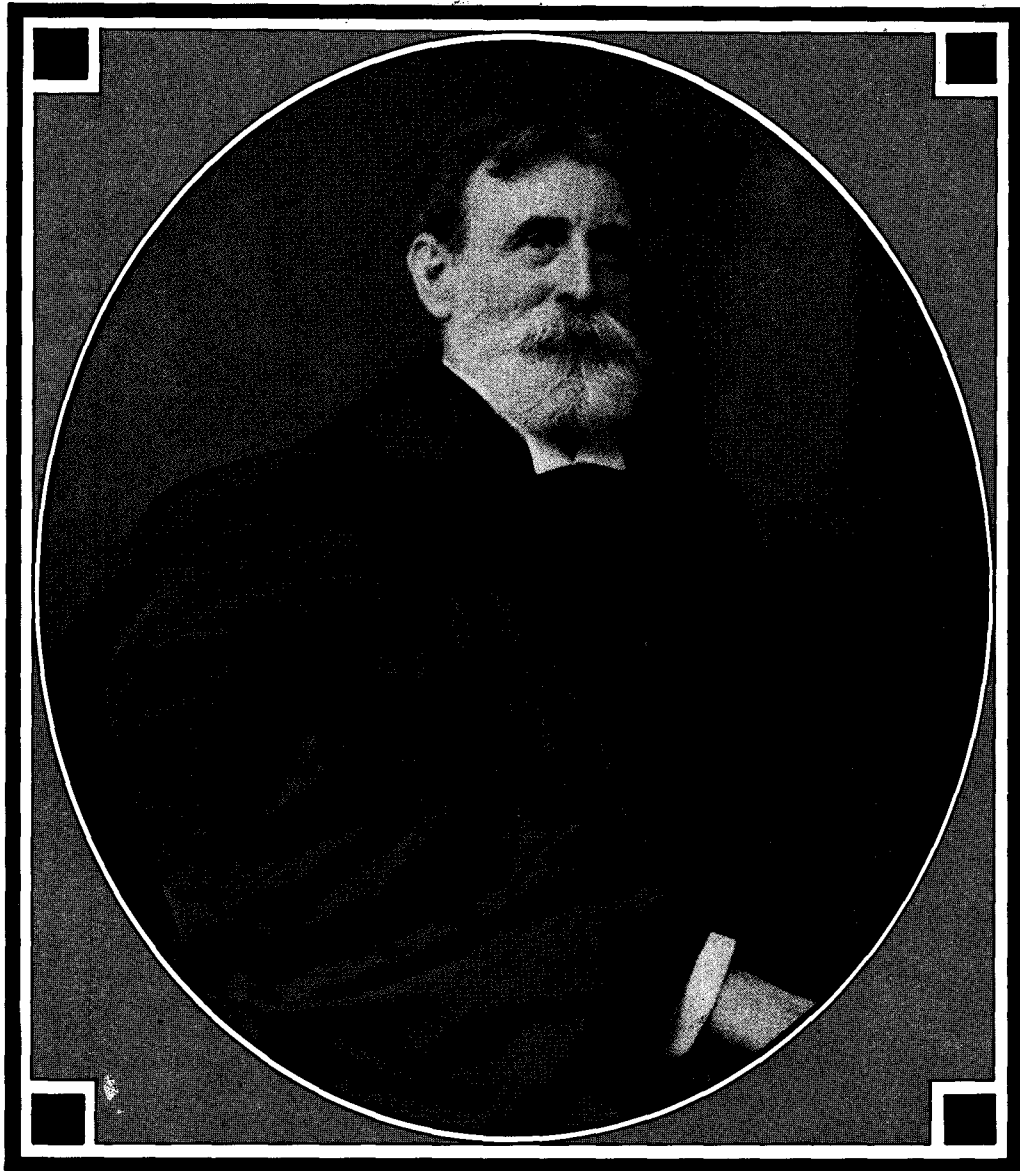


# The Presbyterian Guardian

Vol. 48, No. 2 February, 1979



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The Shorter Catechism  
Where Is Your Library?

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Eritrea 77-78

# Book Reviews

## LETTERS OF A. W. PINK

Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 1978, paper \$1.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley, pastor, MacIlwain Memorial Church (PCA), Pensacola, Florida.

Most of us are familiar with the magnificent expositions of Scripture in the experimental Puritan tradition by the late A. W. Pink. This volume is a collection of personal letters written during the period 1924-1951, and not written for publication. They help us to see the human side of the man.

These letters contain a blend of godly, practical advice and idiosyncratic opinions. Reading them is like working out a puzzle, trying to untangle the threads and distinguish between what is spiritual and what is merely eccentric.

The letters give an opportunity for an intimate glimpse of the private life and thoughts of a man who has otherwise been hidden from public view. Reading them is an opportunity for personal fellowship with a man with whom fellowship, even by means of this correspondence, is bound to be a source of great spiritual blessing. His individual peculiarities do not diminish the book's value but heighten its interest, and help the reader to better appreciate the man A. W. Pink, and so the marvelous expositions which he has given us.

## BIBLICAL CHURCH DISCIPLINE

by Daniel E. Wray. Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 1978, 24pp., paper, 80¢

## WHAT SHALL WE THINK OF THE "CARNAL CHRISTIAN?"

by Ernest C. Reisinger. Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 1978, 24pp., paper, 75¢. Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley.

The booklet on church discipline was written by the pastor of the Limington (Maine) Congregational Church originally for the edification of his own congregation. It was distributed by him in mimeographed form and is now published by the Banner that it may be a help to all

of us. A book on discipline by a pastor for his people in the context of the needs of a local church has a great advantage in usefulness and practicality. Wray argues thoroughly and clearly for the need of discipline in a day when the very mention of the topic is unpopular. A great deal of research has strengthened the value of this volume.

The other booklet refutes the teaching common in our day that there are those who have not repented of sin, have not submitted to the lordship of Christ and are giving no evidence of having regenerate lives, but are to be assured on their profession of faith that they are genuinely saved, for they are "carnal Christians." Reisinger lovingly exposes the errors and dangers of this theory. He cannot be accused of attacking straw men, for he quotes directly from the literature of those who believe in the carnal Christian theory.

Because of this theory, large numbers are heading to hell with a presumptuous false assurance of salvation, unmindful of warnings of their danger. It is one of the most vicious heresies of our time. Reisinger's booklet needs to be widely read and widely circulated.

## ANGLICAN AND PURITAN THINKING:

six papers read at the 1977 Westminster Conference. Huntington, Camb

UK: Westminster Conference, 1978, 102pp. Reviewed by Joseph P. Duggan, ruling elder, Knox Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Lansdowne, Pa.

Today the church of Jesus Christ still fumbles with the problem of authority. How shall she serve her Lord, how shall she be ruled and what shall she believe? To our forefathers in the faith in 16th and 17th century Britain these were often life and death issues, literally so. On the one side, demanding that human reason and tradition must share the throne with Scripture, was the Anglican establishment led by Hooker, Bancroft, Andrewes and Laud. On the other side many Presby-

terians and other Puritans rose to call for the full authority of Scripture alone, passionately asserting the royal prerogatives of Jesus Christ and pushing for an ever reforming church.

Addressing themselves to the question of *Anglican and Puritan Thinking* the 1977 Westminster Conference papers provide an exciting survey of the struggle and make convincing arguments against the *via media* of compromise with rationalism. They do not, of course, really center upon a dead past, but upon today when the church must at last learn to stop playing at religion and to stop doing whatsoever seems right in her own eyes. This realization, found throughout the addresses, contributes greatly to their merit.

While affording an excellent critique of Anglicanism, however, they are generally less successful in defining and asserting Puritan doctrine. This is most pronounced in Paul E. G. Cook's "The Church", which fiercely attacks Anglican ecclesiology, but ultimately falls short because he—just like the Anglicans—keeps forgetting that the New Testament not only tells us what a Christian is but also what the church of Christ is. His major premise: "In the final analysis it is the biblical view of what a Christian is that must determine one's view of the church" (p. 40) makes the fatal presumption that the church is simply a collection of people who have "saving faith and experience" and who have entered into "a voluntary acceptance of a church covenant" (p. 38). While obviously the biblical view of what a Christian is carries much weight especially in contrast to Anglican latitudinarianism, his reluctance—which is substantial and not merely formal—to assert that it is the biblical view of what the church is that must determine one's view of the church not only makes him guilty of something that looks very much like Anglican rationalism, but also deprives him of the exalted view of the church which Christ and his Spirit present in the Word

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# Is The Shorter Catechism Worthwhile?

*Benjamin B. Warfield*

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The Shorter Catechism is, perhaps, not very easy to learn. And very certainly it will not teach itself. Its framers were less careful to make it easy than to make it good. As one of them, Lazarus Seaman, explained, they sought to set down in it not the knowledge the child has, but the knowledge the child ought to have. And they did not dream that anyone could expect it to teach itself. They committed it rather to faithful men who were zealous teachers of the truth, "to be," as the Scottish General Assembly puts it in the Act approving it, "a Directory for catechizing such as are of a weaker capacity," as they sent out the Larger Catechism "to be a Directory for catechizing such as have made some proficiency in the knowledge of the grounds of religion."

No doubt it requires some effort whether to teach or to learn the Shorter Catechism. It requires some effort whether to teach or to learn the grounds of any department of knowledge. Our children—some of them at least—groan over even the primary arithmetic and find sentence-analysis a burden. Even the conquest of the art of reading has proved such a task that "reading without tears" is deemed an achievement. We think, nevertheless, that the acquisition of arithmetic, grammar and reading is worth the pains it costs the teacher to teach, and the pain it costs the learner to learn them. Do we not think the acquisition of the grounds of religion worth some effort, and even, if need be, some tears?

For, the grounds of religion must be taught and learned as truly as the grounds of anything else. Let us make no mistake here. Religion does not come of itself: it is always a matter of instruction. The

emotions of the heart, in which many seem to think religion too exclusively to consist, ever follow the movements of the thought. Passion for service cannot take the place of passion for truth, or safely outrun the acquisition of truth; for it is dreadfully possible to compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, to find we have made him only a "son of hell." This is why God establishes and extends his Church by the ordinance of preaching; it is why we have Sunday schools and Bible classes. Nay, this is why God has grounded his Church in revelation. He does not content himself with sending his Spirit into the world to turn men to him. He sends his Word into the world as well. Because, it is from knowledge of the truth, and only from the knowledge of the truth, that under the quickening influence of the Spirit true religion can be born. Is it not worth the pains of the teacher to communicate, the pain of the scholar to acquire this knowledge of the truth? How unhappy the expedient to withhold the truth—that truth under the guidance of which the religious nature must function if it is to function aright—that we may save ourselves these pains, our pupils this pain!

An anecdote told of Dwight L. Moody will illustrate the value to the religious life of having been taught these forms of truth. He was staying with a Scottish friend in London, but suppose we let the narrator tell the story. "A young man had come to speak to Mr. Moody about religious things. He was in difficulty about a number of points, among the rest about prayer and natural laws. 'What is prayer?' he said, 'I can't tell what you mean by it!' They were in the hall of a large Lon-

don house. Before Moody could answer, a child's voice was heard singing on the stairs. It was that of a little girl of nine or ten, the daughter of their host. She came running down the stairs and paused as she saw strangers sitting in the hall. 'Come here, Jenny,' her father said, 'and tell this gentleman what is prayer.' Jenny did not know what had been going on, but she quite understood that she was now called upon to say her Catechism. So she drew herself up, and folded her hands in front of her, like a good little girl who was going to 'say her questions,' and she said in her clear childish voice: 'Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.' Ah! That's the Catechism! Moody said, 'thank God for that Catechism.'"

How many have had occasion to "thank God for that Catechism!" Did anyone ever know a really devout man who regretted having been taught the Shorter Catechism—even with tears—in his youth? How its forms of sound words come reverberating back into the memory, in moments of trial and suffering, of doubt and temptation, giving direction to religious aspirations, firmness to hesitating thought, guidance to stumbling feet: and adding to our religious meditations an ever-increasing richness and depth. "The older I grow," said Thomas Carlyle in his old age, "and now I stand on the brink of eternity, the more comes back to me the first sentence in the Catechism, which I learned when a child, and the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes:

What is the chief end of man?

To glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

Robert Louis Stevenson, too, had learned this Catechism when a child; and though he wandered far from the faith in which it would guide his feet, he could never escape from its influence, and he never lost his admiration (may we not even say, his reverence) for it. Mrs. Sellars, a shrewd, if kindly, observer, tells us in her delightful "Recollections" that Stevenson bore with him to his dying day what she calls "the indelible mark of the Shorter Catechism"; and he himself shows how he

esteemed it when he set over against one another what he calls the "English" and the "Scottish" Catechisms—the former, as he says, beginning by "tritely inquiring 'What is your name?,'" the latter by "striking at the very roots of life with 'What is the chief end of man?' and answering nobly, if obscurely, 'To glorify God and to enjoy him forever.'"

What is "the indelible mark of the Shorter Catechism"? We have the following bit of personal experience from a general officer of the United States army. He was in a great western city at a time of intense excitement and violent rioting. The streets were over-run daily by a dangerous crowd. One day he observed approaching him a man of singularly combined calmness and firmness of mien, whose very demeanor inspired confidence. So impressed was he with his bearing amid the surrounding uproar that when he had passed he turned to look back at him, only to find that the stranger had done the same. On observing his turning the stranger at once came back to him, and touching his chest with his forefinger, demanded without preface: "What is the chief end of man?" On receiving the countersign, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever"—"Ah!" said he, "I knew you were a Shorter Catechism boy by your looks!" "Why, that was just what I was thinking of you," was the rejoinder.

It is worth while to be a Shorter Catechism boy. They grow to be men. And better than that, they are exceedingly apt to grow to be men of God. So apt, that we cannot afford to have them miss the chance of it. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it."

*Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield was Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary from 1887-1921. This article is reprinted with permission from Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield vol. 2, edited by John E. Meetes (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. 1973.)*

# Where Is Your Library?

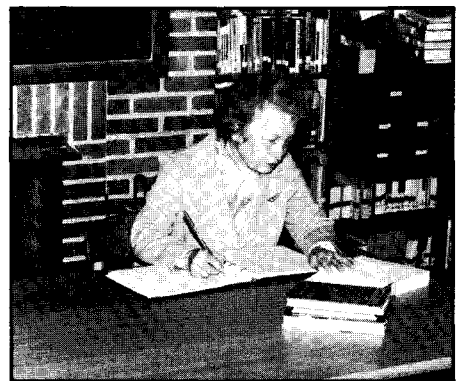
*Norma Ellis*

In 1938 a Master's degree did not assure the graduate placement in teaching. If English was your major and you did not have experience in collecting butterflies or French cookery your opportunities were even fewer. So in that situation a degree in Library Science was worth a try.

It worked. For four years I was teacher-librarian at a Junior High School in Wyncote, Pennsylvania. There are two things about those years that are noteworthy. First, the library and I suffered the results of the inexperience of my predecessor so that the collection of books on the shelves and the collection of cards in the drawer bore very little relationship to each other. The situation was unforgettable.

The other thing of note was the proximity of the school to Westminster Seminary. After four years my career as teacher-librarian was terminated when I moved from the area, the happy wife of one of the Seminary graduates.

Twenty-three years ago my husband accepted a call to Knox Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Silver Spring, Maryland. So I dusted off my Drexel Library School training and began work on the couple of dozen books that occupied a book-case in an upstairs room at the church. Today Knox Library contains some 2100 books shelved in a spacious, attractive main floor room where a cheery fire sometimes burns at the hearth. From that time to this many persons have given support and hours of work. The Board of Trustees has shared in a vision for a reading church. And it would be negligence not to mention by name Jack Vander Sys, whose dream for a library in that room with a fireplace led him to design and construct the shelving, cabinets and even card catalog drawers!



*Mrs. Esther Abramis accessioning books.*

## *A Procedure Guide*

All of those years our "system" has been developing. As it has become more complicated, the difficulty of securing uniformity with a changing group of workers has increased. I have long had the nagging consciousness that the "system" should be put into writing. I have been aware that our free-wheeling operating has been bad and that should I no longer be on the scene a kind of chaos would ensue and I would be the guilty party.

It was not until this year, however, that, prodded by Priscilla Brown with her secretarial skills and available equipment, I was able to complete the *Procedure Guide for the Church Library*. Now at last the Knox workers have in black and white, complete with some 23 illustrations, "the way we do it." I say that the Knox workers have this book because it was not written after carefully researching books on church libraries. There are probably newer, better or simpler ways of operating a church library. This book grew completely from my own training and experience and is primarily for local use. It is a write-in



Mrs. Norma Ellis (on stool) and Mrs. Berlene Murphy taking inventory.

book with spaces for changes and for helps and details not of interest to other people.

Even though this book is primarily for Knox, however, it should be valuable in churches where there is no carefully worked out library system or collection or—could it be?—no library at all! A number of times people in other churches have made inquiries concerning our collection and organization. So, in order to help such persons, an Appendix has been included, containing "A. Subject Headings used in Card Catalog" and "B. Starting a Church Library."

The guide proper has three sections: Entering Materials into the Library, Maintaining the Library, and Entering and Maintaining Miscellaneous Materials. The Table of Contents is rather detailed, its sub-divisions appearing in the form of jobs to be done. There is space provided where the names of persons responsible for these jobs is pencilled in so that there is no confusion as to who will perform each specific task.

### **Entering Materials into the Library**

We begin with book selection. There is now a Library Council, consisting of the Associate Pastor, another Session member and the Librarian. The librarian, with the help of this Council is responsible for book selection. Principles and suggestions for this very important task are spelled out in the Guide. Someone is assigned the responsibility of ordering and accessioning the books. Someone is being trained in classifying and assigning subject headings for the catalog cards. Then come the jobs of preparing shelf list cards and catalog cards, the mechanical preparation of the books, filing the cards and shelving the books. Seeing in print the rules we follow in these procedures and seeing the illustrations makes the workers feel more comfortable about their assignments and produces a more uniform result.

### **Maintaining the Library**

Since Knox Library is self-service, with notices posted to instruct users in finding materials and in checking them out, the library may be said to run itself. But of course that is an illusion. Various persons must be secured for keeping supplies on hand, publicity, repair, circulation and overdue, inventory, annual report, and reading the shelves. Much of this work, as well as that involved in entering the books into the library, can be done in one's own time, even in some instances at home. But there are set times when the Library Auxiliary works together. At such times there is crossing of the lines, so that at inventory, for example, several ladies will work together to speed the process. And these times are fun! There are minutes of amazing quiet, each engrossed in her own own task. But there is also good talk about books and about the things of the Lord. And there is an opportunity for deepening of friendships and meeting the needs of one another.

### **Entering and Maintaining Miscellaneous Materials**

Next we find information concerning our collections of cassettes, tape reels (just about dormant now), records and

filmstrips, our miniscule slide collection, our periodicals and our four-drawer verticle file (bulging with O P C home and foreign missionary materials as well as assorted clippings, pamphlets, reports and programs). There is also a sentence or two about maps, pictures and other items

### **Where is Your Library?**

What a relief to have this Guide available! When persons are secured for each of the slots and are well used to their responsibilities the librarian will be able to sit down and read! There will be more time for careful book selection. There will be more time to introduce people to books, so that needs may be met, which is as it should be, because "The purpose of the church library is to assist any persons, of any age, which it *does* or *can* reach, to come to know God through Jesus Christ and to grow in grace so that God may be glorified." (page 3) It is important to have a good collection of books and other materials, organized for ready accessibility by readers, but there must also be that personal dimension—the person who loves people and loves books and for Christ's sake wants and attempts to get them together. Having the Guide will help free us for this other dimension.

We at Knox Library have not arrived. We are still trying to determine better ways of doing things. There are many areas in which we do not measure up to our own standards. But now we know where our library is. And that is a help. My husband tells of an experience Dr. Van Til recounted in class. The doctor was riding a bus in which was a man much under the influence of alcohol. The driver eventually asked him, "Where are you going?" Dr. Van Til was much impressed by the man's drawled reply, "Where am I?" Where is your library going? Where is it? It would be helpful for you to know.

Copies of the *Procedure Guide for the Church Library* may be secured from Mrs. Charles H. Ellis, 3419 Stonehall Drive, Beltsville, Md. 20705 at \$3.00 each (post paid). Discount for quantity purchase.

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# Eritrea 77-78

John Mason

*The writer of this article who is well known to many Guardian readers, was a missionary to Eritrea with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church until the enforced withdrawal of missionaries in 1976. He has recently returned from mission work in Beirut, Lebanon; again because of war conditions. This article provides information on developments in Eritrea the last two years.*

At the end of 1977, the Ethiopian ruling council or Derg, under the chairmanship of Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile-Mariam, faced war on two fronts: in the Ogaden (against Somalia) and in Eritrea (against the Eritrean fronts). In Ethiopia itself, the Derg continued to strengthen its control over the citizens. Since the Derg seized power in 1974, there have been continual assassinations and purges. Sissay Habtu was killed in 1976, Atnafu Abate on November 12, 1977, and Tefere Bente, at that time the chairman, in February 1977. These were, with Mengistu, the highest men in the government. Their deaths are only an index to the suffering of the people at large.

On March 22, 1978, the London *Times* published on the front page an important article by Hans Eerik giving details of atrocities under the headline, "Bodies litter Addis Ababa streets as death squads indulge in indiscriminate mass murders: children shot dead after being tortured in Ethiopian red terror." The writer estimated that there were about 100 to 150 killed each day. The "red terror" was the public, official campaign for answering the counterrevolutionaries, or persons who opposed the Ethiopian revolution. *Newsweek* a month earlier (February 20, 1978) estimated that 20 persons a day were being killed, and that in the three months preceding 1000 had died and 10,000 had been imprisoned.

The Somalia war in the Ogaden (south-

west Ethiopia) graduated from irregular action to war on July 13, 1977, when regular troops of Somalia invaded Ethiopia. At first, they were very successful. Somalia expelled its Russian advisers in November but failed to obtain any assistance from the West. The United States had promised military aid but withdrew its promise after concluding that Somalia was guilty of aggression in that war. In February 1978, Ethiopia made its counter-attack, and with Russian and Cuban assistance was able to expel the Somali forces. The Western powers helped prevent any invasion of Somalia itself. Somali losses were limited to the territory that they had so recently captured. Since the victory of the Ethiopian forces there has again been only guerilla activity in the area.

The Eritrean war is a fight between Ethiopia under Haile Selassie and since 1974 under the Derg, and Eritrea. Eritrea was an Italian colony until the end of World War II, was then for a time under a British mandate, and was federated with Ethiopia by the United Nations in 1952. In 1962, contrary to the Eritrean Constitution, the territory was annexed by Ethiopia and became one of the fourteen provinces of that country. Organized resistance aimed at Eritrean independence began as early as 1961. It became much stronger after 1975 in reaction to the brutalities of the new regime in Addis Ababa. This past year it reached its greatest successes and also suffered its greatest loss.

Eritrean resistance has been mainly in two fronts, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). Unfortunately, they have often been divided, and it is perhaps this division which has proved fatal. Other weaknesses were the apparently limited support from backers, although those supporters included states rich with oil, and the lack of outstanding leadership. An eyewitness (John Pilger in *New Statesman*, 28 July 1978) reported hospitals without medicines, even doing operations without anesthetics. Small arms were being manufactured in hidden factories, also indicating a lack of adequate supply. Against tanks and aircraft it is necessary to have modern purchased equipment. The combined fronts are about 40,000 men. Before massive Soviet reinforcement of Ethiopia during 1978, the Eritrean

fronts became remarkably successful. Massawa was besieged in December 1977. By February 1978 ninety per cent of the province was in their hands. The towns fell at last in the late summer: Keren, Decamere, Mendefera, and Agordat.

On April 5, Dr. David Owen, the British Foreign Secretary, denounced Cuban involvement in the Horn of Africa. In the same month, the London *Times* and *Le Monde* gave their support to the Eritreans. *Le Monde* said (April 8) that "nothing can cast doubt on the authenticity and the popularity of the fight for liberation waged by the Eritrean guerillas." This Western support was late.

In May, the Ethiopians began their biggest offensive in Eritrea. In November 1977, the Soviet Union had begun a massive airlift to Ethiopia. By January 21, \$850 million of arms had been brought in by 225 aircraft, 15 per cent of the Soviet Union's military transport fleet. This airlift, according to the *Economist*, was "perhaps the biggest operation of its kind since the Vietnam war." Cubans, who for many years had supported the "Eritrean revolution," with naked treachery now took to the field against the same "revolution." There was a force of 120,000 militia from Ethiopia and half again that number of regular troops in Eritrea, whose population is three million. Of these 120,000 militia, "at least 15 per cent . . . are believed to have been wounded or killed" (*Economist*, 14 October 1978). In July, excepting Keren, the important towns held by Eritreans were re-taken by Ethiopia. When an attack on the strategic town of Keren was repulsed, the Derg executed 300—by one report, 700—of their own unsuccessful troops. Either rebellious militia or Eritrean saboteurs blew up the main Ethiopian ammunition dump in Asmara, destroying most of Kagnew station, which had once been an American army base of 5000 men. But in the last months of 1978, Keren fell to the Ethiopians, marking the end of the most successful time of the Eritrean fronts, and for many, bringing an end to hope.

The refugee problem is bad and will become worse. There are at least 200,000 refugees from Eritrea in the Sudan, which is hard pressed to provide for them, to say nothing of political complications with Ethiopia. And they become stateless persons; as one report said, Eritrea be-

comes a nation of refugees. It is rumored that Eritrea will be made a "military province," which will mean the end of traditional life there.

It is very difficult to get any news of present conditions. Food prices are very high: grain was Ethiopian \$50 a bag in 1974 (about US \$25), \$150 in 1975, and \$350 or \$400 in mid-1978. Charcoal was \$6 a bag in 1974 and is now \$50 if it can be found. Food supplies, which had been cut in an attempt to starve the province, have been restored to some extent.

Ghinda was taken by the fronts and has probably been re-taken now. The colonel near Ghinda, Col. Semei, known as a student of the Psalms of David, was executed by the government he served after one of the unsuccessful efforts at Keren. Two of our workers, Lette Berhan Tesfai and Ghenet Gebremeskel, both

young women, were killed during the fighting in Massawa. The Mihireta Yesus Hospital itself is apparently being used as a clinic. The elders of the Faith of the Trinity Church,\* founded in connection with the work of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Ghinda and Senafe, are well, and at last report were meeting every Lord's day. Pastor Gebre Yesus, of the Lutheran Church, is well.

It would appear that persecution of the church, which seems inevitable, has begun. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has about eight million members, or one-third the population of Ethiopia. The publication of religious materials is still permitted and for this we should be very thankful. Let us pray to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that the Christians in Ethiopia will be under God's wings, filled with consolation and courage.

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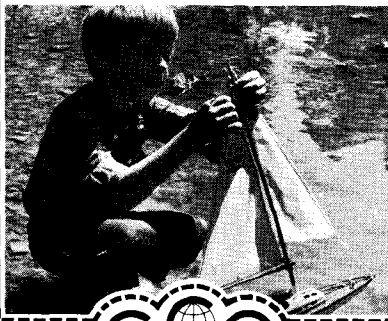
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“... He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation ...”

Isaiah 61:10

### Arctic Fox

*White as the white of snow on snow,  
He curls in the whirls of the arctic blow;  
We can't see him sleep and can't see him go.*

*Warm in his form of fur and skin,  
He walks near the stalks where the hare have been.*

An uncareful observer cannot see life on the winter tundra, but the arctic scurries and stalks with it. Here lives the arctic fox. Like other animals and birds of this northern biome, he has a covering that insures his survival. Without the warmth of his fur, the fox could not stand the cold temperatures. His tail is half as long as his body so that he can curl it before his face when sleeping. His ears are short, rounded, and well-haired for minimum heat loss. Even the soles of his feet are covered with fur. His coat not only protects him from the cold but from his enemies. Those who would hunt the fox must watch sharply for his white movements across the snow. Lastly, his covering enables him to get food. He can stalk the

hare and ptarmigan without being seen.

The child of God has a covering which he receives by faith in Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah speaks of it as the garment of salvation, “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” He who wears this garment can say, “It warms my soul. It protects me from my spiritual enemies. It enables me to get the food I need to live as a Christian in this world. It is sufficient for the coldest winters of my life.”

In a literal sense, the Christian can look forward to that great day at the end of the ages when the whole church, Christ's bride, will be “arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.” Revelation 19:8.

Finally, the arctic fox is beautiful, prized by the native trapper for his rich pelt.

How much more beautiful is the garment of salvation provided by the Lord Jesus Christ! He is that garment. May those who “put on the Lord Jesus” do so with much rejoicing so that others may see and desire it also for themselves.

Ellen Bryan Obed

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# Christian Artists in England

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*About ten years ago the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (the British InterVarsity Christian Fellowship) made a special appointment for work in the art colleges in the United Kingdom. Recognizing the complexity of the current art scene, they felt that specialist skills in counseling, evangelism and encouragement were needed. The current "arts traveller" is an American. Here Paul Clowney writes from London:*

For those familiar with the quiet of the university library, the first encounter with an art college may come as a jolt. You push through the multicolored fingerprints on the swinging door, past a pile of earth embedded with scarlet ribbons—on your right is a framed series of photographic "portraits" entitled "Toes 1-10". Two students slouch by, dragging a leaking bucket of plaster. Somewhere from an upper room comes the repeated sound of shattering glass—creativity is in progress.

Making the effort to understand contemporary art seems to have little reward. The modern movement, obsessed with a narcissistic re-evaluation of art, offers little to outsiders. "Art works" today assume

perplexing forms, and the learned journals have a perspicacity most akin to a fashion report on the emperor's clothes. The arts of the "avant garde" appear as a record of continual crisis, both within the ranks and without.

This complex situation reflects the loss of a common philosophic center for the artistic activity. That loss affects the teaching of art. The art colleges are in the peculiar position of being institutions for the teaching of art, on the one hand, and laboratories for research into the nature of art on the other. Though most students do not consciously pursue the theoretical issues, they are nonetheless exposed to a baffling array of positions and speculations: "Art is spiritual, art is political, art is for art, art by all, art is dead . . ."

For Christian students in the art colleges the problems are acute. Not only is it extremely difficult to discern a right Christian response to the "issues", it is unlikely that the young artist can find the support of other Christians. Without developing a detailed thesis of the Christian perspective and involvement in the arts, suffice it to say that there is still a large segment of the Christian community which regards the arts with suspicion. For

those in retreat from the world, art is superfluous if not positively lethal. For Christian students who feel responsible for developing their artistic talents there is little option but to expose themselves to the risks of a totally secular system of art education.

How can I help? Frankly, I often wonder. The task is immense. Many young Christians enter art college totally unprepared for the difficulties awaiting them. Some are lured away from the specific character of Christian faith by talk about "cosmic creative energy." Others are hurt by laughter at their attempts to make some kind of confessional statement in their art. Many simply withdraw into a dual vision—art there, Christianity here . . .

There are three ways I endeavor to help. First, and foremost, simply by making friends. It is a real joy for me to look and talk with young Christians about their work, about issues in the college, about being a Christian in the twentieth century. Second, encourage them to support one another and to befriend other students. It is surprising how few Christian students know their fellow Christian's work. If Christian students were more curious (and hard-working) the effect of their presence in the art colleges would be felt dramatically. There are a number of colleges which have proven this point. Third, I often have opportunities to speak to non-Christian art students. I have been able to give general lectures on art history and art theory in a number of colleges. These lectures are usually followed by discussion. Though in this situation I do not give evangelistic talks, it is not surprising that the philosophic issues pertinent to faith continually arise.

Obviously, I cannot make frequent visits to many of the colleges. Some colleges, such as those in Ireland, I may only visit once or twice in my three year term. My ability to remember names is severely taxed, and I feel a great need for prayer.

Results. Effectiveness. Response. Such terms are awkward to apply to the work in the art colleges. Certainly art students are becoming Christians, but not in particularly large numbers. Rather the pattern is one of slow, irregular growth. It is apparent that popular culture and the "arts" are moving to the center of modern life. Much art, much which is termed culture is in reality but a surrogate religion—

*(continued on page 12)*

# News & Views

## The First Banner of Truth Ministers' Conference in America

Many Guardian readers have profited from the publication of Reformed literature by The Banner of Truth Trust. The following slightly abridged article is an account of the first ministers conference to be sponsored in America by The Banner of Truth. A similar conference has been held in England for some years now. The article is reprinted with permission from the January 1979 issue of The Banner of Truth magazine.

The Conference met in Atlanta, Georgia from the evening of October 3rd through the morning of the 6th. Approximately 150 men (mostly pastors, with a few elders and missionaries) were in attendance. While most were United States residents, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Nigeria, Canada and the United Kingdom were also represented. There was somewhat of a concentration of men from the Southern states, yet some came from as far as California. While several denominations were represented, the majority seemed to be varieties of Reformed Baptists and Presbyterians. With so much doctrine and experience in common, denominational differences faded easily into the background. The "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" was much in evidence. The daily 7 a.m. prayer meetings and the closing prayer session provided evidence of the truth of B. B. Warfield's contention that it is in the attitude of prayer that religion comes most fully to its rights. In these times of corporate prayer, the experimental Calvinism, which The Banner of Truth has stressed in its magazine and books, was clearly being lived out. There was much prayer for revival, forgiveness, renewed strength and unity, coupled with that ever-present desire for the glory of God.

In the opening address, Iain Murray, after summarizing some of the early history of the Banner of Truth Trust, exhorted the brethren to: 1.) Call no man master; 2.) learn to distinguish between

what is fundamental and what is secondary in the work of the gospel; 3.) maintain our vision, and not grow tired of the battle for truth. He emphasized under the second point that the great need of the hour is for spiritual people in Spirit-filled churches under spiritual preaching. Under the third heading, he pointed out the danger of outliving our usefulness and of becoming less than we once were. It is vital that we labour to grow and maintain a true spiritual ambition for the church of God.

John R. de Witt gave three addresses on "The Worship of God." In the first, he suggested reasons why chaos prevails in modern church worship. Then he went on to list some central principles of public worship drawn from Scripture, and followed that with an historical introduction to Reformed Worship. In the second address, he stressed the Regulative Principle and observed that all Reformed creeds agree on the principle itself, but there have always been differences as the principle has been worked out in practice. He then listed nine principles to guide us in thinking through our practice. His final message was based on Revelation 1.16, particularly the words, ". . . out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. . . ." He stressed the centrality, power and authority of the preached Word as well as the privilege of being called to preach.

Sam Patterson gave one morning address on how to pray for the church, based on John 17.1-11. He observed that the Lord Jesus Christ is our model in what to pray for. We should pray: 1.) That God would keep his disciples pure and holy; 2.) for the unity of the Church; 3.) that his disciples would be kept true to the truth.

Pastor Al Martin gave three addresses based on I Corinthians 2.1-5, entitled, "Vision for the Pulpit". The thrust of these messages was that powerful biblical preaching which leads men to glory in the Lord is the pressing need of our age. The first message concerned the preacher's self-conscious identity. He must be

conscious that he comes proclaiming the testimony of God. Therefore he must labor to penetrate the mind of God in Scripture and display what he finds there to his hearers. In his second address, he underscored that Christ as the crucified One is the essential focus of the gospel and thus of biblical preaching. Nothing should be permitted to obscure the centrality of the cross in our preaching, not even other biblical themes. This point was buttressed by some quotations which the thoughtful reader will want to look up: J. W. Alexander, *Thoughts on Preaching*, pp 208-210; W. G. T. Shedd, *Homiletics and Pastoral Theology*, pp 215-218; Charles Bridges, *The Christian Ministry*, pp 240-241. He concluded his series with a useful discussion of the words, "and I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling". The preacher is but an earthen vessel, but the power is of God.

Pastor Walt Chantry delivered two messages. The first was on "Self-Discipline in the Ministry". Basing his message on I Timothy 4.13-16, he exhorted Pastors: 1.) to look back upon their ordination and remember to what they were set apart; 2.) to labour for advancement in spiritual things, and avoid carelessness with spiritual gifts; 3.) to seek the salvation of souls with tears and groanings. To fulfill his ministry properly, the pastor must cut through many modern ideas of what a pastor is and focus attention on the biblical description of ministry. This will necessitate the self-denial of plugging his ears to many demands which would simply send him into a frenzy of activity while diluting his labours in the Word and prayer. His second address was on evangelism. Here he drew upon Paul's parting words in II Timothy 2.22-26 and underlined the commission to preach the gospel to "every creature" [Mark 16.15]. He particularly exhorted the men to pray for a particular sinner daily; to eschew "canned" methods and so-called easy steps for evangelism; and to face the reality that every sinner is cast utterly upon the grace of God being unable of himself to

believe and repent. The biblical pastor should cultivate a persevering spirit and compassion, along with a self-denying acceptance of hardships and persecutions. The gospel has an offence. There is no nice way to tell men that they are dead in trespasses and sins, and under the wrath of God.

The over-all effect of the conference is impossible to convey on paper. There was a spiritual flame to be caught as well as events and words to be reported. If there continues to be a restoration of Reformed doctrine in America, gatherings such as this one will undoubtedly play a useful part in keeping the movement unified and mature. The common joys, hopes and problems shared among the men played no small part in the value of those days. The object of the conference was defined in advance in this way: "To strengthen bonds between ministers and missionaries who believe that the powerful preaching of evangelical and Calvinistic Christianity is the need of our age". The bonds were indeed strengthened! There were older men present who could well remember when such a gathering seemed out of the question, and it was they who noticed with delight the presence of so many young men. The beautiful, harmonious, and powerful *a capella* singing of some of the great hymns of the faith seemed almost a symbol of the Holy Spirit's work among us. Let us prayerfully uphold this work of God and look forward with hopeful hearts to more such meetings in coming years.

Daniel E. Wray  
Limington, Maine

### So Who Needs Logos Bookstore?

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For this reason window displays, gift items, books on the best seller lists are all there to build a bridge to the customer, to meet him where he is, and to gently lead him on closer to the Lord of all of life.

There are some amazing stories of people from all backgrounds and religious persuasions who have come into a Logos

Bookstore, been attracted to what they found there and returned again and again, learning and growing all the while, becoming what God wants them to be.

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When a missionary is sent to a foreign country what is one of the first things he does? Why, he opens a book room and he begins to guide people as to what to read so they will learn more about Jesus. This is what Logos Bookstores do.

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Lois Sibley

Lois Sibley's husband, Larry, is manager of the Logos Bookstore in Nashua, New Hampshire. He is a minister in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

# The Presbyterian Guardian

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## The Joy of Christian Living

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*Frederick F. Sima, Jr.*

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How easy it is to be saved—only trust and believe. A raise of the hand—a walk forward—perhaps a silent commitment. Then follows a “joy-filled life”. I must confess that as I talk to those people with smiling faces and happy countenances who speak to me of the “joy-filled life” that I am secretly envious. I suspect that my faith and trust are shallow indeed, because I have not experienced this “joy-filled life”, at least, not as I understand the term.

Each day as I leave my home, I must buckle on my Ephesians 6 armor and sally forth. Each day I must lift up my sword and slash and hack and thrust at the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life which continually assail me from every side. I become weary with the continuing storm of blasphemies—blasphemies against the Lord of Hosts from the newspapers, blasphemies from our mad government as it drives our nation further into the abyss, blasphemies from the sex mad “let it all hang out” people that I come into contact with. Even when I come home, looking for a respite, usually more weary from the fighting than the work and throw my armor into the corner and let the sword clatter to the floor while I sink into my easy chair—then I am hit with the fact that the hot water tank burst, and there’s no money in the checking account. Each day I must work out my salvation with fear and trembling knowing that my heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately wicked—who can know it?

I am filled with the sense of seething

frustration at the things I see going on round about us. Oh, how much I want to speak to the living dead and tell them to wake up! Wake up!—for they are walking down the broad way—no, even running. Oh, Lord God Almighty, wake them up! Oh, I am so frustrated—because I am so cowardly that I do not speak out enough or do enough. I am so frustrated because I write letters to the Chief of Naval Operations, the Secretary of Transportation, the President of the United States, various congressmen, and editors of newspapers; and all I get back, if anything, is motherhood and platitudes. Oh, for a modern day Elijah who would get the attention of those in high office!

No, I must confess that I am not a “joy-filled” Christian. I cannot smile and have a happy countenance when the struggle is so fierce and clash of arms is resounding in my ears, and the cries of the dead and dying provide a horrible threnody. I find it difficult to smile and utter niceties when I and my family are struggling to survive—when I want to run and hide from the conflict. Oh, wretched sinner that I am! Lord, you have told me to rejoice in tribulation and not to worry, but to bring everything to you in prayer and supplication. But I do worry, and my hands are weak and my knees do tremble, and my prayer life is not what it should be. But I thank You that you have not allowed me to fall headlong, but by your grace and mercy and for reasons known only to you, you have continued to pick me up and drag me on again.

For those who chide me about not having a joy-filled heart, I can only say that I do not understand what that “joy” is, (perhaps someone can tell me). Deep within me there is a Spark of hope that somehow keeps me struggling to make sure of his calling and election. Since I have been a Christian, my life has been a struggle and my sword is nicked and my armor dented, but how glad I am that by the grace and mercy of God I have not slipped back into the old ways.

In conclusion, I hope one day that I may be counted among that army that J. C. Philpot speaks of when he says: “The strongest believers are not the men of doctrine, but the men of experience; not the boasters, but the fighters; not the parade officers in all the millinery of spotless regimentals, but the tattered, soiled, wounded, half-dead soldiers that give and take no quarter from sin or Satan.”

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*Mr. Frederick F. Sima, Jr. is a member of the Pt. Loma Orthodox Presbyterian Church, San Diego, California.*

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### Artists (continued from page 9)

the desire to worship is always with us. Yet if we know that the Truth holds us, how much greater is our responsibility to do the truth.

We may not yet know what form Christian alternatives must take, or even the extent to which Christians must work out our alternative culture. In Christ we are free, yet we cannot “sanctify” aspects of our culture which are inherently wrong. There are dangers on all sides, and as our awareness of issues increases, so does our susceptibility to being misled into thinking that *we* understand. Yet Christ is a person, not a principle.

If you are concerned for those Christians who would claim back the privilege of being artists to the glory of God, then pray that they might have wisdom and diligence, and please pray for me as I try to help them.

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