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# THE CALVIN FORUM

A MONTHLY

Christmas and Peace  
An Editorial

The Fulness of Time  
The First Advent

Handel's Messiah  
A Hallowed Tradition

The Pleroma of Chronos  
Time—God—Christ

The Election in Retrospect  
A Few Observations

The Communist Menace  
I Was Just Thinking.....

Values of Praying  
What Prayer Is and Does

# The CALVIN FORUM

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# The CALVIN FORUM

VOLUME II

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## EDITORIALS

### Christmas and Peace

ONE of the perversions of the Christmas message is the idea that world peace, the cessation of war between nations, is the central purpose of the coming of Jesus into the world. The reason why this delusion can be preached so widely from Christian pulpits on Christmas day lies undoubtedly in the fact that it contains a half truth which is not to be despised. A follower of Christ is a man of peace. No Christian delights in dissension, bitterness, or war between individuals, groups, or nations. A true Christian will do all in his power to avert war, to promote peace. The follower of Jesus Christ can take no delight in running the bayonet through a fellowman. The Christian stands committed to a political program in which the promotion of world peace must hold a prominent place. He who reads in his Bible, "as much as lieth in you keep peace with all men," cannot be indifferent toward all sincere efforts to promote world understanding and world peace between the nations. But it is a terrible perversion of the Christmas message that the purpose of Jesus' coming into the world is the promotion of world peace, the cessation of war and misunderstanding between the nations. Although Christianity has a real bearing upon every relationship of human life, Christ did not come to promote international understanding between the nations of the world. Christ came to establish peace between God and man. That is basic. The modernist presupposes that sin is a matter of human misunderstanding and that man is able to save himself by creating world understanding, world brotherhood. Jesus thus becomes the great prophet of the gospel of world brotherhood and the central task of the churches is to bring about human brotherhood by church union and world peace. All this is a distortion of the gospel, and the man who with this background tells us that Christ came "to bring peace on earth" has not touched the hem of the robe of the Christmas message. The peace that Christ came to bring was not achieved by preaching world brotherhood, neither by Christ Himself nor by His followers. That peace was to come by way of Calvary, by way of atonement for sin, by way of reconciliation with God. No man will appreciate the peace of Christmas who minimizes the holiness of God and the terrible reality of sin. The Christmas message humbles man as a poor sinner and then exalts the Christ who alone was able to effect peace between God and man. The modernist exalts man and tells him at the manger of Bethlehem that he must become a champion of world

peace. The Socialist and the Modernist and even the atheistic Humanist can exploit the manger of Bethlehem on Christmas Day for their earthly, moralistic, this-worldly humanism, but the peace about which they prate is not the peace of the message of the angels. Whoever has fathomed the spiritual meaning of Christmas will not eclipse the "Pax Divina" of which the angels spoke by prating of a mere "Pax Romana" or "Pax Humana."

C. B.

### The Statue of Liberty Assumes New Meaning

THE recent celebration of the semi-centennial of the presentation of the Statue of Liberty by France to our country has focussed the attention anew upon the symbolism which it represents. This symbolism has gained new significance from the fact that the liberty of which it has been the outstanding monument on this continent is being spurned and jeopardized in various parts of the world. Before the rise of European dictatorships we just took our liberties for granted. Singing "America" began, for many, to have something of the cheap atmosphere of our erstwhile florid and bombastic Fourth of July orations about it. Though to many an immigrant the uplifted torch at the mouth of New York harbor had at least at one time in his life meant a real thrill, of late we Americans, whether native-born or naturalized, were beginning to take the Liberty Maid with her uplifted torch for granted, as though she were a good old grandmother whom no one would think of forgetting but who, for the rest, did not enter very deeply into the reality of present-day life and its struggles. All that has changed. Germany, Russia, and Italy have demonstrated to the world — and that by way of an awful contrast — what liberty means. These countries, at least the fascistic among them, ridicule democracy. To them democracy means indecision, weakness, the strife of parties. Fascism to them means unity, strength, nationalism, power. But the democratic nations will not be fooled. To reinstate dictatorship is to fall back miserably in the scale of civilization. It is trampling upon the social and spiritual values which the Christian nations have gradually achieved in the realm of statecraft. Protestant Christianity, especially in its Calvinistic expression, has ever gone hand in hand with the championing of that high degree of liberty in church and state which is associated with republican, parliamentary, democratic government. Biblical Christians have never subscribed to the doctrine that the voice of the people is the voice

of God, but they have been equally averse to equating the will of a dictator with the will of the Almighty. Enlightened statecraft champions the will of the people and does not tolerate the tyranny of an autocrat. Neither fascism nor communism, but democracy allows for the greatest development of man's freedom and social happiness. Far from being outmoded, the plea for liberty gains new meaning and added import in our day. We look at the Statue of Liberty with a new enthusiasm, and we sing "Our fathers' God, to Thee, Author of liberty" with a new and deeper meaning than ever before.

C. B.

### Social Security for the Laboringman

THE thoughtful Christian citizen who was not blinded by partisanship in the recent election could not help being impressed by two outstanding issues. These issues, I believe, have weighed heavily in the pre-election mind of the Christian voter, and they have lost none of their value and importance now that the election is over. The first is that of social security; the second that of liberty versus regimentation. Each of these presents a moral issue of first-rate importance. President Roosevelt and his party stood for a definite program of social security. In fact, legislation for such security in the industrial sphere has already been enacted and will go into effect on next New Year's Day. Whatever fault—if any—may justifiably be found with the details of this program, the principle embodied in this program is sound and the adoption of such legislation was long overdue. Under the terms of this Old Age Benefit of the Social Security Act twenty-six million industrial workers are being registered; the government will exact a tax from both employer and employee (the latter from his wages but to be paid by the employer); and when the worker has reached the age of 65 he can retire from work on a moderate pension. This pension will not be a matter of charity, but of right. He himself will have paid toward it just as well as his employer, and the government will add interest on the sum so collected by taxation. This arrangement will raise the self-respect of the worker and will give him a higher degree of economic independence. The President in championing this legislation and getting it enacted by the congress was acting entirely in harmony with the principles of sound Christian ethics and an enlightened leadership in these days of economic turmoil and struggle. Many European countries—notably among them, the Netherlands with its Christian political leadership—have had such legislation in force for years. William Allen White, outstanding among American editors, a Kansan, and a supporter of the defeated presidential candidate, has written these fine words, every one of which we endorse from the heart: "Government has a mandate to curb cunning greed and to balk the antisocial plans of the strong. Under that mandate the American government should move into a position where it will do something about the obvious maladjustment of Ameri-

can income and a more equitable distribution of the products of American industry. The laborer, if Roosevelt makes good, will be worthy of his hire and get it. The man who has invested his life and the work of his hands in an industry should have reason to suppose that he will have as much consideration as the invested dollar in that industry."

C. B.

### Sham Liberty and Real Liberty

OF AT least as great moral significance as the social security legislation is the issue of government control versus individual liberty. Also this issue was distorted in the heat of the campaign. The apparent apathy on this score of the victorious party was matched, if not surpassed, by the distortion in which the now defeated party indulged. Looking at the problem apart from the heat and exaggeration of party strife, we may possibly register a few conclusions on which men of Christian convictions and background ought to be agreed. Believing as we do in the soundness of the principles of American democracy, every tendency in the direction of an economico-political dictatorship ought to be resisted. The communistic tendencies of some of the extreme advisers of the President must be repudiated. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the old *laissez-faire* policy is not only inadequate but positively immoral in its actual operation in modern economic society. To plead for freedom in the old unrestricted sense is not to champion freedom but economic slavery. It is nothing less than cruel to talk about the freedom of the worker when that worker is virtually forced to live on starvation wages. The "glorious liberty" for which some political leaders have pleaded with impassioned oratory frequently reduces in our modern economic society to the liberty of the economically strong to squeeze the life blood out of the economically weak. The government not only has the right but the duty to curb the "liberty" of the capitalists when it is used to exploit the worker. It is the solemn duty of the government to protect the weak from the threatened injustice and oppression of the strong. And to these two principles a third must be added. The government—we firmly believe—must not rule a bit more than is strictly necessary for the common good. There is no room for a paternalistic, autocratic, or dictatorial government among men of enlightened Christian thinking. The almighty state, whether in its fascistic or in its communistic form, can never be harmonized with the basic thrust of a sound Christian philosophy of government. After due allowance has been made for government control and regulation wherever the common good and the protection of the rights of the weak demand it, it is hardly possible to place too great emphasis upon the freedom of each individual and of each organic group in human society (business, industry, church, school, etc.) to pursue its own course with the least possible government interference. When the plea for liberty is made with this distinct understanding, it can hardly be made too strong.

C. B.

## Guarding Our Religious Liberties

**S**AFEGUARDING the religious liberties of its subjects has ever been one of the glories of our republic. Democracy and religious freedom go hand in hand. The genius of dictatorship in all its forms — Nazistic, fascistic, and communistic — is hostile to religious liberty as well as to all liberty. In a dictatorship every phase of national life is regimented by the government. Every individual, every group, and every institution becomes the servant of the almighty state, which means the almighty dictator. Also the church must become an instrument for the propagation of the ideals of the autocratic state. Since the Russian dictatorship considers all religion the sworn enemy of its Marxian, materialist philosophy, it would wipe out the church. In Germany the radical groups are displacing Christianity with a revived Teutonic paganism, and the less radical insist that the national church shall conform its preaching of the Christian gospel to the prejudices and hobbies of Herr Hitler and his crowd. In our land, fascism with its repudiation of religious liberty will not find the ready acceptance which it has enjoyed in many European countries. But let us not say with too much confidence that "it cannot happen here." The spirit of the Ku Klux Klan, with its racial bigotry and religious intolerance, is typically fascistic. The Black Legion, recently unearthed and brought to justice in the state of Michigan, is of the same stripe. The growing godlessness and blatant atheism propagated not only in Washington Square, New York, but in many of our leading universities as well, will in the end prove to be just as bitter and intolerant. Meanwhile, while these movements are and will for a long time remain small minorities, it is well for all who are in earnest about religious liberty in our republic to guard against the entrance of the fascistic leaven under the guise of religious pleading. When Dr. Samuel Shoemaker, of New York's fashionable Calvary Episcopal Church, writes, as he did recently, "It seems to me that any government which has the people's interests at heart has the right and the duty to say whether religion, as the Churches preach and practice it, is genuinely beneficial to the people," this outstanding leader among the Buchmanites is propagating dangerous and un-American doctrine.

C. B.

## The Struggle Between Democracy and Dictatorship

**O**N the surface the great game which statesmen are playing upon the European chess board is a contest between fascism and communism. One could make a good case for reading contemporaneous European history in the light of this conflict between "rightist" and "leftist" forces. But although the immediate and present struggle is largely determined by this alternative, the deeper and ultimate issue at stake is the future of democratic government. Europe seems to be moving in the direction of a terrible conflict, but whether a war is in the offing or not, there can be no doubt that the forces championing two hostile forms of government are becoming increasingly solidified and arrayed against one another. And these two forces, we believe, are not fascism and communism, but democracy and

dictatorship. It is true that such fascistic countries as Germany and Italy are at present most uncompromising and most bitter against communism; it is true that Russia is the sworn enemy of its Nazi neighbor; it is true that the ghastly struggle going on in Spain is also readily interpreted in terms of a war between "leftist" and "rightist" forces. Nevertheless, one cannot help sensing that the great struggle that is coming, and perhaps now is, will be that in which democracy will fight for its life with dictatorships. Beyond dispute, Germany and Italy are the most aggressive, the most defiant, and the most militaristic nations in the European scene. They are unified, enthusiastic, intensely nationalistic, and . . . armed to the teeth. They need not throw the gauntlet at the feet of Great Britain and France by provoking a war. In a very real sense that gauntlet has been thrown to these democracies already. Democracy is on trial in Europe. A peace-at-any-price policy, such as the radical pacifist groups in these countries have vigorously propagated, will prove to be suicidal. A genuine democracy is peace-loving, but it cannot love peace at any price and survive. At least not in a world in which such dictators as Hitler and Mussolini set the pace. We fervently hope and pray that God may grant peace to the European nations, but if war comes, the real issue at stake will undoubtedly be the free institutions — religious as well as political — of such democracies as Great Britain and France, Holland and Belgium, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries.

C. B.

## Poor, Bleeding, War-Torn Spain

**T**HE eyes of the world are on Spain. Poor, bleeding Spain, torn asunder by civil war. The country of intrigue and revolution, of wholesale bombings and mass executions. The eyes of the world are on Spain, moreover, because Spain may be the powder keg that will blow up before long and start a general European conflagration. Spain is Europe's sore spot. The widespread infection in the body politic of Europe is coming to a concentrated eruption in an ugly ulcer, and that ulcer is Spain. It is hard telling how long this human butchery may continue in the Iberian peninsula. Even if the fall of Madrid should be imminent, this would not end the civil war. Meanwhile we may well do two things. Pray for the return of peace to this house divided against itself, and get straightened out on the underlying forces and issues in this struggle. Of the latter there is just about as much need as of the former. It is surprising how much ignorance and confusion there is in the mind of many otherwise intelligent Christians about the forces and issues operating in this Spanish struggle. For one thing, this is not a struggle between the forces of an atheistic, communistic revolution on the one hand, and the duly constituted government backed up by Christian forces on the other. A few things that must be kept in mind in order to keep the picture straight — yes, and also to keep our prayers for Spain straight — are the following: The present government is a democracy. It did not come into existence by revolution but is duly elected by the overwhelming vote of the people last February. It is against this legally-elected government that the present rebels have revolted, thus precipitating a civil war. The rebels are not the radicals, but the conservatives,

both politically and religiously. The Roman Catholic ecclesiastical leaders side with the rebels. The Roman Church in Spain is very corrupt. The educated are either indifferent or frankly hostile toward it. The masses have been held in the bonds of ignorance, superstition, and ecclesiastical domination. Spain is a priest-ridden nation. The Church is fabulously rich and owns what no church in any Protestant country would ever own. The Roman clergy identifies all Protestantism with unbelief and atheism. Leaders in the present government are marked by a deep hatred for the corrupt Roman Church, but it is only the most radical among them that are hostile to all religion. Many of them are favorably disposed toward Protestant Churches. The present government stands for the improvement of the economic condition of the masses, for republicanism over against monarchism and fasc-

ism, and for the separation of Church and State. In this bitter struggle, in which some 200,000 lives have already been sacrificed, the line-up may be described as follows: On the one hand the duly elected government, backed up by all democratic groups, including the socialists and communists, as well as the aroused Roman Catholic working men; and on the other the Roman Catholic Church, the royalists, the wealthy, and a large part of the army. The fascist nations are on the side of the rebels. Russia and the present leftist government of France on the side of the loyalists. And the democracies of Europe (insofar as these have expressed themselves) are on the side of the duly elected government. Query: On which side of this struggle would William of Orange and Cromwell have been?

C. B.

## THE FULNESS OF TIME

Ralph Stob, Ph. D.

*Professor of the Greek Language and Literature and President of Calvin College*

**I**N the epistle to the Galatians Paul declares that the Son of God was sent into the world in the fulness of time. It is the object of this study to attempt a description of the civilized world at the time of the Advent, that the "fulness of time" concept may become richer.

We in America are accustomed to having our nation described as the "melting-pot." Into it the blood of all nations has been poured and the peoples of all lands rub shoulders together. Something similar happened long ago in the days of what is called Graeco-Roman civilization. That, too, was a time of the mingling of the peoples of the Mediterranean basin. The Mediterranean world was a seething cauldron in which every type of human idea, every striving, every ambition was found.

There were in the world at that time three outstanding nations who dwelt along the shores of the Mediterranean. These are the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans. And the remarkable thing is that the influence of each of these is traceable to the limits of the two others.

### Israel

Let us begin with Israel. From Moses on a long line of seers and singers had spoken to the people of Israel in the name of Jehovah. Building on Moses and adding thereto in the process of unfolding the truth of God, prophet after prophet had brought his message. This long row of prophets ends with Malachi. In the providence of God the revelation of the Old Testament had been completed.

The peculiar content of that revelation is often briefly described as ethical montheism. To Israel was revealed the true conception of one supreme, sovereign God to whom were ascribed the highest ethical attributes. To Moses it was revealed that the God of Israel was an only God, and that holiness, righteousness, truth, mercy characterized Him. And because God was so conceived and known by the Israelites, a life corres-

ponding to these high conceptions was incumbent on men.

It is quite generally agreed that there is this element of distinctiveness in the teaching of the Old Testament. The task of Israel then, was to receive this revelation from God, and then to make it known to the world. Because it was such a unique thing, every precaution must be taken to keep it intact. Therefore, Israel must be separate from the nations. In Palestine the truth is to be gradually unfolded. To preserve it, contacts with pagan nations are to be avoided as much as possible.

It was said that this course of revelation goes on until the time of Malachi. This was about 450 B. C. The heights of revelation through mere men have now been scaled. If anything additional is to be given, the means to be employed must be of another character. And that is precisely what the New Testament teaches. Formerly God spoke through men in divers ways, but now at the last he speaks through His own Son. The additional revelation must come through the incarnation.

### The Dispersion

But before that momentous event something else must happen. After Malachi, Israel no longer lives in isolation. Rather the nation becomes scattered everywhere throughout the Mediterranean basin. This scattering had been going on since the days of Jeremiah, but increased remarkably in the age after Alexander the Great. In following the travels of Paul, we see that the sons of Israel are in every city in the Mediterranean world.

Thus these Jews are as seed sown among all the peoples of the ancient world. Wherever they go they carry with them their high conception of God, and the calling of man to live a morally clean life. The pagan world heard from the lips of these Jews and saw in their lives higher conceptions of the nature and the will of God than any found among their own noble thinkers.

But another fact is that between the years 250 and 150 B. C. something truly momentous had been done. As these Jews lived one, two, three generations among the pagans, they discovered that their children could no longer read the writings of Moses and the prophets in their own tongue. The language of the academic and mercantile world was Greek. At this time then the Old Testament was translated into the Greek language. Now the sons of Israel could again read the sacred writings. But that is not all. Now for the first time the pagans could get a first hand knowledge of these very writings. Thus through the Dispersion and through the Septuagint the Israelite ideas of God and man were spread widely through the ancient world.

### **Greek Culture**

When we turn to Greece to view the general trend and history of her civilization, we face a totally different kind of people. The Israelites are Orientals but the Greeks are Occidentals. That explains much in the outlook of each. The essential contribution of Israel lay in the field of religion and morality. The glory that was Greece lay in architecture, sculpture, literature, science, philosophy. The genius of the Greek people is characterized by supreme achievements in three directions. There was with them an intense love of knowledge, love of the beautiful, and love of freedom.

This Greek genius had reached unprecedented heights in the fifth century before Christ. The center of that Greek life was in Athens. There the great sculptors, architects, dramatists, philosophers, poets, painters produced their masterpieces. Alexander the Great felt himself called to conquer all other nations and to spread this marvelous civilization throughout the then known world. Down the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, into Egypt, on to Babylon, and even to India the armies of Alexander go.

From Greece itself then flows an activity by which Greek civilization is made to penetrate among barbarian peoples. To the East and to the West the civilization spread. As was the case with the Jews, so again it is with these Greeks. In Spain, in Italy, in Palestine, in Syria, Africa, Egypt the culture predominant was Greek. The Hellenes and the Hellenic spirit have penetrated into all the peoples living in the Mediterranean basin. It is Greek learning, Greek art, Greek science that rules the world of culture of the time. The Roman poet, Horace, sighs that "conquered Greece has subdued her conquerors." For, though Roman arms defeated Greek, the Greek spirit vanquished the Romans.

### **Roman Civilization**

And now the Romans, whose achievements are radically different from those of Greece. The character of the people was neither strongly intellectual nor artistic, as was that of the Greeks. Their stronghold in the realm of achievement lay in the direction of the practical and the utilitarian. In the field of organization, of institutions, of military conquest, of law and the science of government they rose to heights never before attained.

The great achievement of these Romans was in the field of military organization and control. The armies went forth to conquer Europe, reaching as far as the

British Isles. Around the Mediterranean they defeated Carthage, conquered Greece, Palestine, Egypt. To facilitate continued control they built excellent roads, and they made the seas safe from pirates. The Romans moved in all directions, until the then inhabited world was under their control.

### **A Threefold Contribution**

The result of the investigation is that the civilization of the Graeco-Roman world is made up of three main strands. Throughout the Roman world at the time of the advent there were three civilizations mingling with one another. The Jew had gone forth or had been taken from his native land and was influencing life everywhere. The Greek, with his ideals and ideas, was equally ubiquitous. And likewise Roman legions, tax-gatherers, governors, and as a result Roman institutions and practices were everywhere. The superscription on the cross is conclusive evidence that these three lived side by side.

Looking at the contribution which each was to make the following can be said: From Israel comes into the world not only the revelation in the Old Testament, but in Jesus Christ and through His apostles comes the final truth. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In the main, as touching all the essential and fundamental teachings of Christianity, the source is to be found in Israel. But Greece, through its severe thinking, had been led to grapple with ultimate problems. Furthermore, it had fashioned a language in which the height and depth of thought could be expressed quite adequately. To convey divine truth a fine instrument must be used. The Greek then was the means of giving formal expression to the Truth. The contribution of the Romans is to make possible the propagation of this content and form. Because the Roman empire extended so widely, St. Paul could travel with comparative safety and ease whithersoever he felt called to bring the gospel.

The chief contributory forces in the Graeco-Roman world have been indicated, and the total impression which one should have is that of mixture. The East moved West, and the West moved East. The last century before Christ is a conglomerate something. The barriers between the nations have been broken down. As a result there is an increased sense of brotherhood among men. Because the city-states of Greece and Rome had been swallowed up in the empire which was distant and abstract, individualism grew by leaps and bounds.

### **The Light of the World**

In this world of mixture one discovers the following. Epicureanism and Stoicism flourished side by side. The one exalted pleasure as the end of living; the other glorified wisdom. Oriental asceticism crept in. All philosophical schools had their adherents. Ardent enthusiasm for learning as well as distrust of all knowledge. Stern morality and licentiousness lived side by side. Seriousness of purpose and honesty of effort were found as well as bland cynicism, indifference, despair. The old mythology perforated by arguments of philosophers still held an important place among the populace. To some devotion to the Gods was a serious task, to others a mere formality. Still others denied the

existence of these gods. And others relegated them to the high heavens where they lived in supreme indifference to the affairs of men. Noble intellectual conceptions of the gods held sway among some, among others mysticism ran riot. It was an age of magic, of wonder-

working. A profound distrust of everything characterized some. Again there was hope and confidence. There was a general hope of a Savior-God who was looked for among the religions of the East. And from the East came the Light of the World.

## HANDEL'S "MESSIAH"

Seymour Swets, A.M.

*Professor of Music, Calvin College. Director of the Augmented Calvin College Chorus  
Rendering Handel's "Messiah" for the Seventeenth Season This Month*

THE custom among us of singing Handel's "Messiah" each year at Christmas time is almost old enough to be called a tradition. Perhaps the question never occurs to many lovers of the "Messiah," whether or not this is a good tradition. For them Christmas would not be Christmas without it.

Nevertheless there are those who question the worth of this custom. In the main these fall into three classes: those who have never heard the work performed; those who have heard it and are not impressed; and those sophisticated critics who are blind to its true worth.

I can readily see that one who has not heard the "Messiah" cannot understand why it should be repeated annually. I admit, too, that there are intelligent lovers of music who are not impressed by the music of the "Messiah," for the same reason that they are not impressed by a Haydn or Mozart symphony. But I cannot agree with those critics who wish to consign the "Messiah" to the limbo of outmoded things along with Handel's operas, knee breeches, and powdered wigs.

I do not think that it is particularly significant musically or educationally for a chorus to sing only the "Messiah." If the "Messiah" is rendered each Christmas, another oratorio or large choral work ought to be presented in the spring; so that a student spending four years at college could learn the "Messiah" and at least four more major choral works.

Nevertheless, I believe that the tradition should be continued because it is a good one. For the "Messiah" lover this needs no argument, but I think it can be shown that this oratorio is a superior work of art; and it is a good thing for people to become intimately acquainted, again and again, with a great work of art, especially when that work exerts a profound influence for good.

### Great Music Set to Great Words

The oratorio "Messiah" is based entirely on passages of Scripture. The work is divided into three parts. Part I includes the foretelling of the Messiah by the prophets, the celestial announcements heralding this birth, and the reception of the "tidings of great joy" by the shepherds. The second part treats of the Saviour's passion, death, and exaltation, and of the establishment of the gospel in the land. Part three amounts in essence to a mighty "Credo" declaring the truths of the existence of Christ, the resurrection, eternal justice, and the surety of eternal happiness. Here is a text which would test the strength of the mightiest composer.

There have been many attempts to set these words to music since Handel's day. To convince one that Handel succeeded in a masterful fashion one needs only to examine the run of Christmas and Easter cantatas. Even the best of them seem to pale into insignificance when compared to Handel's brilliant achievement. It is rather universally agreed that the "Messiah" is great music set to great words. For almost 200 years the Reverend Charles Jennens has been credited with the arrangement of the libretto. This conceited clergyman, who also tried to rewrite Shakespeare, seems to be the sole objector to the way in which Handel set the words. In a letter quoted by Rockstro, Jennens remarks: "He has made a fine entertainment of it though not near so good as he might and ought to have done. I have with great difficulty made him correct some of the grossest faults in the composition, but he retained his overture obstinately in which there are some passages far unworthy of Handel, but much more unworthy of the 'Messiah.'"

The rest of mankind has not shared Jennens objections. Incidentally, the world has since learned to laugh at Jennens for it has been discovered recently that this proudly rich and superior person was not the composer of the libretto at all, but that his poor, sniveling secretary by the name of Pooley compiled the text and that the detestable Jennens pawned it off to the world as his own work.

The rest of mankind has agreed, and rightly so, that the "Messiah" is the supreme monument to Handel's genius. Compared to his other oratorios, the "Messiah" choruses are less complicated, grander in their simple style, and more deeply expressive.

### Counterpoint and Harmony

Musically the "Messiah" is typically XVIIIth century. That fact for some people is at once its chief condemnation. Some years ago an intelligent music lover remarked to me that he might enjoy the "Messiah" more keenly if it had been written by someone else, for example a later composer. What this man felt was that the criticism of XVIIIth Century classical music also applied to the "Messiah"; that it was formal, objective, impersonal and lacking in color. Now if Wagner, (let us suppose it) had written the "Messiah" one hundred years later there would undoubtedly be more of the romantic, the subjective element in it, there would be much more of delicate color changes and responsiveness to moods, simply because the art of expressing moods advanced unmistakably during the XIXth century, notably by means of the symphony orchestra.

But it would still be a question whether a more modern or colorful setting of the "Messiah" would be superior to Handel's. For this masterpiece is without doubt vastly superior to anything the XVIIIth century produced with the single exception of Bach's "Mass in B Minor"; and, in its class, superior to anything the XIXth century produced.

It must be remembered that modern harmony established itself during the life of Handel. Before him counterpoint was the prevailing method. The difference between harmony and counterpoint can be illustrated by saying that in counterpoint the composer thinks along horizontal lines, i. e., his interest lies in combining melodies. In harmony the emphasis is vertical. There is one melody, usually the soprano, and a sub-structure of harmony based on simple triads.

Handel, the giant of choral music, lived just at the time when harmony had assumed an independent existence, but before the importance of counterpoint had passed away. His wonderful genius seized both styles and made the utmost of each. The fact that the Handelian choruses can be sung by groups numbering a thousand or more and that the accompaniment can be played by several massed symphony orchestras or organs and withal be made to sound well, proves that at least Handel was a master builder who built soundly. One hardly knows what to admire most, his sublime masses of harmony, or his skilfully varied and melodious contrapuntal choruses.

The airs, though conventional in form, speak straight to the heart of the hearer, and in them Handel reached a height of melodic spontaneity never attained again throughout a whole work. It seems that in the "Messiah" alone every number is worthy of being forever associated with the words to which it is set.

### **Handel Inspired**

Handel was a dramatist at heart and remained so all his life. If it were only for his operas he would be as dead as his king, George I. He gave his life to opera and not until repeated failures compelled him, did he turn to oratorio in the hope of recouping his losses. Because of this, some have called him an opportunist. I like, rather, to think that God used Handel to give expression to great art in a new form with the authority of a prophet.

At first Handel regarded this as a concession to public taste and a departure from his dramatic ideals. But later he came to realize that his mission lay precisely in the direction of oratorio. He found that oratorio did not imply self-suppression but rather that it offered unprecedented opportunities for his matchless powers of choral composition.

Because of the fact that Handel spent the best years of his life writing opera some critics have concluded that the Messiah is of a piece with his operas. It is true that these operas have been forgotten ever since the day of performance except for an occasional air such as the "Largo" from the opera "Xerxes." But it does not follow that the "Messiah" should also be cast into oblivion because it is no better. Only this past summer I was informed that it was a mistake to weave a halo of religious observance around the performance of the "Messiah" because it was not a sacred work; it

was nothing more than a glorified XVIIIth century opera.

Glorified! — there's the word. This critic forgot that the "Messiah" is not an ordinary human work. It is a superhuman work! When the libretto was brought to Handel he set to work upon it and in twenty-four days the whole of the oratorio was set down on paper. This fact alone marks one of the greatest achievements in the history of musical composition. But more, I believe that Handel in those twenty-four days was inspired as few mortals have been inspired. He withdrew himself completely from the world so that he dwelt — he was convinced that he dwelt — in the pastures of God.

Newman Flower says, "He was unconscious of the world during that time, unconscious of its press and call: his whole mind was in a trance. He did not leave the house; his man-servant brought him food and as often as not returned in an hour to the room to find the food untouched, and his master staring into vacancy." His servant said that he often stood silent with astonishment to see his master's tears mixing with the ink. A friend who called on him as he was setting those pathetic words, "He was despised and rejected of men," said that Handel was actually sobbing. When he had completed the "Hallelujah chorus" he was overcome with emotion and through a storm of tears exclaimed, "I did think I did see the heavens before me and the great God Himself." Never in his life had he experienced such an intense emotional upheaval and he never experienced it again. For twenty-four days he knew those mountain tops of the soul where he breathed the pure air of God's presence.

### **Handel's Religious Faith**

From all this it must not be inferred that Handel was consistently religious all his life. It has been said that for him, charity was the true religion. He loved God in the poor. For the rest he was by no means religious in the strict sense of the word, except at the close of his life, after the loss of his sight had cut him off from the society of his kind and isolated him almost completely. Hawkins used to see him then in the last three years of his life, diligently attending the services of his parish church — St. George's, Hanover Square — kneeling and manifesting by his gestures and his attitude the most fervent devotion. During his last illness he said: "I wish I might die on Good Friday in the hope of joining my God, my sweet Lord and Saviour on the day of His resurrection." Incidentally, he died on the following day, Saturday morning.

During his life he rarely attended a place of worship. A Lutheran by birth, he wished to die in the communion of his fathers and was regarded by the Anglicans in London as very much of an unbeliever.

Whatever his faith, he had a lofty conception of the moral obligations of art. He wanted his art to contribute to the uplift of his fellow men. It is for this reason that Handel regarded his "Messiah" very highly. He seemed to sense that much of the best in himself had gone into the work. Late in life he declared that the chorus "He Saw the Lovely Youth" in "Theodora" was the greatest chorus he ever wrote. The "Hallelujah Chorus" was a close second and a favorite to the end of

his life. As a work apart, "Messiah" was his one creation that ever pleased him and which he never materially altered. Other works were constantly altered, revised and re-altered. But coming out of the crucible of twenty-four days of the most intense inspiration experienced by mortal music-maker, the "Messiah" stands as a finished work not to be tampered with through mundane methods in uninspired hours. Even the memory of the travail out of which this greatest of oratorios was born was sacred to Handel. The "Messiah" ever remained to him the one beautiful thing that held in it all those vagrant thoughts he had ever enjoyed of religion and its influence.

After "Messiah" had been produced in London he happened to call upon Lord Kinnoul, who had heard the work and complimented Handel upon it. "My Lord," replied Handel, "I should be sorry if I only entertained them; I wished to make them better."

### Mover of Souls

It will never be fully known how wide and how deep has been the influence of the "Messiah" on the hearts of men. It appeals to all classes regardless of standing or creed. No work has had equal power through God's grace to prepare men for a truly spiritual observance of Christmas or Easter. I can think of no work that has been a greater force for moral or spiritual uplift, that has brought more comfort in times of spiritual stress or solace in times of sorrow. Crowest in his book, *The Great Tone Poets*, exclaims: "What thousands of hearts must have been turned by his [Handel's] tone preaching! Where is the prelate who can move our souls as they are moved by Handel's 'Messiah?'"

Perhaps the greatest tangible results of Handel's masterpiece is that it inspires other composers to emulate him. In 1790, old papa Haydn heard the "Messiah" in London and it became the ambition of his declining years to write a great oratorio. The "Creation" and later "The Seasons" constituted Haydn's answer to that challenge. Inspired by the great Handel choruses Mendelssohn brought forth the "Elijah" and "St. Paul." And who can tell how great Handel's influence has been on choral composers since his day?

The "Messiah" was performed thirty-four times during Handel's lifetime but never upon the scale deemed adequate nowadays. At the Handel Commemoration in 1784, it was performed by an orchestra of two hundred forty-nine players and a chorus of two hundred seventy-five voices — the wonder of the day. Upon the centenary of his death in 1859 it was performed at Crystal Palace with an orchestra of four hundred sixty and a choir numbering two thousand seven hundred. There are many annual performances on a grand scale in England.

### The Messiah Tradition Lives On

No musical work has had such long continuous and enduring popularity as the "Messiah." An expert recently calculated that if the lowest royalty paid on a musical work had been paid on the "Messiah" since it was first sung in London, over two billion pounds would have been paid for performances in Britain alone.

America, too, has taken the "Messiah" to its heart from early times. In Boston it has been performed annually since 1818 by the Handel and Haydn Society. There are many "Messiah" traditions of long standing. Notable among these is the festival at Lindsborg, Kansas.

As Oberammergau lives for the "Passion Play," so does Lindsborg live for the "Messiah." In this community of Swedish-American farmer-folk the "Messiah" has been produced annually since 1881. With a chorus of four hundred students and townspeople and an orchestra of some fifty pieces the festival is in its fifty-fifth season. As to soloists, these simple folk demand the very best. At one time the late Schumann-Heink sang the contralto role and the fee necessary to bring her to Lindsborg amounted to a tax of seventy-five cents on each of the two thousand inhabitants of the town. Many of the singers sing the score from memory and at present there are three generations represented in the chorus with grandfathers and grandmothers supplying the stability that comes from long experience, and the grandsons and granddaughters contributing the freshness and enthusiasm of youth.

To these folk the "Messiah" is a religious festival. The oratorio is sung three times: on Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter. Thousands of people swarm in from the countryside, some from a distance of a hundred miles or more. And for what? To hear great music? Yes, but more than that! To hear the greatest story — the story of redemption sung to the grandest music yet heard by mortal man!

## BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN

Why was it that the angels sang  
Their message to proclaim  
That night so many years ago,  
When Christ the Saviour came?  
They heralded this great event  
Above the deeds of man,  
Because God thought of Bethlehem  
Before the world began.

Why was it that the sages came  
From lands so far away,  
To bring their worship and their gifts  
To where the Infant lay?  
They saw in Jesus' wondrous birth  
Fulfillment of God's plan,  
And knew He thought of Bethlehem  
Before the world began.

Why did God think of Bethlehem  
Before time came to be?  
Why did He ope the gates of Heaven  
To let its Light go free?  
When, for poor, dying sinners' needs,  
God sent the Son of Man,  
It was because He thought of me  
Before the world began.

VERNA SMITH TEEUWISSEN.

# THE PLEROMA OF CHRONOS

Henry Schultze, B.D.

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CHRONOS (Time) was god — a terrible, disappointing, devouring god was he. He was from the beginning. He was the Lord of heaven and earth. True, he had charge of the seasons. He introduced the day and night system. Consequently he was credited with all the earthly blessings that mankind received. But there was a fly in the ointment. Each Fall he would destroy the life that he extended to humanity in the Spring. He was also considered to be the sire of all the children of men, but he cruelly and ruthlessly devoured these children upon birth or shortly after. It stands to reason that such a god could not be appreciated by the people. In spite of all the prosperity that he brought, and in spite of all the promise of life that he gave, this remained an exceedingly joyless world. This god gave readily, but he snatched these gifts away again from the recipients. Men yearned for values that could be retained. They looked for deliverance from Chronos. Jupiter (Zeus) appeared for the rescue and won a final victory over that deceptive Chronos — the fulness of time.

## *Time an Oppressive Deity*

This is a myth, of course. But myths are often embodiments of firm convictions. They represent in symbolic form some hidden meaning "of physical, chemical, or astronomical fact, or of some moral, religious, philosophical truth." If that be true, there is here undeniable evidence that in the ancient Greek culture there appeared faint shadows of the truth which was and is clearly revealed to the children of God. However, instead of going forward with it they went backward and rested with blind satisfaction in some man-made religion with its man-conceived god. "Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

These ancient Greeks felt, however vaguely, and tried to express, however mythologically, a truth that every Christian today ought to acknowledge. It is this, that Time is god. He is an exceedingly oppressive god. Few gods there are, that demand and receive a more complete and devoted homage. He determines our every step. He comes with his irrevocable demands. He flashes opportunities before us only to withdraw them almost immediately. Men live feverishly and exhaustingly by the tick of the clock. They ascribe omniscience to him. "Time will tell, and only time can tell." "Time will solve all our problems." These express sentiments familiar to us all. He is regarded as sovereign. He gives birth to events and human beings, and then rules them with an iron and irresistible hand, only to swallow them up later on. Surely it takes but a bit of reflection to realize that Time is god, a selfish destroying god. Men properly illuminated sigh for relief. They want a Jupiter to break down the ruinous activity of Time, and activity doubly disheartening because it is at each beginning so promising.

## *Time Yields to God*

Now it is quite possible to find in this symbolic presentation of a truth an application of the statement that Jesus came into the world at "the fulness of time."

When one passes out of the labyrinth of exegetical difficulties and problems proffered by biblical commentators, and begins to search for some definite contents represented by the phrase, "the fulness of time," he will find that these will vary, depending upon the approach which is made.

A scholar may look at the phrase from the point of view of God, who sent His Son in the fulness of time. Now time is no god to God. He is exalted above it and is in no way subject to it. But He has a plan, a well-ordered plan, the items of which will come to pass in proper chronological order. That plan required the coming of Jesus at a definite point in time. Time had to and did yield at this point, because God had decreed. All the mistaken conceptions of the Jews about the coming of the Messiah did not move the date of Christ's appearance forward or backward a single day. The absolute absence of any apparent readiness on the part of men to receive the child of humble parents, born under destitute circumstances, did not postpone that blessed event for so much as a single moment. There was something irresistible about the coming of the Christ. Time had nothing to say when eternity spoke. And when the horizontal line of time is interrupted by the vertical line of eternity, it's a case of time's up for time. God had ordained the moment from the beginning and had foretold by His prophet the coming of the Messiah. That is the idea of St. Paul when he declares unto us that the heir "is under tutors and governors until *the time appointed by the Father.*" The tutors and governors were not consulted on the matter of the readiness on the part of the heir to receive the heritage.

## *Time of Preparation Ended*

"The fulness of time" may also be viewed from the angle of the recipients of the great gift of God. However little the world may seem to have been prepared to receive the Christ, it had as a matter of fact been ripened by God for just such an event as this. The Gospel was withheld until the world had arrived at a matured age. The law had to work out its educational purpose. Turning to the Jews, St. Paul found that they, prior to the coming of Christ, were in the age of tutorship. All of God's Old Testament Revelation centered about the law. The law's function was pedagogical in character. The Jews needed to learn two things in order to be prepared to receive the Christ. First, they must learn that sin is real and fatal in character, and that all existing systems are futile in giving sinners a way to stand in the presence of God and live. The law must serve as their schoolmaster to Christ. Second, they must also learn that God has found and offered a way out. This factor comes to its own in the promissory elements in the Old Testament.

And the Jews were far better prepared along these lines than their reaction to the Christ may lead us to believe. They longed fervently for the Messiah, though they were mistaken in identifying Him. The history of their nation and their experience had clearly taught that the way of the law did not bring them the relief that they sought. They were ready. The time had come. But sin rendered the readiness in countless cases ineffective.

In the case of the Gentile world, the situation was somewhat similar. The law of Moses had not been teaching them, but their experiences had. They had discovered that the highest culture that could possibly be attained by man left but an emptiness in their lives. Something or someone must come to bring the peace and the joy that men sought. Christ came at the moment when the highest unaided attainments of the human soul had proven that they were of no avail. Men were waiting for a new prophet, like the modernists of today who have discovered that the modernistic movement has run its course and is discredited. Thus from the recipients' point of view the time was ended, the time of preparation.

### The End of Time

There remains the possibility of looking at the fullness of time from the viewpoint of time itself.

The concept of the end of time was not and is not very prevalent outside of the realm of Special Revelation. Surely it was not and could not have been a very delightful contemplation. It was, however, very prominent in the thought of early Christianity. This new dispensation was the end of time. Time had been characterized by the reign of the Prince of this World. This time — this kind of a time — must end if complete deliverance is to be attained. And the moment one leaves the idea of a supernatural and catastrophic ending of time, he leaves the distinctively Christian field.

Hegel and his satellites, for instance, had developed a conception of God and the world in which the idea of the fullness of time in any Christian sense of the term was necessarily repudiated. He did not take the position that God came in the likeness of human flesh, but that He is *constantly becoming* man. He is coming to an ever fuller and richer manifestation as mankind continues to develop along evolutionistic lines. Incarnation becomes on this basis a continuous, never-ending process. There can be no once-for-all incarnation here. There is no room for the fullness of time. The coming of Jesus would stand out at best as a raise in the stream of time, because in and through him God manifested Himself outstandingly and perhaps even prematurely.

The Christian position calls for a supernatural intrusion of eternity in time, of God in human affairs. It calls for a Christ who is not only a revealer but also a deliverer — one who puts an end to all false and destructive gods, who promise but fail to fulfill, who give but only to take away, and who extend the open hand only to clench it in striking a blow. Jesus came to end that kind of a time and with it all time.

### The Fullness of Time

One wonders whether *pleroma* (fullness) will bear that sort of a connotation in the Scriptures. "In the Epistles it is used: of time to denote the period that fills up an epoch (Eph. 1:10, Gal. 4:4); of persons, the number required to make up a definite figure (Rom. 11:12, 25); of measure, to indicate the full capacity, the entire content (I Cor. 10:26, 28; Rom. 15:29); and of love which fulfills and completes the requirements of the law (Rom. 13:10)." That is to say, Jesus came when time was filled up, when it was done. No more could be put in time preparatory to the coming of the eternal One. He put a stop to the process of delusion and ruin. Time always pointed forward to Him and seemed to stop there. It doesn't emerge again, except to point back to Him. He's the center and when things come to Him they have reached their fulness.

If we should find any occasion to stumble because two thousand years have elapsed and the time is obviously not yet fulfilled, then it behooves us to note that the entire dispensation is regarded as the end of time. In principle time ended when Jesus first came. That was the end of the dispensations of time. But such an abrupt ending of time requires a tremendous amount of readjustment which will be completed only when Jesus comes again and time will be swallowed up of eternity. That is the end, the fulness, the *pleroma* of all time.

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## THE FIRST NOEL

Night on the plains of Judea,  
Darkness surrounds on all sides;  
Quietness reigns on the hillside,  
Peaceful contentment abides.

Bright are the plains of Judea,  
Darkness no longer holds sway;  
Voices are heard in the stillness,  
Ushering in a new day.

Angels descend on Judea,  
Bearing a message of love;  
Terrified shepherds first heard it,  
Bidden their fears to remove.

This day is born the world's Saviour,  
Lowly His manger bed lies.  
"Glory to God in the highest!" —  
Anon they return to the skies.

"Glory to God!" our heart echoes,  
Worshipful we, too, would bend,  
Bringing our soul's adoration,  
To Jesus, our Saviour and Friend.

S. G. B.

# THE ELECTION IN RETROSPECT

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THE presidential campaign of 1936 is history. The presidential campaign is a great show, probably the greatest spectacle on earth. There are few souls so dead as not to receive keen enjoyment and exhilaration from it. For myself I must confess that an early languor gave way to feverish interest as the campaign progressed to its climax. There is, to be sure, a great deal of make-believe about a campaign, but after blowing away the froth an impressive residue remains. In this country we are still free men, who, under God, choose our own rulers and determine the course of our government by balloting after free discussion. The sight of men and women freely casting their ballots was impressive. I confess to a thrill in casting my vote.

## I

Now that the election is over a few observations on the campaign, and, incidentally, our form of government, may be in order. The candidacy of Governor Landon again indicates that our form of government does not produce the strongest presidential candidates. To be nominated by one of the major parties a person must possess availability. This does not mean a national reputation acquired by long years of Congressional training in national party leadership. Such a person is unavailable because of the very fact of his long record. This prevents him from becoming all things to all men. In Governor Landon a minor political figure, unknown beyond the boundaries of his own state, a person who had had no training in national politics, was suddenly thrust at the head of a major political party, superseding senators and other leaders who had been in the national political arena for years. He emerged from obscurity to be the leader for a few short months of the Republican Party, whose function it was, as a minority party, to present an opposite, consistent political philosophy and a reasonable alternative to the New Deal program. This would have been a large enough task for a man of real stature and seasoned by long political experience. For Governor Landon the task was utterly beyond fulfillment.

A campaign under a parliamentary system is quite different from ours. Such a campaign is between rival groups rather than between rival persons. This promotes discussion over principles and issues. Under our system of a single executive there is a strong tendency for the campaign to develop into a popularity contest between two rival personalities. From the point of view of the government itself there is the question of the enormous responsibilities of the presidential office. Should one person be asked to shoulder the tremendous responsibility which the office under modern conditions involves? Can such responsibility safely be vested in a single person, however capable and high minded?

## II

A peculiarity of our political system is the long lapse of time between the national party conventions at

which candidates for president and vice president are selected, and the election. There is a lapse of another two and a half months before the successful candidate takes office. Before the Norris Amendment this period was four months. This is much too long a period. Under the modern tempo much can happen within half a year.

It is difficult to draft a program so long in advance of the time the minority parties can hope to take over the administration of government. President Roosevelt was attacked for not carrying out the Democratic platform of 1932. That platform was drafted nine months before the President took office. To have carried out all the planks of that platform would have been disastrous. The President faced an entirely different situation in March from that which the Convention envisaged nearly a year before. It is difficult, except in very general terms, to formulate a program long in advance of the time the minority parties can hope to take over the administration of government. The voters pay less and less attention to the platforms and more and more look to the candidates to develop their own platforms in the campaign.

## III

Our governmental system does not give adequate recognition to the function of a minority party as critic of the administration. Certainly the opposition has no facilities for an effective opposition in Congress. The opposition leaders can never engage the head of the administration, the President, in debate. They cannot even engage the secondary leaders, the department heads, in debate. They can engage in Congressional debate only tertiary leaders, the shadows of the administration. While it is true that some of the majority leaders in Congress are closer to the President than some of the members of his cabinet, there is something very unsatisfactory in seeing great national issues debated in Congress by lesser political figures on both sides. Because the way to the presidency is normally not through a Congressional career, Congress does not attract the best talent. There were a number of great political personalities ranged against the President in the campaign just closed, men like Hoover, Smith, Davis, Baker, and Reed, but it is significant that none of these men were members of Congress. Of the members of Congress in outright opposition to the President there was only one man of more than average ability or with anything like a national reputation. Instead of a continuous running debate on national issues in Congress, we have something approaching a debate once every four years, during the presidential campaign. Indeed, it is only then that the opposition has an opportunity effectively to present its case before the country.

## IV

The campaign has again demonstrated that the doctrine of the separation of powers, at least as between the President and Congress, has largely yielded to the

new necessities. The President is chief legislator as well as chief executive. Part of the Republican strategy was the attempted appropriation of the symbols of patriotism, chief of which was the Constitution. The President was accused of having usurped part of the function of Congress. Yet in the campaign Governor Landon was very effusive with respect to a legislative program, while the President was non-committal. What would Governor Landon have done as president? He could never have redeemed his promises by contenting himself with mere recommendation of legislative measures. There is no surer and quicker road to presidential failure than a lax leadership or control over Congress. On the other hand, should he have resorted to extra-constitutional means he would have laid himself open to the charge of being an autocrat, of having reduced Congress to a rubber stamp and of subverting the Constitution. The fact is that the people look to the candidates for president and not to the candidates for Congress for a legislative program. Yet the people have withheld from the President the open, direct means of giving the legislative leadership expected of him.

## V

However discouraging the campaign was in some respects, there is at least some cause for rejoicing. The radio has brought great improvement in campaign speeches. Radio time is so costly that every word has to be weighed. The speeches must be carefully prepared. The old florid, bombastic, insufferably long, loose orations of the past have given way to concise statement. The long, stupid demonstrations have also had to go in the interest of economy. Nor is it any longer possible for a candidate loosely to play both ends against the middle by promising one class or one section of the country one thing, and another class or section something directly opposite. Unless an appeal is national, it is likely to lose rather than win votes.

It may be that the only issue was prosperity, and that the present administration was given the tremendous endorsement it received merely because of the improved economic conditions. However, I like to see in the results of the election evidences of political and social maturity. The voters refused to be frightened out of their political wits by anti-Red scares, silly charges of dictatorship, alienism and deep-laid schemes, if not by the President himself, certainly by men near him, of undermining the Constitution. The people apparently were more interested in the Constitution as instrument than as symbol.

## VI

Lastly, what about Christian principles and the issues of the last campaign? The social gospellers took to the storm cellars, probably because among the supporters of the liberal churches are many wealthy people who hated Roosevelt and the New Deal. There has been a rather widespread view among us that the formation of a Christian political party is desirable. What is the Christian answer to the issues of the last campaign: the unbalanced budget, relief, agriculture, the tariff, social security, the regulation of business, the Tennessee Valley Authority, states rights and the Constitution? As I have read articles and editorials in church papers and Christian journals I have been

forced to conclude that most writers took their positions first, probably prompted by the same considerations which moved other people, and then used Christian phraseology in rationalizing about them. Christians, even Calvinist Christians, are poles apart in their political and economic views. If agreement could be reached on certain fundamental principles, agreement on the application of these principles to concrete situations and the embodiment of these principles in legislation might still be impossible. I would like to see this question receive more discussion in the pages of THE CALVIN FORUM. And what about THE CALVIN FORUM calling a conference on Christianity and social and economic problems? Would it serve any purpose? I throw out the suggestion for whatever it is worth.

## DELIVERANCE

One day when life seemed drab and drear,  
I chanced a distant strain to hear —  
Like echoes from the carillon,  
Or angels playing harps upon.  
And that celestial harmony  
So thrilled and filled my memory  
That days passed by ere life could claim  
That I return and feel the same.

Another day the master's brush  
Sent over me a solemn hush;  
The colors, rich and deep and rare  
Portrayed a scene beyond compare.  
I backward stepped to view the whole,  
And felt I'd seen the painter's soul.  
And it was many weeks before  
I was a common man once more.

One night I fled from toil's demands,  
And clasped a volume in my hands.  
By potent inspiration stirred,  
The poet poured in rhyme and word,  
His thoughts majestic and divine  
From out his spirit into mine.  
And through the months I felt their spell,  
Ere back to former planes I fell.

Then in my quest for higher ground,  
At last the Living Word I found;  
And life in His anew began —  
The Son of God, the Son of man.  
My heart became the citadel  
Wherein His Spirit came to dwell.  
I turned that day from ways of men,  
And never walked their paths again.

VERNA SMITH TEEUWISSEN.

Litchfield, Mich.

# THE COMMUNIST MENACE

Charles Vincze, S.T.D.

*Dean, Eastern Classis, Free Magyar Reformed Church in America,  
Perth Amboy, N. J.*

I AM looking over the sample copy of the general election ballot mailed to me in advance of the election. I see on it a long list of candidates under the Communist Party. And I am thinking.

I know that the basic laws of this country guarantee freedom of mind and speech to any citizen of these United States. So the letter favors the free promotion of any communistic endeavors. But I have a question. Is it logical to take under the protecting wings of the laws anyone whose ideas and aims are the destruction of the very same laws? Every creature is entitled to life. Certain germs enter my body. But I would rather die than infringe upon their right to exist! And so I fold my arms and patiently wait until the germs put me into the grave!

Communism is let alone in this country. Very few people seem to realize that it is inherently opposed to everything that brought our laws into existence and maintained them. Very few people seem to realize that communism leaves no room in this country for anything that generated its ideals and shaped its course in the past. Very few people seem to realize that to be a communist really means a new citizenship, a new allegiance and this in a world not identical with the United States of America and to an authority located outside the boundaries of our country.

To the communists the hard won and constitutionally secured human rights are only convenient and handy means to attain their purposes and then to crush all and make their own will everything in everything. And do they take advantage of our liberal laws! They do it in such adroit ways that those opposing them are at an unavoidable disadvantage from the point of view of the written laws. And they are after even more! They want their opponents at a cultural and moral disadvantage, too. They disguise their true identity in religion (Jehovah's witnesses), in forming "cultural" societies, in peace leagues, etc. Then if you oppose them, they say you are against the Word of God, you are against culture and enlightenment, you are against peace, against freedom, against the laboring class, and favoring priestly authority, intellectual obscurantism, bloodshed for the gain of ammunition manufacturers, dictatorship, and poverty of the masses. They tar and feather you. They try to make you appear the enemy of your own parishioners. And the laws protect them and are against you, who do see those laws outwitted and washed away by them. You are left alone as though the fight were your own personal one.

Where this is bound to lead, I do not know. The United States is evidently bent on letting things take their own course, and encourage, so to say, by upholding an indiscriminate use of an unbridled freedom, the creation of a situation, that would culminate in a practical repetition of what happened in other

countries. We had to fall in line with other countries in regard to the depression, and it seems that we are bent on falling into line in regard to the communist menace, too. And then we wake up when only arms can settle the issue. As far as the religious forces of America are concerned, it was almost exclusively the Roman Church that made its voice heard. The Protestant forces were pretty silent. On the contrary, we seem to be infested with hazy ideologists and with brethren parading with utter self-aggrandisement in the cloak of champions of liberalism, freedom, liberty, Americanism, modernism, etc.

I look at the sample copy of the general election ballot. I ask: What, if one day all these candidates will be swept into power? Will there be anything left of the precious liberties, now so freely and bounteously extended to the avowed enemies of our Constitution and the forms of government safeguarding those liberties?

I did not say anything. I was just thinking. Just thinking.

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## Y O N D E R

Will not the golden streets be strange  
With neither flower nor tree;  
With never a morning-caroler  
To sing a song for me?  
Shall I not tire of the pearl  
And all that gilt and glitter?  
Not feel a yearning now and then  
For summer and song-bird twitter?  
Will it not very alien be  
A life with nothing to correct;  
With neither sin nor sect  
To break monotony?

Has carnal eye then ever seen  
The trees of everlasting green?  
Has carnal ear then ever heard  
The carol of a perfect bird?  
Have I beheld the million flowers  
That grow in yonder woodland-bowers?  
And what are those compared to Him  
Who sowed the new world full of them?

Shall I not marvel at eternity  
With every inch a world  
Of splendor and variety?

ALBERT PIERSMA.

# VALUES OF PRAYER

W. S. Van Saun, Ph. D.

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TO pray is a Christian duty. It is commanded again and again in God's Word. To enquire further may to some noble souls seem irreverent. But for other individuals a consideration of the values of praying appears both proper and profitable.

Let us begin at the fringe, as it were. If we were seeking to determine the comparative value of a house, no doubt we would so begin and consider the type of community, the location, the yard, the porch and the threshold. Not that these are to be identified with the rooms of the house; nevertheless they are inseparable from the house and in no small measure contribute to its value.

## I

In the first place, praying is a time for pruning away the harmful and the worthless. If praying be at all genuine, then in the hour of prayer some questionable ambition, some popular habit, some enticing thought, or some careless word will be condemned as unworthy of our indulgence. Praying brings us face to face with self, and demands that we be consistent, that we maintain our integrity. To Jonah the sailors made demand, "Pray or get off." Jonah was guilty of wilful disobedience, of unrepented sin, and the request to pray brought him face to face with his fault. Praying demands separation from conscious sin. Restore ill-gotten gains; confess the hasty word; destroy the seducing thing—and repetition of high sounding prayers, even in sackcloth and ashes, is no substitute for such pruning. Many people find little joy in Christianity because they refuse to let go of that which their better judgment cannot approve and which they know God condemns.

In the second place, praying means planting. Praying is meditating upon the noblest, the highest, the holiest that has been brought to our attention. We engage in devotions at the beginning and the close of the day, in thanksgiving at meal time, and in worship in the sanctuary — such meditation occurs at the most favorable times under the most favorable circumstances. It implants in the worshipper worthy suggestions and noble ideals. At the occasion of worship we make intensive search for meanings, we give serious effort to select and organize significant truths, and by grace through faith we seek to appropriate and make our own whatever the Holy Spirit has revealed unto us. Frequent and regular seasons of praying tend to stamp indelibly such experiences upon our character.

## II

Pruning is negative, the removal of the evil; planting is positive, the ingrafting of the good. In both of these phases the emphasis has been placed upon the subjective and the human. However, meditation is hardly worthy of the name of praying unless it be unto God, and unless there be recognition of his sovereignty and holiness.

In evaluating a house it is indeed proper to rate at full worth the beauty and advantages of the yard and

of the outer appearance of the building. But however satisfying these may be, they can never be a substitute for the home itself, its shelter, its convenience, and its beauty.

May we proceed to enter the very sanctuary of prayer? Prayer means coming even as we are into the very presence of God, and speaking from the depths of our being unto Him with the confidence that He hears and answers according to His wisdom and mercy. At the throne of grace we bow in adoration and praise, we humble ourselves in penitence and confession, and we make our wants known in petition and intercession. As a royal priesthood we plead, not our merits for these we have not, but we plead our need. We plead the merits of Jesus the Christ, who at the bar of divine justice took our place. Being truly man He suffered in our stead, being perfectly God He made complete atonement. In His name we pray. He Himself said, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Humbly, yet with confidence, we approach the throne of grace and make known our wants to Jehovah God. To ask the creator of all and to receive according to His grace — would man dare place limit upon the worth of such privilege?

## III

But prayer means something more. Is asking and getting the essence of praying? How disappointed is the earthly father whose son comes only because of need. Praying is not only talking to God. It is also letting God talk to us. As we worship in the sanctuary, as we sit silently with His open word before us, as we ponder the works of His hands and the mysteries of His providence; at such occasions God speaks to His children. In worship, in devotion, in prayer have you learned to listen for the still small voice of God? Waiting and listening that we may learn His will is a most profitable procedure for time and eternity.

Let us look again. As we search the Scriptures and the experiences of the Servants of God, do we not find that praying also means that we submit ourselves completely to the will of God? Praying means, to devout men, the utter giving of self to God, the waiting in His presence for the dross to be consumed, the surrender of our favorite hopes, the patient forbearance under His chastisement, and the counting it joy to suffer for His name. Even more, praying means forgetfulness of self as we adore the holiness and majesty of God. When lost in His love, then we find abiding peace and power in prayer. Dead unto the world and to self, we become conformed unto His will, and henceforth Christ lives in us. From victory unto victory the Christ-filled Christian proceeds in prayer.

These are some of the values of praying. They are not found separately, nor do they succeed each other in time. These are phases of the prayer life upon which we may in turn focus our attention. One or the other may at times stand out prominently, but none of them are entirely excluded when man truly prays. All of these values contribute to the worth of the most precious privilege granted to mankind.

# DUTCH CALVINISTIC THOUGHT AND ACTION

Henry J. Van Andel, A.M.

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## *Is "Laissez-Faire" Calvinism?*

**I**N 1934 the Antirevolutionary (i. e., the progressive Calvinist political) party in The Netherlands appointed a committee to study the questions of a truly representative way of voting, and of the relation of economic life and governmental duties. In regard to the second issue the commission has now published a report. The report is too long to translate in full. But we like to offer a *resumé* and a part translation which may give an idea of what Dutch Calvinists think about the relation of the state to economical life.

I. It is not only necessary that the organized social and economic life should be recognized and supported, but also that such measures be taken as to assure a just coördination of the different organs and interests and a proper coöperation between individuals and organizations.

II. "In determining the planning of society the principles of God's Word ought to be our rule. The purpose is not to brag about an ideal state, or an ideal society. Moreover, the task of the government is secondary."

III. "The task of the government, next to the establishing and maintaining of general judicial measures, comprehends the making of particular provisions for the promotion of a just planning by the interested economic forces themselves. Direct regimentation by the government is only allowable under exceptional circumstances."

IV. The government ought to consider that modern social and economic life is highly developed, that the individualistic element has been reduced considerably, that the interested parties each ought to have their share, and that the development be gradual and in accordance with the character of each branch.

V. It is desirable that collective labor agreements be made binding in their entirety, or partially, with the understanding that this regulation be established only at the request of the contracting parties, after due consideration of the interests involved for the parties concerned and for the national life as a whole, with the provision that the government may annul any regulation, but that no annulment by the parties may take place without the cooperation of the government.

It is also desirable that the government promote the functioning of industrial or economic councils so as to arrive at a more organic development of economic life.

VI. "In regard to the planning of economic life it is desirable:

1. That the government continuously take care of the general legislation in regard to the rights of firms, societies and contracts in order to promote a just planning of economic life, and to prevent abuses and wrong conditions.
2. That the government do not directly interfere in economic life, but under exceptional circumstances.

3. That the government distribute adequate economic information, if necessary, through its own bureaus or technological organizations.
4. That the government limit the depression measures to units and parts of units for which these measures are strictly necessary.
5. That the government leave the responsibility for the provisioning of society through production and distribution to the economic units with the understanding, however, that the government may interfere to correct wrong developments and tendencies under particular circumstances.
6. That the government interfere for the promotion of a regular development of economic life whenever this development be obstructed by excesses of economic liberty on account of which particular economic units, or the general welfare of the public might be injured.

The government, therefore, should have the right to make certain agreements binding, or to declare them no longer to be binding in accordance with the principles laid down in Conclusion V, and the government should also have the right to give to economic organs certain rights, sanctioned and controlled by the government, as soon as this is convinced that these organs can be entrusted with such a task without injuring the just interests of minorities."

It was not easy to translate the conclusions of this report because of its involved sentence structure, but so much may be plain from this translation and paraphrasing that the government, according to this report, has to watch out for the welfare of the nation as a whole, and of the economic units in particular, and may, under exceptional circumstances, interfere, using every depression measure, to be withdrawn, however, as soon as economic life is restored to normalcy.

This report does not mention the utilities, national traffic, and the national resources which, according to the conclusions of the Second Christian Social Conference, ought to be in the hands of local, provincial and national governments, because they are national property, or represent national interests. Nor does this report mention different kinds of insurance with the cooperation of employers and employed, and under the supervision of the state, which was advocated already in the days of Talma and Kuyper. The principles, however, of such conclusions and of such legislation are the same as of the report. On the one hand they maintain the idea of sphere sovereignty, of liberty, of private initiative. On the other they maintain that the government should see to it that there is justice also in economic and social life.

## *Should We Join Neutral Organizations?*

This question was discussed in The Netherlands by Professor Dooyeweerd, the well known author of the *Philosophy of Sphere Sovereignty (Wetsidee)*, in connection with the fact that several Christian employers

in Holland are members of a Christian Employers Association, and at the same time members of a general or neutral organization of employers. Professor Dooyeweerd stated that such employers defend their conduct by contending that Christianity had a profound meaning when it comes to class distinctions, but not when it comes to technique. Of course, Professor Dooyeweerd does not contend that technical principles in themselves are Christian, or unChristian, but that there is a moral element present in the use of technique, and also in the social meetings of those who are employed in the same industry, or craft, which cannot be overlooked.

It is peculiar that the so-called dialectical theology and its leaders, Barth and Brunner, make a separation between a Christian's temporal life and his spiritual life which leads to a rejection of separate Christian organizations. According to Brunner, Christianity has materially nothing to say in the matter of natural life. Faith, therefore, must reveal itself in the individual, not in the organization.

This dualism of nature and grace in Brunner is in conflict with the Word of God, according to Professor Dooyeweerd. It is in line with the old Greek philosophy and with the Thomistic (or Catholic) conception of nature and grace. But not with the ideas of the Calvinistic Reformation, which taught that grace is not a higher degree of life added to the material realm, but that grace restores nature in its religious root.

From this it follows that there is no mental sphere. Nature is not an autonomous territory. Christ reigns everywhere. His kingship must be revealed in all spheres of life. This can only be done if those who confess Christ join hands and witness and act together. If Christians do organize they will find out that faith is more powerful and radical than any other principle.

It seems to us that the same reasoning holds for America. The colonial and puritanic atmosphere has disappeared. The last Puritan has died. In public life

and in the press a spirit prevails which is frankly pagan. It may be refined paganism which inspires the noblest of Americans. It certainly is a grossly epicurean type of thought which goads on the masses. But all in all, our American civilization is intensely secular, profane, cut loose from the religious roots of the fathers. In such a society it behooves evangelical Christians to cut the Gordian knot, and to organize separately. In the long run it will also mean that those Christians who are within neutral organizations will have to abandon them. In the coming Armageddon of the forces of Christ and Satan there is no other choice.

### Open Air Convention of Political Calvinists

The progressive Calvinists, or anti-revolutionary party of The Netherlands existing in organized form since 1878, had an open air convention this summer at The Hague, where twenty-five thousand people were present. It is certainly encouraging for Calvinists all over the world that the Calvinists of Holland do not take a back seat politically, socially, scientifically, and philosophically. Their Christian political and social works are numerous. They have even a monthly, called *Anti-Revolutionaire Staatskunde*, in which their principles and problems are being discussed. It must be on account of the fact that most of the articles appear in Dutch that our young American Calvinists are so little acquainted with these works, and also with the fact that the leader of this party is Dr. Hendrikus Colyn, a world figure in economics, once president of the European financial conference in London, who advised the powers to stabilize the valuta and to lower the tariffs, and whose advice is at last partially adhered to. At the recent conference the Dutch prime minister had for his topic the old maxim of the Beggars of the Sea: *Hac nitimur, Hanc tuemur*, i. e., Resting on the Bible we defend liberty. Indeed no Christian political philosophy, or party, is possible without the old foundation of the Scriptures.

## WEST MOUNTAIN

John H. De Groot

THE Doodletown Road is smooth and winding until it runs dead against the sharp rise of West Mountain. It has not changed much since Cornwallis and his troops marched along it, playing "Yankee Doodle" in derision. Mountain roads through back country do not change quickly. Like the people who built them, they are mild of manner and irresolute. A tree or boulder is not to be fought, but yielded to. The Doodletown Road winds leisurely, around rocks and farms, around the shallow marsh, around everything in its way, until it stops abruptly against a mountain and goes to sleep.

\* \* \*

WE parked our car in a small meadow at the end of the road and began the ascent. First we walked through a deep growth of Christmas fern, along a boggy brook. But soon the trail, an old wagon road following the stream-bed, began to rise. Large stones,

smoothed and rounded by the constant juggling of the old mountain magician, covered the way. The heavy moss was slippery, and it was hard walking with heavy packs on our back. By the time we had reached the junction of the Timp-Torne Trail, after climbing an hour, we thought we should have been near the top. The stream-bed had been abandoned for a single path through intriguing rock canyons and second-growth maples. The surrounding country began to open up before our eyes — Doodletown in the valley, and, opposite, the stiff shoulder of Dunderberg. But the top was still out of sight, and so we took a breathing spell, sitting down on a whitened chestnut log, and allowing the weight of the packs to rest on a rock behind us.

"This is hard work," said my companion.

"Yes," I answered. There seemed to be no necessity for more. Hard work is a price for value received. There should be no complaint.

We went on, over a sharp rise to attain a well-wooded plateau where a strong spring poured out its lavish flood to give life and greenness to a grove of hemlocks which stood, triangular, like giant spearheads sprung from the field of Aietes. We drank, too, for new strength, before the last steep climb.

There was no trail now — just rock walls scoured by glacier, beaten by wind and rain. Up these we crawled on all fours, catching at tiny ledges for finger-holds, and clutching at stunted scrub oaks that hung like old hair from the crevices of the bald mountain top. We were getting tired and breathless. The summit was near.

At last we reached the top. It was solid, blue-gray granite, broad and knobby like a pan of baked biscuits, and hot, too, from the bright sun. On the highest knob, a hundred yards farther, stood the trail shelter. It was of natural stone, bound with cement to form one low wall in the rear and two sloping walls on the side. The front was open, but protected from sun and weather by a large overhang of the heavy, timbered roof. Around it were a few small oaks, and a patch or two of low-bush huckleberries. Before it was built a stone fireplace with an iron grate across. We put our packs inside and looked about.

"This is what God sees," said my companion. "The world looks different from His vantage point."

Before us fell the depths of air. Down, down, they went, to brush the carpet of patterned green that stretched in wide folds to the valley, and on beyond Doodletown, beyond Bulsontown, beyond Garnerville, to the River. There lay the Bay of Haverstraw where the Hudson puffed its full chest and took a deep breath of relief after its tussle with the Highlands before rolling on to taunt the Palisades. Across the Bay stood the mist-grey hills of Westchester and Connecticut.

"I can't stand too much of this," I said. "It gives me a gently gasping thrill." Descending space and the immensity of distance make me feel acutely finite. I struggled to encompass them and cannot."

"I sense the fear of a wingless creature placed high," said my companion. "Great desire, unattained. Comprehension, vainly sought after. Mastery, just beyond reach."

We scarcely heard each other in the deafness to sound which comes with the impact of awe. Great beauty, great thought, great feeling overpower sense and destroy individuality. Words are too particular.

Soaring wild above us swept a sharp-shinned hawk. Envy and lowness of spirit filled us both. As high as we had climbed by slow, hard effort, the bird was higher and freer by less toil. But while we watched, the hum of steady motors grew up from the south, and a moment later the Boston transport plane, like a giant pencil mark on blue paper, streaked past us. We were no longer envious.

\* \* \*

**B**EFORE night fell, we prepared our beds, cooked supper, and made ourselves comfortable behind the small campfire. The shelter was at our rear; the illimitable reach of air and forest was before us. The

sun set quickly, dropping like a hot rivet. We watched the shadow run away from us. It spread like a pool of clean gray ink poured from an invisible reservoir behind us and covered the greens and early browns of the hills to the east. First the near woods, then the valley, then the slopes of Dunderberg and Bochelberg, then the Bay, and last, the hills across the River grew gray and dark.

"Nightfall is a ritual of nature," I observed reverently. "It is a death-ceremony. First the eyes grow dim, and trees and mountains slip out of consciousness. Then comes the gathering in of one's being. Open spaces and trees, trails and rocks, crowd in on all sides and merge to purplish oneness. And last comes a chilling cold."

"You feel lugubrious tonight," said my companion. "Nightfall to me is more friendly than that. I feel the warmth of a Great Presence who is harder to sense when the sun is bright and the movement of day distracts me. The fall of night, for me, is more like the enfoldment of benevolent arms and the resignation to a peaceful sleep."

On Hook Mountain far away to the south and east where the Hudson bends its elbow to flex a mighty bicep, an aviation beacon blinked. Every ten seconds a wink of light in the same place. Every ten seconds a beam of yellow penetrating the darkness.

"That light assures me that south is south and east is east," I said. "It assures me that even in the blackness of night there is life and place and certainty."

"That light is just another evidence that darkness is not victor."

We both felt comforted and watched the friendly beacon. It was still blinking when we rolled in to go to sleep.

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## CHRISTIAN HOME

The essence of your home distills  
The odor of a fragrant smell,  
The savor of true Christian joy,  
Where God's own people dwell.

Words are inadequate to speak  
Of high and splendid places,  
Or of the fellowship we shared,  
The charm of Christian graces.

But as green palms on oases  
After the desert way,  
So moments spent with you afford  
New courage for the day.

JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

# BOOK REVIEW

## IS THIS UTOPIA?

THE MASTER PLAN. GOVERNMENT WITHOUT TAXATION. By Herman Van Polen. The Christopher Publishing House, Boston, 1936. pp. 78. \$1.25.

Not every one who claims to have a solution for our economic problems can present that solution with equanimity. Fewer still can present their theories entertainingly. The author of *The Master Plan*, a former student of Calvin College and of several universities, insists that in the last few years "we have been just side-splittingly funny." And he concludes his work by declaring that we should form a revolutionary army "which shall destroy our antiquated structures by laughing at ourselves."

In interesting, racy, frequently slangy dialogue the reader is informed that we should throw overboard three old theories of economic relations: one-sided individualism, one-sided collectivism, and a compromise of the two. A new economic order can be built by a combination of individualism and collectivism. Such a combination would involve a progressive reorganization of the present system, requiring perhaps seven periods of four years each for its completion.

This change would be demanded by a national vote permitting or calling for drastic changes in the constitution. The constitution would provide for a national economic balancing board and for the purchase of industries, such as would be considered necessary by this board, by a corporation or corporations. The balancing board would divide American industries into two classes, those belonging to the security department (S. D.) and owned by the government corporation, and those belonging to the progress department (P. D.), privately owned. A sufficient number of industries would be included in the first to provide all the unemployed with work and to return a profit sufficient to pay for government services, thus permitting the abolition of all taxes.

This new economy would be started locally on a scale sufficiently large to end unemployment in the first period and then be extended so that in the fifth period all the S. D. industries within a state would be unified and be able to send one check to the balancing board to pay for government service. In this fifth period state governments would be dropped also so that thereafter all of the administration would be centralized in the national government with just one constitution. Thereafter local administrators, while they would be permitted such discretion as differences in local conditions would call for, would be the agents of the central administration. At the end of the seventh period all production for use and security would be concentrated in one corporation and this corporation would need to pay only one check to the government to discharge the entire bill for government services of all kinds.

Beyond what would be needed to pay government expenses industry would remain private, and in this domain individual competition would be relatively free. Sales of securities would be controlled, however, the old monetary system abolished, minimum wages established by the S. D. so that the P. D. would have to follow suit, etc. If the check for government service were more than sufficient a larger number of industries would be permitted to operate in the P. D., if insufficient a larger number would be brought into S. D. All of this would be done by the balancing board. Necessities would be assured and unemployment ended by S. D. while at the same time progress would be encouraged through private initiative in P. D.

Intriguing as all this is one wonders whether it is not too good to be true. The author makes use of some rather easy simplifications as, for example, the difference between compromise and combination. Would socialists and narrow individualists be convinced that the author's combination is not compromise? It is intimated also, with a finality that creates suspicion, that in this life of ours all things come in pairs such as security and progress, individualism and collectivism, and that all we need to do is to combine them, never compromise one in the interest of the other, in order to obtain the abundant life.

Difficulties such as those involved in getting the required change in the national government, those involved in bringing the industries into the one great corporation, and those involved in administering the far-flung productive mechanism are not dealt with in this outline of a better order. That they would be serious must be obvious. Will people want this type of order, the enquirer asks in the dialogue. And the answer is certainly, they will recognize it and know that it is good. They have never recognized this kind of solution as possible before because conditions were not ripe for such recognition. Now they are. Will the system work? The author says it will, people will take

to it naturally. Proof of the fact that it will work is the fact that it works in his plan, "G. Wot", as he labels it. This may strike the reader as arguing in a circle but to the author it seems to be conclusive. He raises the age old question, won't people have to be made good before the system will work, and answers it by insisting that people will not have to be made good because the system is good. Which, of course, raises the question whether the system can be better than the people who make it, and which raises the further question whether the author has not again permitted himself to fall into circular reasoning.

There is undoubtedly much sense to what the author so interestingly offers, particularly much sense to his recommendation that we learn to laugh at ourselves. That we need both individualism and collectivism and that we shall have a real measure of both of them in this country appears to be true. To his description of a world without taxes, without unemployment, with a real thrust toward internationalism many a critical reader will, however, be tempted to give a title already made famous by another writer, "Erewhon", or Nowhere. Still men can hardly be derided for placing their trust in cure-alls, in Utopias, when the body politic and economic is as ill as it is. And when the cure-all is put in the form that it is in this book it may do more good than harm.

H. J. R.

## MEET THE ENGLISH THEOLOGIANS

CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH THEOLOGY. *An American Interpretation.* By Walter Marshall Horton. New York, Harper, 1936. \$2.00.

This book, which is last month's selection of the Religious Book Club, is a most informing and engagingly written account of the various currents and cross currents in contemporaneous English theology. Whoever wishes for a brief, clear and interpretatively written account of the outstanding schools of British religious thought will want to make the acquaintance of this book. British modernism and its recession, present-day liberalism, the Catholic and the Protestant trend, as well as the "Central" party's type of religious tenets all pass review on Dr. Horton's 175 pages. One receives a brief but helpful introduction to the theological views of such men as, Dean Inge, Principal Jaks, Professor Tennant, Canon Streeter, John Oman, Archbishop Temple, and many lesser lights.

Professor Horton writes this book in the fond hope that American religious thought will become more closely allied with English theology. He believes that the days when American students looked to Germany for theological stimulus and inspiration are numbered, if not gone. He does not hesitate to express his strong dislike for Barthianism. He sees American theology faced with following either Barthianism or turning to contemporary English theology for guidance and inspiration. His book, though an historical account, frankly avows the purpose of urging his American *confreres* and students to turn to the English leaders. All this despite the admission which he makes on p. 29 that "John Bull does not think for the joy of thinking, as his French and German neighbors seem to do. He does not think at all about ultimate questions, except in a roundabout, chatty, indirect sort of way, unless he is driven to it by grave practical considerations."

Professor Horton takes occasion to weave a strain of apology into his, otherwise, historical discussion. Once and again he tells his readers that he has been attacked for having pronounced liberalism dead in some of his recent writings. The year before last he published his *Realistic Theology*, whose opening chapter was entitled "The Decline of Liberalism". At that time he pronounced American religious liberalism "dead". Some conservative—even orthodox—theologians took this pronouncement very seriously and have since cited his statements to prove that even liberals themselves confess their bankruptcy. To all who have taken him too seriously, whether among his liberal friends—who were annoyed by his concession—or among his orthodox critics, he now makes the solemn deliverance that "Liberalisms perish; liberalism remains"! (p. 62). In the Preface he explains that liberalism as "a full-fledged system of theology" and liberalism as "a method and attitude" should not be confused. From the discussion of Campbell's erstwhile "New Theology", as well as from other passages in the book, it is clear that the author has very serious criticism for this old liberalism. It is to be regretted that he does not make clear what he means by the liberalism which he apparently champions as much today as any liberal did in his. If he had, he might have been challenged to make clear to himself and to his readers how one can have

"the liberal method" without being led inevitably to some brand of the liberal theology which in other parts of the book he subjects to severe castigation.

In connection with Oman's theology the author advances the idea that this theologian, standing in the Calvinistic tradition, has "reconciled Augustinianism and Pelagianism" by the substitution of persuasive grace for irresistible grace! (p. 135). On page 173 he writes this fine sentence: "I am saying to all my friends in the Presbyterian and Reformed churches that this is a poor time for any of them, who inherit the Augustinian and Calvinistic faith in the sovereignty of God, to abandon it because of the rational paradoxes which it involves." If Dr. Horton would really grasp what he is saying in that sentence, and not make such a complimentary utterance addressed to Calvinists with a view to the latest "prevailing westerlies" in theological thinking, what a different theology we might get some day from this pen!

Meanwhile the present reviewer again recommends this book as a helpful orientation in the field of contemporary English theology and, as for Horton's theological position, he feels he has nothing to add or detract from the judgment expressed on it when reviewing Dr. Horton's earlier work: the old brand with a new wrapper. (See CALVIN FORUM, May, 1935, p. 23.)

C. B.

### FAITH IN SCRIPTURE AND IN HISTORY

**FAITH: AN HISTORICAL STUDY.** By Stewart Means. Original Price, \$2.50. Available at reduced price of \$1.25 from Kregel Book Store, Grand Rapids, Mich.

One would not expect a man of eighty-four to be writing a book, except it be perhaps an autobiography or some other phase of such reflective thought. But Dr. Stewart Means is an exception. It was in 1933 that the aged scholar completed this volume. It reveals a man whose mind was still virile and unaffected by the ravages of time. The author was rector of the St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church in New Haven, Conn., for forty years, and during all that period he remained mentally young by his associations with the University of Yale.

The book shows its strength not so much in detailed analysis as in its broad sweep of Church History. The writer does not stand in the midst of his materials but above them, and with remarkable ingenuity he shows what streams contributed to the main flow of Christianity and what they contributed.

In the first chapter we are instructed by an excellent discussion of the origin and development of the Jewish conception. We are led by this able representative of this particular school of thought all the way from Israel's conception of a tribal God to the high ideal of monotheism. Since Revelation receives little credit, the sources of Hebrew religious development must be sought in the Gentile world. And lo, they are found there.

From the Jewish conception we pass on to the New Testament. Here we have the only chapter in the book that has a right to be placed in a volume called "Faith". It hews to the line. Dr. Means contends that there is a fourfold use of "Faith" in the New Testament, to wit, a psychological, a rhetorical, a moral and a logical use. The author occasionally finds that the New Testament writers do not agree in their conceptions. Indeed "The Epistle of Jude accepts the very type of faith rejected in St. James."

Leaving the New Testament, the author introduces the readers to the various movements and personages through the history of the Church. I have found these chapters decidedly illuminating. They do not explain the concept of faith, but they do indicate the main threads that are woven into the fabric of Church History. The author is enthusiastically appreciative of St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Erasmus and Luther. His reflections upon them constitute brief biographies, which are gems in form and style for all of us whose knowledge of Church history is somewhat limited. The last of the eight chapters is called "The Counter-Reformation and After" and brings us into the midst of the tremendous changes of religious thought in the middle of the last century.

The writer is obviously not a Calvinist. He shows neither the Calvinistic conception of Scriptures nor the Calvinistic appreciation of Calvin. Calvin, who has been without doubt one of the greatest molders of theological thought, is but named a time or two. The Bible is no longer what it used to be. Says he "The New Testament Strauss attacked has largely disappeared and another has taken its place. In this new one the great thing is not the words, but the person". The author may be old but he is "Up-to-date".

This work lies "on the borderline of history and an exposition of Christian convictions". It can hardly be recommended as a discussion of the concept, "Faith", but it certainly deserves the attention of those who are interested in the great lines of the

thought and the personalities that have shaped the development of Christianity. The book is heavy with thought and yet there is a beauty of expression that makes it not at all unpleasant reading.

H. S.

### A FLIMSY LOIN CLOTH

**NEW FAITH FOR OLD.** *An Autobiography.* By Shailer Mathews. New York, 1936, Macmillan. \$3.00

In 1933 Shailer Mathews passed the seventy mark. He is going the way of all flesh, which means the way of retirement for university professors. Now that Professor Case has succeeded him as dean of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, Professor Mathews has the time — perhaps more time than inclination — to reminisce and to write an autobiography.

This story of the life of so active a scholar as was Dean Mathews is interesting reading, even though the element of romance is entirely lacking. Mathews was not merely a scholar. He was an organizer, a reformer, a churchman and a practical social idealist as well. He was a dynamic personality: apparently a born leader. What lends this story of his life particular interest is the cross section of religious and theological life which it offers. The great transition in American religion and theology which has come over most of the large denominations is here pictured as it registered in the life of one of the outstanding leaders in the liberal movement.

Dr. Mathews makes up the ledger of his life and thought, and he does so by entitling his autobiography: *New Faith for Old*. The old faith was the historic orthodoxy, which he inherited from his conservative New England Baptist ancestry. And the "new"? It is a pretty thin faith. At bottom it is faith in the goodness of man; faith in human improvement by man's own efforts; faith in social service, which is held to be the essence of "the Kingdom of God". All the great varieties of the supernatural Christian faith are being denied by Mathews today as he stands on the brink of the grave and at the end of a career devoted to the training of men for "the gospel ministry". Having stripped himself, in the name of scientific method and historical criticism, of the wedding garment of the Christian faith, he stands today stark naked, except for the flimsiest loin-cloth of a bit of cosmic theism.

And how flimsy the loin-cloth! His "theism" can hardly be distinguished from the consistent humanism of our day. It takes a magnifying glass to see the difference between "that cosmic activity we know as God" (p. 299) and the divine urge to love humanity which is the only "ultimate" the humanist still believes in. One wonders what Ames and Haydon, Dr. Mathews' colleagues in the Divinity School, think of the difference between their out-and-out Humanism and this "cosmic theism" of their older confrere. I have no doubt they will call this "theistic" faith a left-over of a non-democratic, imperialistic mold of the social structure which Mathews has not quite succeeded in outgrowing. And if they should render such a judgment, one wonders what Dr. Mathews, whose chief theological emphasis for some years has been that the doctrines of the Christian religion were all shaped in the moulds of the social patterns of each age, would say — in fact, *could* say, in reply. If divine transcendence, the incarnation of Christ, and the vicarious atonement of Calvary must all be rejected (as Dr. Mathews does) because they are but the outcome of man's thinking in the social patterns of his day, by what logic does Dr. Mathews exclude belief in a God different from the best there is in humanity from being consigned to a similar fate? And so the cosmic-theistic loin cloth of Dean Mathews is very flimsy indeed.

C. B.

### SCIENCE AND GOD

**DOES SCIENCE LEAVE ROOM FOR GOD?** By R. O. P. Taylor. Available at Kregel's Book Store, Grand Rapids Mich. Reduced Price \$60.

"Does Science leave room for God?" Thus the author begins his book. In nine chapters he answers: Yes. "Science" not only leaves room for God, but actually *makes* room for Him.

A few examples will suffice to show how the author substantiates his answer. Take the Wireless — we in the United States say Radio — it is the product of "Science", but furnishes a highway for the message of our God. Again, "Science" holds to the theory of Evolution. And Evolution is God's method of creating all things. Man has taken charge of this work, continues it, using the same methods. "Science" discovered rules and system in the universe. Hence room has been made for God as Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge. God's mercy "Science" has illustrated in the realm of Medicine. Adaptability is evidence making room for the "Mercyful Father".

Concerning Christ, "Science" has demonstrated that the "character of off-spring depends on certain elements in the cells, called genes". This makes room for the Incarnate Logos.

Finally, "matter is only a form of energy" thereby making room for God as Spirit.

The Calvinist takes his *starting* point in God—the author attempts to *arrive* at God. Job 11:7 ask: "Canst thou by searching find out God?" Mr. Taylor has responded and said: Yes!!

J. G. VAN DYKE.

### CHRIST THE INCOMPARABLE

FAIREST OF ALL, AND OTHER SERMONS. *By Dr. Herbert Lockyer. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids Mich., 1936. \$1.00*

The author is a Baptist minister in Liverpool, England. His promise indicated in the title—"Fairest of All"—is realized in the ten sermons which compose the book. The Christ he has presented to us is, indeed, the Fairest of All. Christ is matchless, peerless, nay more, he is the Incomparable One. But the Incomparable Christ is not coldly distant from man. On the contrary, he is the living Savior, sympathetic, and most precious to the believer. The sermons, therefore, are practical. That is to say, they are vibrant with life, warm life, glowing life.

From a strictly technical point of view, these sermons are not patterned after the standard academic models. They are really heart-to-heart talks. As such they are valuable. Occasionally, there is some quaint expressions, as for example, the "three fragrant handkerchiefs" which Christ gives to his disciples, John 14. Those who know the declaration of the Council of Chalcedon (451), which states that the two natures of Christ are not confused, will be startled to read on page 96, that the Holy Spirit laid hold on "Jesus as God", and on "Jesus as man" fusing both together so that Jesus was "not exclusively God" nor "exclusively man". In the new birth (in man) "the reverse" happens, so the author assures us. But all this makes the Incarnation a confusing matter.

From a purely mechanical point of view, the book is a credit to the publisher, except page 105, on which the name of the Lord is spelled L-o-d.

J. G. VAN DYKE.

### A JEWEL ON PRAYER

TAKING HOLD OF GOD. *Studies on the Nature, Need and Power of Prayer. By Samuel M. Zwemer. Grand Rapids, 1936, Zondervan. Cloth \$1.50. Paper \$1.*

The author's description of Dr. Hume's *Treasure House of the Living Religions* properly describes his own book: it is an exhibit of pearls and jewels . . . until we have the Pearl of Great Price in the prayer-life and teaching of our Lord.

The title of the book was very aptly chosen, being borrowed from that "bold definition" of prayer found in Is. 64:7: "And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee".

Every chapter exhibits both scholarly treatment and that depth of feeling which we call Christian mysticism. These two are blended, as it were, into a wonderful harmony and are united by the strands of an exquisite style.

Among other subjects the author discusses such interesting questions as the following: Is so-called "primitive prayer" monotheistic? Is prayer for rain absurd in this age of science? What is the essence of prayer? Should we ascribe objective as well as subjective validity to prayer? Why are certain places more suitable and more inspiring than others when we pray? Is the custom of closing the eyes during prayer scriptural? What is the relation between prayer and the laws of nature? What are the hindrances to effective prayer and what should we do about them? Are the prayers of non-Christians answered? What are the fundamental differences between non-Christian prayers and the prayer of a true believer? Does the Lord's Prayer reflect the Trinity?

Without any qualification we regard this book one of the finest that has ever been written on this subject. It is worth many times its price. It should be in every library.

W. HENDRIKSEN.

### ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

A HELP TO THE STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. *By W. E. Biederwolf. 4th Ed., Grand Rapids, 1936, Zondervan, \$1.00*

This work is the outgrowth of the author's own perplexity. Says Dr. Biederwolf: "For nineteen hundred years we have been saying: I believe in the Holy Ghost, but how much do we believe in him, and what is it we believe about him?"

The author treats such subjects as: the Name of the Spirit; the Advent of the Spirit; the Personality of the Spirit; the Sealing of the Spirit; etc.

The book is rich in collation and classification of Bible passages. We consider this to be one of the merits of this work. Usually a careful exegesis is given of controversial passages. In this respect chapter IX, the Baptism of the Spirit, is especially illuminating. On such subjects as water-baptism, baptismal regeneration, the unpardonable sin, etc., the author defends what we consider the only reasonable position. Moreover, he furnishes abundant biblical evidence to substantiate his position and to defend his view against opposing theories.

One disappointing feature detracts greatly from the value of this book. In the Introduction we read: "Still another interesting feature of it is its excellent bibliography. Most of that which has been published on the Holy Spirit since John Owen's book finds a place in this well-selected list." Imagine our surprise and disappointment when we noticed that this bibliography is *entirely lacking* in the present edition!

W. HENDRIKSEN.

### YOUTH'S PERIL AND VICTORY

YOUTH'S VICTORY LIES THIS WAY, *by W. B. Riley. Grand Rapids, 1936, Zondervan. Cloth \$1.00. Paper \$.65.*

This book contains seven addresses intended for young people. The work contains much that merits approval. The style is very simple and, on the whole, well adapted to the needs of the younger generation; every page throbs with genuine love for the sons and daughters of the Church and of the nation. Another outstanding feature of this series of addresses is its timeliness. The book is up-to-date. It describes and warns against present perils. The chapter headings are as follows: Christ's Estimate of Childhood; Paul's Challenge to Youth; The Relation of Sweat to Success; Service, Youth and the Confusion of Tongues; Prophecy and Youth's Present Peril; and, Youth's Victory Lies This Way.

Although, on the whole, we are in hearty accord with the contents and purpose of this book and do not hesitate to give it a warm recommendation, we cannot refrain from expressing our disapproval of the over-abundance of quotations and illustrations. Illustrations are, indeed, very helpful, especially when they occur in addresses prepared for young people. (See A. S. Phelps, *Speaking in Public*, ch. 15). But is there not a danger that an entire series of quotations and story-illustrations, arranged like so many heavy beads on a thread, may be conducive to shallow thinking? The thread usually breaks because of the strain and the "beads" (the separate quotations and illustrations) alone are left. The real "point" or "thrust" of the admonition is lost beneath the weight of illustrations. Does the author escape this danger?

W. HENDRIKSEN.

### BOOKS IN BRIEF

MY ROBBER-CAPTAIN. *By C. G. Killper. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1936. \$1.00*

The story of a missionary held for nine months as a captive by Chinese bandits in their mountain stronghold. Forced to flee with his robber guards from pursuing government troops, exposed constantly to hunger, cold, sickness, and death, this missionary finds rich comfort in the certainty of eternal bliss beyond this life. Throughout the story gives interesting glimpses into the customs and superstitions of the Chinese people.

THIS I CONFESS. *By Nicholas J. Monsma. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1936. pp. 103. \$0.75.*

An edifying and instructive exposition of the Form for the Public Profession of Faith in use in the Christian Reformed Church, especially suitable for young people who contemplate accepting their covenant vows or have recently done so.

BUCHANISM, CALLED NOW THE OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT. *By Arno Clemens Gaebelein. Published by the Author, 456 Fourth Avenue, New York City.*

This 43-page pamphlet is a reprint of some articles which have appeared in "Our Hope" and offers a scathing denunciation of the Oxford Group Movement.

VICTORIES OF PEACE. *Stories of Friendship in Action. By D. M. Gill and A. M. Pullen. New York, Friendship Press, 1936. Cloth \$1.00. Paper \$.50.*

Eight delightful stories of self-sacrifice and good will shown against the background of war and suffering. If these tales, coming from the Friendship Press, are intended to show how

the missionary task is to be carried on in the world, they are sorely deficient, but as tales of self-sacrifice and human helpfulness they are fine. Each story has an historical background explained in 12 pages of Notes. The story of Emily Hobhouse and her friendship for the Boer's during their war with England is especially pleasant reading.

**THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AND THE CHURCH.** *Educational Convention Papers, delivered at the Annual Union Meetings. Chicago, 1936, National Union of Christian Schools. (10119 Lafayette Avenue).*

A half dozen helpful addresses dealing with the status, the principles, and the ideals of the movement for privately owned parental schools for Christian primary education. The first address on "Calvinism over against Communism," by Professor Schultze of our FORUM staff, though only indirectly related to the educational theme of the booklet, is a very fine address showing the evils and dangers of Communism.

**EVOLUTION CONTRASTED WITH SCRIPTURE TRUTH.** *By W. Bell Dawson. Chicago, Bible Institute Colportage Assn. Price \$0.40.*

A fine popular statement of the main arguments against evolution and of the impossibility of harmonizing this theory with the verities of Scripture revelation. Dr. Dawson is the author of *The Bible Confirmed By Science* and has contributed a brief article on "Evolution and Its Danger" to the June, 1936, issue of THE CALVIN FORUM.

**FORETHOUGHT IN CREATION.** *By W. Bell Dawson. Chicago, Bible Institute Colportage Assn. Price \$0.10.*

A 31-page leaflet showing divine design and forethought in nature.

**CHRISTIAN TRUTH TODAY.** *A Presentation and Defense of Historical Supernatural Christianity for College Students. Edited by Calvin Knox Cummings. Philadelphia, 1936, League of Evangelical Students. (25 S. 43rd Street). pp. 112. \$0.50.*

This is the first of three booklets which will offer a complete exposition of the great truths of the Christian religion. The League of Evangelical Students has been organized as a protest against the modernism with which most student associations of our day are tainted. This booklet offers some 30 chapters, each of which is an exposition of some phase of biblical or doctrinal truth which it is intended shall be taken up by students in discussion groups in the colleges. This is splendid material to lay an intelligent Christian foundation in one's thinking at college. The standpoint throughout is scholarly, biblical, orthodox, Reformed.

**WE SING AMERICA.** *By Marion Cuthbert. New York, Friendship Press, 1936. Cloth, \$1.00; Paper, \$ .50.*

An interesting and informing little book for children consisting of sketches and stories about American Negro life, designed to create a more Christian attitude toward the colored people on the part of whites.

**AFRICAN BRIDGE BUILDERS.** *Edited by William C. Bell. New York, Friendship Press, 1936. Cloth, \$1.00; Paper, \$ .60.*

A collection of delightful fairy tales, stories, and missionary tales about the African bush, Nigeria and the Cameroons, Nyasaland and Bechuanaland all come into the picture. "Margaret" and "Bishop Crowther" are the titles of two fine mission sketches. The whole is prefaced by an informing chapter entitled "Africa Close-Up."

**PREACHING CHRIST IN CORINTH.** *Exegetical-Homiletic Sermon Outlines on First Corinthians. By Klaas Jacob Stratemeier. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Price \$1.00.*

Within the compass of 114 pages the pastor of the German Presbyterian Church at Grundy Center, Ia., here offers twenty-one outlines covering First Corinthians. The author says he was stimulated to do so after reading Karl Barth's *First Corinthians*, translated into English under the title *The Resurrection of the Dead*.

C. B.

## THE EVIL OF GAMBLING

**SPECULATION AND GAMBLING.** *By Ernest D. MacDougall. The Stratford Company, Boston, 1936. \$2.00.*

I know there are many ministers and a host of intelligent business men who have been looking for guidance on the subject of gambling and speculation. We are happy to be able to call attention to a book which is full of the finest and most helpful information on this difficult but pressing subject. Dr. MacDougall has written a very valuable book, as any student on the subject will recognize.

One of the fine features of this discussion is that it is written from the point of view of one who appreciates all the aspects of the problem. It is not written from the angle of one interested in the moral issue and not versed in the financial or legal aspect of the problem. Nor is it written from the restricted point of view of the business man with little ethical appreciation. The enumeration of the titles of the chapters will show how diversified the material and its treatment is. Here are the twelve chapter headings: Gambling and Crime; Speculation and Gambling; Some Forms of Gambling; The Attitude of the Church Toward Gambling; Bucketshops and Broker Offices; Playing the 'Futures' Market; What the Courts Say; Hedging in the 'Futures' Market; Selling Stocks Short; Wall Street and Washington, Inc.; This Paper Civilization; Conclusions and Suggestions.

Another valuable feature of this book is that it is written for the general public. Nobody need be in doubt about the meaning of the author. His treatment is clear-cut. The information which he furnishes (and he is very generous with quotations from various sources), even when legal documents are quoted at times, is never abstruse.

The finest feature of the book is its unqualified condemnation of gambling in its various forms of expression. The author is President of the National Institute of Mercenary Crime and has also written a book entitled, *Crime for Profit*. He looks upon gambling as one of the cancers of our modern civilization. He does not palliate the evils of our modern complex financial world but speaks boldly, yet intelligently. This book is a well-documented indictment of the modern evil of gambling in all its forms. In the chapter on, Some Forms of Gambling, he touches upon: Betting at Poker, Betting at Bridge, Roulette Betting, Betting on Horse Races, Betting with the Book Makers, Slot Machines, Raffle — all of which shows how close this book brings this subject to the actual life of the people today.

A few excerpts may be given to give the reader a taste of this book. "Gambling is wholly based on superstition." (Preface, p. i.) "From the viewpoint of today, gambling, which uses the complex forms of trade in addition to the simple devices of yore, must be regarded as the most dangerous and ominous phenomenon of modern times." (*Ibidem.*) "It would require a lengthy catalog to list the myriad lies that these greatest rumor factories of the world, Wall Street and La Salle Street, have foisted upon the country to its undoing. From this foul source have emanated damnable doctrines that have converted honest men into thieving grangers and gamblers, firm in the conviction that one must get while the getting is good; that the greatest crime is to be poor, though honest; that one is foolhardy, indeed, to tell the truth in the face of Organized Greed." (p. 146.)

The author believes that public opinion ought to be aroused. His book is a splendid contribution to that end.

The value of the book is greatly increased by a number of features. Besides an Introduction from the hand of Senator Capper, who has been active in Congress in behalf of anti-gambling legislation, there is a 42-page Addendum. This consists of a 6-page Glossary, explaining scores of technical terms and current expressions in the field of gambling and the stock market; three pages of Bibliography; and more than thirty pages of excerpts from letters which the author received from Deans of Theological Seminaries, Churchmen, and — in some cases — professors of Christian Ethics, in reply to a query sent out to them. Although no names are given — only numbers being used — it may interest the readers of THE CALVIN FORUM that the first of these excerpts from 58 letters is from the hand of a Jewish teacher and the last from the teacher of Ethics in the only Christian Reformed Seminary in the country. Here again the author has given that touch of diversity and inclusiveness to his book which must be felt to be a merit for the student of the subject.

There is not much literature on gambling in which the question of right and wrong is uppermost. This book is one of the most complete and the most helpful on the subject.

C. B.

# REACTIONS OF OUR READERS

## WHEAT, HOGS, AND A FARMER

I wish to express my appreciation of the excellent periodical you are publishing. It is a relief to find a magazine discussing the social and economic questions of the day from a definitely Calvinistic viewpoint. Some of your material, especially in the line of philosophy, is somewhat beyond the depth of a farmer whose schooling goes little beyond high school, but most of it is very interesting and informing. In doctrinal matters, and in applying scriptural principles in other lines, your paper is a refreshing contrast to the Modernist, Socialist *Christian (?) Century*, or even the *Christian Herald* under the management of the last few years.

I note in your last issue that you are being criticized by some for being too radical; last winter others said: "Too reactionary." While not agreeing with all your editorials or contributed articles, I feel that you are very successful in keeping to a safe and sane middle course. Your articles on the New Deal in recent issues seem free from any partisan bias, and seem to me to be a fair presentation of the strong and the weak points of the policies of the present administration.

As a farmer I appreciate the fairminded attitude with which the government's farm relief programs, both the Triple A and the Soil Conservation program, have been presented in your columns. I wish they could be read by many of those whose information comes solely from city newspapers, which for the most part seem to feel that the farmer should be contented and happy to live on the crumbs which fall from the economic table. The relief efforts—the Triple A in particular—have been far from perfect, even to the extent of having dangerous features, but—if wheat were still selling for thirty-five cents a bushel, and hogs for three dollars per hundred pounds, I doubt if I could afford to subscribe to THE CALVIN FORUM!

Your articles on religion and theological subjects are very interesting. The article by Dr. Van Dyke in the June number, on the Sabbath, was both timely and practical. This subject seems to be largely ignored in most undenominational papers, whether orthodox or otherwise. One of the great needs of the day is a real revival of old-fashioned Sabbath observance. Give us more such articles.

I note that one of your recent correspondents has expressed his desire for an article on cults and isms. Could you favor us with a discussion of the so-called Pyramidology? I have seen little about it in print.

LESTER B. McINTYRE.

Sparta, Ill.

## "DE HERAUT" AND CALVIN FORUM

I appreciate the daring and scholarship of your paper. What "De Heraut" was for my father, THE CALVIN FORUM is for me.

PETER WYMA.

751 E. 90th Street,  
Los Angeles, Calif.

## MANLINESS AND CONTROVERSY

Don't let the fact that certain subscribers refuse to renew their subscriptions because they don't approve of certain articles appearing in the FORUM "get under your skin." There is nothing manly about such an attitude. If they don't agree, let them show us the better way. And anyway, what a poor magazine THE CALVIN FORUM would be, if all the subscribers were always in agreement with everything found on its pages! Controversy of the right kind is what we need as long as we all stand foursquare on divine revelation.

N. DE VRIES.

1304 Weber Street,  
Alameda, Calif.

## A PERPLEXED WORLD

Enclosed find \$2.00 in payment for renewal of "our" paper. I am glad we have this paper. We should be determined to keep it. The world today is perplexed. There is a solution to its problems. It is our business as Calvinists who have this solution (in principle), to develop it and to publish it to the ends of the world. THE CALVIN FORUM is one of the best means at hand.

PAUL DE KOEKKOEK.

Otley, Iowa.

## NO, WE WILL NOT!

Something very amusing indeed! The Forum banished because of a Communistic staff of writers! That's rich. It is Mr. Niles' privilege to keep THE FORUM out of his home, of course.

On the other hand, thousands are like I am: the sympathetic attitude of some of the writers to the New Deal is an added inducement to renew the subscription. However, I would not think of discontinuing my CALVIN FORUM because of occasional opposition to the New Deal, although I would certainly not enjoy the FORUM if it never had a little appreciation for the New Deal. I do not like a onesided paper . . . Well, I am not a Democrat, far less a Communist. But, non-partisan as I am, I like a due appreciation for *any* good thing *anyone* does whether New Dealer or Anti-New Dealer.

Please do not reduce THE FORUM to one-sidedness because of a few Niles's. Keep it colored and balanced by presenting many views. That's what makes it good. Don't deaden it by any means.

ALBERT PIERSMA.

628 Stolpe St., S.W.,  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

## MORE POWER TO YOU!

I have just returned from a trip to Sparta, Ill., where I made a very joyful acquaintance with your magazine. A friend of mine turned me loose with every copy he has received since the very first, and it was not long till I had your address placed among my valuables and I'm waiting no longer to get my subscription in.

Had no idea such a magazine was in existence, but can fervently say: "More power to you!" And I'll not be bashful about spreading the word. I only wish it were possible to get a copy of each of the back numbers, but presume that would be an impossibility.

I'd like to start with the December issue, for the first of the year is too far away.

(REV.) J. H. HENERY.

Reformed Presbyterian Church,  
Winchester, Kansas.

## THE REFORMED FAITH

You are doing a wonderful piece of work. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise. I don't agree with everything you advocate, but on the whole I think you come as close to the truth as can be expected from a human person.

You have raised a strong voice in defence of the Reformed Faith when other Christian periodicals have compromised on the issue.

SANKEY OREN.

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