

Could such a catastrophe hit the Christian church? Would God permit it? It does not take much knowledge of history to demonstrate that God has many times allowed a substantial portion of His church to disappear, when it has allowed itself to be overwhelmed by outer or inner forces of infidelity and unbelief.

At one time Syria and Egypt were great centers of Christianity, with thousands of churches. Then Mohammedanism conquered these regions so completely that only a handful of Christians remained. In the latter part of the sixteenth century one-third of Poland was Protestant, including many of the nobility. Jesuit debates and political intrigues, followed eventually by rioting and persecution, cut down the Protestant population to less than five per cent.

At the same period, more than half of France was held by the Huguenots—those earnest French Protestants. All the efforts of military attack failed to dislodge them. One of their number was next in line to be king of the whole country. The time came when all France was at his feet, except Paris, which the Jesuits had roused to fanatical resistance. Unable to take Paris, Henry said: "What is France without Paris? If I reign over the entire country I can protect my Protestant brothers. Paris is worth a mass." So saying, he joined the Roman Catholic church, and became king of all France. For several decades French Protestantism flourished. Then Henry's grandson revoked the edict of Nantes, drove the Protestant pastors from the country, made Protestantism a serious crime, vigorously persecuted all who resisted, and Henry's compromise resulted in the end in the almost complete annihilation of French Protestantism. When the watchmen go to sleep, or the Trojan horses are left unexamined, terrible results may follow.

YOUTHFUL EXPERIENCES

The need of watchmen to protect the Christian church came to my attention very early. As a boy I heard my mother tell about the time, years before, when as a young woman away from home she attended a Congregational Church in Hartford, Conn. There she rejoiced in the work of a godly young minister, devoted to the cause of winning souls to Christ. She once said that she knew her faith would never waver, as long as this minister stood true. Then she and my father were married, and she moved to northern Michigan. Years later the erstwhile Hartford pastor visited us there. What a change had occurred! During the years he had been subject to anti-Christian propaganda. Modernist ideas had infiltrated his mind. By the time he visited us he had completely turned away from the historic Gospel of Christ, and had become an ardent propagandist for the gospel of social service. The teaching of salvation through the death of Christ he now described as a "Gospel of the shambles."

After we moved to California I enrolled in a Presbyterian college which only two or three years before I entered it had been known as one of the very finest Christian colleges in the United States. I found there many professors who were devoted to the service of Christ and anxious to uphold the truth of the infallible Book that He has given us. But already the process of infiltration had begun. English professors sometimes presented anti-Christian thoughts under the guise of literary criticism. History professors sometimes sneered at Bible statements, under the guise of historical examination. In my senior year a new president was inaugurated. A few months after his inauguration he gave a wonderful message one day in the short chapel service, on the theme, "Feed My Sheep." He seemed to pour his soul into these words,

After I graduated from college I spent a year at the Los Angeles Bible Institute. It was the last year that Dr. R. A. Torrey was there. I shall never forget my debt to that great man of God. I was much impressed by his emphasis on putting Jesus Christ and Him crucified first in everything that one would do. He constantly stressed the importance of complete loyalty to the infallible Word of God. Dr. Torrey emphasized the need of careful, scholarly study to know exactly what the facts are, not to take superficial conclusions, but to examine the truth in full detail, and then to stand uncompromisingly upon it, no matter what might result. These ideals have stayed with me through the years, and I am constantly striving to pass them on to my students at Faith Seminary.

A STRANGE CONFERENCE

While I was a student at the Los Angeles Bible Institute, a conference was held in a church a few blocks down the street. This conference was said to be designed to bring together religion, science, and education. The presidents of most of the colleges in Southern California were listed as vice-presidents of the conference. The meetings were well attended, and most of the speakers spoke in very pious tones. I remember how beautifully one speaker made such statements as the following: "Jesus never knew anything but what he learned at school," "Jesus was born exactly as other people are born," and, "There was no special significance to the death of Jesus; it is only his life that is important." These blatantly anti-Biblical words were uttered in very pious tones. I was struck by the attitude of some elderly women in the pew in front of me. Every time the speaker would mention Jesus, one of them would turn to another and say, "Isn't that lovely?"

While this conference may have had a great effect in misleading people, I rather question that everyone present was deceived by it. At least I suspected that the Jubilee singers who gave such beautiful music may have sensed something of its real import. After the lecture I have already described, in which so many teachings about Christ were flatly denied, the Jubilee singers came forward and sang, "It's the old-time religion, it's the old-time religion, it's the old-time religion, and it's good enough for me."

At another time during the conference a speaker told how foolish it is to look for the coming of Christ as the solution of our difficulties. He said that we must not look for something from Heaven, but must build a heaven on earth by improving social relations and instilling ideas of human brotherhood. When he finished the singers came forward and sang, "Keep a-inching along, keep a-inching along, Jesus will come some day."

Another speaker declared that much harm had come to the Christian church because people's thoughts had been too much centered on the future life. He said that what is needed is to make this world a better place to live by building the kingdom of God here on earth. When he finished the singers gave a beautiful rendition of the words, "I've got a mansion in the sky; I've got a mansion in the sky."

Near the conclusion of the conference, the chairman said: "There is something here to satisfy every Christian soul. Those who are intellectual can find joy in the splendid presentation of advanced truth. Others will find their hearts illuminated and blessed by these lovely old songs of the faith."

DOUBLE-TALK

Thus double-talk was becoming widespread even in my student days, and since that time it has reached a new peak. The so-called "neo-orthodox," for instance, may tell us that he believes in the bodily resurrection of Christ,