hour there came a great multitude. They were not soldiers: they were a band given to Judas, at his request, by the chief priests and elders. They soon assembled a great mob. The chief priests and scribes and elders accompanied them as they broke in upon the quiet and privacy of Gethsemane, with ribald cries, no doubt, as rudely they laid hands upon Jesus, and took Him away, and led Him, as you read this evening, to the place of the high priest.

The disciples followed Him. But when they saw that a crisis was reached, when they saw the possibility, not only of danger, but of death to their Master, they feared longer to identify themselves with Him, and so it is said of His disciples, "They all forsook him, and fled." Do not blame Peter too severely for following Him afar off. He did follow afar off, but that was more than the others did: they did not follow Him at all: "They all forsook him, and fled." Now He is in the hands of an angry mob who are clamouring for His death.

Here Mark tells us that "there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body". The young men, part of the crowd, distinguishing

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 delivered to the Saints.

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

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him from others, laid hold upon him, and he left the little clothing he had in their hands, and fled from them into the night. Matthew says nothing about this young man, nor is he mentioned by Luke or John. Mark only refers to him. Whether at a later time he met him, and received the story from his lips, or whether Mark himself was at a sufficient distance from his Master at the end of the procession to be an eye-witness of this young man's following, we do not know. We know nothing about him beyond what is told us in these two verses: the story of a nameless follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. But remember there is not a superfluous word in one of these inspired records; and so the Holy Ghost must have had a good reason for moving Mark to record this simple incident of that dark and fateful night.

I think it is legitimate to use a sanctified imagination to see what lessons may be learned from this seemingly—I was going to say—almost unmeaning text. Why bother about this nameless man who followed in that procession for but a little distance, and escaped from his captors, and fled into the night?

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." There are a great many things "within" us of which we do not always take account. In blessing and worshipping the Lord, all the faculties of the mind should be engaged, and pressed into His service. It is a great thing in the reading of God's word, very often to exercise what conjectural capacities the Lord may have given us, and to use our sanctified imaginations to bring to the elucidation of a text like this what we may know of the word of God from other chapters.

So I want you to imagine with me, to-night, for a while—if you can. Some people are almost destitute of imagination. I was once a guest in a certain minister's house. He was the nearest approximation to an animated block of wood I ever met. He was utterly devoid of imagination. He boasted of being realistic and practical. He had a young family. There was one

little girl who had a very active imagination. She and I became good friends. She would come down in the morning and tell the greatest tales you ever heard in your life. She could outreach many of the novelists. She lived in a visionary, imaginary, world. Her wooden-headed ministerial father insisted that she was a little liar, and often not only reprimanded her, but chastised her for her romancing. I said to him one day, "My dear fellow, you ought to be proud of that child. If you had any imagination yourself you would know that she is living in a world of her own creation that you have never seen, and of the existence of which you have not the slightest idea. Who knows but that you have growing up in your own family one of the most interesting and inspiring story tellers of all time. "She was not lying; she could see things. She loved to imagine them; she told her lovely little fairy tales to anyone who would listen. I can assure you she found in me a very, very, attentive and interested hearer.

Now if that faculty of apprehension, for such it is, the faculty that enables us to apprehend the unseen, be under the control of God, and sanctified, and sublimed to high and holy uses, it may sometimes, by the good grace of God, take us out of the sordid circumstances of this earth-life, and help us to live for a while in heaven in advance of our reaching it. There are raptures of the soul possible which, while they are perhaps beyond the compass of the natural mind, are yet legitimate experiences of a sanctified spirit, and an illumined imagination.

Why did this young man join the procession at midnight? Why was he there? Whence did he come? Who was he? Where did he go when he fled away into the shadows of the night? These are interesting questions which may yield us, perhaps, some profitable answers.

I.

First of all, I want you to try, with me, to imagine, for we cannot be positive about the matter, to imagine SOME OF THE REASONS FOR HIS JOINING THIS MULTITUDE *past the midnight hour*, half-clothed as he was. What could have moved him? Where had he been? What brought him into the midst of this crowd at such a time, and in such a condition? The city generally was asleep. People had finished the labours of the day, and had retired for rest. The only ones abroad were those who loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil, or those who, as a matter of duty, or, like our Master Himself, of high purpose sought the privacy of the night for commerce with the Skies. The rest of the inmates of the city were wrapped in slumber. I rather think this young man was among them, enjoying his sleep in the early hours of the night, having no intention whatever of rising from his couch until the sun should summon him in the morning.

But upon that slumber, and perhaps through his dreams, I do not know, there broke the cry of an angry multitude. It is called a "multitude". How many there were I do not know; but the priests and scribes and the elders had managed to assemble a crowd for their purpose, and I have little doubt that they, thirsting for His blood, even mentioned His name, just as names have been mentioned by similar mobs on all sides in Italy the last few weeks. Who knows but that this man had been awakened suddenly from his slumber by hearing the name of "Jesus" pronounced by angry voices? Whether or not he had heard that name before I do not know.

Whether or not he knew what was afoot at that late hour I do not know. I think there is every reason, from the context, to assume that he knew there was something very unusual; and he hastily wrapped a linen cloth about him, and went out into the street.

I want you to think of that for a few minutes as *an impulsive action of a man who, perhaps, was scarcely more than half awake*. I feel sure that he acted on impulse. He suddenly came to consciousness, and had some apprehension of what was afoot, and, without waiting to make himself reasonably, or respectably, ready, he gathered up a linen cloth, wrapped it about himself, and went out to the street to see what it was all about.

Is it right to act on impulse? I think it is. Many of the noblest human acts have been acts of impulse. Of course, we may be under the power of an evil impulse, an impulse to do some wrong thing; but it can never be wrong to act impulsively in the right direction. Where truth, and goodness, and righteousness, are concerned, and where they can be instantly, and unmistakably, identified, so that we know beyond all possibility of doubt that in that direction the right lies, one does not need a week to consider it. The moment you know what is right, it is right to do what you know to be right. It is better to follow truth, and righteousness, and goodness, impulsively, than to follow untruth, and evil, and unrighteousness, as a result of the politic deliberation of later hours, when you have had time to count the cost. It is often right to do right quickly, immediately, impulsively. Only, be sure of your identifications—that is all.

This man, I say, acted impulsively. *What was his motive?* He may have had a personal interest in Jesus. We shall think of that in a minute. He may have been indirectly the beneficiary of His ministry. Some good may have come into his family, to his wife, his children, perhaps, if not to himself, from this same Jesus; indeed, he might easily have been one of the many who were healed of divers diseases, when they thronged the Master, and He healed them all. There are mentioned in scripture thousands of people to whom virtue flowed at the touch of faith, who are not called by name in the inspired record.

He may have been inspired by curiosity. There is such a thing as *holy curiosity*. I do not mean the curiosity which makes you careful to watch at the window when a crate is being delivered at your neighbour's house, to wonder what new thing she has bought! There are some people like a little dog I have at home. If a parcel comes into the house he never rests until it is opened. You could not keep anything from him until Christmas morning, if he knew where to find it. But there is an interesting and entertaining curiosity not always evil. Sometimes undesignedly curious people have stumbled upon good things, and things of value. I think there is a holy curiosity, too, which leads us to ask many questions. We need not press our inquiry respecting the knowledge of evil, but we may diligently press it in respect to the knowledge of good, and be very curious about things of that sort.

It may be that this "certain young man" was simply a man who was naturally interested in public affairs, and he heard a crowd as they passed by, and a great noise at midnight; and he decided to find out what it was all about. I confess I am very curious to-night. I am ambitious to know what happened in Italy to-day. We shall not know it fully for several days. I hope there will be

news enough to make it difficult for "His Holiness" to sleep to-night, although I do not like the Reds. But I am certainly sufficiently curious to resolve that I am going to get the latest news before I go to bed to-night. That is legitimate. That is why we read the newspapers, and a great many other things—just to acquire knowledge.

I do not know why this young man was so interested. But he was interested. There was no doubt about that. And he was not merely interested in the noise: he did not follow the *crowd*—it was not that. The text says he followed *Him*. I am inclined to think that he had heard the name of Jesus before. Whether he had profited by it, or not, and wanted to know what was transpiring, and what was to happen to Him that night, I do not know. But he was in a great hurry. He did not give himself even time to dress properly. He feared that the crowd would pass, and that the Object of his interest would be out of sight; and so he got out to the street hurriedly, and "followed Him".

I do not believe his was an idle curiosity. I do not believe it was any accident. I said just now it was an impulsive act. It seemed to be impromptu, without premeditation. But some of our impromptu sayings and acts may, after all, be a composite of many things. We are the product of our yesterdays. I have heard of a young preacher who delivered a certain sermon in a country church one Sunday morning, not far from a holiday resort. He preached with great enjoyment to himself. When the service was over a stranger, rather an impressive, distinguished, personality, came to him and shook hands, and said to him, "Thank you, young man, for your sermon. I greatly enjoyed it this morning." "I am glad of that," said the young preacher. "What part did you enjoy?" "All of it, from beginning to end." "I am gratified that you did. It took me just two hours to prepare that sermon." "Two hours!" said the stranger, "It took me twenty years to prepare it." He had preached a sermon of one of the great preachers of the world, who was there to hear his message from other lips. It was the product of two hours' memory work for the young man. But it was the product of twenty years of diligent study and research, and of large experience, so far as the real author of the sermon was concerned.

We do this or that, or say this or that, apparently "on the spur of the moment"? No! Into the subconscious there is written a long tale of wide and varied experience. Deposited in the subconscious mind there is a sum of knowledge which may have required years to acquire. A man does a thing on a sudden impulse—so he thinks. But it is not so. He is the creature of his yesterdays, and of his yester-years, and what he calls impromptu is the fruit, perhaps, of a lifetime of experience which has made him instantly, immediately, wise where some other man would have required months to arrive at the same decision.

Who knows what this young man knew about Jesus? He may have seen Him heal the sick, open the eyes of the blind, feed the hungry multitude. He may have seen many miracles wrought by His hands, and at His word; and the moment the name of Jesus broke upon his mind, wrapped in slumber as he was, he waked to consciousness, and with it, all that the name of Jesus implied came to him. Without a moment's hesitation he laid hold of a garment, wrapped it about him, and out he went and followed Him.

How are we to know when these impulses are good and right? Let me tell you this: it can never be wrong to follow Jesus—never! Wherever you are sure that He is going, you may be sure that you are on the right track if you follow Him: "If any man serve me, let him follow me," said the Lord Jesus. If we were to allow these holy impulses to direct our steps, instead of submitting a contemplated course of action to our carnal judgments, and waiting to consider what may happen on the morrow, we should say, "That way goes my Master. I go after Him"—and we should go at once without a moment's hesitation.

If I were to ask you to come to Christ to-night, you might say to me, perhaps, "I am a very deliberate person. I never do anything hastily, nor impulsively." It is well that you are able to say that in general. But should anyone say, "I am afraid if I came to Jesus without further consideration I might make a mistake," I reply, You could not, my friend. You cannot come to Him too quickly, nor too soon. Only come to Him! Only follow Him, and you will have ample time to consider after; and the more you consider it, the more thankful you will be for that high and holy impulse which led your feet to seek the footprints of our Lord Jesus.

II.

WHO WAS THIS MAN?—this impulsive, inconsiderate, or unconsidering, perhaps, I should rather say, follower of Jesus? Who could he have been? "A certain young man"—that is all. He might have been one of thousands. He might have been one of the blind men whose eyes had been opened. He might have been one of the lame men who had been made to leap as an hart. He might have been one of the multitude who tasted the bread miraculously multiplied. He might have been one of the guests at Cana's marriage feast, when Jesus wrought His first miracle, and made the water into wine.

It is something to suggest a worthy subject of meditation. I like sometimes to take a text I cannot understand. I do not know what it means. But if it comes to my attention, and engages my mind, I turn it over—and over—and over again. If something in the word of God be the subject of my meditation I have always found the truth of that text of scripture, in the psalm, "My meditation of him (is) sweet. I will be glad in the Lord." So do not thus pass some text of scripture by because you do not know what it means. Memorize it; store it in your memory. Say, "I am going to read that volume many times until I find out what it does mean." It will yield you great treasures of wisdom, I am sure in time to come.

Who was he? He might have been the son of the widow of Nain, whom Jesus met in the way, as they were going to the burial place, and Jesus sent him home from his own funeral. He might have been one of the young men who carried the bier, as they were taking him out for burial. I feel reasonably sure there was something in the memory of this man that was challenged, and inspired, by the very mention of the name of Jesus. I wonder if he could have been the rich young ruler, upon whom Jesus looked, of whom it is said that He loved him? The young man said, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus said, "Keep the commandments." He said, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." Jesus "Beholding him, loved

him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me." It may have been that that final word had echoed in that young man's mind for many a day. If so, he did not take much time to put on his fine clothes: he hurried out into the street that before it was for ever too late, he might have the joy of following Jesus. He had not very much to surrender then, had he?

I do not know who this "certain young man" was. I am only sure—I feel sure—that he was one of the beneficiaries of the ministry of the Lord Jesus. Somehow, somewhere, he had been touched by the Lord, and the very mention of His name led him instantly to resolve "I must be where He is." He did not stop to think, perhaps, or did he? what a strange spectacle he must present thus clad. There were no electric lights in those days. It would have taken him some time to light a candle, and to dress properly—but not long to lay hold of a linen cloth, and get out among the crowd following Jesus. That he was determined to do, cost what it would.

So ought we to do, dear friends. Oh, if our eyes have been opened, if we have been enabled to walk, if we have been raised from the death of sin, and walk in newness of life, if we have been made to see that the treasures of earth are nothing to be compared with the unsearchable riches of Christ, we ought to be willing to follow hard after Him.

III.

You will say, "WHAT GOOD WILL IT DO? WHAT HAD HE TO ENDURE? He might have known that he would be a conspicuous figure." I suppose we have all had nightmares, and dreamed of being on the street only partly clad. But not in our saner moments would we deliberately go out to the street in that fashion. This man was there of his own volition thus improperly clad. And I think, whether he considered it at the moment, or between the time he left his bed, and found himself on the street, I think he must have been prepared for what followed.

Certain of the young men laid hold of him, and said, "What are you doing?" There were people, too, there must have been, who saw something in this young man that distinguished him from everyone else. His interest in following after Jesus, as well as his strange garment, I think made these young men aware that he did not belong to the mob: he was following from a different motive. He had a different interest. But whether or not, he must have known it was not easy to follow Jesus. It never is. You would not pick up a linen cloth, and wrap it about you, and go after Him. No; you would take time to dress up, to make yourself presentable to everyone; and you would only waste a lot of time after all, because if you took from your wardrobe the finest things you have, you would still have nothing but filthy rags by the divine estimate. So it does not take much difference:

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all."

They stripped the linen cloth from him, and he could go no farther. He disappeared into the shadows of the night. And went back to his rest? to his couch? Do you think so? I feel reasonably sure he did not. I will tell you what I think he did. He hastened home, took time to dress, and hurried out again to see what was happening, and long before the morning hour I think he was one of the multitude still following Jesus.

It may be that when they took Him to the cross, and nailed Him there, and he saw Him, the Prince of Glory, stripped naked to His shame, it may have been that he said, "I have suffered no more for Him than He is suffering for me." I rather think he saw Jesus somehow. Perhaps he was one of the multitude that stood, beholding. Perhaps he was not far from the centurion who, when the earthquake came, said, "Truly, this was the Son of God". Who knows but that he was one of the three thousand at Pentecost, who cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Who knows but that this "certain young man" remembering all that had happened, in his view of Jesus, saw now at last clearly the Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sin of the world?

I never despair of a man who really gets one glimpse of Jesus; I mean a man who once sees Him by faith. There are many who are called Christians, who have never seen Jesus. I read some things in some of our papers, written by ministers, and I am constrained to say, "That man has never seen my Lord Jesus. If he had, he never would write like that." No; just to see Him once is enough. And if, perhaps, for a moment we may have to rush into the night, yet the morning cometh, and if we have seen Him once we shall see Him again:

"For, ah, the Master is so fair,
So sweet His smile on banished men,
That they who meet Him unaware
Can never rest on earth again!

"And they who see Him risen, afar,—
On God's right hand to welcome them,
Forgetful stand of home and land,
Desiring fair Jerusalem."

Oh, that we may see Him, and seeing Him, follow Him whithersoever He goeth.

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, Lord Jesus, that Thou hast come down to the level of our poor lives, and hast made it possible, by Thine abounding grace, for every one of us to follow Thee. Help us to begin to-night, without stopping for preparation. If there is one who has never taken the first step, may he take it to-night, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

Let us now sing one of our favourites:

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, of that free love
The breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,
Here for a season, then above,
O Lamb of God, I come.—Amen.

"FREE" SCHOOLS

THE public school trouble in New Mexico started in Dixon, in a way, yet it didn't really start in Dixon. Most of us who live in and around Dixon are of Spanish descent, tillers of the soil, many of us poor and ignorant, shut off from the world to a great extent by the mountains surrounding our little valley. But we do know that we want our children to have a chance at a good education, that will fit them to face the world without a feeling of inferiority.

Trouble began in this northern New Mexico village when, six years ago, the Catholic Church assumed control of the public schools in Dixon without the people's consent. In an avowed consolidation move, pupils and equipment were moved into Catholic Church property, and the school became known as St. Joseph Public School. Actually it was a parochial school, and nothing less. Our public school buildings were either sold or abandoned. Among others, an expensive W. P. A.-built structure right in Dixon stands empty and rotting.

Dissatisfaction developed, due to the poor quality of teaching and to the religious instruction forced on all children during school hours by the garbed nuns teaching in this "public" school. Investigation revealed that the Hail Mary was recited by all students four times a day; Bingo was played in school during school hours to raise money; students were urged to go to confessional and punished if they refused; whole grades were skipped by students who memorized the Catholic catechism. These and other abuses aroused the people to action. Two years ago the people began raising money to construct a truly public school, one that would stand for liberal and progressive education, free from any sectarian influence. In the summer of 1947 a fine five room building was constructed. Just before it was to open, the people learned that it was to be staffed with a nun as principal and three nuns as teachers. A cry of protest went up—it was unfair—surely it was illegal.

A delegation went 75 miles to the county seat to remonstrate with the County School Board against this action. They refused to take a stand but referred the matter to the State School Board. We were told that we would be given a hearing, but it turned out to be a closed hearing, with one woman allowed in to represent our side. An open hearing was refused when they learned of our evidence.

We concluded, on advice from others, that a suit in court would be our only real hope for remedying the situation. That is how it started in Dixon.

A State-Wide Problem

We soon learned that the same conditions and worse, existed in many other public schools in New Mexico. In 28 other public schools 145 more Catholic nuns, brothers and priests were teaching. Most of the more than \$375,000 paid to them annually in salaries, out of public tax funds, was going directly to the Catholic Church. Interested citizens from different communities brought forth evidence of flagrant disregard for laws against sectarian teaching in public schools. They were interested with us in bringing legal action on a state-wide basis against the County and State Boards of Education and others involved, with the hope of freeing our public schools of sectarian influences.

A National Issue

Similar situations prevail in many parts of the United

States, as attested by the New Jersey school bus decision, the North College Hill problem, the Champaign, Illinois, decision, and the current North Dakota effort to legislate against garbed members of religious orders teaching in the public schools of that state. The organization of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State is an attempt to meet this issue squarely and on a nation-wide scale. The Dixon situation is a part of the New Mexico problem. In the same manner, the New Mexico situation is a part of a nation-wide problem. Circumstances were such that the problem first broke through the surface in New Mexico at Dixon.

Articles describing the New Mexico aspects of the problem appeared in Time Magazine, September 29, 1947, Christian Herald, February 1948, Scottish Rite News Bulletin, November 19, 1947 and March 5, 1948, Christian Science Monitor, January 24 and 26, 1948, Presbyterian Life, February 14 and 28, 1948, as well as in many other periodicals.

Legal Action

The first step in our fight for "free" schools has now been taken. A suit which "demands the removal of nuns, brothers and priests from public school positions" was filed on March 10, 1948, in the district court in Santa Fe, in the name of 28 plaintiffs from seven New Mexico counties.

The complaint names 235 defendants including Governor Thomas J. Mabry, the state and county school officials involved, the Rev. William T. Bradley, superintendent of Catholic parochial schools in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, the State School Budget Auditor, the State Comptroller, and the 145 nuns, brothers and priests teaching in the so-called public schools.

The suit asks:

1. That all schools named in the complaint be declared parochial schools and ineligible to receive public funds.
2. That all members of Catholic teaching orders be forever barred from teaching in New Mexico public schools.
3. That salaries being paid teaching order members be declared illegal expenditure of public funds.
4. That no New Mexico tax supported school be conducted in church-owned property.
5. An injunction barring any school board from ever hiring or paying any member of a Catholic teaching order as a teacher in a tax supported school.
6. An injunction barring the state budget auditor from making or approving any school budget paying public funds to the members of religious orders.
7. Settlement of all other issues raised.

The purpose of the action as the complaint states is to bring about a complete separation of church and state in the public schools of New Mexico, and to eliminate all religious influences on a sectarian basis in tax supported schools.

The cost of carrying this case through the district court will be \$7,500 plus expenses. These expenses will be heavy because of the amount of testimony and number of people involved and the great distances they will have to travel. The bulk of the work on the case will be done in the district court. If we have to carry the case to the State Supreme Court it will cost \$5,000 more plus expenses. If we must appeal to the United States Supreme Court it will take an additional \$5,000 plus ex-

penses. Persons acquainted with legal costs assure us that this amount is very reasonable for our case.

We are financially unable to carry this cause through the courts alone. We must depend on interested friends and public-spirited citizens to help us. Any and all contributions will help to remove this threat to our public school system. Yours will be appreciated. Can we count on your help?

FREE SCHOOLS COMMITTEE
Box 45, Dixon, New Mexico.

THE BIBLE: A COMMUNIST MANUAL?

A "PERFECT Communist Manual", is the phrase used to describe the Bible in a recent article that appeared in *Le Devoir*, Roman Catholic organ of Montreal. In connection with a discussion of "Social Conditions in the West Indies" a correspondent there refers to "an invasion of Protestant ministers . . . forty different sects. And this with the money furnished by Protestant missionary societies in the United States . . ." The Roman Catholic writer goes on to make the following astounding statements:

"Notwithstanding, reflect what a Bible and commentaries may do when they are freely put into the hands of people who are not fully developed! You may guess what happens. That is the keg of dynamite! We can go farther, and say with sorrow, that it is a perfect manual for the future Communist."

One is almost stunned on reading such a statement: The Bible a "perfect manual for the future Communist"! Again we ask, What do Roman Catholics mean by "Communism"? It is becoming clearer that the word is used as a general term of opprobrium for all who refuse to bow the knee to the great golden image of Rome. Any stick is good enough to beat a dog!

The attempt to link "commentaries" with Protestant Bibles is fallacious, for it is well known that Protestant missionaries give out the Bible "without note or comment". It is Rome's canon law which forbids the distribution of the Bible unless it is annotated, though in practice, the Roman Church does not allow its people to read the Bible at all. It reluctantly permits the Bible to its "faithful" only when it is apparent that they will obtain Bibles from Protestants if they continue to be denied them by their priests. And if Roman Catholic peoples are "not fully developed", whose is the blame? Why is it that in lands where the Church of Rome has had undisputed sway for centuries, the people are ignorant and poverty stricken and impregnated with superstitious practices? Protestants cannot be blamed for this state of affairs.

The Bible is indeed a keg of dynamite, and social conditions in the Romanist countries require the explosive power of the Word of God to bring freedom to their socially and spiritually depressed populations.—W.S.W.

INTELLECTUAL OPPRESSION

By Senator T. Damien Bouchard in *Le Clairon*

UP TO the time of the peopling of the Americas by that part of the European population who had a thirst for liberty and equality, the world had experienced only absolute power and the forms of government which followed on that of the ancients on the old Continent more or less preserved their original stamp. A *juste milieu* between reaction and communism was never known.

In the theory of power, this middle-of-the-road policy is democracy, and there can be no democracy without real individual liberty; that is why so frequently there is confusion between democracy which is a form of government and political and economic liberalism which is a system of public and private life.

Government may call themselves democratic but if, once elected by the people, they allow themselves to be guided by reactionary forces, individual liberty is nothing more than an empty word and the power is democratic only in name. And by reactionary forces must be understood all organized power directing, openly or in secret, the representatives of the masses. And such a power, seeking only to dominate, makes alliances with the great opposing parties; it is of little concern to its leaders that their work should be accomplished by one group or another, provided that it is achieving their ends.

People are getting tired of this comedy which is always played at their expense; they are induced to try out new experiments in forms of power, hoping to find in them the intellectual and economic liberation that they have vainly looked for in governments which have deceived them in this regard.

It is recognized that there are three great classes of citizens: two are small and one large. The two small are composed of extremists of one or the other ideology: communists and fascists, two groups which hold to absolutism and totalitarianism; the third, democrats, are believers in moderate policies, that is to say in liberalism. The first are very active, but the last, though far more numerous, are amorphous. They allow themselves easily to be pulled one way or another; they generally begin to show alarm only when it is too late for them to do anything about it in the way of protecting themselves.

All this explains why four important countries whose majorities were probably indifferent to the communist theory have allowed themselves to be dragged into the Soviet orb. Tired with being under the thumb of reactionaries, disillusioned by promises of intellectual and economic freedom always renewed but never kept, the people have let themselves be drawn into the uncertainty of a new experiment.

There is some talk of communists in our Province. We hardly know of them. They are sundry French-speaking Canadians who have been labelled as such, but it is greatly to be doubted if these are not merely citizens who are dissatisfied with the intellectual oppression under which some instigators of narrow mind compel us to live in this land where liberty is official but absent from our way of life. Let us hope that the example which has been given to the world by countries with a democratic majority passing into the Soviet orbit will make our rulers realize that freedom is not stifled with impunity, under no matter what form.

Will the communist peril teach us the lesson that democracy and freedom must not exist only in the laws of a country but also in its ways of life?

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APR. 48

THE GOSPEL WITNESS
130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2

A FRENCH-CANADIAN READS THE BIBLE

THE following letter was written by a French-Canadian in Montreal who by some means or another obtained some of the French Gospel Tracts distributed in connection with our French Testament Campaign. Rev. John Boyd of Sudbury, to whom the letter was written, passed it along to us with the comment, "I am enclosing a letter received from one of our recent French contacts in Montreal. It is a sample of the letters we receive in response to our publication in the French language *La Voix de l'Évangile*." Mr. Boyd also tells of recent victories that have been gained over the forces of darkness and adds this word: "We rejoice most of all, of course, in the fact that this battle seems to be opening up the best opportunities we have had yet for presenting the Gospel. We are eagerly awaiting the end of the Seminary term and the coming of reinforcements to press the battle there and elsewhere with greater vigour than ever."

Here is a translation of part of the letter from this French-Canadian friend in Montreal who shows the results of his reading of the Word of God.

Montreal, March 14, 1948.

Mr. J. R. Boyd,
Sudbury, Ontario.

Dear Sir:

It gives me great pleasure to reply to your letter of February 27, 1948, and I wish to thank you for the information that you gave me and also for the leaflets entitled *La Voix de l'Évangile* (*The Voice of the Gospel*). I have read them and enjoyed them very much. As you do not know me personally, I shall introduce myself by letter. I am twenty-six years of age, married, and the father of two children: a little girl of six years, baptized in the Roman Catholic religion and a son of three weeks, not baptized in the aforementioned organization; for I have had a Bible in French for some months now and this has taught me that the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for the redemption of the human race once for all for the sins of men, and that there is only one offering for sin and that there will not be another. Therefore Jesus Christ is my sole Advocate with God our Father. That is why I have not had my son baptized by the agents of the Roman Catholic tradition.

In searching the Holy Scripture in my need, I have learned to know the True God, the Father of every Christian and my Saviour Christ. Each day, I study several chapters of my Bible and more and more knowledge grows in my heart and this strengthens my faith in God and makes me worship in spirit and in truth. I believe that salvation comes by faith in God the Father by Jesus Christ His Son. As to the resurrection of the dead I firmly believe that it will take place as it is described in the Scripture. I do not belong to any religious sect. I am free through my knowledge of the Word of God because Christ has made me free: It is by this knowledge that I have abandoned the prostitute in which I was born, that is the Roman Church.

I am now trying to compose a writing in order to be excommunicated from that diabolic organization with its pope, and I am going to write according to the Holy Scriptures by the light and grace of the Holy Spirit. I close in expressing the hope that I may soon have further word from you.

Yours sincerely,

The task of bringing the Word of God to French-Canadian Roman Catholics is an exceedingly difficult one, but letters such as the above are ample reward for many apparently unfruitful days of toil. It is our conviction

that there are many thousands of French-speaking citizens in Canada who are as anxious as the writer of the above letter to know the truth as it is in Christ and who would gladly read the Bible were it put within their reach. Let us pray for those engaged in this task and aid them with our substance.—W.S.W.

A CAMPAIGN OF REPRESSION APPROVED

L'ACTION CATHOLIQUE is, as we have noted before in these pages, the official mouthpiece of the Hierarchy of the Archdiocese of Quebec. As such, the following editorial from its issue of February 17, written by the Editor-in-chief, has a special interest as reflecting the official approval of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy. *L'Action Catholique* says:

On the formal order of the Hon. Maurice Duplessis, acting in virtue of his office as Attorney-General, the police have padlocked the offices of the Workers Progressive Party (French Section) and the shops which printed the paper *Le Combat*.

This act of authority is made in virtue of the "Law Protecting the Province against Communist Propaganda" . . .

In order to reach complete agreement with the Attorney-General, we had only to glance at this organ, of which the greater part exudes Communism. But our testimony might be disputed. We are going to make an appeal to an authority which cannot be disputed by anyone, either as to its value or its impartiality. We refer to Mr. Charles De Koninck, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Laval University.

The entire testimony that he gave at the trial of Madeleine Parent and Azellus Beaucage is of the greatest interest and is crystal clear . . .

In padlocking the shop in which *Le Combat* was printed, and the offices of the Workers Progressive Party, where it was doubtless edited, the Hon. Maurice Duplessis has therefore fulfilled his duty. It is a logical consequence of the campaign of repression that has led to the condemnation of Madeleine Parent and Azellus Beaucage. Let us hope that it may be pursued vigorously.

There never was any doubt as to the real source of the infamous "Padlock Law", but here is proof positive that the Hierarchy zealously applaud Mr. Duplessis' interpretation of it. It will be noted that the clerical paper refers to a professor in a French Roman Catholic University as an "impartial witness" in deciding who and what Communists and Communism are. That was the method by which heretics were condemned to be burned at the stake in the days of the Bloody Inquisition. The fact of the matter is that the Padlock Law of Quebec is the Inquisition dressed up in the legal terminology of a British legislature and using the authority of the Dominion of Canada to demolish the pope's enemies.

—W.S.W.

FORMER VATICAN PRIEST IS CAUGHT

Daily Graphic, London, England

The former Vatican archivist, Monsignor Cippico, who escaped from Vatican custody after being unfrocked, was found yesterday in Rome in the house of a former Fascist general.

He had been arrested by the Vatican for alleged participation in financial swindles. State police rearrested him. According to Rome newspapers, Vatican personalities in high places may be involved.

The general's wife and daughter were also arrested. The general was in Switzerland.

From The Ottawa Citizen

WE FREQUENTLY publish letters and editorials from *The Ottawa Citizen*. Our reason for doing so is that that paper is willing to present both sides of any question, and does not assume that infallibility and impeccability are to be found in everything called Roman Catholic. There is not a paper in Toronto which would publish the letters we publish here, nor is there a paper in Toronto, outside of THE GOSPEL WITNESS that would publish such an editorial as we reproduce here.

A LIBERAL CATHOLIC'S VIEW

Editor, *Citizen*: I am an English Roman Catholic, but I heartily disagree with the views of Rev. Henri St. Denis on the subject of Franco Spain. We English have a supposedly bad habit of being blunt and outspoken. That being so, it may surprise many of your readers when I say that Roman Catholicism today is like politics—i.e., there is a right and a left wing. Henri St. Denis belongs to the right wingers who are in reality pro-Fascist and reactionary.

During the Spanish Civil War one half of Catholic Spain was fighting the other half of Catholic Spain. When a worker has an empty stomach and finds he is treated as a beast of the field a time comes when he revolts—be he Catholic or non-Catholic. Franco is only interested in maintaining the privileges of the landowners, the church, and all other means of exploitation and oppression. Half of the Roman Catholics in Spain have stood for the maintenance of their faith but purged of its reactionary and Fascist elements.

As a Liberal Catholic, I detest the revival of the Inquisition which has once more come to the fore now that Franco is in the saddle again. A Protestant today in Spain is treated as a Communist or a Jew, with all that that entails.

I came to this country in 1938. On board the boat on which I came were several volunteers who had fought in Spain with the loyalists. Two of these volunteers were Roman Catholics—one an English-Canadian and the other a French-Canadian. Both these men voiced their hatred and detestation of Franco and all his works.

What other cause would they have had for fighting in Spain were it not their loathing of everything Fascist?

Ottawa, April 14.

L. W. HARWORTH.

FRANCO'S BLACK RECORD

Editor, *Citizen*: You have struck a hornet's nest on the subject of Spain—from that quarter which claims Franco as "a gallant Christian gentleman". It should be remembered that this gallant Christian had to get Mohammedan Moors to slaughter his own countrymen and the aid of Hitler and Mussolini to defeat Republican Spain—a fact of which some clerical Fascists are loathe to be reminded.

When it looked as if the Allies were likely to be defeated, Franco sneered at democracy. He proudly wore the Grand Cross of the Order of the German Eagle, the decoration he received from his brother thug, Hitler. He also wore the highest decorations which Mussolini could bestow. He gloried in the Axis victories and in the Allies' defeats. He lent his ports for replenishing U-boats and sent his soldiers to fight against our ally, Russia. He seized Tangier when Britain's hands were too full to object and made it a centre of Fascist activities.

When Germany began to collapse, he whined that he was a democrat although Spain had been for years the testing ground for Fascism. It was there the German aviators had their first victory—at Guernica—and tried out their machines—used so successfully later over Rotterdam, Belgrade, and Britain.

Ottawa, April 13.

PETER T. LECKIE

THE NEUTRALITY OF FRANCO

Editor, *Citizen*: If you imply that the recently-published documents on wartime relations between Spain and Germany constitute an indictment of Franco, I am afraid that you are badly misinterpreting them. The most exacting and inquiring mind will not find in them anything that shows a violation by Spain of her neutrality. On the contrary, they constitute a vindication of Spain; and I am surprised that you keep on insinuating otherwise. Franco gave Hitler and Mussolini the "run-around", and thus he carefully preserved Spanish neutrality.

HENRI SAINT-DENIS

Ottawa, April 8.

(The writer's assertion that the rebel dictator Franco "carefully preserved Spanish neutrality" is ludicrous in the light of the facts disclosed in Franco's letters found in Berlin. The *Evening Citizen* has already quoted from some of them. Here is another proof from Document No. 10—a telegram from the German ambassador in Madrid dated Dec. 5, 1940. . . "the Spanish government has agreed to the placing in readiness of German tankers in out-of-the-way bays of the Spanish coast for the supply of German destroyers with fuel". Thus Franco aided Hitler's murder-at-sea campaign which Canada's navy was engaged in countering.—Editor, *Citizen*).

EARNING MOSCOW'S THANKS

Communism as a topic for debate and denunciation on this continent has become obsessional—indeed pathological. Everything from a revolutionary outbreak in Bogota to a missing monkey-wrench in a factory, from a request to the government for lower prices to an outbreak of measles, is put down to the omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient "Red agents of Moscow".

Members of Parliament who should know better denounce civil liberties associations as Communistic—on no evidence at all. Newspapers that do not wish to know better, vilify as the weak-headed dupes of Moscow, citizens who hope that world catastrophe may yet be averted by inducing the Soviet Union even at the eleventh hour to see reason in international affairs. Anyone who goes on strike no matter what his justification, *ipso facto* becomes a "Bolshevik" bent on overthrowing the Canadian constitution.

To apply a bucket of cold water to this hysteria, let it be mentioned that there is more method in it than there was in Hamlet's madness. It is a cloak, a subterfuge, a smoke-screen put up by the Colonel Blimps, the reactionaries, the opponents of political and economic reforms, as their only way of defeating them.

Daub an organization with the red paint of Communism and of course all "decent people" must get out at once. They must not wait and throw the Communists out. By no means. They are worse defiled by the ruddy paint than by the blackest pitch.

No doubt it would astonish these "anguished bawlers", as the *Evening Citizen's* correspondence columns aptly termed them, if they realized that they are the best friends the Communists have got. Instead of ignoring the "Reds" they advertise them. Instead of helping to create the conditions that would nullify Communism, they perpetuate the conditions in which it flourishes. Instead of keeping their heads and realizing that 20,000 Communists in Canada and perhaps 60,000 in the United States, are not the all-powerful, all-pervasive and all-subversive entity they fear, they magnify alike their machinations and achievements.

If Moscow was capable of gratitude, it should accord such folk its heartiest thanks.

**READ THE GOSPEL WITNESS
PASS IT ON!**

NONSENSE IN PARLIAMENT

HANSARD, the official Report of the Proceedings of the Canadian Parliament, contains some pages of interesting reading from time to time but they are often buried in a labyrinth of argumentations that are as dull to read as the speeches were to hear. Parliament is literally a "talking place", and the members we send there take care to see that reporters and printers do not lack work. Not all of *Hansard* is as nonsensical as the following extracts which we print here as evidence of the way in which the pope has his spokesmen on the floor of the Canadian House of Commons. And this member did not come from Quebec! We hope that the electors of the federal riding of Edmonton East will take special note of these two excerpts:

NATIONAL REVENUE

(*Hansard*, March 19, 1948)

INQUIRY WITH RESPECT TO ALLEGED COMMUNIST ADVISERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. PATRICK H. ASHBY (Edmonton East): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Revenue. Is he aware that he is being advised by communists and is actually using the methods advocated in the communist manifesto in order to establish a totalitarian state in Canada?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. ASHBY: I should like the minister to answer the question.

Hon. J. J. McCANN (Minister of National Revenue): I have not been aware of any such advice, Mr. Speaker. If the hon. gentleman can produce anything which will convince me that I am getting that type of advice, I shall be glad to have it.

The Minister of National Revenue, Hon. J. J. McCann, is a fervent Roman Catholic who has enjoyed the distinction of having the French-Canadian Jesuit Fathers reprint one of his speeches as a tract for the times issued with their *imprimatur*. Mr. Ashby from Edmonton East must have a keen sense of discernment if he can sniff any Communist scent in the office of such a minister as that. Mr. Ashby's political affiliations are further identified in the following speech delivered last June after the infamous Marian Congress in the City of Ottawa. He is one of those Canadian politicians who apparently gives his first loyalty to an Italian prince beyond the seas. On June 23, 1947, he made the following speech in the house:

MARIAN CONGRESS

(*Hansard*, June 23, 1947)

EXPRESSION OF APPROVAL OF SERVICES PERFORMED BY VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. PATRICK H. ASHBY (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, may I point out to my fellow members of parliament the wonderful devotion to duty during the past week by the members of the staff of the House of Commons who yesterday, Sunday, handled over 30,000 visitors. I would also pay tribute to the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and to the voluntary services of the St. John Ambulance brigade. They rendered a magnificent service during the whole of the week, and yesterday gave aid to 800 casualties. I would pay tribute, too, to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and to the Ottawa police force, both of which organizations performed their duties magnificently. May I mention, too, the citizens of Ottawa and surrounding district, without whose cooperation that great event, the Marian Congress, could not have been the wonderful success it was.

Mr. POULIOT: What about members of parliament? They did well.

Mr. ASHBY: Let me mention, too, the Ottawa Electric bus drivers, who worked constantly for sixteen hours under most unusual and trying conditions.

Mr. POULIOT: What about the press gallery? They did well too.

That chit-chat of this sort should be dignified with a place in the Canadian House of Commons is lamentable proof of the low level to which the Parliament at Ottawa has sunk. Roman Catholics persist in thinking, in accordance with the teaching of their church, that the pope is superior to every other governing body, and that even the Canadian Parliament ought to pay homage to the one whom Romanists misname "His Holiness". And what can Canadians expect of their elected representatives when the Prime Minister and the Governor General both lent the prestige of their high offices to heighten the dramatic effect of that gigantic piece of stage play by which the Roman priests filled Ottawa with their idolatry last June?—W.S.W.

NUN IS REFUSED OLD AGE PENSION

TORONTO—A nun's application for old age pension has been refused on grounds that her order is bound to care for her.

The applicant is a member of the Order of Grey Nuns at East Pembroke, Ont.

C. H. Green, chairman of the Ontario Pensions Commission, said that "when she entered the Order there was a contract, either factual or implied, that in her old age she would become the care and responsibility of the (Order)."

"On this ground alone the commission ruled she could not be classed as an indigent person eligible to receive the pension."

There can be little doubt but that the application of this nun for an old age pension was intended to be of the nature of a test case. A member of an order who is strictly bound by the vows of poverty and obedience, would not be able to make such an application without the approval of her superiors "in religion". If all the nuns and monks in Canada were granted old age pensions, the additional charge on the public funds would be enormous. And then, there would be the children in Romanist orphanages who would be granted "baby bonuses". It would keep the rest of us busy providing sufficient tax money to pay the way of the Romanist institutions. Let us remember that the last word on this request has not yet been spoken. Roman nuns and priests are insistent and there are venal politicians, even in Ontario, who are by no means immune to the pressure that Rome knows how to bring upon them.

CHRISTIAN GUEST HOME

DURING the summer recess Toronto Baptist Seminary men's residence is being used as a guest home. Located at 478 Jarvis Street, the first house north of Wellesley Street, it is central and convenient. The sixteen-room house is in good condition, clean, and comfortably furnished. Our matron, Mrs. W. Sambourne, will be in charge, assisted by lady students from the Seminary. The accommodation offered is for over-night guests only. Breakfast will be served as desired. Reservations may be made by writing to Toronto Baptist Seminary. The guest home phone is MIDway 0302. The Christian atmosphere of this home will make it desirable for friends to stay in while passing through Toronto. This home will be open for guests, as we expect, between May 7th and September 26th.

DR. J. W. HOYT CALLED HOME

WE LEARNED by wire on Sunday that Dr. J. W. Hoyt had been called home on Saturday. Finding it impossible to reach Warsaw by any airline on Monday, we sent Mrs. Hoyt the following telegram:

MRS. J. W. HOYT,
761 NORTH LAKE ST.,
WARSAW, INDIANA.

DEEPLY GRIEVED FOR YOUR SAKE AND MY OWN
AT J. W.'S HOME GOING BUT FOR HIM REJOICE
IN FULFILMENT SECOND TIMOTHY FOUR
VERSES SIX TO EIGHT STOP HAD FUNERAL
BEEN TUESDAY, THOUGH VERY UNWELL,
SHOULD HAVE ATTENDED AS A MOURNER, BUT
CONSULTING ALL AIRLINES FOUND IT IM-
POSSIBLE TO REACH WARSAW IN TIME TO-DAY
STOP FROM MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH
HOYT AUTUMN NINETY-FOUR UNTIL THE END
HAVE KNOWN HIM AS AN ABLE AND FAITHFUL
MINISTER OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WHO
SHUNNED NOT TO DECLARE THE WHOLE COUN-
SEL OF GOD. WE MAY WELL THINK OF HIM
AS PROMOTED TO HIGHER SERVICE BY THE
LORD HE LOVED, AND CONFIDENTLY ANTICI-
PATE THE JOY OF CERTAIN RE-UNION. MEAN-
WHILE I ASSURE YOU OF MY DEEPEST SYM-
PATHY IN THE GRIEF I DEEPLY SHARE STOP
THIS SIMPLE BUT HEARTFELT TRIBUTE I LAY
ON THE BIER OF MY OLDEST FRIEND IN
WHOSE FELLOWSHIP IN THE GOSPEL I HAVE
REJOICED FROM THE FIRST DAY UNTIL THE
END.

T. T. SHIELDS

Dr. Hoyt exercised a faithful and fruitful ministry of the Word for more than a half century. We knew him first as Pastor of Dresden Baptist Church, Ontario. We cannot recall the chronological order of his pastorates, but he was Pastor, briefly, at Gladstone, Ontario, then for some time at Aylmer; at Victoria Ave. Baptist Church, Hamilton; at William Street Baptist Church, Chatham; at Centre Street Church, St. Thomas; in First Baptist Church, Jackson, Mich.; First Baptist Church, Peru, Indiana; and Belden Avenue Baptist Church, Chicago, Ill. In every one of these places Dr. Hoyt exercised a fervent, evangelistic, ministry, and was used of God in the conversion of multitudes of people. For a number of years he has been engaged in evangelistic work in many parts of the United States, having his permanent home in Warsaw, Indiana.

In his early ministry Dr. Hoyt was a superb singer, as was also his wife. We were often thrilled as they sang together.

Dr. Hoyt was not only an able preacher: he was also an exceedingly able executive, and administrator. He had an almost uncanny gift of discernment. We have often said that we would as readily accept Dr. Hoyt's appraisal of any man's qualities when he had talked with him for but an hour, as an estimate made by any other

man after an acquaintance of years.

Dr. Hoyt was really a church builder. Any church he served was always stronger when he left it than when he began his ministry. Our friend was not carried about by every wind of doctrine. While there was a noticeable deepening, and enlargement, and enrichment of his ministry with the years, in principle, he ended where he began, and never for a moment swerved from the "faith once for all delivered to the saints".

Dr. Hoyt was a great Pastor, a man of pleasing personality. He attracted people rather than repelled them. He knew well how to stop the mouths of the gainsayers, and how to put awkward people where they could do no harm, without offending them.

Dr. Hoyt was this Editor's oldest ministerial friend, by which we mean a ministerial friend whom we have known for the longest period. He was interested in all good works. He had a special interest in Toronto Baptist Seminary. He was ever a careful reader of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. We wrote him, urging him and Mrs. Hoyt to try to be with us for the Seminary Convocation, May 6th. It was in reply to our letter, we heard that he had but recently undergone a critical operation, and was seriously ill. From that operation he did not recover.

Thus the "Old Guard" are called one by one. The ranks of those who are left are pretty thin. But what of it?

Come, let us join our friends above
That have obtained the prize,
And on the eagle wings of love
To joy celestial rise.

Let all the saints terrestrial sing
With those to glory gone;
For all the servants of our King,
In earth and heaven, are one.

One family, we dwell in Him,
One Church, above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death;

One army of the living God,
To his command we bow;
Part of His host hath crossed the flood,
And part is crossing now.

Our spirits too shall quickly join
Like theirs with glory crowned,
And shout to see our Captain's sign,
To hear His trumpet sound.

Oh that we now might grasp our Guide!
Oh that the word were given!
Come, Lord of Hosts, the waves divide,
And land us all in heaven.

"WHY"

"The Canadian Protestant League"

By Dr. J. B. Rowell, Rev. W. S. Whitcombe
and Dr. T. T. Shields

40 pages, designed for circulation by League
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THE PEOPLES CHURCH

Box 370, Truro, N.S.

Miss Georgina Lindsay,
Secretary,
THE GOSPEL WITNESS,
130 Gerrard St. East,
Toronto 2, Canada.

April 16, 1948.

Dear Miss Lindsay:

We were so glad to hear from you in your letter of April 5 and are glad to say that all the GOSPEL WITNESSES and membership certificates and the books arrived in time for our first meeting of THE PROTESTANT LEAGUE. I know that you will be interested to know just what took place so I am sending you this information at this time.

We had really a wonderful meeting for the first meeting. There were two hundred people out. Mr. Lanctin, from Moncton, N.B., gave the message and truly we were off to a good start. There seemed to be a good interest there. Most of the people had already joined THE PROTESTANT LEAGUE and therefore did not renew just at this time. The renewal takes place some time during the summer months. We were able to get a few new members. I believe that a monthly meeting will really create an interest in THE PROTESTANT LEAGUE in Truro. We plan to have monthly meetings and we know that the need is great and that the Lord will undertake and bless us in that way. We shall send to you the membership fees and names at this time.

I am sorry to hear that the doctor has not been well but I am glad that he is around again and able to do his work. It is a great joy to look forward to THE GOSPEL WITNESS from week to week. Truly I do not know what we would do without it. I wish that he were twenty years younger and able to get out and travel more to awaken up the whole land so that revival might come.

The work here continues to go ahead. Mrs. Rockwood and the family have been separated again for a couple of months but we thank the Lord that yesterday we were able to move in our own house, that is the house on the property which we bought for the church. The house has been moved back and has been put into condition again. It is not completed as yet but finished sufficiently that we have been able to move in so that now with our own house we are able to be together permanently. We have had to move five times in the year and store our furniture three times, which has not been easy, but we do thank the Lord for bringing victory in this way and we know that with the Lord with us who can be against us.

We are also going ahead to build a basement church. It is going to be a difficult time but we have to get our own place for worship. We are paying one hundred dollars a month for the hall we are using for services, and it is a difficult time financially to carry on in this way. We feel that if we can get even a basement church started and finished this year that it is going to mean so much. We shall get rentals out of the large house which we have and then we shall have the rent which we are now paying for the church and we shall also be able to increase our congregation. We just have a little hall and up until two months ago we had a smaller one, and now with a larger hall we are able to increase our congregations further, which we are doing. We feel that with a still larger place we can do a much greater work. We are looking to the Lord and we know that He is able to do that for us.

Spiritually the work is being blessed. We are having conversions from week to week and it is through these that our work is growing. A few of the ones who left with us have fallen by the wayside but less than a dozen, on the other hand, the numbers are increased. We have started a membership roll and only have thirty thus far but I would rather have thirty who really are prepared to conform to the standards than have a great multitude who are not ready to walk all the time with their Lord. There are those who do make profession but they are living one time with the Lord and the other time with the world and I am glad for those who are prepared to make a definite stand for separation in the matter.

We are carrying on radio work now and are able to reach

almost the entire Maritime Provinces through three stations, the one here in Truro, which we record for CFCY, Charlottetown, and then for CKBW, Bridgewater. We just have the three stations for a few weeks but have been broadcasting now for seven or eight months. Through these broadcasts we are able to get the gospel message out to win souls and then in time to hold fast to these converts to build them up in the faith and which give us a starting point for further work. We are going to have a number of students this summer and we are hoping to get forth the gospel just as quickly as possible to reveal to the people that there is no meat left — no food — in the denominational churches. The only thing is to come out from among them and be separate altogether. More and more do I appreciate the freedom which is mine and ours here in being able to carry on the work as the Lord doth lead. If only more of these spiritual leaders would see the blessing of making sacrifice and breaking loose from all that is modernistic and worldly, more might take a stand. It has not been easy for us, we have had to go through deep water, but truly it is worth while. We still have much opposition in the town. The ministers will do everything to hinder the work and it would be impossible for me to tell you even in our radio broadcasting, what had to take place. They even censored my script for four months and it has been a difficult time, but again God has prevailed. We thank Him for it.

We again send kindest regards to you all there and kindest remembrance of all that has been done and pray that the Lord will continue to use you all and bless you abundantly in the tremendous work which is being done. Sending kindest regards,

In His Service,

REV. PERRY F. ROCKWOOD.

Enc. 10 /h

SEMINARY CHORUS TOUR

LAST week we published a photograph of most of our Seminary Chorus, and announced that they are going on tour throughout this province immediately on the close of school. This group, directed by Mr. R. Menzies, our school chef, has ministered by song and testimony in several of our churches with real acceptance. The proposed tour will cover most of the larger centres of Ontario. Rev. ("Padre") Bernard Jeffery, our director of practical work, will accompany the group for most of the tour, while Dean Brown will go with them to Ottawa and Kingston.

The schedule of dates, while still somewhat tentative, is as follows: Friday, May 7th, Hespeler Baptist Church; Saturday, May 8th, Briscoe St. Baptist Church, London; Sunday morning, May 9th, Temple Baptist Church, Sarnia; afternoon, Regular Baptist Church, Chatham; evening, Windsor, Campbell Avenue; Monday, May 10th, Memorial Baptist Church, Stratford; Tuesday, May 11th, Shenstone Memorial Baptist Church, Brantford; Wednesday, May 12th, Guelph, York Road; Thursday, May 13th, South End Baptist Church, Owen Sound; Friday, May 14th, Baptist Church, Orillia; Saturday and Sunday, May 15th and 16th, Westboro and Calvary, Ottawa; Monday, May 17th, Bethel Congregational Church, Kingston.

We ask our friends in and near these places mentioned to keep this notice and to plan not only themselves to enjoy the services with the Chorus but to invite their friends to join them on this happy occasion. We are sure that a good number who may live at some distance from this or that centre, will plan to motor in for the Chorus programme, and we are sure that the inspiration they will receive there from these consecrated young people will make any such trip tremendously worthwhile.

—W.G.B.

CATHOLIC ACTION AND PROTESTANT RE-ACTION

By REV. FRED C. GIBSON, B.A., D.D.

(In *The Christian Irishman*)

IN THE years immediately following the First World War, when the peoples of Europe were in a state of upheaval and chaos, and the Protestant Churches were financially impoverished and disintegrated, the Church of Rome saw its opportunity for aggression and aggrandizement, with a view to the realization of its totalitarian ambition.

In 1918 Pope Benedict XV declared "the time is come for a comprehensive enterprise, for a united 'Catholic Action'". And in 1923 Pope Pius XI repeated this challenge to the Catholic laity. In his address to the Consistory he made clear the meaning and scope of the movement. It was to be a New Crusade, apparently, against the New Paganism, threatening the human race, but in reality it was, primarily, against Protestantism, which he declared to be "the sum and substance of all the false doctrines that were before or may yet arise to ruin souls." The Pope expressed the desire that Catholic Action should be a world-wide movement of the Catholic laity and that it should be prepared to take action, in numberless ways, according to the needs of the particular place and time: "Now fighting the battle of Catholic education; now insisting on the observance of Catholic days of obligation; now combating anti-Catholic legislation, and in short, accomplishing those tasks that lay beyond the reach of the bishops and priests." But always with this papal declaration that "the moment Catholic Action broke the bonds which held it in subjection to the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy it ceases to be Catholic Action."

In Ireland Catholic Action received the hearty sympathy and support of the Irish Hierarchy. In 1929 the Synod of Maynooth urged all the clergy and laity of the Church to join "in promoting the movement, by which Catholics are united in suitable societies to form an *organized army* which shall put forth all its powers to mould the public conscience in accordance with Catholic principles; to foster the Catholic religion and to defend it in public and private." (Decree No. 233.)

Amongst the manifold objects of Catholic Action, the ultimate aim of which was the complete elimination of Protestantism, one of the chief purposes was the increasing of the Roman Catholic population in Northern Ireland, by the acquisition of Protestant properties, especially in rural areas. Nothing has been left undone to obtain possession of large residences, which have been transformed into Roman Catholic institutions, each of which is exercising a Romanizing influence in the district in which it is placed. At the same time every effort is being put forth and huge sums of money are being lavishly expended to buy up farms which have hitherto been in the possession of Protestants. In "The Land for the People", the official organ of "The Catholic Land Association of Great Britain", the professed object is definitely stated to be:—

1. The acquisition by gift, purchase, lease, or otherwise land suitable for agricultural development for the purpose of encouraging Catholics to settle upon such land and to work it.
2. The financing of Catholics without means who are desirous of settling on the land.
3. The undertaking of such lawful acts in conformity

with Catholic teaching, including propaganda, with regard to non-Catholics.

It is this aggressive action on the part of the Church of Rome that has made it imperative for the Protestant Churches to take action in the formation of land schemes in the interests of their people. In this practical and constructive way alone can we hope to counteract the passing of farms into the possession of Roman Catholics and the consequent decreasing of our Protestant majority on which our civil and religious rights and liberties so largely depend.

While, as an Evangelical Church we have no animosity towards individual Roman Catholics, and on Christian and Democratic principles we are prepared to grant to them the same rights and liberties which we claim for ourselves. Nevertheless when the existence of our Church is at stake and the well-being of our people is in jeopardy we feel that it is our bounden duty, without rancour or uncharitableness, to take such measures as may be necessary for the protection of these.

This is the spirit in which our Church, confronted by the aggression of the Church of Rome in rural areas, decided on the formation of a land scheme; the object of which was to be the assisting of Presbyterian farmers who were temporarily embarrassed to overcome their present financial difficulties, and to retain their farms. At the same time it was intended to help our young farmers to secure farms of their own, and to rear families, instead of continuing on the old homestead until past marriageable age, or migrating to industrial centres, or emigrating to other countries, and also to encourage young men, who had the necessary qualifications, to settle on the land, with the prospect of bringing up healthier families than they could possibly do in a crowded city.

When in 1932 the matter was brought before the General Assembly in connection with the Report of the Irish Mission, a Committee on Rural Problems was appointed with instructions to suggest a suitable land scheme, and to investigate how far financial help could be obtained for such an undertaking.

After prolonged and friendly conversations with those responsible for the "Irish Land Finance Company" in connection with the Church of Ireland, with whom we have always worked in the happiest co-operation, and having received gratifying promises of financial help, the General Assembly gave its hearty approval to the scheme proposed, but unfortunately they decided that the time was not opportune to proceed with such a financial venture. They, however, agreed that the Rural Problems Committee should act as a Vigilance Committee to keep a careful watch on all matters concerning the interests of our people in rural areas, especially with regard to the infiltration of Roman Catholics from Southern Ireland, which might tend to reduce our Protestant majority in Northern Ireland. For several years the report of this committee to the General Assembly evoked a deep and growing concern, and in 1946 the Assembly instructed the Committee on Rural Problems to take the necessary steps for the flotation of a company to be known as "The Rural Settlement Trust", and to adopt what they considered the most expedient means for raising the funds required for its successful working. These steps have accordingly been taken, and two years after its inception, we are able to report very substantial progress in attaining the object for which the scheme was initiated. The result is that we have now in connection with the

Presbyterian Church an organization with sufficient financial resources to meet every legitimate appeal, within the scope of the Trust, which has been received, and we are convinced that, with increased financial help, the usefulness of the Trust will be very greatly extended.

THE POPE SPEAKS ON LIBERTY

THE following speech on "The Liberty of the Church" was recently delivered by Pope Pius XII when the new ambassador from Santa Domingo to the Vatican presented his letters of credit. We translate from *L'Action Catholique* of March 21 last:

The great spiritual battles which are the dominant note of our days and whose outcome will leave its strong mark on the moral physiognomy of mankind, require carefully laid plans and decided champions. A clear vision of reality and a firm resolution are inseparable when it has to do with putting into practice the eternal laws given by God to men.

The Church of Christ is the authorized and irreplaceable mistress of these laws. Its sphere of activity extends to every corner of the earth, without excluding any race and without depending on any form of government.

But the extent of the benefits that the Church procures for society by fulfilling its mission depend substantially on the degree of liberty and of the possibility of action that each state and each form of government accord to its action. Several conditions are necessary for the Church to fulfill its mission in a way that answers to the present and future needs of the world: liberty of movement in the domain of education of youth; availability of proportionate means for the training of a clergy that is capable of providing, by a large and powerful apostolate, to the spiritual needs of the faithful; material and spiritual conditions which favour the protection of the Christian family, progressive education and the formation of an élite who, in the ranks of Catholic Action, may learn in peaceful collaboration with other citizens, to put into effect the great verities and the vital wealth of the faith, in view of the true welfare and the orderly progress of the people.

The above speech is an additional reason why Canada should NOT send an Ambassador to the Pope. Why should this great Dominion be humiliated by having a foreign prince tell us that the state over which he presides is superior to our government; that liberty really means liberty for the Roman Church to control our schools in order to produce obedient subjects of the Italian Prince, whose church alone is the authorized and

irreplaceable mistress of the laws of God. What blasphemy! For any state to submit to such degradation of its own authority is tacitly to admit that in principle its king or president are mere usurpers, and its parliament illegal except when it takes its orders from the tyrannous wearer of triple-hatted tiara in the Vatican.—W.S.W.

R.C. BISHOP CONDEMNS POLITICAL PARTY

Free Press, Winnipeg, 30 March, 1948

Msgr. J. A. Desmarais, Roman Catholic bishop of northwestern Quebec, has criticized Social Credit leaders in a pastoral letter for their "unclean demagoguery" and for "insulting our priests" at a recent meeting in nearby Rouyn, Que. The bishop in the letter also ordered all Roman Catholic priests not to rent parish halls and schools for Social Credit meetings. The letter was read in all Roman Catholic churches Easter Sunday in the northwestern Quebec diocese, which includes the only Quebec riding represented in the house of commons by a Social Credit member—Pontiac County.

News of Union Churches

REV. MORLEY R. HALL, Secretary

The last three weeks in March were spent in northwestern Quebec where the snow was still plentiful. In fact, a part of my itinerary had to be made with a snowmobile taxi. Even in the grip of winter, the north has its charms and challenges. The north is a young man's country; and it is there that we find youth at its best, and sometimes at its worst. Opportunities abound on the one hand, and sin abounds on the other hand. The land is rich in natural resources, but the communities are in dire need of the Gospel. Remove the efforts of our pastors and missionaries from this area and you would have precious little Gospel left.

Noranda-Rouyn is the largest centre between La Sarre and Val d'Or. At this point we have a small Baptist Church which was founded over 15 years ago by Rev. S. Wellington. It is a work that represents several years of strenuous labour by this servant of the Lord. Pastor Murray Heron took up duties last May, and has met with plenty of opposition and persecution from without. Several times arrested while preaching the Gospel on the streets of Rouyn, he continues undaunted in his task of giving out the Word of Life. Misses Eileen Veals and Marguerite Wallace do visitation work, principally among the French. These are missionaries of our Union, and we are highly privileged in having such consecrated workers associated with us. Pastor Heron conducts weekly services in French as well as carrying on a busy pastorate in English.

An itinerary in this part of the country is never complete without a visit to La Sarre where our French Baptists are going on with the Lord. Mr. X. Trudel covers a wide field in his ministry as pastor, missionary and colporteur. The full tale of members were present for our one and only service on this trip. When one meets these twenty French-Canadian Christians, hears them sing the songs of Zion in their own tongue, and watches them enjoy the ministry of the Word, it touches deep down in the heart. Not many short years ago these were prisoners of Rome, and enslaved in superstition. "Out of their bondage, sorrow and night," they have come to rejoice in Christ their Saviour.

Early in the New Year, Rev. W. J. Wellington made arrangements for his Easter Services at Malartic and Val d'Or. As well as a mortgage on their new church building at Malartic, they owed \$1,350. A drive was being launched to try and wipe this out on Easter Sunday. This was a tremendous undertaking for such a small band of believers—less than twenty resident members, and with only a few of these on a pay-roll. During the Sunday evening service, the pastor had the ushers count the offering. Along with the help that had come in from outside, they raised in all \$1,055.00. Both the pastor and his wife have worked

CANADIAN PROTESTANT LEAGUE MEETINGS

REV. D. C. MCLELLAND, M.A.
Secretary of THE LEAGUE
Will Address Public Meetings at

SIMCOE

Friday, April 30th, in the Sons of Scotland Hall, at 8.00 o'clock. Subject: "Will Protestants in Canada Have to Choose Between Communism or Romanism?"

LONDON

Monday, May 3rd. See local papers for place and time of meeting. Subject: "Jesus and the Holy Catholic Church. What is the meaning of this phrase in the Apostles' Creed?"

very hard in this field. It will be a glad day for them and their faithful band when they are able to clear off all of this indebtedness.

On Easter Sunday morning we enjoyed a fine service at Val d'Or. It is hoped that one will be able to give his full time here in the immediate future as it is a large and needy camp with more than 15,000 of a population. The testimony given by Mr. Wellington and his faithful flock is the only ministry where the Gospel of grace is proclaimed among this people. These other sheep **MUST** be brought, and they **MUST** be born again. In order to do this, the Gospel **MUST** be preached.

Calvary Baptist Church, Ottawa

Rev. J. F. DEMPSTER, pastor

Sunday, April 4th, was a special day in Calvary when they celebrated their 33rd anniversary, and at the same time held their re-dedication services. Rev. W. Gordon Brown, Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary, was their guest speaker. Large audiences were in attendance at both services on Sunday, and then on Monday evening they had another great meeting with a full house. Dean Brown



again addressed the congregation, and this time he spoke on "What Baptists Believe".

During the past four years the church has undertaken an extensive building programme totalling approximately \$32,000. In 1944-45 they built a parsonage, which is a credit to any people. The cut shows something of what was done to the outside of their building in their recent remodelling. The interior was all changed and greatly improved. Nicely finished pews have replaced the old folding chairs. The basement has been almost completely remodelled. Already increased attendances confirm the wisdom of such a project.

Medina Baptist Church

Rev. MELCHIE HENRY, pastor

We are pleased by the following account sent in by the pastor of the special effort among his people which resulted in such spiritual fruitfulness:

"On Sunday, March 7th, we concluded two weeks of special meetings with Rev. Roy Hisey of the Boston Baptist Church as our Evangelist. Some of his people assisted by bringing messages in song. The services began with a good crowd and steadily increased as the meetings continued. At the closing service of the campaign every seat was filled and all available standing room was taken. Two chartered buses came from Tuscarora Indian Reserve, Lewiston, N.Y. During the two weeks there were thirty-four professions and about half of these were for salvation."

Among Ourselves

Devoted to Activities of Former and Present Students of
TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY
By W. Gordon Brown, Dean

W. P. Bauman represented the French Bible Mission at the 12th Annual World Vision Conference of Calgary Baptist Church, New York, on the theme, "Meeting Communism's Threat", in Europe.

On the Sunday evening he presented the challenge of French-Canadian Evangelization at the Brooklyn Baptist Tabernacle, Rev. Robert McCaul, Pastor.

The Seminary library acknowledges with grateful thanks a liberal gift of books from Rev. Harry Walker, really his own personal library.

The matron of our Seminary men's residence could make good use of a sewing machine. One of our friends may have one to offer free or one to sell reasonably.

The Seminary students conducted the evening service at Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church on April 18th. Mr. Geoffrey Adams preached acceptably, the Chorus sang several numbers, also the ladies' trio, and the students took charge of the after-service in helpful fashion.

On Saturday, April 17th, members and friends of Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, joined by a considerable number of Seminary graduates, met to bid farewell to Miss Bessie Falle, who is returning to her field in French Equatorial Africa. Rev. Stanley Wellington made a presentation on behalf of the Alumni, and called upon Mrs. Jack Scott, who recalled memories of the days when Miss Falle attended the Seminary. Dean Brown added a few words, bidding Miss Falle Godspeed.

Recently at the First Baptist Church, Sault Ste. Marie, Rev. Duncan Macgregor has had the joy of seeing two young men make profession of faith in Christ.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol: 12 Second Quarter Lesson 5 May 2, 1948

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

THE MESSAGE OF AMOS

Lesson Text: Amos 4:4-13.

Golden Text: "He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."
—Prov. 29:1.

Supplementary Reading: 1 Kings 12:25-33; 2 Kings 14:23-29; Deut. 12:4-14.

INTRODUCTION

Amos, like Jonah, prophesied during the long reign of Jeroboam II of Israel (2 Kings 14:23-29). This period is sometimes spoken of as "the golden age" of Israel's history, but, although outward peace and prosperity prevailed, the kingdom was inwardly and morally corrupt. Oppression, violence, immorality and wickedness of every sort were practised (Am. 2:6-8; 3:10; 5:7-12; 6:3-6).

The prophet Amos was evidently of obscure parentage: he was not a prophet by birth or position, but just a herdsman, a shepherd of a certain kind of sheep, famous for wool (2 Kings 3:4), and one who tended sycamore trees (Am. 7:14, 15). God called him by sovereign grace from his lowly service to the high office of prophet (Am. 3:7, 8; 1 Cor. 1:26-29). His name means "Burden" or "Burden-Bearer", reminding us of the fact that the prophets who proclaimed the message of the Lord were frequently designated as those who saw and gave forth "the burden of the Lord" (Isa. 13:1; 19:1; Nah. 1:1; Hab. 1:1; Zech. 12:1). God frequently calls men from among the people to be His chosen representatives (Judg. 6:11-16; 2 Sam. 7:8; 1 Kings 19:19).

Jonah was a foreign missionary, but Amos was a home mis-

sonary. He lived in Tekoa (2 Sam. 14:2), in the Kingdom of Judah, about 10 miles south of Jerusalem, and although he denounced the sins of Judah (Am. 2:4, 5), yet it was chiefly to Israel that the Lord sent him. He prophesied two years before the great earthquake which took place about 760 B.C. (Am. 1:1; Zech. 14:5). He preached in Bethel, the chief religious centre of the northern kingdom, arousing the wrath of the priest Amaziah. The priest reported the matter to King Jeroboam, who exiled Amos as a traitor (Am. 7:10-13). It was probably after his return that he committed his prophecies to writing. The Book of Amos may be outlined as follows:

- I. Prophecies against the Nations: chapp. 1, 2.
- II. Warnings against Israel: chapp. 3-6.
- III. Visions and Promises concerning Israel: chapp. 7-9.

EXPOSITION

I. Warnings Unheeded: verses 4-11.

At Bethel Amos came in contact with those who worshipped at the altars of Bethel, erected by Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:25-33) in direct disobedience to the command of God (Deut. 12:4-14). As a herdsman Amos was a man of plain speech, and he denounced the sins of Israel strongly and bluntly. Sarcastically (see Amos 3:14; 5:5) he calls to the people to come to Bethel (Gen. 28:16-19; Hos. 10:15; 12:4; Am. 3:14; 5:5, 6) and to Gilgal (Josh. 4:19-24; 1 Sam. 10:8; 13:7-14) to carry on their iniquitous worship. "This liketh you," is what he says, meaning "This is what you want to do." Let them continue in sin, offering sacrifices, presenting tithes (Deut. 14:28), waving the first-fruits (Lev. 23:10, 17) and making free-will offerings (Exod. 35:29; Lev. 22:18, 21) in their own cities rather than in Jerusalem, as the Lord had commanded (Deut. 12:5, 6; 1 Kings 9:3; John 4:20).

God had spoken emphatically to Israel, but the people had failed to listen to His voice. By a series of national visitations He had sought to bring them back to Himself, but His judgments were repudiated, and His mercies were despised (Psa. 106:7; Prov. 1:30; Ezek. 20:13, 16).

Famine did not affect their stubborn departure from the Lord. The cleanness of teeth mentioned (v. 6) was the result of the lack of food to chew. The Lord allowed drought to come upon various districts at various times, but even to this calamity they paid no attention (Jer. 3:2-5). It is sad when individuals or nations do not recognize the hand of God in their trials, or seek to enquire if He has any lessons which He would teach them.

Pests followed, such as blasting, mildew and the palmer-worm, which would consume the crops (Deut. 28:22; Joel 1:4; 2:25; Hag. 2:17). Pestilence and war destroyed men and beasts to such an extent that carcasses lay unburied (Exod. 12:29; Deut. 28:21; 2 Kings 13:7). Some cities were destroyed by fire in

judgment, as Sodom and Gomorrah had been destroyed (Isa. 13:19; Jer. 49:18; 50:40), and yet Israel paid no heed to the mercy of God in sparing them (Lam. 3:22).

II. Judgment Speeded: verses 12, 13.

Although our God is merciful (Psa. 103:8), there comes a time when patience is no longer a virtue, and when, to be just, He must punish sin. Israel had been warned time and time again, but all in vain. Amos was commissioned to announce that those who had refused to meet their God as a Saviour must now prepare to meet Him as their Judge (Hos. 4:1; 12:2; Mic. 6:2-5; Acts 17:30, 31). The door of God's mercy was fast closing (Matt. 25:10-12; Lk. 13:24-28). Many in our day presume upon the mercy of God at their peril (Prov. 1:24-32; Jer. 19:15; Rom. 2:4). God waits that He may be merciful (Isa. 30:18; Rom. 9:22, 23; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Pet. 3:9), but His long-suffering is not to be counted as slackness: the time of judgment will come surely, suddenly and swiftly (Prov. 6:15; 29:1; 1 Thess. 5:2, 3; Heb. 10:26-31; Jas. 5:9; 1 Pet. 4:5; Rev. 22:12).

The Lord before Whom they must appear is the One Who has all power as Creator and Sovereign of the universe (Isa. 45:12; Zech. 12:1). He has all knowledge, so that He can read every thought of their hearts; they cannot escape His all-seeing eye (Psa. 139:1-10; Heb. 4:12, 13). He can make the darkness light (Gen. 1:1-5; Job 24:17; Psa. 139:10, 11), and the light, darkness (Am. 5:8). He is the Lord God of hosts, the God of the battle array of Israel (Hos. 12:6; Am. 5:14-16; 9:5). Let them bow down before Him and yield obedience to His commands.

The ruin foretold by Amos was accomplished some 60 years later in 722 B.C. when the Assyrians defeated the Israelites, seizing Samaria and carrying the people away as captives (2 Kings 17:5, 6, 13-18; Am. 2:14-16; 5:25-27; 6:7-14; 7:9, 17; 9:8).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

- April 26—The Lord Formed the Mountains..... Psa. 65.
- April 27—The Lord Created the World..... Psa. 135:1-7.
- April 28—The Lord Declareth Unto Man His Thought
Eph. 1:3-14.
- April 29—The Lord Maketh the Morning Darkness..... Isa. 45:5-8.
- April 30—The Lord Treadeth Upon the High Places..... Mic. 1:1-9.
- May 1 —The Lord Is God of Hosts..... Psa. 24:1-10.
- May 2 —Prepare to Meet Thy God..... Isa. 40:1-5; Matt. 3:1-3.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

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