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Pressure Groups
A Two-Sided Evil

Barth's Theology
His Basic Position

Bavinck on Man
Some Excerpts

American Calvinistic Conference
Proposed Program

Secularizing Our Schools
Dewey's Method

Books
News and Letters
Verse

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ANY a reader of Time must have smiled while reading the item on relief which appeared in the number of September 12, 1938. The magazine reported that to a "W. P. A. client on duty in a gravel pit at Sycamore, Illinois, last week came the industrial accident which a million U. S. taxpayers have feared was inevitable among W. P. A.'s hordes of shovel men: while leaning at a comfortable incline with his legs crossed and both hands grasping the shovel's handle to make a pillow for his chin, Ellis Colvin lost his balance, fell heavily, fractured his wrist. Shovel Man Colvin promptly applied for Government Compensation."

Implied in this statement is the widely held impression of "taxpayers" that the W. P. A. is but a racket enabling many who are undeserving to exert pressure upon the industrious and taxpaying members of society to furnish them a living. That so large a number of men and women as that which receives assistance through the W. P. A. organization is in a position to exercise some pressure, and that in coming elections this may become more and more manifest is undoubtedly true. The giving and administration of relief to millions is fraught with possibilities of evil, not the least of them being the power which lies in the ballots of these millions.

The misuse of administrative power that may find expression in the W. P. A. and the work destroying attitudes which may develop among those on relief is matched, however, by the attitudes of many carp­ing critics. If waste of time and money, without appreciation of the real opportunities given through the W. P. A., is the charge to be held against many who are undervolting to exert pressure upon the industrious and taxpaying members of society to furnish them a living. That so large a number of men and women as that which receives assistance through the W. P. A. organization is in a position to exercise some pressure, and that in coming elections this may become more and more manifest is undoubtedly true. The giving and administration of relief to millions is fraught with possibilities of evil, not the least of them being the power which lies in the ballots of these millions.

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Management and Labor have of late been having it out in what threatened for a while to be a free-for-all with no holds barred. Legal compulsion favoring slightly the labor groups (for the first time in American history Labor would insist) has brought about a measure of peace. Both groups are, however, undoubtedly marking time and seeking to strengthen the pressure they may exert or influence they may have. A Commission on Industrial Relations which the President empowered to study the conditions in England has in the meanwhile reported on methods of solving problems in labor relations there. Among the other things it reports that in England Collective agreement does not mean what many have thought it should mean here, a contract between one employer and one union, but a contract between a group of employers and a large
union or an association of unions. It reports that trade agreements in England rest not on the compulsion of the law but on moral force. And, interestingly to us who have witnessed constant quarreling among American unions, it reports that organizational disputes are rare in England. The report is represented as being mainly factual and objective and as holding out little possibility of the immediate application of England’s methods to the American scene. We have been too accustomed to the use of pressure, first that of the employer, now that of organized labor. It may require some more sparring on the part of these combatants before they recognize each other and settle down to the more peaceful method of co-operation.

Pressure in American politics has been so well established as to have become a byword. Who does not know of the influence of political bosses in both of our leading parties and of the almost impossible and seemingly useless task of attempting to break their power! Of late, however, reputed attempts at pressure through the pay envelope, public as well as private, have made the role of influence in elections even more sinister than it has been heretofore. Where will this stop? Propaganda, the disseminating of conclusions rather than the careful forming of opinion, is bad enough; coercion can not be permitted in a Democracy if Democracy is to stand. No wonder that in some European countries open dictatorships have taken over control.

The issue of socialized medicine precipitated both privately, in a number of cities in which privately organized attempts at group medicine have been carried out, and publicly by the government in its desire to offer medical service to its employees, furnishes another instance of the opportunity for the exercise of pressure. The American Medical Association has opposed the movement toward group medicine by refusing to recognize attempts in this direction in various localities, particularly by using its power to oust doctors from the association and to withhold from them the medical services offered by hospitals. What seem to be impartial statements of attempts at group medicine and of the Association’s reaction to them would at least give the reader that impression. The Federal Government is now regarded by the A. M. A. as attempting to use pressure in return. In its house of delegates meeting held recently in Chicago the medics weighed and responded to the proposals of the government, and in the annual meeting of the Association soon to convene they will undoubtedly have to face the whole burning question of socialized medicine.

A common reaction to any proposal that would change the old order of things is, to be overcome by the fears that what one has or has gained will be lost, to resort to a blind defence of the old and an equally blind and ignorant objection to all that is new. New issues are thus too frequently met with the throttle of emotion wide open and the resources of reason apparently ignored. Those who resort to such defences do not realize that such practices do not succeed—other than to encourage what they would prevent. The Medical Association, for example, will perhaps learn that if it is to have a real opportunity to point out evils in this new movement and to guide the development of it, it must recognize the need which has given rise to it and the good in the attempts that have been made to meet it. Not to do so may simply mean the encouragement of blind insistence on “ours is the right position” on the part of the exponents of the new order. H. J. R.

“Gott Mit Uns”

FROM across the ocean we have on more than one occasion heard the cry “Gott mit uns” when the cause seemed to us far from just. We hear on every side today the insistence that the particular position advocated or defended is the right one. The individual or the group is certain that its will is God’s will and that God’s will is its will. The assertion is at times so bold that one dare hardly raise the query whether any real attempt has been made to ascertain God’s will.

The scientist in his laboratory, who seemingly cares little for public acclaim and certainly desires to get away from the public’s frustrating pressure, offers something of an object lesson to those of us who are constantly insisting on knowing, or understanding the right ways, the only ways of doing things. He, at all events, is interested in getting at the facts, in understanding things as they really are. If he is sincere, he is his own best critic, the last to consider himself all wise, to consider his untired ways the only ways of doing things. His desire to be objective, to let the facts tell their own story, to let the truth out, is one that may well be emulated in other fields.

Although the scientist may not regard his discoveries as the revelation of God and may not seek to use them in such a way as to glorify Him, his method should make us pause. What does it mean to “glorify God,” a phrase we so easily and tritely repeat? Does it not mean that in addition to the sincere desire, the attitude of mind, to do God’s will we also seek to know that will, and that we use all the gifts at our disposal, and all of God’s revelation in nature as well as in Scripture to know it? What does it mean to say: “Thy will be done,”—the implicit desire that my will be done? If it really means “Thy will be done,” can we so readily shout that we are right and that God is on our side as is frequently the case?

One wishes on occasion that the certitude of those who are complacent in the face of obvious ignorance of some of the facts of the case on which they make pronouncements would realize what it means to speak as if they were absolutely right. Not that people would not oppose them even if they were!
We know from the life of Jesus Himself that that is likely to be the case. But there is something in the attitude of men as well as their obvious one-sidedness that too frequently belies their claim to the “Gott mit uns” on which they rely.

The true follower of the Lord will humbly follow Him, and that attitude will change his very life and ennoble his purposes, be he scientist or uninformed peasant. Whatever or whoever he be, if he is a follower of the Lord, if he is to say “Thy will be done,” he will realize what one may be permitted to regard as one of the implications of Christ’s command to “leave father and mother and follow me”; he will live now already as in the world but not of it. He who would attempt to do God’s will in any given situation must have achieved the attitude and the power as the result of which in the very midst of all the relations, the supports of his life, he is nevertheless able to live as if outside of them, and as if he had the support of God alone. From the vantage point of such a relation all of life can be viewed objectively and from that point of view God’s will can be done. And just as truly, from that point of view all the relations of life which we hold so dear and that usually hold us so tightly will disappear and become more meaningful than ever before.

This means however, that we seek not only to know God but that we seek to achieve the “apartness” from and the true knowledge of the very life we live that only God has and can give. Only such objectivity will avail to meet our present individual and group problems. On the basis of such objectivity each of us will be able to see problems in a light and in a spirit of detachment he has never realized before. If “God wills it,” if “thine be the glory” means that, then we shall no longer pay lip service to these statements. But without such intention all our insistence, our pressure, our use of influence to maintain something we fear we may lose or desire to get, will turn against us.

H. J. R.

Not Aquinas, but Calvin and Kuyper

NOW that Dr. Samuel Craig, leading Presbyterian minister and journalist, has drawn the attention of the evangelical people to the excellence of the theology and philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, we may be pardoned for sounding a note of warning. Of course, we prefer Scholasticism to Humanism, and we also believe that we have many things in common with truly God-fearing Catholics. We even believe that there are elements in the philosophy of Aquinas on which we can agree, e.g., his belief in eternal standards, and his valuation of faith as a guide in the realm of nature. But, on the other hand, we must not forget that his distinction of a higher realm of grace (the church) and of a lower realm of nature (non-church life), with faith as the guide in the upper realm, and reason as the director in the lower realm, so that philosophy is a totum opus rationis (a complete work of the intellect) with faith only as a negative warning to avoid the wrong paths of human speculation—we must not forget that these Thomistic distinctions were overthrown by Calvin, who has a good deal to say about pagan and Catholic philosophy in the first part of his Institutes when he discusses the knowledge of God from nature. It may be well for us to read once more what Calvin has to say about the relation of reason and faith, and of general and special revelation. For Calvin: not reason, but faith is the final criterion of all knowledge. For Calvin: Scripture is the only guide for faith and life, as article seven of our Belgic Confession makes plain. All philosophy based upon some form of reason is for that very basis antagonistic to Christ, so that he does not hesitate to call Plato whom he considers to be the greatest thinker, “a poor pagan,” who was confused about God and the world.

An equally strong note does Kuyper sound in his Encyclopedia and in his Stone Lectures. Kuyper calls all thinking based on the postulates of reason abnormal. Our thinking will be normal only if we are regenerate, and if we are willing to listen to the testimony of the Bible and the Holy Spirit. “Good ideas,” propounded by philosophers who do not build on the foundations of the Word, must be cut loose from their roots, as he puts it.

Of late a society for the development of a true Calvinistic philosophy under the leadership of two professors of the Free University at Amsterdam has been established. Without making a plea for a bodily transference of this philosophy to America, we dare say that the fundamentals of this new philosophy are not in line with Aquinas, but with Paul ("by faith we understand"), with Calvin, and with Kuyper. Two of those fundamental principles are repeatedly mentioned for the upbuilding of a Calvinistic, i.e., a Scriptural metaphysics and cosmology. They are the principle of the antithesis: not reason, but faith is the final criterion of the truth; and the principle of sphere sovereignty: God made everything according to its nature, and, therefore, gave everything its own structure, law, and purpose. As a third principle, that of sin and grace might be mentioned. Through sin there has come about disorder and abuse, but through Christ, the Redeemer, not only the individual can be restored, but all categories of life are redeemed by Him, and should, therefore, be requisitioned for his service. All three principles are not only opposed to those of an autonomous, i.e., rationalistic philosophy, but also to those of the synthetic philosophy of Aquinas who tries to make a compromise between Christ and Aristotle. We take it, that nobody joining the new Calvinistic society signs up for all that is being written in the books and articles published by their members. But no Calvinist ought to have objection to the three principles mentioned above, on account
of which this Calvinistic philosophy is indicated in the statutes of the society, as the philosophy of the wetsidee, the positive principle of sphere sovereignty. We believe with the new society that Aquinas should not be our guide, but Calvin and Kuyper, and their three landmarks.

H. J. V. A.

Queen Wilhelmina and Dutch Calvinism

IT IS remarkable that during the forty years' reign of Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands there has been in that country not only a general prosperity and a decided progress in every line of activity, but also a wonderful gain in interest in church life, Christian organizations, and—last not least—in Calvinistic science and art. Of course, Queen Wilhelmina herself would not be held responsible for this general prosperity, nor for the florescence of Calvinism. Yet, we venture to say that the words spoken at different occasions, e.g., at the Christmas celebration in 1914, at the tomb of Gaspard de Coligny (whose daughter William the Silent married), and at the time of the impending revolution—also called "November alarm" in 1918; and that also the example of the Queen, e.g., the religious services in her palace, and her almost puritanic life, have greatly encouraged orthodox and evangelical believers in their efforts, sacrifice, and testimony. In so far as the renewed study and application of Calvinism in America among Reformed as well as Presbyterians is a revelation of the revival of Calvinism in the Netherlands during the reign and under the encouragement of the noble descendant of William of Orange, the CALVIN FORUM does not want to fall behind secular American papers in wishing Queen Wilhelmina Godspeed for the future and many more blessed years for church and nation.

H. J. V. A.

One Generation Passeth Away...

On August 20, just as we had gone to press for the September issue, word came of the death of Dr. Siebe C. Nettinga, President of Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan, and now, just a month later, news of the demise of Professor Klaas Schoolland, Emeritus Professor of Greek at Calvin College, reaches us. Dr. Nettinga was still in active service, reaching his sixty-third year, a forceful personality and full of zeal for the institution and church he loved, until cancer made his bodily frame to waste away. Professor Schoolland, retired yet never inactive, in love with study and writing till the end, especially devoted to his Greek New Testament and the treasures of God's truth it opened up to him, fell asleep in Jesus at the ripe old age of 87. Nettinga and Schoolland, whose names are now associated by the proximity of death, did not usually find their names associated in life. The one taught in Holland, the other in Grand Rapids. The one was a theologian-preacher, the other a professor of college Greek. The one belonged to the Reformed Church in America, the other to the Christian Reformed Church. We do not know how well they knew one another, if at all personally. And yet, we combine the two names in one editorial, and that not merely because of the date of their death. Both were of Reformed Friesian-Dutch stock. Both loved the Word of God and the Church that stands in the Reformed tradition of faith and life. Both were spiritual sons of Calvin. Dr. Nettinga, as professor of Church History, was especially devoted to the study and inspiring teaching of the age of the Reformation. There was no compromise with Modernism in Nettinga. He had seen the glory of the Reformed Faith and stood committed to the training of young men for the gospel ministry in his communion who should see something of the beauty and power of that faith. Schoolland was much more than a teacher of Greek to his students. He had caught the vision of the Reformed Faith as a world and life view under the inspiring leadership of Abraham Kuyper. Calvinism had assumed flesh and blood in his thinking and living. His was a philosophical type of mind. As he taught Greek grammar, he was interested in exhibiting the deeper relationships of thought expressed in moods and tenses and prepositions. The lazy student did not always get the whole lesson under his tutelage, but the industrious and thoughtful student got not only the Greek lesson but much more. Schoolland's devotion to Calvinism as a world and life view not only cropped out in his Greek teaching, but came also to expression in his editorial work. As editor and leader he pleaded unceasingly for the application of the principles of the Word of God to every realm of human thought and endeavor. Christian political action was not only a theory to him, but, though the efforts were not always crowned with the desired success, he was ever indefatigable in the pursuit of this phase of Christian duty and in urging others on to greater devotion in a practical Christian life in which Soli Deo Gloria was the only motive, standard, and motto. As these Calvinists of the older generation pass away, may we of the next and the younger generation take up the torch of truth and glorify God in our day and age in some measure comparable to theirs.

C. B.

The American Calvinistic Conference for 1939

In last year's February issue of our journal the first announcement of the proposed American Calvinistic Conference for 1939 was made and given whole-hearted editorial endorsement. Since that time occasional references have been made to the
plans that were carried forward, but no definite announcement as to the further details of this conference could as yet be made. We are now happy to call attention to the present edition of his theological position from the original edition of his Lehre vom Wort Gottes. This extensive treatise to which Barth's position is devoted to the Reformed Faith and believes it is the hope for the future will reveal no essential change. It is possible, therefore, to cull a sketch of Barth's basic theological position from the original edition of his Lehre vom Wort Gottes. Such a sketch this present article is intended to furnish. Succeeding articles will then review the main alterations which the revision brings and give a critical evaluation of Barth's position.

**Its Structural Characteristic**

The most prominent and striking feature of Barth's Prolegomena to Dogmatics is without question the transfer to it of weighty topics and extensive sections from the body of Christian doctrine. The doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine of the Incarnation, and the doctrine of the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit are treated in the Prolegomena in their bearing on the doctrine of the Word of God, of course, but they overshadow everything else. In the original edition they fill 200 of the 463 pages of the text, and in the revised edition 704 out of the 1504 pages of text are devoted to them. This extensive treatment of these doctrines here raises the question what will result from it for the treatment of the same doctrines in the body of Barth's dogmatics proper.

It also raises the question whether there are not some other doctrines which would call for some, even though less lengthy, special discussion in a doctrine of the Word of God. Revelation presupposes a recipient and, in fact, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is discussed so fully with a view to the question as to how the revelation reaches the recipient. We might ask: How did the recipient come into being? What is his nature? And why does he need this revelation? In other words, why not a distinct discussion of the work of the Holy Spirit in man? Why not a development of the doctrines of regeneration, of faith and of illumination? Naturally none of these subjects are simply ignored, but they are either merely touched upon or treated incidentally.

On the question as to the reason for the selection of just these doctrines for treatment in Barth's doctrine of the Word of God some light is shed when we take note of the rest of the contents of his work. These three doctrines are all discussed in its second chapter under the heading "The Revelation of God." There follows a third chapter on Holy Writ and a fourth on the Proclamation by the Church. These three, the revelation, the Bible, and preaching, are the three forms in which the Word of God occurs. The first chapter develops the doctrine of the three forms of the Word of God. This chapter has in the revision undergone more of alteration than any other, but the emphasis on the three forms of the
Word of God has not changed. Two things strike us. On the one hand the fact that chapters one, three, and four together occupy little more space than chapter two alone underscores heavily the significance that is attached to the revelation as compared with the Bible and the proclamation. On the other hand there is not found in the entire work a positive treatment of what one usually looks for in an introduction to dogmatics under the title of general revelation or natural theology or the like.

Elimination of General Revelation

This omission of a discussion of general revelation or natural theology is explained on pages 135-137 of the original edition in the following manner. A discussion of the problem which these terms suggest is promised in the dogmatics proper under the doctrine of God and specifically of His knowableness. That the problem of revelation as such is recognizable also apart from the Bible, that there is an emergence of what he calls the question of man, Barth grants and demands that this question should be dialectically confronted with the revelation as the divine answer. He also seems to grant the possibility of a voice from God in the starry heavens, the conscience, the mathematical axioms, or certain phenomena in the history of religion. But, he claims, if something beyond said question of man is meant by natural revelation and if all possible confusion of this voice with all kinds of voices from the unredeemed "dissesits" of man and from his contradiction is properly guarded against, then the same revelation must be meant in its totality, of which the prophets and the apostles bear witness in the Bible. He knows of no obstacle in the way of the assumption that revelation and testimony of it in this sense exists outside the Bible. But one should have the courage to claim to have heard the voice of the one true God, of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the God of the Church from such an extrabiblical quarter as the starry heavens, conscience, or the pagan world, or else he ought not to speak of revelation. For there can be no partial revelation; in His revelation God is in His entirety.

Article II of the Belgic Confession

To all appearances this trinitarian, christological narrowing of the concept of revelation is a denial of God's revelation in nature as taught by the Belgic Confession, Art. II. It need not be a denial of the facts in which the Belgic Confession, following Paul, beholds a revelation of God. It need not even mean that objectively those facts have no revelatory value, insufficient and ineffective as they are. It does mean, however, that Barth refuses to see the picture of God's special revelation in Jesus Christ in the light of this general revelation as its frame and that he will recognize the frame only when filled by the picture and fused with the picture. In this direction points what he says in his discussion of the so-called vestiges of the Trinity in the world of God's creatures: "One can not, however, cast about next to the revelation for other revelations, nor for proofs of the revelation, nor for analogies and parables of the revelation. If one finds such, so much the better, but one finds them only in the reflection of the revelation" (p. 147).

Further light is shed upon Barth's conception of general revelation and its relation to special revelation in a passage from his defense of the Reformed teaching that Christ's deity as omnipresent is present also outside His assumed humanity. Says he: "... the Word of reconciliation is also the Word of creation and is as such not canceled by the reconciliation but renewed and confirmed. Also the realm of nature is the realm of the Son, not first the realm of grace. In the realm of nature, as the Word of creation, the Son is, however, not the Incarnate One. As Calvin says, as the Incarnate One He does not cease to fill the world, although just this He does not do in His quality of being incarnate (unless one wants straightway to destroy this concept by the doctrine of ubiquity). This Logos Asarkos is not a second (respectively first) natural and perhaps partial revelation. Actually there is only the one entire revelation in the Logos Ensarkos. But in His function as Creator-Word, which function has not been destroyed by the Fall, He is the necessary presupposition of this one and entire revelation in the Incarnate One" (p. 271). His meaning appears to be, therefore, that the revelation in nature becomes a genuine revelation only when integrated with the special revelation in Jesus Christ. Apart from his conception of special revelation his attitude to general revelation can evidently not be correctly apprehended.

The Canon of Scripture

The special revelation of God in Christ we approach only by way of the Scriptures. Barth's conception of Holy Writ differs from ours in two respects. The first peculiarity is his idea of the open Canon. The Church's selection of the books combined in our Bible rests ultimately on an absolute ground and the act of selection was meant as merely the recognition of the fact that these books had already proven themselves to be God's Word (p. 338). Nevertheless it must be said of the Canon, that the concrete result of its recognition is human and relative and in so far fallible and corrigeble (p. 339). And, "viewed from the angle of dogmatic principle, a narrowing or widening of the Canon of Holy Writ can also today not be called an impossibility, although in order to be meaningful and legitimate, it would always have to be an act of the Church which believes the revelation and could not possibly be left to the judgment of historical investigation or to the individual taste" (p. 339).
The reason why this believing Church should make the alteration if an alteration is to be made in the extent of the Canon, is, that the alteration may in no wise alter the revelation, as appears from pp. 250-252. This is a most important proviso to Barth's mind, and it is a most significant proviso for the understanding of his view. How this proviso might leave room for additions to our present Canon is easier seen than how it might permit eliminations. But a reason for the admission of new material into the Canon is hard to discover if the new material is not at all to affect the revelation. Such additions would seem to be absolutely superfluous. And the question arises, why Barth should at all be interested in keeping the door open for such additions. The reason must be sought in his conception of the relation of the Canon to the revelation.

Verbal Inspiration Rejected

The other feature in his view of the Canon that is of special significance is his attitude to the idea of Verbal Inspiration. We learn, that "the form in which the Bible mediates the revelation to us and is in so far God's Word, is the prophetic-apostolic testimony. From this form the revelation can not be separated as a magnitude that stands as it were behind it and can also be viewed by itself" (p. 343). But there is "no recognition of the Bible as the Word of God without concrete knowledge concerning its historical character, concerning the possibility to view it non-theologically, that is, concerning the fact that such recognition is not self-evident" (p. 344). Both the 17th century doctrine of verbal inspiration and the absurd "God in History" of the more recent theology resulted from the want of the dialectical courage, "calmly to think together the human fallibility of the biblical testimony which even from the theological standpoint, properly understood, simply can not be denied, and its infallibility as the Word of God" (p. 346). Again the question arises, what interest Barth—who, to my knowledge, nowhere has pointed out what he conceives to be an actual error in the texts of the Bible—can have in thus pleading for the human fallibility of the Bible. And the answer must be sought in his conception of the relation of the Bible to the revelation.

That relation is suggested when he writes: "The revelation stands, no, happens in Scripture, not behind it" (p. 344), and: "recognition of the Bible as God's Word is itself a happening, an ever freshly occurring breaking through of faith and obedience. The wall that must be broken through is the human-temporal conditionality of the biblical testimony. In denying the character of that recognition as a decision, he who denies or ignores this wall and makes of the Bible an oracle, an organ of direct communication, denies neither more nor less than the revelation itself" (p. 345). To Barth's mind the closed Canon and its verbal inspiration would mean that the Bible is an organ of direct communication and would therefore eliminate the revelation. Speaking of the testimony of the Holy Spirit which is the ground for our acceptance of the Bible as God's Word, he says: "Through the Spirit of Nazareth is Jesus Christ, the incarnate Logos of God. Through the Spirit the human word of the Scripture is God's Word. Through the Spirit the revelation is perceived by the witnesses, and through the same Spirit their testimony becomes testimony for us. Through the Spirit, but that means, through God Himself. He Who alone is competent in this matter speaks and hears" (p. 358).

This fails to make the relation of the Bible to the revelation quite clear. We would like to know, whether or not the reader of the Bible who knows nothing of the testimony of the Holy Spirit has before him testimony of God's revelation in Jesus Christ for which he will be held accountable in the day of judgment. The answer to this question involves Barth's conception of the judgment and of predestination. These two are most intimately associated. But his Lehre vom Wort Gottes, though full of the idea of judgment and of the idea of election, yet does not set the peculiarly Barthian conception of these two in clear relief. His peculiar interpretation of the Pauline doctrine of predestination is developed in his Roemerbrief, with which we have no dealings now. However, we shall have to recur to this point later.

The Revelation

We turn now to the Barthian conception of the revelation. Objectively, the revelation takes place in Jesus Christ, in the Incarnation. The incarnation characterizes itself as miracle by distancing itself at decisive inseparable points from all analogies as an event, the subject and reality of which is only God, the acting Lord. For a view that knows only of other historical events, that knows no such historical events as would be nothing but predicates of the Word of God, the incarnation as miracle can only be subsumed under the concept of myth" (p. 272). Barth emphasizes the divine activity in the incarnation: "The reality of the humanity, the flesh, the historicity of the Redeemer-God stands and falls with the reality of His act on us, with the reality of the Word spoken to us and perceived by us. As we have said before, it is historical reality only as 'urgeschichtliche' reality" (pp. 263, 264). Evidently the activity of God in the incarnation and the activity of God in the believer are viewed as such a unity that without the latter the incarnation is not only not perceived but apparently is not even a historical reality.

Analogous to this dualism in Christ is a dualism which the revelation establishes in the recipient, in man. It is not merely the dualism between the believer's former unregenerate and his present regenerate state as we conceive of it. Barth holds to
something that is analogous to this dualism. So much can be gathered from the thesis which he develops in the paragraph on Grace and Religion. The thesis runs as follows: "The reality of religion, which rests on a possibility of the human soul, consists in the purest instance in reverence for an Altogether Other, to whom, on the basis of actual experience and in contrast with himself and with all that is otherwise known to him, man ascribes superiority and help. In itself this reality is not the subjective possibility of revelation but the strongest expression of man’s contradiction of God and with himself. If it is communion with God, it is this not in itself, but by the grace of God which it receives as faith and obedience." Natural religion is the culmination of man’s sin; but when God in His revelation posits Himself as its object, it becomes true, real service of God. "This divine possibility, not the reality of religion as such, is the subjective possibility of revelation; but for the sake of this divine possibility religion is not only the ultimate phenomenon of the pride and the misery of man, but also the indication which points to the grace that is promised precisely to the altogether great sinner, the indication which points to the Holy Spirit who is to be poured out precisely upon all flesh" (p. 318).

**A Dualism in the Believer**

In the next paragraph, on God and Man in Grace, we find a further explication of this dualism which indicates that it characterizes the believer: "Weak and queer and wrong through and through is also that knowing and doing of man in which he receives the revelation, in which he affirms God. But this is precisely the miracle of the Holy Spirit in the revelation, that such an affirmation of God by our weak and queer and wrong knowing and doing takes place, a work of man which God acknowledges as done in God with all the gracious consequences which such an acknowledgment has for man" (pp. 323-324).

This dualism goes beyond what we learn from Paul as the dualism and struggle between the old and the new man in the believer, but it is not final: "It is of the essence of the revelation, that the meeting of God and man which takes place in it through God’s Word in man’s faith and obedience takes place in the sphere of the relative, provisional, penultimate, that it points beyond itself to a communion without the limitations within which it takes place now and here" (p. 325).

We may have wondered what Barth means when explaining the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing the testimony of the revelation home to us as a hearing of the same God that speaks. We may have wondered what he means with the declaration that the revelation happens in the Bible. In this connection it is significant that he treats of the sinner’s renewal by grace not in a separate chapter but in the chapter on the revelation under the heading, the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Barth takes the recipient of the revelation up into the revelation. Not merely the prophets and the apostles, but every one that believes. What the ancients called the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit Barth describes as an act of divine self-recognition in which an act of human self-recognition receives a share; an act of human self-recognition that participates in an act of divine self-recognition (p. 357). The concept of revelation finds its completion in the fact, “that the Word of God is not only spoken, but also perceived by us” (p. 318). "Spoken in Jesus Christ, perceived in the witness of the Holy Spirit, in this indissoluble totality it is the indissoluble Word of God" (p. 319). The Holy Spirit is the one "Who as the Redeemer-God even now and here substitutes for our humanity imprisoned, as this is, in its contradiction" (p. 290).

This strong language as to man’s participation in the revelation detracts not one whit, however, from the strong language as to the dualism in the believer. Barth establishes four points at which the grace of the revelation as it is communicated to the recipient by the Holy Spirit stands in perfect contradiction with man’s religion as exalted by Schleiermacher. The revelation in Christ Jesus involves no identification of man with God; man is capable and willing at every moment to distinguish God from himself, his states and activities. And the activity which God commands and blesses in the life of sinful and mortal man, faith and obedience, is genuinely the act of man (pp. 293-294). Furthermore, the new relationship between God and man is free and not static in the sense that even its constancy never means anything else but the constancy of an action which is not merely continuous but is in full seriousness at each moment beginning with the beginning (p. 295). Above all this is important with respect to the continuation of the dualism in the believer, that no removal is involved of what man is in himself: "poor, miserable, naked and bare in relation to God, non capax infiniti." And this is asserted, "not for the sake of any philosophy, but because in the light of the revelation he appears thus and not otherwise" (p. 291).

**Conception of God**

We must still briefly indicate Barth’s conception of the God Who reveals Himself in the revelation, the subjective possibility of which is the Holy Spirit, and the objective possibility of which is the incarnate Son (see pp. 284 and 214). The revelation is the revelation of the triune God. It strikes one, that Barth takes no other material from the locus de Deo for development in his Prolegomena besides the doctrine of the Trinity. It roots in the fact of God’s speaking; historically, the doctrine of the Trinity is the unfolding of the recognition, that Jesus is the Christ or the Lord, the Kyrios (p. 141). This doctrine is chosen for extensive exposition in the Lehre vom Wort Gottes not merely for this reason, but also because it is precisely the Trinity in virtue of which
God is indissoluble subject, so that even in the Incarnation He meets us as a Thou, but not as an object, and so that in the coming of the Holy Spirit the revelation is brought home to us only in the vicarious hearing of the Spirit in us for us.

Concerning the Trinity in its bearing on the revelation Barth develops the following five theses:

1. God's Word is God in His revelation. God reveals Himself as the Lord. He alone is the revealer. He is wholly revelation. He Himself is what is revealed (p. 127).

2. God reveals Himself as the One Who is the Lord in three modes which belong as inseparably together as they are irreducibly different: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Precisely in His revelation He manifests Himself and confirms Himself as the “Thou” which confronts the “I” of man as indissoluble subject and is just so and therein his God (p. 149).

3. The one God reveals Himself as the Creator, that is, as He Who is the Lord before and above the contradiction of man against God and with himself. As such He is our Father because as the Father of the Son He is it originally in Himself (p. 171).

4. The one God reveals Himself as the Reconciler, that is, as the One Who is victoriously the Lord in the midst of man's contradiction against God and with man himself. As such He is the Word addressed to us, because as the Word or Son of the Father He is it originally in Himself (p. 182).

5. The one God reveals Himself as the Redeemer, that is, as the One Who is the Lord in the removal of the contradiction of man against God and with himself. As such He is the gift of grace, because as Spirit of the Father and of the Son He is originally Holy Spirit in Himself (p. 199).

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**WE ARE OF GOD**

We are of God, we know we are of God
The Spirit witness bears;
We know His voice and listen when He speaks
Content because He cares.

O might we rise beyond this sphere of time
Above these mundane things
And value fully our inheritance
That we shall reign with kings.

We are of God—mysterious sacred word!
Kindred with the Most High!
Precious prerogative and privilege—
Do you claim it? Do I?

—Joan Geisel Gardner.

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**REST IN GOD**

His word is law to earth and sea.
Creator of the world is He.
All nature bows to God on High.
Why shouldn't I?

He shakes the cedars in His wrath.
He crumbles mountains in His path.
Man, humbled, grovels in the dust.
I also must.

Supreme and terrible His might,
His justice is as swift as light.
The nations shake—when He draws near—
In utter fear.

But God, the Awful One above
Has proved Himself a God of love.
And in that love I put my stay,
And humbly pray—

“Great God of love, and God of might!
Great God of wisdom, truth, and right!
Be Thou my shield, and ever stand
At my right hand.”

He holds His children in His care.
No evil can befall them there.
To Him I'll flee, in Him I'll rest
Forever blest.

J. K.

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**THE ALL-SEEING EYE**

*Thou, God, seest me.*
Gen. 16:13

When doubts and fears my soul oppress,
And I in weakness fain would flee,
I comfort take in my distress,
This knowing that Thou seest me.

The enemy surrounds me still
With sneers and bitter irony,
But I consign all to Thy will,
For surely then Thou seest me.

My heart at times with bitter grief
And sorrows great may filled be,
Then 'tis this thought that brings relief,
That Thou on high still seest me.

I vex my soul when sinners rise
And I'm kept in humility;
Until Thy wisdom I surmise,
Reflecting that Thou seest me.

My labors scarcely heeded seem,
And their reward I do not see;
But Thou wilt every deed esteem,
For Thou, Lord, ever seest me.

S. G. B.
BAVINCK’S CONCEPTION OF MAN

Selections arranged by
Walter Van Saun, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy, Hope College, Holland, Michigan

THIRTY years ago Herman Bavinck, the great philosopher-theologian, delivered the Stone Lectures at Princeton. These were published by Longmans in 1909 under the title The Philosophy of Revelation. For several years this book has been out of print, but the clear and vigorous statement of truth is uniquely pertinent and valuable for our times. It is the purpose of this article to present in quotation and paraphrase Bavinck’s analysis of human nature.

1. Man is fundamentally supernatural. “Humanity as a whole has been at all times supernaturalistic to the core. Neither in thought nor in life have men been able to satisfy themselves with the things of this world; they have always assumed a heaven above the earth, and behind what is visible a higher and holier order of invisible powers and blessings. This means that God and the world while sharply distinguished have at the same time stood in the closest connection.” And on the following page he affirms that the image of God is not a supernatural addition, but an integral part of human nature. (pp. 1-3)

Man’s Self-Consciousness

2. Self-consciousness is the starting point. Bavinck takes his starting point not from the representations as such but from self-consciousness, not from the act “cogitare” but from the fact “cogito.” For “as the external perception, of itself and immediately, convinces of the reality of the perceived object, so the perception of self in the phenomena of consciousness assures us spontaneously and immediately of the existence of ourselves . . . In self-consciousness our own being is revealed to us, directly, immediately, before all thinking and independently of all willing . . . To ignore this fact of self-consciousness, this primary fact, this foundation of all knowledge and activity . . . is to shake not only the foundation of science, but also the indispensable basis of all human conduct, to weaken all confidence, spontaneity, volitional energy and courage.” (pp. 60-62)

3. Christianity reveals the ego as rich in capacities. In self-consciousness we discover the ego “rich in content, full of life and power and activity . . . It is itself immanent in the psychical phenomena and develops itself in and through them; it is capable of working out its own salvation with fear and trembling, but also of working out its own destruction and ruin. It is, but at the same time it becomes and grows; it is a fulness of life, a totality of gifts and powers, which do not play their roles behind the curtain, but reveal themselves and find development in the multiform activities of the psychical life, in the whole man with all his works.”

“When the Christian religion revealed to us the greatness of God’s heart, and in the dayspring from on high visited us with his tender mercy, it at the same time cast its light on man and on the riches and value of his soul. It imparted to him a new certainty, the certainty of faith; it restored to him his confidence in God and therewith his confidence in himself. And by this light of revelation Augustine descended deep into his own inner life. Thus Augustine went back behind thought to the essence of the soul, and found in it not a simple unity, but a marvellously rich totality; he found there the ideas, the norms, the laws of the true and the good, the solution of the problem of the certainty of knowledge, of the cause of all things, of the supreme good; he found there the seeds and germs of all knowledge and science and art; he found there even, the triad of memoria, intellectus, and voluntas, a reflection of the triune being of God." (pp. 63-64)

His Dependence and Freedom

4. The sense of dependence is at the very core of our nature. As Bavinck seeks to determine more closely the nature of mind and for this purpose descends into the depths of self-consciousness, he finds at its very root the sense of dependence. “In our self-consciousness we are not only conscious of being, but also of being something definite;—we are dependent, limited, finite, created beings.” In the first place we feel ourselves dependent on everything around us, on every side we are curbed and hedged in. “In the second place we feel ourselves together with all other creatures wholly dependent on some absolute power, which is the one infinite being.” (p. 66)

5. Freedom is correlative with the sense of dependence. Dependence and freedom are not antagonistic but rather postulate each other. Man’s dependence is not a mere dependence as the irrational creation is dependent on God; in man it is a sense of dependence. In man it is a conscious, voluntary dependence, a dependence of a rational and moral being. Hence if man repudiates his dependence he does not thereby become independent, his dependence loses its rational and moral character, and becomes the subservience of mere means to an end. Therefore the sense of dependence, conscious and voluntary dependence, includes the freedom of man. To submit to God, that is true freedom. This testimony of self-consciousness, combining dependence and freedom in one, is the basis of religion, and likewise of morality. (pp. 76-79)
As to Innate Ideas

6. Not innate ideas but inborn powers. "It is the instinctive, organic life which in sensations, in thoughts and actions, gives an impulse to us and shows us the way. Instinct and capacity, norm and law, precede the life of reflection. Man is not sent into the world unarmed, but is equipped in body and soul with rich gifts and powers; he receives the talents which he has only to invest and augment them in the acts of his earthly life." (p. 216)

Strictly speaking innate ideas do not exist. However "it is the mind of man with all its peculiar nature and organization, its intellect and reason, heart and conscience, desire and will, and with the ineradicable consciousness of its dependence and freedom, that is innate, brought into the world in principle and germ at birth, not acquired later phylogenetically or ontogenetically. Thus when man grows up and develops in accordance with the nature implanted in him, not in detachment from the world and the social organism, but in the environment in which a place was assigned to him at birth, he attains as freely and inevitably to the knowledge and service of a personal God as he believes in his own existence and that of the world... And this is due to the fact that God, the creator of all nature, has not left himself without witness, but through all nature, both that of man himself and that of the outside world speaks to him." (p. 79)

His Relation to Nature and God

7. Man's relation to nature and to God. "Man can attain to a true, free relation to nature only when he stands in his true relation to God. As God's representative man rules the world, but in that capacity only. He may not obey his caprice but only the revealed will of God... Man owes this free and royal relation to nature first of all to the fact that all the world is recognized as created by God... The doctrine of creation maintains the divinity, the goodness, and the sacredness of all created things. In this world man now receives his own independent place. He is kin to all the world, formed out of matter, earthy of the earth; nothing natural is strange to him. But in one respect he is different from all creatures; he is the son, the image, the similitude of God, his offspring. Thereby he is fitted for dominion over all the world. In this relation of man to God and the world is the foundation laid and the origin given of all science and art." (pp. 105-108). "The struggle lies not between man and nature, but is fought out in the heart of man himself, between his what is and his what ought to be. The struggle is primarily of an ethical rather than of a physical nature." (p. 111)

As to Culture and History

8. The individual's relation to culture. "The advantages of culture, handed down by progenitors, cannot be taken up, conserved, and increased by their descendants without some action on their part. Although every man is born from the community and is formed by it, he has to begin again for himself at the very beginning. From his birth he must strive to make the inheritance of the past his own; he must 'labor for it in order to possess it'. And there is the possibility and danger that he may squander, dissipate and turn to his own destruction the treasures which fall in his lap at his birth." (p. 120)

9. The individual's relation to history. "Just as soul and body in man are not genetically one and have not originated from each other, and yet form in the 'ego' of man an inner organic unity; just as the members of an organism are neither exclusively producent nor exclusively product of the organism, but stand in reciprocal relations with it and thus form a unity; so the matter stands with every man, and every people in history, and also with all humanity... The Scriptures teach us that the unity of humanity does not exclude, but rather includes the differentiation of man in race, in character, in attainment, in calling, and in many other things. Every man lives in his own time, comes into being and passes away, appears and disappears; he seems only a part of the whole, a moment of the process. But every man also bears the ages in his heart; in his spirit-life he stands above and outside of history. He lives in the past and the past lives in him, for man cannot forget. He also lives in the future and the future lives in him, for he bears hope imperishably in his bosom. Thus he can discover something of the connection between the past, the present, and the future; thus he is at the same time maker and knower of history. He belongs himself to history and yet he stands above it; he is a child of time and yet has part in eternity; he becomes and he is at the same time; he passes away and yet he abides." (pp. 139-140)

His Religious Nature and Salvation

10. Man is inherently religious. "Sin is not involved in existence itself, for every creature, as it comes forth from the hand of God, is very good; sin consists in transgression of God's commandment." (p. 196). "However far man may wander from God he remains bound to heaven; in the depths of his soul he is linked to a world of unseen and supernatural things; in his heart he is a supernatural being: his reason and conscience, his thinking and willing, his needs and affections have their ground in that which is eternal. And religion is the irrefutable proof of this. It is not thrust upon him by force nor foisted upon him by deceit, but it rises spontaneously from his own nature, although it is nourished from without. The religion of man in the
fallen state is no doubt always arbitrary, but at the same time also voluntary, service. Thereby every man acknowledges and confesses that he can be free only in absolute dependence; that he can be true to himself and be a human being only when serving God.” (pp. 142-143)

11. God alone saves man. “Man does not save himself, and does not save God, but God alone saves man, the whole man, man for eternity. It is a religion not of works, but of faith; not of merits, but of grace. Man can add nothing to it,—salvation is God's work alone; of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. But this almighty and always active will of God is not realized without man, as antinomians of all kinds imagine, but in man, and through man. It is realized according to the witness of the whole Scripture, in regeneration and faith, in conversion and forgiveness of sin, in sanctification and perseverance. All the steps in the way of salvation are God's work, the effect and fulfillment of his will; but because they take place in man, and are realized in his consciousness and will, they may all be considered and described also from an anthropological point of view. In order to become a sharer in divine fellowship, a person must be regenerated, changed, renewed, or, to use the most common term, a person must be converted. Conversion is the sole and absolutely peculiar way to heaven.” (pp. 228-230)

THE BLUE FRINGE
William T. Riviere, D.D.
Victoria, Texas

No one who is now on earth knows what Jesus looked like. Artists paint their pictures of him; and sculptors make their statues: but the likeness is imaginary. None of us can know how He looked.

Jesus was a man's man. He won the devotion of a select group of men friends; bravely He went to a dreadful death and bore a world's sins in His own body on the cross. Who can be satisfied with the ladylke faces which so many artists imagine and paint for that manly hero? They show a long-curl, delicate man with small hands and feet; but Jesus was a carpenter and builder, Who had earned His living with those hands. A carpenter's hands have more strength than delicacy, more muscle than fineness of shape. Surely He was vigorous and masculine and strong; but we do not know how He looked.

Nor can I recall ever seeing a painting that showed how He really dressed. For Jesus was a Jew; and the pious Jew had God's command to wear blue fringes on the borders of his outer garment.

The history of that blue fringe takes us back into the Old Testament. Probably it was a fringe. But the Greek and Hebrew words that describe it were differently translated by different scholars: fringe, hem, border, even lace. How can a mere man keep up with such differences, anyway? God's Holy Spirit had the words written down, but they have been studied and translated and preached about by ministers and professors and men of books, not by dressmakers or dry goods merchants. I think it was a fringe; but certainly He wore something blue on the edge of His garment. The history of this blue fringe is found in the Old Testament.

Here are some suggestions about blue in the book of Exodus. In chapter 24 we read how the people accepted a covenant of obedience to God, and the covenant was sealed with blood. Then Moses and Aaron and two other priests and seventy elders had a vision of God: "under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." That blue, the color of the sky, represented the very presence of God. In the poor words of human speech, God looks down from heaven and pities us; God speaks to us and comes down from heaven to save us; God lifts us up to be with Him: is not blue the heavenly color, a reminder of God? Blue is one of the principal colors of the Tabernacle; and one of the high priest's outer garments was of blue.

The command about the blue fringe is in the fifteenth chapter of Numbers. Sacrifices and forgiveness were provided for the soul that sinned through ignorance. But a terrible warning was given against sinning presumptuously, against reproaching the Lord and despising His word. Next we read about the man whom God commanded them to stone to death for picking up sticks on the Sabbath day. Those people not only lived under a strict Sabbath law: God also reminded them of it every week. They found manna, the bread from heaven, ready to be gathered every morning except the Sabbath; and the day before the Sabbath they gathered a double portion so that they both had food for the Sabbath and could rest on the Sabbath day. On the Sabbath day they were not even to kindle a fire in their houses or tents. This Sabbath wood-gatherer was punished for the presumptuousness of
his sin, for reproaching the Lord, for publicly despising the word of God. Don't say that picking up sticks was a small thing. A few strokes with a pen send a man to prison, if those strokes forge a signature. Crooking your finger may be a capital crime, if the finger rests on the trigger of a pistol aimed at a man's heart or brain. The little act is no trifle: It shows the wicked will; it does great harm to others; and it incurs the dread penalty.

Immediately after this object lesson of sin and punishment, God told Moses to instruct the people of Israel, then and throughout their generations, to wear a perpetual reminder of God's commandments. They were to have this blue ribbon or fringe on their garments to remind them of God. The blue was to remind them of His commandments and to remind them to obey His commandments and to remind them not to seek after their own heart and their own eyes but to remember and do all His commandments. This blue reminder was chiefly, I suppose, for the wearer; but also others who saw it would be reminded of God's commands for the direction of life.

You know very well that with this command in the law of Moses, in Jesus' day pious Jews had plenty of blue borders and fringes on their garments. If a man could not afford a wide strip, he had a narrow strip of blue. A poor man who could not afford blue ribbon for the whole border could wear blue tassels on the corners of his robe. Even in poverty a pious Jew could obtain a blue thread, knot it together into a tiny tassel, and sew it to the corner of his meagre garment to remind him of God and of God's law.

CERTAINLY Jesus wore the blue fringe on His robe. He was a Jew, under the law of God. He came to fulfil all that law. He taught that law. He must have obeyed its precepts. He was preaching to the Jews, a prophet sent by the God Whom the Jews worshipped, a prophet sent not to destroy their law but to fulfil. Surely He wore the fringe of blue, the heavenly color. He came from heaven; He came to show us the way to heaven; He died to open heaven for us; and He was to return to heaven. He must have worn that fringe of blue.

This blue fringe is what is spoken of in the gospels as the hem of His garment. You find it, for example, in Mark fourteen, verse thirty-six. Jesus had fed the five thousand, and His disciples had seen Him walk on the water. When they came to land the men of that country "sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased; and besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole."

These things were involved: They looked, not at self, but at Jesus. They had to believe in Him. Those who believed could bring their friends. They had to touch in faith. A man who could stand had humbly to stoop to touch the bottom fringe; but the lowly fringe was down where the very sick, who were laid at His feet, could reach it. It was a matter of touching the blue fringe at the bottom of His robe.

You may come to Jesus, too. Let your heart kneel before Him and humbly reach to touch His blue fringe. Just the fringe is enough. Even that little touch does so much. We must stoop to touch it. But those who are already down find it within reach of their fingers. This reminder of high heaven hangs at the feet of Jesus. Bend down and touch, and be completely healed, all forgiven, perfectly whole. When He makes you well, you can live and love and work for Him.

The gospel of Christ, of heavenly blue, brings light to those who cannot see: truth for our needs and law for our guidance. It brings help to the weak: healing of soul as well as of body. It brings comfort to the sorrowing: the celestial color of hope. It brings forgiveness to the sinner: a new start even for the worst of us. It brings inspiring guidance to those who want to live fully: bright blue suggests the joy of active life. Jesus brought heaven to us on earth.

AMERICAN CALVINISTIC CONFERENCE
JUNE 27-29, 1939

The evening meetings will be public gatherings. These will be held in the Sixth Reformed Church, Paterson, New Jersey. This church edifice is both spacious and cheerful. The day conference meetings will be held in the Paterson Y. M. C. A. This Y. M. C. A. can accommodate many for meals and will extend dormitory privileges to members. This, of course, will be an important factor for hotel reservations may be limited during the World's Fair. One of the high spots of the conference will be the oppor-
tunity to have our meals together. This will cultivate fellowship, and will give us a more appreciative understanding of each others' ideals and objectives for the Kingdom of God.

Committee

The members of the original committee appointed by the Eastern Ministers Conference were: John J. Hiemenga, M. E. Broekstra, Jacob Van Bruggen, and Jacob T. Hoogstra. Later on the name of Lawrence J. Borst, pastor of the First Reformed Church of Passaic, N. J., was added to this committee. We deeply regret the departure of the late Dr. S. C. Nettinga of Western Theological Seminary, whose discomforts of declining health never prevented him from assisting us with advice. The Eastern Ministers Conference had hoped that both Dr. S. C. Nettinga and Dr. C. Bouma could be our honorary Vice-Presidents. Prevented by death to have both, we are happy, however, to have Dr. C. Bouma in our committee as honorary Vice-President of our American Conference. His encouragements and advice have always been most helpful.

Naturally, a conference has need of sponsors to meet financial obligations. Mr. John Hamersma, attorney-at-law, of Paterson, N. J., has been appointed financial secretary. A Music-Entertainment committee has also been appointed, the names to be made public upon acceptance.

Basis of Fellowship

The basis of fellowship shall be that of historic Calvinism as expressed in its classic creeds.

We are interested in a positive Calvinism. We believe in historic continuity. We hope and pray that those who believe that the Calvinistic creeds are the truest expressions of the infallible Word of God will seek to make friendly contacts with each other in order that we may present a positive Calvinism to our constituency and to the world. We do not wish to stand idly by as spectators while the drama of wickedness is fascinating the hearts of men and women. Another implication is that we are interested in Calvinism. Our time is not to be taken up only with technically theological discussions. We wish a full-orbed Christianity, relating our theology to all phases of human thinking and conduct. The last day of the conference deals with subjects particularly beneficial for students of political science, Christian education, and ethics.

We also hope that ministers conferences, seminaries, and seminary students, colleges and college students imbued with the same ideals may send their representatives, and so carry back with them the benefits to their organization of this conference. Some church assemblies will convene just before this conference. The additional expense of traveling from an assembly to this conference will be small, especially if reduced fares can be had to the New York City World's Fair. This will make it possible for men from the Pacific to the Atlantic, from north to south to come to Paterson.

Program

The Conference theme is: The Sovereignty of God. In our correspondence with representative Calvinists this theme received the preference. This theme was discussed at the 1932 Calvinistic Conference at Amsterdam, Netherlands. At the same time we feel that this theme is appropriate for us in America. The more popular any form of humanism becomes the more urgent it is to emphasize the Sovereignty of God.

The following program has been adopted. Perhaps the committee may be able later on to add a few names of visiting Calvinists to it.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

CONFERENCE MEETINGS—PATERSON Y. M. C. A.

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<tr>
<td>9:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Opening of Conference</td>
<td>An Exegetical and a Biblical Theological Study</td>
<td>And Politics and Sociology</td>
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<td>(Dr. W. C. Robinson)</td>
<td>Prof. John Murray Discussion</td>
<td>Dr. A. Van Den Bosch Discussion</td>
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<td>11:00 A.M.</td>
<td>An Historical and a Dogmatic Study</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>And Culture</td>
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<td>(Dr. John Macleod)</td>
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<td>Dr. L. Wencelius</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>1:30 P.M.</td>
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<td>And Barthianism</td>
<td>And Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:45 P.M.</td>
<td>Opening of Conference; Prayer Meeting</td>
<td>Dr. W. C. Robinson</td>
<td>Rev. W. Matheson</td>
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PUBLIC MEETINGS—SIXTH REFORMED CHURCH

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<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>Inspirational Address</th>
<th>And American Attitudes</th>
<th>And Human Responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 P.M.</td>
<td>Dr. S. Volbeda</td>
<td>Dr. W. C. Robinson</td>
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</table>

Dr. S. Volbeda is professor of Practical Theology in Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is known for his inspirational and spiritual messages. Professor John Murray teaches Systematic Theology in the Westminster Theological Seminary, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. He is also joint-editor of the new publication, The Westminster Theological Journal. He inspires his students with his accurate exegesis, and makes his courses living subjects. The Rev. John Macleod, Principal of the Free Church College, Edinburgh Scotland, expects to visit our shores to lecture in the Westminster Seminary and to be the commencement orator of this seminary at its tenth anniversary this spring. He has graciously consented to address our conference. He is known for his splendid address at the Edinburgh conference on "Calvinism and the Home." Dr. W. C. Robinson, professor of Historical Theology in Columbia Seminary, Decatur, Ga., is the choice man to speak on American Attitudes. Besides being a defender of the Calvinistic Faith in the south, his many contacts with others should make this public lecture very
instructive. Dr. Amry Vanden Bosch comes to us from the University of Kentucky. When work was begun on this conference, he had already expressed the hope that a conference on sociology and political science could be called. Since that time he has spent a year in the Netherlands, the land in which Calvinists play a prominent role in politics. Dr. Leon Wencelius is no longer a stranger to the CALVIN FORUM readers. He is the author of recognized books and articles, a lecturer at Calvinistic conferences. At present he teaches Romance languages in Swarthmore, although he is more interested in theology. Until recently he was better acquainted among the French Calvinists. We hope that we in America may become better acquainted with him and he with us. The Rev. Wm. Matheson is pastor of an independent Presbyterian Church in Chelsey, Ontario, Canada. His life long interest has been ethics. He comes to us highly recommended as an outstanding student in this particular field. As soon as possible we shall give the names of the speakers on the two subjects listed above without lecturers.

We sincerely commit this cause to your prayers in the hopes that God may use these small beginnings to make us stand firm in this age of changing scenes. Often necessity demands of us to assume a critical attitude towards movements in our modern church. Our sincerest prayer is that a positive Calvinism may regain its lost prestige for the glory of the Sovereign God in whose presence we live.

JACOB T. HOOGSTRA,
90 Demarest Avenue, Englewood, N. J.

MORE SECULARIZATION OF OUR SCHOOLS

Henry Van Zyl, Ph. D.

[Note—In last month's issue Dr. Van Zyl, under the title "More Lost Provinces in Education?", gave us a luminous account of the meaning and influence of John Dewey's educational principles and method. That discussion is carried forward and concluded in the present article.—EDITOR.]

LET no one think that this creed has no followers outside of teachers' colleges and day schools. Blanche Carrier in Church Education for Family Life addresses herself to ministers of the Gospel as being wholly in accord with this philosophy of education basically rooted in the movement of experience. On page 115 she extends a helping hand to "many liberal theists who have difficulty in recognizing the experimentalists' conception of God because they are still held by supernatural conceptions." She honors Dewey as the one than whom "no one is more devoted to actualizing of the ideal goods which are possible for man." Dewey is the activist, not a theist, for there are many goods and many processes. And to make Dewey's position as an activist unmistakably clear the author summarizes the sources for a science of religion as Dewey himself epitomizes identical sources for a science of education so that in these naturalistic approaches education and religion are one.

The ideals about which Dewey talks as was quoted above are not entities existing outside of nature to be brought in, but are generated and supported by inherent and demanding conditions in nature and in society, a fact which gives them authority over us. In no other way can man achieve his fulfillment than through these conditions. (p. 117).

The qualifying phrase "no other way" again reveals the absolute note heard earlier and once more characterizes the seeking of genuine values as thoroughly naturalistic. Yes, Dewey and his followers like this author dare resolutely accept their view of the antithesis. The sovereignty of the "movement of experience" wholly supplants the sovereignty of High God; not the supernatural but the natural, not God but man, not grace but activity, not the transcendent but the immanent from now on are the ultimate realities. This naturalistic formulation of the antithesis we ought in a certain way to appreciate so that it may spur us on to make an honest study of this wide divergence between Dewey and Christian education, all the while hoping that it will fortify us to be less compromising and more willing and even eager to seek and state this antithesis however difficult to find and to formulate, all along the lines of human interests, needs, and activities. Let us rather resolutely and lustily sing:

Jehovah's truth will stand forever,
His covenant-bonds He will not sever;
The words of grace which He commands
To thousand generations stands;
The covenant made in days of old
With Abraham He doth uphold.

A Strong Ally

The "powerful stuff" of Dewey would not have made such inroads upon tradition, would not have succeeded in breaking up the ancestral educational order so widely, and would not have resulted for many in the loss of three rich provinces of human values had it not been for a tragic phenomenon in orthodox Christian camps where religion and education are assigned each a part of life—one rather inarticulated to if not entirely separated from the other. Even though religion and education need each other, even though religion and philosophy of education are one in substance, here in our United States the American genius for pragmatism has finally accepted the dualism of assigning to the Church the duty, as it is sometimes crudely put, of making children good while schools must make them smart. This approach is so handy, convenient, accommodating, and eminently useful that it finds almost universal support in many circles. Divide
life in two categories, a lower and higher, and
develop this into a double-mindedness to justify you
in the dangerous procedure of giving education its
own compartment in life and religion another. The
result is two scales of values; viz., for natural phe-
omena we give a physical or natural explanation
and for metaphysical or ethical questions our expla-
nations are religious. And the paralyzing situation
in our country is that education in schools by and
large deals only with natural phenomena and gives
only natural explanation. This dualistic practice
on the part of orthodox Christians mightily sustains
the bold claims of Dewey in article one of his affir-
mation and in article two of his denial. Here lies
the secret for the wide success of this new educa-
tional creed. Dualism and Dewey are the two most
powerful allies in disorganizing man's traditional
interests in the eternal verities of the cosmic order
as the ancestors saw it. Dualism and Dewey dis-
solved for ever so many "the religious synthesis."

The Realistic Situation

Meanwhile, we should note that this dualistic
practice is not an innocent act nor merely a halting
between two opinions. It is in reality an open prac-
tice of abusing the most sacred thing in life: reli-
gion. Many lost provinces are now added. Religion
and business are separated. Religion and politics
are kept far apart. And worst of all education is
left an orphan. And this in spite of the fact that
reality, education, and religion should "form an in-
divisible unity." (L. P. Jacks. A Living Universe,
p. 18.) So closely related are education and religion
by their very nature that the startling question is
asked by one strong opponent of these dualistic
practices, "If education goes wrong, what else is
likely to go right?"

Yet, dualism, educationally speaking, is abroad in
our land. No matter that education needs religion
and vice versa—dualism is carried forward. No
matter that Dr. Snowden in his book Outfitting the
Teacher of Religion writes, "Godless education mul-
tiplies and intensifies every one of the dangers of
our day." pragmatism goes conquering and to con-
quer, even though "Education may be a savor of
death unto death." (p. 45.)

The following series of quotations from Taylor's
Faith of a Moralist most clearly point out the grave
injustice of so abusing man's greatest need, religion.

"It is of the very nature of a living religion to
claim the supreme direction of every effort and

"A religion is a true religion just insofar as it
achieves the purpose—of thoroughly remolding the
self, so as to make God, the supernatural good, and
eternity the very center of man's thought and will." Vol. II, p. 81.

"Life and the world are, in the end, one and not
many, and therefore any version of the doctrine of
the 'double truth' must, in the long run, be destruc-

"Religion is, to put it bluntly, by no means an
accommodating neighbor; grant her a single inch
and she will promptly demand an ell, or rather not
an ell, but the whole compass of sea and land. She
will have nothing at all, or else the supreme direc-

"The real world is precisely the world in which
there are no absolutely closed sub-systems or
spheres; every region in it is open to influences from

"Unity of personality and interest will only be
attained, if at all, by a soul which has come to find

One Outstanding Tragic Result

Both factors, the creed of Dewey and the dualism
of the American mind, are largely responsible for
the rather general phenomenon in schools—that of
secularization. Never before, it would seem, has
school life become so secularized as at present in
our country. Never before have so many millions
of children and students been indoctrinated into so
extensive a secularized thought life. Never before
have thirty millions of our youth been so rigidly
exposed to a detached view of life with religion out-
side. Secularization processes or the ignoring of
the supernatural and transcosmic for a very large
part of space and time are going on right before our
eyes in unprecedented fashion. The control of
the public schools is secularized, content is, methods
are, the very atmosphere in the classrooms is, teach-
ers are, and personality is in all aspects of school
life—with many exceptions here and there. Mind
you, the most important areas in inner personality,
the areas of religion and morals, as God-ordained
and historically developed, are on the whole
secularized.

In 1913 O. A. Tinglesteed wrote a master's thesis
at the University of Chicago on Religious Elements
in American School Readers. Now reading is in a
sense the kev to culture, the heart of the curriculum
as far as tools of learning is concerned, and the his-
torical means for developing a Scriptural thought
life concerning God and the cosmos, heaven and
earth, human life and other life, the first Adam and
the second Adam, heart and life, many functions in
each life, and in any one function subject and object
or self and the non-self. And what did this investi-
gator find? Since 1800 any mention of the Holy
Spirit is out; since 1890 a reference to Jesus Christ
is no longer found; and since 1900 God as a Person
is found nowhere mentioned in any of the readers
examined.

And what is the situation twenty-five years later in
this year 1938? Are there possibly any other
Christian concepts of Christian faith and doctrine
left in the public school readers? In Surprise Stories
by Marjorie Harding no less than 29 pages are de-
vo ted to a Circus and Clowns, but no single positive
religious concept is found even though Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter are all included. And *Peter's Family*, a social studies primer centering around experiences of children, contains no single religious reference or experience. Outside of Roman Catholic and Lutheran school readers little if any of a religious vocabulary and of religious attitudes can be found in the modern school readers.

Thus the ancestral order is being dissolved, and a secularized thought life is fostered among the youth of the land, not only in lower schools but also in the higher. For character education Hutchins' Code of ten laws is thoroughly secularized.

This phenomenon is new in education, new in its extent. Small wonder that even a non-Catholic educator and scholar wrote:

Secular education is cramped, maimed, palsied education. It can never render to the State the service of impressing upon the young that reverence for the public order and established authority which are the first lessons of good citizenship. The secularization of education is cutting off the youth of the Nation from contact with the deepest springs of its moral and intellectual life. It is isolating all the sciences from that fundamental science which gives them unity and perennial interest—the knowledge of God. It is robbing history of its significance as the divine educator of the race. . . . It is depriving man of a sense of the real, of the religious nature of what they offer the public, *Lucifer at Large* by McCole makes a strong appeal. The author aims to trace, if not all, at least several of the currents of thought reflected in the literature produced the last forty years. He practically confines himself, however, to American novelists, the only British writer he extensively considers being James Joyce. To realize his aim he discusses such men as Theodore Dreiser, Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Jack London, James Branch Cabell, Waldo Frank, Vardis Fisher, Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, William Saroyan, James T. Farrell, and others.

The opening chapter is especially valuable. In it the author briefly sketches the currents of thought affecting modern literature and, incidentally, his own outlook upon life. Believing that man is more than a mass of protoplasm, he denounces the adequacy of naturalism with all its varieties as an interpretation of life's meaning. And convinced that human life is controlled by standards which are absolute and objective and that all true creeds must be tested by high spiritual sanctions, he accepts humanism and at times even advances beyond it. But he advances beyond it only when it fails to give a satisfactory interpretation of certain "signs along the way."

McCole is an excellent critic. Widely read and thoroughly at home in the "realms of gold," endowed with a solid and penetrating mind, equipped with good taste and a strong sense of fairness, he is impressive in all he writes. Though he does not fail to do justice to whatever merits praise, he exposes unspingly, as well as urbanely, such corrupting tendencies in modern fiction as lawlessness, sensuality, and fatalism. The very title shows, from a quotation from St. Marc Girardin to the effect that, while formerly men invented saints for their legends, today they create devils for their stories. The process which began with belittling man by a fatalistic philosophy of life resulted in the invention of devils, all of which means the degeneration of literary art.

And yet, excellent as McCole's criticism in the main is, it is not altogether satisfactory. Faith in the supernatural operates only when reason ceases to be sane and wholesome. Instead of being central and all-pervasive in life and criticism, it is merely an added something, to be used when reason goes astray.

J. G. Vandenberg, Mich.
vails everywhere is reflected in literary criticism as well as in
fiction. If novelists have no fixed points to which to refer human
experience, critics are not more favorably circumstanced.
The absence of clarity of thought and certainty, however, does not
render modern fiction void of all meaning. From the nature of
the art of writing fiction, so the author contends, every novelist
does make some kind of comment concerning his representations
of human experience. To him an unvarnished fact is a myth.
By means of the selection of his material and the very pattern
imposed upon it the novelist inevitably offers his personal inter-
pretation of that material.

All this being so, Professor Muller, being engaged in the
business of criticism, is in need of standards. By the repudia-
tion of criteria which imply a mechanistic view of the universe
or the recognition of a supernatural power he paves the way
for the announcement of his own humanism. What counts is not
the rightness or wrongness of conduct nor the soundness or the
unsoundness of the conclusions arrived at by the reason, but
merely the intensity of a given human experience, the insight
into life's adaptation to a definite situation, and the vividness
with which the whole is portrayed. Morality and truth are,
therefore, no more than by-products of fiction; they have at
best only a collateral value. And nothing is more reprehensible
in an author than to exclude any aspect of human experience
on moral grounds.

Our author calls himself a humanist, but he in no uncertain
terms repudiates the humanism of Paul Elmer More and Irving
Babbitt. If another brand of humanism is possible, he fails to
make clear what it is. The partition dividing his particular
brand from naturalism is very thin, to say the least. The con-
fusion for which such haziness is responsible becomes evident
when the author applies his theory to the solution of the prob-
lem of evil as it appears in tragedy. The essence of tragedy,
he declares, consists in setting forth not the fatal effects of sin
in human life, but the dignity of the human spirit. Only by
tragic experience can the greatness of the human spirit be most
effectively shown. To state the theory clearly is to expose its
weakness.

J. G. Vanden Bosch.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

AMERICA'S SMALL SECTS

THE SMALL SECTS OF AMERICA. By Elmer T. Clark. Nashville,
1937. Cokesbury Press. $2.00.

THIS is a most informing book. It deals with about one hun-
dred of the smaller denominational and sectarian groups of
American Protestant Christianity. Dr. Clark has made a careful
study of these smaller groups, some of which do not even appear
in the United States Religious Census statistics. He has pains-
takingly gathered his data by personal interviews with leaders
of sectarian movements, by correspondence, and by going through
a mass of pamphlet and leaflet literature in which these sects
express their views. Dr. Clark deserves the gratitude of every-
one interested in the beliefs of the smaller sects of our country.
He has done a careful and thorough piece of work.

The completeness with which Dr. Clark has treated his subject
in the compass of 300 pages is its outstanding merit. A book
like Ferguson's Confusion of Tongues has its own merits but
completeness in covering the field is not one of these. Dr. Clark
has made it his business to comb the field of the smaller sects
in our land and to include his findings on all of them in con-
densed form in this book. The index is an aid in locating this
material. Do you wish to know about Father Divine's cult, or
the House of David, or the sect of the "Black Jews," or the
Pentecostals, or the Darbyites, or the Llano Cooperative Colony?
It is all here. The treatment is brief and offers the history
and the distinctive beliefs, practices, and characteristics of each
of these groups, and the author is adept at giving you just

what is worth knowing in a nutshell. The titles at the foot of
the page and the rather extensive bibliography at the close are
a great aid to the student who wishes to pursue the subject
further.

The weakness of the book in the estimation of the reviewer is
two-fold. The author speaks disparagingly again and again
(though always indirectly) of the orthodox position which holds
to Scripture as the Word of God and as the ultimate standard
of Christian truth. His allusions to Calvinism are also far
from complimentary at times. As a typical Methodist, he does
not understand Calvinism and has a way of throwing out occa-
sional gibes in the direction of Augustine and Jonathan Edwards
and the Old School Calvinists. This mars the book.

The other weakness is of a different kind. It must be recog-
nised that it is a real challenge in this type of study to offer
a satisfactory classification of these sects. This is not a mere
matter of grouping material for a book. The classification of
these sects is basic for one's evaluation of them, and no adequate
classification is possible without a theological criterion. Now
Dr. Clark's classification into Pessimistic, Perfectionist, Charis-
matic, Communist, and Legalistic sects has some real merit,
but it is also subject to great limitations. This is especially true
of the "pessimistic" and "legalistic" group. But the weakness
of this classification comes out even stronger in the evaluation
of many of these groups and their beliefs. Here the psychologi-
cal approach has some value but its value is very limited never-
evertheless. By overworking certain psychological elements and
completely ignoring or under-estimating the theological approach
the author is often led to explanations and generalizations that
are misleading. The rationale of certain beliefs, customs, and
practices is also often misapprehended. If it be a merit (and it
is a merit to a certain extent) that Dr. Clark has employed the
psychological approach in this study, it must be said that the
weakness of this book lies in the same direction. If a satisfac-
tory classification of these sects is to be offered (and only in
the light of such a classification can any evaluation ever be under-
taken) it must be done not by a psychological observer, but by
a theologian. The psychological element has great value, but it
must ever be subordinated to the theological approach.

The intelligent reader of Dr. Clark's book will sense this
weakness and he will know how to appreciate the good points
in this work when he uses it with discernment.

C. B.

A SOUND APOLOGETIC

HET WEZEN VAN HET CHRISTENDOM. Dr. B. Wielenga. Kampen,

DR. WIELENGA is one of the most cultured and widely read
ministers of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. He
has repeatedly been mentioned as a candidate for a professorial
chair and once declined the honor. He is now 65 and has spent
his extra time during a long and fruitful ministry on the
writing of books, beautiful books. For Dr. Wielenga loves not
only the true but also the beautiful. His style is superb. His
appreciation of culture is keen. One of his latest works was
entitled The Bible as a Work of Beauty (De Bijbel als Boek
van Schoonheid) and the book itself was a work of beauty
indeed.

The present work, his latest, is a beautiful exposition of the
Christian view of God and the world under the title, The Essence
of Christianity (Het Wezen van het Christendom). Originally
these chapters were delivered as lectures to the religiously
interested students of the government institute of technology
at Delft (Netherlands). Though written for an educated audi-
ence, this book is not a technical or specifically scholarly work.
Dr. Wielenga has the happy faculty of making the deepest
SUFFERING FROM SEVEN-ITIS


The author of this book is blessed (or afflicted) with a severe case of "seven-itis." He had the conviction that sevens could be and should be found everywhere in the Scriptures. Since the Hebrew word for seven has the same root as the word for swear, it was felt that "I have sworn, saith the Lord," could be more appropriately translated by "I have seved, saith the Lord." These sevens found in the Bible are held to be God's seal, or his signature, if you will. Thus another evidence for the divine authorship of the Bible.

The work has been executed with remarkable fidelity to the principles adopted. Discussion of each Bible book is taken care of in seven paragraphs. The contents of each Bible book is divided into seven main divisions. Each one of these main divisions (except in the case of II and III John) is again divided into seven subdivisions. The Bible, as a whole, yields under the searching analysis of the author to a sevenfold division. And it makes no difference from what angle the Bible is studied and analyzed, the seven invariably reappears.

The work is excellently done. It required unquestionably much study and ingenuity. The contents of the Bible was subject to a more or less minute study of the comparatively insignificant details of present history. That defect characterizes these effective ministers. The sermons themselves are as varied as their authorship. They are evangelistic in character, interesting to read and profitable unto edification. They are in no sense exegetical productions. They are popular, interspersed with much illustrative material and well outlined. There is one chapter that does not contain what may be called a sermon. It is an address by the President of the Oklahoma Baptist University and constitutes an excellent plea for the indispensability of Christian Colleges.

FRESH SERMONS


Dr. Lockyer offers in this book 14 of his select sermons to the reading public. The volume receives its title from the theme of the first sermon. The preacher is one of the outstanding and most popular representatives of the Dispensationalists of today. His sermons always sparkle with new and fresh approaches. There is apparently a deliberate attempt to make the message of God new and fresh. In this volume the emphasis is placed on the revelation of truth as found in the contrasted or paradoxical statements of the Scriptures.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON HELPS


The Sunday School helps of Snowden are quite familiar to the majority of the Sunday School leaders and teachers using the International Sunday School System. Dr. Snowden himself passed away when the series of 1938 was half complete. Douglas picked up the work where he left off. This Presbyterian minister from Pennsylvania has also edited the work now before us. He has proven himself to be a worthy successor to Snowden. The lessons are discussed in a striking and suggestive outline for. They are made practical and up to date by the attempts to show the bearing of the lesson upon present-day situations. There may be considerable difference of opinion as to the exact interpretations of the various Biblical passages and also as to essentials in a given lesson, but whether one agrees or not with the author, the user is bound to receive suggestive helps.
Dear Editor,

This is the first of a series of letters which I propose to write from time to time, containing notes and news of movements and events on this side that may be of interest to the readers of your excellent journal.

Noyes’ Voltaire on the Index

Much interest has been aroused by the action of the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office in censoring Mr. Alfred Noyes’ Life of Voltaire, which he published two years ago through the Roman Catholic Press, while affirming his loyalty to the Church, and that he withdrew the book, and that they withdraw it from sale.” In conformity with this decision, the publishers have suppressed at considerable loss a new edition which was nearly ready for publication. A French writer who had just completed a translation, has also been compelled to suppress it, while a large American edition has been countermanded. Mr. Noyes has complained bitterly in the press, while affirming his “complete loyalty to the Holy See,” and stating that his chief object in dealing with Voltaire was to win over to Rome as many intellectuals as possible. He claims that this object has been achieved to a considerable extent, and that America hopes were entertained of “an extremely important complete direct result of the book.”

If Mr. Noyes’ book should appear in the new edition of the Index Librorum Prohibitorum, now in preparation at the Vatican Press, it will be marked like Goldsmith’s History of England, “donee corrigatur,” and it will be the first work of an English author to be proscribed by the present pontiff. If Mr. Noyes has been reading Voltaire without a dispensation, he has sinned, venially at any rate; for that writer already occupies two pages of the Index, with 38 works. Milton’s Paradise Lost, though now released, was condemned in the Italian press, while affirming his loyalty. This is the first of a series of cases of this kind where the trumpets have been heard over the heads of the censured authors, and in which the celebrated hymn-writer lived. They were those in his lifetime who objected to what they termed “Watts’ whims,” but whatever view may be taken of the propriety of using human compositions in divine worship, all Calvinists will agree that Watts’ birthplace is at least as worthy of preservation as Milton’s cottage at Chalfont St. Giles or Wesley’s house in the City Road, London, both of which are now used as museums.

Methodism and Romanism

Talking of Wesley, his British followers, although Arminian by profession, have hitherto given as the model and ideal. A Methodist Sacramental Fellowship whose aims seem to be similar to those of the Anglo-Catholic party in the National Church. The members are pledged to “work and pray for the corporate reunion of Christendom” and “to make the Holy Sacrament central in the life of the Methodist Church.” At a conference held at Kingsmead College, Birmingham, Loyola was noted that less than half the counties and Carmelites, and always come back a better Methodist.”

The Expository Times of Edinburgh is an able journal, which has always leaned heavily to the “liberal” side. It was all the more gratifying, therefore, to find in the August issue an entirely favorable study entitled “Calvin: A Character Sketch” by the Rev. Dr. A. Mitchell Hunter.

Cordially yours,

S. LEIGH HUNT

Netherlands Church News

The Javanese Synod of Reformed Churches, met July 4–7, 1938, in Keboemen, Netherlands East Indies. This would be of no special interest except for one thing: these churches are indigenous churches in Holland’s Mission field. Notice the statement in charge of the prayer-service preceding the Synod, that “Rev. Emile E. H. Huygen, President of Synod, the Reverend H. J. Wolters, President of Synod, the Reverend Wijktenjo of Tepluk.

The 289th anniversary of Bunyan’s death evoked a number of tributes in the press, including an article in The Times with the following significant conclusion: “After two and a half centuries the book with which his name is linked keeps its place among the chief treasures of our literature. It appears still to every one who prizes our English speech, and it has brought solace and delight to millions of simple readers. The secret of its popularity lies in the fact that the author knew almost by heart the Authorized Version of the English Bible, the simplicity, clearness and beauty of which reappear on every page of The Pilgrim’s Progress.”

Dear Editor,

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Noyes’ Voltaire on the Index

Much interest has been aroused by the action of the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office in censoring Mr. Alfred Noyes’ Life of Voltaire, which he published two years ago through the Roman Catholic Press, while affirming his loyalty to the Church, and that he withdrew the book, and that they withdraw it from sale.” In conformity with this decision, the publishers have suppressed at considerable loss a new edition which was nearly ready for publication. A French writer who had just completed a translation, has also been compelled to suppress it, while a large American edition has been countermanded. Mr. Noyes has complained bitterly in the press, while affirming his “complete loyalty to the Holy See,” and stating that his chief object in dealing with Voltaire was to win over to Rome as many intellectuals as possible. He claims that this object has been achieved to a considerable extent, and that America hopes were entertained of “an extremely important complete direct result of the book.”

If Mr. Noyes’ book should appear in the new edition of the Index Librorum Prohibitorum, now in preparation at the Vatican Press, it will be marked like Goldsmith’s History of England, “donee corrigatur,” and it will be the first work of an English author to be proscribed by the present pontiff. If Mr. Noyes has been reading Voltaire without a dispensation, he has sinned, venially at any rate; for that writer already occupies two pages of the Index, with 38 works. Milton’s Paradise Lost, though now released, was condemned in the Italian press, while affirming his loyalty. This is the first of a series of cases of this kind where the trumpets have been heard over the heads of the censured authors, and in which the celebrated hymn-writer lived. They were those in his lifetime who objected to what they termed “Watts’ whims,” but whatever view may be taken of the propriety of using human compositions in divine worship, all Calvinists will agree that Watts’ birthplace is at least as worthy of preservation as Milton’s cottage at Chalfont St. Giles or Wesley’s house in the City Road, London, both of which are now used as museums.

Methodism and Romanism

Talking of Wesley, his British followers, although Arminian by profession, have hitherto given as the model and ideal. A Methodist Sacramental Fellowship whose aims seem to be similar to those of the Anglo-Catholic party in the National Church. The members are pledged to “work and pray for the corporate reunion of Christendom” and “to make the Holy Sacrament central in the life of the Methodist Church.” At a conference held at Kingsmead College, Birmingham, Loyola was noted that less than half the counties and Carmelites, and always come back a better Methodist.”

The Expository Times of Edinburgh is an able journal, which has always leaned heavily to the “liberal” side. It was all the more gratifying, therefore, to find in the August issue an entirely favorable study entitled “Calvin: A Character Sketch” by the Rev. Dr. A. Mitchell Hunter.

Cordially yours,

S. LEIGH HUNT

Netherlands Church News

The Javanese Synod of Reformed Churches, met July 4–7, 1938, in Keboemen, Netherlands East Indies. This would be of no special interest except for one thing: these churches are indigenous churches in Holland’s Mission field. Notice the statement in charge of the prayer-service preceding the Synod, that “Rev. Emile E. H. Huygen, President of Synod, the Reverend H. J. Wolters, President of Synod, the Reverend Wijktenjo of Tepluk.
The Synod comprises six classes, each sending three delegates. Present also were delegates from the Chinese Reformed Classis, and three delegates from the (Dutch) missionaries, who held their meetings separately. Among the various overtures there was one concerning women,—unmarried adult women who are confessing members, shall be given the right to cast their votes at congregational elections for office-bearers, etc. Well, this certainly is an up-to-date matter. How the Javanese disposed of the matter? It was pointed out to Synod (presumably by the missionaries) that the General Synod of Arnhem, 1930, had decided that women suffrage was not to be allowed in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. Hence the Javanese Synod decided to appoint a committee to study the matter carefully.

Another matter that came up for lengthy discussion, was regarding a hymnal. It seems that the various churches use various collections of hymns. There is in use also a Psalter prepared by Rev. K. Van Dijk. But this minister is not at all willing to incorporate changes and improvements which the Churches think must be introduced before the Psalter would meet with the standards set at a previous Synod.

The purpose of the Javanese is to have a uniform book of praise (Psalms and Hymns) for all churches. Hence it was decided not to seek the cooperation of Rev. Van Dijk anymore, but to invite all general persons to focus their attention on the Psalms and to submit the results of their poetic abilities to next Synod.

Reading these news items one is impressed with two things: that the Lord has His own in the East Indies and they manifest themselves as Reformed brethren, and secondly, that human nature is the same everywhere in a favorable sense and in an unfavorable one.

Java, belonging to the Netherlands, has a population of 25,000,000. The Dutch churches are working among 8,000,000 of them. During the last thirty years, due to a well-organized school system, a generation has been reared which is willing to incorporate changes and improvements which the Churches think must be introduced before the Psalter would meet with the standards set at a previous Synod.

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Historic Ulrum has once more made the headlines. No, it was not a "Secession" this time. Neither was the important person a De Kock. This is what happened. The pastor of Ulrum's Reformed church, Rev. U. Elgersma, has a lawn about his home. Now grass has in Ulrum, as elsewhere, a habit of growing. This habit results in a habit on the part of the Pastor, namely, cutting grass, regularly. So it came about that last Ascension Day the minister of historic Ulrum, got out his lawn mower and proceeded to trim the lawn. But the police of the old, yet famous town, is today as watchful as it was in the days of 1834. When it beheld the pastoral labors of the domine it remembered that in 1815 a law was passed forbidding on Sundays and on generally recognized church holidays, all labor along the public highway. Result? While the pastor's children played on the smooth velvety green, their dad received a summons. July 12 the case appeared in court. Sternly the prosecution demanded that the lawn-mowing pastor be fined three guilders, or, if the fine is not paid, be sentenced to three days in jail. We would not like to invite the Ulrum police to visit the sons and daughters of 1834 in the First Chr. Ref. church of Grand Haven next Ascension Day. It would break his heart.

During the month of July Edinburgh was host to the Fourth International Calvinistic Congress. Among the many able speakers who held forth concerning the Calvinistic conceptions in regard to the various phases of life, there appeared also Dr. P. J. Kromsi. Dr. Kromsi is the leader of the really Reformed members of the National Church (Ned. Herv.).

He pointed to the well-known fact that many Calvinists are occupying important public offices. But he noted with joy of heart that in his own Church, the National Church, there is an ever-increasing interest in the church as Church, and the necessity of the presbyteral form of church government. It had been his experience, too, that the various groups of Calvinists in the Netherlands are in recent years drawing a little closer together. This news is of great importance. May the Calvinists of the Netherlands be able to struggle unitedly for the realization of the ancient yet ever new device, Soli Deo Gloria.

Grand Haven, Mich.

J. G. Van Dyke.

A Glimpse of Hungarian Calvinism

Our Hungarian-American correspondent, the Rev. Charles Vinece of Perth Amboy, N. J., is at present visiting in the country of his birth and will, no doubt, upon his return give us some interesting notes and sidelights on Calvinism. Hungary is the country of the Magyars. Meanwhile we believe our readers will peruse with interest the following article which appeared on page 20 of The Christian Century. The original article was published in the title, Calvinism Strong in Rural Hungary, the central European correspondent of this paper publishes the following letter. Life in Hungary surely has a flavor all its own.

"Budapest, Aug. 7.—The world offers few more pleasant surprises to an American Protestant than an intimate journey through eastern Hungary, where in almost every village he finds an imposing Reformed or Calvinistic church. There are not enough Bibles. The British Bible Society, Dutch Bible Society, and has undertaken to finance one-half of the tribute some..."
its history, took leave of the pastor, and started away toward the next village, usually singing on the way.

Generally we arrived before sundown, were given a rousing welcome and were guests at a picnic supper given us by the local folk. Then there were songs about a campfire and games. Our hikers gave the village their songs and wrote down theirs.

Calvinism Strong

Thus the boys passed 14 days, wandering from parish to parish, from one high steeple to another. Each spire is crowned with a cock and star, emblems of Calvinism. The star is supposed to guide the people and the cock to keep them awake.

Just how much awake they are I shall not say. Certainly much remains for them to do. Social injustice is especially rampant and most peasants are exceedingly poor. However, these churches play a noble spiritual role, their pastors are among the most alert, progressive and exemplary people in Hungary, and the atmosphere they create here in obscure Hungarian villages makes an American feel very much at home.

The churches are almost all imposing buildings equipped with pipe organs. The ministers are educated men of pure character and exert an uplifting influence. The Reformed schools were for years the foremost institutions for elementary education in the country.”

News and Comments

- China is war weary. The Chinese are sick at heart. They can find little comfort in the preaching of the social gospel to which they have been exposed by the vast majority of so-called Christian missionaries. So wrote Dean Chao of Yenching University in effect. The evangelists who preach, “Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,” and proclaim that there is perfect and complete salvation in the life to come are having large popular followings. The modernistic leadership still insists upon a Christianity that will change home and village life and better social conditions. Dr. Chao feels that such a program is useless in occupied China. He continues, “Perhaps the only road for the Church in oppression is the road to other worldliness.” Chao has sensed something of the truth. Men must somehow sometime learn that it is not Christianity’s way to rectify social and economic conditions and through such corrected conditions to reach down into the individual hearts. The method of Jesus and of Paul was just the opposite. It’s a regenerated citizenry that works for a happy, contented, and hopeful people, and they in turn modify the environment of which they are a part and in which they are a leaven. The religion of Jesus teaches men to find joy amid the afflictions of life be they ever so severe. And it is from that joy, and not from bettered social conditions, that the hope for a better day is born.

- Correspondence from the Orient informs us that the Church in China is beginning to sing. Though the Chinese are often regarded as a taciturn people they are beginning to show apparent enthusiasm for group singing. There is here a sort of a psychological defense mechanism. There is a struggle going on there over against the sagging spirits of an afflicted people. Singing releases tensions, lifts up ideals, drowns troubles, and brings on an attitude. It is reported that the national defense movement is enlisting song enthusiasm for group singing. There is here a very active singing society. The evangelists who preach, “Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,” and proclaim that there is perfect and complete salvation in the life to come are having large popular followings. The modernistic leadership still insists upon a Christianity that will change home and village life and better social conditions. Dr. Chao feels that such a program is useless in occupied China. He continues, “Perhaps the only road for the Church in oppression is the road to other worldliness.” Chao has sensed something of the truth. Men must somehow sometime learn that it is not Christianity’s way to rectify social and economic conditions and through such corrected conditions to reach down into the individual hearts. The method of Jesus and of Paul was just the opposite. It’s a regenerated citizenry that works for a happy, contented, and hopeful people, and they in turn modify the environment of which they are a part and in which they are a leaven. The religion of Jesus teaches men to find joy amid the afflictions of life be they ever so severe. And it is from that joy, and not from bettered social conditions, that the hope for a better day is born.

- The “Southern Methodist Layman” is a mimeographed publication of a loyal group of individuals belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It is apparently dedicated to the fight against the attempts at consolidating the North and South Methodist Churches. Its present grievance is that Dr. Davage, coloured, of Georgia, has been placed by the North on a Committee working on the forthcoming unity conference. Regardless of the legitimacy of the complaint, it raises the question which is so seldom squarely faced in these union movements, namely, “Upon what ground can the members of a denomination be asked to surrender the distinct form of existence of their own Church in the interest of ecclesiastical unification?” Indeed, the South, because of its distinctive history, climate, and other modifying conditions is a distinct people, with distinctive spiritual needs, that can best be met by a distinctive denominational colouring. When all is said and done, man was not made for a specific form of ecclesiastical organization, but the latter was made for man.

- A few weeks ago 15,000 delegates of the American League for Peace and Democracy met in New York City, and paraded in an Atlantic Sea-coast rain. By asking for the resignation of one of the individuals who was scheduled to speak but who was so wise as to reveal the contents of his address in an advanced copy sent to the leadership of the league, it revealed the fact that it apparently was not so much interested in peace within its folds nor in the democracy which it would promote. We like to have the other fellow to be peaceful and democratic. The same group shouted back in unison the pledge read to them. This pledge gave expression to their determination to support and aid all those who struggle against Fascism. Again, it is not a very peaceful and democratic gesture. Crowds are always dangerous combinations. Psychologists have called them afflicted with temporary impetuosity. And it isn’t difficult to get a crowd to do a thing that no one could ever induce a single member of that crowd to do individually. Morial: Don’t let yourself become a member of a crowd unless you have absolute confidence in its leadership. Crowds, bothered with temporary impetuosity, constitutes a fertile soil in which shady politicians, fighting pacifists, and self-seeking human vultures can work and reap a harvest.

H. S.