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the **CALVIN**
ORUM

CLOUDS OVER HOLLAND
Discussion and Controversy

CHRISTIAN SCIENTIFIC METHOD
A Vital Problem

GOD'S ANTITHESIS
The Ultimate Disjunction

THE RECONCILIATIONISTS
Some Serious Errors

JACOB CATS
Dutch Calvinistic Poet

EASTER
In Quiz and Verse

Books

Verse

Letters

VOL. V, NO. 8

**TWO DOLLARS
A YEAR**

MARCH, 1940

The CALVIN FORUM

Published by the Calvin Forum Board of Publication

THE CALVIN FORUM

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Address all subscription and circulation cor-
respondence to: THE CALVIN FORUM, Business
Office, at the same address.

THE CALVIN FORUM is published monthly, ex-
cept bi-monthly from June to September.
Subscription price: Two Dollars per year.

Entered as second-class matter October 3,
1935, at the Post Office at Grand Rapids,
Michigan, under the Act of March 3, 1897.

VOLUME V, NO. 8

MARCH, 1940

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EDITORIALS

What is Brewing in The Netherlands?

SOMETHING has been brewing among brethren of the Reformed Faith in the Netherlands for some time. Theological and philosophical discussions have been the order of the day there for several years. Charges of departure from the faith have been advanced, if not against definite individuals, at least against a definite group and the leaders in that group. Acrimonious debate has filled many an issue of some of the religious weeklies of the Reformed (Gereformeerde) Churches. Books and brochures have appeared in which ministers, theologians, and philosophers have formulated their views and in many cases militated against views of other leaders in that same communion.

Surely this subject is of interest to us in the United States. Quite apart from the fact that many of us have their historical roots and spiritual background in the Netherlands, there are at least two reasons why every reader of THE CALVIN FORUM ought to be interested in what is going on in the Netherland Reformed Churches today. It is beyond dispute that no Reformed group in the world is so well-grounded in theology and so intelligent about its religious convictions as these Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, with their two institutions of higher learning: the Theological Seminary at Kampen, and the Free Reformed University at Amsterdam. These discussions and controversies are carried on by the spiritual sons of Kuyper and Bavinck—to mention no others—and the keenness and resourcefulness with which these men write and speak on the deeper issues of the Reformed Faith is the product of more than a half century of scholarly labors.

The second reason why these issues and discussions should command our respectful attention is found in the importance which they possess for the development of the Reformed Theology, and not for Theology only, but for the whole range of a Calvinistic conception of truth in the realm of Philosophy and Science as well. The differences which are gradually beginning to assume more or less definite outline and shape in the discussion surely concern fundamentals and the choice of the one or the other line of thought and emphasis will have far-reaching

significance for the development of the Reformed Faith and the Reformed Churches.

Because of the significance of these issues now warmly discussed pro and con in the Lowlands—a discussion which has hardly been diminished even by the present serious international situation—we hope to devote a series of editorials to this subject. The attempt will be made to enable the readers of our magazine to judge intelligently of the issues involved. From the nature of the case, we cannot assume that the average reader of our magazine is informed on this subject. Those who are theologians and are able to read the Dutch literature on the subject are in a favorable position and may in many cases have made up their mind on some, if not all, of these questions. Of the rank and file of our readers this, however, is not true. We shall hence undertake to write a number of informative editorials on the subject during the coming months.

By way of introduction we should like to make a few general observations.

First, the issue at stake has nothing to do with a drift toward Modernism. It would be a mistake to characterize what for lack of a better term we might call “the new departure” as in any way leaning toward Modernism. In fact, the new movement lies—psychologically speaking—rather in the direction of greater rigidity and more exclusiveness than the old, though one must be careful not to draw wrong inferences from this statement. At any rate, the intellectual differences do not lie in the plane of Orthodoxy versus Modernism.

Second, this is not a quarrel between the leaders of two educational institutions. Some are under the impression that the controversy can be explained from the submerged but not obliterated differences between the two groups which united in 1892 to form the present communion known as the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. It is true that some of these differences between the two original groups are being revived in this controversy. It is also true that the two outstanding controversialists and leading opponents in this doctrinal struggle are the professors of Dogmatics at the Kampen Theological School and at the Free University. But it would be an error to explain the controversy from this historical difference. Any such attempt is at once ruled out by the simple fact that other leading

men at both institutions are on the opposite side of the fence.

Third, it is important to remember that this controversy may be said in a way to be fought out on two fronts. The one is the ecclesiastical, the other the more academic. The one comes to the fore in the religious weeklies, the other in the lecture hall and in theological and philosophical books. Some of the controversy in the religious weeklies has been acrimonious. Some of these controversialists—possibly it would be more correct to say, one of them—have brought extraneous issues into the discussion, have played on prejudices and animosities of bygone days, and must be judged generally responsible for dragging the controversy at times down to a level which has given the General Synod occasion twice to admonish the brethren on the unbrotherly character of their polemics. We should not allow ourselves to be influenced by this unfortunate circumstance. Let us remember that leading men on both sides of this controversy regret this acerbity in the discussion as much as anyone of us would who lives far from the scene of battle with its peculiar historical sensitivities and personal idiosyncrasies. We will do well not to allow ourselves to be guided by those who delight in stirring up animosities and who make their appeal to factionalism and emotionalism. The noisy ecclesiastical front has been in the limelight to such an extent, that some are in danger of forgetting the other front. We will do well to listen to those who in a dispassionate way can set forth the issues involved, on whatever side of the fence they may happen to be.

Finally, it will be helpful to distinguish between issues of a purely scholarly and academic kind and those which bear directly upon creedal deliverances of the church. It is becoming increasingly clear that many of the discussions deal with problems which must be threshed out in the academic atmosphere and in scholarly works. These are issues on which the two sides must each set forth their views in the class room and in scientific treatises, and for the discussion of which there must be academic freedom. Ultimately on these issues it is hoped the truth will be found, but it can be found only after an intellectual development and scholarly discussion of some years. But there is also another aspect to this discussion. Many of the views expressed bear upon definite positions agreed upon by the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands in their confessional standards. At least that is the charge made by the one group against the other. Insofar as such conflict with the creed is substantiated, it is not a matter of mere academic discussion but also and very really a matter of loyalty to or departure from the historic Reformed position laid down in the creed of the Church. It is with this latter aspect of the problem that the adjourned session of the General Synod will deal some time this year.

C. B.

Superstition Sanctioned by Prayer

A FRIEND of the editor recently received the following chain letter from an unknown source. We pass it on in its original form.

The good luck of Flanders was sent to me and I am sending it on to you. This chain started in Flanders by an American officer and is going around the world 4 times and the one who breaks it will have bad luck. Copy this letter and see what will happen to you in five days after mailing it. Send this copy and four (4) others to the people you wish good luck. It must be mailed in 24 hours after receiving it. Mrs. Field received \$5000 five hours after mailing, but Dr. Koran who broke the chain lost everything he had. Here is definite proof for good luck sent by prayers. Good luck to you in five days after mailing! ! ! !

DO NOT Break The Chain! ! ! !

Cross off the top name and add yours.

Then followed eight names, practically all of good Yankee stock apparently and living in Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington.

It is pathetic to notice the naive faith with which some people receiving such chain letters follow out the instructions. The less people believe in God, the more they fall into superstition. The less the providence of the Almighty God of the Scriptures is a reality to them, the more readily they make themselves idols after their own liking. These people with their good luck god—many of them probably Christians in name—stand on a lower plane than the savages in the heart of Africa who, though living on the same "do ut des" principle as these modern pagans, at least still call upon the imagined deities of their polytheistic pantheon.

Let Christians not play with God-dishonoring superstition and belief in good luck! C. B.

The League of Evangelical Students

THE recent annual convention of the League of Evangelical Students held at Philadelphia may well serve to direct the attention of our American Christian public to the important work carried on by organizations such as this one in the student world of today. This League is a student organization composed of various chapters on the campuses of many colleges, universities, seminaries, and Bible schools. Its aim is to strengthen the faith of those Christian students who find themselves caught in the currents and cross currents of modern thought as expounded and propagated in class rooms and from university platforms.

In many cases students with a Christian background are thrown into the vortex of modern and modernistic—sometimes even naturalistic—thought as propounded by their university professors and as a result a tremendous pressure is brought to bear

upon their faith. Such groups of students the League seeks to organize into chapters who make it their aim by prayer, Christian fellowship, and consecrated study to hold to and bear testimony for the Christian Faith in its biblical and orthodox expression.

On campuses where the atmosphere is more congenial toward the Christian Faith of the Scriptures chapters do not usually have the struggle which marks the life of Christian students in our larger universities. Such chapters frequently go out to do deputation work among students in neighboring colleges. A General Secretary travels from school to school to strengthen the faith of such bands of Christian students and to be a help to them in their organization and activities. The League of Evangelical Students is facing a difficult battle on many campuses and is in need of the prayers of God's people who realize something of the subtle anti-Christian forces with which the college student of our day must contend.

The League is not the only orthodox Christian student organization of the kind. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of North America is doing a similar work. This organization is Canadian in origin but has in recent years expanded its activities into the United States. The matter of the cooperation of these two organizations and their possible merger was one of the subjects for discussion at the recent meeting of the League at Philadelphia. There is great need for the expansion of the work which these two Christian student organizations are carrying on among the Christian studentry of America.

C. B.

A Symposium on a Vital Problem

IF it be true as we contended in last month's leading editorial that our future as Reformed groups will, humanly speaking, depend largely upon the seriousness with which we address ourselves to building up a genuinely Calvinistic and scholarly world and life view in the face of the unbelieving scholarship of our day, it is apparent that Calvinistic educators and scholars must become more determined than ever to dig down to the rock-bottom fundamentals of their faith and exhibit their bearing upon every phase of science and culture.

This problem has in some form or other appeared repeatedly upon the pages of THE CALVIN FORUM from its initial issue on, and it promises to hold our attention also in the months that lie ahead. On another page there appears an article dealing with a specific aspect of this larger problem. Dr. Cornelius Jaarsma, the author of *The Educational Philosophy of Herman Bavinck*, himself an educator devoted to the fundamentals of the Calvinistic world and life

view, here discusses the question of the proper scientific method to be pursued on the basis of the Christian-theistic standpoint. A contribution to the discussion of this problem has recently also been made on the pages of *The Banner*, the weekly paper of the Christian Reformed Church. Dr. Van Til, professor at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia, started the ball rolling by an article whose main thrust was the valuable and significant contention that God has pre-interpreted every fact in the universe and that the Christian-theistic thinker is dealing with such a divinely pre-interpreted universe in all his study and research. Applying this to the scientific method of the Christian he further held that there are no "brute facts," seeing they are all divinely pre-interpreted. He then used the somewhat infelicitous illustration of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Genesis story and of Eve's sin in completely ignoring and denying the divinely given pre-interpretation of the "facts" connected with this tree and its fruit. This illustration was rather unfortunate. Not because it did not illustrate his main contention. It did. However, it was unfortunate and not to the point insofar as it was also to show that for the scientist in his Christian-theistic methodology his observed facts as a scientist are pre-interpreted. But *the scientist's facts are precisely not pre-interpreted for him in a special revelation the way the facts associated with the tree of the garden of Eden were.*

It was this difficulty with which two replies, also published in *The Banner*, dealt. The one was from the pen of a graduate of Calvin College, now studying science at the University of Missouri; the other from the hand of Professor Vanden Bosch of Calvin College. It is regrettable that this point has not since been cleared up. The two replies of Dr. Van Til have chiefly re-iterated his main contention, which is unassailable but was neither assailed by Mr. Verbrugge nor by Professor Vanden Bosch, and the difficulty that was raised threatens to be ignored. If this were done, it would be very regrettable. It will undoubtedly mean that the significance and force of Dr. Van Til's main contention will not strike home with many Christian students of natural science. These articles should not be the end but only the beginning of a valuable discussion. And that discussion should be in the nature of a symposium rather than of a debate. A debate always threatens to deteriorate into the I-am-right-you-are-wrong complex. A symposium offers the opportunity to learn from one another as well as to correct one another. We would like to help promote a symposium on this highly important subject, as well as on other, related, problems. Dr. Jaarsma's article, immediately following these editorials, is, we believe, a helpful contribution to such a symposium. We moreover also have in hand at least one other article dealing with the same problem. This will be placed in a later issue. Editorially we shall attempt to help solve some of the problems raised and to

guide the discussion, if at all possible, into fruitful channels. Also teachers of natural science, philosophy, and theology, who have a contribution to make will find the columns of our journal open to them.

The subject has many ramifications. Dr. Henry Stob is touching briefly (his article was originally delivered as a chapel talk) on another important element in a Christian-theistic methodology—that of the antithesis—in his contribution on another page. And there are many more questions that must

be looked into seriously if our teaching of theology and philosophy, the natural and the social sciences, psychology and education, history and the arts is to be guided, determined, and enriched by the ultimate truths of our holy Christian faith. C. B.

TO OUR READERS

Owing to the limitations of space we are once more forced to let the discussion on the synodical testimony concerning War, Pacifism, and the Conscientious Objector stand over.

Palm Sunday

On the way to Jerusalem rides a King
Meek on the foal of an ass;
His heralds are children in peasant rags—
Who lets this Sovereign pass?
He rides a pauper on borrowed steed
His army can brandish no spears
And yet there are palms of victory
For the King of Kings appears;
His power is patience, His justice divine
Not merely a moment's caprice;
Hosanna to heaven, most blessed is He
He preludes the kingdom of peace.
Are we on the way to Jerusalem with Him
Exultant with branches of palm
And shall we go forth to hard Herod's hall
And under false Pilate be calm?
Do we still follow outside of the camp
To help Simon carry the cross?
Then on to Golgotha at Mary's side
To share in her suffering and loss?
All this is involved—have we counted the cost
As we wave the branches of peace?
Or are we but singing the Palm Sunday songs
With the crowd, for a moment's caprice?
—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

Three Crosses

Three crosses against the Judean sky,
Three wretched souls condemned now to die,
Sinners mockingly standing by—
That once was Calvary.
Three crosses against the Judean sky,
Savior and sinners about to die;
One sinner saved by that penitent cry—
Down there on Calvary.
Three crosses against the Judean sky:
The Savior was there our freedom to buy;
One sinner was there to his Lord drawing nigh,
But—were you at Calvary?

* * * * *

Three crosses against the Judean sky:
The soul on that penitent's cross was I.
The Lord on His cross did not pass me by,
It was I—there on Calvary!
—M. M. JELLEMA.
Clifton, N. J.

Note: This poem was inspired by a sermon of the editor of The Calvin Forum.

Father, Forgive

"Father, forgive them," Jesus spoke
While He was bruised beneath their yoke
And cruel lacerations broke
In agonies of blood.
Tho mockingly they passed Him by
He made no self-compassioned cry
His attitude could verify
That they were not withstood.
That they might turn to God again
He laid his own life down for them
Quite willingly.
"Father, forgive"—they cannot know
How they must reap what here they sow
As grievously they wreak their woe
Upon the Son of Man.
"While yet we're sinners" Jesus loved;
So in this cry His love is proved;
The thief beside Him now is moved
And grasps salvation's plan.
Jesus' next word is clear: "Thou'lt be
Today in Paradise with Me,
Eternally."
Where, Friends, was ever such sweet grace?
O may we ardently embrace
This great example for our race
If we would be forgiven;
O let us pray more earnestly
To follow Christ implicitly
Nor harbor hatred sinfully
Lest we be barred from heaven.
For daily we increase our debt
If we forgive not, nor forget.
Father, forgive!

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

Christian Theism and the Scientific Method

Cornelius Jaarsma

Dean, State Teachers College, Slippery Rock, Pa.

RECENTLY an issue has been raised which merits serious reflection by those who accept the Reformed faith. As I understand the issue it can be stated somewhat as follows: *Can the Christian theist adopt the current scientific method without by implication denying or rejecting the system of thought to which he subscribes? In other words, can he consistently accept the current scientific method as a valid tool of research?*

By some it is claimed that for the Christian thinker all facts are God-interpreted and, therefore, the assumption on which the current scientific method proceeds that facts are "brute" facts when uninterpreted by man is in conflict with the Christian faith. Furthermore, the current scientific method by saying that any hypothesis is relevant fails to make a necessary distinction between eternal, absolute truth and the observations of science. Finally, science accepts the validity of experiment as a test for hypotheses, and thereby subjects divine revelation to the test of human experience. The current scientific method by accepting "brute" fact, the relevance of any hypothesis, and the validity of the experimental approach as a test for hypothesis rules the Supernatural Infinite God out of the universe. It declares itself autonomous in the search for truth, and in the final analysis the whole of human endeavor. This position has been implied in much of recent writings by certain Christian thinkers and has been of late explicitly defended by one of our leading Reformed theologians.

The importance of this issue to the Christian student cannot be overestimated. Many of us have high regard for the great achievements of the scientific method in the fields of the physical and biological sciences, in the medical field, of late also in the psychological fields of study. Even education has profited greatly by recent scientific studies. I have but to assert these facts; most of us will admit the beneficial results of these researches. But, though one may be greatly impressed by the results of modern scientific research, results are no final proof of the validity of the scientific method, unless one accepts the pragmatic philosophy that truth is determined by its consequences. A principle in theory

may work under given conditions as measured by observable results but fall short of certain meanings significant to certain ways of thinking. If the scientific method is found in the final analysis to deprive us of our spiritual faith by implicitly denying the existence of the God of our faith, the method will need critical reconstruction in the interest of truth, regardless of beneficial results.

The Scientific Method

Therefore, let us investigate the methodology of the sciences and explore it with relation to the philosophy of Christian theism. Essentially this represents the old conflict of religion and science. Some have resolved this conflict by making religion conform to their scientific outlook. Others refuse to reconstruct their religious views regardless of the force of scientific results. If the facts of science conflict with some views dogmatically held, "so much the worse for the facts." Likewise some make the scientific method supreme to the exclusion of a Christian theistic view of life and the world. Others find inherent weakness or conflict in the methodology of the sciences. Can it be that both are on the wrong track? Let us see.

We should first be clear in our terminology. Lack of proper definition of terms may becloud the issue and result in confusion. The use of the word science is often confusing, for it represents an abstraction. It is preferable to speak of the sciences. The sciences represent those fields of research which deal with demonstrable data, verifiable in experience. They are concerned with the quantitative phenomena of the universe. In this the sciences differ from the philosophical. The latter is concerned with meanings or interpretations. The sciences are descriptive in the formulation of hypotheses. Philosophy values and reasons beyond the descriptive phases of the scientific hypotheses. Sciences are classified as physical, biological, and social, depending upon the nature of their data. Whatever the nature of the data, however, the sciences use a common tool in the formulation of their conclusions. This tool is what is generally known as the scientific method. The important thing to note here is the term

method. A method is a tool and should be appraised according to its function as a tool or instrument. Some fail to distinguish between the method of scientific research and the philosophy of the sciences, and get in trouble as a result. Can it be that our difficulty with the scientific method has its source in the failure to distinguish between a methodology and a philosophy? Let us explore this a little more carefully.

Some speak of the "current" scientific method as though contemporary scientific methodology differs essentially from scientific research of a generation or more ago. The present-day scientific method is a *highly refined technique* which finds its early beginnings in Bacon's *Novum Organum*. Starting as a mode of reasoning, called induction, it became refined in the process of its use, first in the physical sciences, especially physics, and subsequently in the biological sciences.

This highly refined technique of research has a twofold objective, namely to control the objects of its investigation, and, where conditions are beyond our control, to predict events or conditions for our adjustment by description of the phenomena of observation. We build suspension bridges to convey modern traffic, greater reservoirs to provide water for communities, etc., as a result of exact calculation of data of our observation. The germ theory of disease has paved the way for much beneficial experimentation. Though we cannot control the weather (everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything about it—Mark Twain) science can observe the meteorological phenomena and predict with relative accuracy the change of atmospheric conditions. All this is done by description of the phenomena of observation and continuous verification of these hypotheses.

Assumptions of Scientific Methodology

The methodology of the sciences is based on certain assumptions. The chief among them is the reality of the world of our experience. The objective world which we sense is outside of the individual mind and our perception of it corresponds on the whole to its characteristics. Without this assumption all knowledge of the external world becomes an impossibility. Science must posit a world of external reality to make its search for truth valid.

The Christian theist cannot consistently quarrel with this first major assumption. He views the world as a plurality of existences, of facts. To be sure, this world of great variety, this finite plurality of facts is God-interpreted for He has brought it all into being. The Christian expects to find the thought of God in the objective world of experience. This is the same as saying that God has revealed Himself in nature. This is knowledge by faith. The human mind, however, being finite, is a being among the plurality of finite beings, distinct to be sure but one among many. Mind has the capacity of experienc-

ing the external world which is unknown and therefore uninterpreted by man prior to experience. Men can acquire factual knowledge of the objective world of plural existence.

The second assumption of the scientific method has reference to the capacity of human mind to formulate in descriptive terminology the results of his observation and experience. For example, the theory of gravitation represents a description of the phenomena of factual relationships. The hypothesis of the scientific method is no more than the attempt of the scientist to state symbolically in language the results of his observation. This requires interpretation and is, therefore, subject to all the fallacies of human reasoning. Any hypothesis is relevant insofar as it conforms to the facts of experience. To deny the relevance of such hypotheses is further to shut the door to valid knowledge of the objective world.

Again the Christian theist cannot consistently object to the scientist's attempt to state what he observes in descriptive language, as long as he confines himself to his observation. The results of the scientist's observation may be challenged by further description of more facts and, perhaps, under different conditions. But then the hypothesis is reformulated and the revised hypothesis becomes a key to further research. The point is that an hypothesis is relevant as long as it adheres to the facts of experience.

A third assumption upon which the current scientific method bases its research is the validity of experimentation as a test for the hypothesis. The scientist is not satisfied with mere statements of an hypothesis for he realizes the limitations of his own observation and the interpretation thereof. The hypothesis must be put to the test under controlled conditions. Exceptions must be reduced to the minimum, variables should be taken into account, and a given set of conditions must be controlled.

Why should the Christian theist object to this third assumption? If the scientist has adhered to the spirit of the scientific method, he has confined himself strictly, as far as is humanly possible, to the range of his field, to the description of the phenomena of experience. Interpretation was necessary, but was confined to data at hand and not generalized to the irrelevant or even less relevant. To deny the validity of this third assumption likewise shuts the door to the knowledge of the factual world.

Steps in the Scientific Method

Scientific methodology proceeds along a well-defined course. In the course of experience a problem arises, a difficulty that calls for solution. Life is full of such, both practical and theoretical. The first stage of research demands the isolation or delimitation of this problem. Having done this to conform to the requirements of his technique, the scientist assembles, selects, and organizes relative data, data that are concerned with the difficulty at hand.

In the course of his observation he begins to formulate a tentative conclusion—this is the hypothesis—which he puts to a test of more data and varying conditions. If the hypothesis works, he may announce his findings but always accompanied by a full account of his research, for the validity of the hypothesis depends upon the technique of research employed and the data used. The current scientific method is indeed a highly refined technique, so technical in fact that it takes special training to make any attempt at its successful use.

The point here is that we are dealing with a refined tool, a technique which has but one aim, the description of the world of experience according to the observed nature of its data. As a result, these descriptive means of control and prediction can be evolved, but as a tool of research the scientific method confines itself to description.

Limitations of the Scientific Method

Refined as this technique is, it is subject to important limitations. The method is first of all limited by the data of a given category or field of research. The physical sciences deal with a different set of data than do the social sciences or the biological sciences. The facts of radioactive disintegration differ from the facts of the emotional reactions of a biological organism in kind. The same is true of the social phenomenon of government. In every case the scientist is facing a qualitative distinction among data. Furthermore, relevancy of the hypothesis is determined by the kind of data which are being explored. Huysenberg's hypothesis of indeterminacy is based upon certain observations of electronic behavior within the atom. The hypothesis is relevant to phenomena observed only. Extending the hypothesis beyond these phenomena invalidates it as an hypothesis and extends the conclusion into the field of speculation.

Not only is the scientific method limited by the data of its manipulation and by the relevance of its hypothesis, but it is likewise restricted in its operation by its technique of testing or verification, namely, experimentation. In experiment the scientist puts to demonstrable test the conclusion of his observation. Within the field of physics this is relatively easy, witness what is done by light waves in modern photography. Among other kinds of data as those in the biological sciences this becomes much more difficult. How difficult this indeed becomes in the field of genetics. The difficulty is further increased in the social sciences. Accurate description becomes seemingly impossible when we reach the levels of meaning and purpose in human behavior.

When we enter the field of value, the refined technique of scientific exploration fails us, for the very essence of value is beyond scientific analysis. The scientific laboratory may prescribe a formula for high power explosives, but whether they will be used to uncover natural resources or to blow human

bodies to bits is not determined scientifically. In value we enter a sphere of rationality not of a scientific but of a philosophic and religious character.

The Source of Confusion

We see, therefore, the limitations of the current scientific method as a tool of research, of discovery of truth. It can discover only truth of a kind, not all truth, but truth it is just the same. The world of fact hitherto unknown to man is disclosed and put to use. Whether one is a Christian theist or an atheist the hypothesis of Huysenberg remains unaltered as an hypothesis until new facts or new relations among these facts make a revised hypothesis necessary.

It is when we enter the sphere of meaningful interpretation of these hypotheses in the field of value, or the field of knowledge of the whole of things that the Reformed faith of a Christian theist enters the picture. The scientific method as a tool of research remains unaltered, both as to its initial assumptions and as to its technique of procedure. The method as method is neither Christian nor non-Christian in itself no more than the pencil that is scribbling the initial draft of this article, but the one employing the method makes all the difference. Let us not make something subjective of the method, but let us beware lest the method be generalized into a philosophy.

I am inclined to believe that those who raise serious objections to the current scientific method fail to distinguish between method as a tool of research and the philosophy of the sciences. There is such a thing as a philosophy of the sciences. When the hypotheses of the sciences are generalized as a comprehensive interpretation of the universe and life values, the sciences have entered the field of philosophy and have gone far beyond the data of their own legitimate fields and relevance of their own hypotheses. To the philosophy of the sciences all facts are "brute," unknown to any one, uninterpreted. Such a philosophy may arrive at some non-descript cosmological concept of God at the best, but has by virtue of its own limitations closed its mind to values and meanings beyond scientific data.

It is at this point where the sciences and religious faith do come into open conflict. No Christian theist can for a moment permit his scientific hypothesis to get out of hand. His Christian faith causes him to approach the interpretation of the hypothesis with a mind open to the fullest possible revelation from the God-interpreted facts of a meaningful, purposeful universe. He truly "thinks the thoughts of God after Him."

The Scientific Method and a Calvin University

It is not the validity of the current scientific method as a highly refined tool of research which need concern us when we begin to think of a Calvin University. Perhaps such a university can make a

contribution to the scientific world by demonstrating how this great achievement can be made to function more effectively within its own limitations. A Calvin University would be in a position to assign this technique to its proper place and constitute a meaningful part of the search for truth on a larger scale.

We do not belong to those who believe as did the well-meaning pastor who in my Calvin days uttered this prayer of thanksgiving, "O, God wij danken U

dat wij al de waarheid hebben" (We thank thee, O Lord, that we have all the truth). God has all the truth by virtue of his own being. He has placed a variety of means at our disposal to reach out for truth. Our faith is one means. The scientific method is another. So is our rational interpretation of the related meaning of things. Only in a university such as a Calvin University can these various media be held in proper balance and given meaningful relationship.

God's Antithesis

The Ultimate Disjunction

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IT demands no careful scrutiny to discover that our lives, the lives of our fellow men, and the society we mutually constitute is full of divisions and oppositions. Wherever one looks one finds estrangement, enmity, and dislocation. The stream of history and nature is filled with cross currents; the fabric of life is torn and twisted; and we stand perpetually in the front line trenches of an internecine war. Instead of organic growth toward an harmonious whole, we see part threatening part and a divided cosmos standing in the token of antithesis.

Whence comes all this, we are tempted to ask? Why is nation arrayed against nation, capital against labor, nature against spirit, the strong against the weak, conservatism against liberalism, reason against faith, life against life, and neighbor against neighbor? Whence these rents and dualisms, these wars and strifes that all but characterize our lives? Whence, above all, that fundamental cleft that runs straight through the human race making of all men one of two: children of God, or enemies of Him, believers in the Christ, or revilers of his grace and mission?

To these and similar questions men of all ages have made answer. There was, for example, Heraclitus, who raised the principle of opposition to metaphysical dignity. Strife, he said, is the Father of all things, and Opposition the very law of our being. It is eternal and immutable, and by that token good. Through it new forms are constantly being called into being only to make place in their turn for better. It is the motor and mainspring of our existence, the energizing factor in our life, the vital spark that keeps us going. And it is uncaused. It always was and always will be. It is therefore idle to enquire after its origin and reason. And Heraclitus has had and still has his followers. Nietzsche saw in strife the avenue to the *Ueber-*

mensch, Darwin raised the struggle for existence to a law of nature, and Hegel dissolved the great antithesis in a process of synthetic logic.

* * * *

The Scriptures, however, present another view. "I will put enmity," saith the Lord, "between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed." What does that mean? Not, of course, that God is the author of evil. Nor, indeed, that he is author of pristine strife. The passage quoted does not introduce us to a sower of discord; it presents us infinite love in action. It is grace that speaks here, pure undeserved favor, as boundless and omnipotent as God himself. It is good to remind ourselves of that.

According to the testimony of the Scriptures, it is not some metaphysical principle, some eternal energy, or some indigenous law of nature that first elicited the strife and enmity, the duality and opposition that we see everywhere about us. In the beginning all things were good. In history's early dawn the whole creation served its maker, and the angel and the day-star sang together. Harmony was earth's bright token and heaven's shining crown . . . until, by one fell act of pride and disobedience the creature withdrew from under the dominion of his Lord and formed an enemy camp. Thenceforth two forces were at war.

Into this strife man too was eventually drawn. Created good and in God's own image, he walked at first with his maker, but tempted by Satan and following his example, he fell from his early allegiance and took up the sceptre against his Lord. Now he was one with the devils in their strife, one with the enemies of God. Thus was opposition born, and with it, death.

It is recorded that in that dark and tragic situation a light was kindled. Not a light emanating from some supposed remnant of goodness left in man, but a light ignited by infinite and redeeming love and phosphorescent with sovereign grace. God came into

the forfeited garden and the words he spoke became the Hope of the world. And those words were these: I will put enmity between Satan and the woman and between his seed and hers.

The bond that unites mankind with evil, God promises, I will break. In the enmity grown solid I will cause a division. Out from the doomed and fallen mankind I will call men and women to a new and glorious enmity, the enmity against Satan and Sin. Out of this death I will call forth life. Out of the forces of evil I will recruit forces of goodness and holiness, forces charged and equipped to wage relentless and ultimately victorious war against corruption. I will pour out my spirit upon men. I will call into life a new humanity to fight against the old. I will set righteousness against sin, light

against darkness, love against hate, goodness against evil, my Son against the father of lies.

This is the enmity God has set, this the division he has caused, this the antithesis he has established. There is no division as fundamental as this. This is the final and ultimate disjunction. On which side of it we stand can be determined only with reference to the Christ.

* * * *

We have entered the passion season. We shall be reminded in these days of the price he paid to loose his children from the bonds of sin. We shall trace his lone and bitter struggle against all the forces of hell. That struggle he won, assuring those who believe on him an ultimate and complete salvation, and reserving for those who reject him an everlasting night without a dawn.

The Reconciliationists

A Blasphemous Predestinarianism

Henry Schultze

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A RATHER remarkable theology has developed in connection with the work of the Concordantists, to whose peculiar method of Bible translation we devoted an article last month. Whether the Concordant Version of the Bible is responsible for this theology, or whether this theology accounts for the production of this peculiar version of the Scriptures is a point that may be open to debate. One thing is clear. One will need the Concordant Version to supply him with Scripture texts in support of the Reconciliationist theology. To this theology we now address ourselves.

Evil Not Necessarily Wrong

The fundamental tenet of the Reconciliationist is that all men shall be reconciled to God and that there is no such a thing as eternal punishment. Men, burdened with a conception like that, must have basic to their theology a very distinct conception of evil and of sin. Hence it is not surprising to hear from them: "Evil is not necessarily wrong." "Evil is from the hand of God." "Scripture knows no moral evil." "Evil needs no sacrifice." Such headings give us in capsular form the essence of their conception of evil. They find proof texts for such a position in many texts all borrowed from the O. T. (In the entire chapter that dealt with this matter I found not a single reference to a N. T. text. There is a reason for that, as will be indicated later on.) In these O. T. texts the evil is placed alongside of

the good, or the evil is credited to God. Jehovah saith, "I . . . create evil" (Isa. 45:7). "An evil spirit from Jehovah troubles Saul" (I Sam. 16:14). "Shall we receive good from the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10). These are samples of the type of texts selected to show the "neutral" character of evil. The position that every original word must always be translated by the same English word may suggest a justification for some such an idea. Now I may very well translate the Isaianic text referred to above as follows, "I, Jehovah, created the thing that is evil or the person who is evil." But such a possibility would be ruled out by the translation rule alluded to above, no matter how much the context and the teaching of the Bible as a whole may cry for it. However, this method got rid of at least one serious matter that stood in the way of an universal reconciliation and that saved God as the author of "moral" evil, by simply denying the moral aspect of evil.

There is a concession that the Greek equivalent or translation of the Hebrew word does "carry with it a moral taint." Its contexts, associated with the word evil, have given the word the moral bias which has gradually spread until it seems to taint the act of Jehovah himself. And immediately after this concession, we find the astonishing conclusion, "We may be sure, then that evil as spoken of in Scriptures, is an act which shatters and demolishes, and brings with it a train of trouble and distress. But

it is neither right or wrong in itself." But how can we be sure of that when it is granted that the N. T. word has "a moral taint"?

Sin is Not Sin

It will, of course, if we yield to this position, be necessary to reconstruct our conception of sin. Sin as usually held may stand in the way of a reconciliation which includes all men. "Sin is a miss, an error, a failure." So we are told. Our attention is called to a well-known fact, namely, that one of the principal N. T. words used to designate sin means etymologically "missing the mark." However, we are not instructed in the fact that the word meaning missing the mark simply calls attention to sin from the one angle of its effect, and it surely does not, nor does it intend to, bring to the fore the essential character of sin. And there are other words that are used to express the various aspects of sin such as, disobedience, transgression, lawlessness, etc. These other concepts must be conveniently forgotten in the interest of an etymological meaning of a word, or perhaps in the interest of a theology.

The source of sin (error, miss, failure) is boldly traced back to God. "Remembering our definition of sin; if sin's entrance was a mistake then God sinned!" "If God created Satan perfect and his defection was a surprise and a disappointment to God, then there is no use hiding behind mere words. He failed. . . . But this is all wrong. God never fails or sins." "Sin has an essential, though transient part, in God's purpose. God made due preparation for it, before it came." "Since sin must enter this scene and play its part, since it is essential to God's purpose, and absolutely under his control, since it will eventually change the universe from cold, independent creatures into a lovely family circle, and God from a distant Creator into an affectionate Father, it was by no means a mistake (a sin) on God's part when He created a creature who should not only commit a sin but scatter it in all creation." "Since sin is essentially a mistake, it is possible for a devout spirit to trace the origin of sin back through Adam to the Slanderer and see how God can be the first and only cause of all without the least taint upon his holy name." And so you have the problem of sin solved by making sin no sin. Have they ever read, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil" (Isa. 5:20)?

Calvary Was a Mistake

Now, it is clear that such a conception of sin and evil will not call for anything akin to the common doctrines of atonement held dear by the Christians the world over. And the Reconciliationists have the courage of their logic. "Man atones for misdeeds by good conduct. God demands another wrong to make a matter right." This must be an astonishing mistake! No it is frankly stated that "Two great mistakes mar the course of mankind during the eons: Adam's offense in Eden and Israel's murder of

Messiah on Golgotha." The second mistake corrected or corrects the first. This theory is worked out by showing how in the O. T. the sacrificial animals were killed in such a way as to be a mistake or a sin if you will. If they had been slaughtered for consumption or for their skins or for some other useful purpose, that particular lesson would not have been taught. So "God settles sin by sin." "He was made sin for us." "No man made him sin, and certainly Satan had no such laudable objective in mind. It was God who did it, and to such purpose that is justified and rectified all other sins." At the crucifixion men "knew not what they were doing. Had they known the monstrous mistake they were making they would never have had a hand in His murder. It was necessary that they should be ignorant." This is entirely God's drama. Men's sin in connection "with the crime of the cross is an essential factor in the revelation of God's heart."

Yes, but does it not reveal something else besides God's love? Does it not also reveal his holy wrath speaking in justice against the sins of mankind? And isn't it true that the greatness of the love of God toward sinners can in part be measured by the unworthiness of the objects toward whom it is directed? But somehow or other we must forget that phase of the cross that may interfere with the idea of punitive justice. That surely would be out of place if sin is not sin, but merely mistakes however horrible they may be. Here is a splendid summing up of this position which rules out the Christian conception of atonement. "Reconciliation calls for more than the mere cessation of sin. Sin has wrought such terrible havoc in the hearts of some of God's creatures that its mere absence will not suffice to win their affection. The relief will be great but the remembrance of its distress will rankle, until it is both repudiated and justified. At that time God will show how essential sin was in the past, and how non-essential in the future. It will be justified by its results. It will be repudiated because it will not only be unnecessary for any further revelation of God's heart, but positively subversive of God's glory and his creatures' good."

A Caricature of Predestination

It is of interest to universal reconciliation to emphasize God's absolute sovereignty and man's irresponsibility. The literature which I have perused is filled with evidences of these two basic positions. It fits nicely into the system. If God be, as he is declared to be, the sole responsible party for the sins or mistakes, it would seem to be unreasonable on the part of God to hold any man eternally responsible for them. He created evil. He settled the history of the world by his eternal plan. What he has said must come to pass, and it is not hard to find many texts that support this conception of absolute sovereignty on the part of God. But whether the manner of dealing with the doctrine was gotten from the Scriptures is another matter.

On the other hand, the adherents of this position speak of "The Phantom of the Freewill." It does not really exist. "What is really meant by the freedom of the will is the correspondence between heredity and environment. Lack of friction is taken for liberty." "What most perplexes us is the fact that man's will is always apparently opposed to the will of God. We do not recognize the fact that man is a mere creature, and, as such has not even the power to oppose God unless it has been implanted in him by the Creator." And thus the opposition to God's will on the part of man is charged against God himself. Could you want a clearer expression of this conception than the following? "In this connection I am reminded of the infidel who raised his hand aloft and dared God, if there be a God, to bring it down. It was a silly thing to do, for God wants hands raised against him now, and refuses to use force in compelling obedience." That's the God of the Concordantists, and we are but puppets erring crazily at His behest. How then can God be eternally angry with us?

Everlasting Punishment Becomes Eonian Punishment

The reader may have been wondering what these men would do with the many clear passages in the Bible that speak of everlasting life and everlasting punishment? To meet such possible difficulties they have developed what has been called the "eonian theory." "Eon" is the Greek word that has been translated in the N. T. in the sense of eternity. The "eonian theory" proposes that for the want of a good English word, we take this word over into our vocabulary and translation of the Bible. The Bible then speaks not of everlasting death and life, but of eonian life and eonian death. These words represent present states of existence. The Eon is considered to be a unit of time, and it is unquestionably so used at times in the N. T. But if once so used it must always be so used. That is one of the fundamental laws of translation adhered to by the Concordantists.

It is said that the Bible range of vision falls into three great divisions: "the pre-eonian, the eonian, and the post-eonian." Hence an eon must be actually contrasted with eternity. Eonian punishment is punishment within an eon or within time. "Judgment and punishment are corrective agencies, hence Scripture speaks of them as being eonian, that is belonging to the system of things belonging to an eon." There is, of course, no room for retribution in a system like that, and there is no use to carry the corrective measures over into the new world. And these corrective measures adopted by God for the eons will be successful. The absolute sovereign can take care of that. "No physiological defects, no mental limitations, no perversity of heart can hinder Adam's race from attaining that glorious pattern of manhood, of which the person of the risen man is the concrete expression."

Death is being abolished (so the Aorist is translated). When it will be abolished there will be no power of death to keep anyone in bondage. With the abolition of death, all corrective measures adopted by God will have been done away with.

As one can expect with a system of this sort, the adherent will use to good advantage such texts as Rom. 5:18: "So then as through one offense unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness unto all men unto justification of life." Thus the problem of sin and redemption is placed wholly outside ourselves. Each depends upon an individual act fraught with universal consequences. I Cor. 15:22 "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all be made alive." I Tim. 2:4 "God willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of truth." Such passages could be used by them with telling effect if it were not for the fact that they must be interpreted in the light of other very clear passages in the Bible that speak of a great and impassible division between two very definite classes of people.

Judas One of God's Elect

Let me exhibit this interesting and increasingly popular conception of the final complete reconciliation by picturing its effects in the case of Judas. His case is repeatedly mentioned in their literature. Judas, we are told, was one of the elect in a very special sense. He was selected by God for this sorry rôle of traitor. It had to be done. God had already indicated that and had already settled that it was to be done by this particular character. Indeed, the giving of the morsel of bread by Jesus to Judas was a token of special esteem. Judas did not care to do it. Indeed, he would not have done it except a higher power, namely Satan, had entered him and then he did the dastardly deed. Then the Lord singles him out for special attention, and he at once receives the urge to go out and do it. Before his conscience can act, he hears the voice of Jesus urging him to go out and do it quickly. It had to be done, for God said so. Jesus fell in with divine predestination. It must needs be done. "Ideal were it for Him (Jesus) if that man (Judas) were not born." (This is the Concordant translation of Mark 14:21). Judas is not punished with retribution. God wanted it so. But he has been resting in the hands of death, oblivious to all that takes place in the meantime, until death will be abolished and he too will be received with the hosts of unbelievers in the eternal fellowship of the Father. This same idea of the rôle of Judas was a few years ago reflected in a popular devotional hour conducted by one of the largest radio stations in America. Here are just a couple of citations from it:

"And when Christ
Felt the death hour creep with sullen drunken lurch, He said to
Peter, "Feed my sheep and build my holy Church." He gave to
each
The special task that should be his to do, but reaching one I
hear

Him ask, "What shall I give to you?" Then Judas in his hot desire,
 Said "Give me what you will." Christ spoke to him with words of fire,
 "Then, Judas, you must kill one whom you love, one who loves
 You, as only God's Son can. This is the work for you to do to save
 The creature man." "And men to come will curse your name and hold
 You up to scorn; in all the world will be no shame like yours;
 this
 Is love's thorn.
 It was not death that Judas found, upon a kindly tree;
 The man was dead long ere he bound his throat in final fee. And
 Who can say if on that day when gates of pearl swing wide,
 'Christ
 Did not go his honored way with Judas at his side? I think
 Somewhere a table round owns Jesus at its head, and there
 the saintly
 Twelve are found who followed where he led. And Judas sits
 down with
 The rest, and none shrinks from his hand, for there the worst
 is as the
 Best, and there they understand. And you may think of Judas,
 friend,
 As one who broke his word, whose neck came to a bitter end
 for giving
 Up his Lord. But I would rather think of him as the little
 Jewish
 Lad, who gave young Christ, heart, soul, and limb and all the
 Love he had."

This is the doctrine of the reconciliationists. Watch for it. It will be coming your way, if you have not already met it.

NOTE: The citations above are taken from two pamphlets published by the Concordant Publishing Concern (2823 East Sixth Street, Los Angeles, Cal.), entitled: *Evil, Its Origin, Purpose, and End*, by A. E. K., and: *All in All: the Goal of the Universe*. The lines of verse on Judas were presented over Radio Station WLS, Morning Devotions, March 14, 1935.



Like Unto Dust

Like unto dust, the *Son of God*
 When He became the Son of Man,
 And in the grave they laid Him low
 Unmoved by pride or shame.

But He arose, henceforth the dust
 And every mortal thing
 Must do His bidding—He arose
 Victor, immortal King.

Bring forth the flowers from the sod
 Make bright the Easter day
 Because the Rose of Sharon blooms
 Unvanquished from the clay.

Lord Jesus, come into my heart
 To triumph over sin
 Let this poor dust too be transformed
 O Jesus, enter in!

—J. G. G.

Easter Quiz

"And if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain."

—I Corinthians 15:14.

Why is Easter our outstanding religious holiday?
 Why do churchmen of every shade and (mirabile dictu!) even those who feel like homeless fin-
 bearers in church, never fail to attend Easter
 Sunday?—

Why do shop windows, newspapers, magazines,
 lilies, new hats, and endless radioed programs never
 allow us to forget that it is Easter?—

Why do people the world over, sincerely or in-
 sincerely, choose Easter Sunday as the day to make
 public avowal of their faith?—

IF CHRIST HATH NOT BEEN RAISED!

How explain the Church and Christianity with its
 multiple and multifarious influences?—

Why do people, irrespective of faith, maintain
 standards of morality?—

Why do people who do not believe anything else
 about Jesus insist on seeking to understand and fol-
 low His "ethics" or "way of life"?—

Why do we keep any ethical standards at all?—

IF CHRIST HATH NOT BEEN RAISED!

Where would we find the culture and refinement
 that the world has received through the church
 throughout the ages?—

Where would we look for the ethics of Christian-
 ity?—

Where is, and what is Christianity?—

Why carry on social welfare work?—

Why provide YMCA's, YWCA's, Rescue Missions,
 Relief Agencies?—

Why try to make life happier, healthier, better?—

Why try to inject Christian, Biblical principles
 into life?—

Why maintain the sanctity of the home?—

Why build schools and seek to improve educa-
 tion?—

IF CHRIST HATH NOT BEEN RAISED!

Where can we look for hope for the future?—

Where will we find anything but bleak pessimism?

Why do we honor those who live self-sacrificingly
 to sponsor a great cause or perform a great task?—

IF CHRIST HATH NOT BEEN RAISED!

And now, will you repeat your question, please?

"Is it necessary, in order to keep the broad essen-
 tials of the Christian faith, to accept the Bible as
 historically accurate?"

"And if Christ hath not been raised, your faith
 is vain, ye are yet in your sins."

—I Corinthians 15:17.

—ALA BANDON.

Jacob Cats (1577-1660)

Holland's Greatest Epigrammatist

Henry J. Van Andel
Professor of Holland Literature, Calvin College

THE heyday of Young Calvinism in the Netherlands has known seven great poets: Marnix, creator of the Dutch national hymn which strikes a decided Calvinist note; Valerius, greatest national folk song poet; Cats, greatest Dutch epigrammatist; Huygens, keenest satirist of the country; Breeroo, finisher of the most delicate spiritual songs after his conversion; Revius, sturdiest and profoundest of Dutch sonnettists; and Luyken, most poetical of all mystics. It may be true that all these authors are more analytical, lyrical, and subjective than synthetic, epical, dramatic, and objective, but then they are a good deal like the modern poets, and should not, for that reason, be condemned as of a lower rank. It may also be that they are not first of all seekers of beauty, but seekers of truth. But it is not true that they do not stir us. Their best works are the best testimony that Calvinism is not foreign to poetry.

Jacob Cats, whose maxims and stories are the embodiment of Calvinistic ethics and wisdom, was by profession a lawyer and an engineer. As a true Zealander, he first served his own province, as a city attorney of Middelburg. Then he was called to that same office in the city of Dordrecht, one of the greatest Dutch trading centers, and finally he became pensionary of the Republic, which meant as much as prime minister and treasurer today. In 1627 he was even made ambassador to London where he straightened out some difficulties between England and France, for which he received the golden chain of St. George.

As an engineer he became a millionaire by making polders in England and in Zealand, where still certain towns like Catshoek and Catszand are named after him. And when he had bought a plot of land in the dunes near the Hague he built himself a villa, *Sorghvliet*, which means carefree, which he surrounded with an extensive garden, and where he received hundreds of his friends during his ripe old age.

As a poet he was the most famous of epigrammatists of his day and age. He was the leader of the school of Dordrecht whose purpose was to edify and to entertain the masses rather than a small set of aristocratic souls. He had even many followers among Remonstrants and Catholics. Such a great place he conquered in the heart of the Dutch, that in every religious home—and there were many in those days—the voluminous *Statenbijbel* and the massive octavo edition of *Vader Cats* were found

side by side, and were really the only books that were continuously read.

In the nineteenth century his reputation was marred by men like Potgieter, Huet, Van Vloten and other liberals who were too prejudiced to appreciate him at his best, that is as a story teller, but above all as the unequalled author of hundreds of epigrams which have found their way in the Dutch vocabulary. Here are a few of his little jewels, untranslated, and dressed up in modern spelling:

1. Wie maar één boekje heeft gelezen,
Dat placht een neus-wijs mensch te wezen.
2. Het puntje van een gauwe pen
Is 't felste wapen, dat ik ken.
3. Vroeg wijs, vroeg rot,
Vroeg wijs, vroeg zot.
4. Zijt gij goedsmoeds,
Gij doet wat goeds.
5. Kent en verzint,
Eer dat je mint.
6. God beidt lang,
Maar wreekt strang.

The last one is a version of: The mills of God grind slowly, but his judgment is sure to come.

It took a genuine Calvinist like Dr. Abraham Kuyper to restore Cats to honor as a poet, and now even liberals publish anthologies to glorify the greatest Dutch epigrammatist. It is true that Cats is often lengthy and tedious, and even that from time to time he recites lines that grate on our ears, and that might have been better left unsaid, but Father Cats was never profane or salacious, he was a keen observer of human nature, a great pedagog and teacher, an excellent story teller and a marvelous fashioner of precious rhymes and maxims of homely wisdom. Father Cats strengthened the Christian home, school and church. He inspired two other great poets, Bilderdijk and Guido Gezelle. He is deserving of a new anthology, containing the best of his epigrams and stories. In his day he was read in English, Swedish, Danish, and German. His greatest work, *The Mirror of the Old and the New Times*, should be done in English for our young American and British Calvinists; and his epigrams should be quoted continuously in our Calvinist weeklies and monthlies. Father Cats belongs to the host of great didactic poets which King Solomon led through the ages. He strikes diamonds out of the rock of Christian experience and he does not leave a single field of human endeavor unexplored. He is the greatest Dutch, and the greatest Calvinistic moralist among the poets.

Around the Book Table



A CONTRIBUTION TO OLD TESTAMENT SCHOLARSHIP

DE "WERKERS DER ONGERECHTIGHEID" IN DE INDIVIDUEELE PSALMEN. EEN BEOORDEELING VAN MOWINCKEL'S OPVATTING. *Academisch Proefschrift . . . door Nicolaas Herman Ridderbos. Kampen. J. H. Kok N. V., 1939. pp. 376.*

WITH this work, Dr. N. H. Ridderbos achieves a place among the ranks of the leading, scholarly writers, in his chosen field of specialization,—Old Testament Science. For it cannot successfully be gainsaid that he has made a most important scholarly contribution to the literature of his field, in his rebuttal of the positions of Mowinckel, and in his positive interpretations of the Psalms and Prophets concerned. Of Mowinckel's alleged evidence, there is scarcely a relevant passage from the O. T. that is not thoroughly canvassed, both in the Hebrew form and in its context and in the trend surrounding the context. We have come to the conclusion that Dr. N. H. Ridderbos's refutatory positions are gloriously vindicated by his evidence.

The present dissertation from the Free University of Amsterdam is characterized by both its scholarly research and its scholarly method. One would like to compare its method with the one advocated by Dr. C. Van Til in his recent *Banner* article on a Calvinistic University, but space forbids.

The Free University may again be congratulated upon its outstanding dissertations; honored names are connected with the present work. Under the guidance of Prof. Dr. G. Charles Aalders, his "Promotor," Dr. N. Herman Ridderbos has produced a work that leaves little to be wished, in the way of ramifying research into all phases of his problem, research conducted on the high plane of Biblical, Believing scholarship, yet refuting Radical, Unbelieving scholarship, on objective evidence, in many an instance. Such works are needed to bring Reformed theology ahead. We are thankful that there are scholars who are willing to spend and to be spent, in the great but self-denying task of producing monographs that enrich Reformed theology, for performing its great task of letting the light of God's Word illumine the difficult problems that confront today's scholarship, in every sphere of life.

On the other hand, the present volume, utilizing English and Dutch, German and French, Latin and Greek, Hebrew and Babylonian, Norwegian and Danish, needs popularization to serve a larger sphere of readers. Seeing that the Psalms and the Prophets are here concerned, as they refer to the workers of iniquity, the Reformed reading public would be likely to respond favorably to a more popular form of the present work; especially Part II, dealing with many individual psalms and with some prophetic materials, in an interpretive way, would allow for successful popularization, since the Reformed public is interested in this Biblical material. In such instances, the distance between a dissertation and a popular work can be successfully bridged; for instance, we understand that part of the doctoral dissertation of Prof. Dr. G. Ch. Aalders was used in his widely read work on "De Profeten des Ouden Verbonds"; and, conversely, a scientific work that makes a real contribu-

tion—even if it is written in a somewhat popular form—may become a dissertation, if provided with the necessary scientific apparatus, and scientific discussions and excursions on selected, leading pertinent themes.

Of this dissertation by Dr. N. Herman Ridderbos, Part I has discussions on such themes as these: The Relation of the Psalms to the Cultus or Temple Ceremonies; Psalms and Sickness; Are the "Workers of Iniquity," in the Individual Psalms, Sorcerers and Demons?

These excursions of Dr. N. H. Ridderbos into the territory of the Pan-Babylonists are occasioned by the views of Mowinckel, whose works were published largely at Kristiania, Oslo, Norway. Now Mowinckel holds that the "workers of iniquity" in these psalms, refer to or reflect sorcerers and demons. Mowinckel, a Norwegian, comes to this position from a comparison of these O. T. psalms with Babylonian "psalms," as Gunkel and others have also done. Suffice it to say that much evidence, Biblical and Extra-Biblical, on this problem, is amassed and interpreted by Dr. N. H. Ridderbos, and that the refutation of Mowinckel's Pan-Babylonist interpretive trend is successful. However, the work is done not by a fellow-Scandinavian of Mowinckel, but by a son of Amsterdam and Kampen. We do not wonder that the Norwegians, according to Prof. Dr. Aalders, are looking for a Free University of their own some day, to test such views as those of Mowinckel, and to let the light of Scripture fall upon all fields of scholarship. Nisi Domino Frustra. And will the Lutherans in Norway be ahead of the Reformed in America, in achieving a Free University? Last summer, the *Intelligencer-Leader* quoted Prof. Dr. G. Ch. Aalders to the effect that our greatest need in America is a Christian University. Thus Prof. Dr. Aalders, the "Promotor" of Dr. N. H. Ridderbos, also promoted the interest in an American, Reformed University, during his welcome visit in America last summer:—"first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Since both Reformed, and Orthodox Presbyterian, brethren have utilized a little printers' ink concerning an American, Free University, we have gone and done likewise.

Although Dr. N. H. Ridderbos deserves much praise for the thoroughness with which he has performed his main task, his thesis (stelling) number IX seems to lack sufficient support. It reads substantially as follows: "In Job 19:25 the Hebrew word for dust probably means (even as in some other places, see for instance Job 21:26) as much as the dust of Sheol, the realm of the dead." If so, why does Job, in the following context of chapter 19:23 and 24, say the following? "Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! That with an iron pen and lead they were graven in the rock forever!" Suppose that Job had engraved his words in the rock with an iron pen and lead. Why would he have wished to do so? He wished this, evidently, in order that he might be able to point to his inscription in the day that his Redeemer would vindicate him. For, now, in Job 19:25, he says: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and at the last He shall stand upon the dust." If that dust is the dust of Sheol, and if Job's vindication by his Redeemer would take place on

this dust of Sheol, after Job's death, and not upon the earth, and if Job's words had actually been inscribed in the rock, before his death, how would Job then be able to point to his inscription (graven in the rock with an iron pen and lead), in the day of his vindication by his Redeemer? With the American, Revised Version, we hold that Job refers to the dust of the earth, in 19:25.

On one more item, touching Sheol, we wish to reflect. On pages 54 to 59, Dr. N. H. Ridderbos discusses Biblical passages "in which the one praying describes his condition in such a manner that one can accept the interpretation that the representation of Sheol is made to give dramatic expression to his mood," if we may freely translate Dr. Ridderbos. It is as if the praying Psalmist is in Sheol or is rescued from Sheol. Dr. Ridderbos cites and in part discusses many texts: Psalm 18:5, 6, 16, 17; 30:4; 85:7; Job 33:22, 24, 28; Ps. 7:6; Ez. 28:8; Ps. 55:16, 24; 63:10; 49:10, 15; 89:49; 2 Sam. 22:5; Lam. 3:54; Ps. 118:17; 141:7; 9:14 31:13; 71:20; 94:17; 143:3; 115:17; 6:6; Isa. 5:14; Hos. 6:2; 1 Sam. 2:9; Ps. 88:7,13; Job. 38:17; Isa. 9:1; 42:7; 49:9; Ps. 107:10, 14; 44:20. Some of the above texts are brought in for comparison, others for contrast. In connection with the "waters of Sheol" he cites: Ps. 18:4, 6, 16, 17; and in the discussion he brings in Isa. 8:7; 17:12; 28:17; 43:2; Jer. 47:2; Psalm 46:4 (American Revised: 46:3); 66:12; 93:4; 124:4; 144:7. Now Dr. Ridderbos raises the following question: When one praying in the Psalms describes his condition as being in Sheol, what is the *origin* of this form of expression? The commentary of Gunkel and Beggich holds that fainting, etc., was regarded by the ancients as a going to Sheol, temporarily. In answer to the above question, Dr. Ridderbos says, substantially: "The manner of representation to which Gunkel-Beggich refers can have influenced; representations from myths and legends can sometimes have exerted influence; in most cases one will be safest if one makes mention of hyperbolic speech." Among the above passages mentioned by Dr. Ridderbos in connection with the waters of Sheol are the following: Ps. 46:4 (American Revised: 46:3); Isa. 17:12; 28:17; Jer. 47:2. Now various writers, including Dr. Geerhardus Vos, hold that, in these texts, representations drawn, in form, from the story of the flood have exerted an influence on the form of expression. The nearer context usually has the preference. The story of the flood offers a "context" that is at any rate nearer than that of Babylonian myths and legends, in influencing the form of expression, in this group of texts.

Moreover, even similarity to Babylonian mythical and legendary material does not necessarily imply a *direct* relationship between the Biblical and such Extra-Biblical material. For when mythical and legendary representations are discussed, in connection with Biblical representations, at least four possibilities are open in the abstract: 1. There is no relation between the two sets of representations; 2. The Biblical representation, in its own written form, influenced directly the Extra-Biblical representation; 3. The Extra-Biblical representation influenced directly the Biblical representation; 4. The likeness is due to a common origin, a common inheritance, from more ancient times, and the relationship between the two sets of representations is indirect, due to that common inheritance from a common origin. Some such four possibilities are cited in the work on "The Monuments and the Old Testament," 1925, page 129, by Prof. Ira M. Price, Ph.D., who taught at the University of Chicago for many years. With Price, I prefer the fourth possibility ordinarily, not only touching the stories of Creation, Fall and Deluge; but also touching the material here discussed by Dr. N. H. Ridderbos, especially since some of the representations that he cites present forms of speech like those of the story of the flood. The nearer "context" or rather the nearer materials are those of a common inheritance, due to a common origin, and now if this is accepted, the relationship between the two sets of representations would not be direct, but *indirect*. We thank Dr.

N. H. Ridderbos for giving attention to this question, and congratulate him on his excellent and successful refutation of Mowinckel, and on his important, positive contributions to Old Testament science.

MARTIN J. WYNGAARDEN.

Professor of Old Testament.
Calvin Seminary.

Books In Brief

BRIEVEN VAN MEVROUW GROEN VAN PRINSTERER—VAN DER HOOP. *By Froukje Oosterbaan. Published by Bosch and Keuning N. V., Bavn, Netherlands, 1939. 30 pages. Price 45 cents.*

An interesting little booklet with quotations from letters of the wife of the famous Calvinist Historian Groen van Prinsterer, also the founder of the Calvinist political party of the Netherlands. This collection shows how great a rôle the Christian women have played in the revival of Christianity in the Netherlands. It is an indispensable complement to the work of Miss M. E. Kluit, *The Revival in the Netherlands*, which we discussed a few years ago.

H. J. V. A.

HANS EGEDE. *By I. H. Schneider. Published by the Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio. 120 pages. Price 50c.*

A story of the remarkable success and devotion of the first Lutheran Missionary working among the Greenlanders. Calculated to promote mission interest and activity.

INTERVIEWS WITH GOD. *By W. E. Schramm. The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio. 127 pages. Price 60c.*

A collection of newspaper articles that were written with a view to promoting community righteousness. There is one interview per page in which a question is asked, an answer is given in the form of scriptural citations, and a response is made in the form of a prayer.

LIFE ADJUSTMENTS. *By S. C. Michelfelder. The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio. 80 pages. Price 85c.*

Six sermons, packed with a lot of sanctified common sense, backed by the Scriptures, about the six important periods of life: childhood, youth, courtship, marriage, life's struggles, and life's end.

TALES TRULY TRUE. *By Amalia Tressel. The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio. 248 pages. Price 75c.*

A captivating book for children. These tales are gathered from the lives of missionaries and will promote mission interest and fervor.

LIVES THAT OFT REMIND US. *By Enos K. Cox. The Bible Institute Colportage Ass'n, Chicago, Ill. 178 pages. Price \$1.00.*

Interesting, devotional, and pointed pen-pictures of twenty O. T. characters, examined from the point of view of how God dealt with them and how much humanity remains the same throughout the centuries.

SPIRITUAL LESSONS FROM LITERARY MASTERS. *By E. L. Weaver. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 145 pages. Price \$1.00.*

A presentation of some outstanding lessons "propounded and illustrated" in the life and writing of each of several selected authors. They make for profitable contacts with many of our literary friends such as Longfellow, Irving, Carlyle, Emerson, Hawthorne, Shelley, and others.

WHEN GOD STANDS UP. *By Earl Cooley Sheridan. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 131 pages. Price \$1.00.*

A practical, devotional, and popular discussion of the anthropomorphic presentations of God in the Bible. H. S.

From Our Correspondents

News from Princeton Seminary

Princeton, New Jersey,
February 17, 1940.

My dear Dr. Bouma:

THE second semester of the school year at Princeton Seminary is well under way. A notable fact at the present time is that the curriculum is undergoing a reorganization process. Some changes have been instituted during the present year, and more will be set up next year.

Princeton Will Offer Th.D. Degree

One of the reasons for the curriculum changes is the fact that beginning next year the Doctor of Theology degree will be offered at Princeton Seminary. This is indeed welcome news to the many alumni and friends of Princeton and also to those interested in graduate study in conservative theology on the lines of the Reformed tradition. The degree will be offered in the four major departments of theological study—Biblical Literature, Historical Theology, Systematic Theology, and Practical Theology. The effort to be made in giving this degree is to rehabilitate the Th.D. degree in this country and place it on the basis of equality with the Ph.D. degree. As a result of this intention the requirements which must be satisfied to enter upon study for the degree and the course of study itself will be exacting indeed. A reading knowledge of German and of one other relevant modern language, and of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew will be essential. In addition rather comprehensive preliminary examinations in all four major fields of theology (indicated above) must be taken. This is required in order to indicate the student's proficiency in the whole field of theology. At the least, two years of residence work will be necessary prior to the writing of the thesis. Not only will the student be required to do work in his special field of study but also in the other loci as well. Following two years of residence work even more comprehensive examinations must be passed in the various departments and a specialized examination in the particular field of major study. In this way the degree will be given only to those who have been well-trained in the whole field of theology and who have specialized in one particular department. Following the fulfillment of these requirements, work equal to one year of constant study must be spent on the writing of the thesis which is to be followed by an examination on the particular subject of the thesis.

With the rigidity of these requirements and the traditional prestige that Princeton Seminary carries with it, it is hoped that such a degree will be of great value.

Dr. Hromadka at Princeton

The European war and crisis have come close to Princeton, not merely by means of the radio and newspapers. Aboard the ill-fated *Athenia* were two students coming to study at Princeton Seminary. Happily they were rescued. But the crisis in Europe has also resulted in the addition to the faculty of one who is not so well known in this country, but who has been recognized on the Continent as being one of the leading Protes-

tant minds of Central Europe. Dr. W. H. Horton in *Continental Theology* speaks of him as being the leading Protestant mind of Czechoslovakia. Dr. Emil Brunner, Princeton's guest professor of last year, recognizes him as being an outstanding theologian and scholar. This year Princeton is indeed privileged to have as its guest Dr. Joseph L. Hromadka. It is hoped that Dr. Hromadka will become a permanent part of the Princeton Theological faculty.

Dr. Hromadka received his theological training in Vienna, Basel, Heidelberg, and Aberdeen universities. He received his philosophical training and his Ph.D. at the University of Prague, Czechoslovakia. He himself is a Czech, and is historically out of the Calvinistic tradition. For 19 years he was professor of Systematic Theology on the John Huss Theological Faculty of the University of Prague, teaching dogmatics, Christian ethics, and comparative Christianity. For twelve years Dr. Hromadka was head of the Student Christian Movement in Czechoslovakia.

Dr. Hromadka and Naziism

The Czechoslovakian-Nazi crisis of 1938 almost spelled tragedy for Dr. Hromadka (as it did for all Czech universities and theological schools, all of which have been closed since November 17 last!) Not only was Dr. Hromadka a close friend of former Czechoslovakian President Benes, but he also was known to be an evangelical of the most robust type and a fighting enemy of all totalitarianism. Building his philosophy of religion and life on the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ, Dr. Hromadka fought against all those who would deny the supreme, transcendent authority of God and His Word, and the supreme rulership of Christ, and the freedom of the Church. (Dr. Hromadka lays down as one of the real causes of the present crisis in Europe, the failure of the people, including the leaders, to think into the depths of the real essence of totalitarianism as inevitably antithetic to the authority of the Revelation of God.) Because of his bold stand Dr. Hromadka was in a dangerous position when the Nazis entered Czechoslovakia. This danger was intensified by another factor. Just prior to Munich, Karl Barth wrote a letter to Dr. Hromadka emphasizing the necessity of opposing Naziism and stating that if the Czech soldiers fought for the freedom of Czechoslovakia they would be fighting for the freedom of the Church. (This position of Karl Barth has been more clearly defined in his little book (English translation, 1939) which is a declaration of war against Naziism—*The Church and the Political Problem of Our Day*.) This letter stirred up strong reaction in Nazi circles and it was published in the Nazi newspapers as the "Barth-Hromadka Letter". This development made it doubly imperative that Dr. Hromadka leave Czechoslovakia at once. Friends in Geneva helped Dr. Hromadka, Mrs. Hromadka, and their two daughters to Geneva and thence to America. When he arrived in America, Dr. Hromadka felt physically, mentally, and spiritually exhausted due to the crisis in "my country". His present energy and happiness he accredits to the opportunity given him to teach at Princeton and the Union Theological Seminary, New York, where he taught the first semester also. Although Dr. Hromadka remains rather pessimistic as to the immediate outcome of the European crisis, ultimately he is optimistic. This hope is based, as he confesses, on his faith in the Lordship of Christ, and the firm assurance that there are inner forces of the

spiritual and mental life in every individual which will revolt and do revolt against the superficial, shallow, imposed philosophy of totalitarianism. However, he says, the real issue today is not Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, but rather what civilization will prevail.

It is unfortunate that up to the present time only a little of Dr. Hromadka's writings are available in English. Among other subjects he has written books on *Masaryk*, a penetration into the thought of this great statesman and thinker; *The Christian in Thought and Life*; *Masaryk and Dostoevsky*; books on Calvin and Luther; and *The Principles of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren*. To this church, Presbyterian in polity and doctrine, Dr. Hromadka belonged. He was honored to write this book by the request of the Church. In it he interpreted the Reformed standards in the light of the present day. He sought an organic synthesis of Calvinistic and Unity of Brethren theology. This book became practically a text-book, officially acknowledged by the Church.

Dr. Hromadka's Courses

Dr. Hromadka is teaching four courses during this year. One is on Comparative Christianity, a comparative study of Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism. Dr. Hromadka is recognized as being the outstanding authority on the Eastern Orthodox Church and Roman Catholicism, having spent his theological lifetime in their study. He is especially well-informed on Eastern Orthodoxy. As there are few men in this country grounded thoroughly in the knowledge of Eastern Orthodoxy, it is a distinct privilege which we have here at Princeton to study under Dr. Hromadka. This is especially true in view of the fact that it is in Russia where the Church has undergone such a great crisis. Dr. Hromadka sees the tragedy of the Russian Church as being caused in a measure by elements right within the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Russian Church, as being Eastern Orthodox, claims to be the orthodox, apostolic church, representing the highest degree of Christian tradition, truth, and spirit. It claims that the Incarnation and Revelation of Jesus Christ is still going on and will be consummated in Russia. Yet in the face of these claims what tragedy is seen in what has actually happened to the Russian Church in the last two decades!! Nowhere is the Church in as deep misery as in Russia. The Eastern Orthodoxy in its desire for great simplicity of life had no alleviating message for the masses suffering socially and educationally, and therefore has aided the very reaction to these conditions, Russian Communism, which in turn has brought on the tragic condition of the Church in that land.

Dr. Hromadka is also teaching a course in Church and State—the problem of their relation; the meaning of the present-day crisis; the Biblical conception of the church and of the state; and the possibility of a Christian State; the historical positions as to this problem. He adopts a Christocentric view of the state and civilization. To understand the state and the relation of the church and state we must and can do so only in the understanding of a biblical Christology. Dr. Hromadka pleads for a new, intensive study of Calvin and the later Calvinists (specifically Abraham Kuyper) for a solid and fundamental understanding of the problem of church and state. A great advantage in taking such a course with Dr. Hromadka is found in the personal emphasis which he is able to put on the problem, having come out of the crisis in which this problem is so acute.

Dr. Hromadka is also teaching Christian Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion. In the latter course he also pleads for an understanding of A. Kuyper, H. Bavinck, and J. G. Machen as constituting the real basis for a true philosophy of religion based solidly on the Revelation.

Needless to say, Dr. Hromadka is very popular on the campus, and Princeton Seminary may be well-pleased with the presence of this outstanding scholar and energetic person, who is able to make this present crisis in Christianity live for those who hear him.

These two matters, the granting of the Th.D. degree, and the coming of Dr. Hromadka, are two really significant events that have made news at Princeton this year. THE CALVIN FORUM remains popular here and seems to be read widely among the students. Dr. Hromadka also expressed his deep appreciation for the magazine, believing that it filled an urgent task in our day.

Greetings from Princeton to you, Dr. Bouma, and to all those who make THE FORUM possible.

Fraternally,
JOHN E. LUCHIES.

A London Letter

Dear Dr. Bouma:

YOU would be encouraged if you knew how much THE CALVIN FORUM is appreciated on this side of the Atlantic. Here in war-stricken Europe, while our minds are largely and necessarily occupied with other matters, we stand shoulder to shoulder with you in the great fight which is being waged throughout the world for the faith of God's elect. After four months of war, the work of the churches continues. Services, meetings and conferences are being held, not indeed "as usual", but as far as mobilisation, reduced train services, the "black-out" and other circumstances permit. *The Evangelical Quarterly* enters upon its twelfth year of publication. The Sovereign Grace Union, unlike most religious organisations, has not moved its headquarters from the metropolis, and has in fact embarked on an ambitious publishing program, including a reprint of Elisha Coles' classic on "Divine Sovereignty", a new volume by Dr. W. Childs Robinson entitled "The Word of the Cross", and a reissue of Prof. Floyd Hamilton's "The Reformed Faith in the Modern World", in addition to a series of pamphlets specially prepared for distribution among the troops.

Prophecy, Horoscope, and H. G. Wells

Your notes in the November issue under the caption "Prophetic Study and Idle Curiosity" were of special interest to us in this country, where the war has given a fillip to the art of irresponsible vaticination. Already an ingenious gentleman has discovered "Gog, Nasi and Rosh"-ia (?Ross-shire) as "a combination of anti-Semitic powers" in Ezekiel xxxviii. Fresh dates and data have been extracted from the "inch-to-a-month" measurement of the Great Pyramid, showing that we have now entered upon the "Armageddon Climax" period which, alas, is not due to terminate till "August 19-20, 1953" (*sic*)! Four London journals with a united circulation of 6 million copies publish a daily horoscope. When that feature was missing from a recent issue of one of these papers, owing to the indisposition of its official astrologer, more than 50,000 frantic enquiries and appeals are reported to have poured into the office within a few hours by letter, postcard, telegram, telephone, and even in person. The correspondence columns of a well-known Evangelical weekly have disclosed the fact that "a group of believers" recently visited the Duce to inform him of his future position "according to prophecy" as head of a confederacy of ex-Roman states including Britain. A futurist advocate of the Zionist movement has discovered in the prophecy of Zechariah a prediction concerning an earthquake which shall cause the Mediterranean to recede some 30 or 40 miles from the coast of Palestine, and so make room for the entire Jewish people to settle in that land. It is not only "believers", however, who are indulging in prognostication. In an article in the December issue of *The Fortnightly Review*, H. G. Wells writes: "Franklin Roosevelt and Stalin find themselves in control of vast countries underdeveloped, or so misdeveloped that their main energies go into internal organisation or reorganisation. They do not press against their frontiers, therefore, and they do not threaten war". Meanwhile, the Red Army invaded Finland on November 30!

Back to Calvin in Wales

A Welsh correspondent of *The British Weekly*, writing of life to-day in the Rhondda Valley, states that the fact which has most impressed him there is "the profound change which is taking place in the character of the preaching in the Free Churches. To within recent years many of the Rhondda ministers were Modernist in their outlook, and the Gospel that they preached was predominantly the Social Gospel. . . . But the proclamation of the Social Gospel is rapidly giving way to a preaching in which the urgent note is sin, radical sin, and the need for deliverance from its guilt and power. I have had exceptional opportunities both to meet ministers and to hear them preach. The evidence makes it certain that there is a profound change-over from Modernism to an uncompromising orthodoxy in preaching. I had a significant experience a few weeks ago when I addressed the annual meeting of the East Glamorgan Congregational Association on 'Christian Faith and World Problems'. I presented faith in the extreme orthodox sense. The really striking thing was this: that the younger ministers, without exception almost, supported my attitude. My opponents were all over 60. It is the younger ministers who are disillusioned with Modernism and feel that it is bankrupt. It is the older men who are still munching the dry bones of a decayed faith—but not many of them. The up-to-date youngsters are looking back to Calvin and Luther. This is the most important sign in the Rhondda to-day".

Prayer for Unity

A circular issued by the Church Unity Octave Council, requesting prayers for the unity of Christendom from January 18 to 25, furnishes an illustration of methods sometimes employed by the dominant party of the Anglican communion. One of the reasons given in the circular for participation on the octave is taken from the *Acta* of the IIIrd Œcumenical Council, dated July 11, A.D. 431, and runs as follows: "It is doubtful to no one . . . that the holy and blessed Peter, the prime and head of the apostles . . . received from our Lord . . . the keys of the kingdom, and that to him was given the power of loosing and binding sins: who up to this time and for ever lives and exercises judgement in his successors". These are the words, however, not of the Council of Ephesus, but of Philip, the Roman legate; but the circular follows the Vatican Council in quoting them without a hint that they emanated from him and not from the Synod.

A London weekly known as *Picture Post* has been banned in Eire, following the publication in its columns of an article summarising a recent book by H. G. Wells, setting forth his evolutionary and materialist views, and attacking orthodox Christianity. No Christian would wish to defend Mr. Wells' materialism, but it may be doubted whether the method of prohibition at the instigation of ecclesiastical authority, is likely to achieve success at the present day, even in Eire.

On the Continent and Elsewhere

The sufferings of our Continental brethren can be better imagined than described. Some 20 refugee ministers are officiating in the National Church, and several others have temporarily associated themselves with the ministry of other denominations. The Reformed churches in France are doing their best with slender resources to cater to thousands of refugees, including a number of Spanish pastors and evangelists who dare not take the risk of returning to their own land. The difficulties facing the French Church are immensely increased by the settlement in the interior of large numbers of Protestants evacuated from the war zone. The provision of religious privileges for hundreds of thousands of evacuees is placing an enormous burden on the Church, many of whose pastors have been mobilised. The effects of war on French Protestant missionary enterprise are touched on by M. Daniel Couve in "Evangile et Liberté". Far from the native congregations being weakened by the mobilisation of their pastors, they have accepted their increased responsibilities with joy and have done all they can

to keep the work going. From Gabon, the Cameroons, Togoland, the Ivory Coast, and South Africa the reports are the same. On a vessel carrying a contingent of 1,000 Madagascan gunners to France, a native adjutant organized a Protestant service every Sabbath. On arrival they were met at Frejus by Lieut. Keller, a missionary from Gabon, who collected 200 gunners round him for prayer and the singing of Madagascan hymns. The work of the Paris Evangelical Mission in Africa has been seriously affected by the withdrawal of no fewer than 58 of its missionaries through mobilisation.

The annual report of the Waldensian Church Missions contains many encouraging items concerning the evangelisation of Italy and her colonies. In Abyssinia a mission commenced 70 years ago by Swedes is now being carried on by Valdesi. In Addis Abbeba there is now a flourishing Waldensian school, and the director states that he feels encouraged to hear the children, whose parents were brought up in the corrupt native Church, "spontaneously singing our hymns, almost as if they had attended our schools in Italy". Eritrea now has two Italian and 18 native pastors. Among the converts is an ex-monk, who has resisted all inducements to return to his former life. At present he gains a livelihood by tailoring.

With every good wish,

Faternally yours in Christ,

S. LEIGH HUNT.

British Christians in War Time

Brighton, England,
January 8, 1940.

Editor THE CALVIN FORUM,

Dear Sir:

CHRISTIANS in the United States can perform a great service for their Lord by sympathetically remembering in prayer the Christian Churches and Movements in Great Britain at this time. These short notes are written as a brief survey of some outstanding features of the situation, and as suggesting certain topics which might be made the subjects for intercession.

Run on the Churches?

One outstanding feature of religious life immediately at the outbreak of the war in September was a decided "rush" to the churches. But it was evidently largely due to the feeling of uncertainty and fear, rather than a real movement of the Spirit of God. That sudden accession of numbers in congregations has by now largely disappeared, and there seems to be little change in the attitude of the public as a whole towards religious questions. There has been, of course, a great deal of the bandying about of questions such as "Why does God allow it?" but it is not possible to say that there has been a real revival of interest in spiritual matters. Some would say that the number of people attending church has decreased, but that may in some measure be due to the redistribution of population through evacuation and also to the difficulties of the "black-out." It is no mean test of the enthusiasm and sincerity of members of a congregation that they come through the blackness of a winter night to a church service held under the necessarily rather gloomy conditions of war time.

But on the whole, it is safe to say that English church life generally has continued along fairly normal channels. In this lie both features which are encouraging and also those which raise the question as to whether the general feeling of organized religion in the country is as alive to opportunities as it might well be.

One particular item which calls for comment is the implied recognition of the importance and value of the maintenance of the ministry which has been given by the government. They have exempted from military service, by placing in the category of "reserve occupations," all those who were at the outbreak of war "recognized by their denomination as candidates for the ministry," and also whole-time evangelists and missionaries are being accorded recognition as ministers of religion. This is a great point of difference from the conditions in the last war, when the training colleges found themselves bereft almost entirely of their students, and at the end there was a more than serious dearth of clergy and ministers. One matter which might well be made mention of in prayer is that there may be forthcoming a sufficient supply of men called of God, and qualified, to maintain the standard of Evangelical Truth throughout the war. We feel this to be a desperate need.

Changed Conditions

It has been encouraging to see the way in which leaders of bodies of Evangelical Christians have been adapting their work to meet the changed conditions. In "safe" areas, to which vast numbers of the children from cities have been transferred, evangelists and missionaries have been co-operating in providing special services for the newcomers. On the other hand, it has meant that large and established works in London and elsewhere have lost their usual children, and there are cases of Sunday Schools with teachers but no chance of obtaining anyone to teach! Gradually, though, it seems that the children are finding their way back to their old homes, and—in spite of restrictions upon gathering children in numbers in places where there might be danger of a raid—clergy and others are getting meetings and schools built up again. There is real need for prayer that the children who have for the time been lost to church influences may be ready to return when they come back to the old homes.

A further difficulty has been the necessity of cancellation or at least postponement of rallies and large gatherings. It is not advisable to consider gatherings in London, and this has meant the loss of that impetus which is so frequently given to spiritual life and work through the encouragement of mass-meetings. This may well prove in the long run to be for the strengthening of believers as they become less dependent on speakers, and more experienced in gathering the truth for themselves.

Scripture Distribution

Organizations such as the Crusaders' Union, which is a federation of Bible Classes held for public and private schoolboys, are carrying on with their work as closely as possible on the model of pre-war arrangements. But there is a very real scarcity of workers, since so many of the leaders of such classes are of age for military and similar service. Reports show that there is every reason to hope that such work may be maintained and be very fruitful throughout the year.

Special efforts are of course being made to reach the men who are being called-up for service: among other items, the British and Foreign Bible Society is providing copies of the New Testament in a special edition so that every man may have one if he so desires, and there is a constant increase in the number of chaplains appointed to the Forces. The whole of this is causing a heavier burden to fall on the churches, and there is need for a much deeper spiritual life and power in the home church.

Probably it would be safe to summarize the position by saying that the work is being steadily carried on amid all the difficulties. But we need a real Spirit-controlled enthusiasm, which will lead to a going-forward through campaigns and similar means, and will increase the expectancy of all the children of God in this generation.

R. J. COBB.

Looking Forward as Calvinists

Englewood, N. J.,
January 24, 1940.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

THE former issue of the CALVIN FORUM and the news sheet of the Society for Calvinistic Philosophy bring a challenge to every blue-blooded Calvinist. On the one hand we read of groups organizing specifically for the advancement of the truths we hold precious. On the other hand there is the tragic note that the war calls men to the colors who by education and conviction are fitted to propagate our ideals. What must we do about it? An international organization as the Society for Calvinistic Philosophy must keep in mind that irrespective of nationality we are still bound by a deeper unity. We in America must feel that this is our moment and our responsibility. While Europe is bleeding itself to death we must study and act. Hence I sincerely hope that we do not grow weary in well doing. We may not faint even though our type of leadership may not be popular.

Attempts of Modernism

The Modernists are sincerely facing their debt to mankind. They too are grouping together for discussion periods. The point seems to be that if modernism is to give direction it must be intellectually equipped. Every one will subscribe to this. In our section of America, The Jewish Seminary of America in New York is sponsoring a very interesting series of studies. These are called the "Institute of Interdenominational Studies," Spring Semester, 1940. The lecturers are outstanding modernists and rabbis. The striking thing is that modernists and this school of Jewish thought can work together. Some of us in this section intend to take the courses offered. This will make for new contacts since seminary days. At any rate, although we do not share their theologies, we think it praiseworthy this school is trying to do something in this topsy-turvy world. But, can we build without a foundation?

Attempts of Calvinism

Our little attempts in this eastern section cannot command the publicity these greater movements receive. We labor with a difficulty. Congregational life demands all our time. Still we feel that if we all should limit ourselves to our congregational needs we shall fail to forge ahead.

One of our attempts is the Spring Meeting of the Eastern Ministers Society. This Spring we meet on Tuesday, May 21, most likely in the Hawthorne Reformed Church of which the Rev. Mr. Kruithof is pastor. If plans materialize we shall have an outsider to address us on Jewish situations, and one of our own to discuss one of the current theological questions. New faces are seen in the east of late, so we can expect different questions and different emphases.

Another effort is our philosophy club. We expect to meet some time during the second week of May. One of the Westminster students will favor us with a paper on Aristotle. This will be a continuation of our morning program which purports to cover the entire history of philosophy in the light of Reformed presuppositions. The Rev. Mr. Van Halsema will give us a critique of E. Gilson's philosophy. This makes a balanced program for in the morning we study the original, Aristotle, and in the afternoon the copy, Scholasticism. This meeting will be held in the Westminster Seminary.

Literary Attempts

Soon the *Proceedings of the Calvinistic Philosophy Club of 1939* will be ready for distribution. As in other years I happen to be responsible for the mailing. This year we have to raise the price to one dollar for we have five articles instead of two. Here are the articles: Pre-Socratic Philosophy; Plato; Beyond

Humanism, a book review and discussion; Sören Kierkegaard; and Common Grace, or, What have we in common with the world? Any one interested can write to 90 Demarest Avenue, Englewood, New Jersey.

Perhaps within a short time the Zondervan Publishing House will publish the *Sovereignty of God*, a book of conference reports of the First American Calvinistic Conference held in the summer of 1939. It is hoped that the benefits of this conference may be extended to distant places. This book will also publish some of the decisions which we pray may be realized.

Westminster Seminary

Attempts! Idealism! Just think of this one! The *Presbyterian Guardian* informs the world that the Board of Trustees of the Westminster Seminary will grant to every professor a sixteen months' leave of absence for the purpose of defending the truth in writing. Only one professor will have a leave of absence at one time. I am sure many professors envy this arrangement. Dr. C. Van Til, the senior member of the faculty, will receive the first opportunity to do so. This energetic board feels that the inroads of apostasy began with educated men and percolated to the average member of the church through ministers trained in seminaries dominated by heterodox instructors. New books from Westminster men must serve as bombshells in the intellectual world. Still, hearts of the average devout child of God must be touched. Here is a job that is a real job indeed.

Cordially,

JACOB T. HOOGSTRA.

American Hungarians Use Genevan Psalter Tunes

Dear Dr. Bouma:

HAVING reached the less polemical articles of the January issue of *THE FORUM*, I came upon this statement of Professor Van Andel:

"It is true that the tunes of Bourgeois do not fit in so well with our American temper and our Anglo-Saxon hymns, but it is certainly an honor for the Dutch Calvinists that they have held on to those melodies more than any other nation, and it would be an honor for American Calvinists of Dutch descent, if they would teach their children the heritage of Maitre Pierre, and of Matthias Greiter, but above all of Louis Bourgeois, greatest of psalm chorale composers."

I feel constrained to contest the above statement by virtue of the very fact that we Hungarian Calvinists are still using the psalm tunes of the above named masters not only for the 150 psalms but also for the great majority of our hymns. These time honored tunes are so imbedded in the hearts of our people that no earthly power could uproot them from there.

As I stated in one of my previous letters, my greatest problem at the time we introduced our monthly English services was to find an American hymnal that would contain at least some of these tunes. Great was my relief when I found this requirement in your new Psalter-Hymnal. That alone made it possible to introduce our English services during the course of last year. Otherwise these services would have had to wait for at least a decade yet.

Just to illustrate to you the effect your Psalter-Hymnal had made upon my people I relate the following incident: I noticed an elderly widow at one of our English services. After the service I asked her how she liked the service. "Oh, it was all right," she said, "only when you were singing the psalms in English, I sang them in Hungarian. It was the same thing."

Well, if it's an honor to hold on to those old tunes, we Hungarian Calvinists certainly wish to share it with you.

Yours sincerely,

Magyar Reformed Church.
Perth Amboy, N. J.

CHARLES VINCZE.

From the Presbyterian South

Columbia, Mississippi,
February 16, 1940.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

THE church for which I am reporting is the Presbyterian Church in the United States, abbreviated Presbyterian U. S., and affectionately designated Southern.

Two of our seminaries have just concluded certain winter weeks of special courses. At Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., Feb. 4-10, Dr. John A. Mackay, president of Princeton Seminary, delivered the annual Sprunt Lectures. His subject was "A Preface to Theology." The Bible lectures were by Dr. Manford George Gutzke, professor of English Bible and Religious Education in the Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga. These were a group of studies in the book of Acts. Another visiting speaker was a Baptist, Dr. John H. Strong, Larchmont, N. Y.

At the Columbia Seminary the Pastors' Institute was held Jan. 22 to Feb. 2. Many speakers took part, stressing evangelism. The Smyth Lectures were entitled "The Intellectual Tradition in the Christian Evangel," and were made by Dr. George Lang, professor of philosophy in the University of Alabama. Dr. Lang is a former moderator of the Synod of Alabama, having been elected to succeed himself in that capacity, breaking a precedent.

Too Intellectual?

Our church at large is attempting during these months to carry into effect the Evangelistic Crusade initiated by the last General Assembly. Dr. D. W. Richardson of Union is the chairman of the Assembly's committee promoting it. It comes as a surprise to some that our church has been declining in number of additions by profession of faith in the last ten years. Some of the presbyteries are holding evangelistic retreats for the ministers, elders, and deacons to discuss this matter and make plans for the local campaigns. Judging from the "retreat" of my own presbytery, I do not think we are clear about what we mean by evangelism. We do not know whether to follow the revivalistic methods of the Methodists and Baptists, or some hitherto untried method. One of our leading presbyters insisted that as a church we have been too intellectual in the past, and not emotional enough. I think we have not been intellectual enough. (For example, the Southern Church has no publication, official or unofficial, similar in scholarly standing to *THE CALVIN FORUM*.)

Presbyterian Reunion

Another matter stirring up general interest in our church is the discussion of reunion with Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. The last Assembly asked for the advice of the presbyteries on this subject, and is receiving it not only officially, but unofficially in the church papers. The U. S. A. church desires union along the so-called "synodical plan," that is, organic union with one General Assembly, but with enlarged powers going to each synod. The Southern church wants it along the line of provincial assemblies, that is, federal union leaving more power to the sectional assembly, but heading up in a federal assembly meeting perhaps every two or four years and having only an advisory authority. The consensus of opinion in our church at the moment seems to be to defer the whole action until some future time.

The Bible Presbyterian Synod has been making overtures to us for recognition, but so far without success. One method had been the sending of *The Christian Beacon* free to every minister in the Southern Church. There have been one or two defections to that Synod over on the Atlantic seaboard.

Passing of Two Leaders

Two outstanding leaders of our church have recently passed to their reward. Dr. A. B. Curry, pastor emeritus of the Second Church, Memphis, Tenn., died in Greenville, S. C., Dec. 3, 1939. He was the moderator of General Assembly meeting in St. Louis in 1921. His last two books were, "Practical Lessons in the Early Ministry of Jesus," 1935, and "Practical Lessons in the Later Ministry of Jesus," 1938. One of his earlier publications was "The Relationship of Presbyterians of the Present Day to the Westminster Standards," 1897.

The other leader was Dr. S. M. Tenney, who died Dec. 23, 1939. Dr. Tenney was the founder and curator of the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreal, N. C. Two of his books were "The Passive Obedience of Christ," 1923, and "Presbyterians, Who They Are," 1926.

In the death of these two men, our church suffers an irreparable loss.

Cordially,
ALLEN CABANISS.

The Passing of a Great Presbyterian

Summerside, P. E. I.,
Canada,
February 16, 1940.

Dear Editor:

THE system of British Government includes an official representative of His Majesty the King in each of the Dominions of the Empire. The Governor-General's office completes that link between the mother country and the Dominion of Canada. The system is hierarchical, but not dictatorial. His Excellency the Governor-General is again represented in each one of the nine Provinces by the Lieutenant Governor.

Lord Tweedsmuir

The British Monarchy is one of the most democratic institutions in the world, and in consequence his representatives are also most democratic. The past several monarchs on the throne have also been devout Christians, who at least did not flout every principle of Christianity for pleasure, fame or ambition. In our late Governor-General we had a man who represented the King in Canada in an official capacity at Parliament to be sure, but in a far greater measure in the Christian and democratic demeanour, as he moved about among the people of Canada.

John Buchan, the son of a Presbyterian minister in Scotland, some four years ago accepted the title of Lord Tweedsmuir to become the Governor-General of Canada. That high office was reached by sheer ability and not nobility. For several years he was the King's Lord High Commissioner to Scotland and there he represented the King at the Assemblies of the Scottish Presbyterian Church. The Kirk in Scotland is an Established Church and therefore the visits of the Lord High Commissioner to the Assemblies of that Church. Those visits were lovely gestures implying only his presence at the opening ceremonies and probably a speech. John Buchan could far better give the speech than conform to the etiquette of the ceremonies. His amazing and accurate knowledge of diversified subject matter made speaking easy for him.

His Fearless Christian Witness

A story is told of him on a visit to the Presbyterian Assembly of the Kirk in Scotland that when the ceremonies of the Kirk Church disturbed the Assembly meeting of the Free Church just across the street, the Assembly of the Free Church protested to the Church of Scotland. John Buchan in person

went to the Free Church Assembly and in characteristic humility apologized for such disturbance.

That John Buchan departed this world on the Lord's Day past. The Lord's Day being ended he entered upon his eternal rest. And all Canada mourns the departure of the commoner, while Christian Canada rejoices in his fearless Christian witness.

In a church that suffers the aberration of much ritualism, in the city of Montreal, he made this significant statement:

"The essentials of religion can never change. There is still for every man the choice of two paths and 'conversion' in its plain evangelical sense is still the greatest fact in any life. There are certain fundamentals in our Christian faith which are beyond time and change.

"Today there is a tendency to smooth away all concrete Christian dogmas into a vague theism or a vague pantheism and to flatten out the fine lines of Christian ethics with a pious sentiment.

"The foundation of our Christian faith is not only 'God is Love.' It is still more the tremendous historical fact that 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

"We need a quickened sense of sin, a profounder realization of the majesty and purity of God."

An Active Presbyterian Elder

He was an active elder in the Presbyterian Church. We can still remember when he was first appointed to Canada, how religious bodies anxiously wondered which church he would adopt in this land. With perfect propriety, as the King's representative, he might have adopted the Anglican Communion. Many thought that since the impression is abroad that the Presbyterian Church in Canada had been sunk in the promiscuous Union of 1925, that he might adopt the United Church of Canada. But not so, he remained loyal to that Church which in some sense remained loyal to the Westminster Standards. Canada's prime minister belongs to that same faith.

WILLIAM VERWOLF.

Demoralizing Seminary Students

Chicago, Ill.,
February 19, 1940.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

THE *Divinity School News* of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago contains a very interesting article on the question: Does the Seminary Demoralize Students? As a teacher of seminary students you are vitally interested in this question. Neither the church nor the world expects the seminary you serve to demoralize its students. Perhaps you are ready to say: "Of course, we can expect almost anything from Chicago, and especially from one of the schools of the University of Chicago."

But this question was not proposed by the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. It was one of the topics of a lively discussion at a conference of the heads of all the theological schools affiliated with the Northern Baptist Convention. The conference was held in Cleveland last fall. Dr. Colwell, the dean of the Divinity School of the U. of C., reports the discussion in *The Divinity School News*. Of course, the conference did not accuse the learned professors of demoralizing the students but it was thinking of the liberal financial assistance given to seminary students, so liberal that young men without work are tempted to attend a seminary for lack of anything more appealing and worth-while at the time. Dr. Colwell mentions a Presbyterian seminary "which charges no tuition or fees of any kind, gives the students free room rent, and a cash scholarship which covers board." A Methodist seminary makes a still

stronger appeal by charging "no tuition, a nominal room rent, and pays a single student \$200 a year."

The Cleveland conference believed that this subsidizing of seminary students was positively demoralizing, and consequently a bad thing for the ministry and for the church. Students choose their seminaries, not because of their educational standards, but because they offer the greatest financial assistance. It is nothing uncommon to hear students of different seminaries saying to one another, "I like your school better, but Blank Seminary will pay me \$200 a year more than you offer." The Cleveland conference was inclined to believe "that men who choose their schools for financial reasons will choose sermons and churches on the same basis."

Dr. Colwell gives the case of a nephew of one of his classmates who was an all-state star in high school football. One seminary offered him free tuition, free room and board, and \$15 a month; but he is still undecided "because the preliminary offers from two other schools sound more promising." Dr. Colwell adds: "Some of these football coaches must have attended a theological seminary."

The Cleveland conference will try to work out the following program of reform in the matter of subsidation: "Free tuition to be the maximum of direct assistance; students to pay the cost of board and room; all financial assistance (except academic scholarships) to be in the form of loans which the institution would do all it could to collect. In general, the members of the group agreed that the theological student should be asked to bear more and more the burden of his education. They believe that this will assist in training men to follow the One who said, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

We are told that more time was spent in the discussion of this matter than any other. For myself, I feel that there are much bigger problems for our American seminaries to solve.

Cordially yours,
E. J. TANIS.

News Items and Comments

● The Salvation Army

Dr. H. Kaajan, pastor of the Reformed Church at Utrecht (Netherlands) recently attended a meeting of the Salvation Army. Writing about his impression regarding this meeting, in his "Kerkbode," he says The Salvation Army has changed very much since its beginning. He found the atmosphere restful. The talk by the leader was Biblical. Her language was excellent. The exposition of the text was good. The part which in the past used to be a noisy, high pressured emotional appeal to the unconverted to surrender to Jesus, Kaajan found to be devoid of din and extraordinary emotional excitement. No, he does not approve of high speed conversions, but prefers a surrender which is the result of reflection. But he does find that the Army operates on a much higher level than before.

Dr. Kaajan's impressions are like those of the writer of these lines. Under the leadership of former Commissioner and Mrs. W. A. McIntire (of the eleven central states) the Salvation Army in this district has advanced considerably. The training of the officers is far better than in the past. The screaming and shouting of former days is no more. But the insistence upon a quota of souls to be brought in per year is still a matter we do not like.

● Spiritual Care of Soldiers and Sailors

The mobilization of the Dutch military forces last year produced an important problem for the church. Thousands of young men from Christian homes are serving in the army. Their home life suddenly was interrupted. Their spiritual development was suddenly arrested. Both the church and the

government felt that these "boys" had to have spiritual care. Hence a corps of some 150 chaplains under the leadership of chaplain-in-chief Dr. W. G. Harrenstein, are working in every place where soldiers and sailors are located. But even so, the work is very difficult. How to reach all the Christian young men is the great problem.

Reading about these difficult matters, we become mindful of the fact that the ruinous results of war are not confined to the destruction of homes, property, and life in belligerent countries only. And it behooves Christians everywhere to pray that God may preserve his church,—also in neutral countries.

By the way, Dr. W. G. Harrenstein belongs to the Reformed Church in the Netherlands, and is according to "Credo" the right man in the right place.

The Dutch Merchant Marine is the heart of Commercial life of the Netherlands. As in the case of the Scandinavian countries, so also in the Low Countries, shipping has suffered tremendously because of the war. Mines and torpedoes take an ever increasing toll. What is peculiar (in the Dutch churches) is that the "boys" in the army are a continual care to the church and the occasion for oft-repeated prayers in their behalf. But when the ship "Van Ewyck" is destroyed by a mine, when the "Slidrecht" is torpedoed, when again and again ships are lost, there is no prayer for the victims who lose their lives, or the relatives who have lost a dear one and incidentally their source of income. Hence the Committee for the Merchant Marine, appointed by the General Synod of the Reformed Churches, sent a fervent appeal to the people. For what? Not to be one-sided! Remember the mobilized men at the frontiers, but also the men who ply the now twice treacherous seas.

● Wheaton Loses Its President

Wheaton College (Wheaton, Ill.) has lost its president, Dr. James Oliver Buswell, Jr. Why? When? The following statement authorized by the chairman of the Board of Trustees gives somewhat of an answer.

"The Board of Trustees of Wheaton College, at the quarterly meeting held Saturday (January 20, 1940), found certain difficulties in administrative co-operation, which in the board's opinion, necessitated a change in the presidency. Dr. James Oliver Buswell, Jr., was called to the presidency of the college in 1926. Under his administration the student body has more than doubled, the plant has been modernized and the curriculum expanded. He is esteemed by the board as a Christian leader and as an able minister. It was his preference that the change take effect now, rather than at the end of the college year. The board appointed Dr. V. R. Edman, head of the department of History and Social Science, as acting president. The board is carrying out plans for reducing annual overhead, mainly along lines which had been recommended by President Buswell."

According to later reports Dr. Buswell is now teaching Systematic Theology as guest professor at Faith Seminary, Wilmington, Del. Next semester he is to be the regular professor in that chair at the same seminary. Faith Seminary is the seminary of the Bible Presbyterian Synod. Dr. Buswell has been a trustee of that Seminary for some time.

● Controversy in Holland

The Synod of Sneek, 1939, did not finish its business but adjourned hoping and expecting to meet again during the early part of the winter. Many a "Kerkbode" gives evidence of impatience. While the rank and file of the church wait impatiently, the controversy regarding the doctrinal differences continues and increases in vehemence. Said Professor K. Dyk, "We are continually sinking to a lower level of dignity."

J. G. VAN DYKE.

Grand Rapids, Mich.