

FOREWORD

Three of the liveliest of the smaller Presbyterian Churches in the United States are the children of the action of the General Council of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in determining to demand in the fall of 1933 that the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions be dissolved. Presumably the General Council foresaw that the demand would not be honored. Probably, therefore, it expected to be the father, as it were, of at least one new Presbyterian Church. Whether it counted on triplets is dubious. Its technology was probably not that far advanced.

Population control was not a watchword in the early thirties but it has always seemed odd behavior to find the General Council crying loudly for ecumenicity and at the same time requiring the formation of at least one new Presbyterian Church and, in the event, three: the Bible Presbyterian Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (now a part of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod), and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

This is but one indication of the fact that large Churches are generally much more closely oriented to money and power than Jesus was. It raises the question of whether an increase in the size of a Church is always a blessing. The people who are running things become tremendously interested in their authority and in the means by which they can realize their dreams. Some large corporations have found it advisable to have their divisions compete. Buick and Oldsmobile are each not entirely averse to capturing sales from the other.

We are, at the moment, faced with the spectre of COCU. If it comes into existence, it is not entirely impossible that the result will be less Christian witness in the United States rather than more.

In this valuable book which the Rev. George Hutchinson has written, the reader is introduced to the history of some of these lively younger Churches as well as to the Presbyterian history and tradition which lies back of them and includes the history of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. It is a pleasure to have the privilege of writing a few words to precede it, for it is a very excellent introduction to our present situation and to the question of how best to promote the cause of Jesus Christ today. It is particularly valuable because an earlier book covering one portion of the same ground, Edwin H. Rian: *The Presbyterian Conflict*, is, at present at least, out of print.

If I had been writing the current book, an accomplishment of which I would not have been capable even if I had tried, I would not have always used the same words in every place as Mr. Hutchinson has done. But although we are ministers of different communions it is a pleasure to find in this book but one more evidence of the fact that the genuinely evangelical Presbyterian Churches of this country really have much more in common than they sometimes think that they have. Mr. Hutchinson and I approach one or two things from different angles, but it is discussion of such differences that will promote the cause of truth and the proclamation of the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May the book enrich many hearts and lives in the service of our common King.

Paul Woolley

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