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Peace Problems
Reflections

Fantastic China
Observations

God and Sin
A Discussion

World Balances
Adjusting or Tipping?

Jesus and Doubt
The Master Teacher

The Serviceman
Minister of God

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PEACE! Finally it has come to Europe. No more bombs. No more terror by day and night. No more tyrants and torturers. No more human cannon fodder. No more sadistic cruelties in concentration camps. No more hunger and starvation. Peace, sweet, adorable peace! A man again possesses his own soul and . . . body. After five, almost six, years of destruction, ruin, and terror, the oppressed peoples of Europe are sighing a great, deep sigh of relief and deliverance.

The liberation of the oppressed nations of Europe is almost like a dream to many of them. But it is not a dream. The nightmare of persecution and torture, of terrorism and starvation is now over. The unbelievably cruel tyrants have either taken their own lives or will be brought to justice. From the hearts and the lips of God’s people in these poor, bleeding but unconquerable countries a great prayer of thanksgiving has ascended to the Lord of the nations. And we of America, who witnessed their suffering and were privileged to have a large share in their liberation, join with them in gratitude to Almighty God!

The day of justice has come.

The justice of heaven is being visited upon these who trampled upon every law of God and human decency. Mussolini and Hitler, Goering and Goebbels, Himmler and Streicher, Seiss-Inquart and Quisling, Rost von Tonningen and Max Blokzijl, and all the rest of them will soon find out—if as yet they have not—that those who trample upon justice will be crushed by justice.

There is no place for vengeance. No Christian ought to confuse justice with vengeance. But everything must be done to bring the gangsters and tyrants and terrorists who have enslaved and sought to brutalize their fellowmen these war years to justice. No sentimentality ought to frustrate the course of that justice, just as no act of vengeance should brutalize the sacredness of that justice.

Europe cries to us for food, for help, for relief. The channels of relief and mercy ought to be un­stopping. America has the splendid reputation among the nations of the world of being merciful, of binding up the wounds of the world. The Red Cross is an international institution, but the lion’s share of its relief comes from our country. Just as billions of dollars have had to be spent by us for arms, so hundreds of millions of dollars are flowing through the channel of the American Red Cross to alleviate the suffering of the world.

No greater challenge and opportunity to be the good Samaritan to the bleeding European nations has ever come to us.

We are the one great nation that is providentially called to feed starving Europe. Let the astronomical figures of charity vie with the astronomical figures of the tools of war and destruction. Let us thank God that we are privileged to do this. Let us give till it hurts. We, Christians, of all people ought not to indulge in complaining, self-pity, and griping.

Let relief flow through every possible channel. UNRRA and Red Cross, Dutch War Relief or group organizations for European rehabilitation, as well as the church offerings that are intended for the needs of particular church groups—may all of them swell the river of relief into a mighty stream as it flows from America to the impoverished and undernourished of Europe’s devastated lands. America was foremost in war production. May she by God’s common and special grace also be first now in help, relief, and the binding up of the wounds of a bleeding Europe.

Brave, heroic Holland cannot help standing out in this European picture.

Yes, Holland, we have watched you and admired you.

These have been five terrible, demonic, but also glorious years in your history.

No nation in Western Europe has suffered as have you.

But you have been great in your suffering. The courage and heroism of your martyrs is written with the indelible inscription of blood upon your pages of history, pages more glorious than even those of your incomparable war with Spain in the days of the Republic.

The compassion of Christian and unbeliever for the terrorized Jewish neighbor in the early days of the occupation will not soon be forgotten, and . . . may no trace of anti-Semitism mar your recovery!

You have for five years been under two masters, one of whom you loved, the other you hated, but you have carried your double loyalty with a dignity and discipline that has aroused our admiration.

Your government in London, your underground, your disciplined and united response to the orders of your real rulers, your martyrs, your unconquerable faith in the righteousness of your cause despite executions, tortures, and enslavement by the brutal enemy, and all of this capped by a self-restraint that never deserted you even in the day of final liberation—we have seen it; the world has seen it. You are a great little nation!
And what has touched us deeper than all this in you is what your churches, your spiritual leaders, and your individual Christians have done. The heroic testimony against the enemy that came from outraged consciences and voiced its protest in the immortal words of Scripture will never be forgotten. Unbelievers have even borne testimony to the heroism of the churches, the pulpits, the ministers, and the individual Christians, who spake courageously in your midst when all other agencies seemed to have been silenced.

* * *

And now, with the return of peace to Europe, what staggering problems clamor for solution! Communications with European countries are only gradually reestablished and only gradually will we be in a position to speak intelligently and act effectively in reference to the new situations that have been created.

How one who is an American wishes he could witness some of the scenes of reunion, of deliverance, of restoration! How much there is to adjust. How much deception will be practiced by those who were traitors once and would fain play the hypocrite once more to save their own hide. What joys and sorrows surge through the souls of those who are gradually finding out the real picture of the suffering, death, or restoration of their loved ones. What preaching the ministers must be doing these days! And then again, what unsolved problems.

One thing is certain. America is providentially so situated that she has a marvelous opportunity and a grave responsibility in the directing of world affairs. Military power may have just as much to do with this world standing today as the idealism that in the main has marked our past dealings with other nations. This is only natural in a world of insecurity and balancing of power. But we of America must do our part to show the world that we are guided by what is essentially a basic Christian ethical principle: The greater our power, the greater our responsibility to use it for the protection of the weak and for the establishment of justice for all in the world.

* * *

Russia is a new world power, perhaps the second in prestige and standing among the nations of the world. We will have to learn to understand Russia. Her ways are not our ways. Her history is not ours. Her racial and psychological identity surely is not Anglo-Saxon. We had better stop much of this easy-going, wholesale condemnation of Russia. We should learn to become discerning and critical—intelligently critical—of this great new world neighbor who has suddenly been thrust into a position of power and influence. There are many questions at this point, to which only the coming years can give us the answer.

Russia is a dictatorship as well as was Hitlerite Germany, though a differently oriented dictatorship. But a dictatorship it is. She has much to learn. At the same time she has championed the cause of the common man. Germany's lust for military power issuing in the glorification of the superman and the super race to which all other races and nations are to be subjected in permanent economic and political enslavement, differs widely from the dictatorship of the proletariat which is the key to Russia's rise to power. Both have defied Almighty God, but Hitler did so because the deification of the German race and state and blood left no room for the God of the Scriptures and his righteous commandments for human life. Russia's revolutionary leaders defied God because the czarist regime with its oppression and injustice hid behind the skirts of the priests and because they were of the mistaken opinion that religion is opium for the people who should rise up for social justice and not be enslaved to the capitalistic owners of the means of production. Lenin and his cohorts were of the opinion that the only way to overthrow the intolerable economic order of the czars was to stab at the heart of all religion. Overthrowing the capitalists on earth and bringing down the gods from heaven—to use their blasphemous language—was considered essentially the same task.

Is Russia beginning to see the light? Is she beginning to realize that she made a great mistake in confusing the religion of the Scriptures with the caricature of Christianity which marked the life of many "orthodox" capitalist-landholders and slave drivers of pre-revolutionary Russia? At any rate, we shall not fail to notice the government's new attitude toward the Church and toward many Christian movements and institutions. The Russia of the revolution which murdered priests, closed or desecrated cathedrals, and banished the last seminary from the country is not the Russia of 1945. There is a new attitude. We may overrate it. We may also underrate it. Let us keep our minds and eyes open. And meanwhile let us pray for the revival of the work of God and the preaching of His Word in that erstwhile fossilized institution known as the Russian Holy Orthodox Church.

* * *

The eyes of the world are on San Francisco these days.

Our prayers ascend in behalf of this great conclave of nations whose deliberations and decisions may mean so much for the future peace and security of the world.

It is very easy to become cynical and make sneering remarks about this historic gathering. The serious-minded Christian will do nothing of the kind. With due sobriety and without losing himself in any utopianism or humanistic dreams, he will appreciate the struggle underlying all deliberations, contests, and decisions. That struggle is one that is deeper than the equally real contest for power, prestige, "position."

Although many nations are undoubtedly in it simply for what there is in it, there are also nations
who are guided by a higher moral idealism, nations whose leaders know and recognize that happy relations between the nations of the world are conditioned by justice, honor, fair dealings, consideration for the weak. Here again many people find delight in indulging in cynical flings. We firmly believe that many of the Christian nations have a deep conviction that these ideals, which are the social and political product of Christianity, are the only hope for creating conditions of international peace and well-being. Among these nations our own, by the common grace of God, holds a foremost place.

May America, whose president has recently given such a beautiful public testimony to his deep need of divine wisdom “to rule this so great a people,” speaking in the words of the youthful Solomon, increasingly take the leadership among the nations—not to rule but to serve, and to make even her increased military power subservient to the maintenance of the peace of the world and the protection of the weaker nations.

Well may we of the Anglo-Saxon family, Britain and America, with our great Christian traditions, stand shoulder to shoulder among the “big five.” As long as we live in a sinful world, we will have to be able to back up our prestige with military power, but it will make all the difference between being a Christian and a pagan nation whether that power is in the service of self-aggrandizement or of international justice and good-will.

America is indisputably the foremost nation in the world today. May we realize the burden of our responsibility!

* * *

And as we look out upon this chaotic world of 1945, what new opportunities will arise for the spread of the truth of God, of the Gospel of Christ, of the Church which transcends all national and racial barriers?

Also here it is easier to raise questions than to give reliable and positive answers.

But as we strive to put together the pieces of this jigsaw puzzle, a few large, clear lines stand out.

The Christian Church in many lands has greatly gained in prestige, influence, and opportunity. The ethical potency of the Church to stand up for the right in the midst of the most trying situations, to lift up its voice for justice against tyrants, to show Christian sympathy for the suffering, and to call evil evil when mere military power seemed to have paralyzed the right—this is a marvelous gain. And the gain is the greater because that ethical potency came out of the deepest and truest source of all genuinely ethical endeavor: the fear of God and His commandments.

Unless we are seriously mistaken, it is the churches with a supernatural message that come out of this European War with great gain. The churches—whether free or established—which had only a humanistic, liberal, moralistic message have been put to shame. Their spiritual poverty has been exposed by the judgments of God and their consequent impotence to serve the deep spiritual needs of God’s people. In many Western European countries the swing in theology and preaching has been decidedly to the “right.” Only those churches and church leaders who spoke of the deep conviction that they had behind them in their opposition against the enemy a divine message, a supernatural gospel, an omnipotent living Savior and Lord have really stood the test and have been demonstrated to possess the spiritual power and virility required in days of persecution, days of fire, blood, and tears.

* * *

There is no greater need for the Church, for the world, for human society in its political, economic, and cultural phases than a new and living appropriation of the ordinances of the sovereign God.

Without these ordinances there will be no healing for the nations.

These ordinances nations and statesmen, as well as churches and theologians, must learn to honor, to love, to embrace, to apply, to body forth in a Christian society.

All humanism and relativism have again been shown up in their hollowness and impotence by these terrible years in which God did shake the world to its very foundations.

Only he who bows before God and His Word, the majestic Word, the Word of Judgment, the purging, cleansing, as well as healing Word, finds peace of soul and finds the message which our age so sorely needs.

Have we come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?

C. B.
Fantastic China

Lt. Cornelius Van Zwoll  
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MEASURE the distance to China in hours, not miles. I passed seventy days early in 1942 counting imaginary milestones on the seashores, highways and airways between America and China. But a few weeks ago I passed only that many hours in the air from China to America. And it can be done in less time. Today, China is just around the airways' corner—physically. Sociologically she is already in the Western world's communal lap.

 Rays of China's Sun

Ten hundred days in China have had their effect on my nebulous pre-war ideas of China. Perhaps you think of it as a land of exotic pagodas ensnired among orange groves, delicate maidens murmuring plesantries at tea, music muffled in velvet, poetry whispered at twilight, dewdrop balanced on rose petal; perhaps you think of China as a great shrine of ageless wisdom, ivory gleaming in the moonlight, willows bending in riverside breeze, life gracefully stirring at sunrise. This is not a poem, nor are these empty words. Yet I confess those impressions comprise only one ray of China's blazing sun. The other rays are not so beautiful and bright. It is good to know the relative intensities of the various rays of China's national sun. We appreciate a shining light; and if the light is dim or fails, we exert ourselves to know the reason and restore the brilliance. This report on China is therefore analytical, sympathetic and, it is hoped, constructive.

Here are some discrete impressions:

Hidden among the hills of Kweilin one can find exquisite unfrequented pagodas, no doubt lesser versions of magnificent costal structures... For grace and beauty of mind and spirit, Kwan Kit Lin represents the finest qualities anywhere to be found from her native Hongkong to her adoptive Kunming, or from New York to San Francisco... Music in China is unfortunately not muffled in velvet or even in homespun—it is thrust upon the ear like a bayonet in the belly—there is no escaping it and no pleasure in it; its psychopathic nailing will activate every slightest nerve fiber; it is no respecter of persons. But experience should be noted of several ingenious instruments which produce not only tolerable but most agreeable sounds... Poetry in China is excellent—the simplest literal lines convey grand spacious overtones within which undulate the utmost wisdom and experience, the fathomless yearning of the human soul. And Chinese poetry can be sung; beautifully and touchingly its words and inflections penetrate the callous which civilization frequently cultivates about one's spirit. One time I must persuade Huang Tze Chung to sing a poem softly to you—it will go well of an evening when the world seems a very dreary commercial place... Dew in China lingers on more thistles than flowers, I fear; the temptation to draw an analogy here touching China's own present conditions is too obvious to indulge further at the moment.

 Need, Labor and Sorrow

We who were long in China sometimes thought of America as Shang-ri-la, where happiness and wisdom were to be found. But a moonlight night among the abrupt mountains of Kweilin or even among the massed humanity of Chungking was enough to relocate Shang-ri-la in China, enough to shift a man's thoughts from nature per se to Gerard Manley Hopkins' "The Earth is charged with the glory of God..." At the riverside one is less likely to see willows than little sampans thriving with people arduously working or vigorously eating—or just listlessly vegetating; these are the simplest folk of China—they are the actual flotsam living and working, a-borning and a-dying on their flimsy small craft. They have few cares, few needs, few resources. They are not concerned with the where and whither, only with the how of existence: Fan, Ju and Tsai (Rice, Meat and Vegetables) are the end and qualifier of all things. The head is important for its possession of a mouth through which the stomach may be satisfied; and the stomach of many a Chinese, indeed of many another mortal, pushes stoutly to crush the heart and spirit.

Life stirs in China, to be sure—but before sunrise. Peasants are staggering to market from midnight to dawn with their burdens of furiously driving their reluctant cattle to slaughter; their womenfolk are hobbling on tiny deformed bound feet with a man's share of forage or produce in their baskets suspended before and behind from a pole thrown over a shoulder. Life stirs before sunrise—but it is not the leisurely stir of a gracious dawn, nor the frolicsome leap across the lawn to meet the horizon's sun; the life stirring in China creaks with "the weight of centuries," withers with exhaustion, bends earthward with an habitual stoop, rises painfully aware of need, labor and sorrow. Day by day...
in China life stirs comfortless under the unyielding prod of economic necessity.

China is exotic: its varied terrain and extremes of climate, its quaint people and ancestral pride, its stupendous Oriental self-sufficiency and equally amazing Occidental ambitions—all of these make China not only exotic but at once supremely interesting and superbly exciting. For China is like one of her 500-year-old eggs (a gourmet's delicacy)usted but not useless with age, and still capable of accomplishing a distinguished mission in the world. Unfortunately the masses of China—her peasants and coolies—are dedicated to nothing more exciting than the rice paddy and the water bucket. The peasant labors with his oxen in the rice field and produces food for consumption. He labors in the home with his wife and produces sons and daughters to whom to pass on the heritage of labor and wedlock, ad infinitum. It is like that in China—there is continuity without purpose, activity without progress, drudgery without vision. The peasant and the land are an earthly pair—they know the earth drains the spirit from the man, and the man contentedly receives leeks and onions in return. And there are few voices crying in this wilderness to snatch up from the soil the extended spirit of the Chinese peasant. He takes practical measures against evil spirits, and for the rest once yearly conciliates the gods in the pantry. The peasant knows of no Providence. He has no care for destiny. He is sturdy; his color is clay; his house is of mud and straw and in a few years it is gone, and they both are no more.

Men Burdened

It is not otherwise with coolies. They are the hewers of wood and bearers of water in China. They were our house-servants in Chungking, our chambermaids and shoeshine artists, our waiters and cleaners, stokers and porters and launderers. They are the common laborer, subsisting on a standard never known in America. Where millions of needy people compete for daily survival, the comparatively few jobs need little monetary reward to attract many applicants. Coolies employed by foreigners, and especially by Americans, were well paid, well treated—comparatively. But our laundresses in Chungking received besides lodging and rice the equivalent of $3.00 per month as late as April, 1945. Table waiters in the American officers' quarters received little more—and these were respectable jobs. Coolies in the city were not so well off—a bowl of rice and a bed of straw were their daily concern and sufficient reward. I have seen rickshaw coolies sleeping on the footboard of their rickshaws with feet stretched out in the roadway. Human life and labor are cheaper than beasts of burden. Coolies, leashed to heavily loaded carts, strain and pant and haul to a rhythmic gasping chant as the sweat rolls down over bulging veins of temple and neck; flesh wears raw under shoulder ropes; and trunks bend parallel to roadway in the agonizing task of transporting burdens which Americans would immediately consign to motor or rail transport. But in China motors are worn out and cannot be replaced for civilian purposes; in China railways are scarce; those not controlled by the Japanese still scarcer. And in China humanity needs the jobs our motors, rails and beasts of burden do. The Chinese coolie is faced with the bald law of work for survival.

It is like that in China—life and labor, reproduction and death are so simple in concept and so inevitable in consummation, so impassive of aspect and so implacable in the wheel of time. Before the children of the coolie are grown to maturity they already carry buckets graduated in size to accommodate their maximum strength, and as the children grow, the buckets increase and the burden multiplies. And the children marry and there is less room in the home and there is more burden-bearing and more children and more buckets, and the streets are full of the stench and the sweat and the toll and noise of mankind surviving—and besides all these there is a terrifying, overwhelming, depressing soullessness. For ten hundred days you may observe bodies with human attributes; bodies busily concerned with self-preservation; but in ten hundred days it is quite possible never to see one of these bodies aware of a soul, or if aware, not concerned about its condition. For while there is rice still to be earned, who among the sons of Fu and Mu Manchu has a moment to spare to seek a way by which his spirit may be freed from the rice bowl and the teacup... And if a spare moment arises, who will tell him the things he has never heard, who will erase his errors and write great truths in large letters in his mind? The coolie passes his days as a cry in the night; his children are at labor after dusk; the walls of his house are paper and bamboo; and within there is no light. And in this darkness there is breathing and a sound of bodies and at last not even these.

What is true of the Chinese masses is fortunately not true of many individuals who in a general résumé are likely to be caught up with the mass. To add that I personally knew many such people is hence not only incumbent upon me as an objective observer, but also a pleasure as a warm friend of China. (This is not at all said patronizingly. I am too kindly indebted to China and the Chinese for three years of their hospitality to permit myself the error of patronage where interest, analysis and a kind of reciprocal aid are intended.) The Chinese as an individual is a conscientious, hard-working person, with a broad sense of humor and an inordinate affection for his family. If he lacks spirituality in any great degree, he may at least be said to have certain wholesome social attitudes. The Chinese is a democrat (Jeffersonian) by nature. He loves justice and humanity for all, except that the wrongdoer, when apprehended, is quite humanly anxious for humanity of treatment rather than
for justice. This is, of course, understandable in a country which employs capital punishment somewhat capriciously for minor offenses—if you will allow one to beg the question whether any offense against Right can be adjudged minor.

The Social Process

The war may not flourish in China, but that country should be an excellent place for any type of conference. The longer and less definite, the better. Conferences must have begun in China. It is commonplace to find a crowd in the middle of the walk, trying to settle by argument, conciliation and mediation a private quarrel between two passersby, between husband and wife, or rickshaw coolie and passenger, or between citizen and policeman. Generally one or two onlookers become attorneys, judges and judges in the case, mildly stating their views, remonstrating with the principals and restraining them from mutual assault and battery. Actually my impression (verified by educated Chinese) is that both principals are more than happy to be so restrained from physical violence, the only reason they simulate striking the opponent being a matter of “face.” Evidently the Chinese crowd expects the really valiant fellow to be the most aggressive. Of course the educated Chinese very much regret the whole scene, especially if foreigners observe it. They, of course, look upon private quarrels in public as extremely bad taste socially, and in addition, they consider striking or the attempt at physical violence a proof of inferiority on the Confucian basis that anger is the fool’s alternative to reason. Such quarrels as I described above usually wind up innocently with both principals being physically, but not violently, led in opposite directions by public-spirited citizens, and the wide-eyed curious crowd gradually dissolves.

Aside from its comical aspect, however, these spectacles give a striking demonstration of elementary but essential social processes in operation. Watching these processes is almost like observing a panorama of the development of law from the Hebrews through the Greeks and Romans. Chinese life is colorful, but only primary colors make it so—there are no combinations to qualify or complicate the relationships or situations. Everything lends itself to immediate analysis because of its simple, incontrovertible elements. Living in China is as breathless an experience as that of Alice in Wonderland.

The Quaintness and Warmth

Many situations are so quaint that the difference is much less than that between tears and laughter; it is just the small difference of flexible lines otherwise curved, the difference, shall we say, between frowns and smiles. There is no room in China for involved emotional patterns. Duplicity is so openly practiced it acquires a halo of honesty, and cordiality is so spontaneous and uninhibited that it engenders suspicion. “Face” is a great psychological force in China; face-saving may involve the retention of a cabinet minister internationally known to be corrupt; but in more than one sense the sojourner finds it necessary to accept the Chinese at face value. They are ingenuously genuine, and like the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, the arrival at this realization by long experience I think means the birth of a deep affection for things and people Chinese.

A Chinese friend is as likely to entertain you lavishly for no reason save his undisguised affection for you as he is to place his personal and official resources and influence at your disposal. If he considers you a desirable friend, you thereby obtain the privileged status of a member of the family in addition to the consideration and courtesies accorded a guest. It is a bit overpowering to be made much of in a way Americans rarely do even toward very distinguished people, but the hospitable warmth of a Chinese heart radiates and glows and infuses those about him.

Yet even the greatest pleasure seems to be limited by time and space for the Chinese. I believe they lack an inner source of happiness and therefore need to depend on external stimuli. Their smiles embrace their friends. And the smiles linger until the hearth burns low; then there are many ashes, but the light has failed, and the warmth being absorbed was not replenished. And after the guests departed, not one ember was left glowing, and there were empty chairs and soiled dishes, and besides this, only a stillness, the kind of silence that suspends a question in silence, asking of what value and to what end? And the people of the house went shivering to their rooms. For no answer could be given, and it was late. And nobody saw the tongues of fire that were trying to light their souls and warm their spirits. And so every day there was warmth, but it was always used up by dusk. Their friends used it, and they used their friends’ warmth. And they had no other source. And there was no continuous warmth in them at all.
Why Did God Permit Sin?

U

NFEIGNéd curiosity into things that genuinely matter constitutes one basic requirement for the acquisition of knowledge. There are always those who would rest content on top of the pile that others have accumulated; these never struggle beyond the fringes of tradition. There are also those who feel that any endeavor to read the mind of God is a blasphemous presumption whose only result is an ever-increasing sense of futility with the intelligibility of life!

"Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the two Worlds so wisely—they are trust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scattered, and their Moutus with Dust."

(FitzGerald, Edward, Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam)

And there are certainly those whose pragmatic self-interest prevents them from ever seeing farther than their own proverbial noses and who dogmatically assert that the proper pursuit of knowledge consists of man’s efforts to reconstruct his own moorings so as to increase his hold on life as he lives it here below. Pope was one of these when he wrote:

"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is Man."

Knowledge is a single totality. Whatever the objectives of faith may be, certain it is that these must be of one piece with the knowledge that our senses extract from the phenomenal world. Unless we are prepared to abandon such fundamental laws of logic as the non-contradiction of mutually exclusive propositions, there remains an inner validity implicit in every adventure that mind undertakes to explore areas where empirical methods are inapplicable and to piece together truths whose apprehension is the result of thought rather than demonstration. Such attempts applied to the discovery of ultimate values and reality on the basis of observations on the universe at large are designated philosophy.

However, when revelation becomes the foundation of these efforts, there results an organization of thought that may properly be denominated speculative theology. This species of reflection on supreme reality is not inductive in its direction; it is deductive and takes its major and minor premises from the Scripture. Thus our present problem, "Why did God permit sin?" is a venture in the realms of speculative theology and is to be considered an attempt to understand the mind of God in terms of secondary truth revealed in Scripture about the nature of God and sin and the relation of God to various aspects of the universe.

II

The statement of the question, "Why did God permit sin?" involves a number of highly specific assumptions. It is obviously requisite that the assumptions implied in the problem be accepted before it is possible to attempt a solution. Not everyone can legitimately ask this question; not every one would feel it incumbent to propose such an inquiry. The problem itself is an outgrowth of a definite organization of doctrine. For example, to the pantheist the subject of this paper does not make sense; he would not be impelled by his thinking to pose the question. On the other hand, for the thoroughgoing materialistic evolutionist there is no problem, because evil is a natural quality of man which the force of a progressive environment will eventually slough off. One must have certain notions about God, about sin, and about the universe before one may validly ask, "Why did God permit sin?"

Who is God that he possesses the power or faculty of permitting sin? The God of revelation is first of all personal in order to be able to permit sin. The essential element in permission is that of free volitional activity. A universal substance, or ultimate form, or supreme idea, in which all the stuff of the universe inheres is incapable of conscious action. The concept of permission is a palpable absurdity, is completely at odds with such a promulgation of reality. Thus, we are limited to a theistic conception of God who enjoys personality. Further, it is postulated that God is omnipotent, that he could have prevented evil. Any God like the chess player William James in his "Will to Believe," who is limited by the complete liberty of human action, would have been incapable by definition of considering the alternative of allowing or disallowing the entrance of evil into the human race. Further, only a description of a God that entertained a purpose in permitting sin is tolerable to the human mind. This must be accepted axiomatically, since it is impossible to prove directly by explicit statement from the Scriptures. A capricious God is unthinkable to our way of thinking. A complete analysis of the God involved in our problem would require a catalog of all His attributes. The final thought to be mentioned is the holiness of a God who is limited to permitting sin instead of actively concocting it, since the direct production of evil would contaminate His nature with inconsistency.

The second consideration that devolves upon the investigator of this problem is that of sin. What is
relationships may be fastened, elusivehaps not: He is within his immediate power to prevent its accomplishment? In other words, can we legitimately construe permission of sin with untainted morality? Shedd illumines this aspect of the problem by distinguishing between the relationship of man to the morality of permitting sin and the status of God toward the same factors. “Man may not permit sin, because he is under a command that forbids him to permit it, either in himself or in others. But God is not thus obliged by the command of a superior, to hinder the created will from self-determining to evil. He was bound by his own justice and equity to render it possible that man should not self-determine to evil... But he was not bound in justice and equity to make it infallibly certain that man would not self-determine to evil.” (W. G. T. Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, p. 410.) There is no reason to assume that God cannot permit sin because man may not allow others to commit sin if it is within man’s province to prevent it.

However, there is actually a more severe relationship that may be proposed as subsisting between God and sin. From the question, “Can God permit sin?” one may infer, “Does God permit sin or does he actually direct its eventuation in the lives of men?”. Although most of us would prefer to exonerate Calvin of the charge of making God the author of sin, it is nevertheless adumbrated, if not explicitly stated in at least one passage from the Institutes. “Hence, a distinction has been invented between doing and permitting, because to many it seemed altogether inexplicable how Satan and all the wicked are so under the hand and authority of God, that He directs their malice to whatever end He pleases, and employs their iniquities to execute His judgments. The modesty of those who are thus alarmed at the appearance of absurdity might perhaps be excused, did they not endeavor to vindicate the justice of God from every semblance of stigma by defending an untruth... Hence, recourse is had to the evasion that this is done only by permission, and not also by the will of God. He Himself, however, openly declaring that He does this, repudiates the evasion.” (John Calvin, Institutes, Book I, Chap. XVIII.) This is a harsh doctrine stated with all the confidence of a man who has diligently searched the Scriptures and who has thought through the entire system of Christian doctrine based on God’s word. This kind of thinking cannot simply be dismissed as the malevolence of an intellectual manic depressive. Sin is undoubtedly under the direct employment of a sovereign God. It is subject to His will. How can such an assertion remain consistent with God’s holiness? The direction that the solution to this apparent antimony must take is the careful definition or distinction in the manner God “wills” sin. Here again Shedd makes a happy contribution. “Again, when the permissive decree is dominated by the Divine will, the term ‘will’ is employed in the narrow sense of volition, not in the wide sense of inclination. The will of God, in this case, is only a particular decision, in order to some ulterior end.” (Op. cit., p. 407.)

The problem of “Why Did God Permit Sin?” is ultimately one of relationships. God permitted sin, or willed sin permissively, however one cares to express it, not because the exigencies of His own creation required its occurrence, but because the fulfillment of all creation’s purposes in terms of the nature of God’s own being demanded the possibility that sin might enter the universe. In order to provide the pegs on which the description of these relationships may be fastened, the discussion that follows entertains four concepts. It is hoped that this manner of presentation will summarize all the important aspects of the problem.

The first important concept is that of sovereignty. If one were to arrange one’s thinking about the sovereignty of God in the form of a syllogism, the truth would seem almost self-evident. If God is necessarily infinite, and if power is one of His perfections, then His omnipotence follows. The only other alternative for a personal God is that of William James who considered God to be finite,—one who seemingly sweated and struggled alongside of man to overcome the defects of the universe and to achieve perfection. “The creator’s plan of the universe would thus be left blank as to many of its actual details, but all the possibilities would be marked down. The realization of some of these would be left absolutely to chance; that is, would only be determined when the moment of realization came.” William James, Essays, Will to Believe, Etc., “The Dilemma of Determinism,” pp. 182-183.) To speak of the finitude of God seems almost a contradiction of terms. A finite God stands as helpless before the problems of life as man; one does not pray to such a God; one merely suggests for mutual con-
consideration. If the sovereignty of God is established, there arises the thought of its limits. Is God sovereign over every minute detail in the life of the universe, or is His sovereignty bounded by sin so that only good and so-called neutral occurrences and existences are subject to His will? Jesus undoubtedly thought in terms of the former, for he spoke of the hairs of one's head being numbered, and of the Father causing His sun to shine upon both the evil and the just, and of the life of a sparrow as being under His jurisdiction. Does this sovereignty over everything include sin? Isaiah seemed to concur in this position when he represented God in Isaiah as saying, "I form the light, and create darkness. I make peace and create evil. I am Jehovah, that doeth all these things." The sovereignty of God thus includes the disposition of evil. A deeper analysis would seek the solution of the relationship of God to the initiation of evil. What part does God play in the actual commission of sin? Does He merely superintend it, or is he actually one of the participating elements? The answer seems to lie in the composite causality inherent in the very fabric of the universe. Every effect is the focus of a multiplicity of causes each of which in turn was an effect brought about by another series of causes. The sovereignty of God is a natural corollary of the relationship of things, events, and persons in the universe. God is in touch with every sin only to the extent that he has established the relationship which roots it down to the causes that precede it. That in itself is sufficient to provide as complete a sovereignty over the universe as the most ardent Calvinist could desire. It is thus that the impingement of God's will is the successive arrangement of circumstances that progress throughout the history of the entire universe. The core of the entire matter is the problem of how effective the personality of man is as a creative factor in the progression of events, things, and people in the universe. The discussion of that relationship is postponed to the treatment of the concept of man's freedom.

Central to the Calvinistic organization of Biblical doctrine is the concept of the glory of God. The phrase among the devout has almost become a superstitious answer to all the questions that men would like to ask God. The idea of the glory of God is a direct correlative to that of His sovereignty. Hodge translucently summarizes this position when he writes: "The Lutheran and Reformed churches are distinguished in all that characterizes their theological systems by the fact that the latter allow the supremacy and sovereignty of God in the workings of His providence and grace to determine everything for His glory. The Bible, Augustine, and the Reformed give one answer to all such questions as the following: why did God create the world? Why did He permit the occurrence of sin? Why was salvation provided for men and not for angels? ... It is therefore in accord with the whole spirit and teachings of the Bible, and with the essential character of Augustinianism, that our standards make the glory of God the end of all His decrees." (Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, Vol. I, pp. 536-537.) On the other hand there is Dr. Brunner who flatly says, "The Bible has nothing to say about a Gloria Dei which fulfills itself in the misery of the damned." Emil Brunner, The Divine-Human Encounter, p. 124.) Does the occurrence of sin actually glorify God? Obviously not, since it is a perversion of God's will. The relationship is rather to be sought in that the occurrence of sin provides the occasion for the accomplishment of God's glory. More than that, the occurrence of sin is the result of the requirements of God's glory. The glory of God demands at least the following prerequisites: (1) conformity to His will; (2) the voluntary rendition of such conformity; (3) a conscious reflection that such conformity is pleasing to God. The first of these constituents requires no exposition; it is almost axiomatic. The second element is not so obvious. This means that any conformity that is yielded under compulsion is not God-glorifying. In other words, if God must compel the very conformity He demands, He cannot be glorified. In order to make possible the "voluntariness" of this obedience, God was under the necessity of creating a being whose essential nature provided the freedom to decide whether he wished to conform or not. Thus the freedom of man becomes the postulate for the glory of God. Although the third item—a conscious reflection that such conformity is pleasing to God—is tangible to our discussion, it deserves at least a momentary analysis in passing. An example makes this clear. A cow does not glorify God in the direct sense, because she is not consciously exercising the freedom to obey. It is only because man is enabled to reflect upon the tremendous energy that God has placed in the universe, that he utilizes this cow for the free accomplishment of his purposes. In this God is glorified. Where man does not meditate this glory, the angels do.

The successive arrangement of our thoughts next lead us to analyze the nature of man's freedom that is required in order to be God-glorifying. More specifically, how free is man? Man's freedom may be said to consist of a capacity to set up goals and to pursue a course of action suitable to the achievement of such goals. When such goals are in conformity to the expressed will of God, man is free to modify his activity in the direction of their achievement. When such goals are not in conformity to God's revealed will, man's activity in their pursuit is negated by the consequences of sin. What determines the establishment of goals to be achieved? The predisposition of one's genes whose proclivities reach back into the successive ancestors of each individual, the arrangement of the circumstances by a sovereign God, and the force of personality whose propensities at any one moment are patterned upon the experience of the individual, are the decisive factors in the impact that the individual makes upon the establishment of his own goals. Man's freedom thus becomes a matter of the
self-realization of latencies; personality is the organized pattern that this freedom takes. From this point of view, sin is the proof of man's freedom. The latencies that went to comprise Adam's freedom consisted of his finiteness, his innocence, his speculative knowledge of evil, and the arrangement of the circumstances about the probationary command that confronted him. If Adam would have fulfilled God's will, it would have been a voluntary, conscious conformity to the demand of God for the achievement of His glory. The fact that Adam sinned was a function of the dependent volition with which God endowed him to fulfill His glory—dependent upon the aforementioned constituents of man's freedom, which in turn are under the immediate control of a sovereign God. God remains sovereign since causes remain under His control, and since He ordains the laws of cause and effect in the universe. Brunner's analysis is apropos at this point. "As man remains bound to God even in sin, so sin is also the proof of his God-bestowed power to make decisions for himself. Nowhere in the Bible is God made responsible for sin. Even the strongest emphasis upon the omnipotence of God has its delimitation at this point which is never overstepped. It is not as if God did not have power over sin: He Himself reserves this sphere of freedom for man; He Himself, after all, in the creation of man in His own image made him a free counterpart of Himself—man who can defy Him, who can rebel against Him." (Op. cit., pp. 134-135.)

If God permits the exercise of man's freedom to become effective in specific activity that results in separation from Himself, what is the relationship of God to morality? It is clear from our definition of sin and from the scope and direction of man's freedom that God stands above morality. The application of moral concepts to God is a patent absurdity. One can scarcely think of God stealing when everything is His, or of God committing adultery when He is not a creature of sex, or of God lying when everything He wills is truth. All of our thinking about morality and God centers about the application of intellectual criteria—such as the consistency of His attributes. When God permits sin, it is not the morality of this transaction that we seek to explore, but rather the consistency—the possibility. God's truth, too, is not a matter of morality; it consists of the uniform extension of His being and activity.

We now propose to summarize the discussion by extracting seven propositions that will demonstrate the direction in which our solution must proceed:

1) Only a theistic God whose personality is active in the creation and direction of the universe can permit sin.
2) The kind of sin that such a God can permit consists of a specific activity that leads to separation from Himself and to the attempted abortion of His glory.
3) The permission of sin on the part of God is that aspect of His volition that brings about a specific act as a means to some ulterior end by means of His power over causes.
4) The sovereignty of God remains unimpaired in God's control over sin because of his control over causes.
5) The glory of God requires that conformity to His will be conscious and voluntary. Involuntary obedience can never be God-glorifying.
6) The freedom of man consists of his capacity to set up goals and to pursue a course of action that will result in the achievement of those goals.
7) God stands above morality in His relationship to the initiation of sin. The entrance of sin is the result of the exercise of man's freedom. The exercise of this freedom is operative only on conditions that God controls.

God's permission of sin, therefore, is based upon the demands of God's glory; the possibility of God's permission of sin is in man's endowed freedom for the purpose of achieving this glory of God; the control of sin, once permitted, is the exercise of God's sovereignty. God's re-creation of man's ability to utilize his freedom for the glory of God is the regeneration of man by the Holy Spirit through Christ. Once more man desires to conform to God's standards and thus contributes to the ultimate realization of the best possible world where love reigns supreme.

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Adjusting the Balances or
Tipping the Scales

During the war the settlement of other issues and problems than the defeating of the enemy was in most instances forgotten or ignored. The occasion for some problem situations, unemployment, for example, was removed. The settlement of some vexing issues was undertaken, but with the reservation that after the war the matters would really be disposed of. Now that the unjust foe in Europe has been defeated and the crushing defeat of the unscrupulous enemy in the Far East is but a matter of time, the scales of justice have been brought out again and men are beginning to weigh in the balances matters which they would not or could not consider during the war.

International Justice —
Difficult to Achieve

Some matters were settled before the scales could be dusted off so that they would not have to be put in the delicate balances. That seems to have been the case in some of the international settlements made by certain of the great powers before the war came to an end in Europe. Now that the scales have been brought out and justice demands that they be used, each party to an issue seeks to tip the scales so that they favor him. Meting out justice! Many regard the present attempts with scorn. The balances have been tampered with they say. Who can expect the scales of justice to weigh accurately in such a case? “The world is in a mess, and the mess is even worse now than it was before the war.” No doubt there is much faith in their contentions. What they say is, however, not new, and certainly not helpful at a time when every one realizes that something must be done. Admit that the world today is in a mess greater than ever before and one is simply admitting that the challenge to do something about it is greater than ever before. Who would expect perfection now if he knows man, or knows the record of human events? Who, except one who has no ideals, aspirations, hopes, or faith would sit back and do nothing about it? Now, if ever, we need faith and vision; now if ever, if human history gives us any perspective, we must not permit ourselves to be deluded into expecting or insisting on too much.

Coöperation Possible and Necessary

In spite of the frictions, the obvious lack of complete unanimity on the part of the allies, the cooperation between them has been remarkable, and their successes even greater than we might have had reason to expect. The most cooperative member of the allied nations we often say was, of course, the United States. And the critic in this country does not hesitate to tell us that the United States has played the sucker role again. Why, in the light of the recent revelations of barbarism and inhumanity in Europe, we should be regarded as being suckers for having thrown all we could into the effort to destroy the enemy, regardless of the contribution of others, is hard to understand. We were fighting the evil as well as the others, and were bound to do all we could. What such critics apparently mean is that we threw everything we had into the struggle and will not get much out of it. The first task for us was to win the war and to have done less than we did would have been detrimental to ourselves as well as to others. To that extent we were not suckers.

Self-Interested —
Yet Sincere

That even now we are letting Stalin and Churchill treat us as the generous fool may be true. Some think it is. Magnanimity, generosity, giving rather than insistence on receiving will be necessary on the part of all those who have the power to make and back up the peace. It is the absence of that attitude and the presence of its opposite that makes for trouble. That is the real cause of concern at present. We are certain that Stalin is looking out for Russia. He has already done so, and is doing so even while his delegates are carrying on in the demonstration of internationalism that is taking place in San Francisco. He is not permitting everything to be thrown into the balances. He is weighing many himself, and apparently adjusting the scales in his favor. Churchill has openly said what his intentions are with reference to the British Empire. Nothing is to be liquidated. Much is to be bolstered up and strengthened. France, considered a year or two ago to have disappeared as a great nation, and now restored through the work of the allies, is already up to her neck in difficulties. She
also is looking to her possessions and to her defences. Nor are we going to give up anything of value to ourselves. We are, indeed, going to add to our defences. Behind the front at San Francisco, therefore, some men observe, the great powers are first taking care of themselves and perhaps getting into positions which may make future quarrels inevitable.

This is no doubt too severe an indictment. The great nations are at present obviously sincere in desiring an organization to maintain peace and prevent war. But like all of us individuals, they desire it only after they have secured what they consider their vested interests. In that respect the end of this war does not see us much farther. The terrible lessons of the war may, however, help us see the value of such organizations as are now being set up, and they may, we hope, make men more willing to use them, even at the eventual sacrifice of some of their own interests. What is more, the sincere attempt at making political and economic internationalism work should make such vested interests worth less and less in the future.

Big Business
Tipping the Scales?

Now that peace is in sight business management, large as well as small, and labor are laying before the public issues which were soft-pedaled during the war. Each of these interests is presenting its case in the hope that when the matters of vital concern to it are weighed in the balances the scales may tip in its favor.

Financial statements of large business concerns that have come off the press in the last few months have been most interesting. They have brought out by means of charts, curves and illustrations the trends of earnings, taxes and dividends in such a way that anyone who can read and see can interpret the information for himself. These statements show clearly that although the volume of business and of gross earnings have increased tremendously, net earnings, after all taxes have been paid, and dividends have not gone up correspondingly. They prove that the increase in the share of the returns which has gone to labor is much greater than the increase in the share that has gone to the owners of industry. And the owners of industry, understandably, are clamoring for reduction in taxation and removal of many of the controls over business.

Big business sees the opportunities and the struggles that lie ahead in the post war years and wants to make its influence felt as soon as possible. It knows, as its charts show, that net profits, in the form of dividends have not increased in proportion to the earnings of other economic groups. It cannot deny that the great increase in demand for its products has been caused by the war and that much of the unusual gross profit should be returned to the nation as a whole rather than to the stockholders. That it should want this diversion of earnings to the people to stop once the war is over is also to be understood. Nevertheless industry must not now seek to tip the scales too greatly in its own favor.

Business has Duties as well as Rights

Not only in time of war but also in peace business owes much to organized society for maintaining order, enforcing contracts, maintaining transportation routes and supporting transportation systems, maintaining and supporting the monetary and credit systems, and aiding in maintaining economic balance. Taxes and government control should not be reduced to such an extent that government does not have income enough to carry on such functions as have just been mentioned. There should not now be such emphasis on individual and corporate property rights that other human rights are jeopardized. That would be tipping the scales of justice unfairly. It should be prevented and forestalled with, however, due recognition of the necessary social function which business performs.

The business man has a function which society should do everything possible not only to protect but to enlarge, for the good not only of the businessmen but all of society. In determining to what extent to reduce taxes, for example, we should not listen to business men who have no sense of their social obligation nor should we listen to the so-called reformer who thinks, or rather dreams, only of the new social system in which he and others may be cared for without doing much to care for themselves.

Small Business Clamors for a Hearing

"Small Business" feared that the mass production made necessary by the war would mean its demise. Its fears have not been realized. Business has been good for both small and large firms. During the depression independent business men feared and fought the development of the chains. They secured chain store anti-monopoly legislation of various kinds. Now that post war opportunities are opening up small business interests are clamoring again for protection and assistance. They also want to make their influence felt while there is opportunity. They have been at a disadvantage in securing capital and have not been able to build up large reserves. They feel that they cannot compete where large organizations have a monopoly or semi-monopoly hold on the market.

They must remember that without the standardization and mass production which large scale business made possible we could not have won the war and could not hope to maintain our high standards of living in the future. They are right in insisting that small business has a place and a function as well as large. It is from the small business men
that we frequently get our new ideas, it is the small business man who often has the initiative to put these new ideas into practice, it is the small business man who has sufficient incentive or motivation to work hard at his business, for his returns are largely his own.

**Labor Deserves Full Employment**

Labor has profited greatly during the war. It fears, however, that wages will drop when peace comes and it wishes to peg them now. It has won a great measure of social security and hopes to extend that measure soon by the broadening of the social security act. It has enjoyed a measure of employment for the last three years that was undreamed of ten years ago. With the uncertainties of re-conversion and peace time production in prospect it is now clamoring for full employment. It is in favor of such action as proposed by the "Full Employment Bill of 1945," introduced in the Senate last January by Senator Murray of Montana. Labor wants purposeful action, wants a plan, wants an end to the patchwork methods that we have used in the past to maintain employment. If it gets its way here and in England, where the Beveridge plan is being discussed, a considerable measure of social governmental action will be required to maintain employment.

In this regard too we must move with caution. We must have as full employment as is possible. That is no more than fair to labor, and it is for the best interest of us all. We must, however, consider all measures for the achievement of this end carefully. The line between freedom of action on the one hand and government control or regimentation on the other is a waver ing and indistinguishable one. Measure for full employment must preserve the freedom of individuals and of business firms but must not lead to regimentation. There are great dangers in both extremes.

**Our Task and Opportunity**

We could mention many other instances of difficulties with reference to which men are apparently unable to agree, except perhaps to disagree. And we could follow the course of least resistance and say, "The world is in a mess, there is nothing we can do about it." Are there not, however, general ideas of justice that are common to all men, common even to all nations? In facing the perplexing problems of today we can at least begin with these and attempt to apply them to the cases before us. What is more, we can make cooperative attempts to get at the facts in each case.

In spite of the fact that each party to a situation is set on having its own way the discovery and the publication of the facts may have a good effect. Discussion of the facts, even if all the facts are not available or are not agreed upon by all the interested parties, will be enlightening to right minded men. Certainly if all men and all nations are bent upon having a greater measure of freedom they must know the whole truth of a situation, not just one side, but both sides or all sides of the truth.

We may at least hope that the present attempts to get at every aspect of a particular matter through national or international organizations will make for better and more durable solutions to our vexing problems. That the solutions will not be durable unless all agree on the real facts, the real truth of the matter is only too true. It is the task, therefore, of all concerned, particularly the Christian, to get at and to present every side of a case, especially the right side. It is the duty of the Christian to present not only certain aspects of the truth, half-truths, but the whole truth, God's truth in the matter. That is our task and our opportunity today.

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How Jesus Dealt with Doubt

John Weidenaar
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LEVI the Calculator could never have written the climax of Matthew’s Gospel. But when Jesus by his kingly grace re-made the publican, Matthew the apostle wrote these words for a lasting testimony:

“But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

Like Levi the Calculator, I tarried a long time in the booth and rang up the changes. Then I played in it and like a child imagined it to be a blockhouse. I picked up an armful and preached a sermon on The Great Commission; I returned for a few more blocks and held forth on the Trinity; I came back for more and got a message on Holy Baptism. It was surprising how many trips one could make. One might say that Matthew 28:16-20 is a very rewarding passage; it was just jampacked with sermonic material. Meanwhile Matthew was walking with the Lord while I tarried in the tollgate. Matthew had become an apostle while I remained a time-server. Time came when I tired of playing; I scattered the blocks and threw them into the air until three blocks hit me squarely in the face. As they fell on the ground together they spelled out three words: but some doubted. The familiar blocks seemed very strange. I turned to those about me and asked if they could tell the meaning and this is what they said.

One of the bystanders, who stood apart from the rest, said: “It appears that some of the disciples doubted the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.” But all the others made common cause against the lone bystander and overwhelmed him with so many arguments and reasonings that he soon withdrew from the group and went his own way. The rest, left to themselves, soon broke up into two camps. One group averred that not even Thomas could at this stage doubt the resurrection of Jesus. But some of the disciples did doubt the identity of Jesus. His manifestation was so majestic and awe-inspiring that they failed to recognize the Lord. Had not Mary mistaken Jesus for the gardener? Upon first hearing, this sounded plausible; but the others had the unusual, good sense of reminding them that the doubting disciples had first worshipped Jesus. How could the disciples doubt the identity of one whom they had first worshipped? There was no way of getting around this. The force of this argument was, however, too great even for its advocates; for if all of the disciples had worshipped the Lord, how then could any one of them entertain any doubts at all? At this point one of the group who was given to much reading and research, had an “inspiration.” It was very simple, said he, if one only put two and two together. Paul was called to the rescue. Paul had written that our Lord had appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time. The appearance recorded by Matthew was the same as the one narrated by Paul. The term “disciples” could easily be applied in a general way so as to include the five hundred. Accordingly, some of the five hundred—but surely not one of the eleven disciples—must have doubted. Presto! The problem was solved. Triumphantlv, the entire group went its way and left the erstwhile player-in-the-booth to himself.

When he came to himself, he was staring at the blocks. He turned over the discussion in his mind and fingered the blocks. He did not object to the appeal to Paul. He was satisfied that much might be said, on other grounds, in favor of equating the Galilean appearance with that to the five hundred reported in I Corinthians 15. But the rub of it was that Matthew was not thinking of the five hundred. He spoke only of the eleven disciples. Try as he would, he could not escape the plain sense of the words; some of the eleven disciples doubted. At length, he decided to follow Matthew. Catching up with Matthew, he found himself in the presence of Jesus.

How did Jesus deal with doubt? He came to the doubting disciples. He did not ignore them; he did not condemn them. He understood the need they had of him. Like a firm handclasp he restored the faith of those who had not lost faith in him. But our Lord is not merely a backslapping ‘hail-fellow-well-met’ kind of a person. He not only came to them; he also had something to say. What he said was to the point and served to meet head-on the doubt which troubled them.

What did some of the disciples doubt? Since we have rejected the theories that some of the disciples doubted the fact of Jesus’ resurrection and that they doubted the identity of Jesus at the Galilean
appearance, it is incumbent upon us to explain the doubt. Matthew 28 contains three paragraphs. The first treats of the fact of Jesus' resurrection; the next reports the denial of it by the leaders of the Jewish Church; our paragraph may be described as the confession of the Risen Lord by the eleven disciples in contradistinction to the denial of the chief priests and elders. Observe the sharp contrast between the attitudes of the Jewish Church leaders on the one hand and the eleven disciples on the other hand. We can better appreciate this contrast when we turn to the remote context in Matthew 12, 23, and 24.

Matthew 23 reports Jesus' scathing denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees. In this sevenfold 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,' our Lord excoriates the leaders of the Jewish Church. They had utterly defiled the house of God. They had made God's house their house and transformed it into a den of thieves and murderers. How Jesus lashed them and seared them with his blazing philippic! It was too much for the disciples of Jesus. They could not take it. They were as yet unable to confess Christ, i.e., to say what he said. For Jesus was saying his goodbye to the leaders of the Jewish Church. In the peroration which was more than rhetorical, Jesus announced the doom of Jerusalem and bade farewell to the Jewish Church when he declared: "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." But the disciples of Jesus simply could not follow him at this stage. Instead they took the Lord aside and remonstrated with him. In Matthew 24 we read that they came to him to show him the buildings of the temple. That was their way of calling Jesus to time. They meant to counteract Jesus' 'tirade.' They sought to calm him. In effect they said: 'Come, come Lord; we know that our leaders are not just what they ought to be; but things cannot be as bad as you make them out to be. Look at these beautiful buildings of the temple. Are they not a symbol of the stability and worth of the Jewish Church? Be sane about the matter. You are overwrought. You cannot mean what you said. Don't be a fanatic, Lord!' Seeing the buildings of the temple was not intended by them as a sight-seeing tour; it was a psychological tour-de-force by which they sought to dissipate the excited ire of Jesus. But they failed miserably. For Jesus was not to be put off. Instead, he added: "See ye not all these things? Verily, I say unto you, There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Evidently, the disciples were no more successful in diverting Jesus' pronouncement of judgment than were his mother and brethren in the incident recorded in Matthew 12. On that occasion too Jesus had sharply reproved the scribes and the Pharisees who were on the verge of committing the unpardonable sin when they accused him of being in league with Beelzebub. Then, when even some of the scribes and Pharisees were considerably sobered by the incisive words of Jesus and mildly asked Jesus for a sign, our Lord replied: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of J o n a h the prophet; for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." But Jesus' mother and brethren were alarmed. Jesus was making a scene. They were horrified and terrified. What would the people say and what would the leaders do? They thought that Jesus was beside himself; they entertained doubts regarding his sanity. They sought to take him home; they wanted to take him away from it all. There is a striking similarity between the response of Jesus' mother and brethren in Matthew 12 and that of the disciples in Matthew 24. Both incidents throw light on the doubt of the disciples in Matthew 28.

Even though we concede, in the name of justifiable historical criticism, that there is a gap of days or even weeks between Matthew 28:11-15 and Matthew 28:16-20, it is obvious to all that Matthew wishes to relate as intimately as possible by way of contrast the two paragraphs indicated. Matthew is not writing a piece of chronology; he is writing history. Better still, he is an agent of revelation. Incidentally, he does pay his respects to the exigencies of historical criticism by telling us that "... this saying was spread abroad among the Jews, and continued until this day." It took some time for the disciples to learn of the attitude of the leaders of the Jewish Church and it required some reflection on their part before they could act intelligently. Verse 15 provides the needed time.

The stage is set. The actors in the drama appear. The soldiers have come with the startling news of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The promised sign of Jonah has been delivered to the leaders of the Jewish Church. They now know of a certainty that Jesus has risen from the dead. Deliberately—for the chief priests assembled with the elders and took counsel—they reject the truth and deny the fact. They have the brazen effrontery to bridle the soldiers to propagate the lie that his disciples came by night and stole away the body of Jesus. For this they received much money or 'hush-money.' "BUT the eleven disciples went into Galilee..." In sharp contrast to the official decision of the Jewish Church, the disciples are led by force of the circumstance of Jesus' appointment and by choice on moral grounds to cut themselves loose from the Jewish Church. At length, the disciples have come around; for now they are definitely saying farewell to Jerusalem and the Jewish Church. With a deliberation that matched that of the scribes and elders, they have decided to keep their tryst with Jesus upon one of the mountains in the despised Galilee of the Gentiles. They are ready to stake it all upon the Christ.

It was an act of noble heroism. But heroism always exacts its price. That price was the doubt of some of the disciples. It is a hard thing to break with one's church, for it was their church that they
left when they turned their backs upon Jerusalem and made their way to Galilee. Nothing is more difficult than to make a momentous choice. Was it any wonder at all that they had their moments of doubt and perplexity? Had they done the right thing? Was it safe, too? Was it right to confess Christ at the price of denying the ruthless leaders of the Jewish Church? That was precisely what they doubted when they stood upon the mountain with Jesus in Galilee.

In this light one senses at once the pertinency and adequacy of Jesus' words to the doubting disciples. He said to them: "All authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth." Authority may be defined as right and might, with right always first and might next. Some of the disciples doubted whether they had done the right thing and the safe thing too in departing from Jerusalem and in keeping their tryst with Jesus in Galilee. By this word Jesus assures them that when they have cast in their lot with him, when they have staked it all upon him, they need have no fears as to whether they are right and safe. All right and might reside in him. Having confessed Jesus and chosen for him they are everlastingly on the side of right and safety. This was just what these perplexed disciples were in need of. Jesus gave it to them.

Jesus the soul-healer did even more for them. He vindicated his stupendous claim of universal authority in the words: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Jesus meant every word that he had said to them. He himself believed implicitly in the Father's conferment of authority upon him. He did not tell them to proceed upon an 'as if' basis; but he directed them into the only way that would enable them to confirm the truth and reality of his consoling assurance. To cap the climax he adds the promise of the perceptible and perennial personal presence in the words: "And lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world."

[This article will be followed by another in which the author will conclude the discussion by facing the question: How shall we deal with doubt?—Editor.]
The Serviceman as a Minister of God

Marvin L. Derby
Pastor of the Williamson Memorial United Presbyterian Church
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ROMANS 13:4: “For he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil.”

It is surely no exaggeration to say that the serviceman has a place of honor in the church today which ten years ago he did not always enjoy. Back in 1935, if a man in uniform had been seen to enter certain churches where the minister was a Pacifist, and where the doctrines of Pacifism and non-resistance had been consistently taught, he doubtless would have received hostile glances. He was a representative of the devilish forces of War; this—the church—was a place of peace. And certainly, any man who had shot down twenty-five enemy airplanes would not have been hailed as a “hero,” as he would today, but as a ruthless and barbaric killer.

In many of these churches, although unfortunately not all, it is now admitted that this earlier attitude was a mistake. Because of the realism of War, many of those who held to non-resistance have changed their views, and today their servicemen are received with welcome and honor. But the church should not make the further mistake of assuming that just because she has changed in her attitude—if indeed, a change was necessary—that Christianity and the teaching of Jesus and the Bible have had to undergo change because of the War. Jesus and the Bible have not altered. “Thy Word, O Lord, is forever settled in heaven.” “Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today, and forever.” Jesus Christ, and Christianity, contrary to the blind and unrealistic teachings of the past 20 years, which have so largely ignored many of the salient facts of Scripture on this subject, have always maintained a high regard for the serviceman.

Bible’s Regard Always High

In the Gospel, Jesus rendered high praise to a centurion in the Roman army for a faith superior to that of the most religious people of Israel, and our Lord actually uses this life of militarism and authority as an illustration of the faith He demands from each of us. The only person quoted at the Crucifixion as recognizing in a public way the divinity of the dying Savior, with the words: “Truly, this was the Son of God,” was not an Apostle, not an ecclesiastic, not a student of the Scriptures, nor one to be found among that company of sweet and loving women who wept at the Savior’s dying with inconsolable grief. He was, instead, a hard-headed officer in the armies of imperial Rome; and God, throughout the ages of the Church, has honored his cry and blessed it to the incalculable benefit of the unnumbered souls who have read it in the Gospels. In God’s economy the uniform was no bar to divine blessing and salvation in the early church, for while it may come as a shock to those who regard the professional soldier as engaged in a sinful occupation, Luke tells us that among the very first Gentile converts was Cornelius, another Roman centurion in command of the Roman garrison at Caesarea. Cornelius and all his staff were converted to Christ, and although they had the peace of Christ in their hearts and had become new creatures in Him, they nevertheless, with the complete and unqualified sanction and blessing of Peter and the church, continued to be men in uniform, engaged in the grim business of war and the policing of the Roman Empire.

It is hardly true, then, to ascribe any change in the church’s attitude to the Bible; if there has been any change, it has had to be in the church’s thinking.

Source of the Thesis

But the Christian should not rest content with these few instances in the New Testament in which we find soldiering presented in a favorable light. The New Testament, especially Paul in Romans 13, goes much farther and is a good deal more positive. For, rather than regarding the serviceman as being engaged in a devilish and wicked business, and instead of thinking of our own sons out fighting on the beaches of the Pacific or on the plains of Germany as it were, working against God and against Christianity, just because they carry rifles and shoot to kill—instead of making the serviceman sort of a henchman of Satan to destroy human life—we may, on the strength of a careful exegesis of Romans 13 believe that God through Paul is teaching (by implication, if not directly) that the serviceman is a minister of God for good.” It is a very practical thesis in our times: Are our sons working for Satan...

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or for God? Are they servants of the Evil one, or of Jehovah? The Biblical thesis we shall attempt to prove is: "The Serviceman is a Minister of God."

It will be objected at the outset that even the most popular explanation of Romans 13:1-4 should tell us that the Apostle is not speaking of soldiers, but of speaking of the rulers of the civil state. According to any ordinary reading of this passage I would seem that the Christian here is only being told to obey the police, to be good citizens and not anarchists, and to pay his taxes and uphold the civil State. These are our duties as Christians, persons who must be believers in and practitioners of good government. And the Christian is so to be, not just because of expediency, but because it is God's will for his life. As Christians we recognize the fact that our civil rulers are God's administrators. His executors, His ministers here on earth, to rule and govern with all His sovereign authority; and when we resist the power and the authority of the human rulers which God has set over us, we do resist, as Paul declares, the very ordinance of God Himself. That would seem, according to the usual interpretation of this passage, all that the Apostle is teaching. However, from the principles laid down in this passage dealing with the life of the civil State within itself, certain applications may be made as to the dealings of that same State with the outside world.

1. All human government and authority is ordained and derived from God.

2. The human ruler who exercises this human authority is actually called by the Scriptures "a minister of God." (Romans 13:4)

3. In order to exercise this authority, which includes "bearing the sword," the human ruler obviously must have agents—men, who actually carry out his wish. In the civil realm we call these agents "policemen"; in the national realm, we call these agents "soldiers."

4. These agents who actually exercise this power for the ruler, are themselves referred to by the title "ministers of God."

Therefore, we affirm, that the Serviceman is a minister of God. A few remarks are in order to support this deduction.

**Ordained by God**

1. When we say that "all human government is ordained by, and derived from God," we are not only saying what Paul does in the opening verses of Romans 13 (vss. 1, 2) but we are also affirming what every Christian should know is taught and assumed throughout Scripture. God did not make us and then run off and leave the Universe to its own device, like some mighty watchmaker who fashions a complicated mechanism, winds it up, and allows it to pass from His hand forever. As a part of His work of Providence, He maintains absolute rule over His Creation (Eph. 1:11) and one of the most important ways in which He controls the affairs of men is through the Government of the State. It will be admitted that this is contrary to the evolutionary idea of the origin of human government—that man's gregarious instincts drew him together with his fellows and gradually there emerged the idea of authority and one rule. But the Bible's teaching is that not only the idea of government, but the very authority behind it comes from the God who has created both the Universe and the laws which control it. The authority of our Congress does not lie in the American people, as we are so often told, but in God. And whether we like to believe it or not, God is the originator and Prime Minister of all human government the world over.

A few years ago the writer received a militant and sarcastic letter from a young Pacifist in a conscientious objector's camp in North Carolina. He had read an excerpt from a sermon preached against Pacifism which had appeared in the press. He stated emphatically that he refused to believe that any government on earth had behind it the authority or sanction of God, and that the Almighty had nothing whatsoever to do with human government. The words of the Apostle elsewhere are sufficient reply to such rebellion against the truth: "Who art thou, O man, who repliest against God?"

**The Ruler as a Minister**

2. The second proposition was: "the human ruler who exercises this authority and government for God is called by the Almighty a minister of God." Verse 3 of Romans 13 begins: "For rulers are not a terror to the good work..." and verse 4 follows: "For he is a minister of God to thee for good." The obvious inference is that the ruler is "a minister of God."

We usually think only of a clergyman as being "a minister of God," and it may seem strange to refer such an appellation to a governor or a president. But if such terminology seems strange it is only because we have not fully realized that God has more than just one plan to be worked out on earth for which He needs ministers. There is, of course, His redemptive plan. We believe that it is the most important of all, and to it His other plans are subservient, for "we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." Man's hope for salvation lies in the Savior, Jesus Christ, whom God has provided; and belief in Him for Eternal life. But how shall they believe unless they hear, and how shall they hear without a preacher? And the messenger of good tidings, who bears the precious message of the Gospel to lost humanity, is commonly called in Scripture: "A minister of God." Like any true "minister," he is one who executes the commands of another, namely, His God; and that command is "go into all the world and preach the Gospel." The Christian minister is also one who
administers the affairs of God’s Kingdom, according to God’s handbook, the Bible. But we find in this chapter in Romans that the one who executes and carries out God’s other program, viz., His Providential work of ruling and controlling all peoples scattered throughout the nations of the earth, embracing Christian and non-Christian alike—is also designated by the title “a minister of God.” That is what God calls him, and certainly we can do no less than concur.

The Ruler Must Have Agents

3. The third proposition was: “In order to exercise this authority (the Divine will) which includes bearing the sword, the human ruler must have agents.”

Unless he is some sort of a “superman,” the civil ruler, this “minister of God” must have help, in agents who will carry out his decrees. How else can the governor of the state rule except through the agency of the state police? One man cannot himself go about exerting the physical force necessary to keep the peace. And how else can the President and the American people bear the arms which became necessary on December 7, 1941, to preserve our existence on the face of the earth as a sovereign nation, except through the use of an Army and a Navy, who act as our agents to preserve us and keep the peace?

4. Proposition Four was: “These agents (our own servicemen) who actually exercise this power of the sword, are themselves also to be called “ministers of God.”

There is in Scripture what might be called “the principle of subordinate ministries.” For example, Jesus is the great “minister” of salvation, but those to whom He has delegated His present earthly ministry of the Word He calls “Christian ministers.” Satan, Jesus’ great enemy, has his “ministers” (II Cor. 6:15) and anyone who in anyway aids Satan or in anyway aids one of the Satanic demons does himself become “a minister of Satan.” So we say here, that those who act as agents for the Scripturally-declared minister of God in bearing the sword, do themselves become “ministers of God.” And we are further strengthened in this thought when we read verse six and find that even the tax-gatherer is called “a minister of God.” “For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God’s service, attending continuously upon this very thing.” Obviously, the Governor himself does not go about seeing that we “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s.” Again he has agents, but in this case his agents are called directly “ministers of God.” Surely we are warrantied in concluding that the agent of a minister of God is himself God’s minister. And if this is true in the case of persons engaged in the comparatively minor matter of collecting the monetary support for the State, how much more are we justified in calling the serviceman “a minister of God,” who is willing to shed his life’s blood that the life of the State may be preserved.

Are the Nazis “Ministers”?

The objection may be urged at this point: Are not we then forced to say that Hitler’s S.S. elite guardsmen are also “ministers of God”? Does God looking down upon the atrocities of the Nazi and Japanese soldier regard them as His ministers? Of course, if we were forced to give the affirmative answer to these questions, our thesis would be indeed monstrous. But such a position is not forced upon us at all. In fact, we may say quite the opposite: the Japanese and the Nazi soldiers are rather ministers of Satan. Christian scholars commenting on this passage have always made one qualification. The ruler is “a minister of God for good” only so long as he does as the name signifies—actually ministers to God. This is logical, for to be a minister of someone is to execute that person’s commands, if not perfectly, at least substantially. And there have been times in history when we must say of regimes like those of the Japanese and the Nazi with their wholesale murders, thefts, and their pagan ideologies that these rulers have forswn all right to be called “servants of God.” Hardly can they be called His servants when they defy Him to His face by killing His people, despising His church, and casting His religion without their border that they may substitute a religion of their own. Hardly ministers of the true God, they serve another. To raise this objection is to answer it.

The Duties of the “Ministers” — Negatively

What is the serviceman, as “the minister of God,” to do? First, what he is NOT to do. A. He is not carrying on the propagation or advancement of Christianity by the use of the sword, just because he is called “a minister of God.” He does not do as the Mohammedans do, and all other religions which force men to become their adherents at the point of the sword, for he may not even be a Christian. All along we have been careful (as has the text) to refer to the serviceman as “a minister of God,” rather than as “the minister,” simply because we should remember that he is but one of many of God’s ministers. It is the duty of God’s spiritual ministers of the Word—those who wield the “sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God”—to advance the cause of Christ in the world. It is especially true in this war that the serviceman will do God a service by clearing the way politically (with the sword) for the extension of Christianity in the Orient and in Europe. Surely, had the Japanese gone unhindered there would have been no further
Christian missions in China or in Thailand. And yet we must not think of the serviceman as a minister of God spreading the Gospel with the sword. That would be a confusion of the power of the State with the rights and prerogatives of the Church. God in His good time will evangelize the world through His ministers who wield the "sword of the Spirit," although we know that "all things work together for good" to the Church—even a war.

Second, the serviceman as a minister of God is not to carry on a work of personal revenge or retribution or wanton brutality against the enemy. Early in the war our men were advised that they would have to learn to hate the enemy even as the enemy hated them, and yet the best officers did not encourage their men to indulge a personal hatred in their fighting. Surely the Bible forbids it as being unworthy of a minister of God. In the Old Testament there were instances of God's command for complete extermination of a godless enemy. The orders to King Saul are a case in point; he was to kill all the Amalekites as being the avowed enemies of Jehovah. He was to do the work decisively and thoroughly. But nowhere in the whole of God's dealing is there any warrant for the man who is obeying even the most drastic of His orders to be wantonly cruel, or to operate on the basis of personal revenge. Indeed, the demands our Lord makes upon His followers in that much misunderstood passage of Matthew 5 absolutely prohibit our performing any action whatsoever from a desire for personal revenge—as does also Romans 12:19.

The Duties—

Positively

Positively, the serviceman as a minister of God is to do a portion of the EXECUTIVE work of God on earth. As the President of the Universe, God has executive work to carry out in the governing of the nations, and this work He delegates to human rulers, who, in turn, delegate duties to their agents. Thus, God is ruler over all. But let us suppose that on the Wilhelmsstrasse there arises a little group of men who shake their fists against the Lord and His anointed saying: "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. Let us no more be obedient to God when He forbids anyone save Jesus Christ to rule the whole world. Let us rule it! Today we shall conquer Europe—tomorrow, the world!" And so with "beer-hall putsches" and Reichstag fires they seize hold of the God-ordained government of Germany and literally use God's "instrument for good" and turn it around against God and against His program, even as they turned the guns of the Maginot Line against the French in 1940. Now, what is God to do? Shall He let His program be set aside by these wicked and rebellious men? Shall He allow His decree at Babel dispersing the nations to be openly flouted by these would-be world-conquerors? No, like some great master of the game of chess, seeing his opponent about to assault his position, he adroitly moves his pieces, and the peril is turned aside. Hitler could not win because he was fighting against God. Although God could, with a miracle have accomplished His ends, yet He moves instead upon the far-from-perfect hearts of the Allies (and we freely admit our own sins) to raise our armies and to go out and meet this proud and blasphemous foe. We are saying that the men who do His fighting for Him are His "ministers," carrying out a part of His executive work.

Again, our servicemen are doing some of God's work. We in America believe that there are three branches to good government: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. God's legislative work was all done at Sinai and in the teachings of Christ and the Apostles; His executive work we have already considered; but His judicial work is something else again. Romans 12:19 absolutely prohibits private vengeance, but what of the enemies of God? In a few days, we hope, the Wilhelmsstrasse gang, who thought that killing Europe's innocent citizenry with lethal chambers, machine guns, and robot bombs would aid them in conquering the world, are going to have to settle for their crimes. While the American and Russian soldier may not, with God's favor, fight for private vengeance, yet he does, as God's minister, march into Berlin or Bavaria and bring to justice the Almighty's avowed enemies. We are not saying that the Allies will complete God's punishment of His foes. Those who have slaughtered innocent hostages cannot be adequately punished by even the most rigorous of human decrees; the Nazi crimes will receive a higher retribution than ever man can bring. But God will use our servicemen to bring about a partial accounting, a partial judgment; in that capacity they will be serving as ministers of God, assisting Him in His work of justice.

Practical Implication

If our exegesis is warranted, there are tremendous practical implications. Our regard for the serviceman as a minister of God should influence our attitude towards God and His part in this war. This, then, becomes a conflict in which God is vitally interested, for He has sent out His ministers into the thick of it, and He in His omnipotence and wisdom, will make it come out right.

Our attitude will also be changed towards our men while they are still carrying on the fight. They are doing God's work, not Satan's, and thus we may pray for them with greater faith, knowing that since they are God's ministers it is incumbent upon Him to protect and lead them to victory. And if it
should be the lot of some to receive the dismaying news that a loved one has given his life, they may ever regard such a sacrifice as being made not just for country, but for God.

This concept should help us on the day of their return to civilian life. On that joyous day of reunion we may realize that these our own have not just been away engaged in some bloody business infinitely remote and foreign to the church and home, but rather that they have been actively engaged in carrying out a part of God's program in the world—in another form, to be sure, and a very grim and terrible business—but God's nonetheless. If he is an unbeliever, he will not be saved by having done God's service any more than any unbeliever who inadvertently does the outward commands of the law; but if he be Christ's, when he comes to take his place in the church, it should help him and us in the problem of readjustment to realize that all along he has been doing the work of his God rather than the work of Satan. In that day, perhaps, we shall be able to see with greater clarity something of the meaning of the promise: "all things work together for good, to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." For he, the serviceman, is a minister of God...for good.

FROM OUR INDIA CORRESPONDENT

Kotagiri, Nilgiris,
South India,
April 25, 1945.

The Editor, CALVIN FORUM,
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Mr. Editor:

The gathering of the leaders and experts of the United States at San Francisco today has more than a passing interest for us in India. For, in addition to our accredited representatives attending this momentous conference, there will be present on the Pacific Coast, not a thousand miles from the Golden Gate, a number of people like Mrs. Vijayaralakshmi Pundit, whom one could describe as India's political observers. The two parties from India will, of course, hold widely divergent views as to India's future and her present condition and will therefore have different stories to tell your pressmen. A few paragraphs, therefore, from your correspondent—who is neither a professional politician nor a Government official—might be of help to your readers in forming an independent opinion on the Indian problem as it will be discussed at San Francisco in the coming weeks.

Let me remind Forum readers at the outset that while neither the official delegates nor Mrs. Pundit's colleagues can be said to represent India in the sense in which Mr. Anthony Eden and his party represent Great Britain, Sir Feroze Khan Noon, Sir Ramananmody Mudaliar and the other Government of India delegates at any rate represent an administration which governs India ably and safely and in which administration the vast majority of India's four hundred million repose tacit, if largely unexpressed, confidence. Mrs. Pundit's party, however, are the mouthpiece of the insinuators of the Indian National Congress, a political party which is only one of many even though it be the best organized and the best publicized.

When Freedom Is Not Freedom

India's "Freedom" will be, one supposes, one of the most discussed topics in your newspapers and the salons of the rich. But we citizens of India may well ask just how much any sort of freedom would be worth at the present juncture and in the immediate future. If one thinks realistically, it is easy to imagine India's present state had she been free in the winter and spring of 1941, when the Japanese juggernaut rolled southwards and overran one free country after another. Without the Royal Navy, the R.A.F., and the hard core of this country's land forces, the British Army, we should today probably be among the unhappy victims of that gigantic swindle, the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere! So the word freedom would appear to possess a number of connotations, depending on whichever propaganda wagon one rode in!

It might be instructive to examine dispassionately the question of freedom for India along two connected lines:—just who wants it and how many are asking for it. Well, the majority of Hindus don't want freedom if it means the partition of India into Hinduistan and Pakistan and the consequent destruction of the homogeneity of the country. The 86 millions of Mohammedans don't want freedom at the expense of the subjection to the Hindus who are almost thirty as numerous as the Mohammedans. The "Untouchables" and other minorities certainly do not want freedom if that results in the British taking their hands off the helm. So, who then are the people vociferously demanding freedom, not only here in India, but in England and even the U.S.A.?

Pursuing our probing to its logical conclusion, it seems only fair to state that the vast majority of educated Indians naturally look forward to the day when they will be in a position to run their own show, so to speak, and carry on the administration of their country untrammeled by any sort of control by London or any other capital—in fact, just as Canada, Australia, or any of the great Dominions have been governing themselves for a number of years. But Indian patriots—and their number fortunately is legion—emphatically do not want "Swaraj" or self-government thrust upon them when the country is neither united nor ready for this heavy responsibility. And patriots, politicians, and everybody else alike very definitely do not want their country to be plunged into chaos and internecine strife on a large scale even if those evils were to ultimately result in "liberating" India from the present well tried, sound, and, on the whole, just system of government. Our examination thus would appear to bring us to the conclusion that it is only the extreme Left Wing of the Indian National Congress which is demanding "Unconditional Freedom" for India. Blinded by race-hatred and a wholly unrealistic appraisal of the country's true socio-political situation, incomenasts of the type of Gandhi, Nehru, his sister Mrs. Pundit, and a few hundreds of others of their kind are insisting that this subcontinent of India, by a stroke of the British Parliamentary pen, as it were, should be plunged into a state of civil war and general misgovernment—for that is what the grant of freedom just now would amount to. And the tragedy of it all is that the great American public seldom hears the real voice of India—the voice of millions of sober-minded patriots—speaking of India's deepest needs, her legitimate aspirations, her passionate desire for peace and security and the freedom to live her own life and till their lands and carry on their lawful trade in their bazaars and markets.

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For the time being, however, these fundamentals are threatened by the Japanese and the Germans as well as by our enemies from within. That is why more than two millions of the flower of Indian manhood are today bearing arms and fighting shoulder to shoulder with the cream of British and American youth. The Indian Sepoy or soldier cares little or nothing for politics; he is just a patriot anxious to preserve for his people their birthrights of good government, justice, and the true freedom which these gifts bring to mankind.

The Death of Roosevelt

President Roosevelt's passing has indeed been far more than an American national bereavement. We in India feel it amounts to a world calamity just at a time when his ripe judgment, compelling personality, and far-sightedness would have been invaluable to the deliberations at the San Francisco and succeeding peace conferences. Thousands of Indian and British men and women, military and civilian alike, have thronged the memorial services which have been held in churches and public auditoriums all over India. We feel we have lost not only a world statesman and an international champion of democracy, but a true and understanding friend who strove to look beneath the surface in his study of the Indian situation. And I may add that your new President's inaugural speech to Congress has made a most favourable impression here in India. May God guide him and the American nation in the great part you are playing in international affairs.

Liberal Christians and Gandhi

Orthodox and evangelical churchmen in India have long been exercised in their minds over the way American clergymen of the liberal school applaud the overtly anti-Christian Gandhi in his fulminations against established authority and his only slightly less open hostility towards all agencies for the propagation of the Gospel. Perhaps it is the insidiousness of the propaganda disseminated by the Mahatma's henchmen in the U. S. that has caused your "Liberals" to abandon cogency in their thinking and to swallow hook, bolt, and sinker the tendentious claptrap served up by these men and women who represent but a small fraction of the educated public of India.

Standing solidly for a continuance of the British connection, the Indian Christian community has been described by even the fire-eating Jawaharlal Nehru as "the only community which is not a problem to the country." This indeed is high praise from a bitter enemy not only of the British but of Christian India. Would that the otherwise discerning Nehru could realize that India's only hope is Christ!

With warm greetings to yourself and the FORUM family,

Fraternally yours,

ARTHUR V. RAMIAH.

NIGERIAN LETTER

As from Sudan United Mission,
Lupwe, c/o D. R. C. M.,
Makurdi, Nigeria.
May 2nd, 1945.

Dr. C. Bouma,
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

This letter is being written in Lagos, a port of Nigeria, where we are awaiting transport to England and America. When searching through a mound of unanswered correspondence recently I came across a letter written by me to you but never mailed. I felt that I must not send it, but my wife urges me to do otherwise and so I copy it over now.

In my former letter I wrote:

I have not written to you regularly as I somewhat hastily promised you that I would some three years ago. It is not that I have forgotten at any time, for I have considered doing so frequently. It is that my geographical location is such that it makes an occasional letter from me of doubtful value in as far as THE CALVIN FORUM is concerned. I am not by that belittling my sphere of labor nor the value of your paper. The fact is that that section of primitive Africa with which I am well acquainted has as yet nothing to contribute to the Calvinistic outlook except perhaps by contrast. Moreover, those sections of the West African Colonies which are taking an increasing part in world thought are too far from us to play an active part in our thinking.

Look at it this way. At the moment I am sitting in the shade of a tree, with brilliant sunshine nearby soaking up the moisture of damp earth, and storm clouds brewing above. At my back sit a half dozen women on the lea side where they are quite unclothed but for strings of beads, pink and blue—for they are the recognized colors for this particular place. Apart from the briefest greetings we are unable to converse. This is primitive paganism. Working only for the very basic necessities of life, and to bear children, is the orbit of living for them. Many of them have never slept on anything but the bare ground and know nothing at all of the thousands of things met with in civilization. To them the clacking of this typewriter is a raucous racket and they are far more concerned with the problem of a new farm hoe than with anything that I may possess.

It can only raise a broad grin to consider such in relation to the promotion of Calvinistic unity or the creation of a Calvinistic university. The missionaries, of course, follow such things with the liveliest interest. If, however, primitive Africa has nothing to offer for the promotion of the Reformed Faith it is true that the Reformed Faith has very much to offer for the betterment of these backward peoples. Or is it?

I ask the question because it is clear that in the thinking of many Christians and among the clergy many a German and man is relegated to a lower place as though his soul were not to be compared favourably with that dwelling in a white person. This attitude is offensive, for only the gracious influence of God can make a man's spirit fit to dwell with Him and that quite regardless of its earthly dwelling place.

Heirs of Salvation

Can the unclothed savage—who in this year of our Lord is behaving a lot better than the uniformed ones in Europe or Asia—possibly become an heir of salvation? Yes, indeed he may. If you were to stay at this my resting place for a few months without a radio, without mail and without fellowship, until the evil of the place has had time to be felt and then walk back along the valley to the next village. You will see a new and commodious building, neat and clean with windows, and whitewash on the walls. It is a Church building. See it filled to capacity with clothed people, who will sing the praises of God as the devotional and read the Bible with comprehension (many of them). Twelve years ago all of these were dirty, dissolute, forsaken, without hope and without God.

Are they all the elect of God? Who can say? But this we can say, that you would experience a blessed reaction in leaving this evil place and entering that haven of light, which is solely traceable to the grace of God. Knowing from occasional glimpses how intense is the darkness of heathenism, I marvel at the miracles of God. To compare the opening and the close of a decade in some of these towns is to experience something of the thrill of New Testament miracles in this present age. I am not saying that perfection has been attained, but only that it has begun. Moreover, what God has begun He will complete. God is taking many centuries to perfect the Bride for His Son, and in these latter times has opened the portals of the Dark Continent to gather out some who are necessary to Him in the fulfillment of His task. As though He would prove that from the very gates of Hell there are some fire-touched stones, which gathered and wrought upon by Him make for a perfection which would otherwise be impossible. Believing this we combat the fatalism of the Muslims with the truths of the sovereignty of God and see slowly growing something beautiful to His praise.

Africas is changing. The world war is hastening the process. Self-government is the new cry of the semi-enlightened. We notice its increasing volume in the coastal press. 'Self-govern-
ment in 15 years' is not a reasonable hope. But the government is conscious of the change in public opinion and is making its plans. The long-talked-of plan for education has, however, been abandoned. It was too expensive, and as it was to be the British taxpayer who was to pay the bill, he refused to stand for it. It was just as well, as it would have meant making a few Nigerians (the blacks, that is) very highly paid while the masses continued to scrape along as best they could. Education is a big matter in the Government's thinking, but it suffers from many changes and does not know at what it is aiming. Missions do far more for education in the whole of Africa than any Government has ever dreamt of. True, that the Missions are controlled by the Government to some extent, but schooling is one of the offshoots of the Gospel ministry which provides most Africans with an education.

Are We Awake to the Challenge?

What does our college hold as a principle with regard to colored students? If in twenty years' time students of our Nigerian schools wished for advanced education at, say Grand Rapids, would it be permitted? This is not as fantastic as it sounds. A son of a local man—and the first mention of the Gospel had not been heard here thirty years ago—is now at Yaba College, Nigeria, working for his degree to become a doctor of medicine. Even in this generation there are one or two who, with a better grasp of the English language, would make a good showing at Calvin. So it is conceivable that in twenty years' time there will be men here who will complete their professional training in Europe or America. I use the word 'here' in a very local sense. In Southern Nigeria there are crowds of men and some women with degrees obtained in England and whose work is on an equal basis with their European counterparts.

But, and I emphasize the word, these African brethren cannot be expected to reach the higher rungs of the ladder of learning and usefulness unless they are helped up the intervening steps by trained workers from the Home Churches. Hence this appeal to you. I know that your position and personality wield great influence and ask that the cause of Foreign Missions shall be brought more prominently and persistently to the notice of the students and the seminarians. Without their sacrificial aid in person the work of God suffers from insufficient attention.

Thousands of Christian men have been thrust into the world across the seas by the circumstances of war. The repercussions of such an experience will be many and among them a great desire for a greater loathing for and sometimes a greater love for the heathen of the world. I have prayed for a long time that some will be constrained to dedicate themselves to the ministry of Christ abroad.

Another important fact which our Church papers reveal is that the Christian Reformed Church is emerging from its Dutch isolationism to a realization of its duties to the American nation as a whole. It is getting less exclusively reserved for the Dutch-speaking people and becomes increasingly a Church for America. Our Church's strength does not lie in the nation of its origin but in our Lord Christ whose Kingdom knows no national or tribal distinctions.

I know well and appreciate that our Church has labored long among the heathen and among the outsiders, looking on them as 'mission subjects', a phrase implying a difference hard to define. At all events those mission subjects are becoming children of God and members of equal standing with all others in the Church of Christ on earth. They do not form part of another Church but are part of the same Church. If a difference is found it is that one part is older than another, which only lays an obligation on the elder brother to be a tower of strength to the younger. Because of this I pray that our Church may send forth skilled laborers into the fields of the world—American and Foreign—not alone to evangelize but also to teach and build up the Church.

A Call to Men

These laborers should be from among the men of the Church. It is a mistaken idea that such work is the sphere of women. He who argues so is making a verbal smoke screen either of fear or lack of faith by which he may hide and yet will thrust forth the weaker sex to do a job which he hasn't himself the stamina to tackle. Mission work is a man's work. Any soldier serving in the tropical parts will admit this and, while raising his hat yet higher to the ladies who have the courage to venture across the world for Christ's sake, knows in his heart that here is a task calling for the life-long consecration of the male members of our Church.

As I write it seems as if the war in Europe is drawing to its close. We pray earnestly that that in Asia will soon be finished also. May it mean that from among the thousands of Christian soldiers who will be returning to their homes there will be found some who will take up spiritual citizenship in the cause of the Kingdom of Christ and that Nigeria, among other places, will soon benefit as a result of their obedience to the heavenly vision.

Yours very sincerely, 
EDGAR H. SMITH.

MICHIGAN CALVINISTIC DISCUSSION CLUB

The latest meeting of the Michigan Calvinistic Discussion Club was held on Friday afternoon, May 4, 1945, at the home of Dr. Ralph Stob, to that afternoon served in the double capacity of host and speaker. Before the paper was read, a bit of business was transacted. In the place of the Rev. John G. Van Dyke, resigned, the Rev. John Weidenaar was elected secretary of the Club. President Clarence Bouma was in the chair.

The subject for the afternoon was: "The New Testament Conception of the Soul!" Eliminating the psychological, epistemological, and ethical aspects, Dr. Stob centered our attention on the ontological study of the soul. Reviewing the concepts psyche, pneuma, logos, nous, dianoia, kardia and related terms, we learned that neither in Scripture nor in pagan literature is man ever viewed apart from God. The same terms are ascribed to God and to man. The Scriptural conception of this relation differs widely and sharply from the pagan view thereof. The O. T. not only assumes the existence of God; it also assumes God's being. The description of God does not reach beyond a statement of his attributes while at the same time the term Spirit does appear to receive priority. God is essentially Spirit. The Greek-Roman view of God can be summarized in the word logos. The O. T. stress on the heart is notably absent. The O. T. is more theologically oriented. In Plato and Aristotle mind and soul are ultimately one, while in Stoicism there is added the identification of God and man.

In the N. T. Paul always speaks of God as Spirit in agreement with John 4:24. Psyche is what makes the individual and forms the seat of personality. Nous stresses the conscious faculty and often has moral significance. It is the conscious faculty of making moral judgments. Not only nous but for that matter also dianoia, sarks, sarkikos, psychikos, kardia have definite moral content and emphasis—far more than we would ordinarily surmise.

Of great significance is the fact that Paul refers to man as pneuma especially since God is described as essentially Pneuma. Paul does not think of identifying the Divine Pneuma with man as pneuma. He does mean that man became pneuma by the action of the Divine Pneuma for man is made in the image of God.

What, then, is pneuma? To say that the highest category descriptive of man is intelligence is too limited a view and is reminiscent of the pagan world. Paul rises above this view. Pneuma is the whole personality and stresses its unity. Paul does not glorify the intellect; he places greater stress on will and emotion. But we must not go as far as Augustine did. Doubtless in reaction to the pagan primacy of the intellect, this great
Church father made the will primary. We cannot overestimate the tremendous shift in emphasis brought about by the Christian stress on love over against the background of pagan intellectualism, avarice, and apathy.

But neither in the early church nor at the time of the Renaissance was the pagan leaven wholly purged. Athenagoras declared that God could only be seen by reason. Justin Martyr rendered Matthew 6:21 as follows: "For where your treasure is, there will your NOUS be also." Eusebius had the same general slant. Let it be remembered that the Revival of Learning was a revival of Graeco-Roman learning, which since that day has so largely dominated Western civilization. But, mirabile dictu, even the Reformation did not overcome paganism entirely. Calvinists and some Lutherans were equally at home and appeals to the philosophers for ceding to it supremacy. He even asserts that although the word 'heart' in Scripture may indicate affections, yet he clearly leans to the view that it is predominantly descriptive of the intellectual part of the soul. And even such modern commentators as Elliott, Milligan, A. Hodge, M. Stuart, and A. Alexander fall into the same error.

"And what is the conclusion of the matter? That we cease talking about the primacy of the intellect and cease acting in accordance therewith. For that is the leaven, which has been carried down the stream of time, flourishing and being nurtured since the Renaissance, blossoming forth in idealistic philosophy. The good Lord knew that knowledge is not vice, and He does not save through dialectics."

JOHN WEIDENAAE, Secretary.

HUNGARIAN LETTER

Dear Dr. Bouma:

It is regrettable, but entirely possible to postpone even light tasks like the writing of an occasional letter when one is constantly hard pressed for time and energy for immediate tasks. My heart and soul is with THE CALVIN FORUM and with everything it stands for in essentials, yet—for the above reason—I was negligent toward it. Instead of long lines of excuses I find it the simplest sincerely to say, "Please, forgive me."

Since last you heard from me our Hungarian Reformed community suffered a keen loss through the departure of the Rev. Dr. Louis Nannasy, my predecessor in Perth Amboy, and for the last sixteen years the superintendent of our Bethlen Home, a charitable institution for our aged and orphaned, in Ligonier, Pa. He was summoned to his reward on March 21st in Ligonier. According to his own will his body was shipped to Perth Amboy and on the 26th in the morning was put of this church, which is a living memorial to his faithful pastor of over 21 years duration. He was in his 64th year; an outstanding scholar, especially well versed in the theology of the Fathers. Immediate tasks never allowed him sufficient opportunity to put the riches of his knowledge in writing, yet his whole life and all his expressions carried one always timely and always needed lesson, namely, that the Hungarian Reformed religion is primarily a religion, and whatever else only in consequence to and the extent of being religion; deep, binding, historical and historically affected religion. Having retired from his Ligonier position a few months before his death, we looked forward to his writings in eager expectation, but the Lord thought of him otherwise. His colleagues, of whom more than forty attended his funeral, miss him sincerely and remember him kindly.

Our church life is going on as usual. Our annual battle for the great festival of Pentecost is over and our ministers are girding themselves for the sweaty job of holding summer school. A greater spirit of unity and determination is noticeable. No bickerings are evident except in the case of one or two lonesome die-hard, who seem to be either too old or too slow to notice the signs of an era of better feeling. Our Ministerial Association became a vital force to hold us together for common action and expression in these critical times. The essential identity of our feelings and of the problems facing us, all helped to create this more congenial atmosphere.

The plight of Hungary leaves all of us deserted. Hungary is in Soviet Russia's orbit. For the first time in its more than one thousand years' history Hungary is excluded from the sphere of Western Christianity, culture and civilization. The very thing she was fighting against throughout the centuries befell her. The country's soul is under the influence and might of an alien, materialistic, atheistic philosophy. Only a shaver of that philosophy could be happy over this turn of events.

Is it any wonder that we find ourselves unable to unreservedly rejoice over the outcome of the European phase of this war, which although it may bring some good will and unity and help our brethren and co-religionists in the land of our origin? Is it any wonder that it is hard for us to acquiesce in any world arrangement that might draw a line of demarcation in the face of the ideals for the realization of which, along with all Americans, we also prayed, worked and sacrificed the blood of our children? Is it any wonder that the policy of compromising Christ with Bolívar is constantly straining our conscience? We disown it when weak and surrounded Hungary tried it in one direction, and we find it hardly more reassuring when great and strong nations pursue it. In one or two instances it is a religious conviction with us that no lasting good can come out of it, unless the devil is not as much of a devil as painted.

In spite of all mental tortures, we are still happy to say that there was not a single soul amongst us who did not go along faithfully with the country of our adoption. Our confidence in the conscience of America remained steadfast. It is not possible that "the land of the free and the home of the brave" should depart from what its confession, "In God we trust," implies. God is our trust also. It is possible that under His control ancient sins may be burned out of the Hungarian body politic. Social, economic, and spiritual changes might work out for the greater good of all. But we must trust that when the Lord shall have drawn all the good out of the present predicament of Hungary the sun will brighten up over our brethren again. This hope is the only mainstay of our souls at present, when a hitherto impenetrable darkness separates us from our loved ones in the land of our origin. Dark hints in the press about happenings behind this veil of isolation just tend to add to this awful suspense of knowing nothing of a certainty, now for years,—first on account of the machinations of one giant, and then those of another.

Knowing what this means, we heartily rejoice with our brethren of Dutch ancestry that the time for you to rejoice has come. We are glad with you that freedom has returned to your land of origin. May God hasten the day when the intentions of America will be as much realized in Hungary as in the Netherlands. Keep us in your mind, and help us to stand watch over the cause of Hungarian Calvinism, and over the church nursing it, the Reformed Church in Hungary.

Yours in Christ,


CHARLES VINCZEL.

MICHIGAN CALVINISTIC PHILOSOPHY CLUB

The Club had its tenth meeting in Calvin College on Friday, April 27, at 3:30 P. M. Present were nine members and eight visitors. The president, Dr. Jacob T. Hoogstran, asked the Rev. L. Oostendorp to open with prayer, and then to preside, after which he read a paper of which the following is an extract:

EPISTEMOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN

"The purpose of this paper is to offer suggestions to an unknown friend in search of a subject for a doctor's thesis. Although much that is related to this subject has been written in the Dutch, the French (Lecerf), and the English (Warfield) languages, no one has attempted to write a thesis specifically on the epistemology of John Calvin.

"Epistemology deals with the nature and the validity of knowledge. The crux of the problem is: What knowledge? This
determines what is knowable, or, what knowledge is valid. What determines how. The epistemology of a communist (Feuerbach, Comte) is determined by his materialistic philosophy. The epistemology of Calvin is controlled by his full-orbed Christian faith. I must know Calvin the theologian to know him the epistemologist.

To appreciate Calvin's epistemology we must sketch Calvin's place in the history of thought. Calvin negates and affirms. Calvin negates the Roman mass-drama mysticism by insisting upon exegetical preaching of the Word of God; Anabaptism since its shunning of the world it denies a general operation of the Holy Spirit; Scholasticism with its theory of the natural and the supernatural, or Aristotle and the pope, with total depravity; Double-truth; or, what is true in philosophy may be false in theology, or, vice versa, with the doctrine of the one God consistent in all truth. Calvin affirms that all truth must be subservient to the Christ. Christ is Calvin's epistemological imperative.

Centrality of the Scriptures

If all truth is related to God, and each "section" of it must be seen against the background of the whole, then a Christian can readily understand that the Bible is an epistemological necessity. That Calvin taught this is clear from the following considerations. Exegetical: John 1:1-18, the Christos came to have man know the Logos (Word). The redemptive Light of the World is also the Light that lightens every man coming into this world. No other road can we travel but the road that leads through Christ to the Word or Logos. Eph. 2:1ff, 4:23; Col. 2:8; I Cor. 1:20—If mind not under the Christ then under Satan.

Institutes: The Bible is compared with spectacles that a man must always wear from morning to night if he is to read nature to the glory of God.

Inference: Total depravity that has not exempted the mind of its deadly effects, and the need of the Christ in every thought demand that the Bible be central in all our thinking.

True, the Bible has not been given to us to make us scientists, but to make us Christians. Still it teaches us that God the Creator and the Redeemer is operative in every sphere of life, even in the dancing of atoms.

Accrediting of Scriptures

It was important for Calvin, adopting the position that he did, to be positive that the Bible is the Word of God. Calvin, the theologian of the Holy Spirit, should be credited with the discovery, at least the original formulation, of the Testimony of the Holy Spirit. Calvin had an authority, and we Protestants should reaffirm it, which alone can claim this honor. The papal church claims authority to sugar-coat its many errors and sins. God is our only authority. Reason and the testimony of a church (another form of proof) cannot serve us with such distinction. God Himself testifies with our spirit that the Bible is the Word of God. From this we deduce: The elect only can know truth as God demands of us to know it. The will must be bent, the mind illumined. Both faculties are corrupted. We need regeneration. Then when we read the Scriptures we know God is speaking to us.

Calvin does make use of rational proofs (indicia). This does not invalidate Calvin's position. Calvin does not have a contentless reason, a neutral court, to which he summons believer and unbeliever. Calvin always draws for his defense upon the Bible itself. The reason Calvin uses is the reason of abeliever producing the matchless superiority of the Bible as the ground for recognition of its majesty.

Epistemological Content of the Scriptures

We find in Calvin a God-man epistemological polarity. In every act of knowledge this polarity is requisite. Destroy either pole and the act of knowledge evaporates.

God, the first pole in every way, is Incomprehensible, Sovereign, and Creator-Sustainer. His Incomprehensibility forbids us to think that the human and the Divine cover the same area, identical even in such a cold formula: A equals A. Never is infinitude reduced to finitude, or finitude elevated to infinitude. There is always the eternal, timeless way of looking upon A equals A, and the temporal way of knowing the same. All our knowledge is and remains human knowledge. It is a transcript of God's revelation in nature and in grace.

If God is the Incomprehensible One we may never psychologize Him. We may not posit primacies in God, but a perfect harmony of what we humans call mind and will. Secondly, all knowledge must obey the law of sobriety and moderation. If God is God let man not enter His precincts. Thirdly, if God created us for His glory, all knowledge must be useful. Calvin can give us a description of useful which pragmatism cannot do. Fourthly, if God is Incomprehensible, Sovereign, and Creator (evident in election especially), reason cannot be adequate to answer any problem.

The second pole is man. There would be no epistemology if man were not the image of God. Here the nature and the validity of knowledge, the creation of man, truth related to God all coalesce. No system of thought can match this answer apart from Scripture. Not only does this account for man the knowing creature but also man the eating creature, and the rebellious, idolatrous soul.

We must note a distinction only too often forgotten: man before the fall and man after the fall. Before the fall the 'mind' could penetrate the secrets of revelation and the will cooperated. After the fall man needs spectacles and a changed will.

Alleged Competitors of the Scriptures

Calvin both praises and condemns 'Common Sense', 'Reason', and 'Philosophy'. This praise indicates some degree of approval. Does it follow that we must accept a sphere of neutrality since Calvin praises the philosopher? One must bear in mind that every individual is created in the image of God. Every individual has the same revelation. We see the same world, we read the same Bible. Hence it is not surprising that a non-believer, constituted as he is, can recover something a Christian failed to do. When he interprets what he has discovered divergences will soon appear. The more consciously Christian we live the greater the differences. The 'common' in common grace is the common sun and rain, the same psychological make-up or structure. The great question is what does the sinful heart do with what we have discovered (cf. Calvin on Romans 1:21).

Value

An inquiry of this nature is requisite for a genuine philosophy of Christian Education. Christian Education is an epistemological necessity.

We must appreciate the gift of reason. This faculty must investigate nature. It naturally will do so either to the glory of God or to His dishonor. Hence reason as well as will must be regenerated. Reason is never a contentless reason, a neutral jury. We never find it in life as we find it in a text book on logic: A equals A. Christians may agree with non-christians formally for pedagogical purposes. When the believer and the non-believer agree that A equals A the believer is holding in abeyance the content of this A and the uncompromising fact that A is A because a changeless Creator has made it so.

Only Christianity can account for truth, error, and idolatry. Its great competitive system, evolution, must be at an end on this score.

We must destroy mental idols. If we imagine that truth does not have to be 'human', 'moderate', 'sober', but a bit neutral in certain spheres, and not entirely God-centered in the Christ, we are enshrining subtle mental idols in the temple of our soul as heinous in their sinfulness as the bizarre creations of our hands.

We Christians can have a respectable philosophy that will explain reality on its own basis. We can and must have an apologetics that will not assume a neutral reason to prove that one cannot be neutral. If God is obscured somewhere in a neutral center then there can be no distinctively Christian message.
for if the center is captured by 'neutrality' then the periphery is only a 'mopping up' process. To the center belongs the spoils. At the same time since man is created as he is we can make him follow our argumentation which will in certain cases induce some to see a majesty in the Scriptures, but because of their refusal to accept the Scriptures the very acknowledgement of this majesty will turn upon them as a condemning testimony.'

In the discussion which followed this rich paper, the questions of the general knowledge of God, of the general testimony of the Holy Spirit, of the character of reason, and of the value of faith and regeneration, of the Scriptures, and of the particular testimony of the Holy Spirit were brought up in regard to epistemology.

The meeting was closed by the Rev. Kruthof.

H. J. VAN ANDSEL, Secretary.

THE SACRAMENTS


The general purpose of this book on The Christian Sacraments is to impress upon its readers the redemptive significance of holy baptism and holy communion. In the author's opinion "it is not too much to say that the Protestant churches on the whole have regarded preaching of preeminent importance and have obscured the place of the sacraments. On the other hand, the Roman and Greek churches, and that group in the Episcopal and Anglican churches that leans toward the Roman, have unduly exalted the sacraments and have neglected the ministry of the Word" (page 7). Being a Protestant of the Reformed persuasion, Dr. Kerr undertook to focus attention upon the sacraments, in order that they may meet with the intelligent appreciation they so eminently deserve, and may thus by the grace of God to which they are directly and closely related, serve their divine purpose in a richer and fuller measure. He by no means sponsors what, for want of a better term, may be called sacramentalism. In fact, he repudiates the materialism which manifestly underlies this aberration. To him the Word is the primary and principal means of grace. He does not minimize preaching in the least when he pleads eloquently for a better understanding and a more intensive use of the sacraments as the signs and seals of the covenant of grace. Of course, preaching should be carried on, but the sacraments should be neither depreciated nor neglected. The author believes that the Word which teaches us the doctrine of the sacraments and enjoins their faithful use upon us, does not get its due when, as is the case very generally in Protestantism, the sacraments are treated as little more, if more at all, than mere ceremonies and customary formalities.
The 179-page volume announced above, is not a treatise on the doctrine of the sacraments. It does contain some doctrinal material, and it might profitably have included more. For after all, the biblical truth of the sacraments is the divine index of their redemptive significance and the rule of their ecclesiastical administration and use, respectively. But the author meant to deal with the sacraments as an element of ecclesiastical life rather than as a part of Christian doctrine. The table of contents makes this plain. In 13 chapters the following subjects are discussed: Our Sacramental World, The Christian Sacrament, Baptism in the New Testament, The Sacrament of Christian Baptism, Who are to be Baptized? The Administration of Baptism, The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, The Celebration of Holy Communion, Special Communion Services, The Service Preparatory to the Communion, The First Communion, Preaching on the Sacraments, Is Inter-communion possible?

The volume is the second of a series of "Source books for Ministers." Blackwood's well-known The Funeral is the first number of the series. Other volumes are in preparation, we are told. It is not clear why these volumes are called "Source Books"; nor is it plain why the present volume particularly should be related specifically to the clergy. In the reviewer's opinion the laity have even greater need of a book like this than the clergy. This book would serve the laity's need excellently. But the sub-title might leave the impression that the book is in the class of professional literature. The last chapter of the book is devoted to a discussion of the most problem of open and close communion, in connection with the ecumenical that is that on the docket of the church today.

The reviewer has read this book with a good measure of satisfaction, and hopes that it may be read not only by ministers but also by laymen. Thoughtful reading of the book will doubtless tend to make at least some readers more appreciative of the sacraments, not to the prejudice of the Word but to its fuller understanding and larger use. The reviewer does not endorse all the opinions of the author, but he is hearty accord with the general thesis of the book, namely, that there is room, perhaps rather generally, for a deeper understanding, of a fuller use, notably of the Lord's Supper, and of a richer enjoyment of the sacraments.

Calvin Seminary.

S. VOLBIDA.

AS TO PREACHING


This book does not pretend to deal with the content of the preacher's message. It contains "practical help from a minister's workshop to a minister's preaching." The minister is not the source but the channel of the message. Preaching deals with the plight and predicament of the people. One should, therefore, not write sermons for posterity. Do not strive to be a prince of pulpiteers. Serve your generation here and now and be willing to lose your life in doing it.

"St. Paul wrote great literature; not because he said, 'Go to, now; I will write an ode to love which will go ringing down the centuries; watch me carefully,' but because he had his whole mind, with all of its endowments, intent on the task of making Christ formed in the lives of those to whom he wrote and spoke."

Dr. Luccock suggests patterns of outline and says, "They are offered without any due solemnity, or any pride of parentage, for they are not the creations or inventions of the author."

The ladder sermon is adapted to argument, persuasion, and the appeal to reason. This leads the writer to observe:

"Under the strong influence of the theological trend, variously known as neo-orthodoxy, Continental theology, Barthianism, in violent reaction against the liberalism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there has been a loss of faith and a slighting of the whole approach to the mind which has gone under the now discarded heading of apologetics. The tendency manifested by many exponents of this theology has been simply and dogmatically to announce revelation—This is the word of the Lord—and to regard as unnecessary and even beneath the dignity of the herald of revelation the matter of any attempt to commend the truth to the reason."

Next, there is the jewel sermon in which one idea is turned around as one might turn a jewel in his fingers to catch the light through its facets. The classification sermon is as old as the hills and may partake of the strength and beauty of the hills. Many of our Lord's parables are of this type. The sky-rocket sermon begins on the ground, rises to a height, then breaks into a variety of practical observations. The twin sermon has two contrasting points. The Roman candle sermon lets off sparks of truth. "I am the vine" suggests the analogy sermon. In the surprise-package sermon the preacher tells people that it is the most blessed thing in the world, speaking on the text that teaches the opposite. The chase-technique sermon lets the audience in on the hunt after truth while the rebuttal sermon attacks a current lie and seeks to establish more firmly the right of apologetics in sermonizing. In each case, the sermon should be more like the sun than like a meteor. The true test is, can it make something grow?

The author observes that the Bible rates higher today than a generation ago. Harking back to the days of 1910, he writes:

"In those days quite a number of young Apollonians, on graduating, having become men, put away such childish things as texts and Bible stories. In the pulpit they traded among the immensities and starry galaxies. But after a while, when the little long-suffering congregation had heard the book (except the March of Progress, for progress was marching in those days) and the one on "Science and Religion" and the one 'Pragmatism' (for pragmatism was going big then), like the prodigal, they began to be in want. Then they came to themselves and said, 'In my Father's Book are texts enough and to spare.' And they said, 'I will arise and go to the Bible.'"

But Dr. Luccock cannot suppress an outburst against those who think that expository preaching is the panacea for the ills of the church. A bit more is added to the message, but passed under the name of expository preaching was a weak paraphrase of a Scriptural passage with a moralistic postscript. Mere knowledge of the contents of the Bible is of no special merit. He agrees with one who said "that there is no more religious value in reading about the plaguiastic exploits of Samson than there is in reading about those of Joe Louis."

On the other hand, he will have nothing of "the flinging of quaint allegories out of isolated texts."

Pursuing that the teaching of the Bible has advantages. The Bible speaks common language, the native tongue of the church. It contains vivid and arresting material. It delivers the preacher from the futile strain of trying to preach 'great' sermons. The Bible furnishes parallels to present experience. It is an unrivalled spring of variety and freshness. The minister should read the Bible, bathe in it, swim in it, live in it. Do not read the Bible only with a view to the next sermon but brood over it. The best sermons to preach on Christmas were born in May before. Sermons should not be yanked from the Bible like an anqching tooth; they are garden greens that grow gradually after digging and tender solicitude.

Using many words, the preacher should be a master of them. Do not be forever intent on not doing any damage to the English language; but be sure to do some damage with it. The compositor made an inspired misprint which reported the text as follows: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not clarity, I am become as sounding brass, or tinkling cymbal." Next to clariity, one needs force,—force instead of silky words and vanilla phrases. Only people who confuse sincerity with words are subject to be addled that most in a sermon. Let the preacher beware, however, of becoming a Merry Andrew in the pulpit instead of a Saint Andrew. In the delivery of sermons there should be 'rapport' with the audience. The eye is an organ of speech. "Lovers know it; but preachers often forget it." Rhythm not singing— is the orderly march of sentences making their way into the memory.

"We are not saved by progress or culture or that modern development of grand larceny called geopolitics. We are

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saved by grace. No preaching can come close to contemporary problems in any vital way which does not begin as far away from them as possible, that is, with God.

This is an excuse for ignoring the passing parade of history. We need to tell people more than to act in the 'spirit of Christ.' We have to teach one gospel which involves the nations as well as individuals. Observe, however, the distinction between technical and moral questions. But beware of drifting along with the stream; do not be opportunistic. Watch out for occasional popularity.

This book has received high praise. The jacket says: "A balanced, comprehensive survey of what goes on in the minister's 'workshop' is here presented with Dr. Lucock's usual sparkle and delicious humor." Again, "Dr. Lucock always puts first things first!" Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick testifies that "nothing is more helpful than Dr. Lucock's books." The present reviewer differs sharply from the above evaluation. The book is full of sparkle and humor and for that reason it is delightful reading. As long as one skirts about the edges and fingers the fringes of the minister's task, the book may be called helpful. The moment one seeks to get down to cases, the very best and the most damaging thing one can say is that this book is deeper.

1. Dr. Lucock has unwittingly given a fine demonstration of the utter futility of trying to do what he sets out to do. He presumes to be able to separate the content of the minister's message from the minister's workshop: it is like showing a friend your carpenter shop after you have first removed the bench, the hammer, the saw, the nails, and the lumber. No wonder that through the back door hammer, saw, and nails are put back into the shop furtively. And the hammer, the saw, and nails are put back into the shop furtively, and the hammer, saw, and nails are put back into the shop furtively. And the hammer, saw, and nails were out in the storm and have gotten quite rusty at that.

2. One does not have to swallow Barthianism to disagree with Dr. Lucock's tirade against it. The reason that the author has little patience with Barthianism and pleads for apologetics and reason is precisely the fact that Barthianism has blasted by its apologetics the Modernism which Dr. Lucock is still holding on to. Read this letter from this book and see how the author feels.

3. There is much more discussion of the content of preaching than the foreword would have us believe there is not. The basic standard to which all must be subservient is Dr. Lucock's idea of reasonableness. The reviewer heartily endorses the position that our religion must be reasonable and true. Only, he insists that our notion of reasonableness is not an a priori dictum which we can impose upon reality. Our notion of reasonableness must be obtained full-fledged from the Word of God.

4. The use of the Bible in preaching is not only advantageous; it is absolutely indispensable. The calling of the minister is to preach the Word of God today. The statement that things are to be found in the New Testament is not to the point; New Testament ideas are not found in the New Testament. New Testament ideas are not found in the New Testament.

5. The editor of the book has unwittingly given an excellent demonstration of the utter futility of trying to do what he sets out to do. He presumes to be able to separate the content of the minister's message from the minister's workshop: it is like showing a friend your carpenter shop after you have first removed the bench, the hammer, the saw, the nails, and the lumber. No wonder that through the back door hammer, saw, and nails are put back into the shop furtively. And the hammer, the saw, and nails were out in the storm and have gotten quite rusty at that.

PASTORAL WORK


This book is addressed to the young minister, but may be read with profit by experienced pastors as well. Its aim is to provide instruction and guidance in pastoral work. The book is written in Dr. Blackwood's usual luminous style— one finds it hard to put down—and abounds in illustrations, examples, and concrete cases. It is by no means an abstract discussion. Practical throughout, the book reflects years of experience and observation.

This is an excellent piece of work. I am confident that it will be hailed as one of Dr. Blackwood's most helpful contributions. There are two main divisions: "Basic Forms of Pastoral Work" and "Other Kinds of Pastoral Work." Part One treats such things as first days in a new field, making a plan, and the work of a pastor's wife. The chapter headings are inviting; "The Call in a Typical Home"; "The Wisdom of Offering Prayer"; "The Claims of the Sickroom"; "The Flight of Shut-In Friends"; "The Ministry to the Sorrowing." Excellent suggestions are made about preparing for calls, systematizing one's work, and keeping records.

Part Two discusses other types of pastoral activities. Chapter 17, on "The Help of the Mail Carrier," abounds in helpful ideas. Other chapters treat the approach to newcomers, evangelistic work, special problems, work in the community, and pastoral assistants. Here, too, the book abounds in the types of cases which a minister is likely to meet. One feels that pastoral opportunities are far more numerous than one might have suspected.

A mechanical fault of the book is the listing of footnotes. These are given in the back, but under Roman numerals. Since the chapters are not numbered on top of the page, the reader must in each case go back to the beginning of the chapter to find the Roman numeral, and then go to the back of the book to find the footnote. Readers from our circles will find the chapter on "The Art of Winning Children" very inadequate. The covenant concept is not developed, and pastoral work is merely touched on, and Christian schools are not even mentioned.

One could, perhaps, criticize the book for attempting to cover too much ground in one volume. Thus, much more could be said about sick calling, about ministering to the bereaved, about evangelism, and about the treatment of special cases than is said in this book. But, on the other hand, some very important things are said about each subject and there is great value in that. Then, too, the reader is not only referred to special studies on these particular aspects of pastoral work, but encouraged to read them. The reading of this book might stimulate many to delve further into such volumes as Cabot and Dicks, The Art of Ministering to the Sick, or Bonnell's Pastoral Psychiatry. Dr. Blackwood himself has also written special books on evangelism and the funeral.

All in all, this is a most helpful book. It contains a fund of ideas and plans, which should put new life into any minister's pastoral program. Dr. Blackwood helps one to realize that pastoral work is by no means to be neglected, but is a pivotal part of a minister's duty. More than this, he inspires the reader with the conviction that faithful pastoral work is one of the chief joys of the ministry. Here is a "must" book for every candidate, and for many a pastoral veteran.

JOHN WEIDENAAR.

A BOOK ABOUT BOOKS


Our industrial age during the last hundred years has with increased tempo brought about a reversal of values in many areas. Things are more and more firmly placed in the saddle and they ride mankind hard. Material values too frequently and too generally crowd spiritual values, yet many of the books which are written are not only helpful but inspiring. The art of writing is often degenerating into a mere activity of words, yet many of the books which are written are not only helpful but inspiring. The art of writing is often degenerating into a mere activity of words, yet many of the books which are written are not only helpful but inspiring.

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while material "maketh a full man," that the personality of the reader communes with the personality of the author, and that time so spent is a period of "fine living, elevated thinking, toning and dignifying" the whole life of man—a period "in which the large, spiritual, permanent forces hold sway and in which character is shaped."

Under four large and interesting headings, "Why," "What," "How," and "When We Should Read," the author in thirty-eight brief sections writes most stimulatingly about many practical aspects of reading in a direct, vitalized, and personalized manner that never fails to hold the sustained attention of the reader. The presentation of so many angles of reading with so large a variety of apt quotations and illustrations of reference succeeds again and again in making the reader realize that good reading is indeed an "inward beholding" of the best that the past civilization has offered for wholesome thinking and feeling.

Under the main heading, "What We Should Read," the section "Nothing but Trash" contains so valuable and timely a warning that church officials throughout the land might seriously consider to have it read by every pulpit as a mighty but loving exhortation against the salacious reading which character is "false." "How," "and "When We Should Read," the section "Scholarly" is a fine book intended to reform the reader-minds. It will restore reading as a fine art. Here is a book for our church libraries, school libraries, and last but not least for your family library. It is definitely a power for good in our present day world of moral confusion and sheer thinking. Here men's societies, young men and young ladies' societies find excellent material in thirty-eight sections to examine a problem that baffles many parents and many teachers to start a movement for refining and purifying our tastes, for the reading of good literature and to lift hundreds of Christian young people and their parents to that stage where they can say: "Mr. Snider, we, too, love good books."

HENRY VAN ZYL.