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An Astrologer Debunked

NORVELL has won considerable fame in Hollywood by his uncanny predictions. He used the art (?) of astrology. He has now been, as he ought to be, thoroughly discredited. At the close of 1939 he had predicted that Hitler would certainly meet a violent death during the year 1940, that Germany would be soundly whipped and that the French and English would invade her territory, and finally that the Republicans would come into power during the national elections. How the stars must have twinkled as he tried to convey their messages to mankind. Either the stars did not know a thing about what was to transpire in 1940 or Mr. Norvell was utterly unable to understand their language. That there are fools that dabble about in the silly game of astrology is not surprising, but it is astonishing that such fellows can thrive in an enlightened America. Men want to pierce the veil that hides the future. But God has graciously hidden our vision so that we can't go without His prophecy beyond the present. And even His prophecy hides from us the answer to those questions which we most would like to have answered, because it will not be to our advantage to know them. Calvinism has always frowned upon all such cults as those that lay claim to having the key to unlock the future. It has always insisted that God's revelation is perfect and adequate. There may be many things that are still to be known, but we "are not able to bear them now."

In disturbing and distressing times men put their trust in any one who will fib about the future. It behooves all sane Americans to keep their feet upon the ground and to eschew all occultism. H. S.

Revealing Sentences

HERMAN RAUSCHNING, a former intimate friend of Adolf, quotes the Fuhrer in The Voice of Destruction as saying, "The Christian doctrine of the infinite significance of the individual soul and of personal responsibility, I oppose with icy clarity the saving doctrine of the nothingness and insignificance of the individual human being." On another occasion he informed Rauschning: "Providence has ordained that I should be the greatest liberator of humanity. I am freeing men from the dirty and degrading self-mortification of a chimera called conscience and morality."

If men are to be measured by their ability to lift a nation for a time from the depths of economic throes, to mold a disorganized nation into a wellnigh solid front, or to wage an effective and devastating war, Adolf is undoubtedly a great man. But great men cannot properly be so measured. What makes a man A MAN is the motivating philosophy that grips his soul. If Hitler regards his doctrine of the nothingness and insignificance of the individual human being as being liberating in character, he is in need of the services of a psychiatrist. He is lacking in one of the most fundamental qualifications of being great, namely, the motivation to love one's neighbor as he loves himself. Such love requires the highest evaluation of man as an image bearer of God. Furthermore one wonders whether he did not forget to make at least one exception to this doctrine of the nothingness and insignificance of the individual human being. Surely Der Fuhrer should be excepted from such an evaluation of man. Or perhaps he is no mere individual human being?

The eccentric fellow from Berlin thinks very cheaply about conscience and morality. These are wholesome forces toward decency and self-respect. He seems to be by his very confession a rather unscrupulous, uncontrolled, and unprincipled libertine. He would have all men freed from everything and every one, except himself. He would be the great liberator of humanity, in order that he might enslave it.

"Haven't we read about some such character elsewhere?"

H. S.

Education Fails

IT has been the writer's duty to attend several educator's conferences during the last few months. In each of these meetings there seemed to be an atmosphere heavy with the gloom of at least partial failure. Educators frankly conceded that education had been a miserable disappointment. Most of the delegates did not hide their convictions that the situation called for a radical change in educational methods and objectives. There were many who declared that the constituency among whom they were working complained about the results of our educational efforts.

It may be that we, Americans, have expected too much from formal education. Education has been
the god at whose altar we have been kneeling, in whose honor we have sacrificed tremendous sums of money, and from whom we have expected redemption from our social, economic, and other national ills. We have placed a burden upon education which was altogether too heavy for it to bear.

This consciousness that education was none too successful was wholesome. The first prerequisite for remedying a given situation is a frank appraisal of the situation. But the directions suggested in which we should look for a solution of these problems were most disheartening. The general direction designated by the speakers at these conferences was that the students must be taught what he needs, which seemed to mean what he wants or what his given community wants him to have. Such an attempted solution will lead to a further disintegration of our educational efforts, which already lack all semblance of unity. Education may toy with the idea of student needs, but it must first settle who are to determine what those needs are and by what standards such needs are to be determined. Surely the students themselves are not qualified to do it. They have not back of them the experience for so important a task. Their vision of needs are altogether too limited. They have no adequate standards. Only men who are as interested in the student's welfare as are their parents, men with an encyclopedic knowledge of the various possible objectives, men with a realization of the proper perspectives in life, and men with a guide such as only the Creator and Provider of these students can furnish are somewhat qualified for the task. They must know that life is greater than bread and butter.

Then again, education can never expect to gain the respect of the constituency which it serves unless it adopts some adequate integrating philosophy. The vast majority of teachers have had almost as many philosophies hurled at them as they have had teachers. They cannot possibly have one integrating philosophy. They are at sea. They instill conflicting ideas into the minds of their charges, who are torn apart with all sorts of confusions. We must adopt a philosophy worth defending and fighting for—a philosophy that colors all education and unifies it. The tremendous power of such a philosophy calls for a careful re-examination of what we hold to be true. It is as dangerous as it is necessary. Only the truth can safely function as an integrating force.

Restorative Education

The masterpiece of God's creative handiwork was man. Man was made at the end of a long series of creative activities which placed him at the head of all the creatures from the point of view of his complexity and ability. He was made after special divine deliberation. Special creative methods were used to bring him forth. He was made after a divine model. A special divine objective was expressed. No one will ever over-estimate the beauty, the perfection, and the serviceableness of man as he left the fingers of God. He was to serve as a divine representative before all creation. He was to exercise dominion over all the world and to insist that God's will be done. It was his business to serve as God's vice-regent here in this world. But he was also to serve as the representative of the created world before God. The world through him was to glorify God. The prayers in behalf of the world was to rise to God's throne through him. He was a sort of a mediator between the spiritual world above and the material world here below. The Fall of man brought about such a case of maladjustment that man became utterly unfit, unable and unwilling to function in that high calling for which he was made.

Now it would seem that it would be education's highest function to work in the direction of restoring that masterpiece so that it may begin to function as nearly properly as possible. This means that man should be made thoroughly acquainted with the will of Him whom he is called upon to represent. The source of this information is the special revelation of God. Those whose business it is to teach the messages of the Scriptures would seem to be the proper educational authorities in this matter. However, it is also necessary for man to know the universe which he is to utilize for the glory of God. This is the function of our educational institutions. Adam was able before the Fall to detect the thought of God in the animals as they passed by him and therefore to give them proper names. Such an education will go far in restoring the masterpiece so that he may approximate the function that was divinely given him before the marvel of divine handiwork was shattered to pieces by the force of a lie.

H. S.

SHARP MEMORY

Above the trees on a silver night
Hung a moon, and such a moon!
Yellow and mellow like tempting fruit
Ripened too soon;
The thicket with crickets stirred and whirred
While the world was still
Only one bird apostrophied sound
By a wild trill.
That one bird-call—could I know his name!
Aroused my slumbering sense
And made for me on a certain night
Sweet circumstance.
So much in so little is mystery
Linked by a wonderful memory.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.
American Policy in the Orient

One of the fundamental policies which the United States pursued in its conduct of foreign relations is the policy of the Open Door. Unlike the policy of isolation or non-intervention, which admits of general or universal application, the policy of the Open Door is limited in scope and is more like the Monroe Doctrine in that it is regional in its application. The policy has been confined almost entirely to our relations with China.

In 1842, at the close of the so-called Opium War, England imposed on China a treaty which gave her special commercial concessions in five of China's ports. When this news reached Washington, Caleb Cushing was dispatched to China with instructions "to secure the entry of American ships and cargoes into (the five ports named) on terms as favorable as those which are enjoyed by British merchants." That is the origin of the Open Door Policy. We here wrote into our first formal treaty with China what we thought would graciously acquiesce. But this is not the policy of the Open Door. We here wrote into our first formal treaty with China what is known as the most-favored-nation clause, and have subsequently been inclined to insist that whatever privileges a most favored nation obtained from China should be shared by the United States.

This principle was originally applied only to commercial concessions, but in time it was expanded to cover industrial and financial concessions as well. From the beginning, too, it was made to include the right of extraterritoriality with its consequent infringement on the sovereignty of China. Under President Taft our policy for a time blossomed out into "Dollar Diplomacy," which has been described as an attempt "to force American capital by diplomatic pressure into a region of the world where it would not go of its own accord." Wilson in 1913 promptly repudiated Taft's policy, but by 1920 we find him making a determined but vain effort to influence Wall Street bankers in repeating the Taft experiment. Though the United States has on the whole been more disinterested than other powers, this disinterestedness has not always prevented us from accepting concessions which some more favored nation obtained from China by fraud, diplomatic trickery, or outright force.

Thus the Open Door policy, like the Monroe Doctrine, has come to have various meanings to different administrations. Whether our policy as pursued in the course of a century has been unselfish and altruistic and has evinced a spirit of brotherly love for China is a question upon which opinions in this country and in China radically differ. We have at times been accused of Pharisaism and hypocrisy and of using the policy as a clock for imperialism; yet certain administrations have also shown much highmindedness and moral integrity, and have evinced a desire to use the Open Door policy as a means of preserving the territorial integrity of China.

Even at such times it cannot be said that the policy was wholly disinterested. Nor can it be said to have brought any appreciable happiness or benefit to China. Her history in the twentieth century and especially today is convincing proof to the contrary. Our policy has never had the backing of American public opinion, and at no time has the United States been willing to go to war in its support. Today more than ever it is clear that the policy of the Open Door, with its corollary of extraterritorial rights, should have been abandoned long ago. Yet today American marines are still in Shanghai and American gunboats on the Yangtze. And today as much as ever the United States is insisting that the doctrine must be maintained.

If today China were in possession of full sovereign rights over all her territory and a fully sovereign Chinese government were to request us in polite oriental language to abandon our century old policy of the Open Door, it is a safe guess that our government would graciously acquiesce. But this is not the situation in China today, nor does the request come from China but from Japan. Evidently this does make a difference. And Japan does not speak the language of diplomacy but of force. She has simply slammed the door in our face, and has told us that henceforth, whether we like it or not, we must recognize the New Order in Asia which she is engaged in creating. Should we now risk a war with her in defense of our traditional policy, which by admission of our own government should have been abandoned earlier? Surely such a war would be contemptible and would not merit popular support. But is that the only issue, the real issue, between us and Japan today? Can the impasse in our relations with her be reduced to so simple a formula?

A full answer to this question would involve a discussion of the historic reasons for Japan's present position in the Orient, and a consideration of our relations with her over a period of years. The circumstances leading to the present crisis cannot be detailed here. Suffice it to say that the break in our traditional friendship for Japan had its begin-
Calvin’s View of the Fourth Commandment

THIS ARTICLE is to be devoted to a defense of John Calvin’s view of the Fourth Commandment, but before we begin the argument, let us briefly state why the other two views are not acceptable to us.

Westminster View Criticized

(1) We can not accept the Westminster view, because we consider both of its affirmations unscriptural. We do not believe that the commandment is binding upon the Christian, for the reasons given below. We do not accept the doctrine that God ordered a change of day from the seventh to the first day of the week, because the passages adduced are inadequate to prove the point. The proof texts given in the Westminster standards are I Cor. 16:1, 2; Acts 20:7; and Rev. 1:10. As we examine them, we can not repress a feeling of amazement that such a body as the Westminster Assembly rested so momentous a doctrine upon so flimsy a foundation. The first text instructs the believers to lay aside something, each man by himself, to make up a sum for the time when the apostle will come to receive the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem. It contains no reference to any assembly for worship, and was not to be a permanent practice, since it was for an extraordinary occasion, which, having passed, would not soon recur. The second relates the story of his visit to Troas and the miracle of the restoration to life of Eutychus, when he fell out of the window, because he could not remain awake under the apostolic preaching, it being late at night. That was on the first day of the week, but the apostle remained there seven days and this was the last night yore his departure. It is likely that there had been other meetings on previous evenings, and so this proves nothing as to a weekly habit of assembling on the first day. Besides, it was at night, and the story does not prove that the believers had observed the day as a day of rest. If anything, it suggests that the meeting was held in the evening because they were at work during the day. As proof that the Christians regarded Sunday as the Christian Sabbath, this passage amounts to exactly nothing. The third passage proves that the apostle John was “in the spirit” on Sunday, and that is all it proves. What are we to do with proof-texts such as these, in support of the bold assertion that God commanded a change of the day on which the Fourth Commandment must be observed?

Heidelberg Too Subject to Criticism

(2) The Heidelberg position we can not accept because it requires one to be an intellectual tight rope walker—to believe that we are under the Fourth Commandment, yet not wholly under it, so that we may distinguish between a moral element in the commandment, which we must obey, and a ceremonial element, which we need not obey. This is like cracking a nut, taking out the kernel, and throwing the rest away. You can do that with nuts, but not with divine commandments. He who is under a law at all is wholly under it, and has no manner of right to split it into two parts in this fashion. Notice that this is quite different from what our Lord did when He pointed out that the commandments forbidding murder and adultery could be violated in the heart as well as in external conduct. Thereby He derogated not one iota from
the authority of the law in externals, but carried its demands into the recesses of the mind. The Heidelberg position does actually disregard an element in the law which is acknowledged to be a part of it—namely, the designation of the seventh day of the week as the day of rest. For our part, we accept here the Seventh Day position, that if we are under the law at all, we are under this part of it too.

Turning now to Calvin's doctrine, let us restate it as follows:

Whatever other grounds may be adduced for the duty of observing the Lord's Day, no such obligation arises for the Christian from the Fourth Commandment.

Calvin did not deny that Christians ought to observe a weekly day of rest and worship. He affirmed, in his Commentary on Genesis, on the basis of the creation narrative, and he argued in favor of it in the Institutes. What he denied was that the Christian believer holds to the Fourth Commandment the same relation as the Israelite of Old Testament times, or a relation so closely similar that an obligation to Sunday observance may be said to rest upon it.

For the Israelite, that commandment was unquestionably a ground of moral obligation. He might have, in addition to it, also other reasons for resting on the seventh day of the week, but whether he had or not there was at least this—God had commanded it. That was clear, and that was sufficient. If he did not obey, he sinned. Calvin holds that this is not true of the Christian. He may have other reasons for observing a weekly day of rest, and doing it on Sunday, but whatever such reasons there may be, he has not this reason, that God has commanded it. To the Christian believer, God has commanded no such thing. The Fourth Commandment was for Israel only, and it passed away with the end of the old dispensation.

The reasons for this conviction of Calvin's are not fully developed in any part of his writings, so far as we know. It shall be our endeavor in this article to show why we agree with him, hoping that if the great Reformer were a reader of The Calvin Forum he would approve what we write.

Apostolic Silence on Sabbath Keeping

I. Our first reason is the silence of the apostles in the epistles concerning the duty of Sabbath keeping. This is one of the outstanding features of the New Testament, and the more we think of it, the more surprising and significant it seems, although usually ignored. All of the apostles were Jews, brought up in the strictest Sabbatarian principles. This must have been especially the case with St. Paul, who was a Pharisee, but it is true also of all the rest. Now, all of these men, in the writings we have from them, set themselves the task of teaching the converts, most of them former Gentiles, how to live the Christian life. They go into great detail in such instruction, quoting, emphasizing, and expounding every other commandment in the Deca-

logue, but not one of them so much as mentions the Fourth, either by implication or by direct exposition. This has sometimes been explained by saying that those early believers kept the Sabbath so well that no exhortation was necessary—but that is silly. If it were true, and if the apostles thought it a duty, there would at least be some praise for such extra-ordinary faithfulness, but it can not be true. It would not be true even in Christian America, much less is it true, or can it ever have been true of converts just come out of heathenism. Ask the missionaries and they will tell you that Sunday keeping is one of the hardest things to teach the converts, and the practice is lamentably deficient.

To place this remarkable silence of the apostles clearly before you, let us put it in this way. Nowhere in the epistles do we find:

a. Any exhortation to Sabbath keeping,
b. Any reference to the Fourth Commandment,
c. Any rebuke because the Sabbath was not properly kept,
d. Any praise for faithfulness in such a duty,
e. Any inclusion of Sabbath breaking in lists of sins,
f. Or any inclusion of Sabbath keeping in lists of "fruits of the Spirit," or other enumeration of Christian virtues.

We have here a most remarkable phenomenon, which must be adequately and honestly dealt with in our views on the general subject. If Sabbath keeping, or Sunday keeping, on the basis of the Fourth Commandment, is a duty for us, it was equally so for the Christians of that generation; and if it was then a Christian duty, how shall we account for the failure of the apostles to teach it to their converts?

In the four gospels, to be sure, we find plenty of references to the Fourth Commandment, chiefly by way of controversy about it between Christ and his opponents. These are, in their own way, very important passages, but they do not solve our problem. Christ was "born of a woman, made under the law," and until his death the Fourth Commandment was certainly in force. Hence the question He discussed was not whether it should be obeyed, but how. Since so considerable a space is given to it in the gospels, the silence of the apostolic letters is all the more surprising.

The Council Decides

II. Our second reason for agreeing with John Calvin is drawn from the action of the Council at Jerusalem. This time we do not say: "the silence of the Council," for that body was not silent on the problem. Although it did not mention the Sabbath by name, it took action that covers it. That assembly was convened to decide which of the distinctively Jewish customs ought to be observed by the Gentile converts. Such practices included circumcision, tithing, the observance of new moons and of sab-
batical years, the fasts, the sacrifices, the distinction between clean and unclean meats, and the keeping of the weekly day of rest. Those Jewish customs included also what was to the Gentile mind a strange and unreasonable objection to free sexual intercourse between a man (whether married or not) and an unmarried woman. With regard to all of these things the Gentile converts were asking questions, and it was important that these questions should be answered. After full discussion, the following decision was formulated:

It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. (Acts 15:28.)

Here follows a list of things to be avoided, but Sabbath breaking is not among them. Yet Sabbath keeping was at that time, beyond any doubt, one of the most outstanding Jewish peculiarities. It was precisely one of those things about which the Gentile Christians would be sure to ask: "Must we also, having become Christians, keep the Sabbath, as do the Jews?" This decree was their formal and official emancipation from any such duty. Let us repeat it, this is no argument from silence; it is an argument from a deliberate and carefully worded decision. The list given is distinctly called a complete list of things to be observed. "We lay upon you no greater burden." Everything but what is expressed is excluded from the realm of Christian duty. This covers tithing, circumcision, distinction of meats, the observance of new moons, etc. It also, very distinctly, covers the weekly Sabbath.

It is no answer to this interpretation to point out that such things as murder, theft, and adultery are also not mentioned, for such things belong to general morality, which was as well understood by the Greeks and Romans as by the Jews. No convert could imagine that his Christian faith emancipated him from these elementary moral duties. The question before the Council was not to define the full scope of Christian duty, but to indicate which of the distinctly Jewish practices must be adopted in the Christian church. This being the purpose in view, the omission of Sabbath keeping from the list of required things is a definite exclusion of it from the requirements of the Christian life.

An Invasion of Christian Liberty

III. Our third reason is that the apostle Paul warns us against obedience to the Fourth Commandment as a dangerous form of apostasy from the Christian faith; and against saying that such obedience is a duty, as an invasion of Christian liberty. The passages in which such a position is taken are Romans 14:5; Galatians 4:10, 11; and Colossians 2:16. Most of us have been so thoroughly trained in Sabbatarian principles, and in the conviction that the Decalogue is a universal and permanent moral law, that when we read such passages we fail to see what is on the page before us, or take refuge in various devices of interpretation whereby we dull the edge of their teaching; but if we have once mastered the points already discussed we shall come to the exegesis of the texts named with a new open-mindedness, and we shall admit that they are wholly incompatible with the instruction we have received. Since the space available does not permit a detailed exegetical examination here, let us only quote the judgment of the very learned and evangelical commentator Dr. Henry Alford, in his Greek Testament. On Colossians 2:16 he says:

We may observe that, if the ordinance of the Sabbath had been, in any form, of lasting obligation on the Christian church, it would have been quite impossible for the Apostle to have spoken thus. The fact of an obligatory rest of one day, whether the 7th or the 1st, would have been directly in the teeth of his assertion here.

On Galatians 4:10 he says:

Notice how utterly such a verse is at variance with any and every theory of a Christian Sabbath, cutting at the root, as it does, of all obligatory observance of times as such.

On Romans 14:5 he comments similarly. After long and careful study, our own exegetical judgment coincides entirely with that of Dr. Alford on this point.

Fourth Commandment a Part of the Old Covenant

IV. Our fourth reason for approving Calvin's view of the Fourth Commandment is that only so can we bring to a satisfactory synthesis the whole New Testament teaching on the Mosaic law. All Christians are agreed that not all the provisions of that legislation are binding upon us, but why not? Is it because those laws were given to Israel and not to us? We can not take that ground. It is true that when they were divinely enacted our own ancestors were Gentiles, aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and therefore not under the laws of that Commonwealth, but they were later naturalized in it, so that they became "fellow-citizens" and members of "the household of God." By virtue of that naturalization we also are in it. Hence the laws and statutes of Israel are our laws, unless they have been abrogated; but they have been. They were a part of the "Old Covenant" made by God with Israel at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19 sq.) and that Old Covenant has been superseded by the "New Covenant" which Christ established, and of which the Lord's Supper is the sign and seal. (Luke 22:20). See Jeremiah 31:31-34; II Corinthians 3; (especially vs. 14 in the American Revised Version) and Hebrews 8:6-10:18.

This abrogation of the Old Covenant is very generally recognized by Reformed theologians, but the necessary consequence of it has not been accepted, namely, that this abrogation covers the Decalogue as well as the rest of the Mosaic law. Hence not only the Fourth Commandment but all the Ten Commandments are without legal authority in the Christian church and in the Christian life. This statement will seem very shocking to many
readers, who will at once suspect the writer of being an antinomian, but this is a misunderstanding, due to their mentally identifying the Ten Commandments with the Moral Law. Thus, when they read that we hold the entire Decalogue to have been abrogated, they think we mean to say that there is no longer any Moral Law. That is not the idea. The Moral Law abides, but it is something distinct from the Decalogue. That this is true may be seen by any one if he will reflect:

1. That the Moral Law existed before the Decalogue. It was sin to murder, steal, and commit adultery before the time of Moses, was it not?

2. That the Moral Law exists in areas where the Decalogue is unknown, according to Romans 2:14, 15.

3. That the Decalogue, so far from being the same as the Moral Law, does not even contain the highest Moral Law, according to our Lord, in Matthew 22:36-40.

The Decalogue is simply a partial, temporary, and local formulation of the Moral Law, having jurisdiction only in Israel, and only during the life of the Old Covenant (Gal. 3:19); just as the civil and criminal code of New York State is a local and partial codification of the English “Common Law,” having jurisdiction within that state and not elsewhere; although the same principles apply wherever English speaking people live.

That the Decalogue, as formulated and authoritative legislation, did pass away when the Old Covenant was abrogated, follows infallibly from its close connection with that Covenant. It was, as Dr. Davis says in his Bible Dictionary, the Constitution of the Old Covenant. The other laws were subsidiary, of the nature of by-laws. The Decalogue is expressly called “The Covenant” in Ex. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 9:11, 15; and I Kings 8:21. Well then, if the Decalogue was the Old Covenant itself, and if that Covenant is abrogated, as the New Testament teaches, what possibility remains that the Ten Commandments are still the permanent moral law for the Christian?

Under the New Covenant the people of God must look for moral obligation, not to something authoritative under the abrogated Old Covenant, but to the teaching of our Lord and of the holy apostles. That instruction coincides at almost all points with the commandments of the Decalogue, but, as we have seen, not with the Fourth Commandment.

However, here arises an objection that must be considered. As every Bible reader knows, the apostles do quote all the other nine commandments as divine and authoritative. How can that be reconciled with the idea that they lost their authority with the death of Christ? The answer is not difficult, and is indicated at once when we ask the question: “Did these commandments originate the duties required in them, or were they duties before the time of Moses?” Certainly the latter. Therefore they were a part of the Moral Law before the Decalogue was given, and being such, they remained a part of the Moral Law after the Decalogue was abrogated. It is as such that the apostles affirm and teach them, and in doing so they naturally employ the old and well known form of words. So far as the apostles do this, the Christian is bound to accept the said commandments as authoritative, not now because they were proclaimed at Sinai, but because of their original moral quality and their re-affirmation by the apostles. At the risk of repetition, we may state it thus:

Whatever in the Decalogue is binding upon us is so binding, not at all because it is there, but because it has been re-affirmed by Christ and the apostles as a moral principle of the Christian life.

The Fourth Commandment, however, has not been so re-affirmed, and therefore has no authority as a rule of conduct in the Christian life. That is what Calvin taught, and that is scriptural to the highest degree.

(A Defense of the Heidelberg View by Prof. Kromminga is planned for the next issue.—Ed.)

Either . . . . Or

Christianity’s Great Disjunction

Joshua is giving his final charge to the people whom he has served so long. One consideration is paramount in his mind, that of the loyalty of Israel to Jehovah. He recognizes that this loyalty will be dependent in large part upon decisiveness and clear commitment. He addresses Israel in an hour of crisis. And that crisis, like the one of our own day, required plain speaking and incisive presentation of the issues. “Choose you this day,” said he, “whom ye will serve.”

Harold B. Kuhn

Divinity Student, Harvard University

This word is, first of all, an appeal for an open declaration. It demands action of will. Above all, it demands a clear-cut commitment to one of two alternatives. Such an appeal has long been unpalatable to the fallen human heart, with its inertia and its constitutional bent for retaining its idols.

This characteristic manifests itself periodically in acute form. We are today at a juncture in which clear-cut distinctions are unwelcome. Our generation is so tinctured with relativism, compromise and
evasion that there is danger that the Church of Jesus Christ shall herself succumb and become inert, instead of pressing those issues which precipitate spiritual action.

**Christianity Adjusted to Paganism**

For instance, the “modern man” wants nothing of disjunctions; nothing of “either . . . or.” Says he, “Make it rather, ‘both . . . and.’” In other words, be definite about nothing. Venture least of all to be dogmatic concerning the great historic truths of the Christian Faith. This temper is, in large part, the result of a tenacious desire to assume a pagan world-view, and then to fit the Christian belief into it, as far as possible, but to preserve at all costs the paganism of this-or-that philosopher.

Modern liberalism has reared for itself a new pantheon of “gods of the Amorites.” Its relativisms, evolutionisms, and chronic denials shift from year to year. No one would think of using a science text book printed ten years ago. The assured results of modern science, before whom our generation bows upon calloused knees, are presented with dogmatic certainty in one decade and discarded without apology in favor of new dogmatisms in the next; but let there be no finality and no dogmatism in religion! “Give us,” repeat the liberals, “no ‘either . . . or’; be scholarly and say only ‘both . . . and.’”

The Gospel of Jesus Christ cuts diametrically across this type of evasive compromise. If the call of Jesus Christ be a call at all, it is a call to a renunciation of old loyalties, and to a break with a life of sin. It is a call, not of curious men to the audience of a Great Teacher, but of broken men to the bleeding feet of a crucified Saviour. It is a call, not to the pursuit of the example of one who has by some feat of resoluteness become a son of God; it is rather a call of submission and loyalty to the Eternal Son of God, in time incarnate in human flesh.

**Loyalties Demanded by the Gospel**

The loyalty which the Gospel demands is absolute. It admits of no private attachments of equivocal character. And if its call be imperialistic, its demands are totalitarian. The Cross calls to us through the centuries, “Either forsake Egypt in toto, and follow Jesus Christ, or quit pretending. Either identify yourself totally with the Gospel of the Son of God, or quit playing at Christianity!”

The call of the Gospel is, furthermore, qualified by the element of time. Joshua, after the manner of a faithful evangelist, pressed for a commitment now. He called his people, not to favorably consider the claim of Jehovah, but to incisively settle the issue of loyalty “this day.” Present-day relative liberalism would persuade us to “seek after value,” to “study the religions of the world to see the good points in each,” and to make no decisive commitment of life, but rather, to “face life with courageous action, settling each issue on its own merits.” Jesus Christ, today as at Gennesaret, say, “Follow me now.”

It is valuable to notice the scope of the claims of the Christian message. By virtue of its inner dynamic, it refuses to take its place at a round table, to compare notes with the “other religions,” for the purpose of absorbing, if desirable, some of the “good features” of them. It dynamically thrusts forward its claim to supplant and supersede all other systems. Its universalism admits of no rivals. It goes forth, “conquering and to conquer,” not “apologizing and to apologize.” If its claims upon individual men are totalitarian, so likewise its claim among the religious systems of men. It has no place for the man who, in anaemic terms, thinks that “Hinduism is pretty good for the Hindu.”

Let us be done with this type of compromise! Let us have none of the relativism of this age! Let us confront the world with a Gospel of mighty disjunctions! Either Jesus Christ is the Son of God in an absolute and unique sense, or He is a mere man, and a Gospel based upon any distinctive and absolute merits residing in Him is a presumptuous imposture. Either Christianity is to supplant all other systems, or its imperialistic claims are shallow mockery.

Away with this idea of “both . . . and,” by which we are to look appreciatively upon the systems of pagan philosophical thought, with a view to finding “something good” in the half-baked monism of the Hegelian idealists, the naive optimism of Emerson and his pantheism, or the polyanna-theism of the finite-god-Personalists. Either God is a Person without and above the Cosmos, or He is shorn of freedom, and is in no proper sense God at all; either God is distinct from the creation, or He is shorn of rationality; either He is infinite and absolute, or He is a creature made in the image of man!

**Moral Ruler of the Universe**

Let us note, then, the extent of the claims of the Gospel of Jesus Christ upon the man who will be saved. He must come, in brokenness over sin—over a God grieved, a God whose government has been set at naught. Nor is this view of God and the Divine government palatable to the “modern man.” His thought concerning God is cast in the cracked mould of an age which has willingly forgotten the sovereignty of God and the rigorous nature of the Divine jurisprudence. No sane person would consent to live in a civil territory governed upon the superficial and sentimental basis upon which our moderns would have us believe God governs His universe. The God which liberalism fabricates is to be likened to a childish and near-sighted grandfather, either too benign or too spineless to enforce moral mandates. This is a far cry from the God of the Sacred Scriptures, Who is revealed preeminently as the Moral Ruler of the Universe.
To restore this fundamental concept in the minds and hearts of men is the supreme task of evangelism. Only the operation of the Third Person of the Trinity can rebuild that which the canker worm of liberal thought has so ruthlessly and illogically destroyed. But—and we repeat—he who would be saved must come in brokenness over sin, and in grief over the infraction of the Divine law. He must make unconditional surrender, in contrition, and must trust without reserve the merits of the death of the Son of God for his own sins.

Yet more: the regenerate soul finds himself peculiarly obligated to the call of Jesus Christ. Being now alive from the dead, he is to make a volitional disposition of his redeemed powers. And here the claims of Jesus Christ are totalitarian. That consecration which conditions faith unto the experiential proving of “that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” knows of no “both . . . ands.” The Holy Spirit, as He presents the issues of total consecration, speaks in terms of “either . . . or.” True, this should not be necessary in the case of the born-again believer. Yet above the “mercies of God,” there is an overarching of the strong sanctions of a God of “all or none.”

Discipleship is rugged. How shall we make men realize it? How shall we impress and awaken our generation, already narcotized into spiritual stasis by relativism? How shall we convince men that Christianity is not a side-line; not a casual and unimportant part of general living, to be taken or left as the individual may desire?

It is apparent that such will never be accomplished by a series of equivocal “both . . . ands.” There are indications that the man in the street is becoming impatient with the endless speculation of liberal theorists, with their endless logic-chopping, their hypotheses, and their lack of convictions. Mr. Average Man wants certainties—something upon which he can depend, and to which he may with safety form spiritual attachment. In a day in which political demagogues of Europe present philosophies of action, and thereby get action, there comes to the Church, in a peculiar sense, the challenge of presenting incisive issues and pulsating certainties.

Totalitarianism Under God

But, one will ask, is the Church of Jesus Christ warranted in stepping forward with a claim to doctrinal certainty and to totalitarian spiritual loyalty? The candid reader of the Scriptures will, we are convinced, conclude that it is. The Gospel stands in its own right as a system of dogmatism. It is the outward expression of a theological science which has a right to declare its own norms. And within these norms (namely the Sacred Scriptures), there is revealed a claim for the Christian system, a claim to the right to make the fullest demands upon human loyalties. And these demands thrust themselves forward, not for favorable consideration, but as making all-embracing claims upon human affections and human conduct. It will require emphasis to bring these demands to the attention of men. Nothing but a presentation of dynamic disjunctives will serve to awaken opiated consciences and to energize palsied volitions. Our generation with its chronic skepticism and denials, will be moved (if at all) by the certain sound of the alternative call: “Either . . . or.”

Christianity will never rise to her true level as a Crusade until this passion shall grip both the man in the pulpit and the man and woman in the pew. Totalitarian systems have somewhat to teach us. Let it be understood that we strongly deprecate the rise, spread, and methods of all such systems. But the same dynamic which makes every Communist and every Nazi a missionary—namely the dynamic which springs from the whole-hearted commitment of the life to the cause—could well be reproduced in the life of every Christian. And this can never come until the issues are outlined in clear relief—in such relief as is produced by the disjunctive “either . . . or.” When the same clarity of purpose, the same measure of urgency, and the same measure of devotion and loyalty to the cause, shall grip the Church of Jesus Christ as has gripped the followers of these tyrant-systems, then shall the certain sound of her trumpet rally recruits to her banner: then shall she go forth with a message of life and deliverance, to cast up a breakwater against the insuring tides of human sin.

The Lost Chord . . . Regained

"SEATED one day at the organ . . . . I struck one chord of music like the sound of a great 'Amen'."

In the darkness around us a song is sounding, like the last ringing of a dying melody, the vibration of a vast harmony that is silent. We grope into the void and sometimes seem almost to touch the harp-strings of that supernal symphony and hear again that grand "Amen."

In the far-off ages when time began, God "laid the foundations of the earth" and "determined the bounds of men's habitation." The "Morning Stars sang together," and the dulcet strains of earth's first heaven-born song floated down across the new creation.

Before the awful reality of rebellion, before the stern tones of the curse, the Song receded into the measureless wastes of Infinity and man's soul was shriveled and cold-gray like lead. No song—no harmony—the chord lost. "By the waters of Babylon, there we wept . . . we hanged our harps upon the willows . . . how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"— "When the sun and the light, and the moon, and the stars be darkened, and the
clouds return after the rain . . . the sound of the grinding is low . . . and all the daughters of music shall be brought low" . . . .

But anon—a sound—a note—a chord! "Where is God my Maker that giveth songs in the night?" . . . "Ye shall have songs in the night." "I call to remembrance my song in the night—will God cast off forever?"

The glorious melody comes ringing ever nearer from out the far reaches of Heaven. A new song—"He hath put a new song in my mouth." Not man's song—"In the night His song shall be with me." "Sing unto the Lord a new song, show forth his salvation from day to day."

The slate-black of night grows more and more vibrant, until one night—"Suddenly there was . . . a multitude of the Heavenly host—'Glory to God! . . . Glory to God! . . . Glory to God!'" . . .

* * * * * * *

"It may be that Death's bright angel will speak in that chord again. It may be that only in Heaven . . ."

* * * * * * *

The Throne of God, the Lamb that was slain, the Morning Stars, David, Job, Solomon, Isaiah, the host of the Redeemed, all are there. And they sing forever a new song, the old song, the song in the night, the lost Chord . . . Regained!

"Worthy art thou—for thou wast slain and didst purchase unto God by thy blood men of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

As chorus answers to chorus and echo strikes echo and they ring again upon themselves at last, the answer sings up from God's redeemed creation, "Blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever."

* * * * * * *

". . . I shall hear that grand 'Amen'. . . ." * * * * * * *

"And the four living creatures that are ever round the throne said . . . . 'AMEN' . . . ."  

ALAI BANDON.

Materialism in the Light of History

R. E. D. Clark
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It is often claimed that the progress of modern science is nothing more nor less than the progress of materialistic thought and the overthrow of all belief in the supernatural. True, there has been some sign of a reaction from the "crude" materialism of the nineteenth century and many writers claim that modern materialistic theories must be founded upon very different premises than were those of a bygone generation. Yet even so there is no doubt that the association of materialism and science is widespread in the world of today.

Despite this widespread opinion among the enemies of the Christian faith, there are the very strongest grounds for holding that as a philosophical basis of science, materialism has proved wholly unsatisfactory in the light of history—even when judged by its own standpoint.

Perhaps the chief reason why this fact so often escapes notice is the confusion between two common meanings of the word "materialism."

The Method of Science Evaluated

There is obviously one sense in which materialism and science—or at all events the physical sciences—are closely intertwined. This is the sense in which materialism is merely a method of science. The scientist says to himself in effect: "I have only one possible way of explaining why this phenomenon occurs. I must show that it is caused by something else—by something materialistic about which scientists already possess some knowledge."

In the last resort this simple statement about laboratory procedure is not the same thing as saying that everything can be explained materialistically. As several well-known scientists have pointed out, science is not necessarily an attempt to obtain all truth but only a part of the truth—the part that obeys deterministic laws. Science is not a mass of isolated facts but a scheme in which these facts are interconnected with one another. Facts which do not fit into this scheme are not yet a part of science and, although some scientists spend their time calling all such facts in question, history shows that this is a very unwise thing to do. Time and time again, observations ran counter to the science of one age and were ridiculed at the time, but turned out to be correct none the less. In the seventeenth century, for instance, it seemed ridiculous that there should be stones falling from heaven and people enquired why, if these meteorites existed, they had never fallen in the presence of reliable observers. But meteorites have now been incorporated into the science of today. There are, however, a great many facts (or alleged facts) which cannot yet be "ex-
Is Materialism a Preferable Philosophy?

Now what about the broader problem? Is it true that science has made materialism as a philosophy appear any more probable today than it did, say, two or three centuries ago?

This question can easily be answered from the empirical standpoint of science itself. Well-established scientific theories have only become generally accepted when it has been shown that with their aid the future can be predicted. The astronomer is able to say just where a star will be found in the sky or when an eclipse will take place; the chemist is able to tell what a wholly unknown element or compound looks like before anyone in the world has ever seen it; the geneticist is able to predict the result of cross breeding plants—and so instances might be multiplied. In all cases a power to predict is considered the best proof of the theories held in the different sciences.

Let us therefore apply this simple criterion to the doctrine of materialism. Has the materialist doctrine involved the making of prophesies in the past which can be used as a test of the theory?

In its strictly scientific sense, as a mere method of science rather than as a statement about all reality, materialism has, of course, worked very well. Every successful scientific prediction has gone to vindicate the value of materialism in scientific method.

But success in science does not really bear on our question. When we come to consider the predictive power of materialism as a philosophy the result is very different. The materialistic doctrine from its earliest days involved the view that the world and the things that are in it were just the ordinary things that we should expect to come into being as a result of the operations of natural forces if only we knew enough about them. On the other hand, anti-materialists who believed in God always maintained the opposite opinion. The Almighty had, they said, expended a great deal of care in making the world and it could not have come into being at all were it not that He had decided to create it. Of course, put in this manner, such views may sound “crude” nowadays but they at least serve to show the two different attitudes towards nature which were held by those who accepted materialistic doctrines and those who did not.

These two attitudes really amounted to predictions of what would be discovered hereafter, for in time science was bound to reveal more and more of the truth. According to one view, the progress of science would show us what a “natural” thing the world is and according to the other it would serve to show that it is “unnatural”—the very opposite of what we should expect to come into being of its own accord, by chance or by the operation of the ordinary laws of nature.

What then has been the verdict of history? There is, unfortunately, no space within the limits of a short article to discuss the way in which a large number of sciences have developed. But a few examples may be cited which will serve to show the general drift of science so far as it bears on the above question.

Trouble with the Solar System

First of all, the solar system was, according to writers of the last century, just the kind of thing one would expect to come into existence of its own accord. Just after the French Revolution Laplace described how a diffuse gas extending throughout space would condense to give worlds and how these would throw off rings which would in turn condense to give planets. It seemed natural to conclude, therefore, that the whole universe was filled with life and even in our own planetary system it was not so very long ago since it was thought that the other planets, the satellites and even the comets had living creatures on them. But all these speculations have turned out to be fallacious. Laplace's theory was wrong in all its essentials. A diffuse gas could not have come together in the way that he supposed to give flaming suns. If it had done so it would have acted contrary to the very principles of nature. Further, solar systems are not everyday occurrences in the sky and they only get formed as the result of an extreme freak. Then again, the earth is in the "temperate zone" of the solar system, the only zone in which life in advanced forms can manifest itself.
As for the other planets, there may, conceivably, be something akin to lichens on the dark areas of Mars which change their colors with the seasons—though this is by no means certain—but as there is no oxygen on Mars or on any of the moons or planets (the earth excluded), advanced forms of life as we know it cannot exist elsewhere in the solar system.

In addition to all this, the opinion that life would naturally adapt itself to whatever conditions it found—whether to intense cold or heat—has now been given its death blow by the spectroscope and modern chemistry. Life depends for its existence upon chemical reactions and, since we now know that matter throughout the universe consists of the same elements that we have on earth, they must be regulated by the laws of chemistry such as we can study in the laboratory. The conditions under which these can occur are, however, extremely critical so that the possibilities of life adapting itself in widely different conditions are very limited.

**Doctrine of Spontaneous Generation Discredited**

Then there is the question of life. From ancient times materialistic philosophers accepted the doctrine of spontaneous generation—in fact, it is interesting to observe that it was the Christian fathers who first had the courage to doubt this ancient and well established doctrine. Even in comparatively recent times, it was seen that spontaneous generation was a necessary consequence of materialism and Haeckel candidly said that unless this doctrine was accepted it would be necessary to believe in special creation. But spontaneous generation has been killed in the march of science.

The theory of evolution is already showing signs that it will fare in the same way. It may still be necessary to accept evolution as a fact, but we are not now nearly so confident that the development of amazingly complex structures out of simple ones is exactly what we should expect to happen as were the scientists of a former generation. Indeed, there is an increasing body of opinion—strengthened with each new discovery of the complexity of nature—that it could scarcely have happened at all unless there was something akin to design in nature.

**Evasions of the Materialists**

The energy of the universe is in a highly ordered condition, but if it were otherwise we should not be here to observe it so perhaps we live as a result of a gigantic freak which takes place every now and then during infinite time. The solar system and our world in particular seem to be beautifully arranged for the benefit of life but, once again, if this were not so we should not be thinking about it, so doubtless it is not a matter of any significance. Or again, it is argued that although spontaneous generation has had to be abandoned, it may yet have occurred once by chance in the dim distant past at a place and time when the conditions happened to be just right.

Now although such evasions may look plausible enough, it is important to remember that they are not of a kind that has been encouraged in other branches of knowledge. When Pasteur showed that if liquids were properly strongly heated and properly sealed no forms of life would appear in them afterwards, H. C. Bastian, the great protagonist of spontaneous generation, ingeniously argued that this was just what he had expected to happen, since long heating destroyed the large molecules out of which living matter was formed.

Again, the Aristotelians used to argue that the moon was a perfect body and so, of course, must be smooth. When Galileo showed that there were mountains and valleys on its surface, one of his opponents said that this did not in any way disprove the Aristotelian view, for the valleys which Galileo could see were probably filled with an invisible substance, so that the surface of the moon was smooth after all.

In these and many other instances, ingenious rather than truth loving people have explained away new facts rather than give up their theories. Where there is a will there is a way, so that it is always possible to put forward new hypotheses in order to save old theories. Indeed, most false theories in science have been supported in this manner after they have failed utterly to indicate the course of future discovery.

But such excuses when made after the event need to be taken as evidence against, rather than for the theory which they are designed to support. In theory at all events, the modern scientific temperament is in agreement with the Honorable Robert Boyle: "It is a frequent Practice among you when you assert anything that has no Resemblance to Truth, and would avoid Reprehension, to advance some further Improbability. How much more ingenious would it be to acknowledge a Doubt, than to persist in so shameless an Opposition."

Yet, applying this simple test to the philosophical doctrine of materialism, there can be little doubt as to the answer. The excuses that the order of nature is due to chance and so on have only been invented in recent years in order to avoid the awkward fact that the course of scientific discovery has been the very reverse of that expected by materialists in the past. For this reason such excuses and explanations can be given little weight however plausible they may seem.

On the other hand the spiritual view of nature—the view that saw in the world the work of a Creator, has successfully predicted the general results of subsequent discovery. For this reason it seems that such a view has far more to commend it at the present time than have any of the brands of present day materialism.

THE CALVIN FORUM * * * FEBRUARY, 1941
The Reformed Faith in the Modern World

By this time Calvinism stinketh," declared Joseph Parker in 1891, "for it hath been dead these two centuries." One who overheard the remark added, "But Jesus cried with a loud voice: Come forth!" Today those irresistible words are sounding forth; the Reformed Faith rises up and lives. This fact is incontestable. Forty years ago even a James Denney could describe a certain continental scholar as "one of the stalwarts of Calvinism, but an able man." But now take a cross section of the theological world. Tubingen, long the fashionable center of a radical Hegelian criticism, loudly acclaims Karl Heim, that brilliant and profound apostle of Martin Luther. Paris, the holy city of humanism, which early in the century gave birth to Sabatier's *Religions of Authority and Religions of the Spirit*, today broadcasts to the world Auguste Lecerf's *Reformed Dogmatics*, a lucid and convincing exposition of John Calvin. New York, the citadel and shrine of Modernism, only a decade ago held captive by McGiffert, Fosdick and company, now lies prostrate before Reinhold Niebuhr, a combination of Karl Barth and Karl Marx, with the former certainly the dominating partner. Even in provincial Pelagian England, that old-fashioned Ritschlian, A. E. Garvie, laments that he finds it necessary to swim against the tide. In the North, the famous New College Chair of Dogmatics, associated in the past with the names of Chalmers, Cunningham and Mackintosh, has significantly passed into the hands of the ablest British exponent of Barth, the provocative G. T. Thompson, who maintains among other things that "a church without a hell isn't worth a damn!"

Liberalism is Sick

As finite and dependent man must seek a final absolute authority, which may be found in either the political or religious, the secular or spiritual spheres. The medieval antithesis of Empire and Church was transformed at the reformation into the conflict of the National State and the Word of God. However, the healthy condition of tension was to be superseded by the decadent state of vacuity. The humanism of the Renaissance, man is the measure of things, patented in the philosophy of Rousseau, came to political expression in the French Revolution, religious expression in German rationalism. Hence the nineteenth century with the dominance of unrestrained individualism in religion and politics produced a vacuum which society no less than nature cannot but abhor. The inevitable explosion came with the cataclysm of the Great War, the result being that authoritarianism has once more come back to its own. To date political totalitarianism is in the saddle, but if its one formidable foe, religious totalitarianism, through the present struggle rises to the ascendancy, this fearful conflict will not have been fought in vain. Recently General Franco asserted his aim was to kill the nineteenth century; the nineteenth century was the age of liberalism. Similarly the Reformed Faith is out to slay the sick man of Europe, liberalism, to clear him bag and baggage out of the continent and dump him not into Asia but into the depths of the sea. And in killing the religion of the nineteenth century it will destroy the politics of the twentieth century. The father of Adolph Hitler, maintains D. R. Davies, was Adolph Harnach. The repudiation of the Christian ethic in Germany today is but the inevitable fruit of the renunciation of the Christian Theology yesterday.

The founder under God of the German Confessional Church, a blazing star in the dark contemporary sky, Karl Barth has been hailed by such a competent critic as Prof. Daniel Lamont as the greatest figure in the theological world since the Reformation. At the little Swiss city of Basel where three boundaries meet, in 1536, Calvin, a refugee from persecuting Romish France, gave to the world the Institutes, the magnum opus of the Reformation; four hundred years later in the same city Barth, a fugitive from persecuting Nazi Germany, is writing his Dogmatics, the clarion sound of the "New Reformation"!

World Getting Worse — and Better

The Great War knocked the bottom out of the idealistic evolutionary world of the young liberal minister of the German speaking Reformed congregation of Geneva. The conception of history as a contraption which feeds itself with amoeba at one end and turns itself out at the other end in the form of angels had, as Davies so cogently asserts, one serious defect—the angels don't come out. The amoeba gets stuck in the bloody mess half way—and then comes out in the form of beasts. Hard facts brought Barth to realize that the true prophet in the nineteenth century was not the English scientist Darwin but the Russian novelist Dostoievsky, who so vividly depicts the depravity of the natural man in the crudities and tragedies of the Russia of
his day by the contrasted saintliness of such gracious characters as "The Idict" and Aloysia. As to the course of history we cannot be optimists; neither should we be pessimists. We must be realists. The world is growing at one and the same time better and worse; good and evil are both on the increase. The wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest which is the end of the age. As year succeeds year the tension increases, to be resolved finally not in time, but at the end of time with the Advent of Jesus Christ. Hence the dialectical interpretation of history is intimately bound up with the theocentric interpretation of reality. The world has exchanged the medieval conception of the universe as anthropocentric for the much more naive conception of the universe as geocentric for the much more naive conception of the universe as anthropocentric. Influenced by the insistence of the Danish thinker, Kierkegaard, that there is a qualitative distinction between time and eternity, Barth resolves in all his thinking around the one center of the self-sufficient God. Hence the masterly elucidation in his "Dogmatics" of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity which is indispensable to any vital conception of the absolute God.

What is Barth?

Barth is Catholic. The believing acceptance of the truths of the Oecumenical Creeds as to the Holy Trinity and Person of Jesus Christ are essential to faith. He gives emphatic endorsement to Anselm's interpretation of the Atonement as satisfaction to Divine Justice. He reaffirms Cyprian's dictum, "Outside the Church there is no salvation."

Barth is Protestant. The Church stands under the Word of God and not vice versa. The Roman Church is a false church and it is nothing less than downright treason, as has happened more than once in the oecumenical movement, to designate that body as part of the one church of Jesus Christ. As Luther, Barth is Pauline in his emphasis rejoicing in the wonder of what Chalmers describes as "that joyful mighty paradox, God justifies the ungodly." He would agree with the great German that Paul's Epistles are more a Gospel than Matthew, Mark and Luke. P. T. Forsyth, a Barthian before Barth, has most aptly expressed this point of view. "The Gospels are but introductory to the Epistles, and most of the higher pains and troubles of the Church today arise from the displacement of its center of gravity to the Gospels. The hegemony of the Gospels means the decay of the Church. In the Gospels Jesus is in contact with timid disciples and not with triumphant apostles, and martyrs, and confessors. He is not yet in contact with the Church, which was only founded in the Pentecostal act."

Barth is Reformed. The central concept of revelation is the sovereignty of God in creation, providence and redemption. His strenuous opposition to National Socialism, the deadliest foe Christendom has had to face since the surging hordes of Islam shook Europe, is more reflective of the sturdy independent Calvinistic attitude to the state than the more subservient Lutheran. Further, his interpretation of Holy Communion is in line with the Ge nevan tradition. At the Cathedral of Bonn he refused to preach until the Holy Table was removed from the wall and a chair placed behind it. The sacrament is a supper at a table, not a sacrifice upon an altar. The whole spirit of Barthianism is summed up in the words of G. T. Thompson, "If we can believe in Jesus Christ we can believe in anything." Belief in the Incarnation, that most amazing miracle, makes possible, yea necessary, the believing acceptance of everything upon which lies the imprimatur of our Lord.

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Barth is Reformed. The central concept of revelation is the sovereignty of God in creation, providence and redemption. His strenuous opposition to National Socialism, the deadliest foe Christendom has had to face since the surging hordes of Islam shook Europe, is more reflective of the sturdy independent Calvinistic attitude to the state than the more subservient Lutheran. Further, his interpretation of Holy Communion is in line with the Genevan tradition. At the Cathedral of Bonn he refused to preach until the Holy Table was removed from the wall and a chair placed behind it. The sacrament is a supper at a table, not a sacrifice upon an altar. The whole spirit of Barthianism is summed up in the words of G. T. Thompson, "If we can believe in Jesus Christ we can believe in anything." Belief in the Incarnation, that most amazing miracle, makes possible, yea necessary, the believing acceptance of everything upon which lies the imprimatur of our Lord.

Amsterdam and Princeton

Amidst the raging seas of nineteenth century liberalism like the pillars of Hercules—only it was the mighty Atlantic and not the narrow straits of Gibraltar that lay between—the schools of Princeton and Amsterdam remained intact, pledged to the standards of classical Calvinism. The former with its brilliant exponents, the Hodges, Warfield, Machen, etc., has long maintained a lucid and stimulating exposition of the Westminster theology. Concerning the Dutch school, which came into prominence in the latter years of the last century, James Denney wrote in 1900 to George Jackson, "If you want to think well of Calvinism avoid the Dutch. There is far more of an inferior mathematical kind of metaphysics than of religious conviction in their Calvinism." The great masters Kuyper and Ba vinck are, however, not stolid but solid; for profundity, learning and spiritual insight, their writings occupy the highest rank. Kuyper, preacher and theologian, editor and journalist, founder of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands, with a constituency of now over one million and originator of the Free University of Amsterdam—and in his spare time for some years Prime Minister of Holland, was a veritable prince in Israel. His main theological contribution lay in his development of the conception, latent in Calvin, of Common Grace in the world in distinction from Particular Grace in the Church. All common life must be subject to the sovereignty of God, yet so function in its distinct spheres, that although of necessity impinging upon one another, each sphere must respect the prerogative of the other. The great spheres of Common Grace are the domestic, economic and political, bound up respectively with the institutions of the home, property and the state. Kuyper condemned pacifism as depriving the state of an essential function, whilst on the other hand repudiating socialism as conferring upon it that to which it has no legitimate claim. In opposition to the secular democracy of the French Revolution which long held...
Calvinism--
A Creed and A Passion

On the thirty-first of October it was four hundred and twenty-three years ago that Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses on the cathedral door at Wittenberg, thereby challenging the authority and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. This act of Luther has long been regarded as the official firing of the first shot of the great battle of the Protestant Reformation. Consequently, once each year we celebrate Reformation Sunday, the day on which we give special recognition to the God-given upheaval out of which the Protestant Church was born, the Bible made available to laymen and clergy as the only and absolute rule of authority in life and doctrine, and the great message of justification by faith restored to its pristine, Pauline glory. The Reformed Church in America, The Christian Reformed Church and other reformed churches are almost the direct spiritual descendants of this Reformation movement, having creeds that were written at least three hundred and seventy-eight years ago, or less than fifty years after Luther protested against the sale of indulgences. Ursinus and Olevianus completed the Heidelberg Catechism in 1562, and the Belgic Confession and Canons of Dort were formulated only fifty-six years later. The Heidelberg Catechism in its formation and content is so closely related to the Reformation that Max Goebel was prompted to write: "The Heidelberg Catechism may in the true sense of the term be considered the flower and fruit of the whole German and French Reformation." Now it was Calvinism, the name by which our type of Christian faith and philosophy is generally known, that made the greatest contribution to the fragrance of that flower and the lusciousness of that fruit which we have enjoyed in our religious life for almost four centuries. It is to this "life and world view," which is at once a mighty creed and a glorious passion, that a baffled and sin-worn humanity must turn for light and rest.

A Revival of Calvinism?

That there has come upon us in recent years a revival of interest in Calvinism is apparent in the conferences, books and periodicals that are devoted to a fresh study of this precious heritage. One can hardly share today the optimism of Prof. D. G. Malan who, in delivering a message in Cape Town, S. A., in 1936, said: "One of the most remarkable and at the same time most encouraging signs of
the present age is the notable revival of Calvinism in so many countries of the Christian world, yea, one may well say everywhere where this particular type of religion has spread in the course of the centuries." But so much has happened since then! However, though the outlook is not so bright in 1940, we may not close our eyes to scattered evidences found expression long before the frail Frenchman is not at all correct. John Calvin is definitely related to particular fundamentals. Such a revival might have been expected as a natural reaction to the eviscerated philosophies of the last two or three decades, particularly humanism, which is the very antipode of Calvinism. The disillusionment caused by the great World War and the awful conflict of the present day may be factors that enter into man's flight away from himself to the unchanging and sovereign God of Calvinism. At any rate, one hears of international conferences of Calvinists, of national and district conferences, of new Calvinistic journals, yes, and of "Calvinistic preaching." All of these things augur well for the church of Jesus Christ.

What Is Calvinism?

The popular answer to this question is that Calvinism is a system of religious thinking which originated with John Calvin of Geneva, one of the great leaders of the Reformation. This answer, however, is not at all correct. John Calvin is definitely related to Calvinism, but he was not its founder. To be sure, he was the great exponent, organizer and systematizer of Calvinistic truth, but he was not in any sense the creator of it. The real essence and principle of Calvinism was throbbing in the hearts of men and found expression long before the frail Frenchman wrote the Institutes. Four hundred years after Christ Augustin had already seen its glory and declared its truth. And Augustine, of course, made his discovery particularly in the writings of the Apostle Paul. Yes, and wherever in the Bible God in His sovereign majesty is seen helping man who in sin lies smitten in the dust before Him, there you have the essence of Calvinism. Calvinism is as old as revelation itself. It does not find its origin in the puny mind of finite man. We do not owe the great principles of our faith to man, even though he be a brilliant, passionate and deeply spiritual reformer. Calvin took the great truths of revelation and organized them into a system of thought. As the astronomer is not in any sense the creator of the great laws of the universe, or of the stars, but is merely one who observes and classifies them and thus produces a science, so Calvin observed and classified the great truths of divine revelation, producing a Weltanschauung, or as some prefer to call it, a "life system." No one has stated this truth more succinctly and beautifully than Abraham Kuijper in his first Stone lecture:

"... Calvinism has neither invented nor conceived this fundamental interpretation, but God himself implanted it in the hearts of its heroes and heralds. We face here no product of a clever intellectualism, but the fruit of a work of God in the heart, or, if you like, an inspiration of history. This point should be emphasized. Calvinism has never burned its incense upon the altar of genius, it has erected no monument for its heroes, it scarcely calls them by name. One stone only in a wall at Geneva remains to remind one of Calvin. His grave has been forgotten. Was this ingratitude? By no means. But if Calvin was appreciated, even in the 16th and 17th centuries the impression was vivid that it was One greater than Calvin, even God Himself, who had wrought His Work."

Barring, of course, the claim of divine inspiration for Calvin's work, one nevertheless feels that the words of the Apostle Paul might well, in a certain sense, be applied to the truths with which he confronted the world: "... I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man"—Gal. 1:11. So much, then, for the origin of Calvinism.

Now what shall one say of its essence or nature? Again, the popular thought is that it is a system of doctrine, that its sphere is theology. Nothing could be farther from the truth. It is a "life and world view," that is, a complete philosophy of life dealing with the three fundamental relationships of human existence, namely, our relation to God, to our fellowmen and to the world in which we live. It is a comprehensive system of thought. It has very definite views on science, culture, art, sociology, economics, politics, religion, etc. In fact, Abraham Kuijper goes so far as to make Calvinism one of the five basic philosophies of life. Working out from central, fundamental theological principles, Calvin developed a unified system of thought which related itself to every department and phase of human life. To demonstrate in a very simple way how varied and multiform are the bearings of Calvinism, allow me to quote some of the chapter headings of a recently published book on Calvinism: "Calvinism and Culture," "Internationalism, the League of Nations and Calvinism," "Calvinism and War," "The Origin and Function of the State," and "Calvinism, Politics and the Bible." If you are a Calvinist, therefore, you are not only one who has certain very definite theological opinions and convictions, but one who deduces from these fundamental convictions and principles an entire philosophy of life. Strictly speaking, the Calvinist interprets and relates himself to all that is secular in terms of all that is sacred. But we are not concerned at this time with the logical deductions of Calvinism, but with its essential principles and passion.

The Basic Idea in Calvinism

What, then, if any, is the formative principle of Calvinism out of which, like a gushing fountain, flow the sparkling streams that water the whole garden of life? Hundreds of scholars have spent years in searching its literature in an effort to discover the one great doctrine or principle out of which all the others might find their logical development. But the result has been the discovery of several doctrines rather than one. Calvinists themselves are not at all agreed as to what the formal principle might be; some question the propriety of even looking for one.

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A great number think it is the absolute sovereignty of God; others think it is predestination, the immutable decree of God, the sense of utter dependence upon God, etc. This failure to arrive at some general agreement, it seems to me, proves that Calvinism is not a monistic scheme which has been worked out by a speculative theologian. Calvin, as Prof. H. Meeter contends, was "an intensely Biblical" theologian. Consequently, if God's Word said certain things which would not quite fit into Calvin's logical plan, indeed, even if he discovered doctrines which seemed diametrically opposed to others, he would not discard or tone either of them down for the sake of his system. God had spoken and that settled it. All that God has said must stand!

Although it may be difficult or well nigh impossible to agree on the fundamental principle of Calvinism, nevertheless one cannot help but sense its central emphasis as being "the great thought of God." Read his sermons, study the Institutes, observe his management of Geneva, and everywhere you will find Calvin overwhelmingly conscious of God and of His rightful place in the thought and affairs of men. Mason W. Pressly forcefully expressed this thought when he wrote:

"Just as the Methodist places in the foreground the idea of the salvation of sinners, the Baptist, the mystery of regeneration, the Lutheran, justification by faith, the Moravian, the wounds of Christ, the Greek Catholics, the mysticism of the Holy Spirit, and the Romanist, the catholicity of the church, so the Calvinist is always placing in the foreground the thought of God."

The Calvinist does not place man and his needs first, but God and the glory that is due Him. Although every portion of the Bible is the Word of the living God to him, nevertheless Paul's words in Romans 11:36 seem most expressive of his creed and passion: "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory for ever, Amen."

But one can have many thoughts about God. One may think, for instance, of His attributes of love and justice, of His self existence, omnipotence and omnipresence. Which of these, or others that might be mentioned, expresses adequately for the Calvinist God's full-orbed relationship to His created universe? The greatest emphasis is most certainly placed upon the "absolute sovereignty of God." B. B. Warfield gave expression to this emphasis when he wrote:

"The Calvinist is the man who has seen God, and who, having seen God in His glory, is filled on the one hand with a sense of his own unworthiness to stand in God's sight as a creature, and much more as a sinner, and on the other with adoring wonder that nevertheless this God is a God who receives sinners. He who believes in God without reserve, and is determined that God shall be God to him, in all his thinking, feeling, willing—in the entire compass of his life-activities, intellectual, moral, spiritual—throughout all his individual, social, religious relations—is by the force of the strictest of all logic which presides over the outworking of principles into thought and life, by the very necessity of the case, a Calvinist."

It becomes apparent, therefore, that Calvinism may not be charged with cold intellectualism, as is so frequently done. We dare not think of it as only a list of doctrines or a creed, for it is life as well as doctrine. It is not even doctrine first and life afterward, but "it is doctrine and life at one and the same time." James has much to say about a faith that does not give proof of its reality in works, and he denounces such faith as dead. Calvinism, too, would be a dead faith if it were not a passion as well as a creed. How then shall we describe or define Calvinism? The best definition I have seen is that of Dr. V. Hepp who says, "It is the broadest and deepest Christianity... it is the most consistent and most harmonious Christianity." Such a claim rests upon the fearless acceptance of the whole revelation of God in doctrine and life. All other ancient and modern forms of Christianity are given to some type of concession, compromise, neglect and onesidedness. Calvinism fears no consequences from the truths it discovers. Ideally, it wants to know the whole counsel of God and live by that counsel, whether it satisfies human reason or not. It is sufficient to know that God has spoken it. "It seeks to follow Christ to the very end, even if one's own personality must needs be nailed to the cross." If a doctrine seems unreasonable and inconsistent with other teachings of the Word, others may conveniently ignore that doctrine, or attempt to explain it away, but the ideal Calvinist faces it fearlessly, and when he cannot understand or explain, faith comes to the rescue and he bows humbly before the apparent antithesis or inconsistency and says, "But God said it nevertheless." He believes that as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are God's thoughts above his thoughts. Consequently he expects that his religion shall have insoluble mysteries. A religion without mysteries would not, could not, be divine.

**A Consistent, Harmonious Christianity**

Permit me to demonstrate upon the basis of a few apparently contradictory doctrines that Calvinism is a most consistent and harmonious faith. Let us take, for example, the doctrines of predestination and human responsibility. That God has predestined all that takes place in this world, either by his efficient or permissive decree, is clearly taught in God's Word. But man's responsibility to accept God's overtures of love and to do His will is no less clearly a teaching of the Book. These two truths have stood over against each other for centuries and have perplexed men at times to the point of despair. The result has been that the Arminian laid hold of the doctrine of man's responsibility and sought to explain away or at least dim in some way the revealed fact of God's personal control of everything that takes place in this world. Others grasped on to the doctrine of predestination, neglecting the truth of human responsibility, and became practical fatalists, so that man became as a stick or a stone. In Peter's sermon on Pentecost you will find both of these doctrines taught in one verse: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands..."
have crucified and slain.” Acts 2:23. Christ was delivered to the ignominous cross “by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,” yet Peter accuses the Jews of having crucified Him. How shall we reconcile these two statements? The Calvinist does not need to reconcile them. God does that. Like two great pillars piercing the blue of heaven, so stand predestination and human responsibility. The arch and the keystone which are out of view are hid in the secret counsels of God. The Calvinist rests in the mystery, rather than deny the one or the other. “It is a mystery,” he says, “but in that mystery I rest.”

We might cite other apparently antithetical doctrines, such as the Fatherhood and Sovereignty of God, or Election and the Covenant of Grace. Modernists make much of the Fatherhood of God, or Election and the Covenant of Grace. Modernists make much of the Fatherhood and Sovereignty of God, or Election and the Covenant of Grace. Mod­ernists make much of the Fatherhood of God, or Election and the Covenant of Grace. Modernists make much of the Fatherhood of God, or Election and the Covenant of Grace. Modernists make much of the Fatherhood and Sovereignty of God, or Election and the Covenant of Grace. Modernists make much of the Fatherhood of God, or Election and the Covenant of Grace. Modernists make much of the Fatherhood of God, or Election and the Covenant of Grace.

**Calvinism and the Crisis**

Is our faith merely an ancient heritage to be revered, the glorious religious consistency of our forefathers to be adored, or does Calvinism have a message for the world in these days of awful crisis? Yes, it has a message for our day, for the Bible has a message any day. The Reformed churches of the world should now exalt and proclaim their historic faith as never before, for that faith has the only antidote to the poisonous philosophies and heretical tendencies that are wrecking the faith and civilization of mankind. The totalitarianism that seeks to dictate to the Church and robs her of her God-given autonomy in her own sphere, must be answered, and will be answered, by a Calvinistic faith which asserts allegiance to Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. The Church may only receive her orders from the Word of God and no State authority dare step outside of its legitimate sphere and intrude upon the sacred rights of Jesus Christ. This is the faith of Calvinism. It must stand; it must be prayerfully asserted!

Humanism, the philosophy of self-salvation and self-worship, has seen the hand-writing on the wall! The veritable collapse of civilization in our day makes the boldest statement of humanism, “God only realizes Himself in and through man,” seem stupid, if not thoroughly wicked. The failure, the utter failure, of man to lift himself out of sin has prepared the stage for the messengers of Calvinism. A disintegrating world must hear of a transcendent, unchanging God who offers to a helpless, dying humanity the atoning work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of Man.
Modernism, too, in all of its blatant or beautifully disguised forms, must be countered by our historic faith. The Calvinist will not tolerate the pen knife of the higher critic, but accepts the whole Bible in its original manuscripts to be the inspired Word of God. Jesus Christ is the virgin-born Son of God, who dies a substitutionary death upon Calvary’s cross and literally rises again from the dead on the third day. These and other cardinal truths are not the musty creed of a “past superstitious age,” but the vibrant life and doctrine that sound and honest exegesis discovers today on the pages of Holy Writ. Calvinism must call a weary and speculative humanity back to the “Thus saith Jehovah” of the Bible. For this she is qualified, and because she is qualified, she is divinely called.

Other forces that need to be countered by a vigorous creed and a vital experience might be mentioned. But enough has been said to conclude that “the most consistent, most harmonious Christianity” has a real mission in our time. May Calvinists the world around be united in a fearless stand for the last and only hope of humanity—a Sovereign God, the Infallible Word, and the Crucified, Risen and Returning Christ. And thus may Calvin’s ambition which he expressed to Cranmer be realized: “I long for one holy communion of the members of Christ, which is found, indeed, upon all lips, but not in all hearts. As for me, if I can be of service, I should gladly cross the ten seas in order to bring about this unity.”

From Our Correspondents

Democracy and the Spiritual View of Life

“The Manse”, 8 Myers St.
Geelong, Victoria,
Australia.
November 26, 1940.

Prof. Clarence Bouma, A.M., Th.D.,
Grand Rapids, Michigan, U. S. A.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

A YEAR has past since the outbreak of hostilities in which we in Australia are totally involved. Thousands of our fighting men are overseas, and thousands more are in military camps waiting to be transported to the scene of conflict. Conscription is unknown in Australia. Service in our army is on a voluntary basis, which has proved to be most satisfactory. More men are offering for service than the authorities can cope with at present with the result recruiting has been suspended, but the government has indicated that volunteers will be called for early in the new year.

There has also been a sharp increase in taxation to meet war expenditures. On the whole the people realise the vital need for our war effort and are convinced that we are not fighting for territorial gains, nor new avenues for commercial enterprise, but for liberty and independence.

We have taken up arms to fight for individual liberty against the paganism of Nazi Germany, and while it may not be fully realized by the nation, individual liberty is nothing more or less than spiritual liberty, the liberty of conscience, the freedom of spiritual development. As one of our ministers has said, “Consciously or unconsciously, the democracies are fighting for the spiritual view of life; they are on the side of the angels. They may not realize it; but that does not mean that it is not so. We do not always, or even commonly, formulate the aim we have in any struggle or quest; they may be dim and vague, but they are there nevertheless.” Totalitarianism in the final analysis is purely materialism, for totalitarianism sacrifices individual liberty at the shrine of state. We do not say that this is fully comprehended, but the fact remains that we are fighting against materialism.

This liberty for which we fight, was won for us, under God, by the great Reformers. “The theology of John Calvin, aims a fatal blow at the so-called infallible decrees of the Pope, and the divine right of kings,” and lay the foundations on which our civil and religious liberty has been built. The Reformed ecclesiastical government is based on democratic principles.

Since the outbreak of war we cannot say that we have noticed any deep spiritual movement; beyond the fact that the disciples of liberal theology have been forced to reconsider their position. We also notice that the courageous pacifists of 1939 are strangely silent; a great many, like the chameleon, change their color to suit the background. Leslie Weatherhead in his latest book, Thinking Aloud in War-time, illustrates this when he said (page 11), “So our minds go round and round until we can think no more.” “The issue is so tremendous that I am not ashamed to reveal the movement of my mind, first in one direction and then in another” (page 12). “My pacifism would have been a refusal to think.” “I tore up my ‘peace pledge’ avowal. I began to think again” (page 22). It is certainly a convenient method of thinking in difficult times. Had our Reformed forefathers adopted this method, we would never have had the liberty and independence for which we are fighting to retain today. “Thinking things through” is a favorite phrase of the Modernist, but it is a thin smoke screen to hide their inconsistency. We think that there is an old proverb about “hunting with the hounds and running with the hare.”

During the commission of Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, in November, the Calvinistic Society held a meeting which was well attended, eight were added to the membership roll. A paper was read by the Rev. Robert Swanton, M.A., D.D., who had just returned from post-graduate studies in Europe. The subject of Dr. Swanton’s address was, “The Reformed Faith in the Modern World.” He spoke of the great contribution that has been made for the propagation of the Reformed faith by such men as Augusti Lecerf, Colyn, and Jonkheer de Geer. A strange sadness crept into the heart when we thought of these great men in those countries overrun by pagan Germany. We fear not for their courage, but for their personal safety. May the household of faith remember these men at the Throne of Grace.

With warmest regards,

Yours very sincerely,

ARTHUR ALLEN.
War and Medical Missions in Punjab

Taxila, Punjab, India, December 1, 1940.
Via Air Mail.

Dr. Clarence Bouma,
Editor, CALVIN FORUM, Calvin College,
Grand Rapids, Michigan, U. S. A.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

FAMILIARITY with our rugged Northwest India hill and its sturdy, fanatical Pathan sons of the wide open spaces, breeds contempt for the news-value of happenings from the daily life of a missionary among them, and this must be my plea for forgiveness for not writing in several months. We are in that part of India most unaffected by the war, for Congress agitation reaches us only through the radio and the daily press, and our Mohammedan Punjabis steer aloof with contempt from most of this Congress propaganda and hide their day with patience. If India ever makes a real war effort it will be the Southern parts that contribute most heavily in material goods, but the fighting arm of India has always been the Punjab. I will not say that there are no evidences of war preparations about us, but in general we go our missionary way unhindered, and it is best I avoid war topics or this letter will not reach you. All letters must pass censors.

We are just ending the biggest year Taxila Hospital has ever had. Not only have our fifty-five beds in the hospital been filled all the time, but at times an additional fifty patients have been accommodated on native beds on the verandah or under trees. My Indian associate and I have done about four hundred major operations thus far this year. We expect to total 1300 in-patients by the end of the year, which means much work for our small staff. There is a fine spirit among our staff of workers and in evangelistic work there is zealous effort. Our staff consists of two doctors as mentioned, one American missionary nurse, four Indian girl nurses, and four male Indian nurses, pharmacist, laboratory technician, mechanic, buyer, three sweepers, and two orderlies. All except the orderlies are Christians. We also have a Bible woman. Our hospital-congregation is without a pastor at this time, and we miss his help, as he had others of the staff for particular evenings.

Our staff consists of two doctors as mentioned, one American missionary nurse, four Indian girl nurses, and four male Indian nurses, pharmacist, laboratory technician, mechanic, buyer, three sweepers, and two orderlies. All except the orderlies are Christians. We also have a Bible woman. Our hospital-congregation is without a pastor at this time, and we miss his help, as he had a fine approach to Muslems in our area, each three nights per week personally or by appointing others of the staff for particular evenings. Our American nurse is in charge of women's Evangelistic work. Mrs. Bergsma assists in the operating room and has a women's Sunday school class. Each day starts with worship service attended by all the staff, an un failing custom of many years, the staff taking turns in rotation in leading the 15-minute service. In the hot season the morning worship is at 7:00, in the cold season at 7:30 A.M. We thus get an early start in making rounds and then in operating. Operating takes almost to noon each day. At noon is our clinic for out-door patients and new arrivals, lasting until about 2:30 P.M. In the evening are again the "rounds", seeing about requirements for night.

Our chief sports here are walking and badminton. I often wonder why badminton has not become more popular in America. We play it with gusto, and get good exercise from it. My few attempts at golf have cheered up my ego as to my drive, but depressed my economic balance as now all balls have been lost in the weeds and my golf is at a standstill. Our children have two fine ponies and ride a great deal. With their "Scotty" dog, rabbits, ducks, and chickens they have a happy time here at Taxila. Kenneth, our oldest boy, just returned from his nine months' exile in boarding school four hundred miles away, and is he happy!

A year ago we planned to take our tents and medical supplies and go for a time to an independent Indian State not far from Taxila and there do medico-evangelistic camp work for two weeks. We were abruptly informed by the ruler of that State that he had his own hospital and saw no reason why we should do such work in his country. We went to another section. Later in the year certain officials of that State came to Taxila for medical treatment, a friendly spirit was born, and we received an invitation to visit the ruler of the independent State. Last week Mildred and I went as guests of the ruler. The State mentioned is solidly Mohammedan, no missionary work is permitted there, no Gospels sold there. We were entertained lavishly, a guest bungalow high on the bank of a beautiful river was open for us with all servants on hand, and we enjoyed dinner with a member of the ruler's family. The local hospital was inspected. Its buildings, while small, were good, but the work done there was done so hastily, perhaps one minute to a patient, and on so small an allowance for medicines annually that medicines must no doubt be diluted greatly to go round at all, and one wonders if anything is accomplished in combatting the disease all to evident round about. A most cordial spirit was shown by everyone. Mrs. Bergsma met the female members of the ruler's household, who live in closest Mohammedan seclusion. They seldom see anyone else, and the hour she had with them was a happy one for all as they had many questions to ask. Their chances for education are almost nil. Through our daily contacts on this brief trip we felt real progress had been made in understanding, and the ruler stated he would no longer hesitate to send any patients who desired treatment in hospital to Taxila. Even now we receive several hundred from his territory each year in our out-door and in-door departments.

On December 3rd I will go with my family to an outlying district for two weeks of medico-evangelistic camp work. In the spring season our Indian doctor will go to another district for similar work. These camps have been instrumental in our touching a far bigger field and are one of the reasons for the increase in work at Taxila. People often travel one hundred miles on an uncomfortable lorry to come to our hospital. Our camp work, where we go out to them, has convinced them we really are interested in them. Our camp which begins this week is in a beautiful locality, with snow-capped mountains of the foothills of the Himalayas before our camp, and we live amid tall pine trees, and burn pine cones in our fire at night. To our camp come people incredibly poor, most of them Pathans who have never gone far from home. Their dress is a somber black, often filthy, and they are proud of the fact that they seldom bathe, surely not more than once in a year. Their women folk are in "purdah", for even poverty can have some discipline making the poverty still harder to bear for women. They will stretch forth their hand through their coverings, and most of our diagnosis will be by feeling the pulse. Mrs. Bergsma will see some of them, may even feel their enlarged spleen or tumor of abdomen, but for me to look on them is taboo. And yet some of these same women are going to take courage into their hands and come to Taxila Hospital, where they throw their "purdah" from them and breathe God's fresh air without a veil, all fear gone.

With sincerest greetings,

STUART AND MILDRED BERGSMA.
Around the Book Table

HOMILETICAL METHODOLOGY


This book is not altogether unwelcome under the circumstances. But the circumstances are truly sad, as appears from the three questions that prompted Dr. Blackwood, professor of Homiletics at Princeton Seminary, to write the book under review. The chairman of a pulpit supply committee asked: "Where can we find a minister who knows how to preach from the Bible?" The question betrays a very lamentable state of affairs, if it is more than a splash of rhetoric. The second question came from a parish minister and reads: "Where can I get a book which will tell me how to prepare a sermon from the Bible?" One feels impelled to exclaim: where in the world did this clergyman study homiletics, and who can the man have been who taught him the science of preaching and trained him in the art of preaching. The third question was: "Where can I secure a textbook about preaching from the Bible?" and hailed—believe it or not—from a professor of homiletics!

In two of these inquiries the question, How, is asked in reference to preaching from the Bible, and by that token emphasizes homiletical methodology. The respondent elected to give the title of the book in which he undertakes to meet the respective needs of the minister and the professor, a much wider sweep, though, as a matter of fact, the volume is only an answer to the question, How. Doubtless, the question of methodology is an important one. Hence every homilectician devotes relatively ample time and space to the subject. In the abstract it will hardly do to find fault with the restriction Dr. Blackwood imposed upon himself in the body of the book. A monograph on homiletical methodology, if at all worthy of the name, is never out of order. And the author's opus is eminently in order, because he takes a firm stand against the preacher's meandering through Scripture as a cow roams a meadow and a butterfly flits about in a garden, and strongly urges serial preaching after one fashion or another. In more than one respect the Princeton professor of preaching has done his work well.

But the fact remains that the title of his book reads: Preaching from the Bible, and not: How to preach from the Bible. One could wish that the author had followed the tack of his title. For there is a crying need today, as his own choise of title suggests and more than one statement in his book intimates, of setting forth the high principle of Bible-preaching, of inculcating its supreme importance, of enforcing its categorical imperative and of exhibiting its divine glory: all of this on the strength of the Bible's own witness through the Holy Spirit to God's purpose with in Christ.

It may be said in addition that a clear, strong, sustained exposition of the dogma and ethic of Bible-preaching is much more necessary, and for this reason invested with far greater importance in these Bible-forsaking times of ours, than a methodology of sermon-making. What boots it that a busy man writes a book of 239 pages on homiletical methodology, if hosts of men who asked and obtained ordination to the ministry of the gospel, are not at all persuaded that they should preach the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible, because they do not believe that the Bible is God's authentic Word to man and hence both infallible and by that token absolutely authoritative! And what of it, if in a given instance homiletical methodology be a bit defective—though, of course, it should be as perfect as possible—if the preachment itself be God's Holy Word in substance and have its ring and breathe its spirit! A correct sense of balance requires that first things be put first. And methodology is not the first thing today, to be sure.

Two remarks remain to be made in conclusion. First, preaching from the Bible is not a happy phrase. The preposition from should be deleted, in spite of the author's manifest fondness for it and his deliberate rejection of the emendation suggested by the present reviewer, on page 38 of his book. It is difficult to understand why one should find no fault with Paul for enjoining upon Timothy to "preach the Word" (of God), cf. II Tim. 4:2a, but object to the phrase, Preach the Bible, unless it be that to his mind Bible and Word (of God) are not convertible terms and he belong either to the school of Schleiermacherian modernists or to the school of their Barthian cousins. The phrase, Preaching from the Bible, might pass the Presbyterian, or Reformed censor, in spite of the suspicion that its ambiguity inevitably creates, if it were not for the author's eliberate rejection of the expression, Preach the Bible. The reviewer likes to believe that the writer's objection to this phrase is due to misunderstanding. On page 38 he writes: "While one should preach from the Bible, the heart of the message should be about God in Christ." He seems to proceed upon the assumption that one could indeed preach from the Bible and nevertheless miss "the heart of the message about God in Christ". But that cannot be, if preaching from the Bible be not preaching what one personally and even arbitrarily selects "from the Bible", but preaching from the Bible in the sense of preaching all that the Bible has to say, which is another, though not as commenable, way of saying, preaching the Bible.

The present reviewer's second remark is to the effect that the author's methodology is worthy of close attention and measurably deserving, too, of homiletical use. But it cannot fail to strike the reader that the distinctly gospel note of the grace of God in Christ unto salvation is by no means as prominent in this volume as it is in the Bible. Besides, the book is dotted with hints and remarks, many of them made en passant, that call for marginal question-marks and exclamation points. In the reviewer's candid opinion the author has failed, regrettably, to meet a real need of the times and to embrace the opportunity that came his way to render the kingdom of God a timely, fundamental, and glorious service. He went off on a tangent.

S. VOLKEDA

ANTI-WELLHAUSENIAN


For some of his training, the author expresses his appre­ciation to the faculty of the School of Theology of Temple University, Philadelphia, an institution founded by the late Rev. Russell H. Conwell, D.D., for many years pastor of the Baptist Temple, Philadelphia. Furthermore, the writer expresses thanks to all those of his preceptors of the General Theological Seminary of New York that helped him to lay the foundation for this commentary, during his student days. We rejoice that we have before us the crystallization of the opinions of an author that has consulted much of the litera­
ture, exegetical, archaeological, and isagogical, dealing with the book of Exodus.

There are some obvious matters that will strike the general reader of this commentary at once. The present work represents an enthusiastic attack on the Wellhausen School of higher criticism, particular in its historical criticism of the book of Exodus. Though the author rejects Scriptural infallibility he aims to maintain the historicity, in general, of this Biblical book. For he holds to the general trustworthiness of ancient historical documents, and believes that archaeology has vindicated much of the Biblical history, concerned, against the objections of higher critical attacks.

The work contains an introduction of eight pages, in which we find a summary of the author's position, as follows: “Even if much is explained away the most extreme must admit that Moses was a real person, that he was priest-prophet, that the incidents of his life are facts brooking no denial, that God did use him as a means toward the establishment of a more righteous life according to the Covenant and the Decalogue and also the inception of an official house where His priests offered sacrifice, the latter in point of time being but a foreshadowing of that greater Sacrifice that would be made by His Son.” Of course, we would not so operate as to explain away matters of historical materials presented in the Scriptures, but we can well understand that the analogy of Scripture, the analogy of the faith, and in particular the doctrinal positions and historical materials here cited are precious to the author of this commentary, and that he aims to convince others of their truthfulness. All that has great value, though we cannot but deplore the fact that he has broken with the belief in the infallibility of Scripture.

We appreciate the fact that he rejects the Wellhausen, higher-critical dating of the so-called priestly code, touching the ceremonial law, as exilic or post-exilic, and his argument from the antiquity of priestly records is valuable, though we might wish to formulate it differently. He points to the schools of the priests located at various centers both in the north and the south, page 41. An interesting summary of his argument is found on page 29: “So, the tradition in Israel, that the priests always kept records, is not one to be lightly set aside, because the evidence at this time is quite late and jeopardizing to ‘advanced liberal’ hypothesis that begin with certain ideas of naturalism or what not to which the ancient records and traditions must be blest, for the glory of God and the good of the church.”

On the other hand, the author of this commentary denies the trustworthiness of the Biblical chronology as found in this same so-called priestly code, which includes the ceremonial law, in a general way, besides related historical matters. This so-called priestly code is by many of the higher critics indicated by the abbreviation P. On this “code” the writer has the following, p. 192: “From the aforementioned, it is quite evident that the entire chronology of P in the Pentateuch is found untrustworthy.” He does not follow 1 Kings 6:1, nor the chronology of the book of Judges, in dealing with the date of the exodus, pages 192 to 201. On page 29, the author rejects a certain historical critical view of Driver touching the so-called Jehovah (J) and Elohim (E) codes. But his own view is expressed in the following which again is at variance with the infallibility of Scripture: “Certainly, the ancient priestly history (our book of Exodus), would be so treated by the historians of each kingdom as to give the twist of history in favor of their political subdivision.” By each kingdom is here evidently meant Judah and Israel. This implies that there are twists of history in those portions of Scripture that are designated by the critics and by the author as J and E. All this shows that the author does not share the Reformed view as to the infallibility of Scripture, and of course in all such passages we cannot endorse his views, but have the duty to oppose them strenuously, which we do con amore.

On the score of the date of the Exodus, we accept the early date, at variance with the present work and in line with 1 Kings 6:1, Judges 11:26, the general chronology of the book of Judges, and Acts 13:20. This position is also that of Colonel Conder in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, of Prof. D. C. Van Gelderen of the Free University of Amsterdam, of President John Sampay of the Louisville Baptist Seminary, and of Dr. Albertus Pieters of Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Mich. Its archaeological defense is found in Sir Charles Marston's work entitled “New Biblical Evidence,” 1934, and in various less popularly written works.

There is another matter of some importance that arises in the discussion of the present commentator on the Book of Exodus. This is his view of the translatiation from the earlier form of the Hebrew letters to the so-called square form of these letters that is found in the printed Hebrew Bibles. This translatiation is as simple a matter as the transliteration was from Old English letters to our ordinary type. By the time of Christ, the square letters of our Hebrew Bibles were in use, as can be seen from the inscriptive material of that day. Evidence on this score can be found in Biblical Encyclopaedias, under the heading of Alphabet. Nobody doubts that such a translatiation took place in the Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament, and it is generally understood to have involved no more than the change from the older to the later form of the Hebrew letters. From the standpoint of textual criticism, this would therefore involve no change in the Hebrew text at all, except for occasional抄ists' errors, which could be detected in the light of the context, etc., as a rule. The subject of textual criticism is accordingly worthy of study, and the present reviewer took graduate courses in this field for four and a half years after completing his regular theological course. No kind of course is more helpful for dealing with the problems raised by the higher critics than textual critical work. Both R. D. Wilson and H. M. Wiener made gains against the higher criticism by means of textual critical studies. For many of the problems cited by the higher critics have a textual critical angle.

But now the author, H. J. Keyser, advances the position that when the translatiation from the earlier to the square Hebrew letters took place, the reading of the text was also considerably altered by a variety of scribes, resulting in a variety of style. We believe that the variety of legal styles in the Pentateuch is due to the stylistic difference between statutes and judgments, as set forth in M. G. Kyle's work on “The Problem of the Pentateuch,” and to various other causes. Nor is there any evidence for Keyser's position that the translatiation was accompanied by a change in the reading of the Old Testament text. On the other hand, when the Moabite Stone is transliterated, the reading is left identical and the same applies to the Siloam inscription. Many other inscriptions could similarly be brought forward from the various periods of the Hebrew nation in order to show that the text was left identical and the same applies to the text.

The customary thing in translatiation is to leave the text identical today, and considering the care that the Jews gave to the Hebrew text, to preserve its identity, of old we accept the position that the translatiation took place in such a way that the text was left identical, barring textual critical errors. Jesus also lays stress on the minutiae of the yodh and the title, in the Hebrew text. Apart from materials requiring textual critical study, as shown by the Hebrew manuscripts, and by the primary versions and recensions, we believe that the present texts give a clearer meaningful text than the textual critical and Cooke. The customary thing in translatiation is to leave the text identical today, and considering the care that the Jews gave to the Hebrew text, to preserve its identity, of old we accept the position that the translatiation took place in such a way that the text was left identical, barring textual critical errors. Jesus also lays stress on the minutiae of the yodh and the title, in the Hebrew text. Apart from materials requiring textual critical study, as shown by the Hebrew manuscripts, and by the primary versions and recensions, we believe that the present texts give a clearer meaningful text than the textual critical and Cooke. The customary thing in translatiation is to leave the text identical today, and considering the care that the Jews gave to the Hebrew text, to preserve its identity, of old we accept the position that the translatiation took place in such a way that the text was left identical, barring textual critical errors. Jesus also lays stress on the minutiae of the yodh and the title, in the Hebrew text. Apart from materials requiring textual critical study, as shown by the Hebrew manuscripts, and by the primary versions and recensions, we believe that the present texts give a clearer meaningful text than the textual critical and Cooke. The customary thing in translatiation is to leave the text identical today, and considering the care that the Jews gave to the Hebrew text, to preserve its identity, of old we accept the position that the translatiation took place in such a way that the text was left identical, barring textual critical errors. Jesus also lays stress on the minutiae of the yodh and the title, in the Hebrew text. Apart from materials requiring textual critical study, as shown by the Hebrew manuscripts, and by the primary versions and recensions, we believe that the present texts give a clearer meaningful text than the textual critical and Cooke. The customary thing in translatiation is to leave the text identical today, and considering the care that the Jews gave to the Hebrew text, to preserve its identity.