War on Democracy
When Dictators Unite

The Second World War
Prospects for Christianity

War and Pacifism
A Testimony

John Knox
Fearless Reformer

Martin Luther
In the Pulpit

The Vicarion
Take Down the Capsules

Radio Questions
Verse

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The Book Table

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The German-Russian Pact

SEPTEMBER 1939 will go down in history as a period of momentous decisions and significant developments in international affairs. Overshadowing the invasion of Poland by Germany and Russia is the declaration of war on the part of England and France against the dictator of Berlin. Unless all signs deceive, this is the beginning of a world war which in horror, suffering, and ultimate significance may overshadow the one which began just 25 years ago. And in that incipient second world war undoubtedly the most serious recent development is the pact between Hitler and Stalin, now sealed by their joint partition of Poland. This pact took the world by surprise. Hitler’s partners in the anti-Comintern pact had reason to be “surprised.” And the Communists in various countries—our own included—who take their orders from Moscow were completely non-plussed.

It was not only a surprising move, it was a most unprincipled one on the part of Herr Hitler. Here was the man who had inveighed for years against the Red menace, now entering into an alliance with that menace. Here was the man who had carried on many a blood purge against the Communists in his own country, now giving the head of the nation which is the hotbed of Communist activity the hand of peace and fraternity. Here was the erstwhile leader in the move to effect a pact of three strong nations against what he represented as the dire threat of Russian Communism, now, and that after only a few years, making common cause with that enemy, without so much as recognizing the nations with whom the earlier pact had been made. Nothing could serve better to demonstrate the unprincipled character of Herr Hitler and his policies than this procedure. Honor, fidelity, the obligation of the pledged word—these mean nothing to this dictator. All moral principles and obligations are trampled under foot.

From another point of view this move on the part of Hitler is not only not surprising but can even be said to be in keeping with a basic principle in his ideology. The whole procedure is in perfect harmony with the philosophy of dictators. For them the rule of men is above the rule of principles. There are no moral demands for the great. Each dictator is ultimately a law unto himself. Have his own people—many of them—not deified him? And have his associates not said again and again that the Führer can do no wrong? Then if it suits his immediate end of furthering his program of violence and extending his power, to join hands with someone who on the basis of principle stands diametrically opposed, why should he not do it? The principle of dictators is that they cannot be bothered by any principle if it stands in the way of their own aggrandizement. Consistent Machtpolitik and moral scruples do not go together. Nietzsche’s will to power sweeps all Christian ethical considerations into the waste basket.

The Deeper Issue—
Democracy versus Autocracy

THERE is another reason why we should not be surprised by the pact between Stalin and Hitler. I say, we. That the followers of Hitler and of Stalin should be, is another thing. But we who believe in Christianity and in democratic institutions have no reason to be. It is almost three years since the following editorial sentences appeared on these pages.

“On the surface the great game which statesmen are playing upon the European chess board is a contest between fascism and communism . . . But although the immediate and present struggle is largely determined by this alternative, the deeper and ultimate issue at stake is the future of democratic government. Europe seems to be moving in the direction of a terrible conflict, but whether a war is in the offing or not, there can be no doubt that the forces championing two hostile forms of government are becoming increasingly solidified and arrayed against one another. And these two forces, we believe, are not fascism and communism, but democracy and dictatorship.” (The Calvin Forum, Dec. 1936, p. 101)

Are we today not witnessing precisely that sort of a line-up? The sham conflict between fascism and communism is being shown up and the real conflict between these two forms of dictatorship on the one hand and democracy on the other is beginning to
stand out more boldly than ever. Nazism and Russian bolshevism are not so far apart. In neither Russia nor Germany have the people any voice in the government. Both nations are ruled by the whim of a dictator. In both countries liberty has taken its flight long ago. In neither country is the freedom of speech, of the press, or of religion acknowledged. Though in different degrees, both have persecuted and are today persecuting the Christian Church. Both believe in the almighty State and repudiate almighty God. Although certain differences exist, on the deeper things in religion, morality, and government, they are on the same side of the fence. So we ought not to be greatly surprised that these two dictators have now joined hands.

And now that the two great democracies of Western Europe are about to lock horns with the totalitarian states of Central and Eastern Europe, are we witnessing the beginning of a titanic struggle between autocracy and democracy, in which the nations of the orient as well as of the occident, in which the Western as well as the Eastern hemisphere will be involved? Leaving Italy for the moment aside as a doubtful quantity—will it be Germany, Russia, and Japan against the great democracies of the world? Whether that will be the ultimate lineup in what now threatens to become the most awful world holocaust ever witnessed, there can be no doubt that this is the deeper issue at stake in the present international struggle.

The World Struggle and the Christian Church

In this international struggle between dictatorships and democracies the Christian Church and Christianity in all its ramifications have a great stake and a deep interest. I am not now referring to the question what the duty of the individual Christian is toward his government in the matter of war and peace. I refer specifically to the bearing which this struggle between the democracies and the autocracies of the world will have upon Christianity as such, the Christian Church, the missionary enterprise, and Christian institutions in general. Christianity, especially in its Protestant expression, has always stood for freedom, for the right of the individual, for the education of the people, and has championed democracy as ever against autocracy. This is true of Calvinism especially. Look at the history of Holland, of Switzerland, of Hungary, of England, of Scotland, and of the United States. The Christian religion in its Calvinistic expression has ever stood for those civil and religious liberties which democracy offers and of which all autocracies are the sworn foes. The almighty state, whether in its fascistic or in its communist form, can never be harmonized with the basic thrust of a sound Christian philosophy of government. This does not mean that every person and nation of democratic leanings is necessarily Christian, but it does mean that he who is most truly Christian is bound to be on the side of democracy. The great civil and religious liberties, with which the higher goods of our Christian civilization are so closely interwoven, are safe in a democracy and in constant jeopardy under all autocratic governments.

Look at the attitude of the present-day autocracies toward Christianity. Hitler is persecuting those leaders who refuse to have the Church of Jesus Christ reduced to a tool of the almighty state, and the most vociferous and extreme of his propagandists are seeking to displace Christianity with a revived Germanic paganism. Russia has been the arch-persecutor of all that is Christian in recent decades. And Japan is following the same totalitarian, pagan-nationalistic policy toward Christianity and the missionary enterprise in the Far East. What has become of Protestant missions in Italian-controlled Ethiopia is becoming painfully apparent these days. The national and international policy of these dictatorships is decidedly hostile to the Christian Church and the causes associated with the Christian enterprise. On the other hand, such great democracies as England, the United States, the Netherlands—to mention no others—have not only stood for the rights and liberties of the Christian Church at home but also for the protection and promotion of the Christian cause in their colonial empires.

C. B.

The British Empire and Christian Missions

The missionary enterprise has a deep interest in the present international struggle. From one point of view the future of the British Empire is at stake in the present world war. If this war continues and its scope is widened, the supremacy of Great Britain in the world, and especially in the Near East, India, and the Far East, will be threatened or seriously curtailed. Great Britain, together with the United States, exerts a tremendous control and influence in those parts of the world. Now this influence has, generally speaking, been a beneficent one. Surely it has all worked out to the advantage of the missionary enterprise, especially of Protestant missions. Without passing at all upon the question whether in this British colonial policy the commercial or the religious motive was uppermost, it is beyond dispute that the British, as well as the American, government has ever been favorably disposed to missions. Under these governments the door for missions has always been wide open.

It is hard to calculate what a revolution in missionary opportunity would take place if one or more of the present totalitarian governments would displace a country like Great Britain in one or more of its spheres of influence named above. Doors which
are now wide open to Christianity and its ambassa-
dors might then be slammed shut for many years, if not permanently. This is no argument for seek-
ing to extend the British Empire. And still less is it intended to serve as an argument for refusing to return to Germany its erstwhile colonies, some of which are now in Britain's hands. In fact, even if all Germany's colonies were returned, by and large the same situation would obtain. In the providence of God Great Britain holds a position of controlling influence in many large sections of the globe and this influence must in the main be judged a wholesome one. One trembles to think what would happen if Japan should subjugate China and push both Britain and the United States out of that country. Chiang-kai-Shek and his wife realize deeply what a Japanese victory in China would mean, not only for the loss of Chinese independence and the destruction of free institutions, but also for the checking of Christianity among China's four hundred millions. The same thing applies to India, to the Near East, and to many parts of Africa as well. A weakening or dissolution of the British Empire would be fraught with momentous possibilities for ill to the cause of Christian missions in a world in which the tide of totalitarianism, persecution, and pagan nationalism seems constantly to be rising higher. It is well that Christian people keep these things in mind in their evaluations and discussions, as well as in their prayers, anent the international situation of our day.

C. B.

**War, Pacifism, and Conscientious Objectors**

Is Pacifism Christian? Does the New Testament teach us never to go to war? What is pacifism? What is militarism? Is it up to each Christian to decide whether he will go to war when the call of the government for military service comes to him? What must we think of the recent Ministers' Peace Covenant? Is it the Christian thing to do to sign pacifist pledges? Seeing the United States government has recognized the refusal to bear arms of such religious group as the Quakers, does this not obligate the government to recognize and honor the conscientious refusal of anyone else? When is the conscientious objector to military service justified in refusing to go to war?

These and other questions are discussed in the light of the Word of God, and of the principles of Reformed Ethics based upon the Word, in the article immediately following this editorial. We believe these questions should be weighed carefully in the light of Scriptural teaching, especially because there is so much misleading and unscriptural propaganda afoot on these subjects among Christian people today. As stated in the caption, the article is a testimony adopted by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church at one of its recent sessions in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Anticipating a further query just why this synodical testimony should be placed in The Calvin Forum, it may not be amiss to add that it was originally written by the Editor of The Calvin Forum serving as a member of a synodically appointed committee which had been charged to draft such a statement. It was subsequently approved by the Committee (consisting of the Calvin Seminary Faculty) and adopted—unanimously, we are told—by the Christian Reformed Synod. Whether it had been adopted by Synod or not, it would hence have been placed in our magazine anyway. Now that it has met with the approval of this ecclesiastical body, its prestige is enhanced to just that extent. Readers of The Calvin Forum will recognize that the positions set forth agree substantially with those expressed in earlier editorials, especially the Thirty Theses on War and Peace which appeared in the issue of December, 1935. May this testimony stimulate Christian people to reflect upon this serious and pressing problem and may it aid them in coming to a sound and clear conclusion of their own in the light of Scripture.

We invite comment and criticism. The pages of The Calvin Forum will be open to anyone who has a contribution to make to the discussion of this subject, whether he agrees or disagrees with the testimony.

C. B.

**WITH AUTUMN BLENDED**

Among October's falling leaves
Along the curbstones gray and cold
Petunias play in autumn's breeze
With many a lingering marigold.

Cheerful nasturtiums form a hedge
And smile across to crimson trees
Where filtered sun and foliage
With heaven's blue form a fairy frieze.

Smoke-fires perfume the evening air
As incense to the God above
Who makes each season wondrous fair,
In myriad forms reveals His love.

So ere the summer away is wended
Lest anyone despair
God has its hues with autumn blended
And beauty lavished everywhere.

Thus when his child must meet a test
Of loss and strange tomorrow,
His comforting is manifest
Blending pure joy with sorrow.

—J. G. G.
WAR, PEACE, AND PACIFISM

A TESTIMONY

Recently Adopted by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church

IN view of the fact that there is found among Christian people today, especially in our country, a widespread pacifistic and also militaristic propaganda; and seeing that many of our church members are honestly perplexed as to their duty in the matter of participating in future wars, some apparently holding that all such participation is unchristian, whereas others are inclined to refuse participation in certain kinds of war; the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 1939, herewith addresses the following Testimony to the Churches.

Peace and Militarism

It is a fundamental Christian duty to promote mutual understanding and peace wherever possible between individuals as well as groups and nations. We are admonished in the Epistle to the Romans: “If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.” (Rom. 12:18). The Christian should be the sworn enemy of all malice, bitterness, animosity, and hatred, which is the root of murder.

This is likewise the duty of the government and of every citizen in the sphere of civil, national, and international life. Both individual citizens and those clothed with authority should do all in their power to promote peace and understanding between individuals, between racial, religious, economic, and social groups within the nation, and between nations as such. All inflammatory propaganda designed to stir up hatred and animosity between nations and races is to be condemned. Every effort to settle differences between nations in a peaceful way, by arbitration, by frank discussion around the conference table, is deserving of the support of Christian individuals and nations. We should strengthen the hands of all those who strive in an honorable way to settle international differences peaceably without recourse to war.

There is a militarism which the Christian cannot support but must oppose. This term is often used in a twofold sense. Militarism in the sense of maintaining and developing an adequate army and navy for the defense of a country and the protection of the national interests, is not an evil but a good, a good without which no government could perform its God-given duty in a sinful world. But militarism as an attitude of mind which glorifies war as war, i.e., war for war’s sake, or war for national aggrandizement—this is a great evil which no Christian should promote. All glorification of war for its own sake must be branded as unchristian and a direct violation of the apostolic injunction cited above. Against this militaristic spirit the Synod would strongly warn the members of our Churches to be on their guard.

What Is Pacifism?

Recognizing the evils of such militarism on the one hand, Synod would issue a no less serious warning against the evils of present-day pacifism on the other.

The solemn duty which the Christian has to exert himself to the utmost in behalf of peace and the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes, should at no time be used to cancel his equally solemn duty to defend his country against the attack of the aggressor, to protect the weak in the international family from the wanton assault of the strong, and in general to promote justice and fair dealings between the nations of the world. However much nations and individuals may and should stand committed to the prevention and suppression of war whenever and wherever possible, in a sinful world sooner or later situations will arise in which one nation resorts to aggression and attack upon another. And when in such a situation honest efforts to come to a just and peaceful adjustment of differences with the aggressor have failed, the moral right—if not duty—of the assaulted nation to defend itself against the aggressor is beyond dispute.

In condemning pacifism Synod desires to be clear and unambiguous. If by pacifism were meant the attitude of those who are prompted by a strong and persistent desire to promote international peace and understanding, every Christian should be a pacifist. But this is a loose and improper use of the term. Pacifism, properly used, stands for the conviction and attitude of those who condemn every war, and hence refuse to bear arms under any condition. In its most radical form this pacifism not only involves the refusal to bear arms, but even the refusal to take part in any type of work incidental to warfare, such as medical, nursing, or welfare service when such service is occasioned by and required for the prosecution of a war.

This pacifism, which is incompatible with Christian duty, is becoming alarmingly prevalent in our country, both in its usual and in its radical form. Only a few years ago no less than ten thousand American Protestant clergymen declared themselves against participation in any and all wars. In recent years appeals have been made in the form of a challenge especially to American students “to refuse to support the government of the United States in any war it may undertake.” These appeals to sign
Pacifism and the Sermon on the Mount

Against such insidious propaganda Synod feels constrained to issue a solemn warning, the more so since it is a common procedure on the part of these pacifists to defend their refusal to participate in any and all wars with an appeal to Scripture and in the name of allegedly Christian principles. The Scripture most commonly cited by pacifists in this connection is the so-called non-resistance passage in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:38, 39). But this passage gives no ground for a pacifistic position. It concerns the personal relationship of the members of the Kingdom to their fellows and, repudiating all personal revenge such as Jewish leaders would justify by an appeal to the Old Testament law of retaliation, Jesus urges upon His followers the readiness to suffer evil rather than resisting it. We are taught here that we must be willing at times to forego our rights and that situations may arise in which it is the noble thing to suffer rather than to insist upon our rights. But this can never justifiably be used to nullify our individual Christian duty to ward off an assault upon our life or our solemn duty to protect our loved ones from such assault. And in the sphere of national and international relations it should be remembered that government is divinely instituted precisely for this protective purpose, viz., to maintain justice and to protect the weak from the strong. If this passage means what the pacifist would have it mean, it would require both of the individual and of the nation that they place themselves at the mercy of the violence of the boldest aggressor.

War, Sin, and the Prince of Peace

Many more specious arguments are used by the pacifists which should not lead Christians astray by their pious appearance. When it is urged that since all war is the result of sin, it is the duty of the Christian to refuse to have any part in it, the reasoning suffers from serious ethical confusion. All war is indeed the result of sin. But from this it in no wise follows that participation in every war is a sinful act for every party involved. Also in a sinful world there is a difference between a just and an unjust war, just as there is a difference between attacking in self-defense a villain who breaks into one's home and assaulting a peaceful man without provocation.

Pacifists also often urge that all going to war is incompatible with the gospel of the Prince of Peace. In this connection they are wont to stress love and to ignore justice, both of which are essential in the Christian moral life. In fact, they are inclined to forget that "in the face of unjust aggression the law of love may actually urge a demand for forcible resistance." In another form this same type of argument is urged when it is said that participation in war is always sin because it is utterly impossible to think of Jesus Christ in a soldier's uniform or handling a gun. We leave aside that this reasoning entirely overlooks the fact that our Savior came for a very unique and specific task into this world, which made participation in many human activities out of place for Him. But we may possibly ask the pacifist: Can we very well think of our Savior as a policeman? And if the reply must be in the negative, must we conclude from this that a Christian is not permitted to wear the uniform of a policeman or perform the functions of such an officer of the peace?

Romans 13 and the Confession

But this pacifism is fundamentally to be condemned because it is in irreconcilable conflict with the teaching of Scripture and of our Creed on the duty of the government in the matter of war and the corresponding duty of the Christian citizen.

One of the clearest and most explicit passages of Scripture on this subject is Rom. 13:1-5, and our Reformed fathers have formulated their convictions on this subject in Article XXXVI of the Belgic Confession. In this Scripture passage we are admonished as follows: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth, the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake." And the appropriate sentences from the Confession read as follows: "We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, has appointed kings, princes, and magistrates; willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained and all things carried on among them with good order and decency. For this purpose He has invested the magistracy with the sword for the punishment of evil-doers and for the protection of them that do well. . . . Moreover, it is the bounden duty of every one, of whatever state, quality, or condition he may be, to subject himself to the magistrate; to pay tribute, to show due honor and respect to him, and to obey him in all things not repugnant to the Word of God. . . ."

October, 1939            The CALVIN FORUM
The Teaching Summarized

This scriptural injunction and the creedal deliverance based upon it clearly teach the following:

(1) That because of the depravity of mankind civil government has been instituted by God for the purpose of maintaining good order and decency in human society and to curb the evil of the dissolute.

(2) That according to the divine ordinance the government has the power of the sword over its citizens for the protection of those who do evil and for the protection of them that do well.

(3) That, though this power of the sword is first of all a power to punish the transgressors among its citizens for the protection of the good, it also by necessary implication extends to the power to defend the nation from the attack of an enemy nation. Since the government is responsible for the safety of its subjects, the power of the sword not only involves police but also military power.

(4) That it is the duty of the citizen to obey his government, and that this duty also involves answering the government’s call to arms for the protection of the nation.

(5) That there is only one restriction upon this obedience of the Christian citizen to his government. This restriction is expressed by the Confession in these words: “all things which are not repugnant to the Word of God.” In scriptural language it is recognized and expressed in the words of the apostle Peter, who justified his disobedience to the magistrate when he and others were forbidden to preach the Word of God, by saying: “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Obedience to the Government Unconditional?

From all this it must be clear that the Christian who consistently refuses to bear arms at the call of his government not only is disloyal to his country, but in so doing fails to discharge his solemn God-given duty to obey his government and to defend his country. The Church should bear witness against this pacifism, point out its unscriptural character, and warn its members against its subtle, religiously garbed propaganda.

But can it be said that the Christian citizen’s duty to obey his government in its call to arms is absolute and unconditional? Must he be denied the right to disobey this call of his government under any and all circumstances? It would, of course, be a very simple and easy solution of a difficult problem to answer these two questions in the affirmative. But would such a solution be a Christian solution?

As a general rule the orders of the government must be obeyed. A state in which the citizen only obeys the government when it pleases him is no state and that government is no government. This is true in days of peace, and the principle gains intensified force in days of war, when the national safety is at stake. The duty of the citizen to obey his government by responding to its summons to go to war is, in the light of Romans 13, a very solemn one. He must go the limit in discharging this duty. Seeing we live in a sinful and imperfect world, it may even be necessary for him to submit to an unjust law. But after this duty has been properly stressed, it must also be recognized that there is a limit to this obedience to the state. As Professor V. H. Rutgers of the Law Faculty of the Free University wrote recently in an address on “The Reformed Faith and Its Ethical Consequences for the State”: “But there is a limit: the duty of obedience ceases when to obey men is to disobey God.” (Proceedings of the Fourth Calvinistic Congress, 1938, p. 124. See also Christelijke Encyclopaedie, I, 593).

Refusing Obedience for God’s Sake

As was pointed out above, both Scripture and our Confession place a restriction upon our duty to obey the government. Peter at one time refused to obey the civil authorities and appealed to a higher loyalty to God in doing so. And our Creed restricts the duty of the citizen to the State to “all things which are not repugnant to the Word of God.” From this it is clear that the Church must not only recognize the right of Christians but even their duty under certain definite circumstances to refuse obedience to the civil magistrate.

But under what kind of circumstances must such a right—or even duty—be recognized? That it applies to religious matters is plain. Peter and his apostolic associates were denied the right to preach the gospel and they refused obedience. Our spiritual ancestors in Holland in the days of the Secession similarly refused to obey the orders of the government to abstain from the preaching of the gospel. Korean and Japanese Christians who today are ordered by their government to perform acts of worship in the shrines of a false religion have, according to Christian standards, the right and the duty to disobey. Must this right of disobedience be restricted to matters of freedom of religion only? Surely this would be an untenable position. Quite apart from matters of freedom of worship, the government might conceivably deny a citizen important rights or order him to participate in certain activities, either of which might constitute an outrage to what be, in the light of the Word of God, conceives his Christian duty to be. In such cases, no less than when it concerns his religious rights and privileges, the only justifiable course to pursue is to obey God rather than men.

Is this a vindication of the conscientious objector? Yes, but of only one kind of conscientious objector.

Conscience Not the Norm

There is a conscientious objector who claims that because his conscience objects to all participation in war, he has the right before God to refuse obedience to the government’s call to arms. But this is a baseless claim. Not the conscience of the individual citizen is the last court of appeal, but God’s revealed
will. And, as shown above from Scripture, he who denies the right and the duty of the government to wage war on just occasions is not in harmony but in conflict with the Word of God. His conscience is seriously in error.

Synod would warn Christians against this claim often made of late by pacifists that their conscience must be the last court of appeal. This ethical fallacy was also made in the constitutional amendment on the subject adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. in 1938 and sent down to the presbyteries of that body for ratification. This amendment reads: "When war breaks out, Christians are bound, in relation to it, to obey their consciences before God, who alone is Lord of the conscience, and the Church must recognize and uphold their duty thus to obey conscience, whatever its commands may be." The groundlessness of this sweeping claim may possibly best be instanced from the fact that at one time in the history of our country polygamy was practiced in the state of Utah because the conscience of the Mormon population of that state sanctioned it. Must we understand the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. to mean that that body would wish to champion the nineteenth century Mormon conscience on this score? And would that same Assembly deny the government of the United States the right to override this Mormon conscience as it actually did by federal legislation?

**Other Fallacious Arguments**

If it is objected that in the matter of military service our government has nevertheless consistently recognized the right of the conscientious objector against all war by exempting such groups as the Society of Friends (Quakers) and certain others from military service, it must be noted that such exemption is a concession but not a right. Our government can afford to make such a concession, because, and so long as, the number of conscientious objectors is comparatively small, and it can do this the more readily because Quakers have never objected to perform some very valuable auxiliary services incidental to war. But if and when the number of such conscientious objectors should become unduly large, the government is under no obligation to continue the concession and it would in fact be compelled to withdraw it.

Not only must the Church reject the claim of the pacifistic conscientious objector, but there is also another kind of conscientious objector whose claims cannot stand the test of Scripture and the Creed. There are those who would refuse to take part in any war when, and as long as, they are not persuaded of the justness of the given war. With the frequent complexity of the causes of modern wars and the difficulty of the average citizen to be adequately informed on this complexity of causes at the time the war breaks out, it is clear that this may be the predicament in which many a Christian will find himself. But in such a situation he is not justified in refusing to perform military service. He who would maintain this position overlooks the fact that in such a situation the prior duty of each citizen to obey the government must have the right of way. This type of conscientious objector does not face the moral alternative: to fight or to do nothing; but: to fight or to disobey his government. His uncertainty as to the justice of the given war can be no justifiable ground for refusing obedience to his government.

**When the Conscientious Objector Is Justified**

The only conscientious objector to military service whose claim the Church cannot repudiate is he who, recognizing his duty to obey his government and to defend his country in response to its call to arms, has intelligent and adequate grounds to be convinced that the given war to which he is summoned is an unjust war. When he is absolutely certain in the mind of the principles of the Word of God that his country is fighting for a wrong cause, he cannot morally justify his participation in the given war. War is killing people and for anyone to engage in such killing of fellowmen when he is convinced in his heart that the cause for which he is fighting is an unjust one, this procedure cannot be justified before the tribunal of God and His Word. The only course open to such a person is to resort to passive resistance and to refuse to bear arms in that given war.

In closing, Synod would urge upon all to pray for righteousness and peace in national and international affairs; to study the revealed Word for an understanding of the will of God for the guidance of the life of citizens and their government; to obey all lawfully constituted authorities for God's sake; and, if a serious conflict of duty should occur, to obey God rather than men.

**ODE TO EDUCATION**

Oh, the noble halls of learning
Echo softly with the swish
Of the wriggling and the turning
Of a thousand golden fish.

On his tongue a youthful scholar
Feels them delicately flip,
First a swing, and then a swoller,
Then a long, deep, dizzy slip.

How much better than the hours
Once spent straining brain and eye
'Neath staid, ivy-covered towers,
While the pulse of life flows by.
Now, for higher education
In this up-and-coming land,
You need but to take your station
At the nearest goldfish stand!

—VERNA S. TEEUWISSEN.
SCOTLAND’S FEARLESS REFORMER

D. H. Kromminga

WHEN the future reformer of Scotland was training for the priesthood, there was much complaint of the oppressiveness of the higher clergy in that northern kingdom, but there were only slight beginnings of evangelical preaching. When he died in 1572, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland was rather completely organized and rather firmly established. No single factor had contributed more to this change than the life and labors of this one man—John Knox.

The study of Augustine and the Scriptures had prepared him for the reception of the truth, for which he was definitely won by the preaching of the gentle George Wishart in 1545, who was burned at the stake March 2, 1546, the last victim of the persecuting cruelty of Cardinal David Beaton. At the fall of the castle of St. Andrews, where he had found refuge, the French carried him away captive in violation of the terms of surrender, and his year and a half of service as a galley-slave did much to impart to his character the unyielding determination which marked his championship of the cause of the Reformation. His release in 1549 was followed by ten years of labors in foreign lands. Under Edward VI he preached in England, became a chaplain of the king, and had a hand in the formulation of the Anglican creed known as the Forty-two Articles. At the accession of the romanizing queen Mary he fled to the continent where he served the church of refugees from England at Frankfurt for a while and then labored in a similar capacity in Geneva.

Scotland however was never out of his thoughts. His Genevan stay was interrupted by a nine months' visit to the homeland in 1555 and 1556, during which he persuaded such as were inclined to the Reformation to abandon the mass and to substitute the Reformed form of the Lord's Supper, and again by a sojourn of some months in Dieppe in 1557 and 1558, from which place he hoped in vain to reach Scotland. At last, in May, 1559, he returned and inspired the Scotch nobility to carry through the reformation of the Scotch Church against the opposition of the regent, Mary of Lorain, and the clergy. Aid from England and the death of the regent in June of the next year brought victory to the cause of the Reformation, and the preparation of a creed, a church order, and a liturgy was largely the work of Knox.

In some respects the task which he faced was a peculiar one. Calvin had given practical application of his ideas of the church to the local church of the city of Geneva; now the time had come to give them wider application to churches spread over the territory of entire nations. This was being done at about the same time also in France and the Netherlands, but in both countries the Reformed Church had to organize in the face of a hostile government. Knox had the government on his side and his task was the reorganization of the entire national Church. He did this in the well-known Presbyterian fashion, and it is not surprising that he could not do so completely. One of the limitations under which he labored was the dearth of qualified ministers, and this difficulty was met by the temporary institution of superintendents over large districts, under whose supervision readers and exhorters functioned while ministers were lacking. More serious was the limitation imposed upon Knox' work by the opposition of the nobility, a large section of which did not wish to relinquish its control over the extensive church lands. This opposition frustrated his aim of financing an educational system and the care of the poor as well as the ministry out of the estates of the church and succeeded even in keeping the stipends of the preachers down to a minimum.

* * *

Knox was a man of undaunted courage. Of all the reformers his life was fullest of dramatic incidents of the heroic type. When still a tutor he accompanied George Wishart, whose life was in peril, armed as his protector with a two-edged sword and would have accompanied him into martyrdom, if Wishart had not sent him back to his pupils. When the avengers of Wishart seized the castle of St. Andrews, he entered the castle not merely to seek refuge there from the men thirsting for his blood, but also to aid John Rough in debate with the papist John Annan. Here he changed the basis of the debate from mere complaints of abuses to a fundamental attack on the Romish system as in essence antichristian, and here he accepted a call by the people to be their pastor in spite of the dangers connected with the place.

When, in 1555-6, he had laid the basis for the organization of the Scotch nobles in defense of the Reformed faith and was summoned to Edinburgh, he accepted the summons and preached in the Blackfriars' church to the discomfiture of his enemies. Outlawed after his final return to Scotland, he preached at St. Andrews in defiance of the archbishop who was present with retainers in arms for the purpose of shooting the preacher. Again, in 1563, he was accused by Queen Mary of treasonable activity in carrying out a commission given him by his church to inform the Reformed of her machinations, and again he declined to hide or flee, but entered the den of the lion and so acquitted himself at his trial, that in spite of the queen's wishes and the pressure brought to bear by her partisans the court acknowledged his innocence of the charges laid against him. As was said by the regent of Scotland at Knox's grave, he feared no man; and the secret of his courage was his fear of God and trust in the Lord.
THE later Middle Ages were woefully weak on the score of preaching. A trite observation, but tragically true. For the church had fallen upon sorry days. Its pulpits, those indices of spiritual vitality, were ominously silent. The early church had its Ambrose and its Chrysostom with a host of lesser homiletical luminaries, the medieval period had its Fulco of Neully and its Berthold of Regensburg and its Cluniacs and Cistercians, but at the dawn of the Reformation, the religious upheaval which Schaff has termed “next to the introduction of Christianity, the greatest event in history,” the halcyon days of powerful and soul-stirring preaching were apparently over. It was the altar, always the ambassador of God but were reduced to the level of superintending the ritual and performing ceremonies for God.

Preaching a Lost Art

It was not always thus. From its inception the church had recognized the importance of preaching and had given the exposition of the Word of God a prominent place in its services. Bishop Chrodegang of Metz reflected common practice in his ruling that all clerics in his diocese must preach at least twice a month and preferably every Sunday and feastday. Alcuin, the renowned litterateur of the Carlovingian Renaissance, urged the people of Canterbury, “Provide yourselves with teachers of the Holy Scripture, that there may be no lack among you of the Word of God, that you may never fail to have among you such as are able to guide the people; that the fountain of truth among you may not be dried up.” And the Council of Mentz in 813 had decreed that if the bishop were ill or could not occupy his pulpit for some other valid reason, he must make provision for a substitute so that the souls in his parish be not deprived of the preaching of the Word of God.

But on the eve of the Reformation these rulings anent preaching had long since been forgotten. Buried beneath sheaves of papal decretals, they gradually lost their binding force and were relegated to the innocuous limbo of inoperative churchly legislation. Preaching had become a lost art.

The reason for this deplorable state of affairs is not far to seek. There was no preaching because there were few, if any, qualified preachers. It was an age of notorious ignorance. The clergy were scandalously shy on the score of intellectual equipment. Illuminating, but at the same time saddening, is the record of an investigation conducted in the diocese of Gloucester. Of 311 clerics examined, 171 could not repeat the Decalogue, 10 were unable to recite the Lord’s Prayer, and 27 were so abysmally deficient as not to be able to name the author of the model prayer that Jesus gave to His disciples. Of this group, only 3 had ever tried their hand at preaching.

Lord, Call Preachers But Not Me!

It was in such desperate plight that the church found itself when God stirred the heart of Luther to reformatory activity. The intellectual aspect of the faith had been completely superseded by the ritualistic. There was an ignorant clergy and a consequent ignorant laity. The priests and bishops stood in dire need of theological training and the masses needed instruction in the rudiments of the faith. The pulpit must be restored. The pre-Reformatory movements had sensed the need, sharing the conviction with Luther that nothing in the practice of the church could take the place of the exposition of the Word of God by men whose lips had been touched by a coal from off God’s altar. And hearts were hungering for the gospel. Luther said in the twilight of his life, recalling the spiritual famine in his early years, “O, how happy should I have been when I was in the monastery of Erfurt, if I could once, but once, have heard but one poor little word preached on the gospel, or on the least of the Psalms.”

But although Luther deemed the pulpit an invaluable instrument in the hand of God to combat vicious papism and disseminate Reformation teachings, he himself ascended the rostrum with no little reticence. His forte was teaching rather than preaching; he preferred the lecture room or the solitude of his study. In his monastic days, so he tells us, he adduced fifteen weighty reasons why he should be excused from that phase of theological activity. Nor did he stop there. He warned Staupitz that if he were forced to preach against his will he would not live for three months and that he, Staupitz, would be directly responsible for his rapid exit from the world. Undaunted and undisturbed the Augustinian vicar responded, “Well, our Lord has great business on hand in heaven, and wants able men there also.”

Luther a Polemic Preacher

Luther’s predictions that preaching would induce an untimely end were apparently ill-founded and once launched upon his preaching career his early reticence gave way to positive alacrity. One thing invariably annoyed him, and that was the presence of learned men in his audience. Only the conviction that he had a living message and that he was quali-
fied to bring it constrained him to carry on. “I place the cross before me and say, Philip, Jonas, Pomer and the rest have nothing to do with the matter; and then I endeavor to fancy that no one has sat in the pulpit abler than myself.”

It is to be expected that the sermons of Luther would be deeply tinted with polemics. He was a fighter and his life was lived on the battlefront. Rome, with its work-righteousness, found in the Eisleben peasant a foeman worthy of its best steel. This ex-monk, inflamed with holy zeal, gave no quarter. Erasmus might make delicate and telling thrusts with his rapier of sarcasm and ridicule, but swashbuckling Luther hacked away with his broadsword. He was unsparing in his invectives. He called the Romish clergy, “blind and bigoted guides,” “jangling divines” and the “progeny of Cain” men whose brains were “anemic and sickly.” He vent his irate spleen on the monks, those “doting holy ones” who fasted meticulously one day but recouped themselves the next in an orgy of eating and drinking. Luther was not the type to chide gently. Enlisted in a righteous cause, he disregarded delicacy of feeling and the amenities of convention and rode roughshod into the fray. Luther was aware of his own words to Michael Marx point in that direction, “Thou canst not think how I love to see my sword. He was unsparing in his invectives. He fought for principle. He fought bitter battle.

The Antichrist and the Man of Sin, and that the church was in the grip of the final, devastating apostasy. That conviction spurred Luther on to bitter battle. Luther brandished the sword not, in the first place, because he was an inherently vindictive or militant spirit. He fought for principle. He fought Rome because Rome had departed from the Bible. That leads me to say that Luther was pre-eminently a Biblical preacher. He forged his weapons at Scripture. “Back to the Bible” was his motto. From the Scriptures he drew his reformatory principles and standing on the unshakeable basis of the Bible he countered the papal perversions with the pure Word of God.

Luther’s Preaching Didactic and Simple

That being his attitude, Luther was strongly pedagogical in his approach. He aimed to instruct the people. They had been trained (what little training they had had) along paths of serious error. They needed correction and readjustment. Again and again he stressed the truth which has become familiarly known as the material principle of the Reformation, “We must be saved through Him alone, by mere grace, without any of our own works or merits.” That is his ever-recurrent theme. Faith is pivotal, faith which “annihilates a man or makes him appear as nothing in his own eyes and requires him to depend on the grace of God.” They needed to be educated to that point of view. Luther sought to instruct and when that end was reached he descended from the rostrum.

That explains, in part at least, the abrupt conclusions to his sermons. As he neared the end of his discourse he did not build up to a stirring climax and ring down the curtain in a pitch of emotion. He frequently concluded on this wise, “There you have the meaning of this text” or, “Thus much shall suffice concerning this text.” His primary aim was to expound Holy Truth and thus build up that inner fiber so essential to the wellbeing of the Church of Christ.

One further trait of Luther’s preaching, a formal one, may be mentioned in concluding this article. His preaching was marked by studied simplicity. He spoke the language of the people. No one could accuse him of parading his learning. The untutored, the common people, even the children must be able to understand. When Erasmus Alberus informed Luther that he was to preach at court, the Wittenberg professor urged him speak simply and added, “If in mine I was thinking of Melancthon and the other doctors, I should do no good, but I preach solely for the ignorant, and that pleases all.” He had a message, of that he was sure, but he knew too that unless he conveyed it in simple language it might as well repose quiescent in his capacious mind.

Fighting the Battle of the Lord

It would appear on the surface that Luther’s fighting temperament and invenetor love of conflict were decisive contributing factors to his polemics. His own words to Michael Marx point in that direction, “Thou canst not think how I love to see my adversaries daily rising up against me. Doctors, princes, bishops, what are they to me?” That judgment, however, is subject to stricture. His militant propensities are readily overplayed. Luther loved a battle, not for battle sake, but because he firmly believed that he was fighting the battle of the Lord. Not a battle, mark you, but the battle of the ages, the Armageddon of eschatological history. For Luther lived in the consciousness of the immanence of the end. He wrote on March 7, 1529, “The world hastens to its end, and I often think that the day of Judgment will overtake me before I have finished my translation of the Holy Scriptures.”

There was no doubt in his mind but that the Pope of Rome was the Antichrist and the Man of Sin, and that the church was in the grip of the final, devastating apostasy. That conviction spurred Luther on to bitter battle.

Luther brandished the sword not, in the first place, because he was an inherently vindictive or militant spirit. He fought for principle. He fought...
Jesus Still Suffering in Heaven?

Question: When Jesus was on earth he suffered intensely because of the reaction of sinners. Does Jesus still suffer because of the hatred and rejection of sinners?

Answer: The idea suggested in the question is not at all strange to Bible students. Many seem to feel that we can cause the Christ intense pain and grief even now. They are sure that we today by our sins crucify the Christ over again. It should be observed first of all that the suffering of Jesus here upon earth was of a definite sacrificial type. He was in a state of humiliation. That in itself involved suffering. His entire life was one of suffering because he was bearing the wrath of God upon the sins of mankind. That is in the main the position of those who hold to the theory of sacrificial atonement or of vicarious suffering. If that theory is correct then the heart of the sufferings of Jesus must be sought in the realization on his part of the divine significance of his passion. One can never begin to fathom the anguish of Jesus here upon earth unless one looks upon Christ's bitter experiences as appropriate and just experiences for the Messiah who came to pay the debt of sin that we owe. That is to say, essentially the suffering of Jesus was divinely imposed upon him.

Note in the second place, however, that in heaven Jesus is not in the state of humiliation, but in that of exaltation. He has made the atonement and the favor and the glory of God are his. There is nothing that man can do to deprive the Messiah of his well-earned triumph. And it must not be forgotten that while Jesus was here upon earth he adopted the sin-laden and sin-affected human nature and abided by all the limitations of that nature assumed. But now he is exalted far above such limitations. In his exalted condition he cannot be subject to the puny and pitiful reactions of man. He reigns and judges now. He directs and controls. Neither he nor his cause can be hurt, damaged or restricted by the senseless ravings of man. He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh at them. The Lord shall have them in derision.

The haters and rejectors of Christ can only hurt themselves. It is a terrible thing to be defying the Most High. It is a ridiculous thing for a sinner to be hurling himself against him who is consuming fire. Don't pity the Christ because of any possible damage that a sinner may do to him, but rather pity the sinner who in his ignorance and perversity damns himself by his ineffective railings against one highly exalted at the right hand of God.

Is There Perfect Joy for the Saints Above?

Question: This question is submitted by a party who is convinced that the saints in heaven do understand and know something about what is going on in this sinful world. That conviction is based on Rev. 6:9-10, “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” The question then is this, How can the redeemed in heaven have joy when they see all the injustice, anguish and sin here on earth?

Answer: The condition of those in heaven is incomprehensible. We shall not be able to appreciate it fully until we too have entered the glory above. The Bible reassures us that it is most desirable, enjoyable and incomparable. It is the reward of faith and of services well rendered in the love and fear of God. It is God's supreme and final gift. And the descriptions of heaven are numerous and varied—all calculated to impress the believer with the joy, peace and spiritual prosperity of those that dwell there. Now whatever the joys of the saints may be, they do seem to have a certain kind of a longing, a longing relative to the completion of the cause of the Kingdom. According to the First Epistle of Peter even the angels took special interest in this particular matter. It is quite probable that the saints were interested in watching the hand of God as it works through history. We tend to look at history, at the events that transpire round about us, as the work of man. Indeed, one historian wrote that “history is the record of what man has done.” That is in contrast I think, with the viewpoint of those in heaven. They see what God hath wrought and what God is bringing to pass. They see his goodness, his justice, his mercy, and his righteousness operating in the development of the Kingdom. They do not see merely a man committing murder, but they see the deed in the light of God's reaction to it. This divine reaction is one in which and through which God is glorifying himself and causing the coming of the Kingdom. That process seems to lag. Already in the O. T. one can hear the cry, How long, Lord, How long? This, shall we call it, impatience has been manifested by God-fearing people throughout the ages. We desire the glory and the consummation immediately, but we don't want the process. And it is in that spirit that I would interpret Rev. 6:10. The saints do not manifest the spirit of revenge, but they do manifest the urge or desire for a hastening of the day in which God will be all in all. Look at things as God does. See the cause of God winning ground irresistibly. Behold the power of God going
out conquering and to conquer. Get the viewpoint of heaven. Then you'll understand why there is no mourning, crying or pain there.

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Will God Smite the Earth Again?

Question: In Gen. 8:21 is the declaration that God will never again smite the earth any more for man's sake. However, in Malachi 4:6 it is clearly stated that he may. Here it is, "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." That seems contradictory. On the one hand there is a promise of no more smiting of the earth. On the other hand, there is a threat that he will smite again. How can you explain that?

Answer: It appears, when looking at these two passages superficially, that they are mutually contradictory. And it is rather embarrassing for those who cling to the position that the Word of God is infallible to be faced with such problems as they are bound to be. But there is really no difficulty here. The passage in Genesis refers obviously to a very definite type or form of cursing. In the Genesis record God is referring to a curse which involved the drowning of all men and animals (with a few exceptions). It was a curse in which water was the chief, if not the only, instrument of destruction. It was also very extensive. There was a universalism about it. Now it is just that form and extent of the cursing of the earth that God will never again exercise. God himself suggested that solution when he added the modifying phrase that he would not curse it again "as I have done." That certainly does not exclude the possibility of droughts, epidemics, wars and a host of other forms in which God may express his judgment here upon earth. All that God promised in Gen. 8 is that that particular catastrophe will not be repeated. Expression of God's judgment against sin will always be necessary as long as man continues to sin.

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Should Ministers Wear Distinctive Apparel?

Question: Is there anything in Scripture that would seem to require of the ministers of the Gospel distinctive clothes such as cut-aways or robes while they are officiating at the Sunday services?

Answer: The priests of the O. T. were required to wear distinctive garments. They were to teach by the clothes that they wore certain spiritual truths. Indeed, the highpriest wore different garments on different occasions. He had a garment that was wholly white as he officiated on the day of atonement while presenting the expiatory sacrifices. On other occasions he wore a robe of the ephod with seventy-two bells on its borders that tinkled as he officiated at the sanctuary. He wore an ephod with its precious stones and its girdle. He wore a breastplate upon which were engraved the twelve names of the tribes of Israel. He wore a golden plate with the inscription upon it, "Holiness to the Lord." All this was a part of the dispensation of the shadows, when even every piece of furniture in the temple and the arrangements within the temple were calculated to drive home the revelation of God. In the N. T. there seems to be no indication of a special garment for a minister of the Gospel. There is no indication that Jesus ever wore a distinctive garment. I know of no place in the N. T. where special garments were prescribed for the apostles. However, it is wrong I think, to assume that this is a matter of indifference. The wearing apparel of the minister surely should never clash with the dignity and the solemnity of their work. Ministers should avoid gaudiness on the one hand and slovenliness on the other. Indeed, he should dress unobtrusively. The proper dress would be such as will in no way interfere with the most effective presentation of the Gospel. When the minister is so dressed that his people are not quite sure what he wore after they have returned home, he certainly must have worn a garment that was not in the least distinctive. In other words, though there be no N. T. regulation about a minister's proper garb, yet his interest in the success of his Gospel preaching will have or should have something very positive to say about it.

H. S.

Is It Christian to Judge?

Question: Does not the Sermon on the Mount forbid any Christian to judge? Does it not deny us the right to judge men by their works?

Answer: One certainly has the right and the duty to judge the works of man. There are many precepts in the Scriptures that Christians could not possibly meet without an act of judgment. They are commanded to warn, reprove, or rebuke an erring brother. Surely they will have to judge before any such Christian duty can be exercised. They are urged to fellowship with fellow-christians, but it will require some judgment to discover whether the other party is a Christian or not. There are many other such duties imposed upon the child of God that he simply could not do, except he judge first of all. It may be a bit precarious to judge whether a given individual is really a child of God or not, but we shall certainly never be able to escape the duty of ascertaining whether our brother is conducting himself in a godly way or not. We can't excuse ourselves with an "Am I my brother's keeper? But the Christian judging of a man or his work must be done in love, with God's law as the standard of judgment, and with the purpose of promoting the kingdom. Just judgment is required. But the judgment as practiced by the Pharisees in a spirit of self righteousness and with an air of unbrotherly superiority stands condemned. Such judging endangers the subject and tends to make him an object of condemnation.

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October, 1939
A VERY LITTLE CHILD . . .

Let the scientist beware in his gadget-cluttered lair,
With his theories and axioms of time and space!
For the thing that spells disgrace and will shame
him to his face
And upset his calculations he had polished to a hair,
Just the thing to set him wild
Is a simple question by a very little child.

Should the preacher in his zeal, thundering his woe
or weal,
Ever speculate as to the deep impressions he has
made—
Soon his sense of pride will fade, his pomposity be
laid,
If he ponders that the thing his thunder oft can steal
Be it e'er so sweet or mild—
Is the truth as spoken by a very little child.

Watch the monarch on his throne, visage as if turned
to stone,
How his posture and regalia all bespeak a man
austere.
Surely royalty is here, filling men with awe and fear.
But I would you could observe him with his tender
babe alone,
How that mien of might is sp'iled
By the softest kisses of that very little child.

Sometimes fathers rise in anger for the misdeeds of
their brood,
As the words of hot displeasure sear the culprit’s
quaking soul,
Soon forget though what he stole from that tempting
covered bowl,
And their hearts are quickly melted, turned to kind
forgiving mood—
Sorry that they e'er got riled—
By two little teardrops of a very little child.

So it is, for truth and goodness oft are smothered by
pretense.
You and I, we mostly hide in a cloak of willful pride,
Silencing the still, small voice, taking life in boastful
stride.
Till in manner unexpected we are shown some
common sense
And are painfully beguiled
By reality, as pictured in a very little child.

Clifton, N. J. —M. M. JELLEMA.

LIKE BUTTERFLIES . . .

Like butterflies drifting the yellow leaves fall
The stately old cedars smile gently on all;
Do we in their rustling remember God's call?

—J. G. G.

HALLOWED HOUR

Oppressed by ineffable sadness
I bowed in God's house to pray
Not vainly striving to borrow
Strength for the battling fray;

Trembling, I tarried silent
Looking unto the Lord
And oh, the power He poured forth
From his wonderful precious Word.

I laid my problem before Him
I fear the future no more
He promised me grace sufficient
This day, and each day o'er and o'er.

I lifted my dear ones unto Him
Raised to the throne of His grace
He promised to give them abundance
Of love in the light of His face.

O blessed privilege to serve Him!
O sacred hallowed abode
Where we can enjoy in His presence
Communion and peace with our God.

—J. G. G.

AUTUMN'S HERALD

Down at the end of the lane, one tree has changed
Into the color of a gloryvine;
Lifted so from its dark green background there
I call this bright tree mine.

It looks so gay among the commontone
It stands so tall as if with upflung head
It offers autumn joy in prayerful song
Giving the praise that humans leave unsaid.

—J. G. G.

NO MATTER

One much bowed down
Is hurt by a frown;
But a kind word or song
May lift him ere long;

Tears bring relief
To one swayed by grief;
But he doth not care
Who hath despair;

Nor tongue nor pen
Can matter then.

—J. G. G.
THE VICARION

That was the title of a rather fantastic novel I once read. In it the hero, working on the theory that every deed that is ever performed leaves an indelible impression on the air, perfected a machine to capture these impressions in metal capsules and when they were again released they became visible and the deeds were reënacted by air-forms. So the deeds of the past could be relived vicariously, hence the name, "Vicarion."

The story creates the strange thrill that comes of contemplating the half-possible fantasy. And yet, I can be more realistic. We have all had "Vicarions" in our homes for years. So many years, in fact, that we have relegated them to the doubtful honor of filling unused corners as mere ornaments, or we have stored them in attics or they are filling space in the guest-room. These amazing devices are deteriorating while we content ourselves with limiting our minds to the immediate present by means of radio and newspaper.

Think of seeing Napoleon again, above Ratisbon, or mingling his banners with Alpine snows, or coaxing his army through Russia, under the crushing defeat of Waterloo or sunk in melancholy reminisce at Elba. Perhaps your taste on occasion may look to glamorous Cleopatra, half-mythical Aeneas or Hercules, or join Marco Polo at the court of the Khan. Would a lethargic afternoon be enlivened by a merry dash with the marauding Huns over Ancient Europe's plains?

Why not? All it requires is to take one of your little capsules from its dusty retreat, open it, and let the glorious past march by before you. The novelty of the experience may at first give you a slight headache, but its worth it. Now, before you get a headache wondering where you could have so marvelous a device in your home, let me hasten to explain that we call the little capsules "books" and the method of releasing their treasures is "reading."

And now see if I was not right in describing where you had stored your "Vicarion." Maybe you cannot find yours. Try some old-fashioned family that cannot afford theater tickets or a radio. They will be glad to loan you one of their favorite capsules and show you how to open it.

What an ancient development it is. Jesus once points out to two very puzzled and erring disciples that they should have used their "Vicarion" much more faithfully. "Did ye never read the Scriptures . . .?" He said. And forthwith He opened unto them the Scriptures.

It seems to be the thing to declare a day or a week especially to give time to some necessary but neglected cause. How about making 1940 "Reading Year" and make the proclamation an annual event?

ALA BANDON.

GOD'S BEST

Words are gifts with which
We may weave a bridal garland
Or a prisoner's chain.

Children come from God
But sometimes we send away
Unchallenged, God's best.

—J. G. G.

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

A Canadian Letter

Dear Sir:

Then I began my letter with a jubilant note, for Their Majesties, the King and the Queen, were the distinguished visitors to Canada; but today the dark, blood-red, frightening clouds of Mars are rolling westward again, and Canada with all other Empire nations is making feverish preparation against the storm. The present extent of her preparedness is not known, but Canada is confident that the Rhine will be the major scene of hostilities, and that depredations in her own land will be kept down to a minimum. She looks with great confidence also to the might of her big sister.

The congregation of Fontanelle, numbering about eighty families, was received by the Presbytery of Miramichi in the Province of New Brunswick. Now that there is a congregation in the Gaspe, in the Province of Quebec, the Maritime Synod has extended her boundaries beyond the Province by the sea. Except that the Gaspe is largely French, geographically it would belong to the Maritime Provinces.

The courageous young converted priest, Rev. Real d'Anjou, could not, however, be received by the Presbytery, but the Synodical Missionary, Dr. A. S. Reid, or some other minister in the Province of Quebec, for the performance and registration of Acts of Civil Status."

Well, that action might have been worse. We would like to have seen him admitted this year, but deferring the action may have been the part of wisdom. It sometimes is—but I have often wondered what would have happened at Geneva had Farel deferred action on John Calvin. Some of the ritualistic fathers of the Assembly advised him to go back 'to the church of his fathers and tradition.' Of course, they would have said that to Calvin, too, had they been in Geneva in the 16th Century.
And so the matter stands at present, but the reformed brethren of the Presbytery of Miramichi are busy and stand hoping that all the practical sympathy they can give. The new Protestants need our moral and financial support because of the hardships of their place of habitat not only, but because of the continued petty boycott Roman Catholic merchants apply against them. In spite of persecutions and regulations observers see in the movement there beginnings of larger abductions from the Church of Rome. Many in Quebec have professed their church—but unfortunately the Protestants are sluggish in reclaiming them for the true Christian Faith, and they fall into communism.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has about one hundred vacant pulpits which might be settled immediately. Many, of course, are small, but nevertheless worthy of the full-time ministration of the gospel by Reformed preachers. Because interim moderators of vacant churches have such churches at heart, it is often difficult to supply vacant pulpits when those standing in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, which procedure annoys some of the narrow nationalists of the church. Two years ago a rule (which very few observe) was handed down from the General Assembly forbidding any interim-moderator to allow any licentiate of another church to supply in a vacant pulpit, for it was found that vacant congregations were soon fall in love with such men, and would extend calls to them, which in turn made it much more difficult for the General Assembly to say, “No, you can’t have your love.” But it can be observed that the General Assembly is settling vacancies in the direction of Reformed preachers, permitting others to come into her communion. The sad part, however, is that it continues to be embarrassing for soundly Reformed men to clear the hurdles at the General Assembly, and not because the theological standards are too high. Any such men we need.

Sumserside, P. E. Island, September 16, 1939.

Dear Sir:-

The appointment of the Master of St. Peter’s Hall, Oxford, Dr. Sir Basil Liddon, has happily translated by the papers. A strong preparatory commission, of which our German brethren were joint editors, has recently been composed of the Union and Dr. Chavasse was a member. Among those taking part were the picturesque Waldensian costume.

Emed Calvinistic Conference

Active preparations are in progress for the International Calvinistic Conference to be held at Emden next July 28 to 30. The International Commission is formulating its plans, and National Committees have been formed in the principal countries of Europe. But who dares to look a year ahead in the war-menaced world of to-day? It is encouraging to learn that the Conference has received the sanction of the German Government. Emden lies in a bay on the coast of East Frisia land, and, swartillas apart, it bears the aspect of a peaceful Dutch town. For generations it was a haven of refuge from Romish persecution in the Netherlands, and a succession of Dutch refugees has left their mark on the district. The Congress has been arranged by the National Churches, in connexion with the centenary of the arrival of the Polish Reformer, Johannes à Lasco, from Louvain in 1540 to become chief pastor of the Reformed church. This wandering scholar was at one time a refugee church in London. A strong preparatory commission has been appointed in Germany under the presidency of Baron Dufour de Feronce of the Huguenot church, Professor of New Testament Exegetics at the University of Amsterdam, and of the Reformers in which he glories in his orthodoxy and frankly acknowledges that his master in theology is John Calvin. The volume consists mainly of addresses delivered at assemblies of his own denomination, some of which have been severely criticized by the Congregationalist press in the direction of Reformed theology. The dispensers of this influence include such men as Prof. Dodd of Oxford and Dr. Micklem at Cambridge. To these names must now be added that of Bernard Manning, Fellow of Jesus, a leading Congregationalist layman who has just published a volume of Essays in Orthodox Dissent, in which he glories in his orthodoxy and frankly acknowledges that his master in theology is John Calvin. The volume consists mainly of addresses delivered at assemblies of his own denomination, some of which have been severely criticized by the Congregationalist press in the direction of Reformed theology.

Yours in Christ,

WILLIAM VERWOLF.

London Letter
Dear Sir:

PRiENDS on this side are still discussing the Cambridge Conference, and many have expressed their appreciation of your paper on “Christ and the Student Mind,” which a repre­sentative of the University of Cambridge described as “an inspired and interesting discourse.” It was my misfortune to be called away just as the meetings were about to commence, and since then I have been visiting the ancient Waldensian Church, which has been celebrating the 250th anniversary of the Glorious Riformatio, or return from exile of the heroic Valdesi following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The celebrations included a pilgrimage by road with the Rev. J. R. Mackay, Professor of New Testament Exegetics at the University of Cambridge, who was formerly German Minister at Berlin, who was formerly German Minister at

The Report of the Council referred to the triviality of some of the sentences which are now posted outside the churches, such as, “Don’t worry, it may never happen,” or “The tide turns also when it is low,” but failed to point the obvious moral that the Church’s message is not wise-cracks but the Word of God.

Death of Professor Mackay

The passing of the Rev. J. R. Mackay, Professor of New Testament Exegetics at the Free Church College, Edinburgh, from 1918 to 1935, and Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland in 1928, removes a scholar of dis­tinction and a staunch defender of the doctrines of grace. His sermons and Conference papers are well remembered by members of the Congregational Union of which he was a warm friend. With Professor Maclean, the President of the Union, he acted as joint-editor of The Evangelical Quarterly from its inception in 1899 until ill-health prevented him from giving it full attention. Some of his last articles were on God’s sovereign grace, and the selection of a conservative Evangelical for a diocesan bishopric is an extremely rare occurrence. And although Dr. Chavasse can correctly be described as Calvinistic, he has frequently taken a definite stood against the Oxford Movement. A son of the late Bishop Chavasse who succeeded Bishop Kyle at Liverpool, one of such chief interest is the promotion of the Evangelical Conferences of which the Unitarian Inquiry and Freethinker.

To the Editor,

London, August 21, 1939.

A South India Letter

To the Editor,

Telugu Village Mission,
Adoni, Bellary Dist.,
South India,

July 20th, 1939.

Dear Sir:-

So used has one grown to the idea of Christianity being a comparatively modern institution in India that the expression “A century of missionary effort” has become a cliche. How long, however, can one continue to ignore the roots of the Christian faith in India go back nineteen centuries. Tradition has it that the apostle Thomas reached the south-western coast of India in the first century after adventuring
in the wilds of Mesopotamia and Persia. He appears to have been well received by the then ruler of Cochinn after which St. Thomas traveled inland, making numerous converts until he died near the present site of the coastal town of Kodungallur, where his tomb is said to be buried at San Thome, now a suburb of Madras, not far from the campus of the Tambaram Christian College.

To the former ground of authentic history, we read that the saint was married to a merchant from Antioch. It is said that the saint used to travel in India about the middle of the sixth century and commenced to trade among the subjects of the ruler, or Zamorin. Finding several ruins of what he believed to be Christian churches, as well as relics of an apostolic form of Christianity, Thomas, when he visited India, brought with him a number of missionaries from his native Syria and the Syrian church was thus founded before the close of the sixth century A.D.

The Syrian Christian community now numbers about a quarter of a million and is divided into three major sects—the Roman Catholic, the Mar Thoma Protestants, and the group who acknowledge the Patriarch of Antioch as their spiritual head and are akin to the Eastern Orthodox Church. There are also a number of smaller subdivisions, but the community as a whole can hardly be described as spiritually robust. Had the Syrian church in India been an evangelical one, strong in missionary zeal, the old pioneers—William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and others—would have found very different conditions prevailing in India when they commenced their labors nearly one hundred and fifty years ago.

**Church Union in India**

There has been almost a surfeit of conferences during the past spring and summer. These "Post-Tambaram and pre-Amsterdam" gatherings, as someone described them not long ago, have been profuse and purport to cover more ground in nature and have taken place mostly at hill stations where large numbers of missionaries, educators, and others foregather to escape from the burning heat of the great plains.

At a Conference in Bangalore on Church Union, in which India has led the Christian world, the colorful personality of the Rev. A. Ralla Ram of Allahabad, an outstanding and much travelled Christian leader, so stood out among his fellows that it may be of interest to quote from his informative address. Speaking on the trend towards Church Union in North India, Mr. Ralla Ram said that though South India seemed to be in the limelight at present with regard to Union, North India was not lagging far behind. Mr. Ralla Ram said that the North Indian Presbyterian Church came into existence in 1900," the lecturer said, "and it was with the consent of its North Indian section that its South Indian section joined with the Congregationalists, Wesleyan, and Reformed churches in the South to form the South India United Church. In 1929 the United Church of North India was formed, including American Congregationalists, Welsh Calvinists, Dutch Reformed, and more recently, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church."

Continuing, Mr. Ralla Ram said, "The Joint Counsell Scheme, which has been under consideration for some time, aims at uniting the North India United Church, the Methodist Episcopalian and Presbyterians and Baptists. It proceeds upon the acceptance of the principle of 'Unity in diversity,' a simple doctrinal basis, the two Sacraments, free-dominion, the recognition of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism, and, more recently, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church."

Outcastes and Mass Movements

Mention of the Diocese of Dornakal reminds me of its energetic and evangelical Indian Bishop's talks recently on the ever-absorbing topics of Evangelism and Mass Movements. I give here some of the Bishop's words:

"The term Mass Movement is of missionary coinage, forty to fifty years old, and denotes the decision, not of an individual, but of a group—family, village, etc.—to change their faith. Outcasts do not need to be convinced, they need to be trained in the art to accent His way of life and to begin trying to live in that way. This is an effective and fruitful method of winning Christians, and a natural way for India; life in the social world is a group world; the group is the greatest force to win others; the old restraints of home life are not lost, but continue in force, and thus an indigenous Church will grow more easily."

"The effectiveness of Mass Movements is proved by figures. Some people believe that all statistics are of Satan; but Acts is not afraid of them. God controls the numbers, so there is no reason for us to fear them. In the Diocese of Dornakal the number of baptisms has been round about 10,000 a year for several years."

"What is the use of bringing in the Untouchables? some ask. 'They don't count in the larger task of converting the caste people.' But they do count; they are the Church; their life is a witness that brings in others. All the missionary activity concentrated for ten or twenty years on the higher castes without result. After fifty years, the changed policy is bringing in caste people who have been won by example, by the changed lives of the "Depressed Classes."

The first outcaste was baptized 75 years ago, twenty-five years ago there were 5,000, and now, ten years later, the S. P. G. and C. M. S. organizations. Now there are 218,000 with another 40,000 under instruction. How did this come about? Mass Movements cannot be manufactured; the Holy Spirit moves men's hearts; we can only seek to recognize the movements of God and co-operate. We must witness and preach; and then follow where God moves. If we are prejudiced in favor of the higher castes we must give it up, and concentrate on the accessible. Perhaps the opportunity which has been in our hands for fifty years to reach the neglected castes has been taken from us; soon it may have disappeared. The evidence of changed village life tells most on the hard materialistic townsmen."

"The evangelizing agent is the Church, not the missionary. A man is a Christian, not only to go to Heaven, but to proclaim Christ; not only to grow holier, but to witness. It is not enough for the Church to take permanent care of its members; they are meant to take care of themselves—and to spread the Gospel. We are not to aim for a corner in Heaven; our task must be not so much 'Are you saved?' but 'Are you saving?'

"It is the duty of the whole Church to proclaim the Gospel—'Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.' The existence of paid evangelists blinds people to their duty, and leads to self-satisfaction. If a man has no life in him, he cannot witness, but it is equally true that if a man does not witness, he has no life."

"Wishing The Calvin Forum much blessing and success, and with greetings to its growing 'family' of staff, contributors, and readers, believe me.

Fraternally yours,

ARTHUR V. RAMAH.

**Hungarian-American News Letter**

Dear Dr. Bouma:

FIRST of all I openly want to greet you back to America.

We are sincerely glad that you have found your sojourn abroad so fruitful and that you came back in time to avoid any harrowing experience created by the unfortunate outbreak of the war. We also wish to express our happiness over the fact that you have met that great champion of historical Calvinism, Dr. Jeno Sebestyen from Budapest. He is known all over the Netherlands, because during recent decades nobody did more in Hungary to bring Dutch and Hungarian Calvinism into a closer understanding than he. He is from the school of the late Abraham Kuyper and the life work of Dr. Kuyper became known and revered in Hungary through his meditation. Miss Catherine Kuyper mentioned him to me as the 'Macys of the Calvin World.' What he feels about 'American Calvinism,' you will find in his latest letter. I am sure that he gave you a much better insight into the present status of Calvinism in Hungary than I was able to.

I am confident that his information will help
you to form a more intimate understanding even of these simple Hungarian news letters of mine.

And now let us come to the news. The last time all these items originated from the other side of the Atlantic. This time I shall be an "isolationist" and will remain in America.

Hungarian Reformed Federation of America

This organization is a fraternal institution of ours with headquarters in Washington, D.C., situated at 1401 Columbia Avenue, one block from the White House. Its charter was granted and enacted by the Congress of the U. S. and signed by the late president Theodore Roosevelt. In applying for this privilege, the incorporators of the Federation, members representing the memory of Louis Kossuth, the greatest Hungarian who ever visited the United States, and that reference was not made in vain. "Hail Kossuth," the congratulation sponsor of our cause, received the liberty to carry on the activities of this Federation through an enacted law of the great United States that so signally honored Kossuth in the days of his sojourn in America, some 87 years ago. The organization of this federation took place 42 years ago. It provides sick and death benefits for its members numbering more than twenty thousand. It assists its young college student members with grants and loans, it cultivates the cultural ties between the United States and Hungary, and it is a veritable standard bearer of an impeccably loyal American-Hungarian patriotic character of the Federation. And the privileges of Bethlen Home are available to every member and individual members on favorable conditions. Second, these two institutions are very important for us especially from three points of view. First, the financial strength of the Federation backs up to a considerable extent our whole Hungarian-American life, especially our church life. Loans and mortgages are available to our churches and even to individual members on favorable conditions. Second, these two institutions constitute a very telling proof of the presence of the Reformed element in our Calvinism. Third, despite all differences, those two institutions bind all of our groups together and form a strong tie of unity. Divisive questions are consciously left and kept out of these two institutions and only the common good of all is being stressed.

The last convention of the Federation held during the first ten days of June resulted in the affirmation of all of these ideals and endeavors. This is the reason why we regard that convention as worthy of mentioning. A special feature of the convention and an indication of a new trend in the lives of the Hungarians in America was a memorial service in the Arlington National Cemetery by the Reformed Church in America. The service was conducted by the Rt. Rev. Alexander Daroczy, took place in connection with these meetings. The activities of the whole denomination were reviewed, plans were made for the future, and the by-laws were revised and extended in order to catch up with the growth of the church.

It was one of the high spots of these meetings that your own Prof. Dr. Martin J. Wyngaarden appeared at one of the sessions, at the writer's invitation. He was officially welcomed by the president of the Federation, the Rev. Dr. Bosch, who presided. He extended the unofficial but most hearty greetings of the Christian Reformed community and gave some valuable information about the educational activities of this group, especially about those carried on by Calvin College and Synod.

This is the first time, during the existence of our organized church life, that a member of another and non-Hungarian Reformed group appeared at any one of our highest assemblies. This is a further and much-cherished proof to us that our former dream isolation from our similarly or even identically-minded American brethren is definitely over. We thank Dr. Wyngaarden for his goodwill and ambassadorial services.

Youth Conference

The second annual Conference of the Free Magyar Reformed Church was held in Pittsburgh, Pa., N. J., with more than 250 participants. Sept. 2 was the arrival day for those coming from the West, their registration and quartering with the families of the local congregation. Sunday a special service was attended and a corporate communion took place with 264 participating in the Lord's Supper. Sunday afternoon the addresses were delivered and the discussions were held. One of the speakers was your Dr. Bosch from the Christian Sanatorium near Paterson, N. J. He spoke on the subject of "Clean Living" and made a deep impression upon all those present. His addresses and the credit for the tactful and spiritually conceived presentation of the subject were at the same time a very difficult subject, especially as addressing a mixed group. Dean Bécý from Trenton, N. J., gave an outline of the implications of the Reformed confession of faith and the confirmation vow. It was decided to present this subject to the constituents of our church more often and with a more systematic recurrence.

A representative of the Perth Amboy group presented a paper on the dangers of mixed marriages contracted between Hungarians and non-Hungarians. It is not that the adherents of the Papal See. In this respect our hope lie in a more conscious and more enlightened appropriation of the Reformed faith as a true and genuine Protestantism to the actual dangers presented by Rome in this respect. Racially or linguistically mixed marriages—provided they are marriages between parties of mixed faith—can be a real danger to the individual and spiritual outlook—received no serious criticism. On the contrary, they received a favorable rating above the religiously and spiritually contrasting ones. A representative of the Cartersville, Georgia, group presented an address on the historical background and achievements of the Hungarians in America. The purpose of the address was to gain confidence into the breast of our youth to strive after the highest attainable opportunities presented by America, and this without the least bit of inferiority complex.

Finally a representative of the Mckeepsport, Pa., group gave an account of the inauguration of Calvinism in the world of "isms" current today. It was gratifying to hear how neatly, clearly and consciously the young man brought out Calvinism as the spiritual, intellectual, social, ethical and political cornerstone for the Reformed young man or young woman of today. The formal organization of the Bethlen Youth Conference of the Free Magyar Reformed Church closed the agenda of the convention, which was with devotional services and interspersed with the singing of psalmody, and formally and harmonizing with the topics under consideration. In the evening a social was enjoyed by the conference and on Monday they went to see the World's Fair. Tuesday and Wednesday were devoted to the business of the conference, and the next thing they had to do was to enjoy the whole conference and next year, Deo volente, we hardly have to urge them to attend another conference, they will come back. It was so. In conclusion, although the conference was a somewhat cramped affair, was down tired and quieted after the conference, praying that the Lord will land our labors will not be in vain, and that the good Lord would grant us a youth devoted to His glory in the Church of their fathers and mothers.

Charles Vincze.

Perth Amboy, N. J.
Calvinistic Conferences

In a recent issue the editor of The Presbyterian gave a brief report of the "meeting of Calvinists" held in Paterson, N. J., June 27-30. And he editorializes about it as follows: "The theme of the conference was 'The Sovereignty of God.' This splendid gathering lacked only one thing, a broader catholicity. The largest Calvinist group in the world, the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., was not represented on the programme of the addresses. Next time, we hope, the lack may be remedied. Calvinists are not all of one shape and size, but are of one faith and life. We congratulate our Dutch brethren on this initial venture, and hope from this good beginning a vital movement may spread in our land. As Dr. Hoogstra said in opening the conference, 'These Calvinistic gatherings are held because we need one another.'"

Without discussing critically the editorial, we do feel like the editor, and hope that in future ventures as the one of June 27-30, there may be a greater representation of American Calvinists. "We need one another." The ties with the Dutch Calvinists should remain. But we here in the United States are not Dutch Calvinists but we are, and ever should be, American Calvinists. As such we need all other American Calvinists. The times in which we live, require it, Calvinism itself requires it, our country requires it, our God requires it. And we ourselves need it.

Reformed Synod of the Netherlands

August 29, 1939, the Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands met in Sneek (Friesland). It was the first time in the history of the denomination that it assembled in Sneek. Sneek is the city, where Sept. 1599 "domine" Johannes Bogerman, famed president of the Synod of Dort, was ordained as minister of the Gospel.

The evening before Synod began its work, Rev. J. L. Schouten, president of the last Synod, spoke in prayer-meeting on: seeking the good of the Churches. Said he, "We may do so, we must do so, we can do, so we shall do so."

Rev. H. Veldkamp, appointed thereto by the consistory of the calling church, officially opened Synod.

Not all the brethren delegated were present. Because of the critical international situation there were no delegates from Bentheim, Oost-Friesland, and Scotland. Because the Dutch government had issued orders for a general mobilization, several delegates from Provincial Synods were absent. But present were Dr. H. Beets and Rev. I. Van Dellen, of the Christian Reformed Church in America and Professor S. Du Toit and Rev. W. Snyman of the South African Church.

Rev. J. L. Schouten was elected president. Routine labors were performed. Synod decided also to systematize its methods. Six committees are to be appointed which are to formulate reports and advice to Synod. When they are ready, the Synod is to meet again in full session.

Rev. I. Van Dellen addressed Synod and spoke among other things about the much discussed and hoped for Ecumenical Synod. Professor S. Du Toit spoke concerning the alarming decrease of membership in his church, and of the desire of South Africa to work toward an Ecumenical Synod of all Reformed Churches everywhere.

Dr. H. Beets informed Synod that the Chr. Ref. Church in America is glad to know that the Dutch brethren are true to the confession.

The first important work to be done was the discussion regarding an Ecumenical Synod. No less than twelve delegates debated the matter. It was finally decided, 40 to 9, "to prepare the matter and treat it during the Synod."

That the foregoing matter was first on the agenda, found its cause in the fact that the foreign delegates were compelled to return to their own countries at once. Sept. 1 and 2 train service for civilians was completely suspended. Menacing clouds of war cast ominous shadows over Holland and Synod alike. Would Synod be able to continue its work? At a later session a motion to postpone the sessions for at least four weeks was rejected by a vote of 34 against 9.

Germany Closes Seminaries

In The Presbyterian (CIX:30) we find this editorial: "Ichabod." "October 1 will find the doors of the theological school of Heidelberg University closed, by order of Bernhard Rust, Nazi Minister of Education. By the same order two other seminaries, Leipsig and Rostock, will close. Protestants of Germany look on this as another move in the attempt of the German Government to destroy the Protestant Church. 'Nordland,' a Nazi mouthpiece, pronounces the study of theology 'without value and unnecessary,' and declares that young men should work 'for the resurrection and greatness of Germany in jobs for them.' That is logical from the Nazi point of view, which puts the German blood, State and Fuehrer in the place of God. But for others, of whom there are some hundreds of millions in the world today, there is a greater and more sovereign dictum: 'This is life eternal: that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' The call of Christ to the Protestant boys of Germany will still be obeyed."

Testimony Concerning War

The Classis Muskegon of the Christian Reformed Church decided September 13, to seek a way by which a deliverance of the Synod (1939) may be placed in the hands of as many members as possible. The deliverance is the Synod's "Testimony Regarding the Christian's Attitude Toward War and Peace." Now that war has become an actuality this synodical document has great value for all Christian people. Buried now in the Acts of Synod (1939, pages 240-249) it should be published far and wide. The matters touched upon are of vital interest to every thinking Christian citizen of this neutral nation.

In this connection it may not be amiss to note what The Christian Observer (127:33) says about the Church and war. As to the question What can the Church do? this Presbyterian (South) paper answers: 1. We can pray. 2. We could begin right now and preach more earnestly the Gospel of individual redemption by the way of the Cross. 3. We can preach against the causes of war. 4. We can stop glorifying war. 5. We can co-operate with agencies that are trying to outlaw war.

Protesting Modern Evils

Ever since Luren Dudley Dickinson became governor of Michigan, he has elicited from the press an extra-ordinary amount of publicity. The entire United States knows about his "pipeline to God and heaven." Every picture magazine of any consequence has published a photograph of the governor kneeling and praying to God. Time magazine called Michigan's governing powers "the goofiest and godliest government" Michigan ever had.

Returning from a governors' conference in the East some time ago, Dickinson severely criticized the conditions prevailing at prominent social functions. Some time ago the governor was to speak over the radio, on Modern Sins and Evils. He submitted his manuscript to the sponsor. They found this sentence: "These dances which call for close abdominal contact and frequently bring the cheeks together and intertwine the limbs. . . ." Offended, the editing powers expunged the shameless words. In their place they wrote just three words:
“the modern dance.” Now it was the Governor’s turn to be offended. And he canceled the address. Sin has been whitewashed so long that when it is mentioned as sin, some ears are actually offended. We wish that all men who occupy responsible positions would, like Governor Dickinson, lift up their voices against sin. We hope that Christian men and women will not display a tolerant smile when a Governor seeks to say, what every Christian should say. Certainly, the governor is 80 years old—but what does that have to do with it?

Japanning Christianity

In *The Christian Century* (56:31) there occurs an article from the pen of a “Japanese Witness.” If it correctly pictures the plight of Christianity in Japan, it surely will cause the reader to feel and concerning the cause of Christ in Japan. “The Japanning of Christianity” is the title of the article. In it the writer traces the steps that led to the Christianizing of Japan. By 1913 Christianity “had become one of the three great religions of Japan.” However the world war had shattered Japan’s faith in Western civilization. Communism, Marxism were stamped out. Then “came the time that Japanese Christians had to choose between Caesar and God.”

Knappen’s *Tudor Puritanism*, considered as history, is perhaps the most important of these three works. It traces in detail the rise and the development of the Puritan movement from the secret activities of Wm. Tyndale to the Stuart Settlement, it points out whatever medieval contributions it contains as well as its dissatisfaction with the partial reformation inaugurated or defended by English rulers, and it interprets in the latter half of the book the intellectual, social, and cultural aspects of the movement. According to Professor Knappen, Puritanism “designates the outlook of those English Protestants who actively favored a reformation beyond that which the crown was willing to countenance and who yet stepped short of Anabaptism.”

The historian of Puritanism has to contend with many difficulties. Owing to the exigencies of history the Puritan movement was so varied as to include several shades of faith, Presbyterians and Independents, Separatists and Non-Separatists, even Anglicans with Reformed ambitions, and so flexible that it never remained the same very long. Besides, with respect to the Puritans there have sprung up so many prejudices that the historian finds the road beset with all manner of problems. He must decide at what point to begin, he must define the many terms that have been used to designate the Puritans, he must know what to exclude as well as what to include, and he must seize upon the inceptil principle of the movement and show how and why it changed throughout the decades.

The fact that Professor Knappen once was a student at Princeton Seminary has undoubtedly helped him to understand Puritanism and to treat it with a measure of sympathy and fairness. His interpretations of the spirit of the movement, its doctrine of authority, its urge to make propaganda, its ideal of godliness, its social and economic views, its attitude toward marriage, domestic life, and education, display a large-heartedness that is truly remarkable. True, there is much in the Puritans that he condemns, such as their fear of joy or ascetic bias, their rigid manner of observing the Sabbath, their tendency to be guided only by what is literally commanded in Scripture, and their intolerance. Their theology, he lets us feel, is outmoded. The doctrine, however, against which he directs most of his adverse criticism is that of the infallibility of the Bible. But though the author’s attitude clears the Puritans from most of the bitter accusations, his clear and fair interpretation of the Puritans is one Kagawa had spoken one word of approval or sympathy, the majority of Japanese Christians might have made a brave showing.” But no one followed him nor approved of his loyalty to God. “Instead, the whole Christian Church in Japan, figuratively speaking, marched to the imperial palace and bowed before the throne.”

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J. G. VAN DYKE.

Grand Haven, Mich.

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AROUND THE BOOK TABLE

**THREE STUDIES IN PURITANISM**


Here are three new books on Puritanism, published within a year and every one of them displaying excellent historical scholarship. Doubtless, it was the tercentenary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the throne that led at least two of them to make a serious study of the Puritan movement. Whatever the motive, it is noteworthy that research in every case resulted in the vindication of the Puritans from most of the bitter aspersions heaped upon them. This was also the case with the investigations of such sound scholars as Kenneth B. Murdock and Samuel E. Morrison of Harvard, Thomas G. Wright of Yale, and Perry Scholles, a few years ago.

Professor Haller, a teacher of English literature at Columbia, was led to a study of Puritanism by the desire better to understand the writings of John Milton, especially his Areopagitica, that famous defense of unlicensed printing. He begins the study of his subject with the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the throne and ends it with the calling of the Westminster Assembly in 1643. He has based his conclusions upon what the Puritans themselves wrote, their sermons, doctrinal treatises, spiritual biographies, and books on godly living, preferring, however, the popular writings to learned treatises. The result is an intimate account of a large number of leading Puritans and their most important works as well as an interpretation of the movement.

As a history of ideas or a study of the ideological background of a group of great literary productions, in which students of English are beginning to be interested, this work is very valuable. The student of neither Puritanism nor Milton can afford to ignore it, in spite of the fact that the author’s theological bias is pronouncedly anti-Puritan. He cannot but be struck with the fact that he who undertakes to be the recorder of Puritan thought and conduct faces an extremely difficult task, especially since that thought is so varied as to range from near-Anabaptism to near-rationalism.

One pastor, Motohichiro Osaka, refused to Japanize God. He was beaten, dragged along the streets, crippled for life. “If a few influential Christians had supported or joined Osaka, if one Kagawa had spoken one word of approval or sympathy, the majority of Japanese Christians might have made a brave showing.” But no one followed him nor approved of his loyalty to God. “Instead, the whole Christian Church in Japan, figuratively speaking, marched to the imperial palace and bowed before the throne.”

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says, the attitude of one who regards Puritanism as one of the finest idealisms of the time, superior to Catholicism, Anglicanism, and English nationalism. Professor Knappen sees in it "the ideal internationalism as against nationalism" and the continuation of the "unity and political power of the idealism." While it retained much that was medieval, it had the courage to adopt such changes as the new age demanded. As ethical idealism, therefore, the author considers the study of Puritanism to have great value for us today.

While the two books so far noticed consider the Puritans in the land of their birth, Miller and Johnson's book deals with the Puritans in America during the seventeenth century. There has long been dire need of such a work. If there is any subject in which students of American history and literature are deeply interested, it is Puritanism. It established itself in the wilderness of this continent with the specific purpose of founding in it the Kingdom of God and of its being permitted to live its own life and to develop itself according to its own genius. Such vigor it had that all the national strains that have contributed something to American civilization, it was far and away the most influential. No one can understand the background of American culture without a thorough knowledge of the Puritan contribution. Besides, the distortions of almost Pantagruelian proportions with which magazine and textbook writers have been catechized in the circles in which he labors, to rely on all kinds of mystical experiences for salvation, and to find in them a real standard of judgment and the ground of assurance.

He calls attention to the great importance of life in the covenant. He rightly reminds us on more than one page that the covenant is not merely something which God offers man, and which the latter can accept or reject; but is rather a relationship in which God places man to Himself, a relationship in which man stands in virtue of an act of God, but which man can, and in many cases does, break. He stresses the fact that this covenant is one-sided, since it does not depend on the fulfillment of any condition to be met by man. God gives all, and man only receives. While faith is required of man, even this is a gift of God. The entrance into and the continuance in the covenant is a gift of God and does not depend on any religious action on the part of the individual except the acknowledgment of God's gift and obedience. This will necessarily carry with it the blessed assurance of salvation. Man should not seek this by introspection, that is, by prying into the inner life. The author is an enemy of all mysticism, and seems to make no allowance for what the Dutch often call "gezonde mystiek." Even the experiential life of the Christian seems to deserve very little attention, and it is regarded as a serious mistake to seek assurance by self-examination and by a study of the inner life. Faith and real life in the covenant carries its own assurance with it. This opposition to the mystical may be regarded as the fundamental note of the book. A conspicuous feature of this, however, the author also warns against intellectualism. He objects to the idea that life in the covenant is a life determined by a set of intellectual concepts such as a systematic construction of the doctrine of the covenant. From the Scholasticism of the seventeenth century we must go back to our confessional standards, and from these to Scripture. Living in the covenant is living by the Word of God and not by some cold and lifeless dogmatical construction of the truth. Scripture language should be used in describing our religious experiences.

We quite agree with much that is said in this book. It contains a good deal that deserves appreciation. Its emphasis on the necessity of living by the Word of God is wholesome, and its warning against false mysticism is a much-needed corrective in some Christian circles and may have a beneficent influence. At the same time we cannot refrain from making certain critical remarks. While the author is evidently on the whole rather well-informed, it seems that he has not always thought things through and does not always see the implications of his statements. In his zeal for "living by God" he underestimates the importance of seeing the truths of Scripture in their logical coherence. His opposition to mysticism, while perfectly intelligible, is certainly one-sided. In one place it seems as if it is merely opposition to the use of the word "mystic" as a substitute for more scriptural terms, but the rest of the book clearly shows that he minimizes, if not depreciates, the importance of the experiential life. Life in the covenant certainly yields religious experiences, and Scripture justifies our
taking note of them with great care. The author seems to have little use for introspection and self-examination with a view to the assurance of salvation. For him it means that we are seeking the ground of salvation in ourselves; but this is not necessarily so. Both the Bible and our Confessions teach us to search our hearts diligently, in order that we may derive assurance from the fruits of faith. His deprecating statements about religion (godisdienst) and religiousness reminded us repeatedly of Barth, who speaks in exactly the same vein; and yet the author does not want to be a Barthian. For him, as well as for Barth, religion seems to be almost necessarily work-righteousness.

For these reasons, and for others that might be mentioned, we cannot help feeling that this book, which contains a good deal of excellent material, is yet one-sided in its presentation. The author has not always expressed himself with due care, and failed to do justice to the subjective side, the experiential element, of the life in the covenant.

L. Berkhof.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The author has rendered the word of Bible students a distinct service by making this splendid work on the Book of Revelation available to all. It is a thesis submitted to and accepted by The Pikes Peak Bible Seminary in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the doctor’s degree.

About one-fourth of this volume is devoted to the study of the Book as a whole. In it one finds among many other values a successful attempt to depict the essential unity of the Apocalypse. This is important. It enables him to do, what he ought to do and did do, to-wit, to interpret each part or detail in the light of the whole. That makes for a uniform explanation throughout the entire book. It is the greatest safeguard against many of the vagaries of interpretations of detail that have bewildered many a devout scholar. Principles of interpretation, same and definite, have been adopted and consistently applied. Another virtue that has been altogether too little honored by students of Revelation.

The author has adopted what has been called the synchronistic, parallelistic or (what he prefers to call) the progressive parallelistic method of interpretation. It is a method that has been growing in appreciation among all orthodox scholars in recent years. The writer has wisely insisted that the Book must be interpreted in the specific historical setting in which it was produced, thereby doing full justice to the organic conception of inspiration.

The results of the application of these methods and principles is a work that has been correctly called by Dr. Robinson, “sane, sensible, serious, scholarly, sanguine.”

The very fact that the work is scholarly with an appenpendage of numerous valuable notes may frighten some of the more timid souls. But there is no reason for fear for it has been whipped into a form of remarkable simplicity. The author talks with his readers, formulating their questions for them and then answering them. There is joy and profit in store for the students of the Book of Revelation if they will but avail themselves of the contents of this work.
or would-be-liberalism. He is of the good old orthodox type, but there is nothing musty about his views.

Het Kindergebed. By Rev. J. Overduin. J. H. Kok N. V., Kampen. 32 pp. Price $0.45. Though the author is no psychologist he proves to be well acquainted with modern psychology. The essay is unique in that it is based on a scientific investigation of the value of prayer for children in good Calvinistic homes. We might almost call his Calvinism human. But it is certainly not humanistic.

De Sacramenten. By Dr. K. J. Cremer. J. H. Kok N. V., Kampen, 1929. 32 pp. Price $0.45. The author makes an interesting distinction between sacramentalism, i.e. the movement to introduce more and more ritual and music into the divine services, and a true valuation of the sacraments. This booklet is also of importance for America where ritualism is making its inroads even into Reformed churches.

Jesus’ Geboden en de Samenleving. By Dr. H. N. Riddesbos. J. H. Kok N. V., Kampen. 32 pp. Price $0.45. This pamphlet discusses the value of the ethical and sociological principles laid down by Christ. Especially of interest is his discussion of the Sermon on the Mount of which biblical humanists have made so much.

De Zonde Tegen den Heiligen Geest. By Dr. A. D. R. Polman. Bosch en Keuning N. V., Baarn. 31 pp. Price $0.45. The old topic of the sin against the Holy Spirit is treated in a new way. The approach of the author is psychological and historical, his style is crisp and personal, but his views are sound. An excellent popular treatise.

Jacob Revius. Bloemlezing uit zijn Gedichten. By L. M. Hugen. Bosch en Keuning N. V., Baarn, 1939. 30 pp. Price $0.45. This is an anthology from the poems of the Calvinist poet Revius, one of the translators of the Staten-Bijbel. Long neglected, Revius is now coming to his own. His poems are full of comfort and beauty.

Blijdhap in God. By Rev. W. A. Wiersinga. J. H. Kok N. V., Kampen. 32 pp. Price $0.45. In these days of pessimism and of uncertainty as to the future of mankind it is refreshing to turn to this author who discusses how we can regain the optimism of faith. A splendid booklet.


If He Should Fail. By C. M. Savage. Zondervan Publishing House. 143 pages. Price $1.00. This Baptist minister offers to the public a dozen sermons such as are used for revival purposes. They are vivid, fresh, forceful, and interesting to read. Exegetically they are not strong.

Sermon Seed in the Psalms. By D. A. McDuffay. Zondervan Publishing House. 140 pages. Price $1.00. From Edinburgh a Baptist minister greets us with a series of outlines on all the Psalms. They constitute suggestive helps for whomsoever may be called upon to discuss “The Treasury of David.”


Unto All. By H. W. Ferrin, Pres. of the Providence Bible Institute. Zondervan Publishing House. 158 pages. Price $1. A series of meditations presenting Christ from twenty points of view, as the only One who can satisfy a person no matter what his profession and condition may be.

The Holy Spirit. By B. H. Carroll. Zondervan Publishing House. 174 pages. Price $1.50. Though Carroll has been dead for a quarter of a century, yet his influence lives on. Though he is dead, he still speaks. From time to time another work of his appears. This volume is the latest. It is a clear and devotional presentation of the scriptural teachings on the Holy Spirit.

Right Here At Home. By Frank S. Mead. The Friendship Press, New York City. 182 pages. Price $1.00. A very interesting work showing what missionaries have done right here in America among the Indians, the Blacks, the Mountainiers, and many others. This is not an exhaustive treatise, but a stimulating one, written in the hope that others may be inspired to go out and do so much that still remains to be done.

Evidences that Jesus is the Messiah. By F. Hamilton. Published by Rev. Frank Hamilton, Ventnor, N. J. 125 pages. A volume in which numerous biblical passages are brought together, and so arranged as to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of every reference, however remote, to the Messiah.

The Gospel in the Pentateuch. By Herbert Lockyer. The Bible Institute Colportage Ass’n, Chicago. 125 pages. This is a book designed for study purposes. It is an outlined study of the first books of the Bible with a view to leading the student to see the Gospel there. Appropriate questions for discussion close each chapter.

Vocation. By Rowland Hogben. The Inter-sectarian Fellowship, London. 111 pages. Price, one shilling. This is a series of Christian studies that is calculated to help the Christian young man or young woman to settle their selection of and their attitude toward their prospective vocations. For twelve years the author has been working with the youth facing the problem of life’s work.

Calvin’s Institutes. Written and published by Rev. O. E. Sunden, San Antonio, Texas. This is a pamphlet of 42 pages. The Presbyterian minister believes that a revival of Calvinism is near. He hopes that his brief abridgement of and commentary on the Institutes may stimulate in a practical and suggestive way this longed-for revival.

More Sermons From Life. By Clarence E. Macartney. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 204 pages. Price $1.50. Herewith one of the princes of orthodox pulpitors presents eighteen stirring sermons based on his experience in the ministry. They are not biblical studies. They are characterized by being interesting in content and style, devotional and profitable unto Christian living.

The Greatest Words in the Bible and in Human Speech. By Clarence E. Macartney. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 195 pages. Price $1.50. This is a series of fifteen discourses on single words of the Bible. Here are some of the chapter headings: The Saddest Word: Sin; The Most Beautiful Word: Forgiveness; The Word That Never Comes Back: Now; The Hardest Word: No; The Most Mysterious Word: Why? These essays are very interesting and instructive. They present the great truths of redemption in a strikingly original fashion. We heartily recommend this book; not, however, as a book of sermons, for these essays can hardly be called that, but as an excellent volume for devotional reading.

William Hendriksen.