From the East into Europe rolls a Red tide fomented by a political ideology land characterized in part by persecution which, in turn, has given occasion for much publicity and much lamentation.

From the West of Europe has rolled a Cross tide fomented by a politico-religious ideology and characterized in no small part by persecution which, strangely enough, has occasioned disproportionately little publicity and little lamentation. This letter tide began to roll centuries ago when Constantine succeeded in making his version of "Christianity" not only the instrument of the government but also the master of it— to the embarrassment and corruption of both. That tide has found expression since then in such things as the merciless Inquisition and the slaughter of the Huguenots. It found expression, while Hitler and his henchmen were striding eastward in Europe, in the persecution of the Serbian Orthodox Church. According to press dispatches, it finds expression even now in Spain and much of South America.

The churches of Christ carry absolutely no brief for the persecutor whether he appears in the garb of politics or religion! Coercion is not conversion. There is as much truth as proverb in the statement that "a man persuaded against his will is of the same opinion still." Here is the Lord's way of gaining converts: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17) 'Whosoever will, let him- -That's heaven's way.

Again, Jesus graciously said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) "Come unto me- -" expresses the Lord's way, and it very definitely establishes that it is a matter of one's own volition. Now, let it be granted that you are teaching the truth as it is revealed in the Holy scriptures, and you 'approach another with the anticipation of converting him. Yet, when he hears you, he not only rejects your teaching 'but openly opposes it. What are you to do? Prove your doctrine orthodox by raining on the fellow, a crescendo of blows and knocks? God forbid! Jesus said, 'Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet- - Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst Of wolves: (Continued on page 4)
THE EDITOR

R L. WHITESIDE

If all the material which comes to the desk of the editor of the Gospel Advocate were suitable for publication, it would not be possible to publish it. The paper is not large enough to provide space for everything which is sent in for publication. Of course this means that some material, otherwise acceptable, must be rejected, to say nothing of that which is not considered usable. We desire that our contributors bear this in mind and be as considerate of the editor as they wish others to be if they were in his position. Naturally the final decision in these matters rests with the editor, and he does not hesitate to accept the responsibility. As long as he is editor he expects to exercise this right of decision.—Part of editorial in the Gospel Advocate of November 18, 1948.

- Every informed person knows, without being told, that the editor or editors of any periodical must decide what to publish and what to refuse. His position gives him that power; but with that power goes a fearful responsibility, which should cause him to hesitate and ponder seriously about publishing or refusing some articles. Why was the article, written? Was it written to give Bible knowledge and to promote righteousness? Or was it written to vent the writer’s spleen on someone whose arguments he could not answer? If so, is not such a course similar to that of the Jews who stoned Stephen because they could not meet his arguments? If so, and if the editor does not share the sentiments of the writer, he will not publish the article. Publishing such an article he becomes guilty with the writer. Is he not showing favoritism when he publishes unjustifiable attacks on any man and then refuse to publish anything in his defense? An editor has the power to do so, but will he or anyone else say that he has the moral right to do so? Jude condemns “showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage.” Why should an editor violate the plain word of God and his own repeated statement of policy, unless he so boils over with anger that he cannot contain himself? And if he does become angry with someone because he cannot meet his arguments, should he spread his anger over his pages, and thus injure the cause he is supposed to represent and thereby disappoint and sadden his best supporters and his well-wishers? If he becomes angry, he should not sin; neither should he let the sun go down on his wrath. Anger cherished in the heart grows into malice; and malice seeks ways to injure its object. All such must be put away. (Eph. 4:31-32; Col. 3:5-11). Defiant self-justification is no substitute for right conduct. “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy.” (James 3:17). “Or think ye that the scripture speakseth in vain? (James 4:5).

A long time ago Brother Lipscomb said that the supporters of a paper could make the editor behave. It is easy to see how they can do that. Perhaps very few really try to do so. It is not a pleasant task. Besides, many people have a queer standard of morals, when it comes down to cases. They judge a man’s conduct by the way it affects them personally. Make this test: Tell a neighbor how crooked another neighbor has been in his dealings, and you will likely get this reply: “Well, he has always treated me all right.” So he is a good honest man! With that standard of judgment when could a criminal be convicted by any jury? Each one would judge according to the way the criminal bad treated him. Some likely do not try to correct the editor, fearing they will lose the favor of the editor, “showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage.” Of course any normal man desires the good will of all good people, but the man who will shut his eyes against wrong and low-tow to men who he thinks are in position to grant him favors is a sorry specimen of manhood. Such an attitude of heart...
utterly hinders anyone from being a true believer in Christ. ‘How can ye believe, who receive glory one from another, and the glory from the only God ye seek not?’ (John 5:44). Such political connivance will rot the character of any one. And likely some refrain from trying to correct any fault in the editor feeling that nothing they could say would do any good, and likely they are right. I have tried and failed. Or they perhaps hesitate to try to correct an editor, fearing he might belong to the wrong class mentioned by Solomon: “He that correcteth a scoffer getteth to himself a blot. Reprove not a scoffer, lest he hate thee: reprove a wise man, and he will love thee.” (Prov. 9:7-8).

Those who do not believe in taking life legally for any cause should not try to kill anybody with words, and thereby be guilty of murder. Death by words is slower than by shooting or hanging, but may be just as sure. “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” (Prov. 18:21) ‘With his mouth the godless man destroyeth his neighbor.’ (Prov. 11:9). In this matter we may do a wrong that we can never remedy. Words have killed people.

It is as bad for an editor, as for any other Christian, to become angry. “If that is soon angry angry will deal foolishly.” We have seen some striking demonstrations of the truth of that statement. A Christian should never allow himself to become so angry at any one that he wants to hurt him, or to rejoice when misfortune befalls him, even if the man is his enemy. “Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thy heart be glad when he is overthrown.” (Prov. 24:17).

No, I am not angry. I do not remember that I was ever so angry with any man that I wanted to hurt him by either word or deed; but I have been sorely disappointed in some of whom I expected better things. But here is a strange thing: Some of the brethren who think that such passages as Matt. 5:38; Luke 6:35; Rom. 12:19-20 prohibit any Christian from taking part in the government’s efforts to put down crime or resist the enemy, are yet very bitter toward those who do not agree with them. I have not taken part in the controversy; and yet the most bitter, vengeful, ill-tempered, and unchristian letters I ever received came from some of these men; men I do not remember of ever having seen. One who must have about exhausted ‘his vocabulary of harsh words and ugly charges, finally called me an “old devil.” I had not done them any evil, I had not hit them on one cheek, but they landed on me as hard as they could. And from what I have seen in the papers I judge that others of that class of brethren have taken vengeance on some they did not like. People can sometimes become very warped and twisted, and blind to their own sins.

WHAT DO THE NEIGHBORS THINK ABOUT THE INSTRUMENT IN THE CHURCH BUILDING FOR WEDDINGS?

JUDSON WOODBRIDGE

Recently, I have noticed some writing, and have heard a great deal of comment about moving the instrument of music in the church building for weddings. Those in favor of this practice present some good arguments proving that the church building is not the church. I believe most members will agree that a building of wood and stone is not the church. Most all know that the house of God is composed of Christians, and that the church can meet in a house or out of a house. It can meet in a dance hall with dozens of instruments stacked up, or under a shade tree in a cow pasture. But this does not mean it would be right to roll a piano in the church building. The church using a building where the piano is already there, is not parallel with moving one in. Is meeting in a dance hall for worship, parallel with bringing the dance into the building that was erected for brethren to meet in to worship?

I also observe that this argument is made for the advocates of this practice, “A ceremony is not an item, nor an act of worship.” Maybe not, but I wonder. God’s word is read or quoted; prayer is offered; and sometimes a psalm, hymn, or spiritual song is sung. Yes, I know “I Love You Truly,” and songs of that type are most generally used, and are not in the class of a psalm, hymn, or spiritual song. Once I attended a wedding conducted by a gospel preacher held in a sectarian building. In this ceremony the Lord’s Prayer (what people call the Lord’s Prayer) was sung with the accompaniment of the pipe organ, and the preacher had all to bow reverently while this was going on. It has been rather hard for me to satisfy my conscience that such is not worship. If we are not worshiping, we certainly make it appear to our neighbors that we are. Say what you please about the ceremony, there are some items and acts we engage in connected with it, that are so close to worship, that our religious friends never see the difference.

But another argument in favor of bringing
the instrument of music in the church building: "Bring it in, and show to the world we are not 'old foggies', and are not prejudiced against it. Let's do this and show the difference between worship and a wedding, and the difference between the church and the church house. We want people to know that we do not consider the house sacred or holy."

If the above presented the 'true picture of actually what we taught by moving the piano in, I would be highly in favor. However, from my experience I have found that another lesson is taught. The majority of our friends do not know that it is "not an item nor an act of worship." The preacher says, nor does anything in the ceremony to suggest that it isn't. Now here is what my friends think they have really learned. They think they have learned we are trying to make a distinction where there is no distinction. They believe they have taught them in inconsistency. "See", they say, "You kill it in the building for a wedding, but not Sunday morning or Sunday night." They are sincere in what they think they have learned, and think and talk about it. You will never have that audience together again where you can teach them. They will not come and hear you preach on the subject, for they think they have found you inconsistent. I could only wish that this were not the attitude, but I believe it is.

Maybe we should do this, if bringing an instrument in the building would teach the world the difference between the church and the church house; maybe we should have musical concerts and recitals at least once a month. If we were to engage in this practice we would need to buy a piano and leave it in the building. The young people then would have something to use for entertainment. O yea, they could use it in their Sunday school work; for some would be ready to argue that the school is not worship. What would be the next step? I think you know. We remember how the apostasy, which resulted in the Christian church started in some places. First in the basement, then in Sunday school, and then in the auditorium for the general assembly. I for one am not in favor of starting a practice that will tend toward such a movement.

I hear someone say "That will never happen. You are an alarmist." Maybe, but I do know of a congregation where an effort was made to get the church to buy a piano and keep it in the building for weddings. It has gone that far in some places.

No, I don't oppose the instrument in the church building because I think the building the church; nor because I think the devil is in the organ. But I believe because of influence there are some things that should be kept out of the buildings; and this is one of them. This practice of bringing it in is not the innocent little lamb of opinion, which will make no difference, as some will have you think. It is a little monster that is apt to grow into a dangerous beast. Beware!

I appeal to young people (and I have found most of them to be reasonable) do not bring the instrument into the building, or even borrow the sectarian's building and organ. People do not understand. I know you love the truth too much to do anything that will retard the spreading of it. Leaving the piano on the outside of the building will never create the wrong impression. Stay on safe grounds. You can have beautiful, impressive weddings without the instrument in the building. Do it that way.

PERSECUTION
(Continued from page 1)

be ye therefore wise as serpents, and HARM-LESS AS DOVES." (Matt. 10:14,16) That's the Christian way. Jesus further instructed: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matt. 5:44) Would following such advice ever make a religious persecutor? A Christian follows it.

Our Lord Jesus Christ declared, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matt. 26:52) In support of that principle, Paul stated, "Be not deceived; Cod is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7) Therefore, think it not strange that the persecutor, whether in political guise or religious garb, ultimately finds himself the persecuted.

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WALLACE W. THOMPSON

Primarily, to educate a child is to “bring him up.” Another meaning is “to develop morally and mentally.” Inherent education, that belonging to nature, is not sufficient. One is not completely educated who has a major and minor in science end art. To be morally and mentally trained is good, but it is not enough. A person must be spiritually instructed in God’s word. The pupil spends about twelve years in the public schools. Our government recognizes the importance of this training. Every year millions are spent in this field. There are thousands of colleges fully accredited, and universities in which advanced education of the sciences and arts are taught. Naturally, there are things in the textbooks which are not proved. There are theories that smack of infidelity and strike out God. There are teachers vicious enough to lash out at the Bible and the church of the New Testament. It would be a sad conclusion to reach that due to these unfavorable teachings and teachers all education ought to be abolished. The more one’s mind is filled with worldly wisdom, the more the Bible is crowded out. While the child is growing into maturity, a failure to fill his mind with the truth of God is really disastrous. This is done in the homes of Christians, and in the church. This early training prepares him for the period of temptation ahead. A child rooted and grounded in the faith generally cannot be shoved from his anchored vessel. Even a false religious school would not turn him from the faith. Godly parents are indeed a glorious blessing who give a son or a daughter a running start. The Lord realized we needed instruction in the church. As a result he set teachers in it. (See Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:26). They were “in the church”, not some human institution! They engaged in the development of the “newborn babes.” At first the direction of these teachers came miraculously from the Holy Spirit. But when the perfect law of liberty was complete, every teacher was guided by it. The Bible is God’s only book to develop the Christian. Elders are teachers in the church; preachers are teachers, and they are to teach only the things taught by the Holy Spirit and the apostles. Members teach each other in singing. Teaching carries with it a solemn and weighty responsibility. Remember, the Lord has not required that the members of the church be received and rejected according to their “credits” or “degrees” in secular subjects. Some of the elite and learned(?) seem to demand certain qualifications in this field for preachers and possibly others. It cannot be!

DANGERS OF YOUR ALMA MATER (?)
Alma Mater literally means “fostering moth-
THE APPEAL OF POPULARITY

Some had rather please than to be right. These are generally conscious only of "public praise." The Pharisees were this kind. Some men in the church love worldly acclaim more than God's smiles of approval. Says one, "If I can just impress this rich man, my victory is assured." The greatest name ever given is least sought by the many. Some brethren relish the title 'Dr.' or "Prof." rather than desire to wear the name "brother" or "Christian." I imagine that these big doctors in the sight of God are just as small, if not smaller than the ordinary fellow. God does not recognize human degrees of wisdom, they are simply inferior to the name Christian. And if you belong to the same human order, remember you step down from the church to get into it! The church is hoisted above every lodge and order on earth. It is not doubted but that Judaism in Paul's day was more popular than Christianity. Paganism was popular but was not right. The papacy and its teachings are popular, but they stand in the wrong knowing tradition and leaning upon the human innovations, Demonic nationalism is a popular cry, but it is man's doings destined to doom. It is easier to live in sin than to be righteous. It is easier to go with the crowd than to walk with the Lord, but the latter is much safer and more profitable. Why cannot members of the church be plain, humble, down-to-the-earth, what they really are? If we would be great, let us be humble followers of the Lord!

HUMAN WISDOM AGAINST DIVINE WISDOM!

If you will compare these virtues, I believe you will find that most of the time in history they have clashed. There are different "levels" in the world, but only one in the church. There are different ways to be damned, but only one way to be saved. The Holy Spirit informs us that the "wisdom of the wise" will be destroyed, the understanding of the sages till be brought to naught, as made foolishness by God's wisdom, the wise become confounded by the things Jehovah selected, 'the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, the wise are commanded to become fools, the thoughts of the wise are vain, and the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, (1 Cor. 2:19). God did not select the wisdom of human speech to convert the world in human wisdom, but chose the simple words of God's wisdom to turn man from sin to righteousness. Thus, the Holy Spirit announced the philosophies of men foolish and weak, commanding that our faith, "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Therefore, to be instructed by the Holy Spirit is to receive the greatest teaching there is in the world. Human wisdom does not compare with it. You might spend a lifetime in search of the greatest theories ever discovered; you might attain the greatest height ever reached in human wisdom; after all this, place what you learned by the side of the Bible and the perishable wisdom is but refuse! Man is not rewarded by knowledge but by his faithfulness to God. The great will feel infinitely small before the great I AM. We are not arguing that education will send one to hell, though it might; we simply know it will not secure a reward for one in heaven.

CONCLUSION

We could very well get along without thousands of books in the world composed and compiled by man, but we cannot get along without the Bible. We can easily get by without thousands of human institutions, but we cannot get by without the church of the Lord. We could do without sin, but not without righteousness. There is not a religious paper we could not get along without, but we cannot get along without the letters of the New Testament. Things human are unnecessary, but things Divine are essential. Things earthly are dispensable, but things eternal are indispensable, Thus the college cannot supplant the church any more than human creeds can supplant the truth. The church stands aloof in the realm of salvation from sin. Our love for the church ought to be deep. Nothing should be able to wrest from us our love and respect for it. Ah, what price this for the church! Nothing in man's history sees God coming to redeem man from sin but this! The glory gleam and love light of Calvary shines and glows upon it and declares it to be "the light of the world." Without the church we are tossed to and fro in the tempest, and our vessel, the soul, is dashed upon the shoals and treacherous shallows of hopelessness and helplessness without it. Above all thing we need the church.

THE SECOND EDITION IS READY

CLED E. WALLACE

The second edition of R.L. Whiteside's Commentary on Romans is off the press and ready for delivery. This very valuable work should be in the hands of every Bible student, especially teachers and preachers. I have not only read my copy over and over, I study it. It is the most satisfying treatment of Paul's great epistle I have ever used. The merits of this work should insure a quick exhaustion of this second edition. Brother Whiteside's home address is 1103 Bernard Street, Denton, Texas.
In the press and over the radio, we hear much said concerning the union of churches, or that certain churches, are either taking steps toward uniting under one head in what is called a merger, or have actually tried to merge into a new order. Now, it is true that the Lord Jesus Christ prayed for the unity of his disciples, and he died that all might be united in Him to the salvation of their souls. And we know that all who are in Christ, new creatures, members of his body, are duty bound and obligated, to live and work together in such a way as to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

In a recent United Press report, under date of February 5, it is stated that the “United Church of Christ” was formed today with the merger of the Congregational Christian Churches of America and the Evangelical and Reformed Church but a small minority group of Congregationalists threatened court action to dissolve the new denomination.

Let us observe some striking things in reference to this “merger”:

1. It failed to accomplish its own purpose. For instead of its really uniting two groups, and making one less denomination, it only added another one to the list. For the minority group will continue, no doubt under the old set up, and thus nothing accomplished, after all.  

2. The action must have not been in keeping with the principles which make for unity laid down by the Lord, and his disciples. For, if so, why this minority holding out because of contending that “unity with the Evangelical and Reformed Church would endanger the Autonomy and freedom of local congregations.” If this great conclave of around 1,000 members of these two bodies had proceeded according to scriptures, they would have settled this question by the New Testament, and both would have agreed in regard to the autonomy of the local congregation.

3. And why the name “United Church of Christ?” Before this merger neither group had ever bothered to be content to wear the simple and scriptural name “church of Christ.” Can it be thought that, in their due deliberations they concluded that this was nearer to the right and Scriptural name for them to wear, than what they had formerly worn? Now, if that is true, why not erase the “United,” and be satisfied with nothing but “church of Christ”?

4. But their being called “United Church of Christ,” though the new denomination will have a membership of 2,000,000, does not prove that they will actually be the true church of Christ. But maybe this occurrence is a move in the right direction, for it does tend to indicate that some thought must have been given to the truth in regard to a proper name. Of course, leaders of either side, could not be expected to be willing to accept the name of the other group, but were willing to accept one that everybody must admit to be more nearly scriptural than either of the others.

We know that there are many good names among denominational bodies, and if the name made the body, a true body, or the true body of Christ, all would be well with them. But of course a thing exists, before it is named. And until, by the Holy Scriptures it can be proved also scriptural in doctrine, faith and practice, the name doesn’t amount to much before God, and his true followers.

Allow this scribe to humbly suggest, that the main reason this “merger” reached the success it did, is because neither group had any particular and definite doctrinal belief at stake in consenting to the ‘merger.” And the few who dissented thereto, are those honest souls who are not willing to give up this one point of doctrine, and about the only point that would distinguish them from other groups of so-called Christians.

The Lord Jesus Christ never did pray for denominational bodies to unite, much less “merger.” He prayed for his disciples to be one, but knew that unity between his disciples and those of the world could never be possible. He said that he came, not to bring peace but a sword, for the simple fact that some people would not believe and accept his teachings, while others would, and thus a final and continual breach would be the result. When people of these above mentioned bodies, as well as all others, will be satisfied, not only to lay aside their man-made names, but every opinion, and teaching of man, and to take ‘the Holy Scriptures as a final basis for unity, then and not before can we begin to hope for unity of all supposed believers, Even granting that this occurrence results in complete unity among themselves, one can only conclude that another group has been formed to continue in the paths of unrighteousness, rather than in true holiness, and peace. Let us pray that the day will dawn when men will endeavor to seek the true means of making peace permanent between believers in Christ, by searching for, and anxiously desirous of taking the New Testament as the true, only and final basis for Christian unity.
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IMPORTANT

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cconcerning the future plans for the “Bible Banner”. These plans will be announced fully in the April issue. Thousands of letters are going out with this issue telling you of an important change to be made in the immediate future. We are asking your very best co-operation if you are interested in “The Bible Banner” and what it is trying to do. You can help us put across the most important move that has been made in the history of this publication. We believe you will.

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