Our Indian Policy
Some Pertinent Questions

The Bible and the Laboring Man
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To My Soul

A HOT flush of shame creeps over me occasionally when I think of thee. Thou hast been so sadly and persistently neglected. When eminent psychologists meet and argue with great learning that thou art not and never wert, I find myself almost believing them. But when I am alone with my God, thou dost assert thyself and I am made assured of thy being and of thy preciousness. I am then deeply concerned about thy welfare and make holy resolutions to promote thy interest. But when I go out to labor in pursuit of the things that are neither eternal nor spiritual, I forthwith forget all about thee. I permit thee to pine away within me. I read the Bible occasionally, but it leaves me cold and unaffected. My prayers are desultory, and equally ineffective. I do not bear in mind that thou art to be fed. I go to Church each Sunday. I enjoy the oratory and the beautiful language in which the sermon is couched. It does me good aesthetically. I like the logic and the theology of the address. It gives me rational confirmation. But all this makes no difference to thee. I forget that thou must be fed. So it goes the whole year through. But it is summer now. The days are long and hot, and my body is so easily weariied. I shall take a vacation. On some beautiful quiet spot near a lake. My Bible I shall leave at home. I shall find it hard and even impossible to pray. The atmosphere will be too foreign for that. I shall avoid hot and hasty journeys to the place of divine worship. My Sundays shall be real rest days. Thou hadst better take a vacation, O my Soul. — "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me?" — H. S.

No Ministers Wanted

ICH Mrs. Sisson, a widow in Yonkers, New York, protested against the plan to convert a 4½-acre estate across the street into a home for aged clergymen. She complained that the clergymen who might become guests "cannot associate with us or our guests as they do not have the same social basis." She furthermore pointed out that to put the house to such use as proposed would depreciate property values in the neighborhood. This is a piece of social snobbery that reflects only upon Mrs. Sisson and her associates. The achievements of clergymen and their families, judging from Who's Who and from the comparative statistics that have been gathered from time to time, have been of such a character that men of no other profession have been able to approach them. Ministers certainly need not hang their heads in shame in Yonkers or any other place. But Mrs. Sisson is not the only person that objects to the too near presence of ministers. There is a moral standard set by every minister who is worthy of his profession that sounds an unpleasant and irritating note of condemnation to those round about against all unsocial and unethical conduct. Ministers in the presence of Mrs. Sisson will constitute a standing condemnation of all social snobbery. They have the democracy that radiates from the policy of love your neighbor as yourself. However, when death, that great leveller of all people, approaches, this widow will call in the services of a priest to administer extreme unction and will hope to dwell with the good clergymen in the next land.

H. S.

"Let Not the Sun Go Down on Your Wrath"

TWENTY-ONE-YEAR-OLD G. C. Durling, a Michigan farmer, was brilliant of mind and good of heart. So judged the neighbors. But on the first of July he went to bed "with murder in my heart." The next morning the slugs of a shotgun, held in his hand, tore a hole through a seventy-nine-year-old G. Stimer, his grandfather. This comely youth had thought of murder before, but he had put it aside twice. He hadn't gone to bed with murder in his heart on these former occasions. When the murderer was awake there were sufficient checking currents operative so that the urge to kill could not surge to the top and maintain a dominant position in his consciousness. However, when he fell asleep with murder in his heart the urge worked through. It enslaved him completely. In the morning he was driven irresistibly with gun in hand to follow his grandfather to the barn and to snuff out his life. In his dream life during the night he had rehearsed the matter of murder. He had even considered the choice of weapons, rejecting the hammer and selecting the gun as his murderous tool. There is good psychology in the above-quoted biblical injunction. The subconscious mind works through and follows an unchecked course. Resolutions are made. Actions are determined upon. Urges are set. It is the part of wisdom to begin this subconscious trend of thought as one falls asleep with a sense of good will towards all men, with a realization of being at one with God and
with ideals of high and worthy objectives for the future. These, too, will work through and will by God's grace exercise highly desirable functions during the night. H. S.

Life's Maladjustments

The story of the murder of the aged Stimer by his grandson brings to mind forcibly the problem of maladjustments. Durling was the favorite grandson of the old man. In fact, the aged farmer had taken him in as a partner in his agricultural projects. But Stimer had not taken into account the differences in age, ideals, method of work, etc. Much less did he realize that sin would take advantage of the situation and create an intolerable maladjustment, which he felt just as keenly as did his grandson. Now such maladjustments are the common lot of us all. They constitute every man's problem. Young Durling solved his. But he paid and is paying too high a price. There are only two legitimate ways in which to handle the problem. In so far as the maladjustment is moral or ethical in character, Scripture insists that the spirit of forgiveness and self-denial be exercised to remove the difficulty. So the great Rabbi of Galilee taught Peter who was so easily maladjusted. But there is a type of maladjustment which cannot be reached by the spirit of neighborly love. It is due to racial differences, to deep-seated religious convictions that will not compromise, to ideals that cannot be forfeited, in short, to fundamental differences in the persons concerned. Such differences cannot and may not be ignored. Such maladjustments require separation to such an extent that mutual toleration is possible. That is what Paul and Barnabas did at Antioch in Syria. That is what Stimer and Durling should have done at Mecosta in Michigan. H. S.

A Journal for Calvinistic Philosophy

A new quarterly has just been placed on the market under the editorial management of Calvinistic philosophers in the Netherlands. Its name is "Philosophia Reformata." It uses the Dutch language as its medium. Its editors are Dr. D. H. Th. Vollenhoven, Professor of Philosophy at the Free University (Amsterdam), Dr. H. Dooyeweerd, Professor of Law at the same institution, together with Drs. J. Bohatec of Vienna and H. G. Stoker from Potchefstroom. The aim of this periodical is to set forth what its chief movers (Drs. Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven) conceive to be a sound philosophical position in harmony with the presuppositions of Christianity in its Calvinistic expression. The subscription price is fl. 3.75 (Dutch currency). The publisher is: J. H. Kok, N. V., Kampen, Holland, Europe. The first issue is dated as the first quarter of 1936. The Calvin Forum will have occasion to speak again and more fully of the philosophy represented by this periodical and the scholarly work of Dr. Dooyeweerd entitled, De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee, as well as Dr. Vollenhoven's Het Calvinisme en de Reformatie van de Wijsbegeerte. We rejoice in the appearance of this new magazine. C. B.

Freedom—Just a Word?

If the word Freedom could speak for itself it would undoubtedly complain of the heavy and varied service it must render today. Ex-President Herbert Hoover and others in the Republican party are fighting the present administration in general, and President Roosevelt in particular, in the interest of freedom. For them and for the many who put implicit faith in them the present battle is a critical one. From their statements alone we would believe that we have arrived at a parting of the ways where many would leave the old, narrow, more difficult way that beckons so attractively, so seductively. This new way, they warn us, will ultimately lead to disappointment, to defeat, to slavery for those who think it will lead them out of the depths of economic embarrassment or poverty to prosperity and freedom. Their impasioned appeal to fight for our old liberties, for individual freedom is likely, and it is true already does, stir the emotions of thousands, yea, of millions.

President Roosevelt quickened the hearts and touched off the enthusiasm of the great mass of our people at the time of his inaugural address, and has done so repeatedly since with his frank, his bold acceptance of the task of restoring not just economic prosperity but to recover for the people that measure of individual freedom that men generally associate with economic prosperity. The defeat of some of his cherished proposals and the renewed emphasis of the Republicans on liberty and freedom has but sharpened the edge of his insistence that what is needed in America today is a larger measure of freedom, a fuller realization of the real meaning of liberty.

When one hears the enthusiastic, rather the emotionally fervid, applause which the spokesmen of both parties have received at their respective conventions, one wonders just what faculty of the minds of the boisterous cheerers in the convention, or of the passionately partisan followers throughout the country, responds to these addresses with their bold declarations, their solemn promises. Does one find careful definitions of the word freedom in these addresses? Is freedom presented as a part of our spiritual heritage or as something in the nature of a spiritual reward? If so, is it regarded as something that requires an economic basis, is it given content that all can appreciate and realize in their own lives? Is it just a word which stirs up deep emotions in all mankind but to which each gives his own meaning if he thinks at all, to which, perhaps, most men respond with a thrill and with almost fanatic partisan feeling but with little more?

The word freedom is just the kind of word that is successfully used by the propagandist, who, if he knows what he is doing, knows that he uses such words as a short cut to conclusions, not to get people to think but to keep them from thinking. As it has been well put, the use of such words tends to short-circuit all thinking. There should be a challenge in the widely divergent ways in which such terms are used to impel us to seek to find what deeper meaning they may have for all time, and to determine how we may realize that in our own day. H. J. R.
Is Our Government Promoting Paganism?

An Open Letter

The Hon. John Collier,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Commissioner:

Your letter of February 19, 1936, addressed to the Editor of "The Tushkahoman" and entitled "The Policy of the Office of Indian Affairs on Religious Liberty Among Indians" was read with much interest. Your clarifying statements have allayed some of the apprehensions which we have felt toward your policy because of statements which you and members of your staff have issued on previous occasions.

We wish to thank you for that and for the assurance that your office has no intention of preventing or hindering the work of Christian Missions. There are, however, some things in your letter which impress us as likely to convey erroneous impressions concerning some vital elements of the problem and we therefore come to you with a number of questions.

Violating the Constitution

I. In your letter to The Editor of "The Tushkahoman," you quote the first Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." In connection with that, you assert: "As public officials, sworn to uphold the Constitution, and as Americans, we believe utterly in the ideal of freedom of conscience."

We are grateful to you for that statement, but we must confess that it is most difficult for us to accept that at its face value, for the reason that we find it impossible to harmonize that statement with other, and equally direct statements issued by your office, statements indicating a purpose in direct conflict with your latest statement. Perhaps your answers to our questions will clear our difficulty.

Our questions are:

1. Is it not true that you sponsored the original Wheeler-Howard Bill? Is it not true that Title II, section 2, of that bill declared: "It is the purpose of Congress," among other things, "to preserve and develop the special cultural contributions of the Indian civilizations"? Among those contributions were mentioned also "the traditions of the Indians." According to your own definition the word "culture" includes "religion," but even aside from that, practically all "Indian traditions" are "religious" and a part of the essential "religious ritual." Not only did this bill provide that Congress should declare this program but provided further that those "Indian traditions," or "Indian religion" should be taught in government schools at government expense.

Now all that is clearly a violation of the Constitutional Amendment which declares "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." It is true that this section, because of the many protests lodged against its enactment, was removed from the bill as later amended, but as far as practice is concerned there are reports of a native teaching Indian songs and dances at the Albuquerque Indian school at Government expense, during the present school term.

2. Does not your appeal to this Constitutional Amendment come with rather poor grace after you gave your support to this unconstitutional proposal?

3. Is it fair to state, or infer, that the issue between yourself and those who have opposed your policy, is the question of religious liberty, when the above mentioned fact and others which we propose to mention, clearly show that the issue is very definitely another?

4. Is it not true, that the real issue involved in the question is whether or not a public official, in a country insisting upon the principle of religious liberty, shall be permitted to use his office to make propaganda for, and promote, various non-Christian religions?

5. Are you not the one who has offended with respect to the Constitutional prohibition against "an establishment of religion"?

Separation of Church and State?

II. Referring to another part of your recent letter, we find that you mention "the basic governmental principle of complete separation of Church and State." We whole-heartedly subscribe to that principle. We certainly agree, when you say that no one should be forced by government officials to attend religious services against parental or individual choice. However, here again a question arises. When has Mr. Collier changed? One of our objections to your policy has been exactly this, that you announced a policy and program which was in direct conflict with that principle of "the separation of Church and State." We would ask, has not Indian Office literature abounded with references to the fact that "the new Indian policy seeks to preserve the unique cultural values" (in which you have included religion) through the Indian Schools and otherwise?

We would ask further:

1. How can you speak of the separation of Church and State, when you yourself have said — "The new Indian policy seeks to preserve these cultural values (in which you have included religion) through the schools and otherwise"? (From "A Birdseye View of Indian Policy, Historic and Contemporary," by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Mr. John Collier. Submitted to the Sub-Committee of the Appropriations Committee of The House of Representatives, December 30, 1935, upon request of Representative Marion Zioncheck, of Washington, page 11069.)

2. In connection with the above statement, is it not true that your endeavor to use public moneys
and public institutions for the partisan promotion of tribal religions is a gross violation of the Constitution of The United States?

3. In view of the fact that you express objections about the requirements of a previous administration, which required teachers in government schools to teach Sunday School classes, under certain conditions, does it not offend your sense of justice, to require teachers in the United States Indian Schools to formulate and teach courses of study intended to "preserve Indian religions," knowing that these include the weird and fantastic, not to say degrading spectacles of the Snake Dance, Yeibichai, and similar ceremonies?

4. Again, if you really believe in the principle of "the separation of Church and State," how was it possible to give utterance to the following which we quote from your published address to the returned students at Fort Wingate? "It is the policy and duty of the government to cherish or reawaken, in the mind and soul of the Indian, love and ardor toward the rich and many sided values of Indian life as expressed in……the dances and rituals which are yours as your heritage." (From an address by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, Fort Wingate, New Mexico, July 7, 1933.)

5. Which, Mr. Commissioner, would you have us believe? Shall we believe you when you write that you are maintaining "the basic principle of the separation of Church and State," or when you, in diametrical opposition to that principle, announce to the nation that "it is the duty of the government to reawaken love and ardor for the dances and rituals of the Navajo religion"? Surely that is a departure which those who draw up the Constitution never intended under any interpretation of that "basic principle."

6. Again, Mr. Commissioner, under what interpretation of that "basic principle" of the separation of Church and State, do you find authority for your declaration of an immediate duty to protect the Seminoles against every interference and invasion which they do not sincerely seek and want, including invasion by the missionaries? (From the April 1, 1935, Edition of "Indians at Work," p. 5.)

The Government Promoting Paganism?

III. Toward the close of your letter in "The Tushkahoman" you state: "Going further, I consider that our policy towards the native religion should be a positive one……not less positive than in the case of the Christian religions. There exist tribal religions which have been forged out through thousands of years of striving and endurance, and of search for truth, and which contain deep beauty, spiritual guidance, consolation and disciplinary power. These native religions, on their side, do not contend against Christianity. Indeed it is worth pointing out that in no instance, to date, has any native Indian religion, through any spokesman, asked for the provision of facilities or encouragement by the Government. But should one of the native religions make such a request, our duty would be clear. Within the limits of the regulations we would co-operate."

There are three words in this quotation concerning which we desire more information. They are the words, "positive," "encouragement" and "cooperate." These words, taken in their context, bring up a number of questions which we should like to have answered if we are not asking too much. May we first call your attention to the fact that: Our nation is a Christian nation, at least nominally so. The sessions of Congress are opened with prayer to Almighty God, often in the name of Jesus Christ. The Indians are wards of this Christian nation, and as such, we are duty bound to seek their welfare and progress in every respect.

The one great encumbrance which has kept our Indians from progressing more rapidly is their primitive religion. No nation or tribe can rise above its religion, and no real progress is possible as long as they have their ancient religions, as a millstone around their necks. To assume a "positive" attitude towards the Indian religions, to "encourage" them to "cooperate" with them is to encourage backwardness. How you, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, in service of an enlightened Christian nation, can take such an attitude is beyond us. We should like to see your explanation regarding this matter. Perhaps you can explain it in a satisfactory way, but to us it appears an impossibility.

For some thirty-five years, we have engaged in missionary work among the Zuni and Navajo Indians. In the course of those years we have grown rather familiar with their religions. Of these tribes we can easily prove that their native religions have been a great hindrance to their material, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual progress. And further, though we may not be so well acquainted with other Indian religions, we believe that the same may fairly be said of all, or most of them. Permit us then to point out some of the difficulties which your "positive attitude" toward the Indian religions will bring upon you and your employees.

Retarding the Indian's Material Progress

1. We hear a great deal about, and witness much poverty among the Indians. Some say that land allotment is the cause of all this poverty. But, why should it be? Why should the giving of a piece of land to an Indian make him poor? You say they are easily dispossessed of their lands. But we would ask, what is there in the character of the Indians which allows them to give up their land so readily? Some answer that the Indians' poverty results from the greed of the white man. This may have something to do with it, but what makes the Indian such easy prey to that greed? Again others say it is because so many Indians lack industry, initiative, and are thriftless and improvident, that they are poor. But the question which arises out of all these answers is this — What causes these flaws in their character? Our answer is, "It is their religion." Their religion makes them passive over against the forces of nature. The attitude resulting from the Christian religion causes men to subdue and have dominion over the forces of nature, to bring them into subjection wherever possible. That is in harmony with the Creator's command to Adam. The Indian attitude, and that because of his religion, is exactly the opposite. Dr.
Indian Health and the Medicine Man

3. With respect to health problems, the Indian schools have included courses intended to help the Indians. Everyone agrees that there is altogether too much sickness on the reservations. Some, in their effort to show that all troubles among the Indians originated after the coming of the white man, say these diseases were brought by the white man, although skeletons discovered in cliff-dwellings and ruins show that the ancient Indians suffered from about the same troubles which afflict Indians today. However, in spite of all the Government has done for the health of our Indians, the rate of infant mortality, and various diseases is terrifically high. And so, the teacher instructs the children in the simple ways of health, sanitation, hygiene, the importance of good foods, ventilation and pure water. Her lesson has been given and the representative of the native religion comes in and has his turn. What does he teach?

He teaches that all sickness is caused by evil spirits. The immediate cause is the fact that the sick one has killed an ant, a spider, a snake, or another insect or animal. When sick, the only thing which can cure is a chant. Medicine may be used but it is of less importance, and whether the disease is contagious or not, the crowd, the larger the better, must come together. Do you know, Mr. Collier, that the treatment of the sick is, in most cases, an inseparable part of the religious ritual and ceremony in the Indian religion? Are you, Mr. Collier, taking a "positive" attitude toward the medicine-man, also? Do you really wish to "encourage" him and do you want to "coöperate" with him? If not, what do your statements mean?

Undermining Morals and Character

4. With respect to morals and character, one of the objects of all worthy education is to build character. That is stressed also in the Indian schools. We would ask in that connection, what makes most of the Indians so weak morally? What explains the lack of moral fibre in so many of them? Why could one superintendent say, "Ninety percent of the cases in our Indian court result from immorality and infidelity in the home"? Why is it necessary to promulgate special laws for the Indians in order to protect them, for instance the law prohibiting the sale of liquor to an Indian? Why has it been necessary, in some places, to forbid the sale of flavoring extracts to Indians? Why the restrictions? Shall we tell you, Mr. Collier? It is because of their religion.

And do you want to "encourage" and coöperate with such religions? Do you want our government to be responsible for the poisoning of the minds of children with stories, a part of the religious ritual, which according to Mr. J. C. Morgan, a Navajo Indian, "are positively rotten, and not fit to be taught, especially not to children"? If not, please explain what you do mean.

No Uplift in Paganism

5. Your letter mentions the spiritual guidance found in the Indian religions. We would reply, it is especially here that the Indian religions fail. They have no uplifting power. They have no faith which
overcomes the world. They give no hope of eternal happiness and peace, no comfort in the hour of death. All that talk about a "great spirit" and a "happy hunting ground" is not Indian. At least we have failed to find beauty, spiritual guidance, consolation and discipline. Happiness overcomes the world. They give no hope of eternal happiness and peace, no comfort in the hour of death. All that talk about a "happy hunting ground" in the Indian religions. We wish you to understand your relationship to both classes of laborers. The Israelite who held another Hebrew in bondage was expressly forbidden to treat him harshly; he must let him go free at the end of six years; and must at that time provide him with means to begin life again as a free man. For any serious bodily injury done him, even for the loss of a tooth, the slave could claim his freedom, and for the master to flog his slave to death was a punishable offense. Constantly the Israelites are reminded of the Egyptian bondage, as an incentive to kind treatment of those who serve them. How far foreign slaves were included in these humane regulations is not clear, but the general spirit enunciated in the law could not fail to be of benefit to them also.

Justice for the Working Man

In addition to its regulations for the protection of slave labor, the law in many passages defends the interests of the free working man who works for hire. It is not a matter of indifference to the God of Israel how he is treated. Much emphasis is laid upon prompt payment of wages. "Thou shalt not oppress thy neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of a hired servant shall not abide with thee all night until the morning." (Lev. 19:13.) "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates: in his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it (for he is poor and setteth his heart upon it) lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah, and it be sin unto thee." It is often said, and too often truly said, that the tendency of law is to protect the rights of property, and to forget the rights of man; but this is not the spirit of the Mosaic legislation. Everywhere it breathes the spirit of sympathy with the working man, of understanding of his feelings, and of stern denunciation of those who take advantage of him. It is quite in the spirit of this Old Testament legislation that St. James says to the capitalists of his own day: "Behold, the hire of the laborers who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out: and the cries of them that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

The Weekly Day of Rest

In addition to thus inculcating the spirit of justice and kindness towards the working man, whether slave or free, the Mosaic legislation contained one institution of surpassing value, which has come down to our own day, namely, the institution of the weekly day of rest. This was especially and definitely a piece of "labor legislation"; both the earliest and most valuable piece of such legislation on record. In the version of the Ten Commandments given in Exodus, which is the form commonly read in our churches, this is clear, but not so prominent as it is in the form of Deuteronomy 5: There we read: "The seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work... nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant... that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And thou

Christianity and the Lot of the Laboring Man

Albertus Pieters, D.D.
Professor of English Bible and Missions, Western Seminary, Holland, Michigan

WHEN the Bible began to be written, there were in the world two classes of laboring men, free laborers and slaves. The latter were perhaps, in all ancient countries, in the majority. The Mosaic legislation, given by inspiration of God, did not abolish slavery, which was perhaps, for that age, an unavoidable evil, but it extended the protection of the law to both classes of laborers. The Israelite who held another Hebrew in bondage was expressly forbidden to treat him harshly; he must let him go free at the end of six years; and must at that time provide him with means to begin life again as a free man. For any serious bodily injury done him, even for the loss of a tooth, the slave could claim his freedom, and for the master to flog his slave to death was a punishable offense. Constantly the Israelites are reminded of the Egyptian bondage, as an incentive to kind treatment of those who serve them. How far foreign slaves were included in these humane regulations is not clear, but the general spirit enunciated in the law could not fail to be of benefit to them also.

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July, 1936
The Dignity of Manual Labor

Because the working man was thus an object of concern on the part of God and was in this manner taken under His protection, there never arose among the Hebrews any such contempt for manual labor as we find almost everywhere else. When the New Testament period opens, we find that it was required of every man, no matter how wealthy his family might be or how high was his social position, to learn a trade at which he might labor with his hands—as the apostle Paul, though of a wealthy family, was taught the tent maker’s trade in early youth. For the Christian church, inheriting this same tradition, it was still further strengthened by the fact that Jesus Christ was a working man, a carpenter, and that the apostles all worked with their hands, although not in the ranks of hired labor. After the apostolic days, the earliest manual of religious instruction we find is what is known to scholars as the Didache, or The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. In this book it is laid down that if a Christian brother comes into the community, he may be entertained as a guest for a day or two, but not longer. After that, some work is to be found for him, that he may live by the labor of his own hands. This is in very striking contrast with the practice in Buddhism, in which it is a fundamental principle that the truly religious man does not work, but is supported by others.

Christianity’s Beneficent Influence

For the first two hundred years or more, after the time of Christ, the church had no great influence upon the general state of society, but presently its influence began to be felt in numerous ways, for the betterment of the working man, especially of the slave, with the result that substantial improvement took place. After the fall of the Roman Empire, servitude in Europe, largely took the place of slavery. It was a milder form of bondage, but also with many objectionable features. Little by little, as Christian principles penetrated the mass of men, this also was modified or abolished, and proof can be furnished that this improvement owed much to the teaching of the Christian religion. The process was very slow, and it is true that Christians should have exerted themselves in all this much earlier and more earnestly than they did. Nevertheless, two undeniable facts remain, first, that such improvement did take place through the influence of Christianity, and second, that no such progress has been made in any portion of the world where Christianity did not come.

These are not only undeniable facts; they are very great facts. Four great religions there are that dispute the pages of history with ours: Hinduism in India, Confucianism in China, Buddhism both in India and China, and Mohammedanism in the Near East; but no such influence for the protection of the working man and the improvement of his condition can be found emanating from any one of them, whether slowly or rapidly. I remember vividly a conversation in my class room in Hope College with a Chinese student, a well educated man in his own country. One day, in a class in Christian Evidences, I said to him: “Mr. Chu, Confucius taught in China about 2,500 years ago. Can you tell us of any particular in which the lot of the laboring man is better today than when Confucius was born, due to something in his teaching?” Mr. Chu thought for a moment or two, and then said: “No, I can think of nothing. The laboring man has not benefited by 2,500 years of Confucianism.” The same could be said of every one of the other great non-Christian religions.

The Reformation of 1886

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Why do we of America interest ourselves in a reformatory movement in the Netherlands to the extent of engaging in a celebration of its semi-centennial anniversary? First of all, because we believe “an Holy Catholic Church.” The Church of Christ of all ages and lands commands our sympathetic interest. We are not given to ecclesiastical Chauvinism. The pluri-formity of the Church is a fact, whatever ethical construction one may put upon it. But it should not be overlooked that the institutional forms of the Church are pluralized, not the Church itself. The Una Sancta Ecclesia (One Holy Church) is as much a fact as the Plures Formae Ecclesiae (many forms of the Church). The members and officers of the Christian Reformed Church of America, we do not choose to be clannish, provincial, exclusive. And we are persuaded that we need not be just because, under the circumstances, we insist upon maintaining our denominational identity. All God’s people are dear to us, tho, of course, we do not approve of all things they say and do, ecclesiastically and otherwise.

A Revival of Calvinism

But the tie that binds us to the Reformed Church of the Netherlands is not only generally Christian. It is also particularly creedal. It should not be forgotten that our common Christian character, our having a common interest in the Lord Jesus Christ thru faith in His Name, is basic and essential. But neither should it be ignored that as holding the Reformed faith and the Presbyterian Form of Government, we are closer to each other than we are, respectively, to churches of a less Scriptural creed and polity. And since it is peculiar to Calvinism to be highly sensitive to God’s interests, we Calvinists set great store by close conformity to God’s Word and Law in matters of doctrine, government and
worship. If strict exegetical demands be not enforced, we should like to quote Ps. 86:2 in application to ourselves in this connection: we love the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Incidentally we cannot forget that we are of Dutch descent and that historically our church has sprung from the Old Reformed Church of the Netherlands as restored to greater purity by the reformations of 1834 and 1886. Natural ties are not primary, but neither are they contemptible. Provided they are subordinated to spiritualities, they may not even be ignored and neglected.

Not only was the Reformation of 1886 a reformation of a Reformed Church; it was also a phase of the grand revival of Calvinism with which God sovereignly blessed and honored the Low Lands by the North Sea. Calvinism became eumemical in the century that came to a close in 1650. In that period it flourished and waxed strong. But after the middle of the seventeenth century it languished and decayed and died. The root of Calvinism that remained in the Netherlands was, indeed, embedded in dry ground for long. But in the early part of the nineteenth century the heavenly husbandman nourished it, and by the end of the century it was sustaining a sturdy tree in which the birds of the heavens could be seen and heard. In that revival of the purest brand of Christianity we are deeply interested. Hence our interest too in the Reformation of 1886 which not only itself was sympathetic of the revival of Calvinism, but also contributed to its spread to other lands such as South Africa, North America, South America, Hungary and France.

The Old Dutch Reformed Church

What Reformed Church was, at least partially, reformed in 1886? The Old Reformed Church of the Netherlands. It may not be amiss to sketch the history of this grand old church before fixing our attention upon its reformation in 1886. Luther's protest against Rome in 1517 and following years was soon seconded in the land of our ancestors. Nega­tively Rome itself had prepared the soil for Dutch Protestantism thru its degeneration and abuses. The Brethren of the Common Life have made a decidedly positive contribution to the preparation. And the instinctive love of liberty which marked the people of the land of dykes and dunes was a co-efficient of no mean power. Not long after Lutheranism had found its way to the land of our fathers, Anabaptism rolled in like a tidal wave from Germany and Switzer-land. True to its reactionary and turbulent character, it swept the country like a prairie-fire. It acted like a mighty ferment and stirred the national soul to its deepest depths. Before long it had spent its fury and by reaction induced a state of mind that was prepared for something better. About the middle of the sixteenth century the salutary influence of John Calvin began to spread leaven-like in the distracted country. Calvinism at once appeared to be congenial to the national temperament and hence rapidly replaced Lutheranism and Anabaptism. By 1618 the Reformed Church of the Netherlands was fairly well consolidated in respect alike of doctrine, polity and worship. It was a truly Reformed and Presbyterian Church.

The subsequent history of this fine church can, for our present purpose, best be dealt with on the century plan. The seventeenth century was the palmy period, the golden age, of the church under discussion. For a long time the spirit of the great Reformation of the sixteenth century prevailed. Theology flourished. Voelius wrote his great Politica Ecclesiastica. The church branched out to the East Indies and the North American continent. The church was thus on a level with a learned ministry and the kingdom of heaven was like the leaven which a woman hid in three measures of meal.

Spiritual Decline and Revival

However, as the century wore on, spiritual decline set in noticeably. In the eighteenth century the Church of the Netherlands, too, was caught in the toils of religious decadence, theological indifference, worldly-mindedness and rationalistic philosophy which blighted Christianity everywhere. There were still, it is true, faithful preachers (e.g. Comrie) and orthodox theologians. The revival of Germany (Pietism) and England (Methodism) affected the Dutch Church. But as the century went on its way, true Calvinists cried: Ichabod. For the Philistines were in the ascendant. Spiritual darkness settled upon the land. Dusk deepened into night.

The nineteenth century witnessed a radical change of scene. The seventeenth century life and light returned after the eighteenth century winter and night. But the eighteenth century anti-Christian forces remained on the ground. Before long light and darkness were engaged in mortal combat. Throughout the whole nineteenth century they fought intensely for supremacy. That battle is still raging as fiercely as ever in the land that lies below the level of the sea. In consequence of this life and death struggle, both forces developed greater consistency. Faith waxed clearer and stronger and unbelief grew more aggressive and consistent. Faith waxed clearer and stronger and unbelief grew more aggressive and consistent. The Reformed faith developed into a life- and world-view, and Christian life branched out into statesmanship and politics, into learning and art, into journalism and publicism, into philanthropy and social uplift. The storms that have passed over Calvinism's head have caused that sturdy oak to drive its roots deeper than ever into the soil of God's revelation and to extend its branches ever farther over life's variegated domain. Of unbelief the same story of growth is true. It has grown tremendously conscious of its own distinctive self. It is thru with compromise. It has turned its back on tradition. It has developed the spirit of antithesis. The giant is awake; he realizes his strength. He has raised the war-cry; he is ready for battle. He accepts the challenge of the Pro Rege of the believers and means to tear the flag of Christ to tatters. This is the framework of the Reformation of 1886 and its historical background.

The Secession of 1834

The Reformation of 1886 is one of a series of three successive reformations in which the Spirit of the conquering Christ manifested His great grace and mighty power. The triple reformation is at bottom one grand spiritual movement. But the tree episodes are not repetitions. They differ widely except
in respect of their common root and driving power. The "Reveil" was the first breath of God's Almighty Spirit when the time had come for Jehovah to remove the dead bones of His Dutch church. It leaped like a flame from the heights of Switzerland. It lodged its spark in the bosom of men and women of the upper classes. In doctrinal respect the "Reveil" was evangelical but not distinctively Reformed. Its proponents were primarily interested in spiritual experience, but not in theological and creedal rehabilitation. And least of all were its sponsors inclined to resort to ecclesiastical action in furtherance of their cause. The destruction of Presbyterianism in 1816 hardly attracted their attention and when others espoused the cause of creedal integrity it left them cold and unresponsive. Nevertheless the "Reveil" was God's harbinger of a day of better things.

In 1834 the sun that had begun to rise boldly mounted the ladder of the sky. In De Cock and his confreres men arose and spoke and acted who, too, were instinct with a vibrant spiritual life, but who, in addition, realized that the Reformed faith was God's truth and by that token should be both preached and taught in the church and defended and maintained against its assailants. When the ecclesiastical oligarchy cast them out of the synagogue, they promptly set up their own ecclesiastical establishment and proclaimed that they and not the organization that had expelled them were the continuation of the church of the fathers, on the strength of the principle enunciated long ago by the Father of Reformed Protestantism, that doctrine is the soul of the church. Sound doctrine dwelt in their tents, not in the stately house of the old institution.

The fifty years that elapsed since 1834 resembled the fifteenth century in this respect, that a reformation was all along on its way to birth. The "Af scheiding" (secession) of 1834 did not fail to exercise a salutary influence beyond its own borders. Many people of decidedly orthodox beliefs had refused to join the exodus from a sense of duty to reform the old church from within. They opined that the seceders had acted rashly and had needlessly despaired of bringing the sinking ship into port. They forgot, of course, that the leaders had been disposed from office after having gone the full length of appeal. Yet those remaining behind, and parading their loyalty to the old church could not help admiring the fidelity of the men of 1834 to the truth of God and their fine courage to suffer for truth's sake. The example of a church free alike from state domination and hierarchical exploitation inspired them with a growing desire to enjoy that liberty. It gradually began to dawn on them, as the ecclesiastical authorities of the old church asserted their autocratic power in keeping Christ from His rightful throne in the Church and His redeemed people in bondage, that withdrawal and reorganization became the patent order of the day. In 1886 at last God's hour struck and a part at least of those who were ecclesiastically distressed and burdened, disengaged their necks from the galling yoke of spiritual despotism and restored on their part Christ their King to His lawful throne in their ecclesiastical life.

Fifty Years Later

Details need not be mentioned save to say that God, who inspired the Reformation of 1886, blessed the movement with leaders of great spiritual eminence, theological and canonical learning, and marked executive ability. It may suffice to remind ourselves of names such as Kuyper, Rutgers, Van den Bergh, Lohman, Ploo Van Amstel, Fernhout, Kaptein, and Vlug. The Free University of Amsterdam that had been founded in 1880 and was born of the same spirit as that which crystallized ecclesiastically in the Reformation of 1886, at once supplied the new-born church with ministers of splendid training. The movement grew by leaps and bounds, despite the fact that some of its erstwhile sponsors chose to remain in Babylon, and hosts of Reformed people never as much as considered abandoning the old church. Before long a confluence was effected of the 1834 and 1886 streams, and De Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland resulted in 1892. It is regrettable that Reformed Protestantism is still so badly divided in the land of our ancestors. It is reported that there are as many Reformed people in the Old Church (Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk) as there are in "De Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland" (which latter church has a constituency of over seven hundred congregations). Besides, there is the "Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk" which resulted from the refusal of a part of the church of 1834 to consolidate with the church of 1886. Then, too, there are numerous Reformed churches, notably in the southern part of the country, that are either free lances ecclesiastically, or at least but loosely confederated. One wonders whether there will be another reformation before long. The Reformed element in the Old Church is very restless. And little wonder that they should be. After years of strenuous labor they are like poor Sisyphus whose boulder slipped down the mountain every time he had nearly reached the summit. Inner-church reform of a church, once its "machinery" is in the hands of "enemies of the cross of Christ," seems to belong to the category of the unattainable.

A Reformed Church Must Continue Reforming

One should not study movements like the Reformation of 1886 from purely historical purposes. The past is the teacher of the present. That is true even of Bible history. Of Old Testament history Paul says, "Whatsoever things were written were written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4). There is no better School of Wisdom than the records of the past. The Reformation of 1886 was necessary because the Reformed Church had forgotten that in order to remain a Reformed church indeed, it should go on reforming itself according to the Word of God. The official name, Reformed Church, may subtly impress us as if its reformation is a completed task, a finished process. Only a church that is Reforming as well as Reformed will escape such a crisis as that of 1886. Thou it is far better to reform than to remain deformed, it is infinitely better to preclude the need of such a surgical operation as the reformation we have studied.
The Reformation of 1886 clearly shows that ample serious and thorough preparation are, humanly speaking, very essential to successful work. Again, the spirit of humility whereby those reforming the church accounted themselves responsible, jointly with the rest, for the deplorable state of the Church, is one of its finest and most exemplary features. Then, too, those participating in the Reformation of 1886 acknowledged that the movement was a blessing which God, their faithful covenant Jehovah, bestowed upon them and not a favor which they bestowed upon Him.

In view of the increasing sensualizing of marriage in our day, the steady decline in the birth rate not only in the world at large but also in the Church of Jesus Christ, and the alarming prevalence of practices which are contrary to the ordinances of God and violate the Christian ideal of marriage and parenthood, the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 1936, feels constrained to address the following testimony to the churches.

According to the teaching of Holy Writ, marriage is a creation ordinance instituted by God with a twofold purpose: the loving companionship of husband and wife in a lifelong physico-spiritual union, and the begetting of children in and through this marital love life. Scripture expresses both these aims in solemn words of the Almighty Himself. The former in Gen. 2:18 and 24, where we read: "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him ..... Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." And the latter in Gen. 1:28, where, following the statement that God made man male and female, we read the divine injunction: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth ......" Implied in the former passage are the duties and privileges of marital love, companionship, and mutual helpfulness; and in the latter those of reproduction, fatherhood, motherhood, and Christian nurture.

In a fallen world the sinful inclination of the human heart is to trample upon these ordinances of God and to pervert the functions of holy wedlock to selfish and unholy ends. In this way the sacred marriage union may deteriorate, and in many cases has deteriorated, into a life of sensuality and selfish indulgence. One such form of perversion of the marriage ordinance of God is seen in the refusal on the part of physically normal married people to beget children, or in their failure, when able to do so, to reproduce the race adequately. Many look upon childbearing as an incidental instead of a primary function of marriage, and the idea that the size of one's family is to be determined by mere considerations of personal preference, instead of by the ordinances of God, is apparently making headway even among Christian people.

In the face of conditions and practices occasioned by these perverted views, the Synod desires to reassert the Christian, the biblical, view of marriage and parenthood. In the light of the twofold scriptural principle stated above there can be no doubt that it is the duty as well as the privilege of normally endowed married people to produce as large a number of children as is compatible with the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the wife and mother on the one hand and of the children on the other. To be sure, the mother may at some time be sacrificed to the production of a numerous progeny. She is a spiritual personality and, together with her Christian husband, a "joint heir of the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:7). But it is equally true that her supreme glory as woman lies in motherhood. In the words of the Apostle, "she shall be saved through her childbearing" (1 Tim. 2:15).

The Synod has no desire to define the specific duty on this score of any given husband and wife. This is, in the last analysis, a distinctly personal matter, which husband and wife must settle in the presence of their God and in the light of the best medical advice — Christian medical advice — available. Living as we do in a world suffering from the ravages of sin, certain conditions and circumstances may demand of Christians that they forego parenthood, or that the voluntary limiting of the number of their offspring becomes their duty before God. While making full allowance for this personal and medical angle of the matter, Synod is convinced that it is the solemn duty of the Church to bear testimony against the growing evil of a selfish birth restriction and to hold up the sacred ordinances of God and the Christian ideal of marriage and parenthood, which are increasingly being ignored and flouted in our day. Childbearing and parenthood are to be held up as a basic aim of marriage. The glory of fatherhood and motherhood, which Scripture stresses so repeatedly,
should be made real upon proper occasion in the preaching and teaching of the Church, and especially in the thought, the conversation, and the life of all who name themselves after Christ. Disparaging remarks about large families as such should not be heard among Christian people. “Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; and the fruit of the womb is his reward” (Ps. 127:3).

In this connection the Synod raises its voice in protest against the growing evil of the indiscriminate dissemination of contraceptive information, an evil against which even the American Medical Association has in its 1936 annual session gone on record on moral grounds. (Journal of the A.M.A., May 30, 1936, pp. 1911, 1912.) Let Christian married people who are genuinely perplexed as to their specific duty at a given time rather consult their pastor, and, especially, some Christian physician, of whom it may be expected that his advice will be not only medically sound but also in harmony with the demands of Christian morals in the light of the Word of God.

Finally, the Synod would urge all Christians in the words of the Apostle: “Be sober, be watchful” (1 Peter 5:8). In these days of growing worldliness let Christian people be on their guard lest ways of ease and luxury undermine their morals. Let young people who name themselves after Christ fight manfully against the subtle temptations of our day and in the strength of God live chaste lives. As they look forward to marriage, let them cherish truly Christian ideals in the light of the twofold purpose for which marriage was instituted by God. Let parents seek to mold the thoughts and ideals of their growing sons and daughters, so that these in sex matters may think and speak and live as becomes Christian young people. Let our ministers at the opportune time and in the light of God’s Word speak words of wisdom and discretion to their people on the subject of marriage and parenthood. And let those who live in the state of wedlock by the grace of God make all things, also childbearing, parenthood, and Christian nurture, subservient to the coming of the Kingdom of our God and His Christ.”

Two Billion Years!

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IN the year 1896 Henri Becquerel, quite by accident, discovered that salts of the heaviest known element, uranium, emitted a radiation which affected a photographic plate. It was subsequently shown that the activity of these radiations from pure uranium compounds is proportional to the amount of uranium which they contain. When the ores from which uranium is obtained were examined it was noted that they exhibited a greater activity than could be accounted for on the basis of the amount of uranium which they contained. These facts led, in 1898, to the discovery of the element radium by Madame Curie and her husband, Pierre Curie, and finally, in 1910, to its preparation in the pure metallic state by Madame Curie alone. In analyzing uranium ores it has been discovered that radium is always present, and further, that it is always present in the ratio of one part of radium to three million parts of uranium. To prove this may appear to the reader to be a task analogous to looking for a needle in a haystack, but when one learns that as little as one billionth of a gram of radium can be detected by the chemist or physicist, the problem should seem to be capable of solution.

Radioactivity

Further study of these elements has shown that both uranium and radium give off spontaneously three types of rays. This phenomenon is known as radioactivity. In giving off these rays uranium and radium lose weight and form as the final products the elements lead and gaseous helium. The important point to note concerning this lead is the fact that it is slightly lighter than the ordinary lead. Ordinary lead is 207 times as heavy as elementary hydrogen and this lighter lead, known as an isotope of lead, is only 206 times as heavy as elementary hydrogen. By measuring the quantity of uranium in an ore, the amount of lead of weight 206, and knowing the length of time for uranium to break down into lead, it has been possible to calculate, with far greater accuracy than has heretofore been attained, the age of these minerals. The method has been perfected during the last twenty years and the accurate work on the age of the earth has been done during these last few years. Since this method involves the least number of assumptions, we shall examine it to a greater extent than the other methods which we have discussed in the previous article.

The fact that radium always occurs in such a definite ratio in uranium ores indicates that the radium is produced from uranium at a definite, but slow rate, since if the change were rapid all uranium would long ago have disappeared from the earth. Further evidence that radium is produced at a slow rate can be illustrated by the fact that if the entire world had been one solid piece of radium only 200,000 years ago the amount which could be found in the rocks now would be far less than actually exists today. If all the radium is extracted from a uranium material, the rate at which the new supply of radium is produced is so slow that no appreciable quantity is formed until after a very long period of time. Radium itself, then, breaks down fairly rapidly and in calculating the age of the earth from radioactive data the assumption is made that all radium which has accumulated in uranium minerals has been produced over a period of time which began when the uranium bearing material made its appearance as part of the earth’s crust. The equations which are used to calculate the time which elapses for this transition are very exact and are capable of being proven experimentally. Heat, hammering, or any other treatment has not speeded, slowed, or
otherwise changed an iota the constant natural disintegration of radium or any other radioactive substance. Nature in this case resists human control. The only thing man can do is to produce artificial radioactivity. This was first accomplished, in 1934, by the Jolioti, daughter and son-in-law of the Curie. By means of artificial radioactivity professor Enrico Fermi later produced a new superheavy element with an atomic weight greater than science had previously known existed. The reason why it no longer exists is that it is strongly radioactive, disintegrating in twelve minutes so that only half of the original amount remained. Many other experiments on radioactivity are being performed daily and the laws concerning the time for disintegration of uranium and radium cannot be doubted. It is even possible to count the number of atoms of helium given off by a radioactive element.

Computing the Age of the Earth

The author sincerely hopes that the ideas in the above three paragraphs have not been hidden too deeply in technical terms to prevent the reader having only a limited scientific knowledge to grasp them. The gist of these paragraphs is that proof exists that uranium breaks down into radium at a slow rate and that radium, in turn, breaks down comparatively rapidly into helium and the isotopic form of lead having an atomic weight of 206. It should also be noted that the time involved for these transitions to take place can be accurately calculated. Boltwood discovered in 1905 that the age of minerals could be determined with this knowledge as a basis. He analysed a series of uranium minerals and found that the amount of lead per gram of uranium varied in different minerals. Believing firmly, even at this early date, that lead was the final disintegration product of uranium, he arranged these minerals in the order of the amount of lead which they contained and noted that the minerals arranged themselves in the order of the increasing age of geological formation in which the mineral was found. To express this age in terms of years he assumed that all of the lead present was the result of the disintegration of uranium. Although his general conclusions were correct, on the basis of present knowledge concerning the different types of lead his simple calculations had to be modified to take care of these isotopic forms of lead. The most recent equations which are used to calculate the age of the earth take all of these matters into account. They include factors not only for the lead, but also for the amount of the other element which is formed during radioactive disintegration, namely, helium. The helium content gives us a lower limit to the time, the lead content an upper limit, since on the one hand gaseous helium may have escaped, and on the other lead may have come in from other sources. Calculations of this kind have chiefly been made by Strutt.

1600 to 3000 Millions of Years

The equations which are used to calculate the age of the earth from radioactivity are far too complicated for the average reader to comprehend since they involve at least a knowledge of the methods of the calculus. They may be found in Bulletin Number 80 of the National Research Council which was published in June, 1931. Approximately seven hundred references to experimental work bearing on this subject are listed and nearly four hundred pages of the Bulletin are devoted to the method involved in the calculations. Practically all of the available information — geologic, mineralogic, and chemical — has been assembled and critically evaluated and it soon becomes obvious that this information has already attained an astonishing bulk. The requirements which are necessary to build up a geological time-scale in years based on atomic disintegration are listed and it is interesting to note that very few determinations — seven at most — fulfil these requisites. The "youngest" of these is the thorite from Brevik, Norway, having an approximate age of 224 millions of years and the oldest one is the uraninite which was found in Sinyaya, Pala, Karelia, Russia, which has been calculated to be 1,852 millions of years old. The uraninite from Keystone, South Dakota, on which some of the finest chemical work has been done, is 1,462 millions of years old. Many other ores have been analyzed to give approximate ages. The authors of the articles in the Bulletin have taken the attitude that if they had to guess the value of one factor in their calculations they might as well guess the final answer. The method which is used in these calculations is exact enough to have convinced this author of its validity. Work on radiohalos indicates conclusively that the rate of disintegration of uranium has always been constant. This is important since this fact was formerly merely assumed and was the main assumption made in these calculations. The possibility existed then that it may have decayed more slowly or more rapidly than it does now. At that time the attitude was taken that it would be as unphilosophic to doubt this as to believe that the laws of chemistry and physics change with time. Now experimental evidence bears this out. Further, if the earth was extremely hot at one time and hence have caused an increase in the speed of disintegration, although no temperature has been produced so far to alter its speed, this temperature would have driven the helium gas out of the rocks as it was formed so that the calculations based on the helium content would give then an answer much smaller than the correct one. The other position is that a low temperature may conceivably have speeded up the reaction, although most reactions are slowed down by temperature decreases. However, this objection also vanishes when it is known that the chemist and physicist can get to within a few tenths of a degree of the lowest possible temperature which can ever exist — below this temperature nothing remains. The statement which can therefore be made at present is that the age of the earth exceeds 1,460 millions of years, is probably not less than 1,600 millions of years, and is probably much less than 3,000 millions of years. This latter number is found as an upper limit when it is assumed that all rock-lead is of radioactive origin. This assumption is, of course, not accepted by anyone.

The Almighty Maker

The author is only too painfully aware of the fact that such a conclusion will raise many difficult
problems. These problems he does not feel capable of discussing and answering, since they involve too many facts which lie outside of his field. He does feel that there is a solution to them since he is a firm believer in the divine inspiration of the Bible. It should be pointed out for the sake of the not too discerning reader that nothing has been said concerning life on the earth. That problem belongs to the biologist, although it may be added that scientific evidence corroborates the fact that man has existed on the earth for about 6,000 years. The approximate figure of 8,000 years which is usually given for the beginning of modern races would tend to substantiate the Christian position concerning the creation of man. Dr. Carey Croneis of the University of Chicago has said that if all geologic time is taken as two billion years and is represented on a clock dial as one hour that man would be such a newcomer on the earth that he existed only while our geological clock struck the hour.

Accepting two billion years as the age of the earth would enable us to explain that the light which reaches us from the stars comes to us at a rate obeying physical laws, which we believe God has laid down. Of course, everyone realizes that an all powerful God could have made this light to reach us instantaneously, but in doing so he would be violating his natural laws. Light travels 186,000 miles per second, 11 miles million miles per minute or 660 million miles per hour. As we know, miles for the astronomer become much too small a unit of length, and he uses the distance that light travels in a year, about six trillion miles. Light from the sun reaches us in eight minutes. The nearest star is about four light years away. Beyond our immediate galaxy, which includes the Milky Way, is the far vaster volume of the universe sprinkled with other galaxies. Among these are the Magellanic Clouds which are about one million light years away. The Great Nebula of Andromeda is at about the same distance. So far as the present astronomical instruments can sound the depths of space, to a distance of 300 million light years, the universe is dotted with great star systems. When we contemplate these facts we are moved to say with the Psalmist, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man, that thou art mindful of him and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" And what a great depth of meaning is realized when one reads in another Psalm, "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him." Certainly we must believe that it is all God's work, the atom as much as the universe of fixed stars, the fall of the raindrop as well as the collision of two suns. Well might the prophet of old say, "He stood, and measured the earth; ... and the everlasting hills were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: His ways are everlasting." But the night grows late. Outside, the town lies hushed in sleep oblivious to the fact that we are whirling and spinning through space at an incredible speed. What are the thoughts of Him to whose vastness and agelessness this whole mass of flying and glowing suns are but as a handful of dust that a boy flings into the air? Has He indeed a patient and tender thought of me, the frail creature whom He has moulded and made? I do not doubt it. I look up again among the star-sown spaces and am moved to repeat, with as simple a heart as when I first learned my catechism from my mother's lips, and at the same time with the full assent of those mental powers with which God has blessed my manhood ... .... "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth."

Christ, The Church, and Social Problems
Edward B. Home, M.A., D.D.
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"WHO made me a judge or a divider over you?"

These words of our Lord bring us face to face with the question of the Church and politics. Admitting as we do that there are many things wrong with our social organization and government, is it the Church's business to enter the political field and set them right? Why not? What greater or more important work could it do? Does not the Church claim to be the possessor of those great principles of life and conduct that ought to be applied to all human affairs and relationships? Would not the application of these principles to public and political affairs and to social organization in general result in vast improvement — bring in justice and brotherhood where now there is injustice and oppression? Then why hesitate? Is it not the plain call of duty? The opportunity seems to stare us in the face. The general mind is aroused about these things and is looking for leadership. And we have all the means ready to our hand — our pulpits, our preachers, our widely inclusive membership, our nation-wide organization — for agitation, for education, for propa-
take some notice — not very much for it was regarded as highly improbable that this effort to push the Church into practical politics would succeed. But the effort was made; and will continue to be made, with increasing insistence. For there are some men who are determined to have it so. What about it? Is it right or wrong? Is it wise or unwise?

The Great Work of the Church

We do not have to seek far to find our Lord's answer to these questions. It is set forth in the quotation placed at the head of this article and in the passage from which this quotation is taken. We can easily picture the scene: This man bursting out with his urgent request — "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." And our Lord, not brusque or abrupt at all, shaking his head sympathetically and sadly and answering: I fear you are making a mistake. I am not a judge; neither a law maker nor a law administrator. I am a Teacher. The judges' work may be very important, is important. But it is not my work. I have a great work to do — to form and inform the minds of men, to quicken and enlighten their consciences, to revive and strengthen their courage, to reveal God to them. I must not turn aside from that work. In any case consider this dispute over property. What lies at the root of it? Greed, covetousness. Eradicate that and you have solved not only this particular difficulty, but all such difficulties in life. I must concentrate on my own work of teaching right values to men. I have a great work to do and I must get on with it. "I must work the works of Him that sent me."

That is clear, is it not? And, to me, conclusive.

The Church, I take it, has the same work to do, and must get on with it. It must not turn aside from that great work to take up any other. It is not even as if we had that work all done and were spoiling for something else to do. The work of teaching men right values is never finished. It is a perennial need, the deepest need of human nature.

It would be a good thing for us to mind our own business, which after all in this case is the Lord's business; to get on with it, without too many distractions. It is still the most important work in the world — to illuminate men's minds and inspire their efforts. If that fails, what other good can possibly succeed? To illuminate, did we say, to enlighten? But if that work is not done! If the light goes out! "If the light that is in thee be darkness!" What then lies ahead of the world?

When the Church Was in Politics

This plausible temptation to grasp and wield political power for the Glory of God is one that has always beset the Christian Church, and one to which the Church has sometimes succumbed. It has all been tried out, long ago, on a large scale, and from the point of view of those who wish to put the Church into politics, with eminent success. The Mediaeval Church played just that role. We have no time to trace the long and devious course by which this consummation was reached. Sometimes it seemed that political overlordship was being thrust upon the Church by the very chaos in the world around her.

At other times the Church herself is seen only too obviously and greedily grasping at political power and wealth and conquest. By the eleventh century her claims had become unbounded and were seldom challenged — never successfully. From the eleventh century to the beginning of the sixteenth century it is not an exaggeration to say that the Church ruled in Europe.

And with what results? Not even by the widest stretch of charity or the most fervid exercise of imagination is it possible to paint the results as happy. At the beginning of the sixteenth century both Europe and the Church were morally bankrupt. Within the Church spiritual life had almost died out; it continued to exist only on sufferance among obscure and quiet people. In the corporate life of the great Church it had neither part nor lot. And the new life beginning to stir under the very ribs of death was met with the most ferocious onslaught of intolerance, cruelty, oppression and persecution that has ever disgraced the annals of mankind. And all this in the name of the Prophet of Nazareth, who had told the world of God's goodness and love! No, the results of the Church's "Victory" were not happy. She was indeed not unlike the man of our Lord's warning words; she had gained the whole world and lost her own soul, to the immeasurable misery and incalculable loss of both the Church and the world.

But it might be different under different circumstances, under modern conditions? Why should we think so? Has human nature altered so much as all that? Or the essential conditions of human life and political authority? Let us not delude ourselves. The truth is that practically all the Church's excursions into the political realm have been unhappy in their course, and unfortunate in their consequences. To the modern mind for example it will be clear that the least creditable episode in the life of John Calvin was his exercise of something like a dictatorship at Geneva. It may have been forced upon him; but it has left with him the one dark blot that stains an otherwise great and pure and honorable career. We could almost wish that he had never seen Geneva or heard tell of Servetus.

No, we do not want the Church in politics. Her ministers and her leaders seldom have the knowledge, the equipment, and still more seldom have they the training and the temper, that fit men for the difficult and exacting work of political life and governmental authority. And besides all that she has other work to do. Let her do it! We want the Church in Religion, preaching it, teaching it, living it, commending it to men and making it the power of God and the wisdom of God for the guidance of the world in this perplexed and changing age.

Not a Programme, but a Message

Has Christianity then a social message? The message of the Gospel is for all mankind and covers the whole range of human activities. Nothing is omitted. And among all human activities nothing is more vitally important to man's happiness and well-being than those complex and multifarious arrangements we of necessity make for the ordering of our common life — what we describe in a general way as the social order. So of course Christianity has a message for us along those lines.
To avoid misunderstanding, however, it is well to recognize at once that while Christianity has a social message it has not a social programme. It has no detailed scheme to propose for the organization or re-organization of the social order. Those who try to foist their plans and programmes upon the Christian Church and seek to claim Christ's authority for so doing have no warrant for their claim. Christ Himself lived under a form of government that we would describe as despotic. He did not denounce it. He said: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Christianity has existed under various forms of government and has found it possible to carry on under all of them. No doubt under some forms of government Christianity will find itself with greater freedom and with larger opportunities for development and expression than under others. We are persuaded, for example, that under a democracy like our own, Christianity finds itself in a more congenial atmosphere and with ampler scope than it found under certain other forms of government in the past. I think that is true, and I am profoundly glad of it, for undoubtedly a democracy does give Christianity its best chance to impress its spirit upon the social order. For in a democracy the government is the people, and Christianity's vital message is to the people. In proportion as it moulds the people it permeates the government. That is the most important thing to keep in mind. That is why the Church must not fail in its work of bringing the message of spiritual regeneration and moral uprightness to the people. It must not turn aside from that work to take up any other. Government, or the re-organization of government, is not its work. Christ, Himself, as we have seen, refused to be made a judge or a divider over men. His work was other than that. He was the great Teacher. And His Church must carry on His work. Preaching and teaching are its weapons. It may seem absurd to some people, but it is still true nevertheless, that "it hath pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." And if enough people believe, and believe earnestly enough, we can save society; and in no other way.

Public Spirit vs. Selfish Interests

The true significance of Christianity's social message is as well expressed as can be in the words taken from the New Testament: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." In two words Christianity's social message is just this: Public Spirit. If we are to have a common or public life, a social order at all, then this is the spirit that ought to animate it. Public Spirit must take precedence over private interest. Christ always deals with spiritual things, and this is the Spirit of Social life. With this spirit, almost any form or system of government would work. Without it, no system will work well or long. When this spirit is weak, society languishes. When this spirit is strong and active, society flourishes and civilization advances.

We do not have to seek far to find concrete illustration of the truth of all this. Some three years ago the social order in the United States had been brought face to face with severe Crisis — close to the edge of a precipice some people thought. The newly-elected President undertook in his inaugural address to deal with the situation. What did he find was wrong? Among the major causes of the disturbance and threatened disaster he placed greed, dishonesty, the false ambition of material wealth and power, selfishness and self-seeking — in a word, a lack of proper Public Spirit and an over-predominance of private interest. And he called upon the people everywhere to repent and to return to the old paths. Whatever may be thought or said about the measures since adopted to remedy the situation, there can be no doubt that the diagnosis of the trouble was accurate. A dearth of Public Spirit and an overgrowth of private interest spells calamity for any nation.

We are ready to raise our hands in horror at the infamy of politicians and financiers and leaders of industry who have brought us to this pass. Let us be honest with ourselves. The danger is not to be found among the few at the top. Some of them are infected, no doubt. But no few men, however powerful or highly placed, could wreck or even seriously endanger this nation. But a defection of the people themselves, a falling away from that pristine vigorous Public Spirit that is at once the glory and the life of a democracy — that would be a serious matter indeed. Happily we do not need to believe that that is the case among us. And yet we cannot pretend that all is as it should be; and this is an ever present danger. Apathy is the one fatal disease of democracy. The business of arousing and maintaining a true Public Spirit is never finished. It is not only the life of a democracy; it is the heart of Christianity's social message.

Two Criticisms

I am well aware of two criticisms that will be levelled at the position I have endeavored thus far to maintain. It will be asserted in the first place by some earnest but I think myopic spirits that all this may be very fine, but it is not at all "practical" enough. It leaves the Church helpless in the face of concrete evils of life. In answer, I can only reaffirm that I conceive this to be a total misunderstanding of the situation; that the mission of the Church as I have endeavored to outline it, based as I believe on New Testament teaching, is the most important thing in the world, and the most vitally practical thing; that in proportion as it is ill done, or left undone, it will vitiate all other efforts that may be made for the amelioration of society; and that in proportion as it is effectively done it will give us the one sure basis on which we may work toward a better day and a happier world.

The second criticism will come from those who do not like the religious outlook. It is, they will declare, only another futile effort to revive the religious bias, the preacher's attempt to put all social life on a religious and moral basis. As a matter of fact I do not "put" it on. It is on; always was, and always will be. I recognize the fact; that is all. Perhaps a brief quotation may suffice to dispose of this matter of the Christian and religious bias: "Legislation against private property may have a specious appearance of
benevolence; men readily listen to it, and are easily induced to believe that in some wonderful manner everybody will become everybody's friend, especially when someone is heard denouncing the evils now existing in States, which are said to arise out of the possession of private property. These evils however, are due to very different cause, the wickedness of human nature.

Do you recognize the quotation, or identify its author? Who wrote it, do you suppose? Some other maundering and pulling parson striving to revamp religion and to defame human nature? The quotation is from the works of an eminent Greek gentleman known to us by the name of Aristotle, who lived some three hundred years B. C. And with him we still regard the moral element as the decisive factor in social life.

**Industrial Democracy.**

MONDAY, June 8, 1936, the Alliance of Christian Technicians met in Utrecht. The president of the organization spoke in part as follows:

"More and more the idea prevails that the days of the free play of social forces and of unfettered economic liberalism are counted. Everyone feels that there must be regulations and limitations, that employers and employees together must bear the responsibility for the development of the industrial factors, and that only in this way the employers will be able to arrive at a proper definition of their rights and duties.

"'Planning' is the name suggested for this process, but the Christian social movement has declared itself in favor of 'industrial democracy' (bedrijfsorganisatie) twenty-five years ago. This is only possible within the frame of an extensive growth of the institute of industrial councils (bedrijfsraden) It is now up to the government to regulate the economic forces."

For the benefit of our American readers we must add that the Christian Labor Organizations in the Netherlands do not believe in the socialistic idea that e. g. a factory belongs to the workers because they are workers. Even if a factory would be coöperative this would not mean that for that reason the workers as such rule. All this goes to show that the Dutch Christian Labor Organizations believe that Christianity has its own ideas of rights, duties, ownership, authority, liberty, wage scale, and organization.

**Fascism a Danger.**

At the last election for the Provincial Legislatures the Dutch Fascists obtained so many votes that many are afraid that at the elections for the States General in 1937 the Fascist party may seriously disturb the functions of the government. At present the cabinet consists of members from the two (conservative and progressive) Protestant parties, the Catholics, and the progressive liberals. The danger is that especially the first three parties may dwindle because the Fascists may make the voters believe that democracy is no longer able to furnish a working majority in the Second Chamber. If the people at large begin to believe this Fascist fib, the first step will be to include Socialists in the cabinet, and the second step will be the victory of the Fascists because the majority of the Dutch nation are afraid of Socialistic and Communist experiences. Thus Socialism will prepare the way for the Dutch Hitlerites. A false democracy, as Groen van Prinsterer pointed out half a century ago, leads in the long run to a false autocracy. There is no salvation but in the Scriptural ideas of authority and liberty, that is what Groen and Kuyper have taught. This is the underlying idea of the Dutch Christian political and social organizations. Alas! Many a Dutch Christian is losing his hold on these principles. Instead of faith, fear is swaying the hearts. And fear demands a dictator.

**Christian Coöperatives.**

In the Netherlands Christians have not only felt the need for separate political, but also for separate economical and social organizations. This has become necessary not only because of the phenomenal growth of Socialism, which now dominates about 25 percent of the population, but also because the humanistic press and school began to poison national life, and to threaten the very existence of the church. There is hardly a field of activity where these Dutch Christians have not unfolded the banner of the cross. And it behoves us to hail them as pioneers of a social Christianity which is almost foreign to America, for the social Christianity of our Christian liberals is not much more than social humanism, which believes that all problems can be solved by reason.

One of the many Christian organizations in Holland is the Christian Alliance of Consumers Cooperatives. At their recent meeting in May, 1936, at

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**BLUE MOONLIGHT**

Oh Moonlight,  
Play not turbulently,  
This blue night  
Across the heart of me.  
I cannot bear alone  
This miracle of light,  
This clear white wonder  
Ravishing the sight.  
Its beauty wounds me.  
Oh high queen of light,  
Withhold the wild white flood —  
I am alone tonight!  
—MILDERE REITSEMA.

**Nederland Jottings**
Utrecht, Professor Gerbrandy, of the Free University of Amsterdam, first discussed: the Scriptural idea of Planning (“ordering”), and then how the industrial life of the Christian bakers could be organized and regulated in such a way that they could enjoy their work, lead a decent life, and serve God and their fellowmen in the right way. Christian cooperatives are not looked upon as a panacea for all social evils, but in certain lines, e.g. in consumption and agriculture, they may alleviate conditions to a great extent.

Geert Groote.

IN 1940 it will be 600 years ago that Geert Groote was born. A committee of Catholic and Protestant scholars has been formed to commemorate this event and to republish his works.

Geert Groote was one of the forerunners of the Reformation. He founded the lay order of the Brethren of the Common Life, also called Hieronymians, because they were students and copyists not so much of the church fathers, as of the Vulgate Bible. Their significance lay in just this fact that they called the nations of Western Europe back to the Scriptures, and that they insisted on immediate communion with God, at least in times of storm and stress when the church was degenerating. Since Scriptural Thinking and *Coram Deo* are two of the slogans of Calvinism, it behooves us also to pause a moment to commemorate God’s work in Geert Groote, even though he had only a faint idea of what these maxims would mean in the language of Calvin.

The League of Nations.

IT has been said that the League of Nations has failed since it could not call Japan, Hitler and Mussolini to order. Colijn, the Calvinistic prime minister of the Netherlands, seems to think differently.

At a recent meeting of the Union for the League of Nations and for (International) Peace, he spoke as follows (we paraphrase in part):

May I remind you of the preamble to the constitution of the League? It speaks of international cooperation, international justice and honor. international discussions and pacts. Shall we surrender these principles? If not, shall we surrender the only organization through which these principles can be promoted and maintained? Shall we start all over, or shall we keep on propagating the true principles, and shall we try to reform the League? It is Colijn’s conviction that we must not be discouraged because we cannot reach perfection in a few years. We must not be hyperidealists, expecting that we shall establish an ideal world. We must not be pessimistic because we fail at every step. We must avoid both extremes. We must see the good that has been accomplished and keep on exerting ourselves to the utmost.

Scriptural Thinking.

LAST spring Professor Vollenhoven of the Free University of Amsterdam gave an exposition of Scriptural Thinking for the Provincial Alliance of the Reformed Young Men’s Societies of South Hol-

land in the well-known city of Leyden. He developed the following theses:

1. Our times are subject to an increasing confusion which at the core should be characterized as a spiritual one. Historically this confusion is due to the fact that the church has lost sight of the difference between Scriptural and non-Scriptural thinking.

2. Scriptural thinking should distinguish between:

   a. God and cosmos, the relation being one of Sovereign and subject.
   b. In the cosmos between heaven (host of angels) and earth.
   c. On the earth there are different realms of which the human realm is the central one.
   d. In humanity we ought to differentiate between the religious office-bearer and those whom he represents.
   e. In the religious office-bearer we ought to distinguish between the first and the second Adam.
   f. In every individual human being between the heart (the subconscious) and the conscious life.
   g. In the conscious life we ought to see numerous irreducible, primitive functions.
   h. In every function there is the subject and the object.

3. Unscriptural thinking neglects one or more of these distinctions. There are two main schools of false philosophy: objectivism—which should not be confused with dogmatism—and subjectivism. For non-Catholics Subjectivism is more dangerous. In this Subjectivism we find a dialectical (or intellectual) current, and a non-dialectical, or mystical, one. The dialectical subjectivism is at present gaining. Some of its adherents are individualistic. Some are universalistic, but either form of this intellectual subjectivism (in America better known as philosophic idealism) leads to a certain amount of pride which is not in harmony with covenant living.

4. We shall not be able to fight this subjectivistic (or, idealistic) philosophy unless we return in our thinking to Scripture, and to the fundamental idea of Calvinism.

The report in “De Rotterdammer” informs us that the professor received a sustained applause after his interesting lecture, and that many questions were answered by him. The young Calvinists of the Netherlands must be well informed that they can stand lectures of this type. Our readers will realize that Prof. Vollenhoven’s discourse is also a protest against any form of unscriptural thinking, politics and economics not excluded.

H. J. V. A.

SCENTED HOUR

Comes a time of sleepless waking
In a harried din of thought,
When above the jangled tumult
One clear call to me is brought;
Follows then a space of silence,
When I sense the tones of night;
And as bells ring from the darkness
Bringing with them light,
So my soul has joy in seeing—
So a song comes into being.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.
BOOK REVIEWS

SOME RECENT AMERICAN THEOLOGY


It was a happy and appropriate idea on the part of former students in Union Theological Seminary to celebrate the occasion of Dr. William Adams Brown's retirement by the publication of this series of chapters on the life and thought of the American Church for a half century. The volume is not only a portrayal of developments within the Church but also a vivid revelation of Dr. Brown's own theological views, his catholicity of interests, and breadth of scholarship. The book consists of three parts, of which the first is biographical, the second a series of sixteen brief historical surveys of the period, and the third bibliographical.

The opening essay of the series is by Dr. Van Dusen, and deals some hard blows to the liberal movement in theology. "Clearly, recall from liberalism is the most important feature of the present situation."

"Theology in the past fifty years has been deeply enmeshed within the dominant secular outlook, sharing its presuppositions, partnering its enterprises, glorying in its utopian anticipations. That outlook is now definitely discredited. Criticism has proved its premises invalid. The passage of events has branded its expectations absurd. It must be discarded. Liberal theology, its child, must likewise suffer drastic reconstruction, if not abandonment."

These words might summarize the conclusions of other writers in this revealing symposium. All are not equally outspoken and we miss the name of Reinhold Niebuhr and his recent devastating critique of liberalism in thought and theology. For the rest it is all here: Science and theology, the Social Gospel, the Philosophy of Religion, the Interpretation (of what is left) of the Bible, Christian Education, Theological Seminaries, the Community Church, etc. The whole series of brilliant essays is somehow vitiated by a narrow outlook and a sort of utopian antisocial attitude:

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Today there is too much uncertainty in student circles to press these principles without modification! We are glad to learn that although

"The missionary movement reflected this changed spiritual atmosphere. Probably most missions still maintain the conception of the so-called evangelistic method as the only legitimate form of missionary effort, justifying schools, hospitals, and other forms of service to the non-Christian world by their evangelistic results."

Re-thinking Missions is described as "the most comprehensive and determined effort yet made to ascertain the needs and conditions of Christian work abroad and to discover to what extent missionary organizations, policies, and programs should be continued, modified, or supplemented." The repudiation of this tragic blunder-book is referred to only incidentally (p. 340). This chapter also has a blind spot in that the inauguration of all men of the Christian Scriptures, and finality and absoluteness of Christianity and the universal need of Jesus Christ as the sole Saviour of the world. In these earlier years the aims and objectives which dominated those who went and those who sent were relatively clear and definite."

The reader may well ponder the words of Brunner with gratitude: "We who today are engaged in theological work have all as far as our training is concerned come out of that ice age. If the Christian faith is what Luther understood by the word, then that which those who went and those who sent engaged in theological work have all as far as our training is concerned come out of that ice age. If the Christian faith is what Luther understood by the word, then that which those who went and those who sent were relatively clear and definite."
To my mind there is something particularly interesting about a novel whose main interest lies in the analysis of moral growth or deterioration. Compromise, however, soon loses much of its initial interest because the reader is never certain whether the hero or the system is most to blame for his downfall. Professor France seems to blame the system; but the hero is himself so irresolute, so uncertain of what he wants, so unable to abide by a decision when once it is made, that by the end of the book the reader feels small sympathy for his plight. The astonishing last chapter which reverses all of Emory's previous life and melodramatically reforms him at the death-bed of the girl he might have married but didn't is not very convincing. It is hard to believe that such a chapter could ever find its way into a serious political novel of this day and age. What might have been a powerful study of political corruption and its demoralizing effect on human character becomes instead a somewhat muddled account of the hero's weakness and vacillation.

**MARIANNE VOS RADUIS**

### THE SOUL OF THE ESKIMO

**ARCTIC ADVENTURE.** By Peter Freuchen. 66 Illustrations. 567 pages. New York, Farrar and Rinehart. $3.50.

ONE would, from the reading of the old sagas and from the reading of some of our modern literature that approaches the epical, get the impression that it is only the fight with nature, with the more elemental forces that is worthy of the hero in us. Peter Freuchen, as a young man preparing for the profession of medicine, loses his interest and drops his work when he sees how ineffectual man's efforts at improvement turn out to be, how destructive human beings are. He sees a person, almost miraculously restored to health and vigor by the advances in modern surgery and hospital treatment, run down and killed by an automobile as he takes his first steps again out into the world.

Freuchen, whose love seems rather to have been for the open anyway, turns his back upon civilization and goes on exploring expedition to Greenland. There he finds his real interest, there he lives and explores and goes through experiences which related for us in his narrative, Arctic Adventure, have already come to be regarded as of epic quality. What he tells of Eskimo life and customs, particularly relations within the family and between the sexes, brings home to us the thought that there are others who still live quite differently than we do. Their fights with nature brings them closer to the practice of mutual aid in many respects than we are in our more artificial, more abundant life. But the common faults, envy, selfishness, greed have a way of cropping out among them nevertheless, and usually more openly, more brutally than among us. Freuchen's experiences in the North are almost as startling as those told of in the old sagas. Terrible hardships in crossing the ice-covered sea or the frigid wastes of the Greenland ice cap, near drowning, threatened starvation,—these are adventures such as our easier life makes almost unbelievable. Woven through them runs the thread of Freuchen's love for and marriage with a remarkable Eskimo girl.

True, this is the stuff that makes a man's blood course a bit faster through his veins. Yet the thoughtful reader is inclined to wonder whether Freuchen's zest for adventure and his resourcefulness in meeting the adventures that he relates cannot and should not be met in the very field that he left, that of human carelessness, misery, failure,—human problems of every sort right in the heart of civilization.

There is in the experiences of the people whose lives Freuchen tells of much that confirms us that one of the dominant notes of life is the tragic. The way in which the author and the people of Greenland meet such experiences is highly courageous. In their fortitude and resourcefulness here really come into their own. One is surprised, however, how these are maintained, when one considers that the base of them is little more than ignorant superstition, than pagan fatalism.
Frustration upon frustration faces the Eskimo when confronted by the forces of an inexorable nature. Frustration is the hallmark of life of man, so common that many of us have shut away from the serious situations of this life as beyond solution, manifesting even less courage, less resourcefulness than the Eskimo with all his superstitious attitude toward life. Objective in a measure that engages one a person like Freuchen can be. Yet it would seem that there can be no objectivity quite as serene, nor quite as efficacious as that of him who has come to face life from the vantage point of the risen Lord. What higher objectivity can there be than that of the individual who sees all of life from the point of view of the revealed will of God? Such a one can and does admit the possibility of frustration, but he realizes also that the spirit is victorious after all. Besides, such a one sees in the very life and deeds of Christian men and women a sufficient victory to enable others to see the worth-whilenes of their endeavor, and to face life in the same faith and in the same spirit.

H. J. R.

THOSE SEVENTY WEEKS

In this pamphlet Mr. Mauro explains the famous prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27. His exposition is an abbreviation of that found in his larger work, The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation, which we heartily commend to the reader. The main thrust of the argument is against the position of many mil­lenarians, who separate the seventieth week from the sixty-nine preceding weeks, saying that the entire Christian dispensation intervenes. Herein the author seems to us in the right, and his reasoning irrefutable.

ALBERTUS PIETERS.

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