

BEACON LIGHTS

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*Beacon Lights
Literary Contest Results*

Unions and Co-operatives

REV. R. C. HARBACH



Editorial . . .

WHAT'S WRONG WITH BILLY?

Recently the undersigned was given a pamphlet by a friend entitled "Billy Graham, A Critique." The pamphlet (thirty-eight pages in length) was written by the Rev. Robert Dunzweiler, who is professor of Systematic Theology at Faith Theological Seminary. Dunzweiler is a fundamentalist. Faith Seminary is a conservative-fundamentalistic seminary located in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania.

It is noteworthy and somewhat strange that a man like Dunzweiler criticizes Billy Graham. Are not both men fundamentalists in their theological position? Graham has expressed publicly his faith in all the cardinal fundamentalist doctrines, e.g. verbal inspiration, the deity of Christ, His blood atonement, salvation by faith, New Testament soul-winning, and the premillennial return of Christ. Surely in view of this Graham is a fundamentalist; yet, Rev. Dunzweiler writes in the concluding paragraph of his "Critique": "In obedience to the Word of God, we have felt it necessary to withhold support and cooperation from the ministry of Billy Graham." Even more strange it is that an avowed fundamentalist (as Dunzweiler is) condemns Graham when we consider that so very many who go under the name Reformed see no wrong in Billy and praise him and his evangelism to the sky!

There are three main areas in which Graham has been criticized, writes Dunzweiler. These he proceeds to treat in the main section of his pamphlet and all three are found to be valid criticisms by Dunzweiler. These criticisms are: 1) Billy Graham is sponsored by liberals, modernists, and unbelievers; 2) The Billy Graham Crusade committees send converts (Graham prefers the term *inquirers*) back to the church of

their choice — whether that church be Protestant, Jewish, liberal, conservative, or Roman Catholic; 3) Billy Graham never warns the people of God against unbelief or apostasy in the church. Because point one above is true Billy must needs keep silent in this area.

These three points are treated one by one by Dunzweiler. He points out in re: the fact that Billy is supported by modernists that in his early ministry (the early fifties) this was not the case. Billy, in a letter to Dr. John R. Rice dated May 10, 1952, stated: "Contrary to any rumors . . . we have never had a modernist on our Executive Committee . . . I do not think you will find any man who has sat under my ministry in any of these campaigns who would testify that I ever pulled a punch." Rice in a 1951 edition of the magazine, the *Sword of the Lord*, defended Graham against these charges; but a few years later things were different. The same John R. Rice in the same magazine, *Sword of the Lord*, in the April 18, 1957 issue, writes: ". . . we think he (Billy Graham) is wrong when he goes against the plain commands of the Bible in yoking up with unbelievers." This was in reference to the New York Crusade (1957) which was sponsored by the New York Council of Churches, an organization dominated by liberals and modernists. We can agree with Dunzweiler on this point.

We also agree that Billy is to be criticized for sending converts (*inquirers*) to the church of their choice. Graham openly admits to this policy. It is interesting to note in this connection that most of the cards of *inquirers* of the New York Crusade went to modernistic churches with Norman Vincent Peale's church, The Marble Col-

legiate Church, receiving the greatest number. Second to the Marble Collegiate Church was Riverside Church, an extremely liberal church founded by the late Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick with Rockefeller money.

Finally there can be no doubt that Billy never warns against unbelief and apostasy in the church. For him to do so would be highly unethical because modernists support and sponsor his crusades. Hence, William Ward Ayer writes; "Billy spreads himself too thin; he tries not to offend anybody in any way."

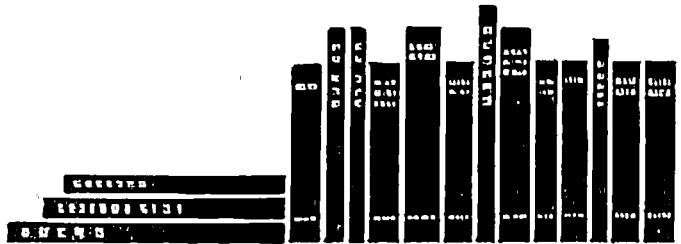
This is what is wrong with Billy. Dunzweiler is correct, but only in as far as he goes. He really misses the point! He does so because he himself preaches the same erroneous message Graham preaches. Rev. Dunzweiler says on page 5 of his pamphlet: "First of all, I think that Billy Graham preaches the simple Gospel of salvation . . . he does preach the simple Gospel . . ." This is simply not true; here Dunzweiler makes a big mistake! Graham is an out

and out Arminian. He teaches that God loves everyone, that God doesn't want anyone to go to hell, and he (Billy) begs and pleads with people to accept Jesus and be saved. Christ is presented as a mere beggar who wants to save everyone, but cannot unless they themselves believe.

This is what is fundamentally wrong with Billy Graham; let's not be afraid to say so! It is not at all strange that Billy can flirt with liberals for it can be shown historically that Arminianism always leads to modernism. Ultimately there is little difference between the two. Both are a fundamental denial of the Christ of the Scriptures. We can be encouraged that Dunzweiler condemns Graham, but we wish he would do so on doctrinal grounds. These are after all the basis. Graham's wrong methods and practices stem from his wrong doctrinal basis. What is wrong with Billy is that he substitutes for the truth of God's Word a wicked caricature.

R.D.D.

BOOKS



"Israel and the Nations"

F. F. BRUCE, published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., \$3.95. Reviewed by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema.

There are very few books published today which furnish a thorough and satisfactory account of Old Testament history. The book under review is not an exception. The information on the jacket says, among other things: "This unusual history book combines a scholar's research and a Christian's interpretation with popular history's readability. It is a definitive source book on the history of ancient Israel from the Exodus to the fall of Jerusalem in A. D. 70."

That the book furnishes the fruits of a good deal of scholarly research I will

readily grant. Especially the history from the Captivity to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 receives a good deal of attention in the book; and there is no small amount of valuable historical information furnished. The treatment of the Pre-exilic period is rather scanty, but the author admits this and explains it in his preface. Perhaps the chief merit of the book lies in the information it furnishes.

Moreover, that the book is characterized by "popular history's readability" is also true. Dr. Bruce writes in a very readable and lucid style, one that retains the reader's interest.

It is on the score of the claim to "a Christian's interpretation," however, that I must be severely critical. In fact, I believe

that the book fails dismally in this respect.

One can put this matter of a Christian interpretation to a very simple test. The test is this: *does the author recognize and subscribe to the miraculous element in Old Testament history wholeheartedly and without reservation?* Reading the book with this test in mind, I find that it fails to measure up. Instead there is a consistent attempt to give a "naturalistic" explanation of the miraculous elements and to accommodate Old Testament history to the views and interpretations of so-called "secular" history and unbelieving historians. This is a severe criticism, I know. But if Dr. Bruce desires to escape it, he should be much more explicit in maintaining this miraculous element and in maintaining the character of Old Testament history as "sacred" history. At many stages in the book one has to remind himself that this is a history of God's covenant people and not merely another secular history book about a nation of the ancient world.

Let me give a few examples.

"Their ancestral faith, however, was rekindled by Moses, a man of their own race. This Moses had been brought up, through a strange combination of events, at the Egyptian court; but eventually had to flee for his life to North-West Arabia when he was caught espousing the cause of his enslaved kinsmen . . . Moses therefore returned to Egypt, and led his people out of that land into the wilderness of North-West Arabia amid a series of natural phenomena in which could be traced the directing power of the patriarchs' God, intervening for the deliverance of their descendants. And indeed, these phenomena were such as Moses in the ordinary way could neither have foreseen nor controlled; yet their occurrence just at that time confirmed the directions given to him in his vision and rendered possible Israel's escape from Egypt in the way in which Moses assured them it would happen." p. 14.

"Whether other gods — the vanquished gods of Egypt or the gods of the Canaanites or of other nations — might have some sort of existence was not a question about which either Moses or his followers were likely to trouble themselves: their business was to worship Yahweh their God and serve Him alone." p. 15.

"The Old Testament record attributes the drying up of the river (Jordan) to a landslide at Adam (modern Ed-Damiyeh), some fifteen miles north of the place where Jordan runs into the Dead Sea; but the fact of its occurrence just at this time was evidence to them that the God of their fathers who had brought them safely out of Egypt was now bringing them safely into Canaan. The collapse of the walls around the citadel Jericho, which lay two miles west of the place where they crossed the river, was no doubt caused by the same seismic action as had brought about the landslide at Ed-Damiyeh." pp. 17, 18.

Or compare the Scriptural account with this: "The undisciplined body of slaves which left Egypt under the guidance of Moses had to spend a generation in the wilderness before a nation could be fashioned to invade the land of Canaan as conquerors and settlers. Some who did attempt to raid the Negev within a year from their leaving Egypt met with a costly repulse and were not disposed to repeat the experiment . . . The outward and visible sign of their covenant unity was the sacred chest, the ark of testimony, constructed by Moses, housed in a tentshrine. The tribes thus formed what in Greek history is known as an amphictyonic league, a group of states or tribes sharing a common sanctuary which served as the focus of their federation."

In the whole account of Gideon nothing miraculous is mentioned. He "led a small and mobile band against the invaders, took them by surprise, pursued them across Jordan and wrought great havoc in their ranks." p. 20.

Or take this description of Saul: "The tragedy of Saul is that he was a sincerely religious man, deeply concerned to do the will of Yahweh, and Samuel's announcement that Yahweh had rejected him as king preyed upon his mind as it would not have done if he had been an irreligious man. He became a victim to melancholia and persecution mania, and required to have his dejected spirits soothed by music." p. 26.

Solomon's succession to the throne is not a matter of the promise of God, but: "David had already promised her (Bathsheba) that her son Solomon would succeed him as king; and this succession would certainly be more pleasing to the people of

Jerusalem, who would prefer to be ruled over by a native of their city (as Solomon was) rather than by a son born to David before he became king of Jerusalem." p. 34.

Jeroboam is explained as follows: "But the prophetic party, which was opposed to the innovating trends of Solomon's policy, marked out this Jeroboam as one to whom the national loyalty could be diverted; and the suggestion was sown in Jeroboam's mind by the acted prophecy of one of their number, Ahijah of Shiloh." p. 39.

The stroke of the angel of death upon Assyria in Hezekiah's time "appears to have been an attack of bubonic plague." p. 72.

And so there are many such expressions in this book which do not ring true. Israel as God's peculiar people, the product of His grace, the wonder, faith, the promise — all these play no part in this history.

Perhaps the root of the trouble in this book lies, on the one hand, in the attempt to write what is called a "political narrative" of Israel's history. The attempt to do this is in this reviewer's opinion impossible. Israel was the theocracy, the Old Testament kingdom of God. To avoid this fact,

and treat Israel as a nation among the nations is exactly to divest Israel and its history of its fundamental and peculiar character. On the other hand, whatever else Dr. Bruce may believe about the Scriptures, the way they are characterized in his "Introduction," p. 11, is less than satisfying: "Yet, while these books (of the Old Testament) have come down to us as Holy Scripture, they are historical source-documents of first-rate worth. The chapters which follow are not concerned with them as canonical writings, but as material for constructing a political narrative." This, to my mind, is essentially a denial of the unique character of Scripture as the infallible Word of God. This use of Scripture goes a long way toward explaining the presentation of this volume.

My trouble is that when I discover things like this in a history book, I lose my confidence in the author's presentation of historical data also, and become inclined to question almost all that he writes.

Conclusion? Read the book for what it is worth; but read with extreme discretion and a good, healthy skepticism.



FROM **Dort** TO **TODAY**

the development of the reformed faith

(4)

REV. H. HANKO

THE GREAT SYNOD

Who were those who stood in the line of Calvin? Could the Arminians prove their claim that they were the ones? Was it true that they were intent only on developing the Reformed faith, as they claimed? Or was it rather true, as the leaders of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands maintained, that their views were destructive of Calvinism? And, that they had attempted, be it in a devious and crafty way, to destroy

the truth of God's Word?

We will let the Arminians speak for themselves.

You recall that in 1610 the Arminians (who were at this time known as Remonstrants) had met in the city of Gouda to formulate their views. The product of this meeting was a document known as the five points of the Remonstrants. In these five articles, they commented on the truths of

sovereign predestination, the total depravity of man, the atonement of Christ, the work of salvation in the hearts of the elect, and the perseverance of the saints.

You will not dispute the fact that these five doctrines of the Reformed faith are all the cardinal doctrines. The Arminians were not speaking of rather minor points (if one can properly speak of minor points of the Word of God) of the truth. They were discussing the towering doctrines of Scripture, the foundations of the Christian faith. They were not interested in developing points on which the Church had not spoken before this time. They were formulating opinions on questions on which the Church had for many centuries maintained specific positions. They were calling attention to questions on which Calvin had written extensively.

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Calvin had taught (in keeping with the views of St. Augustine) that God sovereignly determined in His eternal counsel by the decree of predestination the ultimate destination of all men, angels and devils. Calvin had taught that this predestination (both election and reprobation) was altogether the sovereign determination of God, and that it was not based on any other consideration, e.g., the works of men. He did not elect those who He knew would do good works. Nor did God reprobate those who He knew would sin. He sovereignly chose His own. He sovereignly rejected the rest.

What did the Arminians say about this crucial question?

The first article of their Formulation made in Gouda reads:

That God, by an eternal unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ His Son, before the foundation of the world, hath determined, out of a fallen, sinful race of men, to save in Christ, for Christ's sake and through Christ, those who, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, shall believe on this his Son Jesus, and shall persevere in this faith and obedience of faith, through this grace, even to the end; and, on the other hand, to leave the incorrigible and unbelieving in sin and under wrath, and to condemn them as alienate from Christ according to the word of the gospel in John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," and according to other passages of Scripture also.

It is a good question whether there are very many today who would be able to detect the error in this point. In fact one does not find it at all uncommon to read and hear people of Reformed persuasion defend these very views. This is not only due to the fact that the Arminians were very subtle in stating their position (admittedly this is true), but it is also due to the fact that there is terrible ignorance in the Church world today.

The fact is that the above article does not maintain that God sovereignly determines who are elect and who are reprobate. It teaches the very opposite. It teaches that God chose those to be His elect who would believe on His Son Jesus and who would persevere in this faith and obedience of faith to the end. Thus man's faith is the condition of his election, and his perseverance in faith is the condition for his remaining elect. This has been called conditional predestination, and so it is.

This may seem as a trivial point to debate; but most emphatically it is not. And the Arminians were fully aware of the importance of this position. If it would be adopted (although Calvin had taught quite the opposite) it would open the flood gates to the view that man of himself can believe. This, in fact, was precisely what happened. He does not believe because he is elect; he is elect because he believes. The Arminians may say that he believes only by grace; but this is more of that terrible subterfuge with which they tried to make their views sound good.

The point had to be answered or the Reformed faith was lost forever.

It was answered beautifully and concisely in the first chapter of the Canons of Dordt.

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Calvin had taught that the death of Christ on the cross was only for the elect. He taught without any doubt that the blessings which Christ merited for the elect were for them alone. He took away their sins by His blood and earned for them alone eternal life through His obedience. And all this was rooted in a love of God which was towards the elect only. The reprobate were, in an absolute sense, excluded from all this.

Did the Arminians teach this?

Let them speak for themselves.
Their second article reads:

That, agreeably thereunto, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, died for all men and for every man, so that he has obtained for them all, by his death on the cross, redemption and the forgiveness of sins; yet that no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except the believer, according to the word of the Gospel of John 3:16: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And in the First Epistle of John 2:2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

It seems as if the Arminians become bolder here, for they say very clearly that they are firmly convinced that Christ died for every single man and that He merited His blessings for everyone that ever lived.

It is true that they add that only the believers ever receive this forgiveness, but the inescapable conclusion is that Christ died for many that are not saved. And the only reason why they are not saved is that they do not, by their own will, agree to believe on Christ.

Really the Arminians, having written Article I had to write Article II. They are so logically related that the one necessarily follows from the other.

But the cross is destroyed. Christ cannot save those for whom He died.

This had to be answered.

Do you ever hear the same position defended by those who claim to be Reformed? by those who call themselves Calvinists? by those who say they maintain the Canons of Dort? It's a very common thing in our day.

The Canons answered this in the second chapter.

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Calvin had taught (and in this respect also he simply repeated what Augustine before him had maintained) that man is totally depraved. He could not do any good in the sight of God at all. The fall had robbed him of every ability to fulfill in any respect the law of God. He was sold under sin and thoroughly corrupt. He was (and is) a foul fountain spueing forth a dirty stream of sin.

And, most important of all, because of

this total depravity, he can do nothing to save himself.

The Arminians had something to say about this too.

Only, what they had to say sounds very good. They thought, evidently, that at this point they had better hew to the Reformed line lest they arouse undue suspicion. They forgot that they already implied (and later in the articles do state) that man can of himself exercise his own free will. They speak very strongly of total depravity.

Their third article reads:

That man has not saving faith of himself, nor of the energy of his free will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostasy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do any thing that is truly good (such as saving Faith eminently is); but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through his Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, according to the Word of Christ, John 15:5: "Without me ye can do nothing."

They did not mean this, of course; it was a camouflage.

It is not at all unusual to hear the same things in our days. Oftentimes, our young people are convinced that a man is sincerely interested in the truth because, although he may bring false doctrine, he nevertheless at the same time speaks the language of Reformed believers. He talks both ways.

We must beware of this. It is intended to deceive.

There is an old Dutch proverb which, freely translated, says, "The devil never comes in wooden shoes, but always in slippers."

CHURCH CENTER WILL SERVE U. N.

The church world is moving very rapidly toward centralization and toward becoming a world church. Recently a crowd gathered in front of the new \$3,000,000 church center for the United Nations as the 12-story building was dedicated at ceremonies across from U. N. headquarters in New York City. The structure was built by the Methodist Church and will be administered by the liberal anti-Christian National Council of Churches. A.L.

BEACON LIGHTS LITERARY CONTEST

RESULTS

Judges: REV. J. A. HEYS, REV. D. J. ENGELSMA, MR. R. PETERSEN

Prose Non-Fiction

1. My Most Unforgettable "Character" Rev. Robt. C. Harbach, Kalamazoo Church
2. Divine Decree Versus Divine Permission Mrs. D. Jonker, First Church
3. God In Creation Elaine Triezenberg, Kalamazoo Church
4. Almighty Man John Kalsbeek, Jr., Hope Church

Prose Fiction

1. Great Gain Mrs. H. C. Hoeksema, First Church
2. Pride Goeth Chas. H. Westra, Southeast Church
3. Submission Mrs. D. Jonker, First Church

Poetry

1. Winter Rev. Robt. C. Harbach, Kalamazoo Church
2. Faith Mrs. H. C. Hoeksema, First Church
2. Rain Rev. Robt. C. Harbach, Kalamazoo Church
3. Transformation Mrs. H. C. Hoeksema, First Church
4. Hope Winifred Koole, Hope Church

Grade School Category

1. God's Seasons Mary Jane Holstege (Jun. High)
2. High On A Hill Marlene VanDenTop (age 12)
3. A Light To Rule The Day Karen Lubbers (Jun. High)
4. The Pine Grove Lois Engelsma (Jun. High)
5. Ronny Inchworm Phillip R. Harbach (age 11)

PROSE NON-FICTION

1st Place

REV. R. C. HARBACH

My Most Unforgettable Character

Our covered wagon suddenly emerged from the rolling green of Virginia into the closely crammed hills of Kentucky. Amazement struck me, not only with the sight of the first mountains I had ever seen, but with the fact that ninety-eight per cent of the local *terra firma* was set on a sixty degree angle. How utterly different from the exciting canyons of Juniper and Chestnut, the towering Petra of South Penn Square or the asphalt jungle thickly settled between the Delaware and Schuylkill! At

ox-cart pace we proceeded along the winding trail walled in by the myriad hills, avoiding ruts and hog wallows, real threats to the "body by Fisher," and escaping them altogether where path blended with stream. Jouncing along the creek bed, we felt as out of place as a juggernaut in the narrow pool of the Taj Mahal. Occasionally the shallow flood seemed to merge back into what residents euphemistically referred to as "the road." I never could quite make up my mind whether the trail ran into the creek,

or the creek ran more often into the trail!

At last we reached the preacher's tiny stilt-supported cottage on the hillside by a bend in the trail, the stony yard sloping down to sapling-covered, hog-infested bottom land. Not as drab as I had expected, no bad-lands fascination as I had anticipated. Later, as I soon learned that night, there was a quaintness, a sweetness, an attraction known only in these coal-mined hills.

At moonrise, hills and valley combine silvery glow;

Stars faintly sparkle crystal jewels

Like splattered tear-drops on black velvet.

Hilly woodlands, silent and serene,

Emit dark, pristine beauty's fragrance.

From forest pulpits cicadas lead

Nocturnal mites in chirping praise,

Expressing vernal sentiment, "Peace! peace!"

Strange, how such impressions are made while enjoying a Saturday night bath out on the back porch in the moonlight! In the little bungalow only rigged-up privacy was available. Early pioneers had no gas, electricity, running water, bathroom or tub. But since "civilization" had not yet penetrated into this back-country, there was no more advanced facility present than the back stoop and a galvanized laundry tub. I drew water from the well, heated it in a vat over an open wood fire in the yard under the stars, and completed my ablutions at an hour when mountain travelers would not be trudging the nearby trail. I was further encouraged in this bold exposure by the fact that neighboring homes were separated by modestly intervening hills.

At the time I did not realize it, but my friend Alexander and I were destined soon to meet. It was to be my happy task to visit lost places on Lost Creek, far back into the hills, to teach the Word of God in the scattered mountain schoolhouses. To begin this project, I had to find Alexander, for he was to take me through this wild territory and introduce me to adventures such as I had never contemplated. He lived on one of the Jones' residences, and not too far from Jonestown, population: 10. This was next to Granny Campbell's place. I remember this dear old soul chiefly for her habit of expectorating on the floor at the Wednesday cottage prayer meeting. Arriving at the Jones household, I was greeted by yelping hounds which did not faze me much

until I saw how they could climb the fences and trees on the premises. Alec was not in at the moment. He was up in the woods "t'other side th' crick," but Mrs. Jones accommodatingly called his name in what to me sounded like the screechy tones of the rebel yell. Reluctantly, Alec came out of his comfortable hideout and jaunted down the hillside and across the foot-bridge to the barnyard where I was waiting. He greeted me with a disgusted eye. I did not shake hands. Alexander was a mule.

In my opinion, this bony, shapeless, shiftless, non-descript beast was dubbed "Alexander" because he had no more worlds to conquer. That is, from birth he had been born "beat," and cared nothing to prove his mettle, nor even to conquer the little knoll "ahint th' Jones place." He only half-heartedly fought his way up there because it was wooded and afforded ample refuge from the heat. There he would remain until he couldn't stand the insistence of Miz Jones' screechy summons, or until he smelled the cooking of blackberry cobbler a day or two later.

Mounted on Alec, I who had hardly mounted more than a soap-box scooter made with an old roller skate, felt like Lawrence of Arabia sitting atop the peak of a dromedary's back. However, he had an advantage over me. His desert bus would kneel so he could mount. Mine had to be hauled to a stump from which I could climb into the saddle. How far it seemed to the ground! Seated there I had no idea how or where I was to dismount. But I had a suspicion that Alec knew. He started off rather sedately down the road as long as we were in sight of his master's house. But once around the bend in the road he became proud and acted as though he owned me. Uppity enough, I humiliatingly felt I had to agree. He determinedly slowed down to such a slow gait that I kept wondering when his hind feet were going to catch up with his fore feet. The *plop plop* of two of his feet were separated by such a long interval of silence before I heard the *plop plop* of his other two. The trail led under shaded ledges, over sunny valley and right down the middle of the creek for miles. I soon learned that feet in stirrups and reigns in hand do not necessarily imply a rider in control. Alec went wherever he desired, and not where

I subtly tried to guide him. Along a path at the edge of a bluff hardly wide enough for a child, with a stream far below, I was absolutely fearless. Mules are quite sure-footed. I read that in a book somewhere, I told myself. Alec *was* rather steady on his feet for the first hour of the rocky trip. After that I often felt that I should attempt carrying him part of the way.

Little mountain cottages dotted the hillside, some quaintly framed with rail fence, and as we passed, some of the inhabitants might be seen seated on the porch or standing in the fields gaping with long unbelievable stares at us. After all, Alec and a greenhorn from William Penn's town were quite a combination! It was customary to go through something like the following greeting and salutation routine. "Howdy, there!" I would call. "Haowdy, thar. Step daown an' set a spell. Stay ohl naahit." "No, thank you; reckon I have to get along. Come with me." "Nope, thank'ee, reckin Ah'll jes set raahit chere." This and much more was often said in passing — you can't imagine just how slowly Alec could dawdle.

Now Alec knew everything a mule could know about this country, whereas I neither knew the country nor Alec. Consequently, next to him I felt like a jack-ass. I had to despise my own vaunted wisdom more than once to depend on his. It is a genuine lesson in humility when one must learn from a mule. I was not aware of the fact that over this trail Alec had been used to stopping at certain houses, but that was why he kept pulling me toward every draw or creek branch leading to small out of the way cabins. It was all I could do to turn him back to the wilderness road. The cliché "stubborn as a mule" did not apply to Alec. He was only conforming to his old social habits. Besides, he was too lazy to be stubborn. But there was one lonely house at which Alec simply had to stop. So off the road he went to the "tether tree," and off went my sun helmet as the hanging branches scraped it from my head. My thoughts reverted to Absalom as his mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak . . .

Soon the first schoolhouse was in sight. Before it there was situated a narrow wooden foot bridge over the ubiquitous stream.

This seemed like a natural short-cut to the school, being wide enough to accommodate a mule. But Alec merely stolidly stood, and eyed the planks with careless annoyance. Men and boys lounging on the front steps of the schoolhouse stared mightily but offered neither comment nor advice. I learned later — everything I learned here I learned later — that mountain people have the facility of laughing uproariously to themselves without cracking a smile. They are too polite to needlessly offend strangers. Dismounting and tugging on the reins could not avail to make Alec take one step on that bridge. In disgust I remounted (this in itself must have been an amusing sight) and rode Alec across the creek, where I dismounted, tethered, entered the schoolhouse under the curious gaze of the country schoolmaster and his lovely pupils. There I taught what everyone called "Sunday School," regardless of what day it was; we sang hymns, and I gave instruction in Bible history. Afterward, Alec and I proceeded on *his* way to the next school down the creek. Alec, I was afterward instructed, was not being ornery; he simply never would cross a bridge like that for fear of breaking a leg in one of the many holes of that rickety span. I may have been brave, but Alec was no fool.

Through a shady avenue of trees surrounded by endless hills I pressed on into more inaccessible country, where of course I'd never before been, and where no sort of written directions could have been of any possible use to me. So I was instructed to "borrow" one of the pupils to ride Alec with me as a guide to the next outpost. With a quiet mountain boy behind me, I informed him how I was more familiar with the controls of an auto, and had not yet discovered the control panel on this reeling quadruped. Consequently I had a question: how do you accelerate this thing? I can't say that Alec paid no heed to my insults for he made noises in his throat like marbles rattling around in an empty oatmeal box. My biped companion quickly dropped down to the ground, was as quickly back with a stick which he applied to Alec's bony rump. The change was shocking. The world suddenly seemed to be a blur of saddle, stirrups, mule ears, two pairs of arms and legs bouncing high, scenery

rolling by, an occasional hen scuttling aside from flying hoofs, and in that hectic moment I remember a pair of geese dive-bombing overhead.

This locomotion continued more or less unabated, with Alec's head turned sideways, ninety degrees to his body, one eye then to the fore in the direction of flight, and the other eye to the rear watching application of the switch. When he observed cessation of this persecution, he would immediately slow to a worm's crawl. He became so well trained that I had only to raise the stick, and that one rear-viewing eye took the message to his two-by-zero brain, and off he would go again at his mock gallop—more motion than speed. But usually his was an exasperating slowness. I could never understand how a creature with twice as many legs as I (and twenty times the muscles) could move slower than a man wading in waist deep snow! On one of these trips I had neglected to carry a switch. This certainly was not unknown to my flea-bitten friend. For taking advantage of his head-sideways strategy he constantly maneuvered me away from overhanging trees and bushes on either side, so that with his zig-zag stagger I could not break off a switch while en route. But a resourceful man will not be outwitted by a mule, I affirmed. There was my mechanical pencil: I drew it from my shirt pocket like a dagger from its sheath and with a back-hand sweep struck Alec a blow, you know where. He got the message, even though conveyed over a longer nerve route than before, and heaved off into space. This method of acceleration did not succeed for long, however, as Alec, craning backward could see nothing in my hand, and since he could see nothing, concluded there was not only nothing to fear but nothing to feel. After that, no amount of jabbing would coax him to give a snail competition. But then I instituted the habit of carrying a piece of lumber the size of a billy-club. Alec only had to see that raised, and for quite a spell he'd whip up a breeze.

On return from these safaris, we had to take a different route across lonely ridges, and on that first sally Alec was the only one of the two of us who knew where we were going. Once he led me down a strange but sparkling, bubbling stream away from

my desired haven, and refused to turn back or to stop. With that bit in his teeth there was no turning him, and riding in the creek as we were, dismounting meant an unattractive half wading, half swimming progress. Meeting a native and not taking the time for the usual greeting, in exasperation I asked whether *he* could "turn this bag of bones around." Hauling on the reins he did so, addressing Alec by name, for he knew him of old, and slapped him off into the right direction.

Certain mule-back riding questions at times entered my mind. Does one ride a mule *up* the mountain-side? Yes, I found, but only upon making frequent rest stops on the way. Alec sounded like a broken down pump organ at a city mission with his wheezing, grunting, grumbling, moaning, and for my benefit the giving of his own imitation of the "death rattle": so that numerous pauses seemed in order. Does one ride a mule *down* the other side of the mountain? No, I learned, unless you like the saddle situated right behind his ears. It was necessary to dismount, take the reins before him and drag him down, stepping carefully over rocks and breathlessly guiding him as he stumbled half falling, catching himself and so laboring to the next level.

My work was done in very hot weather, sometimes 112 deg., once 125 in the sun. Returning on one of these friendship tours (Alec and I were rather close by now) we came to an old abandoned saw mill where rotten saw dust was strewn down the mountainside and across the road. At this point I had the sensation from my usual lofty height of coming closer and closer to the ground. Alec's legs were with his forward progress bending more and more until my feet in the stirrups were actually touching the ground. I bounded out of the saddle as mule legs stuck straight up into the air as he lay on his back like a dead beetle. I felt like Balaam whose ass fell down under him. From a safe distance I watched my only means of conveyance throw what I assumed was a fit from sun-stroke. What thrashing about on that soft bed of sawdust! I had an intuition that a sick animal ought to be gotten on its feet as soon as possible, so a little rein pulling roused him shakily to his feet. Fearful that

the throes of his "fit" might still be current, I tethered him in the shade under a tree to see what results a rest-cure might bring. As I did not wish to be too close, in case a like spasm should recur, I sat in the tree over his head to read my Bible for the time. But Alec was only pulling my leg rather than his own carcass. His cinch had slipped and become too tight; so he was only settling down in the softest spot on the long mountain road to wriggle and shift it to a looser and more comfortable position.

Finally, proceeding homeward, I was happy that my rented transportation was still in operative condition, and could be returned to owner in approximately the same shape as when we started out. I had my doubts when the next moment a cloud-burst struck us. Alec took off as though a tribe of Comanches were after us. We were immediately drenched. All the while I was bobbed around in the saddle, a stirrup broken, and rode trying to hold it uselessly on my foot to keep from losing it. Just as suddenly the rain ceased, the monotonously calm gait of my companion resumed, and sitting practically side-saddle

with one stirrup, we were, in the 100 degree heat, soon as dry as ever.

Now I was an experienced circuit-rider for the Lord, and every day faced similar intriguing adventures. Alec faithfully took me over mountain fastnesses, placid streams, across raging torrents, through woodland vale, high along waves of ridges and ranges, along shaded ways trellised with black locust, in the blazing sunlit valleys, and once through a huge buzzing colony of digger wasps entrenched in the bed of the road. Alec and I called at many a one-room schoolhouse, some much more remote than others, yet revealing a spiritual nurture, a bright-eyed inquisitiveness not at all evident in duller pupils much closer to organized society. I remember the dark-eyed, calicoed, pig-tailed teacher in one of the schools, the aged, hoary-headed prophet-like teacher in another. I remember the clean cut, shining faces of the mountain boys and girls radiant with intense interest, hanging on every word, their enthusiastic and attentive response heart-stirring. But then, Alexander, my mesozoic wonder, that fugitive from a glue factory, has an esteemed and irrepressible place in my memory.

**Grade School
Category**

**1st Place
MARY JANE HOLSTEGE**

God's Seasons

*God sends the winter winds that blow,
The ice, the sleet, and drifting snow.
He speaks across the frozen plain,
And whispers, "I'll send spring again."
Soon we will feel the southern breeze,
And see the birds upon the trees.
He sends the summer drought and showers,
The growing grass and fragrant flowers.
When summer heat and storms are past,
The autumn comes with chilly blast.
Again He sends the drifting snows;
His wondrous works to us He shows.*

Great Gain

She shivered as she stepped across the rugged rocks. That big boulder standing straight and alone would give some shelter from the wind. Stumbling, she twisted her ankle and felt the tears creep to the surface. She wished she would reach that rock. Walking sidewise might work better, because the small rocks underfoot were slippery from the drizzle.

Facing the tall rock at last, she ran her hands over its rough surface. Here was a niche she was looking for. Pulling her loose raincoat over her head for protection, she pillowed her face in her arms against the cold stone: she stood very still and sobbed.

Could there be a worse hour to be out here alone? Five o'clock on a dark drizzly morning with scarcely a streak of light in the sky? Even the lake, the lake she loved, with its shores sometimes sandy, sometimes stony, looked bleak.

But she had planned it this way. For weeks she had thought it out. Mom called it moping. Now it seemed morbid, and she couldn't go through with it. She slid her arms down the side of the rock and wearily sank down. With head and arms resting on her knees, a crooked little figure, she sighed.

That was it, she sobbed again, her crooked little figure. Her back. And people meant so well when they told her to forget her hunched-up figure. She had such a pretty face. And people told her not to mind the stares and sarcasms of taunting children, but to remember that children are cruel and they will grow up to understand. And people told her she could use her talents and be of a lot of use in life.

And her parents had pondered all her problems with her. For several years they

had "sessions" as Dad called them. She really wanted the sessions to help her, and sometimes they did. Mom said a crooked body needn't house a crooked soul. Dad said her heavenly Father gave her that crooked back for His own good purpose.

The minister came often to chat. He would remind her what Paul said about godliness with contentment. She tried to think the way they wanted her to. But then she would look at her ill-fitting clothes and spindly legs as she stood with her back against the wall in the hall at school and watched the graceful flirting girls laugh along with their would-be dates. The boys smiled at her, and were even sympathetic sometimes, but she knew she would never have a real date. She would never realize the dream of every girl, to marry, to have a home, and, most cherished dream of all, to become a mother.

Then all pious talk of purposeful living faded, and she looked at life at seventeen with an aching dullness and utter loneliness. Why did it have to be me? Why not end it? She sobbed aloud.

Startled, she stood up. Someone else was walking along the lake shore at this odd hour. It was a boy, because she could hear him whistling. She was dabbing at her face when he rounded the bend in the rocks.

"Did I hear someone crying?"

No answer.

"How come?"

"Because it's raining," she heard herself squeak lamely.

"Not when the sun is out. Then the rain stops. Come over here and feel the first warm rays of the morning sun. They're always the best, you know." His voice was

hearty. If he was laughing at her he didn't show it.

Timidly she tripped over the rocks and sand. She hadn't noticed that the rain had stopped.

"Beautiful morning for a walk," he began tritely. Did he expect her to walk along with him? She stole a shy look, but he was looking out toward the lake. "Come along a little way," he said, still looking over the lake.

They didn't talk as they crunched along the still-damp sand. His name would be Bob, she thought. That would fit a tall, well-built, clean-cut boy. His hair was blond and short. His easy bearing and expensive clothes told her that he was used to the finer things in life. She could picture him in a cream colored convertible with his fashionable friends: or he would have a sail-boat. Yes, he would like sail-boat races. He would be an all-around fellow at school. His girl-friend would be . . .

Turning abruptly toward her, his pale blue eyes smiling down at her, he queried, "Do I pass?"

"I — I don't even know you."

"You're trying to figure me out, though. Just wondered if I passed inspection. But never mind," he laughed, "let's talk about the lake. I love it. Always call it my lake. The fresh breeze in summer, the gale in winter, the placid ripple or the war-like waves intrigue me. I love to listen to the first splashes of the frolicking fish, and to the busy birds discussing their morning chores . . . Then the sun slowly comes around to greet me. Oh, I'd never miss my morning walk."

He was probably a poet, too. Then in a slower voice he went on, "It's just the time to think out all those problems. Wouldn't you say so?"

"I'd say you wouldn't have problems."

Silence again. It was strange that she had never seen him. Their town wasn't very large. That ring on his finger, elegant, expensive, might be a class ring from an exclusive school. His father might be a successful lawyer, or a doctor. Anyway, unconventional as this walk might be, it was taking her mind off her troubles.

"Are my legs going too fast for you," he asked, shortening his strides, "or are

your troubles bogging you down?"

"Are you a mind reader?"

He laughed again. "Elementary. Why else would a pretty young girl leave her beauty sleep and sit crying on some rocks? But we needn't talk about it."

"Why should we?" She knew he heard the bitterness in her voice. "Anyone with half an eye can see how deformed I am. And you needn't be kind and say that it doesn't show under my raincoat."

To her surprise he didn't look at her. He kept gazing quietly toward the lake.

"I'm young yet," she went on, "and have nothing, nothing but an empty friendless life to look forward to. No fun, no sports, no dates," she was speaking impetuously now, "and I may as well tell you the rest. I was going to end it all in your beautiful lake this morning."

"Would it have helped?"

She didn't answer. She didn't care what he thought about her. She still had half a mind to go through with it.

He spoke with seriousness beyond his years. "Would it be right?" Have you thought of your parents? Of yourself?"

She stopped a moment and rubbed her tiny foot on a smooth stone. "Don't preach," she sighed. "How could you understand? You have everything. You don't know what it is to be sweetly sympathized with. You don't know what loneliness is: you, with your beautiful body and good looks, plenty money, popularity, and probably a dozen girl friends."

"A what?" He threw his head back and laughed. "That's funny! The best joke . . ."

"Watch out!"

But he had already stumbled. It wasn't a deep crevice, but the rocks were sharp and he had a gash above his ankle.

"Sit here," and she helped him to a flat rock, "and I'll try to fix up that cut. Next time if you don't laugh so hard, you'll see the pitfalls ahead," she lectured.

Kneeling at his feet, busy ripping up his handkerchief as a bandage, she didn't notice how quickly his laugh died out. When she looked up she saw a sad wistfulness on his face as he said in measured tones, "That wasn't the reason I mis-stepped on those rocks. You see, my friend, I'm blind."

POETRY

1st Place

REV. R. C. HARBACH

Winter

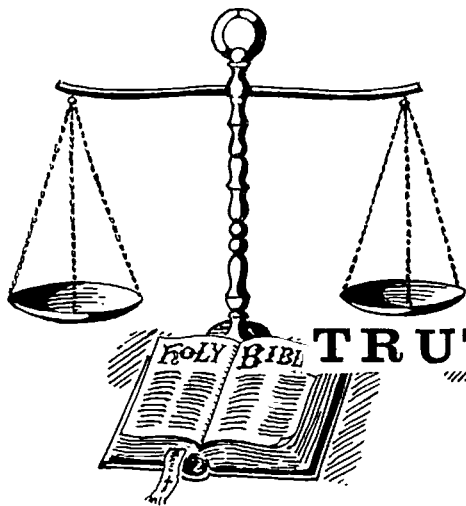
*Snow falls on sere field and chill stream,
 icy waters congeal at winter's blast;
 White haze shrouds nature in a dream
 Of platinum blanket bound to last!
 Snow fallen, woodlands rest in bright array;
 No human presence intrudes the scene:
 Deer trails o'er vale and hill lead the way
 To lonely lake mar'd with beauty's sheen.
 In twilight cold, all Creation stands
 Majestic, still, with frost-laden hands
 Adoring its Maker who mountains made,
 And heaven and earth's foundations laid.
 My heart echoes the silent song
 Of glory to God for ages long!*

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
 John Kalsbeek, Bus. Mgr.



TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. R. C. HARBACH

UNIONS AND CO-OPERATIVES

The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, 1943, adopted the following principle concerning labor unions: "Church membership and membership in a so called neutral labor union (CIO and AFL) are compatible as long as such union gives no constitutional warrant to sin, nor shows in its regular activities that it champions sin." Without making a formal, detailed analysis of this "principle" which has been done most capably and devastatingly in volumes 18 and 20 of *The Standard Bearer*, we offer a few thoughts of our own on the matter. The positive position this principle advocates is that church membership and union membership are compatible. This position, it is felt, may be safely assumed for the reason that the existing unions do not necessarily give "constitutional warrant to sin," nor show in their "regular activities" that they "champion sin." What would it mean for a union to give a constitutional warrant to sin? What would it mean for a union in its regular activities to champion sin? Will anyone ethically self-conscious maintain that in the existing unions there cannot be found a constitutional warrant for the strike, picketing, the closed shop and the boycott, and that these practices are not sins? Will anyone maintain that the picket experts, the strike champions, the boycott adepts and the labor violence addicts do not champion sin? Admittedly, both business and labor are corrupted with eco-

nomie injustices, but the solution to these evils is not to be found in the even more perverted pragmatism of the modern godless unions. The Christian is motivated by a different principle. "The integrity of the upright shall guide them; but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them" (Prov. 11:3).

The negative position of the above principle is that neutral (!) unions do not necessarily furnish a constitutional warrant to sin, nor in their regular activities do they champion sin. Here we have the old line of the religious liberal and of the Marxist socialist.

Syndicated Columnist Edith Kermit Roosevelt alerts us to the existence of a so called "Group Research, Inc.," Bond Bldg., 1404 New York Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C. This corporation is a subsidiary of the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Dept., set up by Walter Reuther. This organization has about 100 filing cabinets containing information relative to thousands of conservatives, as to where and how certain "right wing groups" get their financial backing, and produces mailed reports on hundreds of individuals regarded as "extremist," "outlandish" and "fantastic." Some of those criticized in these reports are: Sen. Barry Goldwater, Sen. Dodd, Dr. J. B. Matthews, Ronald Reagan, Adolph Menjou, Fulton Lewis, Jr., Dr. Carl McIntire and Maj.

Edgar Bundy. Coverage on detested organizations includes the American Farm Bureau Federation, the John Birch Society, the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade and the radio program *Life Line*.

The Church League of America reports that "the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Action (COPE) issued a memorandum in March 1963 urging state and local labor union people to use the Group Research smear reports to discredit . . . as extremist any person who dares to disagree publicly with the left-wing liberals." COPE (the AFL-CIO committee) advises, "When you hear that a right-wing speaker is coming to town, check him immediately in the directory and alert friendly groups . . . Armed with facts about extremist groups, labor union members can take some leadership in combatting them, either by heading them off before they really get started or by limiting the damage they do and helping to dry them up . . . There is sometimes an advantage in arranging a meeting at which community leaders actually sign a warning statement, for release to the press, in advance of a right-wing meeting, exposing its nature and intent . . . Editors and broadcasters should be visited . . . Develop a pool of well-informed, readily available speakers to address church groups, fraternal, civic and service organizations, schools . . . If a right-wing spokesman appears on local radio or television in an interview . . . request equal time to rebut him. If you have access to a labor-sponsored or liberal farm organization-sponsored radio or TV program, use it to alert the community to right-wing activities . . ."

The above evil intrigue is not defensible on the ground that no sin is involved! or on the ground that *this* is no constitutional warrant to sin, or that it is not the result of regular union activity in which sin is championed. The above tactics are those of the false prophets of Nimrod, of the builders of Babylon. "There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey: they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things . . . Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain" (Ezek. 22:25, 27).

Walter Reuther, a vice president of the AFL-CIO, in his infamous "Reuther Memorandum," among other things, recommends to the Kennedy regime the following. "It is not known the extent to which the Federal Bureau of Investigation has planted undercover agents inside the radical right movement as it has inside the Communist Party and its allied organizations. If it has already done so, the information would be readily available upon which to draw up charges for a hearing against one or more of the radical right groups. If the Bureau has not as yet infiltrated these organizations, a longer time will of course be necessary to obtain the information for the charges, although much of the needed information is available through public sources. In any event, the announcement of the investigation would have an immediate salutary effect and the later announcement of the hearing or hearings might have an even greater one. It is not unlikely that these groups will refuse information and otherwise act towards the Attorney General's procedures just exactly as the Communists have acted in the past. Nothing could better reveal to the public the true nature of these groups than defiant resistance to their Government."

Shades of the Gestapo and Nazi Facism! Such an insidious plot, if adopted, would mean that the Protestant churches not already members of the National Council of Churches would be infiltrated with FBI undercover agents in order to trump up charges for a hearing against them, where they would be denounced and banned as defiant enemies of the government. The unions do not give warrant to sin, do not champion sin? That is like justifying the wicked for reward. That is like calling evil good, and good evil, like putting darkness for light, and light for darkness; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! That is to take away the righteousness of the righteous from him (Isa. 5:20, 23)!

But as long as a union lends no constitutional warrant to sin, membership in it would not be incompatible with membership in a true Christian church? Who denies this? But where is the "neutral" (?) union which does not constitutionally write in the strike clause? which does not operate by coercion, force and threat of violence? The union, it is averred, protects the worker

from the employer. But who protects the worker from the union? The tendency of the union is to secure from the worker (proletarian slave) absolute allegiance. Take, e.g. the Teamster Pledge of Allegiance as it appeared in *Life*, May 18, 1959, in white print on a black background. Quote: I will use all honorable means to procure employment for brother members . . . I will be obedient to authority . . . charitable in judgment of my brother members . . . I will render full allegiance to this union and never consent to subordinate its interest to those of any other organization of which I am now or may hereafter become a member . . . Unquote. Here the union demands precedence over every realm of society, and all else in life thereto made subservient. Sacrificed to this Moloch-Mammon god must be a man's soul, his wife, children, home, property, school, church, liberty, faith and God.

From the union let us turn for a moment to a consideration of the so called "co-operative." The "co-op" system is regarded as one in which a Christian may still be a part. That depends. For some cooperatives are established to destroy the private enterprise system, to take away private property, and to make the farmer a slave of the state. Are not these things inherently wicked? Now, a "co-op," in itself, is simply a corporation. One may form and be a part of a corporation. Farmers, e.g., have a right to join a corporation, of their own independent organization, to carry on their marketing or dairying in order to meet the competition of larger concerns. In our former pastorate we knew of such establishments. But they were nothing like an Israeli *qibbutz* (socialist corporation farm). Beware, however, of a "cooperative" in which the profit motive, competition and private initiative are either not existent, or are politely condemned. Modern labor, political or religious liberals have infiltrated the "cooperatives," but do not be deceived by their "come on" language that a "co-op" is an "economic brotherhood," that it provides for "understanding, a sympathetic attitude, a mutual loyalty, a spirit of confidence and goodwill, the only sure basis for democracy and world peace." This is mere frontage for a collectivist, socialist (eventually communist) organization. The modern liberal concep-

tion of a "co-op" is that property exists in the form of state property, or in the form of collective farm property, or property of a co-op association. By "cooperative" is meant a dropping of competitive capitalism, which is deemed the contradictory opposite of cooperation, in favor of an economic household where all members share all things (property and prosperity) in common.

This conception of a "cooperative" maintains that "one cannot be a Christian and labor for profit and personal interest." Economic motive must be established within the unselfish framework of the "Christian order of the brotherhood of man." (This sounds like that Red journalism, *The Worker!*) The "cooperative" motive is love, so that farmers and industrial workers will have to cooperate or be charged, "now walkest thou not in love." They will have to cooperate whether they want to or not. If not, the cooperative will say, Then you shall not work, and "if any would not work, neither should he eat." This the co-op will then enforce. Men will thus be forced to "love" each other, if they want to eat and to live. The co-op which deprives of freedom and employs this coercion is as bad as any "neutral" (bigoted) union.

It is insisted that a "co-op" must be cooperative. It must not merely be called a "cooperative," it must not glitter with the word "cooperative," only to be, in reality, a form of profit enterprise for the benefit of private owners. It must not be merely a producer "co-op" to help the farmers get higher prices for their products. This money-loving spirit falls short of the "Christian principle of bona fide cooperation without profit." It must be a consumer "co-op" which is owned by no individual, but by the entire group — consumer-owned industry. Church membership and membership in such a "cooperative" are incompatible. Will it be contended that these "cooperatives" have nothing to do with unions? The AFL, CIO, international and local unions have voted to set up special committees on cooperatives. Study the subject. Read the National Council of Churches literature on the subject. See how the union-backed cooperatives are pushing us all with our businesses down the road of the tyrant.

Genesis 11

I. The Confusion of Tongues.

(Genesis 11:1-9)

Book of
GENESIS

It would seem that when we compare what is recorded in these verses, especially verse 2, with what we read in Genesis 10: 8-10, that we must conclude that the history recorded in Chapter 11 is antecedent to that recorded in Chapter 10. If this conclusion is correct, we may conceive of the historical events in this order: Mankind, under the leadership of Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord, moved eastward till they came to the plain of Shinar. They settled there, and attempted to establish a kingdom of universal proportions with its center in the tower and city they planned to build. God, however, frustrates their plan and defeats their purpose by causing the nations to be divided through the confusion of tongues.

What we have in the verses 1-4 is a concerted attempt of the people of the earth to remain one, contrary to the commandment of God to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 9:1, 7, 19). Moreover, in defiance of this commandment mankind also sought to have dominion over the earth, and to realize that dominion through consolidation. Such a kingdom was all the more conceivable because all the earth was of one language, and of one speech.

We should not forget here that man was originally created to have dominion over the earth. And when man sinned, he did not change essentially. He did not become another creature, but he remained what he essentially was, a man created to have dominion. However, since the fall he would attempt to obtain this dominion under the power of sin. This power was not completely destroyed in the flood, but came out of the ark, and became manifest in the generations of Noah (Genesis 9).

What we have, therefore, in the plain of Shinar is this attempt to establish a world

kingdom, no doubt under the leadership of one man, Nimrod the mighty hunter. It was he who undoubtedly was the first man to conceive of the possibility of a union of power and authority different than that which formerly was tribal and patriarchal. It was he who conceived of the plan to break the bonds of family and tribal ties to found a kingdom of universal dimensions. By his feats of daring in hunting the wild beasts that threatened the lives and well-being of his contemporaries, and his humanitarian acts he had gained prestige and fame which aided him in molding the minds of the humanity surrounding him and which made it easy for him to persuade them to follow his plan. Thus persuaded, they with one accord exclaim, "Go to, let us make brick . . . let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

The purpose of this construction was not, as some explain, to have a safe retreat in case another flood should threaten. The very fact that God had promised never again to destroy the earth with a flood should disprove this theory. Rather the purpose, as expressed in verse 4, was twofold: to make themselves a name, and to prevent their being scattered over the face of the earth.

We must not forget here that that only which can unify and keep together, namely, the true knowledge, righteousness and holiness, in one word, the image of God in man, was lost through sin. Yet sinful and corrupt man would nevertheless bring about a unity in which sin may have full sway, and God may be entirely ruled out.

The central purpose, therefore, of the tower was, in the first place, to solidify and consolidate into a great commonwealth. All the peoples of the earth must be one. This

they contrived to do in order to magnify their name and to have their honor and glory extolled. In the second place, they purposed in their plan to make the tower to reach unto heaven to reflect their open defiance against God. If it were possible, they purposed to dethrone God, to erase the name of God from the earth, and to realize a kingdom that would be anti-God, and anti-Christ.

But according to verses 5-9, God frustrated their plan and spoiled their purpose through the confusion of tongues.

In this connection there are especially three thoughts that bear special emphasis. The first of these is the significance of the name Babel. The name comes from a word the root of which means to confuse. Evidently it was given to the tower after the work of building was halted. It serves as a memorial of the judgment of God, not, of course, in the intention of the builders, but in God's intention, Who destroys their unity with confusion. Secondly, it should be noted that this confusion was more than the creation of different languages. In reality here the Lord separates the peoples of the earth into many nations, some of which still remain to this day. The difference between the nations is not merely one of language, but also of natures and colors. By this confusion God made it impossible for whites and blacks, for example, to dwell under one roof. Though science, no doubt, would disagree with us, we believe there is something in the pigment of the skin, an odor which perhaps is pleasing to those who are of like skin, but repulsive to others of different skin. Moreover, with this confusion God also placed each in his own habitat. Hence the Eskimo cannot live at the equator, nor can the white man live without great discomfort in the Sahara desert. And in the third place, and most of all, it should be emphasized that the purpose of God in the confusion was to halt the progress of the kingdom of Antichrist, until the cause of Christ should first be realized. The prime purpose of all history is the cause of Christ in which He gathers His elect from all nations. No other causes may interfere or come to a head until this cause of Christ is first realized.

It should be pointed out at this juncture that since the confusion at Babel there have

been and still are attempts made to overcome this confusion. There is always a spiritual counterpart of the tower of Babel in the world. The spirit that was behind the building and that moved the builders in the construction of that first tower is still with us. The world does not want that confusion. It is well known that the world for some time has endeavored to establish a universal language. And many and varied are the attempts to unite the nations. The late Wendell Willkie's *One World* is an idea not foreign to the mind and will of sinful man. We may observe this attempt at unity in the U.N.O. We are convinced that the World Council of Churches is another attempt at world union with a religious color. The principle back of the Peace Corps initiated by the President of the United States is another very apparent attempt at world unity. All the integration movements of our time are evidently the same endeavor.

However, not before the marvel of Pentecost has been fully realized can this worldly endeavor to establish world unity be accomplished. On the day of Pentecost God caused the gospel to be preached in many tongues. Each heard the wonderful works of God in his own tongue. By the Spirit of Pentecost God causes all the nations in principle to be united. He gives them one language—heavenly. He gives them one nature—heavenly. He gives them a new life—heavenly. So that the redeemed church can boast of one God, one Spirit, one faith, etc. And this unifying work of the Spirit of Christ must yet be perfected. Only then can the prophecy of Revelation 13 be fulfilled. Then the head with the deadly wound shall be healed. That wound was inflicted, we believe, at Babel. That it is healed means that the time is coming when the confusion of nations will cease. At that time the Antichrist will effect his own unity.

II. The Covenant Line from Shem to Abraham. (Genesis 11:10-26)

The canonical significance of the Book of Genesis is the setting forth of the beginning and the first stage of the realization of God's purpose to glorify Himself in His covenant people antithetically. This significance should never be lost out of sight as

you study this first book of the Bible. The appearance of the genealogy of Shem's generations in this context is evidently to show forth this purpose.

We have not the time nor the space to compare this genealogy with that recorded in Genesis 10:22 - 30, I Chronicles 1, and those recorded in the Gospels according to Matthew and Luke. Such a comparison would produce no doubt some very interesting observations.

One of these observations is in connection with verse 16 as compared with Chapter 10:25 and I Chronicles 1:19. From the latter passages we learn that Peleg lived in the days when "the earth was divided." The question was once asked me: Where were the children of God at the time of the confusion of tongues? My answer was that they were evidently there, and Peleg was one of them. If my mathematics is correct, Peleg was born 100 years after the flood, and all his forebears, including Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, and perhaps even Noah were living at the time of the division of nations.

We may also observe that the name Peleg means "division." This would seem to indicate that Peleg was born at the time of the confusion and that his name was given to him by his father Eber as a memorial of God's judgment of the wicked in those days. Indicating also that by faith Eber saw in the division of the nations also the separation of the covenant line that must ultimately bring forth the Seed of the Promise.

One more observation could be made here, namely, that the life span of man is considerably but gradually shortened. Shem's age is given at 600 years, Arphaxad at 438 years, Salah at 433, Eber at 464, Peleg at 239, Reu at 239, Serug at 230, Nahor at 148, Terah at 205, and Abraham at 175 years. Since all the names of those mentioned above were progenitors of the covenant line, an interesting question it might be to discuss: Why did God cut short the life span of these fathers?

III. The Family of Terah. (Genesis 11:27-32)

Terah lived in Ur of Chaldees. The capital city of Chaldea was Babylon, earlier Babel. So we must conclude that Terah,

four generations after Peleg, had not moved far from the original site when God had divided the nations and purposed that they should scatter over the face of the earth.

Joshua tells us in Joshua 24:2 that the house of Terah served other gods. The context of this latter passage shows us that Joshua had gathered all Israel to Shechem where he exhorted the people to put away the gods which their fathers served on the other side of the flood. Reference is undoubtedly to the fact that Terah served idols. At this same place in Shechem Jacob later buried the strange gods in his household under the oak. Also these strange gods were taken from the house of Laban, where Jacob had sojourned in his flight from Esau (Genesis 35:2 - 4).

It is because of these facts, namely, that strange gods continued in the family of Terah, that it is taught by some that when God called Abram from his father's house to go to the land that He would show him, it was to preserve the true religion. This thought is disproved, it seems to me, by the fact that the true religion was not preserved in Abram alone. Contemporary with Abram were men like Melchizedek and Job, both of whom were God-fearing men. Rather, the reason why God called Abram apart was to initiate another phase in the development of His covenant. Abram must go to the land God would show him, in order there to live the life of an elect stranger in the midst of the world. There, walking thetically, he would evoke the antithesis, the bitter opposition of the world.

Terah, it appears from the text, took his family, with the exception of Haran who died in Ur of the Chaldees, and moved to the province of Mesopotamia, particularly to the place called Haran. Here Terah died, and from here God called Abram to go to the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1). We know from subsequent Scriptures that part of Terah's family, i.e., the household of Nahor, remained in Haran (Gen. 24:4, 10).

Haran, it appears before he died, brought forth three children: Milcah, Iscah, and Lot. Nahor, Terah's son, married Milcah the daughter of Haran. The genealogy that followed out of this marriage is mentioned in Gen. 22:20 - 24. Abram married Sarai. She, according to Gen. 20:12, was Abram's half-sister, indicating that Terah had more

than one wife. That she is called Terah's daughter in law in vs. 31. is due no doubt to the fact that she was married to Abram, while the truth was also that she was his daughter by another wife than the one who gave birth to Abram.

Some suggested questions for discussion:

1. What purpose did the builders of the tower of Babel have in mind with the tower?
2. How did God by the confusion of tongues frustrate that purpose?
3. Of what did the confusion of tongues consist?
4. Is the tower of Babel an isolated attempt on the part of man to attempt a unity without God?
5. Will the evil purpose of the tower builders eventually be realized? If so, how?
6. Why is the genealogy of Shem recorded in this context?
7. Were there sincere people of God living at the time of the building of the tower of Babel? If so, who were they?
8. Is there any significance in the fact that Scripture records no protest of the God-fearing against the idea of the tower?
9. Does verse 31 suggest that Terah was also of a mind to go to the land of Canaan?
10. How are we to judge of Terah's family in the light of other Scriptures?

NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

LOIS E. KREGEL

Because of a lack of space in this month's issue of *Beacon Lights* our news will be brief and will be limited mostly to statistics.

Concerning our Servicemen:

We have received two addresses from Loveland:

SP/4 Wm. D. Huber, RA17606781
Btry. C. 6th MSL Bn. 52nd Arty.
APO 321, New York
Box No. 1052, New York
Mr. and Mrs. Max Moore
4611 2nd Ave. North
Great Falls, Montana 59401

Don Schwarz, of our Loveland Church, has been home on furlough recently. The following address is that of a member of our church in Randolph:

Pvt. Ronald Huizenga
U.S. 55752531
Co. B, 6th Bn. USATC INF
Fort Jackson, South Carolina, 29207

Called Home

Mr. Peter Schipper, of Holland Prot. Ref. Church, at the age of 78 years; Mrs. John Heys, Sr., of First Church, at the age of 84 years.

Congratulations

to Mrs. R. De Vries (First) who was 87 years old on November 7.

Our Future Church

grew by the addition of several infant members:

- A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Campbell (Loveland)
- A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Engelsma (Hope)
- A son born to Mr. and Mrs. Marinus Kamps (Hope)
- A son born to Mr. and Mrs. John Huizenga, Jr. (Hope)
- A son born to Mr. and Mrs. Peter Miedema (Hudsonville)
- A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Zwak (Hudsonville)
- A son born to Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Vander Noord (South Holland)
- A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. J. Koning (Southeast)
- A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit Vanden Top (Doon)
- A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. Duane Brummel (Hull)

Wedding Bells

rang on November 13 for Larry Lubben and Elaine Holstege (Hudsonville); on November 7 for Gerald Visser and Beatrice Lubbers (Hudsonville); and on October 18 for Roger King and Phyllis Kamphuis (Hope).

JOHN ZANDSTRA JP.
R. R. 1 BOX 227-A
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