But Now Is Christ Risen
   An Easter Editorial

Calvinistic Congresses
   1938-1939-1940

Brunner and Scripture
   A Criticism

Pierre Viret
   Contemporary of Calvin

The Economic Situation
   A Survey

Letters and Reports
   Reviews and News Items

Easter Verse

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CONTENTS—Vol. IV, No. 9, APRIL, 1939

EDITORIALS
But Now is Christ Risen......................................................... 195
The Reformed Faith and Its Ethical Consequences.......................... 196
The International Calvinistic Congress for 1940............................ 197
First American Calvinistic Conference......................................... 197
The Gospel of Christ and the Student Mind.................................. 198

ARTICLES
Brunner on the Word of God. By E. J. Tanis................................ 199
The Empiricist and the Beam. By Ala Bandon.............................. 206
Contemporary Economic Survey. By H. J. Ryskamp........................ 207

WHAT OUR READERS THINK AND SAY
Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia................................................... 209
Flattery vs. Truth Speaking...................................................... 210

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS
Report Calvinistic Discussion Club............................................. 211
City Mission Work in Holland.................................................... 211
The Pacific Northwest.............................................................. 212
Calvinistic Study Club in Canada................................................. 212

BOOK REVIEWS
A Passion Poem........................................................................... 213
Inter-Varsity Publications.......................................................... 213
Dr. Henry Stob's Dissertation.................................................... 214
As to Questing............................................................................. 214
Practical Psychological Tips....................................................... 214
Why Be Good?............................................................................. 215
Books in Brief.............................................................................. 215

NEWS ITEMS AND COMMENTS.................................................. 215

VERSE
God With Us.............................................................................. 204
Contrast...................................................................................... 206
Song of Mary Magdalene............................................................ 206
Spring Song................................................................................ 206
Serenity...................................................................................... 208
BUT NOW IS CHRIST RISEN

AN EDITORIAL

The historic reality of Christ's resurrection holds an all-important and central place in the Christian religion.

Christians in the early church used to greet one another on Easter morning with the salutation: The Lord is risen! to which the appropriate response was then made: He is risen indeed!

Not some truth about life and resurrection, but the actual historical, once-for-all resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was considered the supreme and climactic thing to stress.

The same emphasis is apparent in the gospel narratives.

He is risen, as He said.
Tell his disciples and Peter that He is risen.
He is risen, He is not here.
Why seek ye the living among the dead? Remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.
The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.
See my hands and my feet that it is I myself ....
We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see .... After eight days Jesus cometh and saith to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger .... and be not faithless but believing.
Nor is this emphasis limited to the Gospels.
Paul may be said to stake everything on the reality of the resurrection of Christ. “If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Ye are yet in your sins.” And then he continues in positive strain and with an assurance that is unmistakable, But now hath Christ been raised from the dead!

And in the last book of the Bible, there appears in the opening chapter, before the apocalyptic visions are unrolled, this unmistakably historical judgment about—yes, and from the lips of—the Christ Himself: I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades!

This reality of the living Christ, who was dead and is alive forevermore, is the glory and the boast of the Christian faith.

Here lies the source of its power.
Idealistic philosophers, liberal theologians, and “romantic” poets have not understood this.
They have sought to substitute for the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ the idea of human immortality, the universal belief in the continued existence of the soul of man after the dissolution of the body. The resurrection, according to them, was but a symbolic idea, beautiful, but only a symbol nevertheless. The reality according to them was belief in human continued existence after death.
And so we have had the poverty-stricken Easter messages of the liberal preacher on lilies, on budding life in spring, on the imperishable character of the spiritual principle in man.
Poverty-stricken these messages were, not because they did not contain a grain of truth. Immortality is a truth, a universal truth. But immortality is not the message of Easter.

Immortality will be shared by every son of Adam. Man has it because he is man. But immortality has nothing to do with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and its dynamic place in the gospel and its spread in the world.
Immortality, moreover, is no consolation for the dying. And that for the simple reason that being immortal is no proof of the future possession of eternal life. Just as immortality and the resurrection of Christ can never be identified, so immortality and that eternal life which shall be the possession of the believer who dies in Christ can never be equated.
The realism of life and of Scripture teaches us that we are living in a sinful, sin-cursed world, in which the ultimate issues for each son of Adam are inseparable from the awful alternative of heaven and hell, eternal life and eternal death. And that death is not annihilation. There will be a resurrection of the just, but of the unjust as well. Immortality and mere resurrection have nothing to do with being eternally happy.
The all-important question is whether the human individual is in Christ; whether he has appropriated
the gospel of the living Christ, who was dead and is alive for evermore. One is "naturally" immortal, and every son of Adam will share in the resurrection at the end of the age, but only those who have fallen in faith at the feet of the risen Redeemer will be the possessors of that eternal life in the presence of God which is life indeed.

Immortality and resurrection without a living faith in Christ spells hell.

That is what makes the paleface "gospel" of immortality on Easter morning such a consummate lie upon the lips of those who should preach the truth to a perishing humanity.

No universal idea or ideal can save sin-cursed man.

Only the power of a living Christ can accomplish that!

And the power of that resurrection gospel is inseparable from the cross of Christ.

Just as the incarnation cannot be understood apart from the atonement, so the resurrection of Jesus Christ derives its real significance from that atonement.

Not the mere fact of Jesus' body returning to life as such makes his resurrection pivotal for Christianity.

Lazarus' body also returned to life from the tomb.

The unique significance and power of Jesus' resurrection is inseparable from his Godhead on the one hand, and his preceding suffering and death on the cross on the other.

It is not the mere return to life and the reassumption of his body that we celebrate in Jesus on Easter day. It is the resurrection of Him who fully satisfied the justice of God in his suffering and atoning death and who vanquished death and the grave.

According to the eternal council of God and in fulfilment of the predictions of the prophets, he hooveed the Christ to suffer all these things and thereafter to enter into His glory.

To enter into His glory he must conquer His one great enemy, the Devil. And we can only share in the glory of His resurrection if we share in the blessed covering for sin accomplished on Calvary. We do not forget Calvary on Easter morning. On the contrary, we truly and deeply understand and appreciate Calvary in the light of Easter.

Only he who has seen the Christ agonize in Gethsemane and on the cross can understand the meaning of the gospel of the resurrection. Good Friday makes Easter Easter, and Easter makes Good Friday good, truly good, divinely good—good with eternal issues.

All of which means that Easter is Easter, and Good Friday is good—only for sinners!

Easter has no consolation for those who in their complacent and self-righteous outlook upon eternity only prate of "joining the choir invisible." Easter has no consolation for him who tells us:

Approach thy grave
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

These are empty sounds amid the stark realities of a world of sin and death, doom and judgment.

But what a source of joy and peace it is to him who in all humility has found his Savior at Calvary, to hear Him saying on Easter morning: I am He that liveth, that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.

That is balm for the wounded soul.

That is comfort, solid comfort, in the hour of death.

These words from the lips of the strong Son of God are music in the ears of Christ's own when they pass through the valley down which we must all go one by one.

C. B.

The Reformed Faith and Its Ethical Consequences

JULY 1938 the Fourth International Calvinistic Congress was held at Edinburgh. The theme around which all addresses and discussions centered was: The Ethical Implications of Reformed Faith. A 260-page volume recently published enables all of us to share in print what the more than 150 delegates to this Calvinistic conclave at the city of John Knox, together with the Scotch visitors to the Conference, enjoyed last summer. This volume (whose title is: Proceedings of the Fourth Calvinistic Congress, Edinburgh 1938) ought to be distributed and read widely among all who love the Reformed Faith. It may be had for only 5 shillings by addressing the office of the Calvinistic Congress, 15 North Bank Street, Edinburgh 1, Scotland. We understand it may also be procured from the office of The Presbyterian, 1217 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pa., at the American price of $1.25. Everyone interested in Calvinism and its implications for life will read this volume with great profit. The addresses are neither too scholarly for the average layman, nor too popular to be of little use for the educated. The main body of the addresses deals with the Reformed Faith in its ethical bearing upon the individual, the family, the church, society, the state, economics, and art. The addresses of the two Swiss delegates (both of which show some traces of Barthian influence) bear only indirectly upon the main theme. Apart from certain ideas expressed in these two addresses, the papers are throughout soundly Calvinistic. One grand theme runs through them all. Whether it is Sebestyen from Budapest, or Robinson from Decatur, Ga.; whether you listen to Rutgers from the Free University of Amsterdam, or to Principal Macleod of Free Church College;
whether it is Prof. Burleigh of Edinburgh University discoursing, or Auguste Lecerf from Paris—
all speak the same language. Here is a marvelous expression of the internationalism of Calvinism, and
the beauty of it is that the Calvinism expounded and applied is a living and vital one, one that has an eye
for the needs of the present no less than a deep appreciation of the spiritual treasures of the past.
It is a delight to study the faces of the delegates and speakers of this Congress as they appear on the
clear photographic print opposite the title page of this volume. Here they are, men from Holland and
France, from Switzerland and Hungary, from Scotland and the United States, from England and Ger-
many. Buy this book. Read it, yes, digest it, and draw from its pages instruction in the truth and inspira-
tion for the battle which we as Calvinists of all countries face in the world today.

C. B.

The International Calvinistic Congress for 1940

At the conclusion of the Fourth International Calvinistic Congress held in Edinburgh last July, a meeting of the International Commission for Calvinist Congresses was convened. Of this commission the Rev. Professor Donald Maclean of the Free Church College, Edinburgh, also editor of The Evangelical Quarterly, is Chairman, and Professor V. H. Rutgers of the Law Faculty of the Free Uni-
versity, Amsterdam, the Vice Chairman. At this meeting it was decided that, if circumstances per-
mitted, the next congress should take place in Germany. This congress is scheduled for the summer of
1940. At that time the Reformed Churches will be celebrating the quartercentenary of the arrival in Emden of the Polish Reformer Jan a Lasco, and it is proposed that the Fifth International Congress shall take place in this old historic city, synchroniz-
ing with these celebrations. It is altogether fitting that Emden should be chosen as the convention city
for 1940. Not only was Emden the scene of a Lasco’s labors, but the first Reformed Church in Germany
was founded there as early as 1526. A Lasco organized the Church, giving it a catechism which, with
Calvin’s, subsequently became the basis of the Heidelberg Catechism. In connection with the pro-
posed Congress, a preparatory committee has been formed in Germany under the presidency of the
Baron Dufour Feronce, and a meeting of the International Commission to consider further details is
being held at the time this issue reaches our readers. The CALVIN FORUM hails with joy this movement
among European Calvinists to hold biennial con-
ferences such as were held at Amsterdam in 1934,
at Geneva in 1936, and at Edinburgh in 1938. May the 1940 Conference at Emden carry the promulga-
tion and discussion of new aspects of the glorious Reformed Faith forward. We pray that neither war
nor government intolerance may make it impossible

for the 1940 conference to meet in that historic center of early Calvinism in East Friesland, whither
refugees of the Reformed Faith fled in such large numbers, also from Holland. May the representa-
tion of Calvinists at these conferences become ever
more truly international. What an inspiration for
the furtherance of the Reformed Faith it would be if in the summer of 1940 Emden would see gathered
within its walls enthusiastic spiritual sons of Calvin
from an ever increasing number of countries in both
hemispheres!

First American Calvinistic Conference

THERE are various signs of a revival of interest
in the Reformed Faith as a living power in the
thought and life of our day, not only in Europe but
also in our own country. American Calvinism is
undergoing a rejuvenation. A group of younger
men are buckling down to the study and propaga-
dation of the distinctive features of the Reformed Faith
both in Reformed and in Presbyterian Churches. As
yet this American movement, which must overcome
the indifference of those whose enthusiasm has for
some time gone in the direction of a modernistic
gospel of social service, is only in its beginnings.
There is, however, a cloud as of man’s hand. We
might point to the organization of clubs for the study
of Calvinism in its deeper philosophical and theo-
logical implications as these have recently come
into existence in the East as well as in Michigan.
We may perhaps also, in all modesty, point to the
appearance of our own magazine, whose basis and
program is interdenominational but positively Cal-
vinistic. And, without doubt, one of the finest mani-
festations of this new budding Calvinistic life in our
country is seen in the undertaking to hold the First
American Calvinistic Conference this coming sum-
mer. This Conference is scheduled for June 27 to 30
at Paterson, N. J., within suburban traveling dis-
tance from New York City. Evening meetings will
be held in the spacious auditorium of the Sixth Re-
formed Church and will be open to the general
public. Conference sessions, held during the day,
will take place in the Paterson Y. M. C. A. building.
The basis of fellowship is that of historic Calvinism
as expressed in its classic creeds. The purpose is to
rally positive Calvinists to defend and propagate
Calvinism in our generation. The conference theme is:
The Sovereignty of God. This subject will be treated
in its biblical, doctrinal, and devotional im-
lications, and the bearing of this exalted theme
upon political life, upon culture and philosophy,
upon ethics, as well as its relationship to human re-
sponsibility, to American attitudes, and to Barthian-
ism, will come in for treatment. Speakers are: Dr.
Samuel Volbeda (Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids),
Professor John Murray (Westminster Seminary,
Philadelphia), Prof. W. C. Robinson (Columbia
Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga.), Principal John Macleod (Edinburgh, Scotland), Dr. Leonard De Moor (Reformed pastor), Professor D. H. Kromminga (Calvin Seminary), Dr. Garrett Heyns (Warden Ionia Reformatory), Dr. Leonard Greenway (Reformed pastor), and the Rev. William Matheson (Presbyterian pastor). There will also be brief addresses on "The Future of Calvinism in America" by the Rev. Claude Hayward of the Canadian Presbyterian Church, by Dr. K. J. Stuebbe of the German Reformed Church, and by Dr. Charles Vincze of the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America. The Committee on Arrangements consists of the Rev. J. J. Hemenga, President; Professor Clarence Bouma, Honorary Vice-President; the Rev. M. E. Broekstra; the Rev. Lawrence Borst; the Rev. Jacob Van Bruggen, Secretary; and the Rev. Dr. Jacob T. Hoogastra, Corresponding Secretary; to whom all inquiries should be addressed (address: 90 Demarest Avenue, Englewood, N. J.). May there be a wide participation in this conference and may our God use this means to further his truth in a day of confusion and perplexity.

C. B.

The Gospel of Christ and the Student Mind

The colleges and universities have ever been the centers of intellectual ferment. Thus it was in the days when these institutions stood committed to the gospel; so it is still today. But the sad fact is that for some time the professorial and the student mind in our leading universities and colleges has become estranged from Christ and the verities of the Christian gospel. This is the case in Europe as well as in America. Idealistic philosophy, Scientific Naturalism, and Theological Modernism have invaded the schools for higher education, which in many cases were originally founded and endowed in the interest of the truth of historic, supernatural, biblical Christianity. What tragedies have not been enacted in the lives of students who came from homes and churches where Christ was honored and the truths of biblical Christianity embraced, when upon entering college or university they lost their hold upon the gospel of Christ under the strokes of an unbelieving science or philosophy persuasively presented by some brilliant professor. Under influences such as these it is not surprising that the religious student organizations in these schools have turned modernist and repudiated or suppressed the great verities of the Christian religion as revealed in the Word of God. Against this drift of things in the Christian student world some students and teachers have risen up in protest. For some decades in European countries, and of late also in our own United States, students have broken with the existing student organizations which had turned traitor to the historic Christian Faith and have organized themselves upon the basis of the verities of Scripture and the truth of the fathers. Such orthodox student movements have now been in existence for some time in England and the Netherlands, in Norway and Sweden, in Finland and Denmark, in Canada and in the United States. These organizations are known by different names, and some are more distinctly Calvinistic than others, but all of them are the result of a protest against the modernism of the existing organizations and stand foursquare for the biblical gospel, for which stand they often are subjected to ridicule. In England and Canada it is the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Students, in the Netherlands it is the movement known as "Calvinistische Studentenbeweging," and in our own country it is the League of Evangelical Students. What these organizations seek to do is to capture the student mind for Christ; to hold up a testimony for the Gospel of Christ on the college and university campus; and in every possible way to strengthen the stand of believing students during their academic life as they contend with influences alien and hostile to the faith of the Bible. Local, national, and international conferences are held at which the problems of the student mind are viewed in the light of the Word of God. Outstanding among such conferences will be the forthcoming Fourth International Conference of Evangelical Students which is scheduled to take place at historic Cambridge University, Cambridge, England, this summer from June 27 to July 3. The editor of The CALVIN FORUM, who has accepted an invitation to represent America on the program of this Conference, hopes soon to be in a position to observe these European student movements first hand and will strive to do his part to acquaint our readers with these significant Christian movements in the student world. Besides several conservative speakers from the Scandinavian countries and Finland (countries in which of late a remarkable revival of conservative theology and Christianity have taken place), there will also be English, Scottish, Welsh, Dutch, and Hungarian leaders addressing the Conference sessions. Some of these best known among Calvinists are Professor F. W. Grosheide of the Free University of Amsterdam, Professor Sebestyen of Budapest, Professor Lamont of Edinburg, and Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones of Westminster Chapel, London. One of the most hopeful signs for the revival of the gospel of Christ in its intellectual expression and implications is this orthodox student movement in the colleges and universities of Europe and America. Let us also in this realm lift up the banner of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C. B.
BRUNNER ON THE WORD OF GOD
Edward J. Tanis
Minister Second Englewood Christian Reformed Church, Chicago

As became clear from our article in last month’s issue on the subject, Brunner says himself that the main problem of a Reformed philosophy of religion is that of revelation. We must “start from definitely Christian presuppositions, and give a well-rounded description of the relations between revelation and rational knowledge on the one hand, and between revelation and religion on the other.” (p. 17) We can agree with Brunner that the main problem for a Reformed philosophy of religion is that of revelation, but just because that is the main problem one would expect a treatment of the subject of general revelation, but aside from a reference here and there there is no adequate treatment of this subject. He says that Kant and the Protestant Reformers before him set “only a very limited value on theologia naturalis. They did not deny that a certain knowledge of God could be derived from nature. None the less, they laid all the emphasis on the wholly uncertain and insufficient character of any knowledge that was independent of revelation.” (p. 66)

Calvin on General Revelation

The fact is that Calvin attached far more significance to the revelation of God in nature than this statement of Brunner would lead us to believe. Several chapters of Book I of Calvin’s Institutes are devoted to the exposition of Calvin’s view of the natural knowledge which man has of God. Calvin says: “We lay it down as a position not to be controverted, that the human mind, even by natural instinct, possesses some sense of a Deity. For that no man might shelter himself under the pretext of ignorance, God hath given to all some apprehension of his existence (Rom. 1:20), the memory of which he frequently and insensibly renews; so that, as men universally know there is a God, and that he is their Maker, they must be condemned by their own testimony, for not having worshipped him and consecrated their lives to his service.” Page after page could be quoted from the Institutes in which Calvin shows with a wealth of illustrations from the religions of the nations, and from the sayings of Plato and Cicero and others, that nature reveals the existence of God and that man is endowed with some knowledge of his Maker. To say that the Reformers attributed “only a very limited value” to this knowledge is not true. One can say this of Immanuel Kant, but not of a Reformer like Calvin. And hence some treatment of the doctrine of general revelation would certainly be expected in a Reformed philosophy of religion. There is virtually nothing of this in the whole book. That would not surprise us in the case of Karl Barth with his exaggerated emphasis on the transcendence of God, but in the case of Brunner, who does believe in a general revelation, we would expect some treatment of the subject.

As for the special revelation of God, Brunner always emphasizes the fact that this revelation is given in the Bible, in the testimony of the prophets and apostles. In the Word of God we have a wholly unique revelation of a transcendant God to a man who could never know God unto salvation without this unique revelation. Brunner most clearly distinguishes between the special revelation of God in the Bible and the conception of revelation in the immanentist philosophy.

The Vagueness of Brunner

But what does Brunner mean by the Word of God? That is an all-important question, and when you ask this question you would like to have an answer in the crystal-clear language of a Kuyper or a Bavinck, but this is the kind of answer you never find in Brunner. The language of Brunner is not only so exceedingly abstract, but also so abstruse that it is extremely difficult to know what he means. Take the following sentences as an example of abstract writing, and of that identification of the objective Word of God which Reformed people call the Bible and the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart—an identification which certainly destroys the objective character of the Bible.

“Between Christ as the Mediator and the believer there is no mediation, because this could come about only by means of a continually renewed incarnation of the logos, thus contradicting the apostolic dictum ‘once for all’. Only God, as the Holy Spirit, can speak again the word which was spoken at that time once for all, and speak it in the heart of the believer at any later moment in history. God as identical with Himself in His historically unique revelation, and in the ‘subjective’ knowledge that appropriates it, God as the ground, object, and subject of knowledge, the triune God, is the content of Christian faith, a content incomprehensible to reason. The norm of that faith was formulated in the creed of the early church. With it corresponds, as the doctrine of the formal norm, the Reformation principle of Scripture, viz., the word of God in Scripture which is identical with the word of God in the soul, or in brief, Scripture and spirit in their paradoxical and incomprehensible identity.” (p. 23)

If Brunner were a Hegelian, we might conclude that his monistic thinking had led him to identify the Word of God in Scripture with the word of God in the soul, but Brunner definitely rejects this type of philosophy. Whatever philosophy is at work here (Kierkegaard perhaps?) this is not the Reformed view of the Word of God. We do not speak of the Word of God in Scripture, but we call Scripture the Word of God. At the same time we must not think that Brunner accepts the old modernistic distinction of portions of Scripture as divinely inspired and other portions as merely human. That distinction he definitely rejects.
The Word of God in the Soul

What, then, does Brunner mean by the Word of God? Let us repeat a sentence from the above quotation. “Only God, as the Holy Spirit, can speak again the word which was spoken at that time once for all, and speak it in the heart of the believer at any later moment in history.” It seems that Brunner identifies the speaking of God to the prophets and apostles with the speaking of God “in the heart of the believer.” That is, he seems to identify inspiration with illumination. Now to understand the inspired Word in the Bible our minds must be illumined. Any Reformed believer will grant that. But the illumination which we receive is not identical with the inspiration of the prophets and apostles.

In the above quotation Brunner also speaks of “the word of God in Scripture which is identical with the word of God in the soul, or in brief, Scripture and spirit in their paradoxical and incomprehensible identity.” The dictionary defines identical as meaning “the same, not different or other . . . exactly alike or equal . . . Identical is the strictest term for entire and absolute agreement.” In the light of his own statement and this definition of the word identical it would certainly seem as if Brunner taught that the word of God in Scripture is exactly the same as the word of God in the soul of the believer. This is an identification of the objective Word of God, the Bible, with the illumination in the soul of a Christian. But then what remains of the objectivity of the Bible as the Word of God?

In the very next paragraph Brunner teaches that the Reformers did not believe in the external authority of the Scriptures, an authority which they had in themselves. He says that the Reformers avoided “realistic heteronomy or authority,” and also “idealistic autonomy or freedom.” In the following sentences he makes his meaning clear. “Realism makes us dependent on a given fact, and thus on something which, as itself relative, has a place in the flux of relative phenomena. At the same time, it makes us dependent upon something external which seems foreign to us. By the former dependence (dependence on a given fact) the bond is made uncertain, by the latter, ‘dark’ or ‘blind’ because it does not take inward possession of the spirit. Hence a protest must be raised against it in the name of idealism. Idealism will recognize as binding only what comes from within and not what comes from without.” (pp. 23, 24.) This is not the end of the discussion of this point, but this suffices to indicate that Brunner certainly misunderstands the Reformers. They did believe in the external authority of Scripture in distinction from Rome’s emphasis on the authoritative character of tradition.

Not Scripture But Christ

By the word of God Brunner means the voice of God as that voice speaks to us in and through the incarnate Christ. He says that the Word of God does not come from our deepest self, from within, but it must come to us “as a datum from without, a word of revelation which subjects us to itself as authority and yet, at the same time, lays hold of our spirits inwardly as truth. It is the eternal word of truth as a concrete and personal entity, as an event in time; the primordial word of the Creator which man lost and which as a consequence he has no longer at command; which he cannot call back to himself as an a priori principle by any sort of ‘recollection’; it is the initial word set forth as a new revelation but now revealed as the final word, the word of redemption.

“It is as such an eternal fact given in time that this word is presented to us in Scripture. The meaning of the word is Jesus Christ. [the italics are mine. T.] This ‘given’ quality of His is the revelation in history, as a thing unique and complete. The word has been spoken. It is as this finished work that it is preserved in the canon of Scripture, by means of which revelation and general history are separated for the first time. The concreteness of the word, the fact of its having happened in space and time, is not accidental as in the case of general truths, but crucial. Only thereby does it become other than an idea: it becomes a given authoritative word of revelation, not discoverable by ourselves. . . . (p. 25.)

This word of God is not the Bible, but is Christ. Brunner does not teach that the whole Bible is a revelation of Christ, all centering in Christ, as Paul says in Gal. 3: 8 that the Gospel was preached unto Abraham, and as Jesus says in John 8: 56 that Abraham saw his day and rejoiced, but only Christ himself is the Word of God. To quote: “The word in scripture, Christ, becomes the same as the word in the heart, the Holy Spirit.” (p. 28.) The revelation of God is in Christ and is identical with Christ. The rest of the Bible is a purely human product, and is full of errors and contradictions.

Revelation a Personal Address

That this is the real view of Brunner is still plainer from Chap. III where he tries to produce evidence that the later Lutheran and Reformed theologians departed from the teachings of the early Reformers, Calvin and Luther. “The content of Scripture is true, not because as a whole it is to be regarded as God’s word but because and to the extent that God meets me there and speaks: He attests himself to me as present and ‘decides me’: that is why we call Scripture the word of God. The witness of the spirit is the same as the clarity of God’s word” (Zwingli). But in the fact that God’s word is not the letter of the Bible as such, but only this letter as understood in the spirit, the further conclusion is involved that the identity between Scriptural word and God’s word [note the distinction—T.] is indirect rather than direct. There is no such thing as revelation-in-itself, because revelation always consists of the fact that something is revealed to me. Revelation is not a thing, but an act of God, an event involving two parties; it is a personal address. Hence the word of
Scripture is not in itself the word of God but of man, just as the historical appearance of the God-man is in itself that of a man. The incognito of the purely human appearance is unmasked only by faith, by the testimony of the spirit which enables us to hear the word of God in the mere word of man. Only by becoming 'clear' does it become the word of God, and if it does not become 'clear' it is not the word of God.” (p. 32.)

This would mean that to an unbeliever it is not the Word of God.

Verbal Inspiration

In the following paragraphs Brunner points out that the fatal step was taken, as he says, “of regarding Scripture as true in itself,” and applying this quality to every detail of Scripture, even to the Hebrew vowel-points as if they too were divinely inspired. It is true that some theologians went to this extreme, but the Reformed theologians never taught that the translations were inspired, but only the original manuscripts of the Word of God. And it must be borne in mind always that by verbal inspiration they did not mean mechanical inspiration, but organic inspiration. The Holy Spirit did not dictate to the writers of the Sacred Word as if they were stenographers or amanuenses, but they wrote as self-determining personalities, who wrote what they were moved to write, but they were so guided by the Holy Spirit that both as to the content of their thought and the form of their thought they wrote the truth. It must always be remembered that the form in which the truth is expressed, the language used, is of vital significance. Why do we study language at all if language is not the expression of thought? Why do our literary scholars devote a whole lifetime to the words of Shakespeare in order to find out from the words what the thought of the author was? Word and thought are far more closely related than many people realize.

That Jesus himself attached great significance to the words is evident to anyone who knows the Gospels. In resisting the great tempter he said three times, “It is written,” quoting from Deuteronomy. He might have expressed the same thought in some other words, but he said, “It is written.” Word and thought cannot be separated. Abraham Kuyper and Warfield both insisted on the importance of verbal inspiration. (See Dictaten Dogmatiek, Vol. II, and Warfield’s Revelation and Inspiration, p. 214 ff.)

Brunner reminds us that the crucial opposition between the orthodox and Reformed doctrine of Scripture has been set forth in the historical portion of this book. “For orthodoxy, the Bible as a book is the divinely revealed truth. It is thus a revealed thing or object. For unpervoided Christian faith, however, Scripture is only revelation when conjoined with God’s Spirit in the present. The testimonium spiritus sancti and the clarity of God’s Word are one and the same thing. . . . The real thing is Scripture to the extent that it is the witness to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. ‘Scripture is the cradle in which Christ lies’ (Luther) . . . ” (p. 152.)

But Brunner also makes it clear that he does not mean that the word of God is in the Scripture in the modernist sense that we must “discriminate revelation from what is not revelation in Scripture by an a priori principle of selection, by a content that can be defined beforehand. But this simply cuts the nerve of the Christian belief in revelation,” says Brunner. See rest of paragraph, pp. 153, 154.

The Bible Overgrown with Legend

But after having said this Brunner also takes great pains to make clear that he does not believe in an inspiration covering the words and facts of Scripture. Note that he also adds, facts.

“In saying this, we have also implied that our attitude toward the individual words and facts of Scripture is entirely different from that of the orthodox view. ‘The cradle in which Christ lies’ is not the same thing as Christ himself. The words of Scripture, which serve to witness Christ to us, are not Christ himself, despite the fact that we only know Him through these words. Taken by themselves they are human words. The Bible is human testimony about God. . . . It is full of errors, contradictions, and misleading views of various circumstances relating to man, nature and history. It contains many contradictions in its report of the life of Jesus; it is over-grown with legend, even in the New Testament.” (p. 156.)

Brunner compares the Bible with the frail and weak human nature of Christ, but does this prove that either Christ or the Bible err on the human side? Christ was human, as well as divine, but his teaching did not contain errors.

Brunner doubts the historical certainty of the whole Bible, that is, the historicity of some of the things reported as history. We read on p. 159:

“Another general question is that which relates to the relation between historical certainty and the certainty of faith. Reconstruction of the past belongs to the realm of empirical knowledge which as such can never arrive at absolute certainty, but only probability. The farther we are from historical events, the more uncertain they are to us. . . . Every historical verdict is thus a verdict subject to appeal, and on the understanding that it may be revised later. It goes without saying that this holds good also in regard to historical judgments on Biblical material.

“At the same time, however, faith passes absolute judgments on this same Biblical material, and these have meaning only when they have absolute certainty. . . .”

Historical Certainty and the Certainty of Faith

Brunner makes a sharp distinction between historical certainty and the certainty of faith. There is good reason for making such a distinction if we are thinking of the difference between the certainty which we arrive at only through a rational knowledge of facts, and the certainty which is the gift of the Holy Spirit. A Christian would have the right to say: “I am more certain that God lives than that Luther lived.” But if Brunner applies this same distinction to a fact revealed in Scripture, say the raising of Lazarus from the dead, then I question the right to make a distinction between historical cer-
tainty and the certainty of faith. I would say in this case that we believe in the miracle of Lazarus' resurrection because it is recorded in Scripture. Brunner cannot take this position because, as he says himself, he does not believe in the inerrancy of Scripture.

Brunner tells us why he has a different conception of historical certainty in reference to Scripture facts and the certainty of faith. He says that the historical element is not historical in the same sense to a believer and a historian. He says that faith stands "in an altogether unique relation to historical fact, viz., in a relation of contemporaneity, or even of identity. Such a relation can, however, only exist where history can be defined as 'Urgeschichte' or primordial history, in the sense of the previous chapter." (The word Urgeschichte means history of the primitive ages.) He says on p. 126 that the notion of the history of the world as a unity "is a bastard begotten of Christian faith and rationalism. Christian faith knows nothing of any history of the world in the sense of a unity. Its unity is not historical, but that which belongs at once to primitive history and the consummation of history, i.e., history not as moved by forces within itself, but within its relation to a creative and redeeming God. This is a relation which cannot be fitted into the frame of profane history...." (p. 126.)

This conception of history as such is correct from our Christian point of view but that does not warrant Brunner in making the general assertion that all the facts recorded in Scripture do not have that certainty as history which they have as matters of faith. I would say that we believe them just because we find them in the Word of God. To me they are history because God inspired men to record them. The Lord Jesus says time and again: "Have ye not read that Moses said?"

From Brunner's point of view the Scriptures do not have historical certainty in the sense that we use that phrase, meaning that the events happened as they are recorded. If one makes a distinction between the virgin birth as a historical fact and as an article of faith one is in the realm of subjectivism.

**Conclusion**

In summarizing Brunner's philosophy of religion we need not hesitate to express our appreciation of his constant emphasis on the transcendence of God; our need of divine revelation if we are to know God and have communion with God; our equal need of divine grace if we are to hear the Word of God and to establish contact with the revelation; his insistence that the metaphysical and moral problem cannot be solved the one without the other; his rejection of philosophic mysticism. All these emphases we can appreciate. And if we remember Brunner's background, his early devotion to 19th century modernism in all its forms, the social and economic as well as the theological, then we are bound to feel that Brunner has moved a long way in the direction of a Reformed philosophy of religion. And if Brunner were teaching in Yale or Harvard or the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, we might well regard this as a very significant trend.

But when we take note of Brunner's peculiar conception of the Word of God, the seeming identification of that Word with the spiritual illumination of the believer; his plain statement that the Bible is full of errors; his rejection of the complete historical certainty of the Bible, and then remember that this man is occupying the chair of the Hodges and of Warfield at Princeton, be it as a guest professor—in the light of these facts we must express the earnest hope that Emil Brunner will continue to move in the direction of a Reformed theology until he can whole-heartedly accept the doctrine of a completely infallible Bible.

**PIERRE VIRET**

*Popularizer of the Calvinistic Reformation*

**D. H. Kromminga**

Of the three earliest Reformers of French-speaking Switzerland, Farel is eminent as the initiator, Calvin as the organizer, and Viret as the popularizer.

The youngest of the three, Viret was born in 1511, in Orbe, a town of the district known as Vaud, and thus, the only one of the three, a native of the land he helped to win for the Reformation. At the University of Paris he early pursued classical and theological studies in preparation for the priesthood, but he never received priestly ordination, since the reading of Luther's writings unsettled his convictions to such a degree, that he gave up his studies and returned to his home. There, at Orbe, in contact with other evangelical men, he became convinced of the truth and found peace. When Farel came to Orbe as herald of the Reformation in 1531, he discovered the youth, discerned in him fit material for the Gospel ministry, and by his powers of persuasion or conviction induced him to take upon himself the duties of that ministry.

The Fathers of the Reformed Churches faced a threefold task. First of all came the problem of propagating biblical doctrine and practice. Since
under the prevailing circumstances such doctrine and practice could not become dominant without the support of the civil authorities, the next problem was, how to keep that support from becoming outright control of the Church. In many countries the government actively opposed the reformatory movement, and for such regions the problem became one of finding ways and means for the preservation of the Reformed Church in the face of civil opposition. Viret's public career divides into four main periods, in the first three of which the propagation of the Reformed faith, the struggle for a degree of autonomy of the Church, and the labors to preserve it in the face of governmental hostility successively engaged his energies, while in the closing years he led the quiet life of an academic teacher.

* * *

Viret began his work as a propagator of the Reformed faith in the town of his birth, Orbe. Among his first converts were his own parents. In 1531, shortly after Farel's coming, he preached publicly, though the authorities still held to the Roman faith. The next year he administered the Lord's Supper to about one hundred communicants. Plans were made that called for his accompaniment of Farel and Froment in the fall of that year in their attempt to gain a foothold in Geneva, but he was beaten by a priest to within an inch of his life, and could join them in Geneva only much later. Then there was an attempt made in Geneva to poison the three, and Viret was the only one to eat of the poisoned food with the result, that for the rest of his life his health was broken. By the time Calvin came to Geneva, Vaud had fallen under the control of Bern, and under Bernese protection Viret set out with Calvin and Farel to win the entire district for the Reformation. In October, 1536, a religious debate was held publicly in Lausanne, the capital, in which Viret was the successful defender of theses drawn up by Farel with the result, that the city was won for the Reformation.

For the next twenty-two years Viret was the pastor of Lausanne. During those years he was involved in endless difficulties. Though the city had adopted the Reformation, not all its citizens were satisfied. The task of winning the dissatisfied elements was complicated by opposition of his fellow-preacher Caroli, who resented the fact, that the younger Viret was instructed to guard against Caroli's instability. He accused the Reformers of Arianism, and the case was tried and decided in their favor at a Synod held at Lausanne and at one that met in Bern. But the greatest source of difficulty was the fact that Bern, which had political control over Lausanne, followed the Zwinglian method of subjecting the Church to the control of the civil government and insisted to exercise such control also in Lausanne. Ultimately, in 1559, this conflict led to Viret's dismissal.

He now found work in Geneva, where he was no stranger. In the period of Calvin's banishment and after the overthrow of Calvin's enemies, Lausanne had loaned Viret to Geneva as pastor for six months, and he had done much to overcome Calvin's reluctance to return. In all the years since Calvin's return he had faithfully stood by the great Reformer. But he was not to serve long by the side of Calvin as pastor of the Genevan Church. The French Calvinists were in sore need of ministers. While still in Lausanne, Viret had taught at a seminary together with Beza and others, to supply that need. Now various churches in Southern France appealed to Geneva for preachers, and in hopes that the mild climate might be good for his poor health, Geneva sent Viret to Nimes for two months in 1561. The vacation lengthened into a permanent stay. He served the churches of Nimes, Montpelier, and Lyons, and thus repaid the debt his own country owed to France for Farel and Calvin. Everywhere he seems to have won many for the Reformation through his convincing arguments and his winning personality. He was very influential in warning against illegal measures of force, such as the violent seizure of church buildings and the forcible retention of them where the government ordered their return to the Roman Catholics. In 1563, he acted as moderator of the fourth national Synod of the French Churches, which met in Lyons. But the days were darkening for the French Churches: the Huguenot Wars were beginning, and, as a foreigner, Viret's usefulness was at an end. For the rest of his life, from 1566 till 1571, he found a peaceful refuge in Protestant Bern, where he could again devote himself to academic teaching as he had done in Lausanne.

* * *

When we call Viret a popularizer of the Calvinistic Reformation, we have particularly in mind his voluminous writings. They were all addressed to the common man of ordinary intelligence, and for that reason have offered little occasion for extensive preservation or reprinting. They touch upon all the great religious issues that troubled the times, and always Viret knew how to make those issues plain to the common people. Like Erasmus, Marnix, and others, he knew how to employ satire in the exposure of popular superstitions and abuses. This popular appeal of his presentation together with his peaceableness and lack of resentment to personal wrong and his counsel of subjection to the constituted civil authorities if only the Gospel could be preached and followed, gave him a powerful hold on the French Huguenots and won him the respect even of many of his adversaries.
GOD

(An attempted metrical translation of Francisco da Costa (1798-1860). Da Costa was a blind Brazilian who, after his blindness was removed, saw the Chris Scriptures. Noteworthy about the poem is its emphasis on the power of faith, love, and gratitude.)

Lost in the depths of despondence and sorrow,
My mind disillusioned by dreams that proved vain,
By frettings of unrest, whose fountain I knew not,
Afflicted, tormented, in harrowing pain,
Long bore me the earth in my barren vexation,
In grumbling despair of the world and my plight:
A gnawing obsession consumed all my moments,
A passionate hunger for spirit-delight!
I sought what this heart so elusively yearned for,
In all the allurements the world did display:
In delirious passion, in riotous living,
In wanton abundance, where sense held full sway,
In music which charmed e’en the list’ning cathedral,
In laurel-wreaths platted for conquerors bold...
But the shadow did flee at the touch of my fingers;
’Twas vainness, illusion: to dream, not to hold!

In depths of disaster lost, sunken, bewildered,
How thirsted my soul for the true living God!
Alas, born in blindness of sinful corruption,
Despairing confusion continued my lot!
For how should the creature presume still to seek Him—
Th’ Almighty Creator—in a heart that rebelled?
And where is the light whereby man can yet find Him
Whose image in us by our sin was dispelled?
That light no Platonic acuteness can kindle,
No systems of science, as fleeting as time,
No penance-prescriptions of Law or of Rabbis,
No self-willed obeisance to deified Mind...

O God of compassion! Thou lookedst upon me,
And into my darkness came Thy wondrous light!
In th’ Only-Begotten to man God returneth,
In th’ Only-Begotten, His Image so bright!
That Only-Begotten—His hand touched my eyelids,
And gone was my blindness, my heart was made whole.
I saw Him, surrendered! Hell fled and forsook me,
And heaven arose through Thy Word in my soul!
I saw Him, predicted to exiles in Eden,
As spotless, the Seed of the sore-tempted Eve;
Him Who would demolish the fetters of evil,
The serpent would crush and the vict’ry achieve!
I saw Him, foretold as a Son of the Hebrews,
   From Abraham's loins, and of royal descent;
The Branch that, full-grown in the fulness of ages,
   The wall of partition for Gentiles would rend!
I saw Him, prefigured on Israel's altars,
   In cov'nant of Sinai, in off'ring and flame!
I saw Him, the God-man, Who was to interpret
   All things Israel's prophets to man did proclaim!
I saw Him, the Root of the lineage of David,
   His Lord and his King, and yet also his Son!
The God of the Heavens, on earth the despised one,
   Made holy, made glorious through suff'ring and scorn;
Assuming our flesh to redeem us, His brethren:
   Yea, made to be sin for my trespass, my blot!
Insulted, tormented, in blasphemous frenzy,
   Yea, nailed to the cross, and forsaken of God! . . .

My Ransom, my Goël, my Evil-Destroyer,
   My Master, my Saviour, my Lord and my God!
My Victor o'er sorrow, my life's Inspiration!
   Most blessed, most hallowed, most glorious my lot!
For Thee will I strive, and for Thee will I suffer,
   For Thee will I fill the whole earth with Thy praise!
To Thee will I dedicate life, breath, and power,
   In Thee will I glory through all of my days!

Hast Thou, O my King, hast Thou come to this sinner?
   Hast Thou sought and found him who thought not of Thee?
Then wash me, then bathe me, in soul-cleansing rivers
   Of Thy Holy Spirit, poured out upon me!
Yea, fill me, transform me, with pow'r in believing
   Which moveth the mountains, which crumbleth the rock!
Which, mighty in prayer, calls down fire from heaven
   That love-flames doth kindle, closed hearts doth unlock!
Yea, grant me to sing, with adoring thanksgiving,
   In flaming devotion, with militant ring,
In beautiful chorals, in thundering accents:
   Fall heaven and earth before Jesus, the King!

—Anthony Hoekema.
THE EMPIRICIST AND THE BEAM

BEHOLD, two men were strolling on a city street. And it came to pass that, as they walked, they both espied a steel beam lying on the street some blocks in the distance. To the beam was attached a chain that extended skyward and then was hidden by a projecting building corner. The men watched with interest as the chain grew taut and the beam went up and up until it too disappeared from view.

The one man had been to college and had learned from one John Locke, that to be a truly educated man, he must never make up his mind until all the evidence is in. He had become an empiricist, and believed it was unscientific for him to draw any conclusions until all the phenomena had been observed and classified. So he drew his limited conclusions about the ascending beam. "The beam," said he, speaking musingly, "goes upward simultaneously with the tightening of the chain, there must be some relation between the tightened chain and the ascending beam, whether the chain raised the beam or the beam's movement tightens the chain, I cannot tell without further experiment."

The other man was unlearned and blessed with nothing more than what he himself called "common sense." He knew nothing of science or empirical method. Nevertheless, his mind followed as unerringly as by sight, the moving chain, up to crane-arm, on to the revolving drum of a donkey-engine, past the engine to the operator, carefully adjusting a myriad of levers, past that mere operator to the master-mind of an engineer that designed the engine with its reserves of potential power, past the engine and its builder, to the frame of the sky-scraper into which the beam was being carefully fitted, and past the building to the mind of some architect who had designed the building, ordered the beam, secured the engine, hired the operator and was busy supervising the raising of each steel beam as it went into its place.

The two men turn a corner and never see the beam or building site again. And yet, what think ye, which of the two, the empiricist or the man of faith—which he calls "common sense"—gained the greater fund of true information about the moving beam? And who, I pray you, was more scientific in his method? ALA BANDON.

CONTRAST

Some stood by to jeer, Others laughed and swore; Greedy hands cast lots For the coat He wore.

But the quaking earth Trembled in disgrace, And the noonday sun Blushed and hid its face.

—VERNA S. TEEUWISSEN.

SONG OF MARY MAGDALENE

I've served Him meagerly, I know; Yet there is this to say: That I was privileged to be His herald for a day.

The fleetest errand I have run Was run that Easter dawn To tell his friends He was alive And they would see Him soon.

It was so effortless; there seemed No weight retarding me. My mind, so stricken with delight, Had set my body free. My sandals seemed of feathers blown, Of mist my hands and hair; And the road that was so hard and rough Lay like a band of air.

Fleet was the pace of ecstasy And fleet the flight of song That sang itself impatiently The while I sped along:

Alive. The Master is alive! Jesus—our buried one! The grasses bend beneath his feet; His head is in the sun.

He is alive and walking round— I've seen Him and I know; And He has spoken, telling me To tell the others so.

(I hope they will not shake their heads And think my words are lies. Did I not hear Him say my name And see His lighted eyes?)

Truly the Master is alive— Tall and warm and well. (Hurry, my feet! O faster, please— I cannot wait to tell . . . .)

—BETH MERIZON.

SPRING SONG

So pass the days and after them comes Spring. We've waited long, and now March is at hand. Where worn snow disappears, crocuses lift Their creamy cups above the damp, green sod.

The days are longer now and so much more, So much more beautiful. The sun is warm Against our hair. Life moves where sun strikes earth.

The rich plowed land moves by on either side Combed to right and left. Trees bud, or break Into a cloud, a mist, a froth of bloom. So comes the Spring with gladness in her tread.

—MARIE J. TUINSTRA.
CONTEMPORARY ECONOMIC SURVEY
Henry J. Ryskamp
Professor of Economics, Calvin College

SOMETHING of the tenseness of the present world situation has been communicated to all of us by our commentators of the Press and of the Radio. They have told us what they have observed and of the rumors that pass from mouth to mouth. What occurs behind closed doors or what has already happened in the minds of Europe’s leaders they can only guess.

A glance at just one page of recent economic history or a casual perusal of a few entries in the diary of a present day Evelyn would increase our understanding of the problems of the day and of some of the reasons for the general tension. It is to be hoped that we may have the time and patience to read the page now rather than to leave it to future generations to scan and to use as evidence of our folly.

Notations such as the following would stand out in the diary of an observer whose eyes were lifted beyond the immediate scene.

The Lima Conference. One of the outstanding causes of friction and one of the important reasons why little was done was the matter of trade relations, particularly that of unfavorable trade balances, that is, a surplus of imports over exports, and resulting disagreement as to how such a disturbing economic situation should be met by the nations. Some favored Secretary Hull’s policy of reciprocal trade agreements, others were obviously under the influence of Germany’s proposals to encourage trade by means of what amounts to barter—lack of gold for international payments having hamstringed trade of many a small nation in the last few years.

Argentina. Shortly after the close of the Lima Conference Argentina announced to the United States that she would have to curtail imports from the United States. Contrary to the impression of our citizens who, magnifying the statement found printed on canned meats and other products, “Packed in Argentina for such and such an American Packing Company,” have insisted that we should stop buying goods from Argentina, Argentina’s balance of trade with this country in the last year had been so adverse that the Argentine government decreed that imports from this country (manufactured goods especially) would have to be cut down by some thirty or forty millions. As a part of the explanation the Argentine government added that her meager gold supply made the continuance of such an unbalance in foreign trade impossible.

Brazil. Here disturbances both political and economic, have led to the establishment of a virtual dictatorship. With the new government the United States has just concluded a trade agreement which will permit the flow of goods in both directions, overcoming an impasse brought about by Brazil’s lack of purchasing power other than in goods. Appended to the announcement is the interesting statement that a condition upon which the agreement was based was Brazil’s promise to renew the payment of interest on Brazilian bonds held in this country.

Chile. A news flash sufficiently important to unsettle the New York stock market for a day or more informs us that this country which receives much of its revenue from natural resources exploited by foreigners has decided to put an export duty on copper taken out of the country. This will undoubtedly affect the income of several great American copper companies. Have the copper companies been too hoggish, too short-sighted in their policies? Is Chile possibly killing the goose that laid the golden egg? Perhaps neither is altogether true. Chile needs money to meet the costs of rehabilitation in the earthquake zone.

Germany. In spite of the careful husbanding of resources and of the rationing of certain consumers goods the standard of living according to news reports has gone down, not up. The German trade balance, adverse for a long time already, was more unfavorable for February than it was in January. Germany must export to secure funds with which to buy the necessities of life but her imports continue to outrun her exports. With almost no gold with which to buy in other countries she must resort to barter. With markets closed to her she resorts to retaliations and attempts to secure goods in other ways. Even the small supply of gold, some $50,000,000, which Czechoslovakia possessed looked large to a great empire which had even less. By comparison with the $15,000,000,000 of the U. S. it must look small indeed.

Rumania. Latest news bulletins inform the world that although Rumania will not submit to German domination of her political life she will come to economic terms with the Reich. If true this means that Germany will be able to command rich resources which she now lacks. If economic cooperation affords Germany the opportunity for putting her propaganda machine to work, other accords or exploitation may follow, and the leaders of the Reich may finally be able to give full expression to the spirit of revenge which seems to motivate them.

If the diarist were a citizen of the United States he would note the disturbing economic conditions at home, would certainly not fail to record that according to three of the most reliable reporting
agencies the estimate of the number of unemployed in this country at the present is about 10,000,000. He would not fail to record the fact that economic activity in this country is most sensitive to what is happening in the world outside. He would record his fears that not only world economic catastrophe but world war is liable to strike us if and when it strikes elsewhere. If he had listened to American opinion for the last few years he would have added, "Let us mind our own business and let the rest of the world go by."

Awake to what is happening in the world today, however, the modern diarist must make some startling entries in his record.

Whether we like it or not, whether we want it or not, gold continues to flow to this country. We now have the almost unbelievable sum of $15,000,000,000 of gold in this country, more than one-half the entire world's monetary supply. Tend to our own business if we will—how are we to stop the flow? We have so much gold now that it is really a threat to our economic recovery, and certainly a brake on the economic recovery of the world.

The diarist would be surprised to have to record that a country which wished to mind its business, which was quite obviously sympathetic to China, was nevertheless helping Japan to fight China by great exports of commodities to Japan for use in war against China. He would be startled to learn that whereas we had made direct exports of goods to Loyalist Spain practically impossible, Insurgent Spain was being helped by others. With our own goods? Perhaps not. But the diarist might recall and record that during the world war Germany supplied France with materials of war to be used against her own men, and that France supplied Germany with materials which were hurled back at her own sons. Mind one's own business in a world in which gold flows to regions where it is not wanted, in which trade continues by indirect if directly throttled!

The world war was concluded by an unreasonable peace, dictated largely, it would appear, by a desire to profit from the victorious outcome, and to obtain revenge. (The vanquished would in all likelihood have been no more reasonable, it is true). But as ever in human history unreasonable has begotten unreason, revenge has begotten, what strikes us at least, as an almost maniacal revenge.

Shall the diarist make another entry: "Economic Determination!" and then close his eyes, his ears, and his diary! He should know better if he has followed the ways of man. Economic events are human events, economic science distinctly a human science, and the antics of our present economic order and of the world are those of human beings.

Shall he repeat the advice of many a soothsayer of the day and enter for future generations to read the warning—"Let us look out for ourselves," "Let us raise our fences high and protect ourselves." He will know only too well that one reason why we have been losing what we have is because we have been selfishly trying to protect and to save it. To withhold from others what we ourselves have, makes it impossible for us to use and enjoy it, means withholding it from, robbing it from ourselves.

Shall the diarist admit that the present world situation is of our own making and that, therefore, we cannot well condemn those who at present err the most? That would be a counsel of despair indeed. True, who dares to throw the first stone today in economic or political circles? But how are we ever to meet the challenge of present events if we do nothing but admit our own mistakes, our own sins? Shall we contribute only to the vicious and apparently ever more vicious circle in which we are moving? Or shall we step out of it, and instead of stepping backward before the appalling situation of the day, step forward to meet it.

Bismarck is reputed to have said, "A statesman can never alone by his own efforts accomplish anything; he can only wait and listen till he hears the footsteps of the Almighty echoing through the changing events, then spring forward and grasp the end of His mantle—that is all." But is there in just this one page of human history no evidence of the will of the Almighty? Is there today not ample evidence of God's hand in history? Does it not even now point the way to those willing to give heed?

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SERENITY

Are you willing to pay the price
For the choice you make?
Remember to count the cost
And the risk you take;
Ponder the cause: your motives;
Look at results, your peers;
Is the ending a harmony
Or is it but grief and tears?

Look at the faces about you:
Some of them gnarled by greed;
Others are vague, or pretentious
Many are harassed by speed.
Are some sweet and contented?
Ask what their secret may be;
Choose carefully ere you disparage
A life of serenity.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.
Hungary and Czechoslovakia

The following article was in part called forth by an article entitled "The Munich Conference" in the December, 1938, issue of The Front. Here follows the paper presented the points of view of Hungary in the Central European developments since the close of the World War, his voice deserves to be heard. There can be no doubt that Hungary has been done a gross injustice at the conference table of Versailles. And no one can doubt that we are today to a large extent reaping the dubious fruits of the inequities associated with the names of Versailles and Trianon. It need hardly be said that, in the light of the recent developments of this fact and the consequent relative justification of the claim made by this Hungarian voice in behalf of his native country and its people, President Wilson repudiated his own autonomy at the hands of Hitler.—[EDITOR.]

There is no doubt that many tears have been shed in America over the recent fate of Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, there was very little understanding and sympathy for those countries which profited by the territorial redistribution of that state.

We must remember that before the world war there was no Czechoslovakia. More than 300 years ago there existed an independent Bohemia, including the province of Moravia, populated by Czechs and by Moravians assimilated by the Czechs. This country, however, was subjugated by the House of Hapsburg after the battle of Weissenberg, 1620, and reduced to the status of an Austrian province. It remained an Austrian province until the close of the world war. The Czechs adjusted themselves to this status of their country admirably and they were always ready to fight Hapsburgs in the cause of the House of the Hohenzollern and Hapsburg hegemony in those parts of Europe. And they succeeded! Years of work and sacrifice were rewarded with the possibility of re-instatement in a generous mood at the expense of the Central Powers, and all the smaller countries to be benefited by the dismemberment of Austria and Hungary (the "Little Entente"), and on the basis of their racial affinity with Russia and their attachment to her through the dreams of an all-embracing pan-slavism, they envisaged themselves as taking the place of the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburg hegemony in those parts of Europe. These were all the more encouraging, as the last century's troubles were being with materials of false data and propaganda.

The Hybrid Creation of Czechoslovakia

First they invented the myth of a Czechoslovak nation composed of Czechs and Slovaks, two branches of the same Czechoslovak race, with one and the same language. They claimed that the Czech language is the original, and the Slovak language just a variation, a Czech dialect. Possessed of this, they passed through. They now had the God-given opportunity to re-instate their former dynasty. Then again, they lacked the moral qualities needed to win the heart of the peoples of the world. They must remember that before the world war there was no Czechoslovakia, and that the representatives of the other Allied Powers were in a generous mood at the expense of the Central Powers and mainly at the expense of Austria and Hungary, they turned into unprincipled opportunists. They decided to ride along with those who gave America the experience of winning a war but losing the cause for which it was fought, namely, to make the world safe for democracy.

They now had the God-given opportunity to re-instate their historic Bohemia and Moravia along ethnographical lines as an uncontested, independent, happy little country to which all their neighbors and former masters already acquiesced in principle by having accepted Wilson's 14 points. Had they done this, the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1938 would never have arisen, and the nerves of the peoples of the world would have been spared all the accompanying excitements.

But they were seized with a veritable glutony for territory. The vision of a great Slavic Empire in the valley of the Danube and in the heart of Europe—headed, of course, by them—possessed them of all sense of proportion. In concert with France and all the smaller countries to be benefited by the dismemberment of Austria and Hungary (the "Little Entente"), and on the basis of their racial affinity with Russia and their attachment to her through the dreams of an all-embracing pan-slavism, they envisaged themselves as taking the place of the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburg hegemony in those parts of Europe. Those were all the more encouraging, as the last century's troubles were being with materials of false data and propaganda.

Hungary and Czechoslovakia

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states the reason for this attitude toward the idea of any plebiscite in connection with the creation of Czechoslovakia was written in his book, *The Peace*, as follows: "We had to choose between a plebiscite and the creation of Czechoslovakia." So it was well known that the peoples concerned would have voted against it, for it was artificial and historically new, named Czechoslovakia.

At that time the United States was not unmindful of these facts. On the contrary, at the instigation of Senator, later President Harding, the Senate had sent a delegation to Hungary. As reported by Mr. Wilson, the United States delegation listened to their statement of the gross injustices contained in the Treaty of Trianon, as the treaty handed down to Hungary is named, and in consequence the United States did not officially accept it, but concluded a separate treaty of peace with Hungary. True, this fact did not change the dictums of the Treaty affecting the dismemberment of Hungary, but it at least cleared the United States of all blame for it. For her, the United States had conducted her official grounds as a basis for any future attempt to induce this country to help maintain the conditions created by that truly shameful document.

Nor did the United States join the League of Nations, which in its reality turned out to be nothing else than "a close, armed alliance to maintain the status quo of the peace treaties," and not the instrument to carry out "the broad principles of justice contained in President Wilson's Fourteen Points which led to the armistice," as Professor Herbert Wright wrote in the February, issue of the *World's Work*.

Moreover, the Czechs did not do anything really effective to forestall a crisis. Arming to the teeth and building fortifications along borders which were historically, ethnographically, and economically unjustifiable, was not doing the really effective thing.

Keeping the mills of a misleading propaganda at full blast was not effective prevention.

Making provocative alliances with distant nations while constantly exasperating their immediate neighbors worked only until those neighbors felt strong enough to call them to task.

Forgetting about the higher interests of humanity and, for the sake of personal vendettas and imperialistic dreams, offering a natural bridge from Bolshevik Russia into the heart of Europe through their military alliance with her, was not the right thing to do. It is a pity that Hitler had to be so shrewd to point this out.

Nor was it the wise thing for the prevention of disaster to pursue a ruthless policy of Czechozizing, centralizing, and onpressing masses of peoples and races herded under Czech rule again. Their country was not a true democracy. They should have the right to adopt a truly democratic policy toward them. (See, *Shall Millions Die for "this Czechoslovakia?* Memorandum of the Slovak Council, London, Jan., 1928.)

Disaster, therefore, had to come. It was only a question of time and opportunity. I predict that it is yet far from being over. [The reader should remember that this article was written before the recent "conquest" of Czechoslovakia by Hitler. Editor.]

encia in the territory of historical Hungary, the mixed population of which the Czechs pacified to some extent, for the time being and under the force of occupation and by granting them their original, promised but always delayed, autonomy. But the Czechs still shrink from the idea of giving these peoples a chance to reveal their real mind through a popular plebiscite.

Hungarian Wishes and Aspirations.

During the recent negotiations the Hungarians kept on demanding such a plebiscite for their former Slovak and Ruthenian provinces. They were led by Mr. Breydo, the first prime minister of "autonomous" Ruthenia, suddenly made autonomous and re-christened "Kar pathological-Ukraine," advocated it rather than turn over his people to starvation on the barren mountains of that strip of land. And what was his reward for trying to be honest with his people and to be truly democratic in principle? He was stripped of his office, deprived of his possessions, and put into jail as a traitor. This first prime minister of "autonomous" Ruthenia is now in one of the jails of the "democratic" darling of America, carrying on a hushed-up hunger strike in protest against this latest atrocity of Czech "democratic"-mindedness! He is becoming the latest instance of the constantly increasing number of such cases in which the idea of democracy which had nothing but a jail cell for the best spirits and minds of all the nationalities "freed" and "blessed" by it! It was not democracy, but brazen "Czechozizing." For the sake of ciphers and bookkeeping the Hungarians are frankly dissatisfied with their part of the solution of the Czechoslovak crisis. But at present they can hardly do anything about it. They would have gotten much more satisfaction had they thrown themselves into the arms of Hitler as the Czechs did with their characteristic change of front. But Hungarians would rather wait patiently somewhat longer than barter away their zealously guarded independence, and their self-esteem with it, for something which was theirs since 880 A.D. and which historical and economic forces will bring into their lap sooner or later regardless of all dictators.

During my visit to Hungary in August and September, 1938, I went to a point on the then Hungarian and Czechoslovak border along the River Tisza. I stood at a bridge-head all prepared for dynamiting both by the Czechs and the Hungarians. On the opposite side was the Czech customs house and on this side the Hungarian one, with guards on both sides. Among the corn fields on the Czech side but still owned by Hungarian farmers residing on this side I could see one of the concrete fortifications and several of the machine gun nest clearances in the brushes and bushes of the river banks. Below us, tied up on the smoothly swirling waters of the river, there were about a dozen rowboats, light craft for the Young Mondays who holiday at the faraway mountainous Eastern parts of historic Hungary but now ceded to Rumania. To bring down the river the log wood of their mountain-sides and sell it for the bread of the Great Huns. I think the Plaines was the age-long trade of the mainly Rumanian people of those districts. One of them was boistering around the Hungarian guard house. I addressed him in Hungarian: "Is there an American here?" "Sure," he said in Hungarian and with a perfect matter-of-factness, "that's what we always did!" Where before the war he saw only one undivided country balanced economically by the Creator himself, there after the war he saw three countries bordering upon each other—Rumania, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary—but still he said they were doing what they always did

That unbreakable economic unity and interdependence which made Hungary one of the geographical wonders of the world, and which fact was entirely missed by the makers of post-war Europe, will yet cause much concern and will make still more beautiful stories.

But we should not become unduly excited again as we did in the case of Czechoslovakia. We should know beforehand, that nature and history will be re-adjusting themselves. God will prove to His little, mortal man-creatures, that He is the real master of the fate of peoples. And what might collapse in Europe will be "at best a makeshift system founded on unreality, conceived in vengeance, and perpetuated by guided artificialness," as an editorial in the *New York Journal and American* remarked recently regarding the crisis of Czechoslovakia (Sept. 28, 1938).

Perth Amboy, N. J.

Charles Vinceze.

Flattery vs. Truth Speaking.

Holland, Michigan, R. 6.

March 17, 1939.

Editor of CALVIN FORUM.

Dear Mr. Bouma:

I WISH I had the ability to express my complete agreement with your editorial on the need of more downright truth speaking.

Too many in our day are popular and influential because they'll stoop to flattery—they call it "praise." They are kind, easy to get along with, for they condemn no evil. To them there is no evil except the reproof and exposure of others. They are fortunate in seeing their indignation rise.

They use half-truth, innuendo, and lies to protect their name and honor—making others appear untruthful.

We yearn for the day when half-truth, lying, deceit, guile, pretense, flattery, and other forms of dishonesty will be called Sin, as an editorial in the *New York Journal and American* suggested.

May God grant us the fear of God and a keen sense of justice, truth, and right. That we may see that there is no true peace, nor love, nor kindness in the home, Church, or nation—at the cost of truth.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Joe Ten Cate.
Report Calvinistic Discussion Club

Readers of The Calvin Forum have been informed from time to time concerning a society of which Professor C. Bouma is the president and the undersigned secretary. As has been stated before, the aim of the group is "to analyze present day currents of thought in Theology and Philosophy, to analyze the problems touched upon, and to treat these problems from the Calvinistic point of view, i.e., in the light of God's Holy Writ, the Word of God in the sense conceived in the Reformed standards, thereby seeking constructively to deepen and strengthen our insight into Calvinism as a world and life view."

March 10, 1939, we met at the home of the Reverend J. Weidenaa. At this meeting Dr. C. Bouma read a paper on "The Nature and the Unity of Reality." This paper is introductory to an entire series of subjects dealing with Ontology. The title of the series is: Studies in Christian-Augustinian-Calvinistic Ontology.

Dr. Bouma in speaking about the Nature and Unity of Reality emphasized the following points:

1. Basic to the Christian view of Reality is God and his creation of man and the world.
2. As to the question, what is the Nature of Reality, the answer is conditioned and determined by a twofold assumption: God is God, Creator, and all existing things are related to him as creatures to their Creator.
3. The Christian rejects any view of the Unity of reality which does not do full justice to this duality of Creator and creature.
4. As a result, the Christian rejects the two types of modern Monism so prevalent today. He rejects idealistic Monism which identifies God and the world, and he rejects naturalistic Monism which identifies the world and God.
5. The distinctive and determinative element in each of these two forms of Monism is the assumption that all reality consists essentially of one immanent process, and that every phase of reality is produced and determined by factors inherent in and appropriate to this one process.
6. The implications of this monistic ontology are diametrically opposed to the fundamentals of the Christian Faith.
7. The irreconcilability of Monism and Christianity is confirmed by testimony from both sides.
8. But if Christianity is the sworn enemy of all Monism, must we conclude that it involves an ontological Dualism?
9. Whereas Monism in both its forms posits a spurious unity of Reality, Theism offers the true principle of unity as found in God and his purpose for the world.

This masterly paper was followed by a general and constructive discussion. Scheduled for the next meeting is a paper on "Christianity and Platonism," with special emphasis on that form of thought which is known as Neo-Platonism.

J. G. Van Dyke, Secretary.

City Mission Work in Holland

My Dear American Friends:

In my previous letter I promised I would tell you more about the wonderful work of city evangelization. I shall redeem that promise now.

Already I have had occasion to point out that the conviction is rather general among us that this evangelization work is the task of the organized church. We do not view it as a sort of pet hobby of certain individuals who happen to take interest in this work. On the contrary, we view it strictly as a type of work proceeding from and controlled throughout by the local church as a body.

It is true, this erroneous view, as though evangelization is a pet hobby of certain individuals, has not entirely disappeared as yet. However, it may be said that the conviction that this type of Kingdom work is the duty and responsibility of the church of Jesus Christ as a whole is fast gaining ground among us, both in theory and in practice. In this we rejoice.

When we remember that our Lord gave his disciples the great commission to preach the gospel to every creature, it certainly must be considered improper and out of place for the Church or any body arbitrarily to exclude certain groups from the scope of this missionary charge. No one will think of objecting that the commission of our Lord refers to missions, but that evangelization is not so mentioned. Surely those who live for immediate results are included among "all creatures" as well as the heathen in distant lands.

Foreign missions and home missions (evangelization) both are included in the natural task of the church. We may possibly draw a parallel from the life of our bodies. When something is abnormal and the lungs do not function properly, our bodies will suffer from lack of pure air. So also the atmosphere within the church will become stifled and impure whenever the Church fails to function properly in discharging its God-given duty as a church militant and as a light that must illumine the world.

Since all evangelization is hence viewed as an integral part of the task assigned to the church, the matter comes up regularly for discussion and deliberation in consistory meetings as well as at classical and synodical assemblies. Unitedly the churches must tackle this task, seek to stimulate it, and adopt the most effective methods for the attainment of the desired end.

As can be expected, activity of this kind meets with various obstacles and often encounters much opposition. Let us look at some of these, and consider the evangelistic efforts which are carried on in my own city of Deventer. Our consistory has engaged the services of an assistant pastor, to whom this work has been committed and who devotes all his time to this work. At least once a week gospel leaflets and papers are distributed by the gospel workers of our church. Often a good opportunity to start a religious conversation is offered at the time these leaflets or papers are handed out. The conversation may be brought to such a reference in the Bible that some remark may be made about knowing the Lord Jesus, the person to whom the tract or paper makes reference from week to week.

The reaction often is far from appreciative. At the front door or in the front hall the worker often is subjected to warm argument and sometimes even abuse. Explanation is often made that the person addressed cannot believe in God. "If there is a God, now is it that I have suffered so much misery in my life? How is it that my husband has been out of work for more than three years!" So one retorts. Another replies to your remarks of interest and admonition by assuring you that he lives a good life, gives everybody a square deal, but that it is surely not necessary to attend church services for that.

These are just a few of the numberless retorts which in some form or other recur most frequently, and which are intended to serve as excuses for refusing to open their hearts to the Lord Jesus. When the conversation has reached this stage, it is usually not difficult for the given gospel worker to make an appointment for a later call, a call which is then made at some later time in the company of the evangelistic, or assistant, pastor.

When such a call is made, it is all-important for the gospel worker to practice the art of listening. One must have a sympathetic ear for all human needs and must listen patiently to the numerous objections which are brought against the Christ, but especially against Christians. The carefully experienced worker will not try to make reply to all such objections. He will rather listen attentively in order to detect in and behind all these objections and arguments the deeper motive which prompts the objector in refusing to come and surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ.

After carefully determining the true diagnosis in this fashion, the proper remedy from The Word of God should be applied to each individual case respectively.

In this way our workers often experience a combination of bitter disappointments and of remarkable blessings. But we continue in faith, never discouraged, and with the prayer upon our lips and in our hearts—a prayer in which we know you join us—that through our frail efforts the Kingdom of God may come both at home and abroad.

Deventer, Holland.

P. PRINS.
The Pacific Northwest

Dear Dr. Bouma:

Your request that I serve the \textit{Calvin Forum} as correspondent for Seattle and the Pacific Northwest is hereby answered with a trebling affirmative. A person nestled in the somewhat idyllic life of a small country charge makes few contacts outside of those that are of purely local interest, but I shall strain my eyes and ears a bit to catch whatever news of more general religious interest I can. Let me begin with a few introductory comments about the Pacific Northwest.

That which we now call the "Pacific Northwest" was once part of the Oregon Region, the possession of which was a matter of dispute for many years between Great Britain and the United States. The Oregon Region, as every student of an American History text-book knows, extended north to the 54° - 40' parallel, between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Coast. The attempt to possess the whole of it was bolstered by the blustering war cry of Tyler's regime: "Fifty-four forty or fight,"—which was the signal of renewed interest in a territory to which for many years all Americans had been indifferent except a few intrepid fur traders and missionaries. Eventually, in 1846, a treaty with Great Britain established the northern boundary of the United States at the 49th degree parallel. Just now I sit at my desk in Sumas, Washington, which is just a few short blocks away from resting squarely on the 49th parallel.

The treaty of 1846 meant for us the concession of extensive forests of fir and cedar, the rich, fertile farming area of the Fraser valley, the Vancouver harbor, and many points of natural grandeur. But we hardly sense any feeling of being impoverished, retaining as we have all the wealth and beauty that is embraced in the Pacific Northwest. There are the heavily wooded slopes of the Cascade foothills; fertile valleys cleared of woods, whose green pastures and fruit-producing soil extends to the salt water of the Sound; Puget Sound itself, teeming with salmon and dotted with verdant isles of emerald; and the wooded Cascades, with tumbling waters of rivers and creeks, high pastures of heather, rocky peaks, and summits of eternal snow. Here is a heritage not only of material wealth, but as well of awe-inspiring natural beauty.

This might, for the moderation of its climate, the fertility of its river-reined valleys, and the multiplicity of its fruits, be called a Paradise; or, in another figure, God's great cathedrals, with giant pillars of cedar, its lofty firs and piercing peaks for spires; its valleys like carpeted alais of green, its music the whistle of winds through the harps of the trees, and the voice of God speaking in the noise of many waters. The sentiment awakened in the hearts of those who have an eye to see this beauty and majesty is often expressed in the prosaic but suggestive phrase: "This is God's country."

But in "God's country" not all are conscious of God, and not all are God's children. The facility with which men ignore or forget the revelation of His wisdom and power in the things that are seen brands them as spiritual kin to those whose only cathedral is the slums of a great metropolis and who see no spires except those of the tenement house chimneys. Even those who live in a potential paradise are not sanctified by the beauty, grandeur and power of God's manifestations. The unregenerate human heart has as little inclination to respond to God's revelation in nature as to God's revelation in grace.

And so, here as elsewhere, there is need of the Church to bring estranged sinners to God. The task of the Church here is as surely as that of the Church in every other part of the earth. And the Church's manifestation reveals the same variety here as elsewhere—some proclaim the gospel of Sovereign grace which is God's power to salvation, others give stones for bread in the proclamation of a gospel which brings no satisfaction for the deepest needs of the human soul. Perhaps in another letter we shall speak less of the physical aspects of this community and more of the trends in its religious life.

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE STOEB.

Calvinistic Study Club in Canada

It is with a certain diffidence that I accept and do now write to the readers of a thoroughly Calvinistic monthly, a bit of news from Canada, for the simple reason there is so little original Calvinism obtaining in Canada today. So far as I know there exists only one small organized body that does anything at all to promote the continued existence of Biblical principle as expounded by the Apostle of Geneva. I should, when I say that, modify the assertion. We have in Prince Edward Island a church body locally known as "The Church of Scotland," (not in connection with the Church of Scotland in the old country) that adheres rigidly to the Calvinism of the Scottish Confessions. Two small congregations of this body exist in Ontario, another in Cambridge, Mass. Of that I shall write in a subsequent letter.

The small body before referred to is "The Calvin Club," organized November 13, 1934, in a meeting held at the manse in Hopewell, Nova Scotia, where the Rev. A. Roskamp, now of Weyburn, Saskatchewan, pastor minister. Eight ministers, of one mind and spirit, organized with the Rev. Mr. N. D. Kennedy, M.C., M.A., a sound Scottish minister and theologian, duly elected president.

The Club was conceived in the mind of a Canadian-born, Westminster-trained minister, the Rev. Mr. C. E. Hayward, who felt that since there were several ministers all within close range and in one Presbytery, who were Calvinistic in theology, they should be organized in order to discuss and to witness that system of truth known as Calvinism.

Incidentally the same group of men, for the most part, had already been instrumental in getting through the Presbytery, in good grace, a Pre-Presbytery Conference, which met each morning for two hours before the meeting of Presbytery. The purpose of the Presbytery Conference was to offset the purely—and too often spiritually sterile—business meeting of the Presbytery. Excellent papers were prepared, which always were provocative of good discussion.

However, the Calvin Club was not organized to supplant or supersede the Pre-Presbytery Conference, but to supplement it. It was from the first to be more distinctive, and in a sense more theological than practical.

In anticipation of the first meeting, Mr. Hayward prepared an excellent paper on a "Brief Review of Calvinism in History." In his scholarly way he lucidly indicated how the fundamental principle of Calvinism is the principle of both the Old and New Testament; how the principle was expounded by Augustine, then by Gottschalk, but pre-eminentiy by Calvin, who gave it the distinctiveness by which it has always been known.

At the second meeting of the Club on December 10, 1934, the "Purpose of the Club," was adopted and incorporated in the minutes.

"The purpose of this Club will be to discuss the system of truth known as Calvinism, and to maintain a distinctive witness to that system.

The membership of the Club will include any minister who holds to the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures, as interpreted by the Reformed Creeds, notably, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, the Augsburg Confession, and the Canons of the Synod of Dort.

The Club does not isolate any particular doctrines contained in the Reformed Creeds as forming a doctrinal basis for the Club; it is intended that adherence to these creeds will insure its distinctive Reformed character.

And so the little vessel, pretty well rigged up, began its voyage, tacking against the winds of modernism.

WILLIAM VERWOLF.

Summerside, P. E. Island.

March 22, 1939.
BOOK REVIEWS

A PASSION POEM


In close to 2400 lines the author here offers a poetic version of the trial, crucifixion, and death of our Lord. This is no mean undertaking. To combine in the presentation of these exalted and soul-stirring themes delicacy of poetic feeling with beauty of language and soundness of theological interpretation is no easy task. There are not many Da Costas, a fragment of one of whose poems is presented in translation on another page of this issue. The author of The Tragedy of Calvary says in his preface that what he has attempted is to "set the Passion History to verse." I think this is about what he has succeeded in doing. It is history "set to verse." There is rhyme here. There is also a sound theology woven into these stanzas. At no time does the author's imagination play fast and loose with the biblical account. He honors the Bible as the Word of God and he personally knows the Savior whose suffering he seeks to depict in poetic form. But one could wish the author might have had at his command more feeling and imagination, and, especially, more delicate artistry of language. A good sample of the type of poetry here offered may be seen in the following stanza, typical of the well-nigh three hundred which make up the poem.

The drink declined, without delay
On cursed tree the Lord they lay,
Sharp nails they drive through hands and feet,
Support His body with rough cleat.
Then raise the cross, stained with His blood,
They let it fall with heavy thud
In place designed to designate
That Jesus was transgressor great.

C. B.

INTER-VARSITY PUBLICATIONS


THIS half dozen inexpensive but valuable books have been published by the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Student Unions, whose address is 38 Bedford Square, W.C. 1, London. This is the British organization of Student Unions to which editorial reference is made on another page of this issue. The British movement of orthodox students apparently is in many ways far ahead of the corresponding American movement. It has succeeded in enlisting the services of numerous scholars for the writing of valuable study manuals on the various phases of Christian truth. The above six titles stand for a half dozen of such publications. They are valuable, inexpensive, readable, and loyal to the orthodox faith.

Christ and the Colleges gives the history of the Inter-Varsity movement in Great Britain and has an account of the organization and activities of all the branches of this movement in the universities of the British Empire. From this account we learn that the origin of the movement lay in dissatisfaction with the inadequate basis of the liberally inclined Christian Student Movement; that though the beginnings may be seen as far back as 1919 in the Cambridge Intercollegiate Christian Union, the movement was not organized until 1928; and that the Inter-Varsity movement stands unflinchingly for loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word as well as for the centrality of the atoning blood of Christ in the Christian Faith. This is an informing book for only 2 shilling sixpence. A bird's eye view of Cambridge University, where the forthcoming International Conference is to be held, forms the frontispiece.

Effective Witness describes the various methods by which the student mind may be reached with the gospel of Christ. It is a symposium in which those who have been engaged in this type of work give the readers the benefit of their experience. Here we meet with contributions of such men as Dr. Howard Guinness and Prof. A. Rendle Short, both of whom have taken a leading part in Inter-Varsity activities. Subjects taken up are such as: Prayer Meetings, Personal Bible Study, the Use of Christian Apologetics, Squashes, Open-Air Work, Missionary Study Circles, etc.

Valiant in Fight is a 212-page history of the Christian Church written from the point of view of one who is thoroughly loyal to the Scriptures. Apart from certain touches of Brethrenism and premillennialism and a corresponding undervaluation of the church as an institute, the reviewer must say that he has read this volume with great delight. It does not, of course, do justice to all the movements of Church History. How would that be possible within the scope of 212 pages? But within this limited scope it surely does justice to the subject. It is written in popular style, but is throughout the work of a scholar, the author being under librarian at the University Library of Cambridge. The treatment is marked by a unity of theme which enables the author to lend his discussion a certain sweep which carries the reader along. If you think Church History is dry-as-dust stuff, by all means spend three shillings for this book.

Five Great Non-Christian Religions is a 118-page account of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shintoism written from the standpoint of a believer in the absolute and supernaturally revealed character of the Christian Religion. It is interestingly written and gives some Christian evaluations on the basis of Scripture. In some parts, owing to lack of space no doubt, the account is woefully inadequate, as, for instance, the almost complete absence of any account of Mahayana Buddhism. For the rest, it is a good brief popular account written from the standpoint of the Bible believer.

"In Understanding Be Men" and Why the Cross are two volumes dealing with Christian doctrine. The former covers the entire field, the latter deals with the cross and the atonement. It is a fine vindication of the historic Christian view of the penal satisfaction theory of Christ's death. In Dr. Hammond's book the reviewer occasionally placed some question marks in the margin, but it must be said that as a brief account of the entire field of Christian doctrine it is, with the exception of some confusion on free-will and the Arminian-Calvinist issue, an admirable little handbook. It is clear. It does not fall into any of the current vagaries on the doctrine of the Church and Eschatology. It is in a high degree conservative and bent on letting Scripture speak. The account is written with the specific aim in mind of giving non-theological students a handbook on Christian doctrine. To this use it is admirably suited.

For the effective way in which in all these manuals the subject discussed is stated, the reviewer has nothing but admiration. There is not a dull page in any of these six works.

C. B.
Henry Stob's Dissertation


 altogether too long has this doctor's thesis waited for a review in the Calvin Forum. We offer Dr. Stob our apologies and assure him that our congratulations are none the less cordial for coming so late.

Max Weber's sociological writings offer an unmistakable point of interest to a man and a theologian of Calvinistic antecedents and convictions. In them capitalism figures as the most characteristic expression of the spirit of modern occidental culture, religion is evaluated as the most important social factor, Calvinism is seen as the latest development in the religious evolution, and to the capitalistic structure of our present day society nothing is held to have contributed more than has Calvinism. This complex of views certainly presents a challenge to a defender of Calvinism to clear it of the charges which seem to be implied.

However, Dr. Stob's thesis is by no means first of all a defense of Calvinism but an exposition of the thought processes by which Weber arrived at his conclusion. And in that exposition the large thought not an executive responsibility for capitalism but Calvinism appears as an accusation of Calvinism, but both Calvinism and capitalism appear as apparently unavoidable stages in the religious evolution of mankind. At any rate, whether unavoidable or not, as Weber sees this religious evolution, it started with a magical conception of the world and, passing from the magical through a symbolizing to the ethical stage, has driven magic out, substituting for it the rational world. Calvinism's particular contribution to this development is held to be connected with its asceticism which is the highest development of the occidental way of working out one's salvation in distinction from mysticism as the typically oriental salvation. Assurance of salvation Calvinism sought in a life of obedience to God and thus taught men to view and treat this world as a place for the performance of duty rather than as a place of enjoyment. If you take God out of this picture, what remains is that disinterested devotion to the task in hand, that "Sachlichkeit," which is of the essence of the capitalistic spirit.

According to Weber, God has dropped out of the picture. In this modern world ultimate values have no recognizable scientific standing except in so far as they may influence or determine the course of action of such as still believe in them, though as such they have very great sociological significance as wielding a power by which most individuals are swayed. Right here there would seem to be an opening for an effective defense of Calvinism and criticism of Weber's views. For Calvinism can not be made responsible for the modern social disintegration of ultimate values; it certainly is not Calvinism's fault, that God has dropped out of the picture.

Dr. Stob does, in fact, not neglect this point of weakness, though he attacks it rather from another angle. He sees here an element of inconsistency in Weber's own thought. Weber has, says Stob, a theory of values, the guiding principle of which is the mutual independence of the cognition of what is and the decision as to value, and it is a violation of this principle, that he makes the present situation normative as determining man's duty after the cessation of the prophecy and before the emergence of a new prophecy as being the courageous face of this prophecyless situation as his fate.

Though criticism is everywhere kept subordinate and is merely indicated, there is more of it. Stob suggests, that Weber's own devotion to his scientific task may have been a flight from the fate which he felt he was sharing with modern man. He finds it offensive to religious feeling that Weber penetrates into the realms that are most sacred for faith with a strictly rational craving for definition to the exclusion of all powers of feeling. He registers Weber's neglect of the mystical character of the doctrine of predestination, the significance of the testimony of the Holy Spirit for the assurance of grace, and the character of gratitude as ethical motivation. He points out, that Weber's admission, that his purely sociological methods cannot grasp the inner side of religion but condemn him to deal exclusively with its external and often quite coarse manifestations, is no excuse for the neglect of its inner nature.

The thesis is of a solidity which calls for thoughtful reading and amply repays it. May its author be granted a long life and the production of many more painstaking studies in the defense and for the propagation of Calvinism.

D. H. Kromminga.

As To Questing

Christianity and the Creative Quests. By G. G. Atkins, Cokesbury Press, Nashville. 222 pages. $2.00.

The author is the professor of Homiletics in Auburn (N. Y.) Theological Seminary. This volume contains the lectures (plus two additional chapters) that were delivered as the Cole Lectures at Vanderbilt University for 1938.

The book reads easily. It reveals a wide range of reading on the part of the author, and enables the ability to express thoughts clearly and suggestively, and it constitutes a stimulus towards re-thinking.

The thrust of the book is that man is essentially a "questing" individual. The prophets sought the will of God in history. Men everywhere have searched for intellectual integrity, for moral integrity, for deliverance, and for authority. In each case the quest is traced historically and then directed to Christianity's response to it. Recent occidental civilization has brought about a tremendous shift in the direction of this human quest. But the new-found humanistic direction of the quest has brought us nowhere. "There are no assuring signs that we are ready to leave behind us all that has been discarded and outgrown, but we do seem on the edge of the world and to be looking over into a void. That void is Christianity's opportunity." The work constitutes a wholesome reaction to the current adoration of the "modern" man.

H. S.

Practical Psychological Tips

Tricks Our Minds Play On Us. By Karl R. Stolz, Dean of the Hartford School of Religious Education, Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 252 pages. $2.00.

In the preface we are informed that "This book was written for persons in every walk of life who desire to understand themselves better, to surmount their own difficulties, to enrich their day by day contacts with peoples and conditions, to undergird their own personalities with a sound practical philosophy, and to guide others in overcoming the barriers to a free and victorious type of individual ongoing experience." That is quite an ambitious objective. And the objective will be realized in so far as men will yield to the practical advice offered. That is the difficulty with most men beset with problems. Their very condition almost precludes the possibility of their taking a hold of themselves and moving up to higher and freer ground.

Dr. Stolz presents in simple language a common sense discussion of the various problems that beset so many of mankind. The problems of nutrition, anger, sex, nervousness, morbidness, drunkenness, misalliance, sickness, and many others are analyzed and practical solutions suggested.

There may be a tendency in this volume to give men's minds more credit or blame in the determination of their weakness and defects than they deserve. The willful sinfulness and the results of sin play exceedingly important roles in this matter. The stressing of the fact that man must be right with God and that he must seek strength in prayer and communion with God would not have been superfluous at all.

H. S.
WHY BE GOOD?


THE atmosphere of proper conduct has in many circles become polluted with the stench of the new morality of humanism and the license of unrestrained self-expression. Dr. Reid furnishes at least a partial answer to such new, different, and objectionable morality.

It is well that the book has been written and then written in such a way that the layman can read it with profit. Problems about being good touch everyone who realizes that though he is not of the world, yet he is in it. The writer insists that there is no real goodness except it be Christian goodness in Christ and in a growing experience of Him. And there is no joy save in the practice of goodness, because it makes our enjoyment subject to our loyalty to Christ.

It would not be fair to cast the book aside as if it were worthless, because one fails to agree with its emphasis. Its potentiality for wholesome stimulation and inspiration is too strong for that. However, the present writer would like to have seen the question, Why be good? answered unequivocally by a reference to the obligation that God places upon men, as bearers of His image. Why be good? Primarily because it is a divine requirement. How be good? By complying with God's precepts unto His honor and glory and by the Spirit's cooperation. God alone determines the why and the how. No man or group of men can.

H. S.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Mary Reed of Chandig. By Dr. L. S. Huizenga. 36 pages. 35c. Zondervan. A brief appreciative history of Mary Reed who for 44 years was a missionary to the lepers of North India.

Russellism. By T. T. Shields. 105 pages. 35c. Zondervan. A telling criticism of some of the cardinal doctrines of the sect now headed by Rutherford. The work is well done and certainly is not superficial at the present time.

By Life and By Death. By E. Schuyler English. About 70 pages. 50c. Zondervan. The subtitle explains its contents as "Excerpts and Lessons from the Diary of John C. Stam." Anything that may come from the pen or the lives of the Stam's will stimulate one's interest and quicken his fervor for the cause of missions.

Let the Fire Fall. By P. W. Rood. 131 pages. $1.00. Zondervan. A collection of editorials that have appeared in the "King's Business." They are brief, interesting, and devotional in character.


These Men Live. By W. W. Ayer. 159 pages. $1.00. Zondervan. The minister of the Calvary Baptist Church, New York City, gives us in this volume eleven studies on themes that never grow old. They're studies on Biblical characters.

All the Days. By C. F. Torrey. 163 pages. $1.00. Zondervan. A volume of eighteen forceful and popular sermons by the minister of the "Non-Sectarian Tabernacle and Church of the Air" at Washington, D. C.

H. S.

NEWS ITEMS AND COMMENTS

Buchmanism

The "Oxford Group" consists of a "wholly indefinite and unascertainable number of persons who possess no organization and no secretary or treasurer or officer of any kind . . . and who are endeavoring to lead a spiritual quality of life under the guidance of the Holy Spirit." Their leader is the Rev. Dr. Frank Naumann Daniel Buchman. Hence the name "Buchmanites" or "Buchmanism,"—terms which the "groupers" dislike. Now it so happened that a while ago a lady left the Buchmanites, by will, the sum of five hundred pounds sterling. To get it Dr. Buchman petitioned the Board of Trade in London for incorporation of the Buchmanites, by will, the sum of five hundred pounds.

"Buchmanism,"—terms given by former synods: old age, sickness, other physical causes, and appointment to a chair in Theology. A committee will report on this. Another important report is expected from the committee to bring relief to the distressed condition of Synodical Funds for superannuated ministers and their dependents.

The church problems of one continent are the problems of churches on other continents it seems. Hence the necessity to work together today as far as churches are concerned.

The New Pope

Receiving 35 votes on the first ballot, forty on the second, and sixty-one out of a possible sixty-two on the third ballot, papal Secretary of State Eugenio Pacelli was elected Pope in the recent conclave of Roman Catholic cardinals. His prompt election was unusually significant. It meant that the Roman hierarchy stands united in its policies developed by Pope Pius XI (ably assisted by Pacelli), toward the totalitarian governments. As such it serves the Roman church well. Hitler and others of his ilk know that they are dealing with a vast and homogeneous organization.

The election of the new Pope was watched with tremendous interest the world over, by Protestants as well as Roman Catholics. The reason is that the foes of the Roman Church are practically the same as those which beset the Protestants.

A morsel of food for the superstitious mind: the suit of the Pope's "emeritus." A telling criticism of some of the cardinal doctrines of the sect now headed by Rutherford. The work is well done and certainly is not superficial at the present time.

Parochial School Subsidy

Dr. H. S. DeForest Burrell is greatly concerned about the Harrison-Thomas-Fletcher Bill. This Bill came before the last Congress and may now at any time come up. "It provides for..."
the subsidizing, out of Federal funds, of private and parochial schools, granting them $40,000,000 for the year 1929-1940, and increasing that grant gradually until in 1945 it would amount to $140,000,000." In "The Presbyterian" Dr. Burrell sounds a warning against this bill saying that it would benefit chiefly the Roman Catholics and the Mormons, and that it would inevitably compel the Federal Government to seek control of, or at least an interest in, the schools of Presbyterians and others.

The first argument means very little; the second should be worked out in greater detail.

Controversy on Mysticism

In the religious press of the Netherlands there never is any stagnation. Somehow there are always important subjects under discussion. Now of late attention is directed toward Mysticism. The Dutch are fortunate in having two words at their disposal to designate that which is sound mysticism and that which is not so (Mystiek and Mysticisme). According to a certain Reverend Matter who gave a paper on "Mysticism" at a conference, this word mysticism should be eliminated from Reformed terminology. He believes that the word "faith" would serve the purpose much better. Dr. H. Kajjan and Dr. V. Hepp are now defending the use of the old term,—Mysticism (mystiek). But others think that the matter touched upon by Dr. Matter is important enough to devise ways and means to bring about a better, and more correct term. It appears to us, that it will be well, perhaps, first to investigate the exact concept conveyed by both the old and the proposed new terms.

Personal Evangelism

Worthy of emulation are the words of an editorialist in "The Messenger," organ of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Under the caption, "The Call to Evangelize," the writer, Fred C. Schweinfurth, editorizes thus: the church in the accomplishment of her great task must become more aggressively evangelistic in her approach to and attack upon an indifferent, sinful and godless generation. The church must bring the Gospel. It must win individual men, women and children for Christ. This stress upon individual men and women is the opposite of the so-called social Gospel, but it is the only Biblical way and it is the only logical way. A pile of links does not make a chain. But individual links, each one linked up with the next one, do.

The author stresses also the fact that we as individual Christians, clergy and laity alike, are God's messengers and witnesses. Hence the importance of personal contact.

Church Attendance

The American Institute for Public Opinion is an "ear" developed by Dr. George Gallup for the purpose of catching the whisper of the People's Voice. Whether or not the "ear" functions correctly cannot be known except in certain cases, for example elections. If the Institute heard the People's Voice complain about political situations, certainty that it had heard correctly came after the election returns were in. Several times the Institute has been proven correct. Since then the "ear" has been treated with respect both in dollars and esteem. Incidentally it satisfies the human craving for knowing what is shrouded in the mists of the future. It removed some of the suspense so closely connected with national elections. As a by-product there develops the possibility of the "ear" becoming a voice which prepares Public Opinion.

But be that as it may, the Institute released for publication yesterday information of great interest to the churches of our land. It has discovered that 50% of the people go to church less often than their parents did. More often than parents, 18%, and about the same, 32%. It is also interesting to note that the survey appears to indicate, that religion is losing ground in the country and small towns but is gaining in the cities. However, this latter part is based upon the opinions of those asked to express themselves regarding it.

Dr. Ames' Theology

The "Christian Century" publishes serially a number of articles on the general theme, "How May Mind Has Changed in This Past Decade." The tenth article is from the pen of the well-known Edward Scribner Ames. In it he declares that he really has not had a change in mind. He is in the condition of a "person who is committed to the philosophy of change and the empirical attitude involved in such a philosophy." Therefore his philosophy of change, so it seems, precludes the possibility of a change of mind.

In 1929 Dr. Ames wrote a book, "Religion." Now, ten years later, his ideas have been "sharpened and amplified." Controversy on Mysticism, he says, is shrouded in the mists of the future. It removed some of the "resurgence of old theologies." He was "shocked into a new appreciation of modernistic liberalism by Barthianism with its re-emphasis upon supernaturalism, authoritarianism and dialecticism." But, mark well, Barthianism Ames calls resurrected Calvinism. Evidently E. S. Ames has not read what THE CALVIN FORUM says about Barthianism. Nor does he seem to have read what European theologians who are Calvinists, say about Barth c. s. And still Dr. Ames contends that he has an "interest in science in relation to religion." Says he: "ministers and churches ... should ... put their influence wholeheartedly on the side of science both as to its methods and its good works."

Defining God he says: "God is Reality idealized; or God is life as you love it. 'God' designates reality in some such way as the terms nature, cosmos, universe do." "God is life, actual, potential, a process, ever becoming, changing and permanent, novel and familiar." Man belongs to this process so called. Man's thinking actually and really modifies reality!

It is small wonder that Dr. Ames finds "worship" and "spirituality" difficult to understand. They do not fit his idea of God. "Genuine spirituality," he holds, "is a complex state, including high purpose, sensitivity, intelligence, aesthetic quality."

In other words, Dr. Ames has not changed at all. He is still without God. He adores science because he has seen the discoveries of the last three centuries. But look at what science has not discovered and you feel the need of God and the Word-become-flesh.

World Conference of Christian Youth

Although the Netherlands is to be hostess to the World Conference of Christian Youth, to be held this summer, a large section of Dutch youth will not be present. Dr. K. Dijk, who is professor at Kampen, recently gave the reasons for non-participation by the Reformed Youth organizations of the Netherlands. They are not a lack of confessional basis on the part of the World Youth Conference. The confessional aspect is sound, thinks Dr. Dijk. But there are youth organizations taking part in the conference who deny the Deity of Christ, the atonement by and in the precious blood of Jesus Christ. This situation makes it impossible for Reformed young people to co-operate with the Conference. Dr. Dijk points out that in our day and age there is coming to the fore a totalitarian Church-Idea which is called ecumenical. But it is a false idea. The unity sought is not real. Liberal and orthodox are so far apart as east and west. To leave interpretation of the confessional intent to the conscience of the liberals does not help any. True orthodoxy and liberalism may not and can not shake hands and act as though they are one. Let no one therefore look next summer for delegates from the Reformed Youth organizations of the Netherlands. They will be absent. These words can be made to apply to a good deal of attempted church-unity movements in the United States and elsewhere.

J. G. Van Dyke

Grand Haven, Mich.