

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

For Church and Country: The Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict in the Presbyterian Church

In the 1920s and '30s, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. was torn by conflict over the issues of theology and ecclesiology. Underneath those struggles lay profound concerns about the role of Christianity in the culture and how that role was to be expressed.

by Bradley J. Longfield

THE 1920S AND '30S WERE NOT HAPPY times for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. In those decades, issues that had been developing for over half a century finally erupted in the fundamentalist/modernist conflicts as conservatives and liberals battled for the soul of the church and, at least implicitly, for the soul of America. While these battles were fought primarily over issues of theology and ecclesiology, the major protagonists in the struggles were also profoundly concerned with the role of Christianity in the culture and how that role was to be expressed.

The late nineteenth century witnessed a revolution in social, religious, and intellectual arenas that transformed the face of America. Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis challenged the biblical account of creation and the traditional understanding of the providence of God. The rise of historical criticism led to the questioning of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the dating of Daniel, and the historical accuracy of significant portions of the Bible.¹ Likewise, the rise of the social sciences, such as anthropology, sociology, and comparative religions, questioned dearly held notions about absolute truth. In 1918 Henry Adams summarized the vast changes in the intellectual world, claiming, "In essentials like religion, ethics, philosophy; in history, literature and art; in the

concepts of all science, except perhaps mathematics, the American boy of 1854 stood nearer the year 1 than to the year 1900."²

On another front, technological innovations in the generation of power, manufacturing, transportation, and communications created unprecedented economic growth and helped America become the leading industrial nation in the world by the turn of the century.³ Key entrepreneurs—such as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, and Cornelius Vanderbilt—made unprecedented sums of money while millions of laborers, many of them women and children, worked sixty and seventy hours a week for minimum wages. The economic revolution contributed to equally revolutionary social transformation. By 1920 America, which at the close of the Civil War had been an overwhelmingly rural nation, had become a predominantly urban country, with over half of all Americans living in cities. Pittsburgh, Chicago, and New York skyrocketed in population in the closing decades of the nineteenth century as the sense of accountability and community in rural America gave way to the heterogeneity and anonymity of the city.⁴

The rise of the metropolis was spurred not simply by migration from the country to the city but also by rapid immigration from

Dr. Longfield is Dean and Professor of Church History at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.

Journal of Presbyterian History 78:1 (Spring 2000)

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

abroad in the years after Appomattox. By 1900 foreign immigrants and their children comprised over one-third of America's population. After the turn of the century, the pace of immigration climbed even higher as people from southern and eastern Europe spilled onto America's shores. Different languages, religions, and features distinguished this wave of immigrants from the mass of Americans and accelerated nativist trends.⁵

Industrialization, urbanization, and immigration combined with changes in the intellectual world to encourage the secularization of American culture. Though the major Protestant denominations tripled in membership from 1860 to 1900 (from five to sixteen million), religion was having a smaller and smaller impact on large arenas of American life. Outings, ball games, and Sunday theater inspired an increasing apathy to attendance at Sunday worship. Likewise, the advent of the Sunday newspaper, growing use of a seven-day work week, a rise in travel by rail on Sunday, and the establishment of country clubs all demonstrated a move away from traditional Protestant values.⁶

In response to these changes the New Theology, later known as liberalism or modernism, was born. Drawing on the earlier traditions of Transcendentalism, Unitarianism, and the evangelicalism of Horace Bushnell, the New Theology sought to reconcile the old faith with the results of higher criticism and evolutionary thought. Popularized by the likes of Henry Ward Beecher and systematized by William Newton Clarke and William Adams Brown, liberalism, by 1900, had become a major force in American mainline Protestantism. Liberalism, while a diverse movement, came to emphasize the immanence of God, the goodness of humanity, a moral interpretation of the atonement, and the importance of experience and ethics in religion. Since evolution was equated with progress in the liberal worldview, liberals had an optimistic view of history and looked for the advent of the Kingdom of God on earth.⁷

While some Christians tried to make peace with modernity through liberal adap-

tations of the faith, others developed more conservative responses. The publication of a series of booklets entitled *The Fundamentals* from 1910 to 1915 embodied this conservative movement. Financed by California oil magnates Lyman and Milton Stewart, the essays addressed such topics as scriptural authority, sin, salvation, the virgin birth, missions, and Sabbatarianism. The works, which included articles by Robert Speer and Charles Erdman, two Presbyterians who would play a major role in the Presbyterian conflicts of the 1920s, were more important for their symbolic value than their constructive contributions.⁸ As historian George Marsden has argued, when the term fundamentalism was coined in 1920, "it called to mind the broad, united front of the kind of opposition to modernism that characterized these widely known, if little studied, volumes."⁹

In the Presbyterian Church, developments in the late nineteenth century set the stage for the conflicts that would wrack the church in the 1920s and '30s. As higher critical views of the scriptures threatened the traditional Presbyterian notion of the Bible as the infallible rule of faith and practice, Presbyterians, especially at Princeton Seminary, responded with a doctrine of scriptural inerrancy. The Princeton Theology, grounded in the philosophy of Scottish Common Sense Realism and the theology of the Westminster Confession, held that the Bible was truthful in all it reported. As Archibald Alexander Hodge and Benjamin B. Warfield articulated this view, "the Scriptures not only contain, but ARE THE WORD OF GOD, and hence that all their elements and all their affirmations are absolutely errorless, and binding the faith and obedience of men."¹⁰

While many Presbyterians agreed wholeheartedly with Hodge and Warfield, others, most notably Charles A. Briggs of Union Seminary in New York, looked on this doctrine of inerrancy with disbelief. Charles Briggs was, in the late nineteenth century, the foremost biblical scholar in the nation. In the 1880s he had cooperated with A. A. Hodge to edit the *Presbyterian Review* but

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

editorial disagreements finally led to the journal's demise.¹¹ Tensions between Briggs and the Princeton theologians came to a head in 1891 when Briggs, upon his induction into the chair of Biblical studies at Union, delivered an inaugural address that claimed that "there are errors in the Scriptures that no one has been able to explain away." He went on to deny the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and the unitary authorship of the book of Isaiah.¹²

In response, a number of presbyteries overruled the General Assembly to address Briggs's heretical statements and the Assembly vetoed Briggs's appointment to Union Seminary.¹³ The 1892 General Assembly, in a statement that came to be known as the Portland Deliverance, specifically endorsed the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. Finally, in 1893 the General Assembly suspended Briggs from the Presbyterian ministry for propagating "views, doctrines, and teachings" contrary to the doctrine of Holy Scripture and in violation of his ordination vows.¹⁴ Lane Seminary Professor Henry Preserved Smith also lost his ministerial status for defending Briggs and his view of Scripture. In no uncertain terms the Presbyterian Church had placed itself on the side of biblical inerrancy.¹⁵ As William Weston recently concluded, "the 1890s [were] a very successful decade for the conservatives."¹⁶

Two further developments in the early part of the century also contributed to the conflicts of the 1920s. First, in 1903, the denomination approved revisions in the Westminster Confession that emphasized such items as God's love for all humanity and the salvation of all who die in infancy.¹⁷ These changes paved the way for the reunion of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Though the church did not abandon its Calvinist heritage with the revision of 1903, many in the Cumberland Church with a loose understanding of confessional subscription now felt comfortable joining the larger church. In the 1920s, when liberals argued for greater latitude in confessional subscription, they received significant sup-

port from these former members of the Cumberland communion.¹⁸

Finally, in 1910 and 1916 the General Assembly of the church, distressed by the liberal theological tendencies of some ministerial candidates, declared that all candidates for ordination ought to be able to affirm the inerrancy of scripture and the virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, miracle-working power, and bodily resurrection of Christ.¹⁹ While supporters insisted that these doctrines (known as the "five fundamentals") did not exhaust the Reformed system of doctrine, they did give conservatives a quick means to test the orthodoxy of candidates as they sought ordination.

By the second decade of the century, then, the Presbyterian Church found itself poised on the brink of major conflict. Liberals and conservatives had been sparring for years and conservatives had won major victories in the expulsions of Charles Briggs and Henry Preserved Smith, and the adoption of the Portland Deliverance and the five fundamentals. On the other side, liberals had been emboldened by the Cumberland reunion and were becoming increasingly assertive in their demands. In the years before World War I theological moderates in the church helped keep the peace. But the cultural crisis that swept the nation in the wake of World War I brought these tensions to a boil.

The Cultural Crisis and the Eruption of the Conflict

America entered World War I with all the fervor of a religious crusade. Under the leadership of the Presbyterian Woodrow Wilson, the nation fought to make the world "safe for democracy" and "political liberty." Upon the cessation of hostilities, however, the nation turned inward and idealism gave way to isolationism, intolerance, and a "quest for normalcy." An anticommunist hysteria gripped the nation in 1919 and 1920 and renewed immigration spurred racism and nativism. Congress responded by passing the 1924 National Origins Act, an effort to ensure white hegemony by limiting immigration.²⁰

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

The war also accelerated secularizing tendencies that had been influencing American life for generations. The “revolution in morals” of the Jazz Age, increasing divorce rates, rising crime, and declining Sabbath observance were all seen as signs that Christianity was losing influence in America. For many conservative Christians, including conservative Presbyterians, Darwinian thought and resultant liberal Christianity were major contributors to this secularization of the nation. For the sake of the church and culture, therefore, conservatives believed, liberalism needed to be arrested.²¹

Harry Emerson Fosdick, perhaps the most prominent preacher of his day, preached a sermon on May 21, 1922, that finally ignited the fundamentalist/modernist conflicts in the Presbyterian Church. Fosdick, a liberal Baptist preaching by special permission in First Presbyterian Church, New York, had become increasingly dismayed by the sniping of conservative Baptists and Presbyterians. In response, he preached “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” in which he outlined differences between liberal and conservative Christians and insisted that, inasmuch as liberals would not leave the church, only a policy of tolerance and humility on the part of all involved would make for peace.²²

Fosdick, a well-recognized and articulate spokesman for liberal Protestantism, drew quick response from conservative Presbyterians. Most notably, Clarence Edward Macartney, pastor of Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, replied in a sermon titled “Shall Unbelief Win?” in which he addressed Fosdick’s work point by point. Contending that Fosdick’s views were irreconcilable with the doctrinal positions of the church, Macartney argued that evangelicals needed to fight for the faith, “earnestly and intelligently and in a Christian spirit,” but, even so, to fight, lest liberalism lead the church to “a Christianity of opinions and principles and good purposes, but a Christianity without worship, without God, and without Jesus Christ.”²³

The sermon, published in pamphlet form and in *The Presbyterian*, rallied conserva-



Rev. Dr. J. Gresham Machen

tive sentiment. The Presbytery of Philadelphia, in response, requested that the General Assembly “direct the Presbytery of New York to take such action as will require the preaching and teaching in the First Presbyterian Church of New York City to conform to the system of doctrine taught in the Confession of Faith.”²⁴ With that, the issue was joined. Fosdick had challenged conservatives to tolerate liberals, and militant traditionalists took up the challenge with a vengeance.

Macartney’s concern to combat liberalism stemmed not simply from a desire to preserve the influence of Calvinist orthodoxy in the church but also to preserve the influence of traditional Christianity on the culture. Macartney and most all of his conservative allies fervently believed that American Christian civilization was founded on orthodox Christianity. The increase in divorce, decline of the Sabbath, secularization of higher education, rising hemlines, and increasing crime rate all symbolized, Macartney insisted, the declining influence

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

of Christianity, a decline attributable, at least in part, to the rise of theological liberalism. The struggle against modernism was, therefore, not simply a battle for the truth of Christianity but also for the survival of a Christian America.²⁵

In the course of the next decade liberals (or modernists) and militant traditionalists (or fundamentalists) would battle explicitly for the soul of the church and implicitly for the soul of the nation. Even so, as Lefferts Loetscher noted almost five decades ago, there were three primary parties in the conflict—“extreme conservatives,” “an extreme party of toleration,” and “a third group...of conservatives...who nonetheless favored a policy of toleration”—and it was this third “mediating group” that “held the balance of power and eventually decided the issue.”²⁶ The leadership of these three groups was not only instrumental in orchestrating the fights and determining the outcome, but reflects clearly the issues that contributed to the intensity and longevity of the battle.²⁷

In the wake of Fosdick’s sermon, a young professor of New Testament at Princeton Seminary, J. Gresham Machen, stepped forward with the publication of *Christianity and Liberalism*.²⁸ As the title implied, Machen had concluded that liberalism was not simply a variety of Christianity but was an entirely different faith. Indeed, in an effort to accommodate the faith to the culture, Machen insisted, liberal theology had sacrificed “everything distinctive of Christianity,” leaving nothing but a “sordid life of utilitarianism.”²⁹ To Machen’s mind only the rebirth of Christianity could stop the spiritual decline of the age. But such a reformation required soldiers of the faith willing to fight for the faith in the midst of a hostile culture. A “separation between the two parties in the church” was “the crying need of the hour.” Failing a liberal withdrawal from the church, Machen allowed that conservatives might have to secede. Above all theological pacifism could not be countenanced.³⁰

Machen’s claims reflected both his theological and regional heritage. He had been

raised in Baltimore in a devout, conservative Southern Presbyterian family, where he imbibed not only Calvinistic theology but a profound respect for the “Lost Cause” of the Old South. After graduating with honors from Johns Hopkins University he attended Princeton Seminary and then traveled to Germany to engage in New Testament studies. There he found the liberal theology of Wilhelm Herrmann extremely appealing and, separated from friends and family, was thrown into a profound religious crisis. He returned to Princeton Seminary to teach, gradually resolved his religious questions in favor of Old School Calvinism that clung closely to the Westminster Confession, and was ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in 1914.³¹

Though Machen became, in time, one of the most articulate spokesmen for the fundamentalist cause, in significant ways he differed from other fundamentalist leaders like Macartney and William Jennings Bryan. While most of the militant traditionalists in the Presbyterian Church were heirs to the Northern evangelical tradition of social reform, Machen, true to his Southern Presbyterian heritage, insisted that the church had no business addressing strictly social and political issues. Rather, he looked to the power of ideas—of doctrine alone—to reform church and culture.³² In time, these different emphases would lead to division in the fundamentalist ranks and Machen’s exit from the church.

The Philadelphia Overture addressing Fosdick came to the 1923 General Assembly meeting in Indianapolis. The two leading contenders for the office of moderator at this Assembly were Charles Wishart, president of the College of Wooster in Ohio, and William Jennings Bryan, three-time presidential contender, Presbyterian elder, and crusader against the theory of biological evolution. Bryan was convinced that the theory of biological evolution not only undercut biblical authority and Christian doctrine, but also cut the nerve of moral reform and destroyed the foundation of Christian civilization. His entry into the moderatorial

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

race brought the issue of biological evolution front and center on the Presbyterian agenda. Moreover, inasmuch as the College of Wooster taught biological evolution in its curriculum, the issue provided a clear choice for the Assembly.³³ In the words of one reporter for the *New York Times*, the Presbyterian Church was “being divided into evolutionists and anti-evolutionists.”³⁴

Though Bryan was considered the clear frontrunner early on, he lost the election by a narrow margin, signaling the church’s unease with Bryan’s strident opposition to evolutionary thought. Indeed, the Assembly later defeated a hotly contested motion to oppose the teaching of biological evolution in Presbyterian schools and adopted a much milder resolution that instructed church judicatories to “withhold their official approval from such academies, colleges, and training schools where any teaching or instruction is given which seeks to establish a materialistic evolutionary philosophy of life or which disregards or attempts to discredit the Christian faith.”³⁵ Most Presbyterians, even many theologically conservative Presbyterians like Machen, were willing to accept biological evolution to some degree.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures, which handled the Fosdick controversy, recommended no action pending the results of the investigation of the New York Presbytery. But militant conservatives were in no mood to leave Fosdick’s fate in the hands of the liberal New York Presbytery. After long and acrimonious debate, the Assembly reaffirmed the five fundamentals of the faith first declared in 1910 and instructed the Presbytery of New York to bring the preaching of First Presbyterian Church, New York, into conformity with the Westminster Confession.³⁶

Hard upon this decision, however, liberals mobilized a public counteroffensive to this conservative victory. Henry Sloane Coffin, for example, a prominent liberal and pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, issued a statement claiming that he agreed completely with Fosdick and if Fosdick were disciplined he should be also.³⁷ Liberals like Coffin were

convinced that if Christianity was going to appeal to thinking men and women and transform the world into God’s Kingdom then it had to present a united front based on doctrinal liberty. As proponents of the Social Gospel, liberals believed that true evangelism had to bring all of life—industry, education, and government—under the gospel in order to “make the world the kingdom of God.”³⁸ The liberal battle against fundamentalism was, therefore, not simply a fight for the tolerance of liberal theology but also a crusade to advance the Kingdom of God on earth.³⁹

In the months following the 1923 Assembly supporters of Fosdick composed a declaration affirming their orthodoxy but claiming that the adoption of the “five fundamentals” by the General Assembly was unconstitutional. Moreover, the declaration went on to contend that the endorsement of the fundamentals “attempts to commit our church to certain theories concerning the inspiration of the Bible, and the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection and the Continuing Life and Supernatural Power of our Lord Jesus Christ” but that these were “not the only theories allowed by the Scriptures and our standards.”⁴⁰ The signers insisted that they did not seek to exceed the boundaries of “evangelical Christianity” but were compelled to defend “liberty of thought and teaching” in order to “more effectively preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.” In the face of a world so desperately in need of the gospel, the declaration concluded, the church needed to avoid infighting and seek unity and liberty.⁴¹ The declaration, commonly called the Auburn Affirmation because of its origins at Auburn Seminary, was circulated by its authors for signatures in November 1923 and released in January 1924 appended by 150 signatures.⁴²

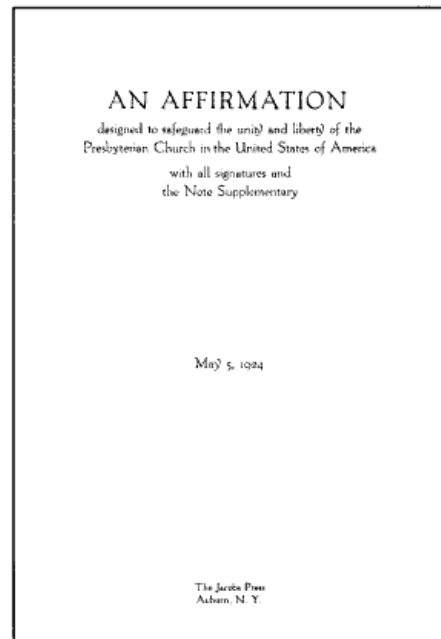
Actions of the New York Presbytery further aggravated the situation. In open defiance of the recent Assembly, the presbytery, in June of 1923, licensed two Union students, Henry P. Van Dusen and Cedric O. Lehman, who refused to affirm the virgin birth of Christ.⁴³ In February of 1924 the

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

Presbytery of New York, in response to the mandate of the 1923 General Assembly, adopted a report that essentially exonerated Fosdick of any wrongdoing and proposed no disciplinary action.⁴⁴ Conservatives within the presbytery, convinced of injustice, appealed the case to the General Assembly, and the Presbytery of Cincinnati passed an overture calling the Affirmation and its signers to the attention of the Assembly, ensuring that the fight would last at least one more round.⁴⁵

The election of moderator of the 1924 Assembly, meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, pitted Clarence Macartney, the acknowledged leader of the fundamentalist party, against Charles Erdman, a conservative professor at Princeton Seminary who was tolerant of diverse views within the church. Macartney won by 18 votes out of 910 ballots cast, demonstrating the divided mind of the church.⁴⁶ Henry Sloane Coffin despaired at such a victory. He wrote to his wife from the Assembly that “Here the dreaded worst has happened.” Even so, he added, “My fighting blood’s up and I am rather glad that the issue can be clearly drawn.”⁴⁷ Despite Coffin’s despair, the Assembly tended to make moderate decisions. Though the Affirmation was called to the attention of the Assembly by the Cincinnati overture, no action was taken against its signers. Moreover, though the licensure of Van Dusen and Lehman had been appealed to New York Presbytery and the Assembly, the Assembly took no action, remanding the complaint to the Synod of New York.⁴⁸

The reasons for the lack of action on the Auburn Affirmation are elusive. Perhaps many commissioners were wary of condemning so many individuals who had signed the Affirmation. Perhaps conservatives felt that strident action would only hurt their cause. Coffin speculated to his wife that “I believe [?] the conservatives are frightened and they shrink from extreme measures.”⁴⁹ Whatever the reason, conservatives failed to address the liberals’ most articulate declaration of faith at a time when they had a working majority.



On the issue of Fosdick, which was again before the Assembly on appeal, the Assembly shifted the entire controversy away from questions of theology to matters of polity. The report adopted by the Assembly focused on the unusual nature of Fosdick’s relationship to First Church, New York, and recommended that, if he desired to preach in a Presbyterian church for an extended time, he should enter into a regular relationship with the church and become subject to its jurisdiction. As such, the Assembly instructed the Presbytery of New York to invite Dr. Fosdick to enter the Presbyterian ministry.⁵⁰

Coffin was delighted that the Assembly did not condemn Fosdick, but rather invited him into the church. Fosdick, on the other hand, was suspicious of the invitation and could not in good conscience accept.⁵¹ Fosdick wrote to Coffin, “I simply could not make the sort of even formal assent required of all candidates for your denomination’s ministry. I would choke—for, rightly or wrongly, I should feel as if I were lying like a rogue.”⁵² On 22 October 1924 First Presbyterian Church accepted Fosdick’s resignation and on 1 March 1925 he preached his farewell sermon.⁵³

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

Though Fosdick's departure cheered many conservatives, the war was far from over. In the wake of the 1924 Assembly, Machen had warned his allies, "We did suffer a great defeat at the end of the Assembly; and I think that if we represent it as a victory, or if we give the impression that we regard the battle as over, we are traitors to our cause."⁵⁴ Macartney thus used his moderatorial office to speak out against modernist theology and warn of the dangers of the decline of the Sabbath, the breakup of the family, and the secularization of education.⁵⁵ Similarly, liberals continued to press their cause in pulpit and print.⁵⁶

By 1924, these debates had also invaded the hallowed halls of Princeton Seminary and the surrounding community. In October 1923 Machen accepted an offer to serve as stated supply preacher at First Presbyterian Church, Princeton. Machen used this platform to attack modernism repeatedly. In response, Dr. Henry van Dyke, a professor at Princeton University and noted liberal Presbyterian, surrendered his pew in protest.⁵⁷ When Charles Erdman replaced Machen as stated supply in December of 1924, van Dyke returned to his pew, leading some militant conservatives to conclude that van Dyke, at least, anticipated more congenial liberal preaching from this Princeton Seminary professor. A public feud erupted between Erdman and Machen, bringing to light tensions that would color the 1925 Assembly and ultimately erupt in full-scale hostilities in 1926.⁵⁸

The Special Commission of 1925

In the spring of 1925 Charles Erdman was nominated by New Brunswick Presbytery for moderator of the 1925 General Assembly.⁵⁹ Machen was unalterably and publicly opposed to Erdman's candidacy because of what he perceived to be Erdman's palliative compromises with liberals in the church.⁶⁰ Coffin privately supported Erdman, encouraging him in the face of attacks from his militantly conservative foes.⁶¹

Erdman's theological positions, which reflected his New School Presbyterian up-

bringing, were conservative but emphasized the need for evangelism over the defense of precise Christian doctrine. His revivalistic heritage inspired in him a passionate concern for the moral reform of America and the preservation of the moral order, most notably in Sabbath practices, family devotions, and concern about the rise of crime. His concerns for the advance of a Christian America thus mirrored many of the concerns of Clarence Macartney but because, to Erdman's mind, evangelism took precedence over doctrinal precisionism, he worked for a more inclusive church to present a united front to the world. Erdman's efforts in the church stemmed, therefore, not only from a concern for the unity of the church but from a concern for a united witness to the world and the preservation of moral order.⁶²

Garnering support from people as diverse as Coffin and fundamentalist Billy Sunday, Erdman won the moderatorship handily on the second ballot.⁶³ The activities of New York Presbytery were again before the Assembly. The presbytery had asked the judicial commission of the Assembly to determine the presbytery's power in licensing candidates and a conservative appeal of the licensure of Van Dusen and Lehman was again before the body.⁶⁴ On 26 May, the judicial commission reported back and ruled that the General Assembly did have review powers over the actions of a presbytery and that New York Presbytery should not have licensed Van Dusen and Lehman because they could not affirm their belief in the virgin birth of Christ.⁶⁵

Modernists, pushed into a corner by the decision, took the offensive. Coffin had met with Erdman earlier in the Assembly and warned that such a decision would "cause a split in the church."⁶⁶ Erdman, hardly wanting to preside over a major schism, had agreed to let Coffin issue a formal protest if the commission ruled against the presbytery.⁶⁷ So upon the ruling Coffin read a prepared statement before the Assembly claiming that the presbytery, because of its allegiance to the constitution of the church, could not submit to such a decision unless

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

The Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict

43

the constitution were amended by the Assembly and presbyteries acting concurrently.⁶⁸ The threat of schism loomed in the air.⁶⁹

Moving swiftly to calm the threat of open division, Erdman surrendered his moderatorial chair and moved “that a Commission of Fifteen members be appointed to study the spiritual condition of the Church and the causes making for unrest, and to report to the next General Assembly, to the end that the purity, peace, unity, and progress of the Church may be assured.”⁷⁰ The motion, which had been suggested by the conservative Mark Matthews, was seconded by both Bryan and Coffin and passed unanimously.⁷¹

With one bold move, the liberal forces had turned the tables. Apparently sincere in their threats to leave the church, the liberal threat also pushed moderate conservatives to decide whether a united church or strict doctrinal orthodoxy was more important. One or the other, the liberals insisted, would have to go. In the words of Coffin, “I talk up very boldly to the Moderator and to all the Moderate group. We must put the fear of God upon them.”⁷²

Just a month after the close of the Assembly liberal forces received an added boost from the fundamentalist debacle at the Scopes trial in Dayton, Tennessee. John T. Scopes, a young science teacher, had been charged with violating a recently adopted statute prohibiting the teaching of biological evolution in Tennessee’s public schools. Bryan had signed on with the prosecution and the famous agnostic attorney Clarence Darrow had agreed to serve as counsel for the defense.⁷³ Bryan asked both Machen and Macartney to assist in the trial but Macartney was traveling out of the country and Machen demurred claiming a lack of knowledge of the subject at hand.⁷⁴

For the duration of the trial, Dayton, Tennessee, became the news hub of the nation. Over 150 reporters descended on Dayton, sending the proceeding of the trial across the country. The town itself took on a festive atmosphere with vendors of every sort selling their wares and crowds invading the streets.⁷⁵ Though Scopes was convicted



Rev. Dr. Charles R. Erdman

of violating the law (the conviction was later overturned on a technicality), the trial was a disaster for the fundamentalist cause. Counsel for the defense, frustrated in their efforts to bring expert witnesses, finally called Bryan to the stand as a witness for the defense. Bryan floundered under Darrow’s persistent questioning, revealing his scant knowledge and lack of preparation in the fields of geology, comparative religions, and ancient history. In brief, Bryan’s performance confirmed the worst stereotypes of fundamentalism as ignorant, narrow-minded, and reactionary. His testimony, combined with Dayton’s rural setting, left the impression that fundamentalism was a rural, rear-guard movement and weakened the cause of fundamentalism within the Presbyterian Church.⁷⁶

The Special Commission of 1925, composed overwhelmingly of moderate individuals, met four times between the assemblies of 1925 and 1926 and interviewed representatives of various factions in the church. While Machen and Macartney warned about the dangers of modernism, Coffin warned about the dangers of divi-

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

sion.⁷⁷ Despite significant differences on the commission, the group's desire for the unity of the church and the church's mission drove them to consensus and they presented a unanimous report to the 1926 Assembly.⁷⁸

The commission's report listed five major causes of unrest in the church: intellectual movements, historical ecclesiastical differences, different approaches to polity, theological changes, and misunderstanding. These included such items as the "so-called conflict between science and religion," divisions rooted in the former Old School–New School controversies, and decline of religion in school and home. Noteworthy also was the assertion that "lack of representation of women in the Church" contributed to the conflict. Contrary to fundamentalist claims, the commission reported that it found no radically liberal party in the church and chastised those who had engaged in "slander and misrepresentation."⁷⁹

The commission at once insisted that toleration of differences was essential and that doctrine was important. But, clearly adopting the arguments of the Auburn Affirmation, it insisted that doctrine had to be determined "either *generally*, by amendment to the Constitution or *particularly*, by Presbyterial authority." Deliverances of the Assembly, while meriting great respect, did not set legal precedent.⁸⁰ The Assembly, in the wake of the fighting of the previous five years and the national fundamentalist disaster at the Scopes trial the previous year, was clearly in the mood for compromise. The report's pleas for toleration and peace, along with the commission's recommendation that the commission be extended for one more year of study, were overwhelmingly accepted by the Assembly.⁸¹

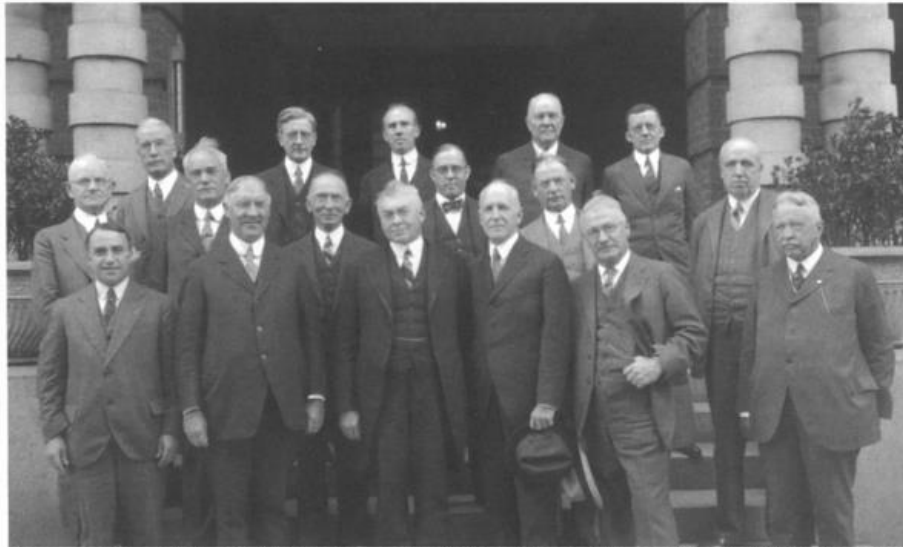
In addition to approving the report, the Assembly also, at least partly in response to the Special Commission's findings, commissioned a study on "Causes of Unrest Among Women of the Church."⁸² In 1923 the women's missionary organizations in the church, which women had founded and directed, were merged with two new denominational boards, the Board of Foreign

Missions and the Board of National Missions. The frustration and anger among some women in the wake of this move helped inspire the General Assembly's efforts to address women's unrest in the late 1920s.⁸³ Indeed, disagreement about the role of women in the church was one of the many issues that aggravated the fundamentalist/modernist conflicts in the church. Though most Presbyterians affirmed the importance of women's public contributions to the church, by the late 1920s, as Margaret Bendroth has argued, "the defense of orthodox Calvinism became in part a masculine stand against the 'feminine' heart religion of the nineteenth century."⁸⁴

In 1920 the church had considered, and defeated, a move to ordain women as elders. In 1928, following the results of the 1926 report, the Assembly appointed a committee of fifteen leading women to meet with denominational officials to discuss women's issues in the church. This resulted in an overture before the church in 1930, largely advanced by denominational officials seeking to address women's anger at the loss of their missionary agencies, to ordain women as elders and pastors. Though the effort to ordain women as pastors failed, women were approved to serve as elders.⁸⁵

Several significant fundamentalists were vocally opposed to the ordination of women, seeing this effort as one further move to accommodate the faith to modern culture. Clarence Macartney, for example, claimed that these proposals resulted from a "hankering and hungering after the fleshpots of this present world," and a desire for "a new church and a new gospel." "Many of the subtle and dangerous and seductive heresies and perversions and distortions of the gospel of Jesus Christ," he continued, "have sprung from the brain of women."⁸⁶ Likewise, Mark Matthews, pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Seattle, understood the "present agitation to feminize the session and the pulpit" as the effort of a chosen few, such as Robert E. Speer, Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions.⁸⁷ Speer, a theological and ecclesiological moderate who

Lion and Lamb Apologetics



The Special Commission of 1925 meeting in Atlantic City. Charles Erdman is front row, third from right; Robert Speer, back row on the left.

had played a major role in the Special Commission of 1925, confirmed many conservatives' worst fears about his theological orthodoxy in his outspoken support of women's ordination.⁸⁸

As Bendroth has noted, the conservative opposition to ordination of women on biblical grounds was likely aggravated by the fundamentalists' own loss of status in the course of the 1920s. Though many conservatives had opposed the ordination of women when the issue was raised in 1920, by the late 1920s, after the consecutive defeats of the decade, moderating voices among conservatives tended to drop out and the opposition became hardened and intransigent.⁸⁹

The final report of the Special Commission of 1925 cemented the decisions made in 1926. Reversing the decisions of previous assemblies, the commission declared that judicial decisions of the General Assembly "cannot be made to rest properly upon merely a declaratory deliverance of a former Assembly." Further, though a General Assembly may declare an article "essential and necessary," in so doing "it would be required to quote the exact language of the article as it appears in the Confession of

Faith."⁹⁰ In essence, the "five fundamentals" declared by the assemblies of 1910, 1916, and 1923 were declared non-binding and tolerance for "liberal evangelicals" was almost guaranteed.⁹¹

Troubles at Princeton

The wave of toleration that swept in the reports of 1926 and 1927 did not, however, extend to all parts of the church. The 1926 Assembly tabled an appointment of Machen to the chair of apologetics and Christian ethics at Princeton Seminary and established a special committee to investigate the increasing conflicts at the church's flagship seminary.⁹²

By the mid-1920s divisions among the faculty at Princeton had grown to a fever pitch. Disagreements in the faculty over a 1920 Plan of Union of the Presbyterian Church with other Protestant churches, over the controversy in the church at large, and over internal seminary politics threatened to undo the institution.⁹³ The faculty majority at Princeton was convinced that Princeton, by its charter, was committed to defending and teaching Old School Calvinism. The faculty minority, which included President

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

J. Ross Stevenson and Charles Erdman, were more willing to cooperate with liberals and wanted to make the school theologically representative of the entire church.⁹⁴ When the Board of Directors of the seminary elected Machen to the recently vacated chair of apologetics and Christian ethics, Stevenson and Erdman could not stand silent. They opposed the immediate confirmation of Machen and asked for a committee to investigate the school.⁹⁵

The assembly committee interviewed alumni, faculty, students, and administrative boards and concluded that, contrary to the claims of the faculty majority, all of the faculty members were loyal to the doctrinal tradition of the church. The committee, changing the subject from theology to bureaucracy, decided that the difficulties were actually rooted in the dual government of the seminary by a Board of Directors and a Board of Trustees. The solution, they suggested, was to form one board of control and delay any further appointments until such a board was formed.⁹⁶

The 1927 Assembly tentatively approved the report and asked that the committee (now expanded) propose changes to the 1928 Assembly. A public debate about the future of Princeton ensued in which Stevenson and Erdman supported the reorganization and Machen and Macartney opposed the plan.⁹⁷ For the likes of Erdman, the reorganization would mean “united action in proclaiming the gospel message which Princeton has ever taught and which Presbyterians ardently love,” but for Macartney such a move threatened to “discourage loyal men in the Church and dishearten evangelical Christians throughout the world.”⁹⁸

The 1928 Assembly, perhaps responding to a petition of over 10,000 ministers and elders who opposed reorganization, postponed action again and asked the board of directors of the seminary to seek reconciliation at the school.⁹⁹ But another year of conversation failed to reconcile differences within the faculty and the existing boards and finally, in 1929, the Assembly voted to create one board to govern the seminary.¹⁰⁰

Inasmuch as two members of the new board had signed the Auburn Affirmation, Machen could not countenance remaining at the school.¹⁰¹ He and a number of supporters began making plans to found a school to continue the tradition of the “old Princeton.”¹⁰² This move, however, revealed significant tactical divisions in the conservative ranks. Macartney was not at all sure that abandoning the resources and prestige of Princeton for a new seminary, and hence dividing the conservative witness, was the wisest move. Though Macartney eventually refused an offer to serve on the Princeton board and became a director of the new school, Westminster Theological Seminary, these differences signaled the beginning of the end of the fundamentalist alliance.¹⁰³

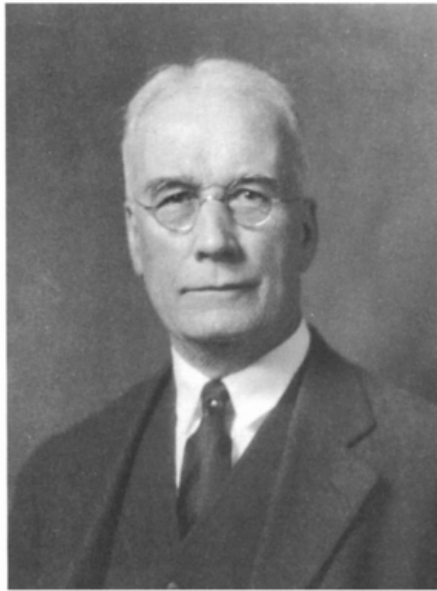
Westminster Seminary, committed to academic excellence, biblical expertise, and a militant defense of the Reformed faith, opened its doors in September 1929.¹⁰⁴ Machen and his allies, having lost the battle in the church and now the battle for control of Princeton Seminary, were feeling more and more like theological and cultural outsiders. Even so, with the birth of their new school they continued to look for a “mighty revival of the Christian religion” that would revive the influence of Christianity in the world.¹⁰⁵

The Crisis of Foreign Missions

Machen, though removing himself from Princeton, was not ready to lay down his arms in the battles in the church. For years he had had suspicions about the faithfulness of missionaries sent out by the church and about the church’s secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, Robert E. Speer. The publication of *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen’s Inquiry after One Hundred Years*, funded by John D. Rockefeller and coordinated by the liberal Congregationalist William Ernest Hocking, led to Machen’s final battle in the Presbyterian Church, involving himself, Speer, and renowned novelist Pearl S. Buck.¹⁰⁶

The theological section of the report, written by Hocking, argued that the unique-

Lion and Lamb Apologetics



Robert E. Speer

ness of Christianity lay not in any particular claims or doctrines but rather in its selection of truths that were essentially available in all religions. This being the case, Christianity should, Hocking argued, work with other religions in the pursuit of a unified religious truth.¹⁰⁷ Though the Presbyterian Church, along with a number of other denominations, had offered support of this project at the outset, the syncretistic and seemingly universalistic tendencies of the report led the church to distance itself from these more radical aspects of the study. The Board of Foreign Missions, for example, issued a statement that reaffirmed the Board's commitment to the "evangelical basis of the missionary enterprise" and to "Jesus Christ as the only Lord and Savior."¹⁰⁸

Pearl Buck, novelist, Presbyterian missionary to China, and theological liberal, was less circumspect about the report.¹⁰⁹ In a review of *Re-Thinking Missions* published in *Christian Century* Buck praised the book, calling it "a great book." In a thinly veiled stab at her fundamentalist opponents she opined, "I think this is the only book I have ever read that seems to me literally true in its every observation and right in its every con-

clusion." *Re-Thinking Missions* should, she insisted, be read by every American Christian and adopted by every missions board.¹¹⁰ This evaluation, coupled with a January speech at the Astor Hotel in New York in which she rejected the doctrine of original sin and the finality of Christianity, reinforced conservatives' fears about the liberal tendencies of Presbyterian missionaries and, as Margaret Bendroth has noted, of the dangers of women's leadership in the church.¹¹¹

Machen, long simmering about the questionable orthodoxy of Presbyterian missionaries, took this opportunity to launch a full-scale critique of the orthodoxy of the Board of Foreign Missions. When the 1933 General Assembly failed to condemn or reorganize the Board of Foreign Missions, Machen and others formed an Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions "to promote truly Biblical and truly Presbyterian mission work."¹¹² Macartney, who had been skittish about forming Westminster Seminary, could not subscribe to the formation of a rival missions board and, at this point, broke ranks with his more schismatic colleagues.¹¹³

The 1934 Assembly, having had its fill of conflict and convinced that the church's mission needed full support in the midst of an economic depression, declared the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions unconstitutional and ordered Presbyterian clergy and laity to sever their ties with the board or face church discipline.¹¹⁴ Machen found this decree a complete violation of the church's constitution and, despite the persistent entreaties of Macartney, refused to moderate his stance. Indeed, by this stage Machen was praying that a new church, a "real Presbyterian Church," might come of this turmoil.¹¹⁵

Machen and other clerical members of the Independent Board were suspended from the ministry by the 1936 General Assembly and soon thereafter these individuals led in the formation of a new church, the Presbyterian Church of America (now the Orthodox Presbyterian Church).¹¹⁶ Machen, who had been more and more the outsider, rejoiced

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

at “the blessing of a true Christian fellowship.”¹¹⁷ Within six months, however, his young church was torn by division over premillennialism and the use of alcoholic beverages.¹¹⁸ Exhausted by over a decade of struggle, and facing struggle now in his new communion, Machen died of pneumonia in North Dakota while on a trip to encourage a small band of followers.¹¹⁹ While Machen was never completely comfortable being called a fundamentalist, and while the fundamentalist movement in the Presbyterian Church did manifest significant differences with interdenominational fundamentalism, his death clearly closed this chapter of the fundamentalist controversies in the Presbyterian Church.¹²⁰

The battles the church fought between 1922 and 1936 were primarily concerned with questions of theology and ecclesiology. Differences concerning the truth of the “five fundamentals,” the relative importance of doctrine and the moral aspects of Christianity, the nature of Christian community, and the proper response of the faith to new intellectual currents fueled the conflict throughout these decades. But the battle was not concerned with theological and ecclesiological issues alone.

The major protagonists in the church conflicts of the 1920s and 1930s strove not simply to defend their theological and ecclesiological positions, but were also concerned to preserve the influence of Christianity in a dramatically changed and radically changing world. How the church should work to influence the culture and what that influence should look like were hotly debated issues, but no one doubted that the church had a major role to play in a world moving steadily away from distinctively Christian influences.

NOTES

¹See Ferenc M. Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America: 1880-1930* (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1982), 17-19, 26-29, 33-41. This essay reflects my longer study of the fundamentalist/modernist conflicts in the Presbyterian Church, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates* (New York: Oxford University

Press, 1991). Further elaboration and documentation may be found there. Some of the sentences are the same.

²Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography* (Cambridge: Riverside, 1918; reprint, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946), 53.

³Carl Degler, *The Age of the Economic Revolution: 1876-1900*, 2nd ed., (Glenview: Scott, Foresman, 1977), 17-18, 28, 30, 32.

⁴James T. Patterson, *America in the Twentieth Century: A History* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 26-28, 6-8.

⁵Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 735; Degler, *Economic Revolution*, 8; Patterson, *America in the Twentieth Century*, 15-16, 19-20.

⁶See Francis P. Weisenburger, *Ordeal of Faith: The Crisis of Church-Going America, 1865-1900* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 46-48.

⁷The standard work on the rise of liberalism is William R. Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

⁸See Amzi C. Dixon, Louis Meyer, and Reuben A. Torrey, eds., *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, 12 vols. (Chicago: Testimony, 1910-15).

⁹George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 119.

¹⁰Archibald A. Hodge and Benjamin B. Warfield, “Inspiration,” *Presbyterian Review* 2 (April 1881): 239, quoted in Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 113.

¹¹See Max G. Rogers, “Charles Augustus Briggs: Heresy at Union,” in *American Religious Heretics: Formal and Informal Trials*, ed. George H. Shriver, (Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), 89-95. For a more recent consideration of Briggs see William J. Weston, *Presbyterian Pluralism: Competition in a Protestant House* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997).

¹²C.A. Briggs, “The Inaugural Address,” in *The Edward Robinson Chair of Biblical Theology* (New York, 1891), 35, quoted in Leferts A. Loetscher, *The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954), 50.

¹³Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 50-56.

¹⁴*Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* (hereafter *Minutes of GA*), 1893, 2 vols., (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1893), 1:165.

¹⁵Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 63-68.

¹⁶Weston, *Presbyterian Pluralism*, 11.

¹⁷Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 39-47, 87, 89.

¹⁸John T. Ames, “Cumberland Liberals and the Union of 1906,” *Journal of Presbyterian History* 52 (Spring 1974): 12-15.

¹⁹Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 97-99.

²⁰William Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity: 1914-1932* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 30, 66-83.

²¹See Clarence Macartney, “Shall Unbelief Win: An Answer to Dr. Fosdick,” *Presbyterian*, 20 July 1922, pt. 2, p.10.

²²Harry E. Fosdick, “Shall the Fundamentalists

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

Win?" in *American Protestant Thought in the Liberal Era*, ed. William R. Hutchison (Lanham: University Press of America, 1968), 170-82.

²¹Clarence E. Macartney, "Shall Unbelief Win? An Answer to Dr. Fosdick," pt. 1, *Presbyterian*, 13 July 1922, p. 8; pt. 2, *Presbyterian*, 20 July 1922, p. 10.

²²Quoted in Robert Moats Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick: Preacher, Pastor, Prophet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 119.

²³Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 114, 124.

²⁴Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 119.

²⁵In an early study of the fundamentalist-modernist conflict Stewart Cole noted that "the controversy may be characterized mainly as a conflict between types of church leaders." See Stewart G. Cole, *The History of Fundamentalism* (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1931), 321.

²⁶J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1923; reprint, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1946).

²⁷Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, 2, 7, 15. For a recent provocative study of Machen see D.G. Hart, *Defending the Faith: J. Gresham Machen and the Crisis of Conservative Protestantism in Modern America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1994).

²⁸Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, 160, 166-67, 173-74.

²⁹Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 36-49.

³⁰Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 224.

³¹Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 54-58.

³²*New York Times*, 17 May 1923, p. 21.

³³Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 73; *Minutes of GA*, 1923, 2:212.

³⁴Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 74.

³⁵*New York Times*, 25 May 1923, p. 10.

³⁶Henry S. Coffin, *Some Christian Convictions: A Practical Restatement in Terms of Present-Day Thinking* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915), 203.

³⁷Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 84, 94-100.

³⁸Auburn Affirmation quoted in Charles E. Quirk, "The Auburn Affirmation: A Critical Narrative of the Document designed to Safeguard the Unity and Liberty of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1924," (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 1967), 397-99.

³⁹Auburn Affirmation quoted in Quirk, "Auburn Affirmation," 399-400.

⁴⁰Quirk, "Auburn Affirmation," 107, 109, 144-49.

⁴¹Edwin H. Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1940), 36.

⁴²Quirk, "Auburn Affirmation," 212-213; Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 130.

⁴³Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 122; Quirk, "Auburn Affirmation," 244-45.

⁴⁴Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 104.

⁴⁵Henry S. Coffin to Dorothy Coffin, 22 May 1924, Henry Sloane Coffin Papers, Burke Library, Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York (hereafter Coffin Papers); quoted with permission.

⁴⁶Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 53-54, 36-37.

⁴⁷Henry S. Coffin to Dorothy Coffin, 24(?) May 1924, Coffin Papers.

⁴⁸*Minutes of GA*, 1924, 1:195-96

⁴⁹Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 134.

⁵⁰Harry E. Fosdick to Henry S. Coffin, 11 Dec. 1924, quoted in Morgan Phelps Noyes, *Henry Sloane Coffin: The Man and His Ministry* (New York: Charles

Scribner's Sons, 1964), 169.

⁵¹Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 139, 144-45.

⁵²J. Gresham Machen to Maitland Alexander, 10 June 1924, quoted in Ned B. Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen: A Biographical Memoir* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1954), 369.

⁵³Delwin G. Nykamp, "A Presbyterian Power Struggle: A Critical History of Communication Strategies Employed in the Struggle for Control of the Presbyterian Church, USA, 1922-1926" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1974), 317, 332.

⁵⁴Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 129-30.

⁵⁵Stonehouse, *Machen*, 356-57.

⁵⁶Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 131-32, 162-63.

⁵⁷Nykamp, "Power Struggle," 371-72.

⁵⁸J. Gresham Machen, "The Present Situation in the Presbyterian Church," *Presbyterian*, 14 May 1925, pp. 7-8.

⁵⁹Henry S. Coffin to Charles R. Erdman, 6 April and 2 May 1925, Charles R. Erdman Papers, Speer Library, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ.

⁶⁰Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 143-47.

⁶¹*New York Times*, 22 May 1925, p. 5.

⁶²*Minutes of GA*, 1925, 1:28, 83-88.

⁶³*Minutes of GA*, 1925, 1:84-85, 87-88.

⁶⁴Henry S. Coffin to Dorothy Coffin, 24 May 1925, Coffin Papers.

⁶⁵Noyes, *Coffin*, 174-75.

⁶⁶Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 127.

⁶⁷Robert H. Nichols, "Leader of Liberal Presbyterianism," in *This Ministry: The Contribution of Henry Sloane Coffin*, ed. Reinhold Niebuhr (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), 52.

⁶⁸*Minutes of the GA*, 1925, 1:88.

⁶⁹Charles Erdman, "The Special Commission of 1925," *Presbyterian Magazine*, August 1925; Nykamp, "Power Struggle," 405; Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 128.

⁷⁰Henry S. Coffin to Morgan Noyes, 4 June 1925, Coffin Papers.

⁷¹Lawrence Levine, *Defender of the Faith: William Jennings Bryan, the Last Decade, 1915-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 328-30.

⁷²Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 154.

⁷³Paolo E. Coletta, *William Jennings Bryan*, 3 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 3:240; Arthur G. Hays, "The Scopes Trial," in *Evolution and Religion: The Conflict between Science and Religion in Modern America*, ed. Gail Kennedy (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1957), 35-36.

⁷⁴Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 185-89.

⁷⁵Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 157.

⁷⁶Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 130.

⁷⁷*Minutes of GA*, 1926, 1:63, 67-72.

⁷⁸*Minutes of GA*, 1926, 1: 79-84.

⁷⁹*Christian Century*, 17 June 1926, p. 789.

⁸⁰Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender, 1875 to the Present* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 56.

⁸¹Margaret Bendroth, "Women and Missions: Conflict and Changing Roles in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1870-1935," *American Presbyterians* 65:1 (Spring 1987): 49.

⁸²Bendroth, "Women and Missions," 50; Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 57.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

⁸⁵Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 56-57.
⁸⁶Clarence Macartney, "Shall We Ordain Women as Ministers and Elders?" *Presbyterian*, 7 Nov. 1929, p. 7-8, quoted in Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 58-59 and "Women and Missions," 55.
⁸⁷Mark Matthews, "Why Women in the Pulpit?" *Presbyterian*, 16 Jan. 1930, 6, quoted in Bendroth, "Women and Missions," 55.
⁸⁸Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 58.
⁸⁹Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 57-58.
⁹⁰Report of the Special Commission of 1925 to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1927), 20-21.
⁹¹Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 134.
⁹²Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 163-65.
⁹³On conflicts at Princeton in this period, see especially John W. Hart, "The Controversy within the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. in the 1920's with Special Emphasis on the Reorganization of Princeton Theological Seminary" (Princeton University, 1978 typescript).
⁹⁴Hart, "Controversy," 75.
⁹⁵Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 166-67.
⁹⁶Report of the Special Committee to Visit Princeton Theological Seminary to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1927), 47-50.
⁹⁷Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 168-71.
⁹⁸*Presbyterian*, 3 May 1928, p. 21; *Presbyterian Banner*, 5 Jan. 1928, 5-6.
⁹⁹Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 78-79.
¹⁰⁰*Minutes of GA*, 1929, 1:133-34.
¹⁰¹Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 173.
¹⁰²Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 88.
¹⁰³Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 174-75.
¹⁰⁴Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 177-79.
¹⁰⁵J. Gresham Machen, *What is Christianity? and Other Addresses*, ed. Ned B. Stonehouse (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1951), 129, 251-52.
¹⁰⁶Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 181, 199-200. For a very helpful essay placing this controversy in a broader context see John R. Fitzmier and Randall

Balmer, "A Poultice for the Bite of the Cobra: The Hocking Report and Presbyterian Missions in the Middle Decades of the Twentieth Century," in *The Diversity of Discipleship: The Presbyterians and Twentieth-Century Christian Witness*, eds. Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, Louis B. Weeks (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 105-25.

¹⁰⁷William Ernest Hocking et al., *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932), 49, 20, 32-33, 44, 47.

¹⁰⁸*Christianity Today* 3 (December 1932):20.

¹⁰⁹Buck insisted that technically she was not a missionary, but she was considered such and the Board of Foreign Missions did accept her resignation. See William Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 166, and Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 206.

¹¹⁰Pearl S. Buck, "The Laymen's Mission Report," *Christian Century*, 23 Nov. 1932, pp. 1434, 1436-37; Fitzmier and Balmer, "Poultice for the Bite," 109.

¹¹¹Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 167-69; Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 59.

¹¹²*Christianity Today*, 4 (June 1933): 10-13.

¹¹³Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 206-07.

¹¹⁴*Minutes of GA*, 1934, 1:110, 114-15; Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 151-52. See Robert T. Handy, "The American Religious Depression, 1925-1935," *Church History* 29 (March 1960):1-29.

¹¹⁵Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 211.

¹¹⁶*Minutes of GA*, 1936, 1:83-101, 138-42; Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 227.

¹¹⁷J. Gresham Machen, "The Church of God," *Presbyterian Guardian* 2 (June 1936):98, quoted in Dallas M. Roark, "J. Gresham Machen: The Doctrinally True Presbyterian Church," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 43 (June 1965):124.

¹¹⁸Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 237-43.

¹¹⁹Stonehouse, *Machen*, 506-8.

¹²⁰For a recent sustained investigation of Machen's identity, particularly as a fundamentalist, see Hart, *Defending the Faith*.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

The Journal of Presbyterian History (1997-) Vol. 78, No. 1, Presbyterians in Times of Controversy (SPRING 2000), pp. 35-50 (16 pages) Published by: Presbyterian Historical Society
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23335297> Retrieved July 19, 2021.