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CALVIN

ORUM

Calvinistic Conference
Inspiration and Task

College Graduates
In Time of War

Values in Art
Return to Masters

Spiritualism
Unitarian Theology

The New Supernaturalism
Tested by Christian Theism

Democracy and Authority
In Christian Education

Economic Organization
In War and Peace

News

Letters

Reviews

Verse

VOL. VII, NO. 11-12

TWO DOLLARS
A YEAR

JUNE-JULY, 1942

THE CALVIN FORUM

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

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

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

The CALVIN FORUM

Published by the Calvin Forum Board of Publication

VOLUME VII, NO. 11-12

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Contents

Editorials

A Soli Deo Gloria Conference.....	227
Calvinistic Ecumenicity	227
Dutch Calvinism in the Shadows.....	228
The Task that Challenges	228
Calvinistic Conference Committee	229

Articles

The Christian College Graduate in Time of War <i>Henry J. Kuiper</i>	230
A Chronicle of Art	<i>Henry J. Van Andel</i> 234
Unitarianism from the Tombs	<i>Arnold Brink</i> 235
Christian Theism and the New Supernaturalism <i>Ray W. Teeuwissen</i>	238
Democracy, Authoritarianism, and Christian Education	<i>C. R. Jaarsma</i> 241
Economic Organization in War and Peace.. <i>H. J. Ryskamp</i>	244
Little Man, What Now?	<i>Ala Bandon</i> 247

News and Correspondence

The Second American Calvinistic Conference.....	248
Michigan Calvinistic Philosophy Club	249
Calvinism Club at Calvin College	250
Hungarian Reformed Church Life	250
British Inter-Varsity Fellowship Conference.....	252
Calvinism—Dead and Living	252
A Letter from Australia	253

Around the Book Table

A Bad Novel	253
Meet Dirk and Bello Again	254
Big Ben	254
Books in Brief	255

Verse

Wings	237
To the Flag	247

INDEX to Seventh Volume	255
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EDITORIALS

A Soli Deo Gloria Conference

THOSE who were privileged to attend the sessions of the Second American Calvinistic Conference recently held at Grand Rapids will not soon forget the experience. The attendance exceeded all expectations. The very first evening address drew a large and appreciative audience, and from the first day session the Calvin Seminary Chapel proved inadequate, making use of the College auditorium imperative. No less than four hundred conferees took the pains to register and such registration was restricted to the day sessions only. It seemed like a grand reunion of Calvinist leaders, teachers, students, ministers, and laymen. New Jersey was officially represented as well as Iowa, and there were individuals from no less than sixteen states of the Union and from three provinces of Canada. Denominationally the Conference was also representative, for although the large majority were members of the Christian Reformed Church, there were also many of the Reformed communion, and, though in small numbers, the following bodies also had some adherents at the Conference: the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the United Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church U.S., the Congregational Church, the Free Magyar Reformed Church, the Reformed Church of Hungary, and the Protestant Reformed Church.

But worth more than numbers was the spirit of the Conference. That spirit was unmistakable. One note ran through all the addresses and papers, the devotionals and the discussions of the Conference. It was the *Soli Deo Gloria* note. Nor was there anything forced about it. From that magnificent opening address of Dr. Ockenga in adoration of the Word of God to the last sentence of the closing prayer of the banquet, the greatness of God and the majesty and glory of His Word stood out in bold relief. There was no burning of incense to any man, not even to John Calvin, there was only worshipful adoration of God, acknowledgment of His absoluteness and priority in our thinking and living, and earnest endeavor to know His will for every realm of human culture. The music from the console, the majestic psalms and hymns from the lips of those who came to worship as well as to be instructed, the toasts and the after-dinner address, the scholarly papers and the stimulating discussions—all breathed one spirit, all was set in one key—*Soli Deo Gloria!* Here was a Calvinistic Conference that was Calvinistic in spirit and in truth.

c. B.

Calvinistic Ecumenicity

CALVINISM in its best form has always been ecumenical. Narrow, exclusive, and bigoted sects may sometimes have pre-empted the Calvinistic name—the true Calvinism of John Calvin has always been ecumenical. It recognized no national limitations. Of all Protestant groups it was from the beginning most truly international. This Calvinistic ecumenical sense also came to expression at the Grand Rapids Conference. Perhaps at no point in the entire program more beautifully than at the banquet. Here three hundred guests, who filled the spacious banquet hall of the Central Reformed Church, listened with rapt attention and acknowledged by sustained applause not only the sage remarks and witty observations on Calvinism from the seasoned lips of the Scotch-Irish-Presbyterian-American Crowe, but also the touching greetings from the heart as well as the lips of a Frenchman, a Hungarian, and a Netherlander. With an allusion to the nations represented by their Calvinistic hero on the Monument of the Reformation in Geneva each one of these three guest-speakers was introduced to touch briefly on his country today and tomorrow with reference to Calvinism. Wencelius, himself an officer in the French army, had already in the Conference spoken with deep feeling of his beloved France and his hope for its ultimate resurrection. He now spoke again briefly of the plight of his country and brought the greetings to the Conference from the living French Calvinistic leaders Lecerf and Boegner. Dr. Stephen Szabo, a plenipotentiary of the Reformed Church of Hungary and pastor of one of its largest congregations, temporarily stranded during the war in this country, conveyed the official greetings of the largest Reformed Church communion in the world. Both in his case and in that of Wencelius the tragic realities of the present war lent a deeper note and a new dimension to their greetings, hopes, and wishes. And Dr. Van Lonkhuyzen, an American by choice, but a Dutchman by birth, training, and recent sojourn in the land of his fathers, interpreted to us in the few moments at his disposal something of the pain, the heartache of Dutch Calvinism, which has lost so much by the recent debacle. There was the grip of a grim realism in these words. International Calvinism was not a florid expression—it was on this occasion a genuine fellowship in suffering as well as in hope. It showed a new facet of the sovereignty of God. And out of it all there spoke the challenge to American Calvinism to realize its

calling, its opportunity, its God-given task for such a time as this. It was a humbling consciousness of Calvinistic ecumenicity, but a bracing and inspiring one as well.

C. B.

Dutch Calvinism In the Shadows

OUR hearts at the Conference were beating high for the brethren of the Reformed Faith in all parts of the world, but especially for those oppressed, harassed, exiled, and persecuted in Nazi-dominated and Nazi-subjugated Europe. The following cable was sent to Jean de Saussure, Pastor of the Cathedral de St. Pierre, John Calvin's own Church, at Geneva. "Second American Calvinistic Conference greets all European Calvinistic groups, commending them to our Sovereign God, and praying for liberation of oppressed." Dr. Wencelius assured us that the Genevan pastor, being prominently connected with the Calvinistic conference movement in Europe and living in neutral territory, was in a position to forward these greetings to various groups on the Continent.

But our hearts warmed even more and beat a bit faster in the moments when we fellowshiped in spirit with the brethren of the faith of the Netherlands, both in subjugation and in exile. Nor was this only because of the Dutch blood coursing through the veins of the overwhelming majority of banqueters. We all know there is no group to which we owe more for the modern revival of the Reformed Faith and for the deepening of our Calvinistic consciousness than to the Dutch. In church reform and church organization, in the development of a genuinely Reformed consciousness, in the furtherance of a progressive Reformed theology, in the unfolding of the implications of Calvinism for every realm of human thought and research, and in the practical application of the ethical principles of our faith to every realm of human activity—in all these things recent Dutch Calvinism was easily first and the teacher of us all. We owe an immeasurable debt on this score to the leaders, the institutions, the scholarly works, and the religious press of Calvinism in Holland. How deeply we felt the tragedy of the ruination of much of this which Dr. Van Lonkhuyzen spoke of with humility and pain of heart. We felt the greatness of the threatened loss in case the intolerant, bigoted, paganistic Nazi ideology should permanently hold sway in this land in which, both in the 16th and 17th as well as in the 19th century, true liberty and the God-centered faith of Paul, Augustine, and Calvin had come to such remarkable development. The urge to express our sympathy with Dutch Calvinism in its present struggle and to formulate our hope and prayer to God for its restoration and purification came to expression at the Conference banquet in two ways. There was no possibility of sending word to any Dutch Calvinistic

leader in the Netherlands or in German concentration camps. But such a message was sent by the Conference to Pieter Gerbrandy, who is not only Prime Minister to the Dutch government in exile at London, but—what is more important—also a courageous and upstanding Calvinist, formerly a professor of Law at the Free Calvinistic University of Amsterdam. We felt that these words were addressed through him to all of Dutch Calvinism in the shadows. "Second American Calvinistic Conference prays for liberation of Dutch Calvinism, for perseverance under persecution, and a greater future in service of our Sovereign God." And we undoubtedly reached one of the high moments of the entire Conference when with the picture of leading Dutch Calvinists imprisoned in concentration camps before us, we joined in spirit with them in the fellowship of suffering, but also of hope, of prayer, and of unquenchable faith in the God of sovereign grace, as we rose to our feet three hundred strong and sang with all that was in us:

Gij toch, Gij zijt hun roem, de kracht van hunne kracht.
Uw vrije gunst alleen wordt d' eere toegebracht!
Wij steken 't hoofd omhoog, en zullen d' eerkroon dragen
Door U, door U alleen, om 't eeuwig welbehagen:
Want God is ons ten schild in 't strijdperk van dit leven,
En onze Koning is van Israëls God gegeven.

(Thou art, O God, our boast, the glory of our power;
Thy sovereign grace is e'er our fortress and our tower.
We lift our heads aloft, for God, our shield, is o'er us;
Through Him, through Him alone, whose presence goes before us,
We'll wear the victor's crown, no more by foes assaulted,
We'll triumph through our King, by Israel's God exalted.)

Would that John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper, and Hendrik Colijn could have heard these inspiring words of faith sung to the majestic tune of Maitre Pierre's chorale by three hundred American Calvinists in downtown Grand Rapids on the evening of June 5, 1942!

C. B.

The Task That Challenges

BT if the Conference was a spiritual feast, a treat, a mountain top experience, it can have lasting value only insofar as it inspires us for the task that lies ahead. Calvinists are not dreamers—they are workers. Their imagination is ever disciplined and put in the service of the ideal that beckons and its practical realization. No genuine Calvinist would wish to stay on the mountain top when there are demons down in the valley that must be cast out. Even for our Lord the glory of Mount Tabor was in order to his decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem.

The task that challenges the American Calvinist is a great one. If we should undertake it in our own power, we might well despair. But the Calvinist is precisely the man who believes in that which is humanly impossible. He believes in God—not in

man—and with God all things are possible. A true Calvinist may be discouraged sometimes, but he is never a defeatist. We'll wear the victor's crown . . . through Him, through Him alone . . . *om 't eeuwig welbehagen!*

The task is a great one, but it lies close at hand. Let us dream no fantastic dreams about Calvinism sweeping America. Let us just build, and build, and build, and let everyone build "over against his own house." If rubble must be cleared away, and a new foundation must be laid, let us do so. If we are privileged to build upon sound foundations already laid by a former generation, let us thank God and build on. In so doing we may at times have to handle the sword as well as the trowel, but we shall always be interested in the trowel more than in the sword. Yes, we must build.

Or do you like more realistic language?

The task that challenges is a task of building up homes, and churches, and schools in which God's will is supreme. It means breaking with all half-heartedness. It means living the *Coram-Deo* life seven days of every seven of each week. It means making sacrifices for the great institutions that can build up ourselves and others in the truth and in Christian living. It means building Christian schools and institutions of higher learning in which God and His Word shall hold the supreme place, the constructive, determinative place. It means bearing our testimony before the world, the world of scholarship, the world of statesmanship, the world of economic and international endeavor. It means holding aloft the torch of God-centered and God-given truth in theology and philosophy, in science and art, in every phase of human culture. It means to dig ever deeper into the treasures of God's truth. It means to produce works in which the beauty and the power of the Reformed Faith shall be exhibited in such a scholarly fashion that it shall command the respect of those who think and occupy positions of leadership. It means to bring the Gospel of sovereign grace to a perishing world. It means a triumphant Christian testimony in practical devotion, in daily living with our fellows, and in the inner chamber in the presence of God. It means a soul on fire for God and for His Christ. It means a passion for the recognition of the crown rights of our King, not only in the Church but also in every realm of human endeavor. It means daily drinking at the fountain of living water: Isaiah 40, Romans 8, Revelation 19. It means a complete break with all worldliness. And it means doing all this and not merely theorizing about it or telling others how to do it.

That is the only Calvinism that will set the world on fire.

That Calvinism we do not need to "propagate"—it will propagate itself when we "propagate" it in our lives.

That Calvinism is nought but the Christian Faith at its best and in its richest expression.

To embrace it, to study it, to teach it, to preach it, to live it, to forge it into every phase of the structure of our life—that is the task which challenges!

C. B.

Calvinistic Conference Committee

THE recent Conference resolved to continue the present General Committee and charged it with the task of carrying forward plans for the next Conference. This Committee consists of twenty members, with no less than nine different denominational affiliations. Possibly it ought to be made even more representative than it is. All American groups, interested in the Calvinistic world and life view, whether ecclesiastical, educational, or cultural, might well be represented on this General Conference Committee. The Committee will, no doubt, soon augment and possibly reorganize itself. Meanwhile the news of the recent conference is being broadcasted to the religious press and steps are being taken to have the addresses, the discussions, as well as the lighter speeches of the Conference published in book form, so as to be available to the general public. We are certain many conferees and readers of *THE CALVIN FORUM* will want a copy of this valuable book. To be able to read and reread the scholarly addresses and to live, after a fashion, through the lighter experiences of the Conference again in print will be all to the good. We shall keep our readers informed on the progress made and the book will, we trust, soon be made available. Plans for another conference will also soon be in the making. Speakers ought to have at least a year for the preparation of their papers. Some recent conferees have expressed the hope that these conferences might become annual affairs. We admire the enthusiasm but believe that one conference every two years will possibly be more desirable. This was also the original intention of the first conference, though, owing to circumstances beyond the committee's control, a period of three years elapsed between the first and the second conference.

Let us work and pray for the Third American Calvinistic Conference tentatively scheduled for 1944.

C. B.

The present issue consists of 32 instead of 24 pages. It is an enlarged number in view of the combination of two summer issues into one. This is the June-July issue appearing about the last week of June. The next issue will be for the months of August and September and will also be eight pages larger than usual. It is scheduled to appear about the third week of August. Apart from these two combinations during the summer season, *THE CALVIN FORUM* will continue to appear every month as heretofore.

The Christian College Graduate in time of War

Calvin Commencement Address, June, 1942

Henry J. Kuiper

Pastor, Neland Ave. Chr. Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Mich.

WE are addressing you this evening as graduates, students, teachers, curators, and supporters of a Christian college and seminary—one whose avowed purpose is to serve and glorify Christ in the realm of learning.

It is hardly necessary to remind you that the Christian college is not exempt from the problems with which the stress of a gigantic war confronts every educational institution.

The students at a Christian college, in common with the students of other colleges, are under severe handicaps as the result of the war. All of you, except those who leave the Seminary and perhaps those who intend to enter the Seminary, have been spending the last few months of your stay at Calvin under a cloud of oppressive uncertainty regarding your future. You were faced with the probability of being called to the colors in defense of your country, and that in a war whose extent and whose issues are so great that it may prove to be the beginning of an entirely new era in history. Your plans for your future career have been disrupted. I can well imagine the mental distraction which threatened to upset you. I can see you in your study—eyes on the textbook but thoughts far away; you saw yourself in a military camp, on a cruiser or battleship, or in the cockpit of a bomber or pursuit plane. How tame, how unreal, the academic life must have seemed to you in this day of grim warfare, of heroic living! You knew that the hazardous life of the soldier instead of the serene life of the professional had become your goal in the near future. You may have asked yourself the question: Why should I spend my time in college when I know I'll have to go to camp?

We hope you are not sorry for having spent four years in the college classroom. The purpose of a Christian college is not merely to prepare you for a congenial career but to equip you, intellectually and spiritually, for leadership among men, Christian leadership. We trust that purpose has not failed in your case. The function of a Christian college is to make a real contribution to one's character, with all that word implies. If Calvin's purpose has been realized in you, you and others will reap the fruits of your Christian education even though you are deflected from the civilian pursuits to which you have been looking forward, yes even though your life should be short. For after all, since such a

Christian education seeks to make God and his world known to us, its benefits are for the future life as well as the present.

We are not forgetting that many of Calvin's graduates and students are women. You who are coeds are exempt from most of the war-time perils and handicaps of your brother-students; but you did not and will not escape all the woes of this cyclonic disturbance called a world war. How can you when perhaps your brothers or sweethearts are entering the army or navy? Though we have no proofs to offer, no statistics to present, we cannot help believing that even you have found the psychosis of war-time more or less a hindrance to study.

* * * * *

But let us hasten to call your attention to the special advantages enjoyed by the students and graduates of a Christian college in a time of war. That is the main purpose of my address this evening.

You will agree with me that the privations or even the sufferings of war are scarcely more distressing than the perplexity which it creates in thoughtful minds. The impact of a world war on such minds is tremendous. No wonder! Our institutions are trembling on their foundations. We are compelled to abandon long established modes of living. Cherished ideas and ideals must be relinquished. The huge catastrophes and tragedies of war threaten to overwhelm our souls. In such times, according to the sublime language of the inspired poet, "mountains are shaken into the heart of the seas; the waters thereof roar and are troubled; the mountains tremble with the swelling thereof." Men are bewildered; fear grips their hearts.

How fortunate the men and women who in such a time as this have a unified, consistent, and adequate world and life view to steady them in the testing of their souls. Modern education cannot give such a unified, consistent outlook on life. The non-Christian college or university teaches a host of facts but no fundamental truths. Theories are offered but no consistent philosophy with which the teacher of natural science, the professor of history, and the instructor in the social sciences all agree. One professor affirms what his colleague in the adjoining class-room denies. The mind of the student trained at such a school is apt to be in a welter, in a state of confusion. It is like a well-stocked

store whose thousands of articles are distributed in helter skelter fashion, whose departments lack unification and coordination.

Young people who attend Christian colleges and are privileged above others should not feel they are superior to others. Students at non-Christian schools have intellects as good as yours. I suppose they have as much information. But you have one priceless advantage which they lack: a satisfying view of life which all the hideous realities of war have not proved false but have confirmed.

We do not imply that you have been forbidden or discouraged to think for yourself while at school; that ready-made solutions were offered you for all problems, in theology, philosophy, science, history, art, literature. Schools must teach young men and women not only to know and to believe but also to think. The function of a Christian college is two-fold. First, it teaches basic facts and the problems which those facts disclose. Second, it gives the student, not the solution but the key to the solution, of all those problems by teaching him the principles and the beauty of a biblical world and life view, a Christian philosophy—one that cannot be proved false by any of the facts of science or by the startling catastrophes of history.

* * * * *

It is not easy for us who enjoy the security and comfort which our Christian philosophy of life imparts to understand the dismay and disillusionment which the present war has caused in the mind of the typical college student, of our day. Modern youth, educated in the so-called neutral college or university, is desperately confused and baffled. His intellectual foundations have been destroyed. I suspected it could not be otherwise and mentioned this to your president when I told him I did not feel I would have anything worth while to say in this address unless it would be on the tragic futility of modern education, as revealed by the present war. He then kindly sent me a copy of a magazine entitled "What the Colleges Are Doing." One article after the other offered a striking example of the spirit just mentioned. I shall quote only one of them, an article that was taken from *The Daily Princetonian*, and whose heading was: "Pity the Poor Youth." Let me read to you the following excerpts:

"The questions put to the evening's speakers" (at a meeting of an Alumni Association) "indicated how baffled American youth is at this time. Those questions pointed out clearly and unmistakably that this country's youngsters are at sea, that they have no unified opinion on international problems, and that they are just a bit desperate.

"That, however, is not youth's fault . . . though its elders are inclined to overlook that important fact. Men and women of college age are accused of all manner of unpleasant tendencies because of their present indecision, but they are not entirely to blame.

"What the older generation is so apt to forget is that 1940's youth has, in twelve months' time, been asked to junk all its old principles and accept an entirely new set. That's a big order. No large group in history has been expected to forget the teaching of a lifetime and adopt an entirely different philosophy in such a short time before. Not of their own free will at any rate.

"It is not surprising, therefore, that America's youth is confused. The residuum of approximately fifteen years of study has left it extremely suspicious of European politics and 'just' causes. It was the older generation that taught youth its skepticism; now it is the older generation that asks youth to discard that for a new philosophy . . . that quickly too . . . You just can't flush fifteen years of study out of their brains in a moment."

You and I agree that a philosophy of life which fails in the crucial hour, which only leaves men bewildered in the great upheavals of civilization, is not worthy of acceptance.

* * * * *

What is this philosophy that has collapsed? What are the principles which today's youth, trained in neutral schools, has been compelled to consign to the scrap-heap? And what, over against these, are the principles which you have learned to know and—I trust—to appreciate—principles that have stood the acid-test of global war and of all those former mighty convulsions in history of which Scripture speaks as the casting of mountains into the heart of the seas?

First: this false philosophy which thinking youth has to abandon teaches the doctrine of innate human goodness and of its corollary: the inevitability of human progress.

The schools have taught and youth has believed that human nature is essentially good and that, in the process of evolution, man is bound to outgrow all such evils as slavery, social inequality, and war. The awful calamities of the past quarter century have exposed the fallacy of this doctrine. Daily life disproves it; but war especially makes a mockery of the claim that men are naturally inclined to be virtuous. Even if we are so foolish as to believe that in this war all the evil is on the side of the axis powers and all the good on the side of the united nations, we still face the fact that the former constitute a large section of humanity. Dare we say that men are good and getting better when so many of them hold that might makes right, and when fabulous sums are spent to invent and perfect the most horrible engines of destruction? Moreover, are not the same beliefs and passions that triumphed in Germany doing their deadly work in the rest of the nations?

Do not misunderstand me. I believe we are fighting a just war. But let us not fail to trace some of the deepest roots of this totalitarian madness that we are fighting. We know that the philosophy which

has helped to produce Hitler, the Hitlerian outlook on life, has been widely taught in our schools. Let me quote the blunt words of Dr. Mortimer Adler of the Chicago University, in his sensational speech and pamphlet, *God and the Professors*: "Democracy has much more to fear from the mentality of its teachers than from the nihilism of Hitler. It is the same nihilism in both cases, but Hitler's is more honest and consistent . . ." (page 18). Again, on page 34: "I say we have more to fear from our professors than from Hitler. It is they who have made American education what it is, both in content and method . . . Whether Hitler wins or not, the culture which is formed by such education cannot support what democracy we have against interior decay."

That men are by nature good, and that therefore the human race is sure to make progress in all things, has been taught not only by thousands of America's schools but also by a large number of its churches—those that have drifted from the pure gospel. And now the shrines of our culture are going up in smoke, the temple of our civilization totters on its foundation! The unspeakable cruelties and savagery of modern warfare have exposed the thinly veiled brutality of man. The fact of human sin is now so patent that, as *The Daily Princetonian* expressed it, students are "expected to forget the teaching of a lifetime and adopt an entirely different philosophy." But will they and their teachers now turn to the Christian view of man as taught in the Bible? Not unless the Spirit of truth is poured out upon them; for the same perverseness which inclined them to the optimistic theories which the war has exposed as false also prejudices them against the doctrine of man's fall and spiritual blindness.

How thankful we should be that we have a view of human nature which all the shocking events of the present war have not disproved but on the contrary confirmed.

* * * * *

A second time we ask: What is this philosophy which has collapsed?

It is the view that nationalism is narrow and patriotism infantile. Prof. Walter M. Kotschnig declared in the *Harvard Educational Review* that we, the older generation, "are responsible for the disillusionment, the cynicism, the hard-boiledness of the younger generation." We have destroyed their sense of values, he says; therefore the world in which they live is a "world without deeper loyalties." He exclaims: "No wonder that the young do not respond when we call them to defend such a world. Either they themselves have become contaminated with our cheap utilitarianism, in which case they do not see why they should sacrifice themselves for the comfort of others, or they recognize the hollowness of our patriotic slogans." Why do the patriotic slogans of the present sound hollow to so many educated youth in America? Because they have been taught that nationalism is foolish, dangerous, a breeder of war; that the salvation of the world lies

in the direction of internationalism. According to this view, patriotism is a hindrance to the world's progress.

Hitler's doctrine of "blood and soil," his cult of race-hatred and rabid anti-Semitism, are in part a reaction against the extreme internationalism which was preached so insistently by liberal professors and modernist teachers. His glorification of brute force has plunged the world into the bloodiest struggle that was ever waged by warring nations. We, too, are compelled to fight for our very existence as a nation. We have been forced into a war for which we were unprepared in part because of this poisonous philosophy of the new internationalism. Now we witness a resurgence of national pride, a strengthening of the national will. The deep, almost ineradicable instinct of patriotism is reasserting itself. But—we have left American youth stranded with their discredited philosophy that nations never engage in war except for commercial reasons and that the patriot is a silly ignoramus. Yes, indeed, pity the poor youth! But we do not pity you, students and graduates of Calvin College. There is no conflict between your country's call to sacrifice and the truths you have been taught. How reasonable it must now seem to us to believe that nations are God's creation; that national characteristics and instincts are a God-given barrier against the peril of world-empire, so much so that no world-empire has ever succeeded in crushing the nationalistic and patriotic motive; and that though the law of love applies to nations as well as individuals, internationalism is sound only if it begins with and is restricted by the recognition of the right of every nation, great or small, to an independent, sovereign existence.

* * * * *

A third time we ask: What is this philosophy with which modern youth has been left stranded by the tide of war? Here is our answer: It is the belief that war is necessarily and always evil.

This belief is the logical consequence of the two doctrines just mentioned: the essential goodness of human nature and the folly of nationalism. The connection is so self-evident that it needs no demonstration.

Modern thought has been a fruitful soil for the pacifist movement. That movement was checked temporarily by the first World War. When the war ended pacifism again made great headway. It was in harmony with what was taught by liberal schools and modernist churches and exerted a marked influence in the ranks of our national leaders. Peace conferences and disarmament programs led the optimists to believe that a warless world was near. We scuttled some of our good warships. We neglected our national defenses. To the sinister militarism of Germany and Japan many of our national leaders were wilfully blind. Patriots who warned us of the impending storm were rebuked and scorned. Then came the second World War, but

our feverish endeavors to expand our army and strengthen our navy could not save us from our complacency and from the disgrace of Pearl Harbor. And now all that American youth was taught about the coming federation of nations and the nearness of the age of peace—not the kingdom of peace which Christ will bring but man's godless peace—has been proved false. Ah yes, pity the poor youth!

I am convinced that if the political leaders of England and America during the past twenty-five years had been realistic, consistent Calvinists, instead of idealistic liberals, Germany and Japan would not have found us asleep at the switch. This war could easily have been prevented. False pacifist doctrine, combined with the worship of material comforts, is partly responsible for it. How thankful you should be, students and graduates of a Christian college, that the hard and stubborn facts of a global war have not made a mockery of your Christian view of life. This war may blot out, for the time being at least, your prospect of a peaceful civilian career after graduation; but it came as no surprise to you. You have not had the tragic experience of thousands of American youth; you were not compelled to junk your principles or give up your faith in a God who existed only in your imagination—a God only of love. All that is happening today confirms what you and I believe about God and man and the world. We have not lost all if we have kept our faith.

* * * * *

A fourth and last time we put the question: What is this philosophy which so many college-bred youth have been forced to surrender? It is the philosophy that democracy is futile and that the world's salvation lies in dictatorship.

The schools of the United States were still paying lip-service to democracy when the war began, but often their teaching on this score was not whole-hearted. Many teachers in public educational institutions were more enthusiastic for Communism than Democracy. The two systems do not agree, for Communism is a form of dictatorship. And why could democracy not evoke enthusiasm? Because it has no deep and sound foundations except in the religious belief that man was made in the image of God and that human personality and human rights are sacred. As Dr. Adler has clearly shown in *God and the Professors*, the proposition that democracy is the best political system rests on the truths of philosophy and religion. We may add that democracy is bound to fail unless it rests on a view of life in which freedom and law, liberty and authority, are reconciled. But Christianity offers the only view of life which can do this. Have not its teachings been spurned by the modern world? Is it a wonder that the word "democracy" provoked a sneer on the lips of many to whom the education of our youth was entrusted? Yes, indeed, pity the poor youth who were taught to despise democracy as the pat-

tern of inefficiency and now are suddenly asked to lay down their lives, if need be, that our free, democratic institutions may not perish!

Even today we can often detect a false ring in the slogan: Save democracy! Thousands among us, in places high and low, fail to realize that political freedom and even religious freedom cannot last if the blessings of economic freedom are lost. We know that in time of war many of our liberties must be surrendered; but it makes a world of difference whether those who regulate our economic life in war-time are reluctant or eager to extend the powers of government over the whole of that economic life. How tragic it would be if through the war our democracy, while saved from external assault, should be undermined and destroyed at home. A permanent economic dictatorship, when the war is over, is an evil to be feared almost as much as national defeat.

We call on you, present and future graduates of this Christian college, to face the danger of this un-Christian philosophy of an all-powerful State, and to fight it as much as you will be able. If economic dictatorship lies ahead, if State Socialism should be the outcome of this present war in our own land, we shall be a democracy only in name; we shall lose the war even though we win it with our army and navy. I congratulate you, graduates of Calvin College and Seminary, that with your faith in the teachings of Scripture you can believe in an all-out, hundred percent democracy.

The world and life view with which you enter the arena of practical affairs should have the love of your hearts as well as the assent of your minds. There is no logic, comfort, or power in the Christian philosophy of life except for those in whom it is rooted in a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the wisdom as well as the power of God. May it be your solemn determination to serve Him in every walk of life. May you be a credit to your *Alma Mater* by defending and practicing the principles which it has taught you. This school could not be proud of you if you should abandon those principles, even though you should become a revered statesman, a noted scientist, a popular novelist, a famous artist, a nationally known teacher or scholar. You will honor Calvin only as a humble yet fearless Calvinist.

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A Chronicle of Art

Calvinism and the Return to Values

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THIS department intends to be a chronicle of art in as far as it is of importance to Calvinism as a life- and world-view. It will not aim at giving a complete survey of art from month to month. But it hopes to put in the limelight certain prominent facts and current ideas which are of interest to our readers because of their positive or negative values. Calvinism claims to be not only a theology and a system of ethics, but also a philosophy, that is, an epistemology or a theory of knowledge, and a cosmology, or an explanation of every sphere of life, and of all these spheres in an integrated relation. Calvinism does not contend to create its own technical principles. After a fashion we have such technical principles as are based on experience, in common with many others, and after a fashion we have a common quarrel with the ultra-radicals, or revolutionaries of the type of Matisse, Picasso and other madmen in which we fight side by side with such decent and common sense humanists as Thomas Craven, Karl Scheffler, and a host of others. But when it comes to the ultimate understanding of art, and to the ultimate appreciation of art, the Christian can neither rest in common sense, nor in what has been called "uncommon sense," that is the silent agreement of artistic souls about higher values, for the Christian has a peculiar criterion which the world does not understand. Natural man cannot understand the things of the spirit. Liberals cannot share our ultimate explanations and profoundest enthusiasms. The cross of Christ is a folly to the Greeks. The Christian appreciation of art is madness to the humanists. They will accuse us of dragging in religion and ethics which, in their eyes, have nothing to do with art. But we have to insist that art is not an absolutely independent realm. We have to insist that art is related to all other spheres of life. We have to insist that the so-called laws, or principles of art, are not simply human formulas, or abstract generalizations, but that God made everything according to His pattern, and that it is our duty to find the logos of this pattern. And, therefore, the Christian feels something unique about art which only Christian artists and aesthetes can share. It will be the purpose of this chronicle to register the reflections of this group, and not to enter into technical detail for which every one can consult a general encyclopedia, or an encyclopedia of art.

Reaction and Return

Because Christian philosophy, and, therefore, also Christian aesthetics is of an ultimate character, it

ought to be plain that we shall not exclude any school from our sympathy beyond the school which is no school, because it broke the rules of all preceding schools, except the one canon on which it tried to hang the whole universe of man's emotions. We mean the insane period of the first quarter of the twentieth century which is represented by so many eccentricities that no one has yet succeeded in classifying all its fads and frills. We do not mean to deny a place to the most outstanding leaders of this awkward primitivism, for it is of no use to ignore the idols of a past age which still has a hold on many innocents abroad, but we only want to assure our readers that broad sympathies do not mean that we have to follow the policy of the weathervane. It is very well possible to appreciate all kinds of idealistic and realistic art without having to make one's bow to the fauvists, or "wild beasts" that howled in the artistic wilderness between 1905 and 1930, and are still trying to make an impression on America, whereas their fame in Europe is dying out. In the near future we hope to point out some new publications which try to justify the madness of the last generation, but in this chronicle we want to draw the attention first of all to something of the opposite nature.

We mean to emphasize the fact that the great majority of the new art critics have returned to the old standards without closing their minds to new movements. And this does not only hold for painting, but as far as we have been able to trace it, also for the other arts.

It is true that in painting we still have some works coming out which classify the madmen of the immediate past among the "giants," and we shall soon have occasion to warn our collectors of art books against the defenders of freaks and streaks. But there are on the other hand such a host of sane new critics that the voice of a few belated theorists will not do much harm. The most important art critics who have returned to the old values are the same men that have revived interest in Dutch painting of the seventeenth century which is decidedly of Calvinistic origin. These men are of German and Dutch descent. The Germans were the first to restore our Dutch Calvinistic painters to honor. We owe this especially to Wilhelm von Bode. The Dutchmen Bredius and Hofstede de Groot followed in their wake. But the most modern and the most convincing utterances are from the pen of Germany's foremost art editor Karl Scheffler whose work *Holland* appeared in 1932 in English in our

own country. He boldly states that Dutch art is at the basis of all modern painting, and that it behooves all painters to turn to the seventeenth century Dutch as their masters.

Recent Art and Dutch Calvinism

Besides Scheffler there are a host of art critics, art historians, and art monographers who strike the same note of reverence for the Dutch Calvinists, and of faith in their standards of technique and symbolism. In England there are Lucas, Wilenski, Collins Baker, Aldous Huxley, Bodkin, Tietze. In America there are Valentiner, Mather, and above all Thomas Craven whose *Modern Art* became available in a popular edition, besides the monographs on Vermeer by Philip Hale, and the essay by Rowley in Thompson and others, *The Civilization of the Renaissance* (1929). Especially the eulogies on Dutch Art by Craven and by Rowley are worthwhile. It is certainly remarkable that the return to standards in painting means a reevaluation of the Dutch painters of the seventeenth century, and that this painting is accredited by Mather, by Craven, and by Rowley as Protestant and as being influenced by the Puritanic Way of life.

But this is not all. There is also a return to values in architecture which has quite a bit to do with the

Dutch Calvinists of yore. The most popular style all over the world for ordinary homes and for small buildings and churches is the style of the Dutchmen Berlage whose two motives of the structural line and of variety of brick and stone are derived, according to Scheffler and Cheney, from the old Holland style of the seventeenth century which again must be accredited to the Calvinists.

And finally, now that we are emerging from the chaotic style in music it is again the Dutch who are in the lead. The most modern composer for organ is a Dutch Catholic, Hendrik Andriessen, whose third Chorale was published by Widor in Paris and, therefore, well-known. But more intelligible music for organ has been written by the Calvinists Cor Kee and Willem Oranje whose chorale preludes deserve to be known by every one, because they are thoroughly modern and of an unequalled originality. Karg Elert has written music which no one cares to play. Mac Dowell wrote for the concert hall. But Kee and Oranje composed for the cathedral. And here again is an echo of the halcyon days of Calvinism. For the father of homophonic music was not Beethoven, but was Jan Pieter Sweelinck who freed music from the polyphonic shackles of the middle ages.

Unitarianism from the Tombs

Spiritualism as a Religion

IN this concluding article of the series on Spiritualism, we wish to confine ourselves strictly to a résumé and evaluation of the specifically religious dogmas of this movement in its garb of a religious sect. At the two extremes of that which may properly be called Spiritualism stand on one hand the extravaganzas of early spiritualists who readily accepted any story, were it ever so weird, and at the other hand the reputedly scientific judgment of those who without any religious axe-to-grind, accept the hypothesis of spirit communication as best explaining certain psychic phenomena. Between the extremes, a fairly well-defined religious system is detectable. Conan Doyle avers that, although psychical research in itself may be quite distinct from religion, its deductions and lessons teach the continued life of the soul, the nature of that life, and how it is influenced by our conduct here. Admittedly, that enters the universe of religious discourse. Doyle distinguishes between spiritualists who remain in their own churches, and those who organize their own. The latter, says he, are very elastic of dogma, most of them are Unitarian.

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"A Strange Mixture"

The British National Union apparently holds to the following seven principles:

1. The Fatherhood of God,
2. The Brotherhood of man,
3. The Communion of the saints and the ministry of angels,
4. Human survival of physical death,
5. Personal responsibility (which, Doyle admits, rules out the whole redemptive cycle as found in historic Christianity)
6. Compensation or retribution for good or evil deeds,
7. Eternal progress open to every soul.

These principles as so stated are open to interpretation. We can give them an orthodox interpretation, or we can accept the fact that they are the stock-in-trade of Unitarianism in every form throughout the years. What is the interpretation of Spiritualism?

Barwise, in Braden's symposium ("Varieties of American Religion," pp. 201-216) lists twenty-two points of doctrine that belong to the system. These may serve as our commentary upon the seven principles of the British Union.

1. Life after death is merely a universal law of nature.
2. Everybody is body and spirit, and the spirit consists of a semi-physical substance, made of finer atoms at a higher rate of vibration.

3. The spirit-body is formed by the spirit substances of the parents precisely as the physical body is. In fact, the spirit-body is in every respect the exact counterpart of the physical body.

4. The physical body is like a coat that is worn through a season and laid off.

5. The whole spirit-world is the counterpart of the material world, but at a higher rate of vibration.

6. This spirit-world consists of concentric zones, the first just around the earth, the second about 60 miles out, etc.

7. We know about four of these zones directly, by spirit-contact, and about three more by hearsay from spirits. (The assumption seems to be that spirits in one zone make contacts with spirits in higher zones in much the same way as mediums do on earth.)

8. Every man at death enters the first zone unchanged mentally or spiritually. (Apparently especially good people may skip a zone or two and avoid the slower process of evolution into the next zones. Houdini was thus assured by Doyle that he would no doubt find himself in the third sphere with his good wife.)

9. There is no judgment (and no regeneration, Divinely wrought) it is all natural. One will seek out his own associates on the other side.

10. The process of evolution which controls the material world is continued in the spiritual world.

11. Those in higher zones may lower their pitch of vibration and descend to lower spheres, but not vice versa. Thus spirits who have just departed are more likely to communicate with earth than others. Eventually those spirits who formerly communicated with earth can do so no longer, since they have progressed beyond that possibility. There are certain earth-bound spirits who for some reason seem unable to stop haunting some spot associated with their earthly life.

12. Some higher spirits attach themselves to lower spirits and to human beings as permanent "contacts" or "guides".

13. In the spirit world, instead of any violent break like death in the physical world, there is just a gradual process of refining of substance and raising of vibration pitch until there occurs the natural merging with the next spirit-plane.

14. There is no second death, only continual unfolding and onward progress.

15. The spirit-world is as tangible to the spirits as ours is to us.

16. The only goal of life is the development of the individual spirit.

17. There is no evidence of a limit to the zones of spirit-life.

18. There is no fall, hence no salvation. Jesus' life story may be true, the spirits are not agreed. But in any case, all of the world's religious leaders have the same value.

19. As to God: a. We believe in Infinite Intelligence.

b. The phenomena of nature are expressions of that Intelligence.

c. Understanding natural phenomena and living by them is true religion.

20. The spirits are not agreed about the existence of angels or other non-human spirits, or spirits on other planets.

21. In the spirit-world, children grow up, old people revert to vigorous middle-age. At first all of earth's sicknesses and pains go with us, but after we are acclimated all sickness and decrepitude disappears.

22. The gift of mediumship belongs only to some people and is a property of the astral or spirit-body.

"Frankly Un-Christian" . . .

What shall we say to this illogical array? That there is an obvious attempt to copy some of the attractive teachings on death and resurrection, need not be denied. That there is an unhealthy dwelling upon one aspect of human experience is admittedly true. But taking the "system" as a whole, it is nothing short of an outrage to human intelligence. That it is utterly and frankly contrary to the tenets of Creedal Christianity, need only be stated to be accepted by Christians and Spiritualists alike. That psychic research as a study in psychology may be

compatible with Christianity, no one would deny. Two questions arise: can belief in communication with dead spirits be harmonized with Christianity? and, What is the animus, the real virus, the thrust in spiritualistic theology as we see it? These two questions we wish now to answer.

In answer to the first question, if Christianity be viewed from the criterion of the Bible, the answer must be "No." We have shown the Bible's unequivocal stand on that matter in the previous article. But is it even conceivable from the standpoint of the basic philosophy of Christianity? The answer again is "No." Spiritism in any form must posit, in spite of all its avowals to the contrary, if it is going to maintain its central contention of spirit-communication, a grossly materialistic universe, in which even spirits are not spiritual but only material of a finer type. That fundamental materialism warps the whole thing from a Christian standpoint. The whole question of spiritual life at war with material appetites, corrupted by sin, is meaningless in such a universe. The whole concept of spiritual communion with God is ridiculous in such a system. Not only is it so in point of fact, but it must be so from logical necessity. That psychic research should go on, I think commendable. The departed spirit hypothesis is philosophically and religiously untenable.

"The Real Virus" . . .

As to the second question, what is the real animus, the virus of the system, it will be remembered that we remarked in a previous article that in spite of Spiritualism's contention that undeniable phenomena have produced the system of religion, it is still a question whether the phenomena originated the system or whether the wishful thinking of an age of rationalism did not do much to originate the phenomena. We would now answer that question this way: certain phenomena have occurred and do occur, these have given rise to psychic research as a scientific study. But the religion called Spiritualism burst full-grown out of the deranged minds of the rationalistic and reaction-to-rationalism age in which those phenomena occurred and gained greatest notice. The phenomena called forth a study. The religion produced the spiritualistic hypothesis. The animus of that hypothesis is a deceitful attempt to ape the glorious promises of eternal life and cut away their redemptive foundation. There is nothing so new about that. Even now we still hear the echo of a crafty voice, "Thou shalt not surely die, but in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt be as God." There is the virus of Spiritualism. Satan knows that if he can get people to accept a religion without a Redeemer, he has won. He has well been called God's great imitator. If he can deceive people into believing that the benefits of true faith can be secured in another way, he has gained the victory. Spiritualism, like all man-made and Hell-instigated religions, is an attempt to do away with

the results of sin without touching sin itself. It has used trickery and real psychic phenomena to do it.

In that light we need not be surprised to see how Spiritualists handle the cardinal doctrines of Christianity.

They abrogate a personal God. Anything may be God. Occasionally "spirits" blurt out that Satan is their God. They are indifferent about the historicity of Jesus. Any good person may be a Christ. He was no more Divine than we. Some say he was a Judaeon medium and now lives in the sixth sphere. His resurrection was not physical, but an appearance of His astral body. His second return is fulfilled in the birth of Spiritualism, says one of them. The doctrine of the atonement is the crowning product of deranged imagination. There is no justice in it. Man never fell. The Bible is not inspired. If it does not fit the "New Science (Spiritualism)," throw it away. There is no Hell, but a kind of purgatorial transmigration. The Church is a barrier to the truth and Spiritualism is its death-blow. Resolutions have been adopted against Sunday Schools, church services, sexual tyranny, and animal food.

If it be objected that these are extreme types of Spiritualism, they are extreme because some Spiritualists have intelligence enough to see that these are the logical conclusions from their first principles. They are the logical result of any pantheistic humanism of the typical American Unitarian type.

"How Much Can We Accept" . . .

In conclusion we shall summarize some of Harry Price's closing chapter of "Fifty Years of Psychical Research":

"There are few phenomena studied by psychical researchers that have been demonstrated scientifically. None of the physical psychic phenomena exist so far as orthodox science is concerned. Certain phenomena in the field of abnormal psychology have been demonstrated. Although *Science* does not accept the spiritistic explanation, certain *scientists* have. The reason why official science is still unconvinced is that it has not made an honest attempt due to lack of official funds. Private funds (Stanford, Seyfert, et. al.) have been used by biased investigators. The evidence for such phenomena is overwhelming, but it will never be accepted until Science in the shape of a chair or department in some University places its *cachet* upon it. (It is interesting and significant in view of repeated avowals that Adolf Hitler acts by psychic information, to note that the Third Reich was the only government who was willing to sponsor such a department at Bonn University and offered Mr. Price the position as its head.)

"I will now state what I have observed in the way of paranormal phenomena, speaking personally. My experiences are based on thirty years' intensive experimentation under conditions where fraud simply could not have occurred. I have seen, felt, pinched, photographed, and played tug-of-war with 'pseudopods', teleplasmic masses. If 'Rosalie' was genuine, then I have witnessed a full-form materialization. I am convinced that there is ample evidence of thermal changes: the apparent fall in temperature in the immediate vicinity of a medium. I am certain that houses are affected by influences. In particular, the genuineness of *Poltergeist* cases have been established. I believe in spontaneous telepathy and clairvoyance, but not—as yet—in induced telepathy. The same holds for prevision and precognition. As to contact with the mind of a person who is dead, my theory is that an emanation of our ego, a part of our intelligence persists after death and can be picked up by a suitable mind. Buildings especially may contain these emanations, even of people who are living but absent. Ghost phe-

nomena occur with periodic regularity because a room or building becomes charged with personality like a battery and then discharges the phenomena.

"I have said little about the spirit hypothesis because I consider that the spiritualists have not proved their case. However, the spirit theory covers many of the facts. We know so little about subconscious and so little more about the conscious mind. To the scientist, I implore him not to dismiss too hastily the facts that I have enumerated. 'Science is bound by the everlasting law of honor to face fearlessly every problem that can fairly be presented to it.'"

Here we have a fairly open mind wrestling to find a tenable hypothesis to cover facts of whose existence he is convinced. What shall we say about his "facts" and theories? Perhaps no single theory will cover all the phenomena, weird and amazing, unearthed in the field of psychic research. As a religion, Spiritualism is a curse, like the Unitarianism out of which its theology sprang. As a psychological phenomenon, it is perhaps a combination—fraud, insufficiently understood psychology, demonic and angelic influences—who knows what more?

Perhaps science will find the answer. In any case, further investigation certainly seems to be indicated.

NOTE: If there are readers who would like to have a bibliography on this subject, and sufficient requests are sent to the author to warrant mimeographing a supply, it will be made available to you on receipt of a request addressed to Rev. Arnold Brink, 3350 Wilcox Ave., Muskegon, Mich.

Wings

Wings against the sky;
A silhouette in flight—
Flight of birds that speed their way
To a certain goal.

Wings against the sky;
Feathered creatures that seek their nests.
Embodiment of speed and grace;
Winged warblers whose goal is rest,
Whose song and call hold nought of fear,
May God your Maker speed your flight!

Wings against the sky;
Roaring wings that cleave the blue at man's behest.
Gigantic man-made birds that seek to prey
On human life and habitation.
Baneful thought!
Birds of might fashioned for destruction;
Their goal—their end—is Death!

Wings against the sky—
A silhouette in flight!

—BESS DE VRIES.

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Christian Theism and The New Supernaturalism

Ray W. Teeuwissen
Calvin Seminary Student

A DOZEN years ago W. M. Horton inserted in his book *Theism and the Modern Mood* the following theological want-ad: "What is badly needed, it would seem, is a theology which can sympathize with the spirit of the age without being blinded by it; which can bring to the issues of the moment a power of discrimination and a power of resistance born of historical perspective. Such a theology might be able to solve successfully the difficult problem we are to face: that of separating the valid from the fallacious elements in contemporary humanism." (p. 43.)

The Plight of the Humanist

At the time of Horton's writing there were many who felt that there had to be some changes made, in fact, were already then being made. There were others who frankly spoke of fallacious elements in contemporary humanism. In Europe, where the World War had not only left bleeding countries, but maimed philosophical and theological systems as well, Karl Barth and his group were speaking of a God whom they called "Der Ganz Andere."

In the United States, during the first decade after the "war to make the world safe for democracy," there was still plenty of money, and the people forgot that the bloody horrors of war had brought them that money. Suddenly, however, the nation awoke one morning and found itself—not famous—but poor. Looking at the God which he had created in his own image, the humanist found that God to be as poor as he.

The brightly colored and noisy band wagons of the humanists and naturalists no longer seemed to belong on Main Street, and wisely withdrew to the side streets. Humanism with the Social Gospel of Liberalism proved to many people to be as unreliable as their investments. Just as many, however, hoped against hope that some day the worthless papers would regain their value, so many in theological circles thought that there was still some hope for humanism. They hesitated to forget this "noble experiment" and to return to traditional supernaturalism.

We can very well understand their plight. They did not enjoy watching the show from a side street band wagon, though there were, and still are, some humanists who insisted on, and enjoyed, blowing their off-tune horns from that direction. Many were perplexed as they watched the theological parade go past. They were unwilling to jump on the serene

float of orthodoxy, where they would have been welcomed had they but been willing to leave their humanist music and instruments. Suddenly they smiled at the approach of a new band wagon. The answer to W. H. Horton's want-ad! It was traveling faster than the slow float of supernaturalism, more like their own speed when they had been heading the parade.

The New Band Wagon

As the wagon approached, their joy increased for they recognized among the occupants a group of men who had once been with them on the humanist-liberal band wagon. These had left them when their wagon turned down the side street. Everyone had imagined them back on the old supernaturalist float, but here they were on an outfit of their own! The music from this new theological vehicle at first sounded strange, but listening more closely they discerned a familiar refrain. It would not be difficult to join in with them, and the distance between the two wagons was smaller than it seemed. So, jump, jump, jump. They took their instruments and much of their music with them!

That new vehicle is the band wagon now occupied by the New-supernaturalists. The melody coming from it has caused many a passer-by to stop and listen, and as he listens he is bewildered, for the tune is as that in an old French story. A man, hiding a short distance from the road, had instructed a companion to warn him whenever someone approached. If the figure was that of a man he was to blow a doleful march, and if a woman, then a bridal march. All went well for some time, but then the man in hiding heard a strange mixture of joyful and sad music. When the figure, male or female, was past he questioned his companion as to what had passed. "The face was that of a man, but the clothing was that of a woman. I thought you would understand it was a *monk*." Such a monkish tune is that of the New-supernaturalist. He sounds both orthodox and heterodox!

What is Christian Theism?

We shall first consider Christian Theism, the supernatural system *par excellence*. This system stands over against both monism and dualism. It recognizes the reality of both God and His creation, though God is the sole ultimate of the system. Theism rejects a dualism which would place over against each other two infinite ultimates. Likewise

it rejects the monism of the naturalist who makes one ultimate out of the two realities of the theist. Perhaps one could say of Christian Theism, if the terms be correctly understood, that it is "monistic dualism." The paradoxical ring to this term should make it acceptable to the Barthians.

Theism, however, does not place the Creator and the Creation antagonistically over against each other, nor does it leave both these realities disconnected. The creation is *subordinated* to the Creator. The finite universe, i. e. that which is not God, has an existence of its own, but it does not exist of itself. God, by a supernatural act has created it. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." (Rom. 11:36).

This creative act of God is a supernatural event "that takes place by the immediate, as distinguished from the mediate, power of God." (Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, p. 99.) The mediate acts of God are called natural, and one understands that the theist does not consider nature independent of God. In God's natural operations he uses means laid down by Him in a providential way. In final analysis all is the work of God.

The theist then does not hesitate to speak of miracles, for he believes in a personal God who created and sustains the universe. A miracle when performed by God—and who else can perform miracles?—is not due to caprice, rather, it is ordered by the God who *orders* the universe. To God a miracle is not a miracle, for He performs it at His time, and at His will.

For brevity's sake the word "theist" is used rather than "Christian Theist," but it must be understood that the message to which the theist clings and which he heralds to the world is the Gospel of *Christ*.

The Supernatural Revelation

This message has come as a supernatural revelation as to both source and method. The entire system is derived from it. We shall review its main points in order to compare them to the claims and beliefs of the new-supernaturalist.

The God of the theist is a personal God, the Maker and active Ruler of the universe. He worships Him as his Father after he has become reconciled to Him through Christ. He stresses both immanence and transcendence. God is transcendent for there is nothing and no one above Him, all things and all creatures are subject unto Him. This does not place God so far off that He cannot be approached, but He must be approached in the right way. The immanence of God is never inflated to make God and man one, as does the pantheist.

The theist, far from calling himself God, falls down before the transcendent God, for he knows himself as a sinner. He has not been persuaded by the positivist Comte that man is "*Le grand être*." Nor has the humanist's talk about "Man and his Goodness" convinced him that he should rise from

knees and pat God on the shoulder. For the theist we all fell in Adam, and discovering his sins he goes to God to have them healed, rather than to bandage them with the infested rags of "the quest for the better in life." There remains an antithesis between good and evil, due to the fall of man. This fall is interpreted historically, i. e. he believes that there *was* a woman named Eve who ate from the forbidden tree.

As mentioned, the theist believes in a supernatural revelation; the Bible. Not a book *containing* God's Word, but actually the accurate record of that which "God hath spoken," both by word and deed. The Bible is unique and is treated as such. Unique because its contents are inspired by the Holy Spirit. Believing that the theist holds to the infallibility of the Scriptures.

Christ, the Cross, the Church

With respect to the central figure of the Bible, Jesus Christ, the theist considers His atoning work as primary. He believes that Christ came as a supernatural person, yea, as very God, and took upon Him the form of man. He accomplished a supernatural task; His life and death brought redemption from sin, and atonement for the sinner. Having become the Savior, Jesus also becomes the Guide. Conquering death, He arose from the grave to dwell with His Father as Mediator between God and man.

The Cross then becomes central in the theistic belief, for, having experienced the reality of what took place on the cross, man can achieve his chief end, i. e. to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever. When the theist accepts that atoning sacrifice he speaks of a rebirth. The supernatural then enters actively into his life. This rebirth is historic, for the fall was historic, as were the death and resurrection of Christ. The break between man and God is healed. To those who refuse to admit such a break, or consider *themselves* gods, this remains unintelligible, and they may at times ridicule this rebirth.

Having experienced this miraculous rebirth the theist looks toward a life of consecration to God, and to the time when, after death, he shall for ever be in His presence. Though accused of being a pessimist, he, more than anyone else, can be an optimist, for his out-look is other-worldly. He lives in the assurance of a better life to come. Still, the problems of this world are not ignored, and to those problems the theist has the correct answer for he looks at them in the light of God's revelation. When engaging in social work he will place first things first, for he has read: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God." Man's spiritual need remains paramount.

The church of the Christian theist reflects the above. It is the Body of Christ, a group of individual believers, a communion of saints. To become such a saint the individual must experience the supernatural rebirth.

Meeting Man's Deepest Needs

There, in brief, is the outline of a world and life view of which H. N. Wieman states "... this body of thought has a clarity and systematic completeness not found elsewhere." (*American Philosophies of Religion*, p. 63.) One would wonder why then there are still other systems who endeavor to compete with theism. It is not because this system is a new one which has not been made known, for Wieman continues: "Most if not all other philosophies have been retreats from traditional supernaturalism and concessions to the basic theory of modern culture, rather than aggressive, constructive and triumphant grappings with the problem of rearing a system of religious thought and life which will express the true genius of our culture and meet its deepest needs." (p. 65.)

What is there then in theism which keeps theism from becoming the sole contestant in the race? And why so many systems which challenge its finality? I would venture to say it is precisely because the "deepest needs" of our culture are not understood.

The humanist for one is unwilling to admit that we need a supernatural, divine, revelation and a just and sinless Savior to bring us back to a supreme, personal God. Man's deepest needs have been considered a new swimming pool, and a larger birth control clinic.

No wonder that many, sucked into such mire, looked up from their philosophical and theological mudholes to the firm rock of theism, firm because founded on *The Rock*. The Barthian school in Germany, leading this movement back to supernaturalism, found followers in other countries and in the United States, so that we can speak today of a new-supernaturalist school. The American movement cannot be identified with the Barthian movement in Europe, for the American theologian, as a rule, remains an activist and pragmatist, and does not see eye to eye with the Barthian on all points.

As to God and Scripture

We shall now look at some of the great Christian doctrines in the light of statements by the new-supernaturalists, and it is well that we remember that the last word has not yet been said by all of them on all subjects.

E. E. Aubrey explains the adjective "new" by stating that they hold to "a critical supernaturalism based on an examination of the limitations of the scientific methods as a means of knowing reality; and a conjunctive supernaturalism in which no ontological break occurs between the natural and the supernatural." (*Present Theological Tendencies*, p. 195.)

There is a wholesome note of reaction in the first half of that statement. It is admitted at last that science cannot solve the problem of reality, and that the only approach to God is *not* the scientific one. The word transcendence again has been applied to God, and placed over against the "excessive imma-

nentism of the Schleiermacher tradition." Yet, as Dr. Van Til points out in a recent article in *THE CALVIN FORUM* (February, 1942), this school does not yet uphold a self-sufficient God.

It resolves that the new-supernaturalist does not attribute to God the causal creation of the world. He rejects the Genesis account, no doubt to evade the "ontological break between the natural and the supernatural." He is willing to listen with appreciation to the modern Bible critics. It is at this point that the theist most readily discovers that the new-supernaturalist took with him the music and instruments which he formerly used on the humanist-naturalist band wagon. Even Edwin Lewis, who has swung back farther than most to the orthodox position, does not accept the Bible at its face value. Reinhold Niebuhr, one of the leaders of this group, is quoted as saying that the Bible contains "... irrelevant precepts deriving their authority from their sometimes quite fortuitous inclusion in a sacred canon...." (*CALVIN FORUM*, Vol. III, Aug.-Sept., 1937). The Scriptures contain "social and moral standards which may once have had legitimate or accidental sanctity, but which have, whether legitimate or accidental, now lost both religious and moral meaning." (*CALVIN FORUM*, *ibid.*)

Georgia Harkness, who studied under Reinhold Niebuhr, says in *The Resources of Religion*, that he did not "manifest a somersault back to fundamentalism... it would be impossible for him to revert to Biblical literalism." (p. 97.)

As to the Fall, the Atonement, the Kingdom

It is apparent that such a view of the Bible must upset the other doctrines as held by the theist. The Biblical account of the fall of man becomes a myth which is true at all times, for it occurs again and again. The new-supernaturalist speaks much of Christ, using traditional terms with a non-traditional meaning, but from all appearance this Christ is not the traditional Son of God. Niebuhr relates in *Beyond Tragedy* how, at the time of his ordination, he was perplexed about confessing: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." The words "resurrection of the body" caused much difficulty. Now, however, he says "the stone which we then rejected has now become the head of the corner." He realizes the importance of that phrase, and we gladly agree, but then comes: "The idea of the resurrection of the body can of course not be literally true." And later, "resurrection is the divine transformation of human existence." (pp. 289-290.)

The vicarious atonement of Calvary is explained in these words, "The Savior dies not because he has sinned, but because he has not sinned. He proves thereby that sin is so much a part of existence that sinlessness cannot maintain itself in it." (*op. cit.* p. 167.) Likewise the words "redemptive power" do not mean to the new-supernaturalist what they mean to the theist. Nor does the former mention a

day of judgment when the sinner shall appear before God. For Georgia Harkness the death of Jesus is the "eternal symbol of a loving, suffering God, as the resurrection is the symbol of spiritual triumph over death and evil." (*op. cit.* p. 29.) How, we beg to ask, can a symbol save?

Over against the idea of the Kingdom and the Church made up of individual believers the new-supernaturalist posits a to-be-redeemed society. This idea results perhaps from the manifestation in cruel and disastrous battles of the collective sins of the nations. *Mankind* has sinned and fallen, and so *mankind* must be redeemed! The theist will agree to that, but the new-supernaturalist seems to set aside the personal element. Becoming impatient with the world order, Niebuhr also becomes impatient with the orthodox church and speaks of its "petrified doctrine and irrelevant puritanical precepts."

The real supernaturalism of theism comes vitally into the life of man when he goes to the supernaturally revealed Christ, and weeps about his sin

as a reality separating him from the Almighty God. Reinhold Niebuhr, however, says, "...if we can only weep for ourselves as men, we need not weep for ourselves as man." (*op. cit.* p. 169.)

Not the Real Thing

We agree with the new-supernaturalist that this world is in a bad way, for it is not "of the Way." We also agree when he shouts that God should be on a high throne, and not on a high-chair. We would not even maliciously remind him that that is what the theist has maintained all along. "Sin is real," he tells us. That too we have known all along, and we hope that he understands what he says. When, however, such statements are merely "selected passages" from a Bible which they refuse to accept as infallible, we realize that what they *select* today they may *reject* tomorrow.

Their supernaturalism is "new" as in conquered Europe there is "new" bread; it does not contain the real stuff. Let us hope and pray that it will make those who eat of it long for the real thing.

Democracy, Authoritarianism, and Christian Education

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I READ with considerable interest and much appreciation the discussion of the democratic method in education in the February and May issues of THE CALVIN FORUM. Both Mr. Bontekoe and the Rev. Mr. Monsma concerned themselves chiefly with educational methodology, though they realized that methodology cannot be separated from the philosophy of education. Bontekoe argued for a democratic methodology. He contends that more democracy in educational practice in the construction of curricula, in classroom instruction and in administrative organization are necessary if the school is to function as an effective agency in the promotion of democratic thinking and living in society as a whole. He contrasts the democratic method and authoritarian techniques.

Monsma takes the authoritarian method to mean that the teacher proceeds deductively in the presentation of subject matter and in the control of the classroom. By the democratic method he understands that the teacher proceeds by inductive means to arrive at certain generalizations in the learning process. Bontekoe tries to show that a God-centered and God-directed philosophy of educational objectives is not at variance with a democratic methodology. He does not accept the democratic philosophy of education which is man-centered and meta-

physically naturalistic. He does, however, advocate a child-centered methodology. (It should be noted here that Dewey and others of the Progressive School have seriously questioned the child-centered concept because it is too individualistic. They prefer now to speak of a society-centered method.) The controversy arises partly from the confusion by Monsma of the authoritarian method and inductive logic, and the democratic method and deductive logic.

Bontekoe seems to accept these terms as synonymous and proceeds to refute the arguments of Monsma in part. I believe the views of the two men can be brought into closer harmony if the terminology is changed slightly and a few confusing ideas are cleared up.

Authoritarian vs. Democratic

Let us first look at the contrast drawn between authoritarian teaching and the democratic method. I have heard these terms contrasted in many an address at educational conferences of late and one finds these concepts contrasted constantly in philosophical and educational literature originating from Progressives in education. "Authoritarian" is identified with arbitrary command and regimentation. Dewey regards all philosophies of a non-

naturalistic or of a non-pragmatic-instrumentalistic nature authoritarian because they find their ultimate frame of reference beyond experience. According to Dewey both the democratic philosophy of education and democratic methodology originate in and are confined to experience. One simply cannot separate Dewey's democratic methodology from his democratic philosophy. They are of one pattern. Education, so he says, is the "continuous reconstruction of experience." To try to inculcate truths or principles which are extra-experiential is authoritarian and, hence, undemocratic, arbitrary, regimentation, according to our Progressives.

In a Christian philosophy of life these concepts are not mutually contradictory and exclusive. A God-centered and God-directed life does not make man an automaton or a blind imitator. Quite on the contrary, a Christian voluntarily chooses such a life and accepts understandingly the norms or standards of the kingdom of God as we have them in God's special revelation, the Bible. Living by faith is not living by blind necessity or by regimentation. In the learning process the child acquires in part by precept, in part by imitation, in part by participation, and in part by spontaneous and directed self-expression the understanding of these norms for thinking and living. Good teachers have never confined their instruction to precept alone, but have generally combined these methods. To be democratic in teaching simply means to give the pupils a chance to learn understandingly. A blind *memoriter* process of learning of precept upon precept is authoritarian in a sense of regimentation and blind imitation. The democratic process is not free from authority of the kind that appeals to basic loyalties and norms. Not even Dewey escapes an absolute when he makes the scientific method the clearing house for all controversial issues. His appeal is to a methodology upon which he built a philosophy of education which he calls democratic.

In short, it is a mistake to contrast authoritarian method and democratic method. In schools as well as in homes of a democratic society, children must be taught by precept in part, though not entirely so. A good Christian home and a Christian education seek meaningful interpretation of the precepts for Christian living so that youth may act intelligently, understandingly. Christian education finds its precepts in the Bible as the eternal and living Word of God. Bagley and the other present-day essentialists find precept in the cumulative culture of the human race. President Hutchins, Mortimer Adler, and the other modern scholastics find precept in the great philosophical classics of history. Dewey appeals to the scientific method as the basic guide for individual and group discipline. It is the glorious function of Christian education to bring youth voluntarily and intelligently, understandingly in submission to the authority, the precept of the will of God. To live by faith is to live not in blind submission, but to permit faith to open for us the great

vistas of eternal truth, the truth of the kingdom of God. As a result the world of culture and vocation, of art, philosophy and science require a higher meaning and an eternal perspective.

The Logical and Psychological in Learning

Rather than speak of the authoritarian as deductive and the democratic as inductive (for all learning is both deductive and inductive), it is more correct to make the distinction of logical and psychological in our methodology. A body of information relating to a given field of study, such as philosophy, sociology, economics, government, etc., is organized in logical form by experts in these fields. Each of these sciences constitutes a logically organized body of learning acquired both deductively and inductively. Pedagogically they are often referred to as disciplines, meaning that each categorizes and moulds our thinking according to certain idealogical patterns. In elementary education systematized bodies of subject matter are generally classified as tool subjects and content subjects. To the former belong reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic. History, geography, elementary science, hygiene, etc., belong to the latter.

Pedagogically the issue is raised whether the basic knowledges and skills shall be taught in their finished, pre-arranged logical form, or whether they shall be learned psychologically through concrete, first-hand experience. The former, logical teaching and learning, constitutes a short-cut for mastery, but lacks the challenge of meaningful relationship to the immediate present. The latter provides the motivation of the immediate need, but entails much valuable time in trial and error (mostly error unless the teacher is alert to every opportunity for constructive guidance).

Without entering into the advantages and disadvantages of each of these techniques, it seems obvious that the exclusive use of one or the other is a pedagogical error. We know from the science of child psychology that all learning commences psychologically or in concrete experience and not in abstraction. The concept of space is acquired by reaching for objects beyond the infant's reach. After some trial and error, the child begins to move his body in direction of the object before reaching for it. However, in reaching for forbidden objects the infant meets with the precept of the parent either negatively in "don't touch" or positively by substitution "you may have this." The precept of logic and abstraction soon enters the child's experience together with the psychological, growing from spontaneous response. An intelligent parent employs both techniques in a well-balanced and meaningful way, not arbitrarily, to help the child develop intelligent and constructive control of himself in his environment.

In Christian education we accept the Biblical mandate to "bring up a child in the way he should go." The direction which we are obligated to give

to the child's thinking and living is pointed toward God and the service of God. God's special revelation in Scripture and His general revelation in our natural and cultural environment constitute the means at our disposal. This orientation of the educative process as being God-centered and God-directed is the heart of Christian educational philosophy.

Criteria for Good Teaching

In the learning process, however, we are to take into consideration not merely the goal, the content, and the tools available. The nature of the child is likewise an important criterion. We accept the biblical view of human nature that man is born and conceived in sin. But this doctrine has frequently in traditional schools been appealed to as a basis for cruel discipline and arbitrary control, for the rank-est kind of authoritarianism. We owe much to the Dewey philosophy in the way of educational reform. Chief among his contributions is the humanizing of classroom and pupil control. Of course, the love for the child as a child is not original with Dewey. Jesus also pointed to a meritorious quality of child life when He said that unless we become like little children we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. In order to know how to teach, we much understand how children learn. That is Pestalozzi's great message to teachers of all time.

In all good teaching, then, and this should be especially true in Christian education, methodology is determined by the goal we seek, the content and tools at our disposal, and the nature of the child. From these three criteria we can conclude that the mastery of a prescribed body of learnings is essential, not only to catch up with the progress of the race, as H. C. Morrison puts it, but for Christian education, to learn the will of God in the life of the individual. The individual must be disciplined by the truths of Scripture, the truths of our cumulative culture, and the facts of our natural environment. This is done chiefly by the logical organization of this body of knowledge. However, the child's understanding of these truths, their meaningful interpretation for life is not merely a matter of application, but of progressive discovery through challenging activity. So the classroom becomes a place of mastery of fundamentals of human living, sometimes arrived at psychologically through inquiry and first-hand experience, at other times acquired through intelligent interpretation of pre-organized data.

School and Society

A few words about this vital issue.

In society, including the home, most learning is informal and proceeds according to occasion. The school, however, is a formal institution where the primary responsibility is the transmission of our human culture to the coming generation. The learning process is too complex to leave it to incidental and informal practices outside of the school. This

does not mean, however, that the school is to occupy an ivory tower in separation from society. The school is the agency of the home and of society as a whole to perform a duty definitely assigned to it. The Christian school is an agency of the Christian home to induct the youth into a Christian life of thinking and doing.

The Teacher

In the school the teacher occupies a major position of responsibility. He represents the family and society as a whole and is held responsible by these institutions to instruct, guide, and creatively inspire youth to the best endeavor in their personal development. The curriculum, and also the so-called extra-curricular activities, constitute important media for this development. In the Christian school, the Christian teacher has the added responsibility of interpreting all school activities as media in and through which the youth learns to dedicate himself to God, his Maker and His Redeemer. The interpretative function of the teacher must be emphasized as well as the instructional and guiding function. The teacher of the Christian religion interprets the Word of God, not to, but with his pupils, instructs them in the fundamental truths of that religion, and guides them in making that Word effective in thinking and doing. These three functions overlap and they are complementary.

Summary

I may have added further confusion to the issue of democratic methodology. I have tried to make clear that a Christian philosophy of education requires a methodology which recognizes the necessity of a pre-arranged, well-organized curriculum. This logically organized body of knowledge should be approached psychologically in terms of the child's needs and capacities at various levels of learning. But this orienting process must not continue beyond the stage of economy in learning. Children may play store to motivate the learning of the fundamental processes in arithmetic, but to master all the combinations by playing store is both tedious and wasteful of the child's time and energy. The psychological approach constitutes a spring-board for the necessary drills that must follow to assure mastery. This principle applies in various ways to all learning situations. Effective learning is inductive-deductive, psychological-logical, and if one desires to use the terminology, authoritarian-democratic.

The present issue consists of 32 instead of 24 pages. It is an enlarged number in view of the combination of two summer issues into one. This is the June-July issue appearing about the last week of June. The next issue will be for the months of August and September and will also be eight pages larger than usual. It is scheduled to appear about the third week of August. Apart from these two combinations during the summer season, THE CALVIN FORUM will continue to appear every month as heretofore.

Economic Organization in War and Peace

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THE organization which makes possible the amazing production of goods and services and the unexampled distribution in wages and income today has of course been occasioned by the war. To continue this production and to carry it to the still higher peaks necessary to win this war requires procedures old and new which men will have to accept and use unselfishly if they are to succeed. Among the economic procedures which we must now accept and use wisely are rationing, price ceilings, taxation and borrowing. Whether these are to continue after the war will depend upon the kind of order men succeed in creating out of the chaos of war.

Rationing and Price Ceilings

Rationing has been made familiar to us in the restrictions on the sale of automobiles, tires, sugar, and gasoline. It is necessary, all fairminded men will agree, if our armed forces are to get what they need to carry on the war. It is necessary also to assure fairer distribution of goods among civilians than would otherwise be the case. In time of war duties not otherwise recognized are imposed upon men; they should, therefore, receive all that they need to carry out what they are compelled to do. To permit those who happen to be financially able to buy first, and to buy up goods, so that essential goods become unavailable to or too expensive for those who need them is obviously unjust. If this war continues rationing may have to be extended to a large number of goods.

In addition to rationing the prices of goods must be controlled when there is such an unusual demand for goods as there is in time of war. Even under rationing prices may have to be fixed by decree. But in the case of almost all goods and services, which threaten to become more scarce as the crisis becomes more severe, prices tend to rise more and more rapidly as uncertainty concerning the future increases. The setting of definite limits to such price increases backed by real authority prevents forward buying and enables those who need the goods, but whose incomes are low, to buy them as well as others whose purchasing power is higher. Establishing price ceilings is one of the necessary methods of preventing inflation during a period such as the one in which we are living.

Blanket Price Ceilings and Black Markets

The government has placed a blanket ceiling over the prices of a large number of goods, the highest price for which they may be sold being the March price. The prices are not "frozen" for they may fall below the ceiling price. By determining the ceiling price for all these goods as of a certain date (or at the same time) the government undoubtedly acted more fairly in the case of the prices of some products than of others, perhaps unfairly in the case of some. Some writers have, therefore, urged that the government substitute individual ceilings for the blanket ceiling. Although this might conceivably be fairer in the long run, the determination of a ceiling for each commodity or service after a careful study of the individual situation would be a very slow process, completed only after many rises had taken place, and perhaps too late to be effective. Adjustments under the blanket ceiling arrangements should be few and far between if the very principle and purpose of this kind of control is not to be defeated. For the same reason all prices which are likely to rise and bring on the spiral of inflation should be covered by the ceiling. Since the prices of some goods and services are costs in the production of others such prices must most certainly be included. The prices of labor and of agricultural goods, for example, should in all fairness be limited also. There are real difficulties here, however. The low wages still paid to some workers in March should in all fairness be raised, but the government should act just as boldly with reference to wages and agricultural goods as it has in the case of prices already covered.

The settling of ceilings for prices undoubtedly causes serious hardships to business men, hardships which the government must try to alleviate, but the use of ceilings to prices is far better than the inflation which rising prices might bring. If all prices likely to rise are not covered costs of production will increase and industries will not be able to sell their goods at the ceiling price. Then if the government does not raise the ceiling price it will have to subsidize the industry if it believes its armed forces or the civilian population must have the goods. And such subsidies will but bring on what the price ceilings were intended to prevent, inflation.

As the result of rationing and price control "black markets" are bound to make their appearance. Such illicit selling and buying, such bootlegging is despicable, when the controls have been imposed in the interest of the common good. Sellers in such markets deserve the ignominy and the punishment that they do often receive. But it is well for the buyer, whom people suppose to be law abiding, to remember that the seller could not exist without the buyer and to acknowledge that the action of the latter is as reprehensible as that of the former. Our attempts to control prices will succeed only to the extent that individuals generally make them succeed. Rationing and price ceilings are a test not only of our democracy but also of our morality and of our religion. If we really believe what God has commanded us, to do unto others what we would have them do unto us, if we really believe what we profess, that God has placed those in authority over us in positions of authority in order that they may maintain justice, we should do all that we can to make these emergency measures of our government successful.

Higher Taxes

For many of us the present holds the spectre of taxes so high that they will cut greatly into our usual manner of living. We try to prevent the passage of these taxes through our representatives in the government, we try to avoid them in every legal manner, we try even to evade them if we think we are not likely to be caught. We are afraid of inflation, if we have any idea as to what it is, but we much prefer to have the government borrow and thus take the high road to inflation than to pay heavily by means of taxation. Now certainly our taxes should not be imposed in such a manner as to kill industry and business, or in such a manner as to cause the gross tax avoidance brought to light recently in the huge salaries and bonuses paid to employees in order to avoid taxation. But, admitting that there is danger in heavy taxation, we must nevertheless also admit that paying for the war directly by means of taxation is far wiser than encouraging inflation by means of borrowing. When millions of our young men are offering or are asked to offer their lives we should not object to paying taxes until the payment actually causes sacrifices. Opposing higher taxation because it will reduce our incomes or our profit is obviously unpatriotic and unfair to those on the firing lines, unless the taxation is unjust and robs some while permitting others to be enriched. That very heavy taxation will tend to equalize income and even wealth is only too true, but it is one of the inevitabilities of war, very certainly one of the inevitabilities of defeat.

In no western nation is taxation sufficient at present to pay the cost of war. Consequently governments must borrow from individuals, business firms and other institutions if at all possible, and from the banks if others do not lend sufficient sums of money. Our people are now buying bonds in

huge quantities but the banks are still buying the lion's share of them. This constitutes a real threat to our financial organization. If people buy bonds with their savings they buy with money already in use or in circulation. If the government borrows from the banks it exchanges government credit for bank credit. When it receives bank credit it receives the equivalent of a deposit of money. No deposit of money need actually to have been made for the government receives the right to draw checks against the banks and when doing so is using bank credit. The checks which it draws against this credit serve as money, however, and increase the total stock of money in circulation. Such an increase in money or purchasing power tends to cause an increase in prices and, if continued on a large scale, to bring on inflation. Inflation is simply a decided and rapid increase in prices, not caused by a scarcity of goods and services but by an unwarranted increase in purchasing power. If the government continues to borrow, as it is now doing, some fifty per cent of its funds from the bank's prices are bound to rise unless our ceilings are really ceilings. Whether they can be such with continued borrowing from the banks or the Federal Reserve banks is a serious question.

What is at Stake?

As a matter of fact we are not accepting taxation as we should nor are we buying bonds in the quantities we should. We are loathe to part with what we think we need. True, we have all made commitments which we can only with great difficulty decrease suddenly in time of war. But total war will of necessity strip us of many things we now think we need. In war the tinsel and the frills go. The coming of the conflict to the East Indies, to Singapore, and to Hongkong stripped individuals of much that they had considered indispensable. Privileges held for years were lost over night. Shorn of their erstwhile masks and trappings the real men and women were revealed. In war much of the riches of our culture may be destroyed, indeed the culture we have within us may be all that we may be able to save.

In order to perpetuate our culture we are carrying on war against National Socialism in its various forms. But to wage this war successfully we are compelled to use many of the procedures introduced by those whom we are fighting. Indeed all ends, except the worship and service of God, are now subordinate to the war effort. Regimenting, leveling, breaking down of privileges are the order of the day. Must this continue after the war is over? What will be the shape of things to come?

In spite of all its weaknesses, its inefficiency, its graft, its tendencies toward superficiality and mediocrity we are fighting for the democratic way of life. We believe democracy gives greater recognition to individual dignity than does any other form of government, and we believe it offers greater guarantees of justice than do others. Because it did not suffi-

ciently recognize human dignity nor guarantee justice to all, democracy was itself largely to blame for the reaction. But stern and selfish dictatorship cannot last any more than can a shallow, selfish democracy. In spite of our selfishness, national or individual, there will be a day of reckoning. Just as the laws of nature cannot be denied so God's laws for human conduct cannot be broken long with impunity. Though all our sins are not rebuked at once the waves of our little days, or of dictators' days, are but ripples on the ground swell of God's eternal will and His holy wrath. Our organization in the days after the war, democratic as we desire to make it, will have to conform more truly to the pattern suggested by the word of God. There must be real recognition of duties and the privileges which acceptance of such duties brings. There must be real freedom, economic, political, and religious, not only for individuals but also for nations, in order that all may do what they can best do without unjust interference by others.

What of the Future?

What the future will be no man can say. It would seem, however, that when the war ends peace should be made quickly and the economic organization, now devoted so amazingly to the prosecution of war, turned immediately to the satisfying of peace time needs. The settling of political issues, the determination of the ultimate terms of a treaty should not delay economic reconstruction. The organization necessary to carry on industry and trade within and between nations should be continued, and even broadened where necessary to help impoverished peoples. There may seem to be a threat in this to economic freedom of individuals and states but by this time we must have learned that it would be better to continue some kind of centralized control for a time than to have the world turned upside down by a too sudden return to the pre-war way of living.

The way things are shaping now is causing great concern over the future. Some are certain that the end of the war will find capital once more in the saddle, unemployment and the destruction of labor's recently won rights once more the order of the day. Others are just as certain that the war is one phase of a great revolution which will completely dethrone the old ruling classes and leave the balance of power in the hands of labor. Thus men fear one dictatorship or another after the war. Many insist that the measure of dictatorship which we now have in this country will but be made complete and that state socialism will replace private capital. Some believe that all dictatorships will go and that individual freedom will be restored. Most of our fears or our expectations are, however, but the expression of our desires to have our own way again once this war madness is over.

Restoration of Freedom

After the war it is possible, and we hope altogether probable, that real economic freedom for individuals and for small business institutions will, as Thurman Arnold predicts in the *Saturday Evening Post*, be restored. The monopolistic power of large scale business or of large combinations should be broken unless the monopoly is one that cannot be avoided and is permitted and regulated in the interest of the common good. Freedom of exchange between individuals and also between nations should be restored. Each individual is created, we believe, with his own God given, unique, characteristics and with his own unique function in life. These characteristics cannot be brought out nor this function fulfilled unless the individual can live in free and full coöperation with his fellows. The same thing is true of groups and of nations. They have their own God given nature and purposes, and they can realize themselves and meet their obligations only to the extent that they can contribute to others and have others contribute to them. Nations occupying their own distinctive geographic areas must have an opportunity to develop their own culture. Such opportunity becomes real through contribution and through exchange of goods and ideas. If this is to be true unearned privileges, rights not based on function or on the recognition of duties to be performed, must go. Entrenched positions, wealth and territory held only as the result of capture, robbery or treachery must also go. This will mean full and free participation of every kind in the restoration that must follow the war. And just as it means free coöperation within and between nations it will mean a measure of regulation. The perversity of human nature has always and will in the future require policing within a nation. Similarly the perversity of individuals acting in groups or nations will require policing. We shall have to continue strong organization within nations and develop strong organizations of nations.

Our World Responsibility

We did not think we could be a party to the world war. But we contributed greatly to its economic causes and we could not escape its economic effects. After this war we may not pull out as England and the United States pulled out after World War I. We are the most privileged nation in all the world; our obligations are proportionate to our opportunities. We may not ignore them now. Nor can we, without in the long run paying the price. If an individual isolates himself from others he imprisons, he kills himself; if a nation attempts the same thing it invites the same end. Worse still, if we have duties to perform for others and refuse to meet them we injure others as well as ourselves. We should look for and help establish international banking unions, monetary unions, tariff unions, investment unions and such other international organizations as may seem wise and just. This is nothing but perfection-

ism, some critic may object. If so let him remember that this is written in the full consciousness of the shortcomings of perverted human nature and of the limitations to human achievement. But it is also written in the light or, rather, in the shadow of recent world history. Let hard headed recognition of what shortsightedness and selfishness has done in the last few years, as well as recognition of what our Christian duty is, determine what our course must be.

Men of all shades of convictions are insisting today that such a program as that suggested above cannot be introduced and carried out without a return to fundamental values. And men, who give no precise indication as to what they mean by the term, are insisting that to implement the desirable course of action we must have a return to religion. But what will the reliance upon religion mean if it is but another way of relying upon ourselves, or as some would put it, upon our better selves? Our trouble has ever been just this that we recognized no authority higher than our own, no values greater than those we created for ourselves. If we need religion today to support and buttress our individual and our common efforts it must be a reliance upon an Almighty and a just God, a desire to know and to do His will and to do it in our service of others as well as of ourselves. And only God can give us such religion.

Little Man . . . What Now?

THE Sportpalast was packed with serried ranks of the Faithful. The walls were alive with banners and their overlapping Swastikas seemed to squirm like living serpents.

A Voice was speaking. In bursting staccato sentences it was speaking. The Voice barked like cannon-fire as it said: "We must have a strong Germany. We must be willing to make any sacrifice to make the Fatherland strong."

Again, the Voice rang like a bell when it cried: "With a strong Germany we will bring about a United Europe."

Then the Voice softened to the wheedling familiarity of pleading friendliness: "Why should anyone hold silly scruples about freedom when one little sacrifice will make a United Europe in which all can be really free?"

The little mustache disappeared. Through the rushing cataract of applause sounded music and down the middle aisle came children marching in "goose-step," who shouted a song, "Today we rule Germany, tomorrow the whole world."

A little man, wedged between a storm-trooper and a gigantic *Hausfrau*, began to ask himself questions:

A strong united Europe against a united Pan-America, I could see some logic in that. But a united world? United against what? The Martians? The Moon-Maiden? Or is unity another mask for an aim to destroy all freedom?

The Auditorium was packed with row on row of delegates, each wearing the badge of the World Conference of religions. The walls were bedecked with banners bearing crosses and open Bibles, squirming uncomfortably in that uncongenial atmosphere.

From the Speakers' Platform the Voice of the New Liberalism was speaking. It was the keynote address of the Conference. The Voice pleaded for a strong conference, so that the strong conference might move toward a united world church.

"Why should anyone insist on his scruples about certain outworn dogmas when a little sacrifice all along the line would mean a great united church, throwing its vast resources into each great united enterprise?"

The Keynoter disappeared among the speakers' chairs and the crackling bonfire of applause was broken by a procession representing the Missions Branch bearing a fluttering banner upon which a Hindu, a Mohammedan, an American Indian, an Eskimo, a Chinaman and an Occidental stood arm-in-arm.

Then followed another parade representing the New Deal of Domestic Missions. In each row marched a Theosophist, a Bahaist, a Christian Scientist, a Spiritualist, a Mormon, a Congregationalist, a Methodist, a Jew, and a Catholic.

A little man, gasping between an Episcopal Vicar and a suffocatingly ample church secretary, asked himself some questions:

A willing sacrifice of unessential dogmatic disagreements in order to present a really united front against paganism and atheism, I can see that. But a World Religion? United and strong? against what? Against paganism when the World Church itself is pagan? Against Atheism when the World Church itself has no God?

Or is Church Union a mask to disguise another aim, to destroy Truth itself? ALA BANDON.

To The Flag

My country's flag, I pledge to thee
Unswerving truth and loyalty.
May no dishonor blot your hue—
Tho blood must flow and loved ones go
To keep our heritage unstained,
Still shall the despicable foe
See that our values are retained
That to our principles we're true.
O precious flag of dear design
I thrill to call this emblem mine;
Profoundly stirred I vow anew
Devotion to the red—white—blue.
Long may you wave in honor bright
No tyrant ever bring you blight;
Our fathers' God of yesterday
Keep and protect you still today.
My country's Flag, I pledge to thee
Unswerving truth and loyalty.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

News and Correspondence

The Second American Calvinistic Conference

THE Second American Calvinistic Conference, held at Calvin Seminary and Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 3 to 5, is history. A few have said this conference was epochal. Whether it was epochal or merely a ripple in the onward rushing of the stream of Church History depends upon the good pleasure of our God from a divine point of view, and upon our own realization of human responsibility from a human point of view. We must carry our dreams and ideals into the future.

First and Second American Calvinistic Conferences

In glancing over the attendance one could notice a rather goodly number of members who took part in both conferences. This is encouraging. The Eastern Ministers' Association, sponsoring the first Conference, had for its spokesman the Rev. L. Borst, of Passaic, New Jersey. In passing, the Rev. Mr. Borst was a committee member of the First Conference. Those who attended both did not get together to make an official comparison. We take the liberty to do so as a private judgment.

Both conferences had striking agreements. Both succeeded beyond expectations. The same enthusiasm characterized them. Both, although American, were supernational. Holland and Scotland were represented at the first conference. Holland was again represented by our American Dr. J. Van Lonkhuyzen. Hungary was represented at this second conference in no less an amiable person than Dr. Stephen Szabo, plenipotentiary of the Hungarian Reformed Church to the Hungarian Churches in America. There was a dramatic moment when Dr. C. Bouma, president of the second conference, introduced Dr. Szabo to the conference to the effect that although on the verge of war with Hungary we can meet as one in the Lord. The usual stately applause changed into a sustained welcome to our visitor of Budapest. We all felt what a privilege it was as a nation to have the liberty to do these things. And may God help us to keep America truly American!

There are also differences to be noted between the first and second conferences. The outbreak of war has aroused us from our sleep. We felt more than we did in 1939 the need of a Calvinism on the offensive. True, this is only a difference of degree, for the first conference had resolved to do great things by God's help. There is evidently a gain in momentum. People did not dream that such conferences were possible. Finally, although the east very graciously opened its doors to the first conference, Calvin College and Calvin Seminary seemed a more ideal place to hold the second. These institutions did not sponsor this conference, as some seemed to think. The Mid-Western Ministers' Conference must receive the credit for that. Calvin College and Calvin Seminary were the host. How appropriate! Is it not, according to President H. Schultze, Calvin College's ideal to be the intellectual center of Calvinism in America?

Speakers and Speeches

Resumés of speeches are dangerous. Besides, in this instance, superfluous. The committee purposes to publish the addresses and the proceedings before the flame of enthusiasm dies out. If plans materialize it is possible that also a resumé of the discussions which followed the reading of the papers may be offered. The ideal of the committee is not only to record something of historical value, but to bring the conference right in your very home. Perhaps these papers may constitute a wonderful basis for group discussion. We are positive that both

the departments of art and literature as well as Calvinism in Calvin will use this book as required reading.

The following is merely a personal reaction. Dr. Ockenga gave us an inspiring address that was learned. Dr. Allis gave us a learned address that because of its very erudition was inspiring. The first said the Bible is the Word of God. The second said, the Bible has its own requirements of interpretations, and the Westminster Confession has caught this truth. He called it the "harmonistic" approach. By that he meant that the Bible is consistent with itself in all its parts, in all its doctrines. If the Bible is its own best interpreter, the new in the light of the old, or the text in the light of the message of a book, then the harmonistic approach forbids us to accept both Higher Criticism and Dispensationalism. Dr. Crowe, a singularly gifted banquet speaker, gave us to understand that any one who has caught the system of John Calvin founded upon this Bible must do something with it. He put the challenge to us. The symmetry is evident: We have something; we know something; and, therefore, we must do something.

This same plan and attitude characterized the supposedly more learned addresses of the day. We doubt whether we can call them more scientific. A word spoken in simplicity to meet the approach of the one unschooled in the language of the masters may be as scientific as the more academic presentation of human thought. The day lecturers took greater liberty to use the terms of the schools. They did more interrelating and plunged into greater details and depths. President Berkhof of Calvin Seminary gave us an historical explication of the question: What is the Word of God? Through the eyes of yesterday we saw today with its *dramatis personae* as Barth and Brunner. Dr. Stob in his pithy way related this Word of God to philosophy. With his contagiously staccato replies he brought out as a by-product to his paper the relation of philosophy to theology seen through the eyes of a theologically trained philosopher. Dr. De Vries took us from the Bible to test tubes and atoms. This lecture, too, has not been spoken for the last time. Our winsome Dr. Wencelius, now wounded for the plight of contemporary France, gave us a most unusual paper on The Word of God and Culture. This brought with it a very interesting discussion. Many of the school teachers heard it. As such they heard a master teaching us how to plow fallow ground. Prof. Welmers related the Word of God to Christian Education stressing the necessity of knowing the Bible, the child, of loving the child, and praying for the child. We sincerely hope that this resumé may whet our appetite for the coming book instead of being the blow that felled the splendid work of every speaker.

Conference Set-up

Dr. Clarence Bouma of Calvin Seminary was nominated by the committee to act as president. Others of the committee served as chairmen.

There were representatives, if our memory does not deceive us, of at least seven denominations. Geographically we were represented from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the south to the north. Through the misfortunes of war we had the privilege to have one from even as far east as Budapest, Hungary.

The banquet was a stately occasion. Dr. Crowe, however, had the unusual ability to keep this banquet stately, and through God-given talent of humor to make us relax. After the story was told, after the laughter died down, the truth the speaker wished to convey had lodged itself in our soul as a bullet shot in a tree. Pathos wove itself into stateliness. We could not help but think of our Dutch brethren as Dr. Van Lonkhuyzen spoke. We knew France was bleeding but praying for a new

day when Dr. Wencelius showed us the shattered home of John Calvin. We felt the pain of the gash between century friends, Hungary and Holland, at this time because of the tyrant's heel. Still, faith forbids us to despair, for how appropriate was the closing number suggested by our music director, Prof. Swets,

"Thus may we abide in union
With each other and the Lord,
And possess in sweet communion,
Joys which earth cannot afford".

Ecumenical Value

We would like to jot down a few things about ecumenicity because we believe this is inside information that must give us a vision. Naturally, a conference as conference advances the cause of a true Calvinistic ecumenicity. This is self-evident. Still there are other aspects usually not appreciated. Dr. Bouma had a chat with all the speakers at his home. Dr. Meeter made hay while the sun was shining for he has great plans in his soul. He talked with Hungarians and others. These may be like the cosmos seed that is as fine as dust but produces a plant more pretentious than a marigold or a four o'clock. THE CALVIN FORUM will benefit by this, our department of Calvinism will, and so will Calvinism itself.

Our "good ole dorm" played a conspicuous rôle. The resolutions below will tell us more about that. But sit with a few in the lobby or in a room with a friend. One, Dr. L. Wencelius, says we must be as generals planning the offensive. (Dr. Wencelius is also an officer in the French Army.) Take the lobby. All the speakers and also Dr. S. Szabo, were there. Each one talked about this phase: How can we unite our common strength? The conversations included these thoughts: The two great requirements of a Calvinistic university are a good faculty and money. In the absence of a university in America, could we not get the scholars to work together in such a way that we can publish an International Calvinistic Journal. The scholars the world over would give their contributions. We must remain idealistic but we must approach our task realistically. Then Calvinism would be a world wide power sweeping over national barriers. Also, how can we make the Reformed churches conscious of their obligations to their spiritual brethren now torn asunder by war? How ready will our churches be to meet the need of rebuilding the churches and the christian schools of our brethren? This group also agreed that the most contagious way of inspiring anyone is to be on the offensive.

No doubt more conversations of like nature took place. We record these little details to show the possibilities of a conference. The German has this pet phrase, "according to plan". We acknowledge God alone may say that. Still, we feel the need of charting turbulent seas.

And May This Spirit Never Die

One of the contributors to that mystic element called "inspiring", Prof. H. Van Andel, sat at the console. His fingers touched a forgotten chord, but not lost. The audience arose. What had happened? One said: "Is this the College Song?" No, it was the Dutch National Anthem. But, was this not an American Calvinistic Conference? No, the organist was not interested in the first stanza. What rolled through his soul and what he conveyed to the audience was this message:

"My Shield and my salvation
Art Thou, O Lord, my God,
I'll build on this foundation,
Be Thou my staff and rod.
That faithful both and willing,
Thy servant I may be,
All tyranny expelling
That sorely woundeth me.

Farewell, my flock, remember
Though now in bitter need,
Your Shepherd will not slumber
However you may bleed.
His healing word, revere it,
To Him for refuge flee,
Keep a true Christian spirit,
For soon the end will be."

And May This Spirit Never Die!

Conference Resolutions

In addition to the usual motions of appreciation, the Conference at its closing banquet meeting passed the following resolutions which are of more than passing significance and value.

Resolved, That the members of the Second American Calvinistic Conference, being aware of the disturbances and afflictions which are disrupting the life of the greater part of the world, express heartfelt gratitude to Almighty God for His great kindness in granting us the measure of freedom and peace necessary to our meeting in uninterrupted days of spiritual fellowship and joyful assembly.

Resolved, That we thank God for the opportunity to testify to our biblical, creedal, historic Calvinism. With such blessing received, we acknowledge as our common duty and privilege, the propagation of our Calvinistic convictions. We also confess this day the truly international fellowship of the saints which exists between all Calvinists. We wish hereby to assure our brethren the world over of our sincere prayer for a greater blessing and a deeper sense of spiritual solidarity.

Resolved, That information about the present Conference be as widely publicized as possible to keep alive in the public mind the idea of Calvinism.

Be it further Resolved, That the Conference go on record as favoring continued work toward the ideal of a Calvinistic University.

Resolved, That it is the desire of this Conference to work toward the holding of a Third American Calvinistic Conference. At the pleasure of this Conference the present committee will be happy to carry the plans forward, with the understanding that such change in its membership may be made as it shall deem necessary to the advancement of the cause.

JACOB T. HOOGSTRA.

Holland, Mich.

Michigan Calvinistic Philosophy Club

IT IS about time that this recent Calvinistic Philosophy Club be introduced to our public.

The club was started by the Michigan members of the (Dutch) Society for Calvinistic Philosophy, but made it its policy from the very beginning not to be exclusive and to invite friends to attend its meetings.

The first meeting was held in Holland, Mich., in the church of which the Rev. Hoogstra is pastor in the summer of 1940. At this meeting Prof. C. Van Til of Philadelphia gave us a paper to introduce us to the philosophy of the *Law Idea*. A dozen men were present and the need was felt to meet at least once a year.

The second meeting was held at the same place in the summer of 1941. At this meeting the Rev. L. Oostendorp of Battle Creek read a paper on Reformed Epistemology, tracing the thought down from Calvin to the present day.

From the minutes of this meeting written by the Rev. J. F. Schuurmann I may quote the following:

The speaker had asked the question: "What is really the basis of the antithesis?" In elucidating the question he asked four other questions, namely, 1. Is it that the Bible adds to the facts? or, 2. Has the one a regenerated consciousness, and not the other? or, 3. Is there a difference of interpretation? or, 4. Is there a combination of all three in naïve thought?

Here are a few gleanings from the discussion: The antithesis (in philosophy) is not quantitative, but qualitative. The non-Christian scientist, although in error, may give us valuable truth. Even the devil has given us much truth.—There is no pure description. It is always interpretative.—The theistic proofs for the existence of God cannot be true because they presuppose an independent world and an autonomous mind. We

get no more than a finite God, because we start with a finite fact and a finite human being. This brings us to a vague general Theism.—A true philosophy requires a simple acceptance *in toto* of the Word of God.—

At this meeting the Rev. J. T. Hoogstra was elected president, and the undersigned secretary. It was also decided to hold more frequent meetings if possible.

The third meeting was held at the Calvin Seminary on Jan. 30, 1942. At this meeting were present six regular members and about a dozen guests.

The Rev. Oostendorp again gave us a paper, this time on the Epistemology of Augustine.

The speaker discussed the importance of Augustine as the first philosopher to stand between Greek philosophy and Christian theology.

He then developed the following five points:

1. The quest for certainty based on Augustine's *cogito ergo sum*.
2. His conception of knowledge as ideas, or forms, and the sensuous and direct routes thereto.
3. His theistic basis of certainty.
4. His description of the noëtic effects of sin, viz., the antithesis between believers and unbelievers, and the confusion in the mind of the latter.
5. His conception of the relation of faith, reason, and Scripture.

The speaker then valued the contributions of Augustine:

1. He formulated the problems of philosophy.
2. He kept a way open for theology.
3. He made the theistic argument for certainty basic to Christian epistemology.

The speaker finally enumerated the difficulties to which Augustine's philosophy leads. In general Augustine's idea is an idealistic regression into abstraction. He makes reason alone real. This reduces God to external truth, man to mind, and life to contemplation. Augustine neglects immediate experience which is more basic than abstraction. As Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd put it: Systatic precedes synthetic knowledge. Only thus can antithesis be understood.

In the discussion the problem of the relation of the truth to the Logos, to wisdom, to reason, to nature, to fact, and to the Bible was discussed.

At the next meeting, again in the Calvin Seminary, we hope, our speaker will be Prof. C. Van Til. The date will probably be July 2. Watch *The Banner* for an announcement. Friends are welcome.

H. J. VAN ANDEL, Secretary.

Calvinism Club At Calvin

THROUGHOUT the past few years the need for a Calvinism Club has been felt by the upperclassmen on the Calvin College campus. True, there was the study of Calvinism in the class room. But there was a desire for some self-expression and an informal study of these principles. Therefore a group of sixteen men students, representing the various departments in the school, met at the home of Dr. H. Meeter. Out of this meeting sprang a new campus organization—the Men's Calvinism Club.

The aim of this organization is twofold. First of all there is the desire to stimulate interest in the principles of Calvinism. Calvinism should be more than a dogmatic theological term. It should be an integral part of the students' life. How does Calvinism apply in our school life? This is one aspect of Calvinism that we have discussed. But there is also the question of practical Calvinistic practices in our life work. Thus pre-meds,

pre-dents, pre-sems, pre-law, engineering students and others preparing for other fields of work have joined our ranks. They have entered with the question, "What does and will Calvinism mean to me throughout life?" The Club hopes in a small measure to answer this question and stimulate the students' interest to further study of our ideals.

The second aim of the Club is the propagation of Calvinistic principles. We may say that already this has been realized on our campus. Proof of the fact is that in four months our ranks have grown from seventeen charter members to thirty-five at present. All classes are now represented in the Men's Calvinism Club. Next year a large task awaits us. We hope to lay plans and the ground-work for the publication of literature on Calvinism and its influence on other spheres of life. Yes, the goal is high. But the work will be enjoyable and well worth the time expended.

This has been a brief resumé of the formation and first year of the Club. Through panel discussions, open forums, and guest speakers we have gained a better understanding and greater appreciation of Calvinism. Our hopes for the future are high. If we can but imbue the members with the idea of the supremacy of God in life, our goal will have been attained. With the help of God our Calvinism Club will go forward—building better Calvinists for school and church.

BERNARD PEKELDER.

Hungarian Reformed Church Life

Dear Dr. Bouma:

I FEEL that it is time for one of my Hungarian letters. With your kind permission, here it goes.

A Welcome Visitor

During the middle of last summer a plenipotentiary of the Reformed Church in Hungary arrived in our midst in the person of the Rev. Dr. Stephen Szabo, secretary of the Foreign Board of the General Conventus, American Committee, and pastor of the ancient and large congregation at the city of Ungvar in northeastern Hungary.

He is a man just around forty. He spent four years in American seminaries, traveled far and wide in Europe, and held several lectures on Hungarian Reformed church matters especially in England and Scotland. Naturally, he speaks English well. He is a very pleasant personality, and has the outlook of the younger generation.

His voyage was quite circuitous. On account of prevailing conditions he traveled by way of the Orient, and his trip took about three months. He hoped to be back in Hungary shortly after Christmas together with his bride, the lovely daughter of our fraternal insurance and benevolent organization, the Hungarian Reformed Federation of America, whom he married in the church of his now father-in-law, the Rev. Dr. Francis Ujlaki of Toledo, Ohio, in November last year. But the spread of the war interfered with his plans and he is still in the U. S. A., residing in Toledo in absolute retirement from public life.

His mission was a purely spiritual and ecclesiastical one. He was to personify the warm interest of the original Mother Church of all Americans of Hungarian Reformed religious background. He was to convey the greetings and blessings of the one-time spiritual mother, and carry home the expressions of our appreciations and good wishes both to the church as an institution and to our kinfolks in it. Furthermore he was invested with authority to offer his good services as an intermediary between our several groups to foster a better understanding and a closer coöperation in whatever way suggested to him by our—sometimes warring—factions, without the slightest interference or meddling in our internal affairs. He also came as a representative of the Pension Board of the Reformed

Ministers in Hungary. This well-established and consolidated Board was approached innumerable times during the last two decades by such members of our clergy as wished to have the opportunity of spending their days of retirement in Hungary. But due to constitutional impediments such approaches could not be honored until recently. And now, after Dr. Szabo brought the good news that the Pension Board straightened out the difficulties, the whole idea had naturally to be shelved until after the war. This was the sum total of Dr. Szabo's now suspended mission.

Steps Toward Union and Coöperation

Our divided state in America is our constantly open wound. It pains us, it shames us, it handicaps us. It is in sharp contrast with the unity of the original stock, the Reformed Church in Hungary, which is the largest united Reformed communion on the whole continent of Europe, and, I think, even on the whole globe, with over three million souls.

Under the inward pressure of the situation a Joint Committee on Union and Coöperation was formed and it met last September in Ligonier, Pa., at the dedication festival of the new children's building of our jointly maintained orphans' home and home for the aged, The Bethlen Home, Inc.

The committee agreed on all points of coöperation and resolutely dedicated itself to exploring all the possibilities of actual organic union, and decided that it should remain *in permanentia* until the completion of its entrusted and conscientiously undertaken task. The group constituting the writer's denomination, the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America, was asked and undertook to comply with the request to submit its idea of an organic union, as soon as the articles of coöperation were released and put into effect by all factions, as it was stipulated that whatever be the outcome of the search for an organic union, brotherly coöperation must exist; strife, competition, laxity and narrow-mindedness must stop in our ranks. The sacred burden weighing heavily upon our souls, the responsibility to God and Country demands it; the task of representing Hungarian Reformed Christianity fittingly makes it obligatory on everyone with a spark of decency.

Such were the deliberations and resolutions of the Joint Committee on Union and Coöperation. These deliberations and resolutions were received with joy and high hopes by the rank and file of our respective constituencies. It is part of the truth to say, though, that also some old-type delaying tactics became apparent soon to quench the high hopes of those who expected a speedy and easy solution of this old and complex problem. Nevertheless, the inward pressure of the situation and the outward pressure of public opinion released the dams of detention and the propositions of the Committee gained a free flow through all the constituted ecclesiastical forums thus far, and real deliberations and negotiations cannot be far away. The barriers seem to be formidable. The friends of the union have but one thing to rely upon, the Word of God, "All things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23).

Our Churches and the War

The war effort of the country finds us naturally lined up in unquestioning loyalty and readiness to serve. There is not one local church or minister who is not helping in one way or another. Our resources and building facilities are placed at the disposal of the nation, and our young people are flocking to the colors by the score. Choirs, young people's organizations are depleted. Shift work makes the holding of meetings always problematical. But there is not an audible word of complaint anywhere.

One of the most beautiful things this crisis brought out is that our boys opened their hearts and minds about their churches. While they were at home, they hardly ever gave us a glimpse into the innermost recesses of their souls. They came to church and they presented themselves at the Lord's table, in many cases even more regularly than their elders, but they hardly ever spoke. And to conscientious ministers,

always in the habit of searching their own souls, it presented a pretty painful problem how to judge this inarticulate element in the church.

But now our boys speak. Our ministers keep in touch with them, the churches show in various ways that they are kept in mind, and the boys respond and write wonderful letters of testimony. These letters are brought to the attention of the congregations in one way or another, and they certainly help in combatting lethargy on the home front. The writer feels tempted to quote two of the many letters he received from boys in distant camps. But before doing so, I must mention that it is not letter writing alone through which the soul of our boys in uniform speak to us. Many of them sent donations to the "glory of God" from their first military payments, and one from Greenland sent money to buy the elements for one of monthly celebrations of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and when they happen to get a furlough, no matter how short, they manage to come to church or at least to call on their pastors. On the basis of these testimonies we hope that the Lord will spare their souls all through the ravages of war and bring them back to our churches as He brought back Onesimus to Philemon, profitable in body and soul. We just pray that they be spared from the fate of many of those who participated in the last war, who brought back their bodies but left the best part of their souls on the battlefields. So far the indications are definitely otherwise.

And now allow me to quote the two letters referred to before.

A former choir member writes from the Pacific coast:

"*Reverend*: It sure would be nice to be back home and in the church again. I sure miss the quietness and peacefulness of the church on Sunday mornings, also the prayers and singing of those beautiful hymns. I love to sing and miss the choir very much. I never realized a person could miss the beautiful things about the church and services, things that looked so ordinary then, but look so beautiful now that I am far away from home."

And a member of the board of deacons writes from a camp in Louisiana:

"*Dear Reverend*: I want to thank all those who had part in sending me the Bible. It's one book that I am not without at any time. I have received a small one of the New Testament from our Chaplain down in Camp Wheeler. I will cherish the one I received from my church and protect it at all times. I think every soldier should own one and read it. . . . I am in a new outfit now, which is the mechanized cavalry. . . . It's all new work for all of us and takes most of our time up. . . . There are a few boys here in camp that belong to our church. I see them every once in a while. It makes me feel good that I am not alone from home whenever I meet them. Please forward my regards to the rest of the Brother Deacons. Wishing to all the best of health and happiness."

And a third boy touches upon the wisdom of introducing services in the English language a few years back prior to the outbreak of the war. Before such services were held, our boys never knew any hymns in any other language but the Hungarian; services in any other language were strange and totally unfamiliar to them. Had they been let into the armed forces without some familiarity with services held in the English language, they would have been shy to attend such services there, too, and this would have left them without any services at all. That would have been simply tragic in its later effects. But now they all attend services, and tell about their joy whenever they hit a familiar hymn. This phase of their religious situation is especially gratifying to your correspondent who was one of the first to champion English services in our churches, and actually the first one to introduce them in his own denomination. It pays to keep our ears close to the needs of our congregations and to the trend of the times. When we undertake something at a clear intimation of Heaven, we come to rejoice about it no matter what the price may be at the time. I remember our good friend, Dr. Hoogstra, who helped me in my travails when about to introduce our English services on a more regular and extended basis. He wrote me at that time: "If you feel the need for it, go ahead with it, Charles; future gener-

ations will bless you for it. We had that experience in our churches." His words were prophetic.

The Calvinistic Conference

I personally am preparing for it. How I am going to get there, just now I do not know. But if the Lord leaves any possibility at all, I want to use it to advantage. I did my best to boost the Conference in Hungarian Reformed circles. I sent out the pamphlets, wrote two articles in our monthly about the conference, made some personal persuasions, and called the Committee's attention to Dr. Szabo, the representative of the Reformed Church in Hungary. I think, contact was made with him, and through him our brethren over on the continent will be represented too. All in all, I wish and hope that the Conference will be a success, and I most assuredly hope to meet my friends there, including yourself, Dr. Bouma.

DR. CHARLES VINCZE.

Perth Amboy, N. J., May, 1942.

Inter-Varsity Fellowship Conference, Trinity College, Cambridge, England

WE have just concluded what has proved to be one of the most inspiring and valuable in the long list of Conferences since 1919. There were nearly 250 present and of these the majority were young Christians. (N.B. There are fewer senior people left in the Universities except for those in the Medical and Theological Faculties, and the members of the Unions are mostly of 16, 17, and 18 years, i. e., they are early arrivals from schools, trying to get in a year or two years at the University before being called up).

At the outset, it was thought that the Conference would have to be cancelled. The Oxford College at which it had been arranged were compelled to discontinue our booking shortly before the start of the Conference, owing to shortage of domestic staff as a result of the call-ups. But at the last moment we managed to get a food permit at Cambridge, and Trinity College showed great hospitality in receiving the Conference at short notice.

The speaking was of a very high standard indeed. No one will forget Dr. Lloyd-Jones' Presidential Address, which was attended by the Master and several 'dons'. Dr. Graham Scroggie's Bible Readings on the First Epistle of St. John were masterpieces of pure Biblical exegesis, and very apposite to the conditions. The Conference Addresses by the Rev. Alan Stibbs on "The Word of God to Rebellious Man" were equally valuable from another point of view, as also was his "Confirmatory" address, designed to help the younger Christians by suggestions on how to become established in the faith. The host—the Rev. H. Earnshaw Smith—also gave very helpful talks on the Minor Prophets, before the Conference went to prayer each morning.

Perhaps the most outstanding session occurred on Sunday morning (which happened also to be the National Day of Prayer) when the Conference members, reinforced by ex-members and friends from the town, practically packed the large chapel of Trinity College for the morning service (followed by a united Communion Service). As Mr. Earnshaw Smith was compelled to return to London to his own Church for the National Day of Prayer, the service was conducted by the Rev. Geoffrey Rogers, the new Candidate's Secretary of the C. M. S., and the sermon was preached by the Rev. A. T. Houghton, B. C. M. S. They were assisted at the Communion Service by the Rev. Alan M. Stibbs and the Rev. W. W. Martin.

Rarely have we had a Conference in which such a high standard of speaking was maintained throughout and in which the addresses, without exception, were so entirely applicable to the needs of the members attending.

The Influence of the War

The work in the Universities generally is different from pre-war days in that the average age of members is much less (as

stated above). This means that activities in the Unions are on more elementary lines, but at the same time it has the advantage of tending to rebuild the Movement! There is nothing like going back to the foundations, seeing that they are all well dug, and then erecting what will, in fact, be a brand new structure (not quite so "jerry-built" as before!).

The shocks of war and the stress of the times tend to dispel superficiality. The addresses and Bible Studies go deeper. Speakers must search more accurately into the prophetic and hortatory messages of Scripture. Everybody is more serious-minded. Whatever may await us in the future, it looks as though the Church is in process of being reborn and that it will have a vigorous resurrection. We trust that this will be so.

Future activities are a bit problematical. Owing to the restrictions on traveling we have only made tentative arrangements for a Leaders' Conference and next year's General Conference. Such Conference centres as are still left open, find it more difficult to receive parties of visitors owing to food problems. But the Unions will in any case continue to carry on and the central I. V. F. activities will be maintained as long as possible.

The "auld enemie" has been trying all along the line to engulf us. He seems in somewhat a chastened mood! But we are not leaving our stockades too light-heartedly, and are in a somewhat stronger position than on such previous occasions when our position was due for testing!

We may have to reduce the size of our Magazine at the next issue, and publications are becoming more difficult to put out owing to paper shortage. We have a little paper left from the last quota and hope to publish a book by Evan Hopkins entitled, *Henceforth*. It is intended for those who have just entered on their new allegiance to Christ, and has the difficulties of the student type particularly in mind.

DOUGLAS JOHNSON, Gen. Sec.

Calvinism — Dead and Living

London, England,
March 14, 1942.

Professor Bouma,
Grand Rapids, Mich., U. S. A.

Dear Friend in Jesus:

IT IS some time since I last wrote you. God, in His sovereign goodness has granted a period of peace and quiet in comparison with the times when raids were almost incessant at night and sleep only possible in broken snatches. I have just been standing in amazed contemplation on the brink of the crater (big enough to bury 200 people—with great trees uprooted all around) which marks a bomb that missed me by yards. The other side of the road in direct line (I was midway between) is the site where three large houses once were. I thought how God must have ordered that Nazi hand not to press that button till a split second before and after the instant which would have sent the bomb directly where I was. That such a vile sinner should be thus signally preserved is indeed a proof of sovereign mercy and longsuffering.

I keep urging friends to subscribe to THE CALVIN FORUM. I know of no other periodical which so well combines the fundamental faith of God's electing love with a spirit of life in its daily manifestations resulting from that electing love. I know sound magazines and thank God they exist but they exhibit, for the most part a hard cold adherence to Calvinism which seems to lack the warmth, the life, the love that Calvin so fervently inculcated. There seems to be a conspiracy in "Christendom" to portray Calvinism as a system in which the missionary spirit and passion for souls (that was a marked characteristic of 18th century Calvinists) languishes and dies. Indeed many popular theological history books pervert the truth and state that Calvinism is incompatible with active zeal for the extension of God's Kingdom and the furtherance of the Gospel. In other

words, Calvinism is classed (in effect, if not in so many words) with fatalism. This widespread assumption (endorsed by men whose names stand high in so-called Christian circles) is doing the cause of Calvinism untold harm and depicts a people who having satisfied themselves Election is a truth, go on to conclude that the Church not merely may but must sleep or at least become mere passive observers of the will of God, in which they think it a crime to fervently desire an active part. I actually heard a so-called Calvinist say, "If God wants to revive His Church, He will do it. It is not for us to be concerned about it"!

On the other hand there are a few who, while being solid in their belief in election, find a fervent spirit, a wrestling, a fire, a passion burning in their breasts, that God would make His love known to many sinners and grant a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of souls far and wide.

Yours in Jesus,

GEOFFREY WILLIAMS.

A Letter From Australia

Dear Dr. Bouma:

"The Manse", 8 Myers Street,
Geelong, Victoria,
Australia.

AS I write to you the battle of the Coral Sea is being fought, and we wait by our radios for the latest communique issued from General MacArthur's Headquarters. In Australia we fully realize that the fleet of the U. S. A. and units from the Australian navy stand between us and invasion by the Japanese. The outcome of the present battle will undoubtedly be of tremendous importance to us. The Prime Minister has just issued a grave warning to that effect, and by the time this letter reaches you many and perhaps great changes will have taken place, and what is now the immediate future will then be in the past.

Perhaps you will be interested to know how the Australians are reacting to the threat of invasion that is hanging over us. For the most part we realize the gravity of the situation, and I think the people accept it in much the same way as the people of Great Britain when they awaited the next move of the enemy to invade their Isles. We feel that if the Japanese come here, we are ready to meet them, and with the practical aid in men and equipment from the U. S. A. drive them back into the sea.

We are most encouraged by the presence of American soldiers and the roar of American fighter and bomber planes overhead. The conduct of your fighting men, when on leave in our cities and in their contact with the civilian population, is worthy of the highest praise.

At one period we stood alone marshalling our forces to meet the Japanese hordes pressing down upon us in our near North. We did not doubt that aid would come, but would it come soon enough? Today we are not alone. American and Australian forces are united under the command of the hero of the Philippines, General MacArthur.

The civilian population go about their business in as normal a fashion as is possible. When the nation's resources are concentrated on the war effort, certain commodities are rationed and others cannot be obtained. And while such a state of affairs does cause inconvenience, and discomfort, one would have to greatly stretch the imagination to call it hardship.

The Australians have made preparations for the protection of the civilian population of the cities against air raids, and many of us have private shelters dug in our own grounds. Air Raid Precaution personnel have been trained to meet any emergency that may arise from air raids. The cities and large towns are blacked out and all motor cars travelling at night must have screened headlights. The screen is so made as to throw a dim light on the road immediately in front of the car, which makes driving over twenty miles an hour dangerous.

From the spiritual aspect, there appears to be very little change. In some of the churches there is an improvement in attendance at the services, but this is mainly due to the movement of people to centers of war production. At present a section of the community is advocating organized entertainment for the troops on the Sabbath day, and there is every indication that they will be successful. Up to the present time, we have not had any organized entertainment on the Sabbath day. Both the churches and the trade unions have been opposed to it, but the churches rather than the trade unions are giving way to it now.

The Calvinistic Society had planned to hold a Conference during April, but with the imposing of lighting restrictions and the added difficulty of traveling, we were undecided whether we should proceed with the provisional arrangements we had made for the conference or abandon it altogether. It was finally agreed that we should carry on with the Conference on a somewhat smaller scale than we had intended. On the 24th of April we held a one-day Conference. In the afternoon two papers were delivered and discussion followed. Professor John Gillies, M.A., B.D., occupied the chair. The first paper was prepared by the Reverend A. Martin on "The Contribution of P. T. Forsyth to Theological Thought", and the Reverend H. K. Mack, B.A., read a paper on "The Reformed Conception of Eschatology". The afternoon session was appreciated by all present and disappointment was expressed when the discussion was closed, as many wished to speak but time would not permit.

The evening session was opened by the Rev. J. C. Jamieson, Director of Youth of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Mr. Jamieson gave an introductory narrative of John Calvin. Professor John Gillies then delivered a popular address on "Calvin and the Psalms". The professor was followed by the Rev. Robert Swanton, M.A., B.D., who spoke on "Calvinism's Message Today". The attendance at both sessions exceeded our expectations, and it was the opinion of all that the Conference had been most successful.

I trust my letters are reaching you. This is the third since my last appeared in THE FORUM. With warmest regards,

Yours very sincerely,

May 5, 1942.

ARTHUR ALLEN.

[Received June 17, 1942.]

Around the Book Table

A BAD NOVEL

FREE AS THE WIND. By Dascomb Atwood. New York: Live-right, 1942. 331 pp. \$2.50.

FREE AS THE WIND is a novel. The title is taken from an old Frisian Statute Book: "The Frieslanders shall be free as long as the wind blows out of the cloud and the world stands." Miss Atwood's dedication is "To the Dutch who sheltered the founders of our nation . . . and sent to our shores the forefathers of some of our finest . . . citizens." The setting is western Michigan. The story is the story of an emi-

grant from Friesland who joins the Van Raalte colony in 1848 and of his children to the third generation.

Free As the Wind is a bad novel.

The proof-reading—an important trifle—was bad. We read "he honk" and "he drive" (147) for "the honk" and "the drive," "rang around" (205) for "hang around," "loked" (234) for "looked," and "Ive" (109) for "I've." The date "June, 1848" of the caption on Chapter II should read "June, 1849." The Senator Vantiler of page 141 becomes Van Tiler on page 307, the "Field and Leiter's" of page 39 becomes "Field & Leiter's" on

page 51, and what is properly called the "Dutch Reformed Church" on pages 112 and 122 becomes the "Dutch Reform" church on page 131 and 132.

Punctuation is a small matter but when, as in this novel, the punctuation is bad, it becomes a thing of alarming importance. Disastrously superfluous commas abound: ". . . the hand that Nicholas took, wrung his . . ." (22); "The bride sat thinking, what a wonderful man her Ross was" (34); ". . . Kalamazoo—many possibilities, there for evening amusements" (147); "The first cattle he spied . . . he pointed out to Martha with great satisfaction, at his ability to label them" (177). Sometimes the comma is conspicuously absent: "Luke . . . pulled out his corn cob pipe and filled it with a smile (sic) wreathing his . . . mustache" (112). And what strange use of the semicolon is this: "They entered the . . . stable and the span were bedded down; their coats roughly curried, removing the dust; Uncle Murphy keeping up a string of talk" (56)?

The dangling participle, "removing the dust," suggests that the grammar, too, is bad. It is. "Having no parents," we read, "he must dower her anyhow" (3). Pronouns want agreement with their antecedents: "Peace, plenty, and thrift spread her rewards before the eye" (180). In this novel saw-mills can buy wood: "Old Zuppan worried over the condition left by the saw-mills to whom he had sold the . . . forest" (81). Participles are unequally yoked with infinitives: "Turning back was easier than to accomplish" (62). What were meant to be independent clauses collapse for want of a subject: "She looked . . . but as she turned from the last bed where a man swathed in turban bandages, his face black and burned with glaring red scars, opened his eyes, and whispered . . . , 'Greta'" (75). And the book has many such monstrous constructions as these:

And for that, a small portion in a tin was handed him which he tossed off and ran towards the gate (58).

Derry reminded him that living as the Hollanders did with all Europe ready to gobble them up it had made them suspicious (183).

The diction and style are bad. Miss Atwood, like so many amateurs before her, thinks that capitalizing a word somehow gives it sublimity. We read of "Life," the "Shearer of Life," the "Altar of Life," of "Peace," of "Plenty," and of "Youth." The characters of this novel do not breathe mere air: "Great breaths of ozone were breathed in . . ." (121). Married folk do not bicker: they have a "conjugal argument" (203). Prayers are not heard: they are "efficacious" (211). A viewpoint is not a place to look from but a place to smell from: ". . . odors of roasting meat perfumed the air better than any flowers could, from the travelers' point of view" (22). You do not throw a bomb too early: you throw a "premature bomb" (214). In fact, in this astonishing novel, "a chicken half eaten made good sandwiches . . . and a bottle of homemade beer . . . gave a zest to the tray she carried . . ." (146).

In this novel Dutchmen have German names (Feldinger, Clausen, Velz) and the Dutch they talk is German. When Nicholas Zuppan—a Dutchman, believe it or not, and hardly a month out of The Netherlands—hears an Irishman say, "God will help," he replies, "Ja! Ja! God wird helfen." A child is born in camp and Mrs. Velz, who knows only the Dutch language, exclaims, "Een madchen—een madchen (sic)!" Zuppan calls his Irish friend not "My vriend" but "My freund" and when, in a moment of gratitude, he sings a hymn of praise, he sings, "Nun sie (sic) God (sic) danket."

In this novel the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of a Dutch immigrant to the Van Raalte colony marry such Irish, Old Stock American, and German folk as Ross Gilman, Martha Saunders, Helma Speare, George Elwood, and Gustave Hertz. Now obviously Miss Atwood can have Humpty Dumpty marry Cinderella if she wants to. But in a novel of which the title, epigraph, dedication, acknowledgments, introduction, and early chapters lead the reader to believe that this is to be a tale of the Dutch in western Michigan, such uncommon going-on are an artistic blunder, for they detract from the illusion of reality the author is endeavoring to achieve. Here

is another disturbing detail. The town is Zuppanville, and we are to accept it as the equivalent of a Holland, or Grand Haven. In this Dutch town, in the year 1900, such felicitous interdenominationalism has already become the habit that when a young Dutchman (an Atwood Dutchman, of course) takes his bride there, he is welcomed at a Congregational church, where the Dutch Deminie prays for the bride, the Congregational minister for Peace and Plenty, the Methodist minister gives a welcoming speech, and the Episcopalian rector offers the concluding prayer. Such things can happen, but to make them happen among the Michigan Dutch in 1900 is to strain our "willing suspension of disbelief."

The structure of the novel is bad. The Great Fire of Chicago lures Miss Atwood into giving it an irrelevant and long description. In the last quarter of the book the author seems wholly to have forgotten that this was to be a tale of Michigan, so involved does she become in her accounts of the wickednesses and atrocities of the Nazi system.

The novel is, as you see, a bad novel. It is a tissue of incompetencies, and deserves to fall dead from the press.

HENRY ZYLSTRA.

MEET DIRK AND BELLO AGAIN

THE BELLS OF THE HARBOR. By Meindert De Jong. Harper; New York. 1941. \$2.00.

WE ARE indeed happy to have with the children again Dirk and his big Dane, Bello. They have come in another juvenile, *Bells of the Harbor*, a sequel—or shall we say the second in a series?—from the pen of Meindert De Jong, our Grand Rapids author of children's classics. It is his fourth book and as graphic, thrilling and aesthetic as the others. Every grownup will enjoy them, too, for Mr. De Jong does not talk down to children; his gripping story, not the simplicity of his vocabulary, stands out.

The setting is again Wierom (Wierum) of Dutch Friesland. The characters are practically old acquaintances with the exception of Jan, the orphan rescued through the alertness of Dirk and Bello from the sinking Norwegian freighter. Jan, promptly welcomed into Dirk's family, becomes one of the central figures around whom the plot deepens and in whom the suspense is held till the end. After Jan has won our hearts, Mighty Pier, the most respected man in Wierom, comes to the sad conclusion that Jan must be guilty of stealing six thousand gulden from Hannes Berg, the grocer, during the night when the whole village was in the throes of the ice flood panic. In the end, however, Jan's innocence of the crime is definitely proven when Axel, a Norwegian refugee sailer like Jan, befriended and sheltered and fed in Wierom for many a month, is found guilty.

Dirk's initial fishing trip during the terrific storm and his miraculous rescue from the wrecked schooner blow the North Sea right into our faces.

Sorry to say, there are just a few printer's errors, bits of mild profanity, and the author's characteristic approach to things religious to mar a juvenile masterpiece.

TESSIE L. BOUMA.

BIG BEN

BIG BEN. By Earl Schenck Miers. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. pp. 238. \$2.50.

THOUGH it is said that education and opportunities in America are free and equal for all, yet, when we read a book like *Big Ben*, we realize the sham of such a statement.

Big Ben, the hero of the story, is an athlete, a student, a singer, and a fine character, but, alas a negro. Because of his colored skin, he goes through many hard experiences as he lives, studies, and works with his white brothers. The author weaves into this story the prejudices of the whites against the negroes in a most natural and artistic manner, which makes the book fascinating reading. As a contrast, he also gives incidents of

friendships Ben experiences with some of the white Americans. This gives fine balance and reality to the book. It's the story of Paul Robeson, the great negro singer, if not in fact, surely, in spirit. As the author comments on the purpose of this book he aims to reflect "the story of every Negro boy who goes to college, who remembers, as Robeson does, the people who loved and cared for him and for whom he loves and cares first and always."

The story is well written and holds the interest of the reader easily from beginning to the end. Though not Reformed, nevertheless the moral tone is uplifting, and the story constructive. This book can be recommended to Christian young people.

GRACE PELS.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Die Bijbel is die Woord van God, by Prof. Dr. J. D. Du Toit (Pro Ecclesia-Drukkery, Stellenbosch, South Africa) is the first number of a series of booklets published by Calvinists in South Africa. The treatment is popular but based upon sound scholarship. The series is known as "Die Verkennerreeks" and is edited by Prof. H. G. Stoker and the Rev. J. Vorster for the Federation of Calvinistic Student Unions in South Africa. This is the same organization which sponsored the publication of the three volumes known as *Koers in die Krisis*. The present booklet in the space of 44 pages deals with the authority of the Word of God: its basis, its scope, and its transmission. It is written in Afrikaans, which is a "corrupt" form of the Dutch. The treatment is soundly Reformed and rather elementary. Price: one shilling, nine pence.

Die Grond van die Sedelike, by Prof. Dr. H. G. Stoker (Pro Ecclesia-Drukkerij, Stellenbosch, South Africa), a 91-page booklet which may be had for 2 shillings threepence, is another number in the same series as Dr. Du Toit's booklet just discussed. It is much more solid. Prof. Stoker is a thinker, teaches philosophy and psychology at the Potchefstroom University-College, and is a stimulating writer. In this booklet, written chiefly for students, he discusses the ultimate ground upon which all morality rests. It deals with ultimate principles in ethics. The absolute and ultimate ground of all morality is God. Hence all ethics for the Calvinist is theonomous. Dr. Stoker next discusses the basis for morality as found in the cosmos, the creature. This is the counterpart of the absolute ground, and in this connection much of what he offers is a psychology of the

moral agent as a creature of God and as integrated in the totality of the cosmos. This is a fine booklet and the reviewer finds himself in substantial agreement with most of what Dr. Stoker advances in this connection. The author is not so convincing when in the last chapter he takes up a discussion of the relation and the difference between theological, philosophical, and empirical ethics. This weakness (to use no stronger word) Dr. Stoker shares with much of what men like Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd have advanced in recent years.

Some Moral Difficulties of the Bible, by H. E. Guillebaud is a publication of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions (London, 1941, pp. 208; price 3/6) and a valuable little book it is. It offers a reverent apologetic discussion of the moral objections that naturally suggest themselves against certain doctrines, divine and human acts, and statements found in Scripture. The attempt is not made to convince the unbeliever (who would not be convinced anyway) but rather to help the believer who at times seeks an answer to certain perplexing questions. The author, the Venerable Archdeacon H. E. Guillebaud of Ruanda, is not only a devout Bible believer but a keen theologian. Why did God permit sin to enter the world? Why did God favor the Jews? Is God jealous and cruel? Do evil spirits come from God? How about the imprecatory Psalms? Are we predestined? To such questions as these, and many others, the distinguished author, who recently departed to be with his Lord, gives what is not only a devout but also a convincing answer. The present reviewer does not agree with the view that the Jews will again be restored to a favored position, but for the rest, this little book can be commended as helpful and instructive to all Bible believers. Although some of us might have put certain phases of the argument slightly differently, all Calvinists will be grateful to the author for so convincing and clear a defense of the biblical doctrine of predestination which he offers in chapters IV and V. Our Arminian Christian friends ought to read this discussion on the subject.

The Standards of Government, Discipline, and Worship of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (Orthodox Presb. Church, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia, Pa., 1941. 50 cts.) is a 120-page bound booklet which offers what the title indicates. It is the result of the labors of the Committee on the Constitution which was appointed at the first General Assembly of the youngest Presbyterian communion in the country, in 1936. Its labors were finally adopted in revised form at the 1940 General Assembly.

C. B.

INDEX TO *The* CALVIN FORUM - VOLUME VII (1941-42)

SUBJECT INDEX

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Adler, Mortimer J.: 196. | Calvinistic Philosophy Club: 249. | Ethics: 255. |
| Agnosticism: 20. | Calvinistic Society, Australian: 253. | Ethics, Old Testament: 166. |
| Alaska: 31. | Calvinistic Study Club: 53, 169, 218. | Evolution: 221. |
| America: 158, 179, 204. | Child Study: 174. | Fabius, D. P. D.: 8. |
| Ann Arbor: 51, 169. | Christian Century, The: 155. | Faith: 20. |
| Anti-Semitism: 60, 107. | Christian School: 136, 219. | Fichte: 161. |
| Apologetics: 135. | Christmas: 87. | Fiction, Christian: 109. |
| Art: 89, 116, 183, 234. | Christocentric: 121. | Fourth Commandment: See Sabbath. |
| Assurance of Faith: 73. | Church and War: 157. | France: 100, 101. |
| Auburn Affirmation: 19. | Church Union: 247. | Freedom, Economic: 246. |
| Augustine: 250. | Colijn, Hendrik: 9. | Gandhi: 52. |
| Australia: 253. | Colleges: 5, 131, 194, 230. | Geology: 94, 95. |
| Authority: 60. | Common Grace: 75, 76. | God: 3, 84, 92, 93, 184. |
| Authoritarianism: 136, 215, 217, 241. | Communism: 6, 62. | Goodness, Human: 231. |
| Bavinek, Herman: 8. | Conference Chr. World Order: 172, 219. | Government: 17, 19, 212. |
| Beauty: 90, 184. | Creation: 134. | Government, Forms of: 62. |
| Bible: 255. | Death: 64. | Graeco-Roman World: 206. |
| Bible Schools: 76. | Decalogue: 23, 50, 70. | Groen van Prinsterer: 7. |
| Black Market: 244. | Defense: 42. | Haifa: 27. |
| Black-outs: 171. | Defense Program: 5. | Hegel: 161. |
| Britain: 55, 147. | Delinquency: 60. | Henotheism: 165. |
| Brute Facts: 13, 15. | Deluge: 94. | Hitorism: 161. |
| Calvin, John: 7. | Democracy: 42, 63, 73, 198, 199, 219, 233. | Humanism: 238. |
| Calvinism: 3, 4, 7, 13, 28, 29, 30, 35, 198, 203, 228, 234, 252. | Democratic Method: 136, 138, 215, 217, 241, 242. | Hungarian-American Churches: 251. |
| Calvinism, Australian: 197, 253. | Demonism: 207, 208. | Hungary: 122, 250. |
| Calvinism, Dutch: 37, 228, 235. | Dewey, John: 36, 133, 195. | Hutchins, President: 35. |
| Calvinism, Ecumenical: 75, 189, 190, 227. | Dictatorship: 233, 247. | Hypnotism: 187. |
| Calvinism, French: 100, 101. | Discussion, Theological: 36. | Image of God: 10, 11, 43, 44, 66. |
| Calvinism, South African: 77. | Divorce: 12. | India: 52, 144. |
| Calvinism Club: 250. | Dogmatics: 126. | Inductive Method: 216, 217, 242. |
| Calvinistic Conference, Second American: 98, 99, 151, 173, 203, 227, 228, 229, 248. | Easter: 181. | Inflation: 59. |
| Calvinistic Conference, Third American: 229. | Ecumenical Synod: 113. | Internationalism: 7, 8, 86, 232. |
| | Ecumenicity: 75, 114, 188, 189, 190, 227. | Inter-Varsity Fellowship: 252. |
| | Education: 36, 93, 194. | Intervention: 7, 86. |
| | Education, Christian: 136, 137, 215, 241, 242. | Israel: 141, 163. |
| | Epistemology, Reformed: 249, 250. | |

Jaffa: 27.
 Jerusalem: 27, 28.
 Jewish Missions: 26.
 Jews: 107.
 Justice and Love: 18.
 Justification by Faith: 39.
 Kant: 133.
 Keegstra: 108.
 Kierkegaard: 175.
 Kingdom of God: 61, 92.
 Knowledge: 20.
 Kuyper, Abraham: 8.
 Liberalism: 247.
 Liberty: 63, 64, 83, 191.
 London: 100, 103.
 Luther: 38, 39, 40.
 Marriage: 10, 11, 12, 43, 44, 45, 66.
 Meeter, H. H.: 9.
 Mesmerism: 187.
 Metaphysics: 30.
 Mixed Marriages: 68.
 Modernism: 55, 86, 119.
 Monism: 30.
 Monotheism: 164, 221.
 Nationalism: 85, 232.
 Nazareth: 28.
 Nazism: 6, 37, 63.
 Necromancy: 209.
 Negro: 254.
 Netherlands: 26, 37, 101, 157.
 Neutrality: 86.
 New Testament: 18.
 New Zealand: 28, 172.
 Niebuhr: 134.
 Nietzsche: 10, 162.
 Nigeria: 221.
 Non-Intervention: 7, 9.
 Non-Resistance: 17.
 Norway: 157.
 Old Testament: 16.
 Original Sin: 25.
 Ossebrandwag: 146.
 Pacifism: 16, 17, 18, 19, 85, 155, 191, 211, 220, 232.
 Palestine: 26.
 Patriotism: 85, 156.
 Pearl Harbor: 107.
 Philosophy of Life, Christian: 230, 231, 238, 239, 240, 242.
 Polemics: 79.
 Pragmatism: 36.
 Preaching: 4, 5.
 Presbyterian Church (Southern): 4, 5.
 Presbyterian Church (U. S. A.): 54, 149, 220.
 Price Ceiling: 244.
 Princeton Seminary: 220.
 Protestantism: 38.
 Psychiatry: 173.
 Psychic Research: 185.
 Psychoanalysis: 175.
 Psychology, Medical: 152.
 Radio: 170.
 Rationing: 244.
 Realism: 91.
 Reformation: 38, 73.
 Reformed Church in America: 25, 56.
 Reformed Faith: 55, 203.
 Responsibility, World: 246.
 Revelation: 14, 163, 166.
 Romans 13: 17.
 Rome: 204, 205, 207.
 Romig, E. F.: 25.
 Roosevelt, F. D.: 29.
 Russia: 6, 103, 123.
 Sabbath: 22, 23, 24, 48, 49, 50, 70, 74.
 Sabbath Observance: 71, 72.
 Scheffler, Karl: 234.
 Scientific Method: 13, 14, 15.
 Scripture: 40.
 Sects: 79.
 Seventh Day Adventists: 51.

Sin: 191.
 Sloane Coffin: 220.
 South Africa: 29, 77, 146.
 Sovereignty of God: 3, 35, 197.
 Spiritism: 160.
 Spiritualism: 159, 185, 207, 235.
 Strauch: 8.
 Stuart, William: 128.
 Sunday: 23.
 See also: Sabbath.
 Supernatural: 218.
 Supernaturalism, New: 238.
 Symbolics: 79.
 Synod of Dordt: 22.
 Synod of Sneek: 26.
 Szabo, Stephen: 227, 250.
 Taxes: 245.
 Teaching: 243.
 Tel-Aviv: 26, 27.
 Thanksgiving: 69.
 Theism, Christian: 238, 239, 240.
 Theocentric: 121.
 Thomas, John Newton: 4.
 Tillich: 134.
 Total Depravity: 73.
 Totalitarianism: 83.
 Trinity: 11.
 Unitarianism: 235.
 University of Michigan: 169.
 Van Dellen: 108.
 Van Lonkhuyzen, J.: 227.
 Van Til, C.: 76.
 Van Wijk: 108.
 Von Treitschke: 162.
 War and Peace: 7, 8, 16, 156, 191, 212, 213, 232.
 War (Present): 6, 7, 77, 83, 100, 107, 110, 122, 131, 145, 146, 147, 148, 156, 179, 220, 230, 244, 246, 251, 252.
 Wencelius, Leon: 237.
 Westminster Seminary: 173.
 Witch of Endor: 210.
 Witchcraft: 208.
 World Religion: 247.
 Youth, American: 231.

Heerema, Edward: 75, 172, 219.
 Hendriksen, William: 200.
 Hoekenga, Ruth Bernice: 64.
 Hoogstra, J. T.: 75, 100, 151, 188, 248.
 Hunt, S. Leigh: 102.
 Jaarsma, Cornelius: 241.
 Johnson, Douglas: 252.
 Keizer, J.: 121.
 Kromminga, D. H.: 48, 152, 175, 221.
 Kruithof, Bastian: 151.
 Kuiper, Henry J.: 230.
 Marcinkowski, W.: 26.
 Meeter, H. Henry: 29.
 Monsma, N. J.: 215.
 Muller, William V.: 7.
 Murray, John: 70.
 Ockenga, Harold John: 61, 92.
 Pekelder, Bernard: 250.
 Pels, Grace: 254.
 Pieters, Albertus: 22.
 Prins, P.: 26, 101.
 Radius, W. T.: 204.
 Radins, Mrs. W. T.: 174.
 Ramiah, Arthur V.: 52, 144.
 Ryskamp, Henry J.: 41, 110, 179, 244.
 Schultze, Henry: 5, 6, 59, 60, 87, 131.
 Smith, E. H.: 221.
 Smith, John N.: 28, 172.
 Stob, Henry J.: 30.
 Stuart, W.: 128.
 Swanton, Robert: 198.
 Teeuwissen, Ray W.: 238.
 Timmerman, John: 31.
 Van Andel, Henry J.: 116, 234, 249.
 Van Beek, J.: 10, 43, 66.
 Van Dellen, I.: 113.
 Vanden Bosch, Jacob G.: 89, 183.
 Van Dyke, J. G.: 53, 169, 181, 218.
 Van Heukelom, Raymond R.: 191, 211.
 Van Til, Cornelius: 133.
 Verdun, Leonard: 51, 169.
 Vertregt, Wilhelmina: 128.
 Verwolf, William: 124.
 Vincze, Charles: 122, 250.
 Whitney, Dudley Joseph: 94.
 Williams, Geoffrey: 100, 252.
 Wiltshire, H. L.: 147.
 Zylstra, Henry: 253.

CONTRIBUTOR INDEX

"Ala Bandon": 20, 47, 69, 97, 119, 140, 168, 247.
 Allen, Arthur: 253.
 Andreas, G. A.: 73.
 Andrews, J. Campbell: 197.
 Astbury, Elizabeth A.: 121.
 Berkhof, L.: 222, 223.
 Bosselaar, G.: 125, 199.
 Bontekoe, Cornelius: 136, 216.
 Bourdin, M.: 73.
 Bouma, Clarence: 3, 35, 36, 37, 79, 83, 98, 107, 108, 109, 126, 152, 155, 156, 157, 158, 176, 200, 203, 223, 227, 228, 229, 255.
 Bouma, Hessel: 223.
 Bouma, Tessie L.: 254.
 Bratt, John H.: 141, 163.
 Brink, Arnold: 159, 185, 207, 235.
 Brink, William P.: 16.
 Broene, J.: 31, 152, 175.
 Coetzee, J. Chr.: 77, 146.
 Craig, Samuel G.: 54, 149, 220.
 Dahm, Peter F.: 13.
 De Graaf, Clarence: 78.
 De Jong, F.: 171.
 De Moor, Leonard: 38.
 Ernst, Karl J.: 74.
 Fakkema, Mark: 170.
 Ploekstra, L. J.: 194.
 Greenway, Leonard: 25, 56, 161.

INDEX OF VERSE

Aurene: Atop the Continental Divide, 25; Echo Lake, 120; Cross and Rock, 120.
 Bloemendal, George W.: On Calvary, 214.
 Boyd, Laura Alice: Shekinah, 19; Perfect Love, 21; Steps and Stops, 40; A Legend, 47; Consistency, 196.
 C. V. Z.: Memoria Amoris, 72; Lines for a Friend, 115.
 De Vries, Bess: Columbus, 46; Education's Dilemma, 69; Times Like These, 214; Wings, 237.
 Gardner, Joan Geisel: Thanksgiving Worship, 60; Like a Ship in Passing, 60; The Larder, 78; Courageous Doing, 112; The Antidote, 120; Possessing All, 120; Beauty, 158; Close to God, 167; The Call To Us, 194; To the Flag, 247.
 Piersma, Albert: High Cost, 19; Passing Ships, 21; Alcatraz, 162; Ecclesia Catholica, 214.
 Teeuwissen, Verna Smith: God's All-Embracing Grace, 12; A Storm, 21; Be Still, 32.

BOOKS REVIEWED

Albright, William Foxwell: From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process, 221.
 Allen, Frank E.: The Acts of the Apostles, 200.
 Atwood, Dascomb: Free As the Wind, 253.
 Barth, Karl: This Christian Cause, 223.
 Berkhof, L.: Systematic Theology, 126.
 Blanchard, Kathleen: Stories of Favorite Hymns, 176.
 Boettner, Loraine: The Atonement, 223.
 Bowman, Archibald Allan: A Sacramental Universe, 30.
 Braden, Charles Samuel: The World's Religions, 176.
 Carver, William O.: Sabbath Observance, 176.
 Champion, John B.: The Heart of the New Testament, 200.
 Conant, J. E.: No Salvation Without Substitution, 222.
 De Jong, David Cornel: Day of the Trumpet, 109, 128.
 De Jong, Meindert: The Bells of the Harbor, 254.
 Du Toit, J. D.: Die Bijbel is die Woord van God, 255.
 Fahling, Adam: A Harmony of the Gospels, 200.
 Guillebaud, H. E.: Some Moral Difficulties of the Bible, 255.
 Hewitt, Paul Edward: Russellism Exposed, 176.
 Jones, Rufus M.: A Small-Town Boy, 31.
 Kruithof, Bastian: Instead of the Thorn, 78, 110.
 Kuiper, R. B.: Are Infants Guilty Before God?, 176.
 Lewis, Clifford: 212 Victory Poems, 176.
 Love, Julian Price: The Missionary Message of the Bible, 176.

Miers, Earl Schenck: Big Ben, 254.

Neve, J. L.: Churches and Sects of Christendom, 79.
 Nichols, Robert Hastings: The Growth of the Christian Church, 128.

Paxson, Ruth: Life on the Highest Plane, 223.

Qualben, Lars P.: A History of the Christian Church, 152.

Rehwinkel, Alfred M.: The World Today: A Challenge to the Christian Church, 176.

Riviere, William T.: A Pastor Looks at Kierkegaard, 175.
 Rounds, J. B.: The Ten Commandments for Today, 223.

Smither, Wessel: Another Morning, 32.
 Stewart, George R.: Storm, 151.
 Stoker, H. G.: Die Grond van die Sedelike, 255.
 Street, Roy F.: Children in a World of Conflict, 174.

Waelder, Robert: The Living Thoughts of Freud, 175.
 Whitley, Charles D.: Reaching Upward, 176.

Zilboorg, Gregory: A History of Medical Psychology, 152.
 Zwemer, Samuel Marinus: The Cross Above the Crescent, 176.

ANONYMOUS

Koers in Die Krisis, 29.
 101 Prayers for Peace, 176.
 Religious Leaders of America, Vol. II, 1941-'42, 152.
 The Standards of Government, Discipline, and Worship of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 255.