New Year
A Prayer

Common Grace
A Practical Problem

As to Flags
In the Church

The Labor Problem
And the Christian

Ceylon
Calvinistic Background

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Letters
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New Year's Prayer

O THOU who art the Ruler of the nations and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and for His sake our Father—we stand upon the threshold of this new year with mingled feelings in our souls. Our faith is struggling with our fears. Our gratitude to Thee is tempered by our anxieties.

But we would thank Thee from the heart for Thy boundless grace in restoring peace unto us during the year that has faded into eternity. Thou hast heard our prayers, unworthy as we were. Though death has come to many on the battlefield, on the naval deck, and in the air, Thou hast been pleased to spare the lives of countless thousands who went forth to meet the enemy not knowing whether they would ever return to their loved ones. We thank Thee for our returning boys. Bless them as they resume their places in the communities whence they set forth in response to the call of their country.

Our hearts, O Lord! go out in deep sympathy to all whose loved ones have made the supreme sacrifice of which Thy Word says: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. As their bodies sleep in some distant cemetery, may we on the basis of Thy Word and the life and testimony of the departed have the blessed conviction that they have died in the Lord—our blessed Lord, who spake the words of truth and of life: I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.

We commend also to Thy gracious care the thousands upon thousands who today are suffering deeply from the ravages and after-effects of this gruesome war. We think of the dislocated, the homeless, the exiles, and all the army of innocents who are suffering as a result of man’s inhumanity to man. Grant Thy children among them the sustaining consolation of Thy never-failing promises, and may even those who know Thee not, experience the kindness and mercy and sympathy and help of fellowmen in the hour of their suffering and want.

Bless us as Christian Americans with a deep sense of gratitude toward Thee and of responsibility for the needs of suffering humanity. Thou hast taught us that from those to whom much has been given, much shall be required. Thou hast indeed blessed us above the nations of the world. We, Thy children, share in these blessings of plenty. Forgive us for our occasional grumbling and discontent. Make us ashamed of ourselves and teach us to confess our unpardonable sin of ingratitude. May we share of our abundance with those who are still destitute and in need. Teach us, who have received so much, the joy and blessedness of giving sacrificially, unselfishly, and without expecting return.

We pray Thee for all those in authority. We remember not only the President of our nation but also the heads of all the nations of the world. Give them wisdom to rule wisely and to guide the affairs of the nations in accordance with the principles of justice and mercy, of truth and righteousness enjoined and expounded in Thy Word. May it please Thee to curb and frustrate the evil designs of those who prey upon their fellowmen. Thou who hast rebuked the haughty tyrants of the totalitarian nations and curbed the fury of their cruel henchmen, keep the nations of the world and their rulers in the ways of peace and justice and understanding. May the nations not only think of their own advancement but also consider that they are their brother's keeper.

We are deeply conscious of the grave responsibility resting upon our favored nation at this juncture of the world’s history. We confess our sins as a nation. They are many. But we also thank Thee that Thou hast so signaliy favored us among the nations of the world. Impress upon us our obligation to share the blessings of a Christian democracy with the nations of the world who are less favorably situated. May we who are strong use our strength not for our own aggrandizement but for the protection of the righteous cause of the weak and the oppressed. Give us wisdom in dealing with Russia, our enigmatic ally. May we stand for righteousness and justice in the councils of the nations. Give us, we pray Thee, Christian leaders in the affairs of state.

Bless Thy Church. Make it strong in the preaching of the Gospel. Keep it from all schism and disension. Above all, keep it strong in its testimony for the truth at whatever cost. Rebuke those who are blind leaders of the blind. May those who have made themselves cisterns of their own—broken cisterns of a humanistic religiosity and morality—re­pent and turn unto the living fountains of Thy divine truth to quench their own spiritual thirst and that of the sheep entrusted to their care. May Thy truth, Thy Gospel, be for the healing of the nations. Bless every agency entrusted with its dissemination: the pulpit, the class room, the lecture platform, the missionary agents, the Christian press. Fill us with a holy passion in Thy service. May the beneficent influence of Thy Gospel radiate into
every realm of human life and endeavor. And hasten the day when the kingdom of the world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever! Amen.

That Escape Feeling

EVERYWHERE we hear the expression of the inevitable escape feeling that could be expected after the close of the war. Reports from Europe indicate its prevalence. Whatever the attitude of the once exiled repatriates may be, many people in the countries which have suffered under Nazi domination are eager to "get away." This is also true of the Netherlands. Some want to get away to Russia. Others talk about going to the Indies. And the list of those desiring to emigrate to the New World is constantly growing. This escape feeling is in itself neither evil nor good. It is simply a psychological phenomenon. But its implications and applications in practice may be fraught with both evil and good.

Two, quite distinct and unrelated, forms in which the manifestation of this post-war escape complex strikes us now may be noted. The one pertains to European immigration, the other to our international responsibility.

Unless the United States keeps its bars down, there is bound to be a flood of immigration into our country before long. And even if our own country should keep its immigration doors only slightly ajar, we will face the prospect of a heavy Canadian immigration, much of which sooner or later filters across the border. Already the organization of immigration societies and agencies both abroad and on this side of the ocean is reported. Those churches in our land which have a European background and stand in close relation to the mother churches abroad have a special responsibility to care for the spiritual needs of these coming immigrants. Such immigration groups have often proved to be of the finest religious and racial stock and their integration in Canadian and American church and civil life should be a matter of concern for the proper agencies. Especially the Reformed and Christian Reformed Churches in America with their Dutch traditions and Calvinistic faith will do well to be on the alert when that escape feeling among post-war Dutch groups is translated into action.

This escape feeling also strikes us from an entirely different angle. We are exposed to the evil of desiring to escape from our world responsibility now that the war is over. The war has taught us a very needful lesson on this score. We Americans had imagined for decades that we were a "self-sufficient" nation; that European affairs did not concern us as a nation; and that our national salvation lay in isolation. We now know better. Though it is taking the leaders in one of the major political parties a bit longer than those in the other, most people with their eyes open know that isolationism is both impossible and immoral for a nation of our standing and responsibility. Some may take the issue on the basis of pure self-preservation, but even so, they have begun to see the light. Others have been won over to a new sense of world responsibility, which even the cynicism of those who sneer at Uncle Sam for wanting to "mind everybody's business," cannot quench. It was a great leader in the "isolationist" Republican party who gave us the best seller, One World. On this score he saw eye to eye with his political opponent, that indefatigable champion and patron of the oppressed nations of the world, the man whose departure from the White House is being felt increasingly as the days go by.

But also here the escape feeling is growing upon some of us apparently. In a way it is a natural reaction after the war. We like to slide back into our isolationist rocking chair. And there are others who were never cured of their isolationist disease and, after a period of silence when the wind blew in another direction, are only too eager to sing the same refrain over again. The most charitable thing that can be said of them is that they are being overcome by a natural escape feeling. It would be so nice if we could wash our hands of the deeper responsibilities of world affairs. But in the name of common sense, in the name of history, and above all, in the name of our moral accountability before God, we as a nation must fight this escape feeling as a disease. Let the worldly cynic sneer at our "Pharisaism" and "self-righteousness," we as Christians at least know the difference between these and the duty of being our brother's keeper. The Cain spirit is suicidal for Christian nations as well as for Christian individuals.

"In my judgment, if the selfish interest of America becomes the official guiding light of our world policy, it will be one of the most tragic phases of American history. The doctrine of 'America First' is purely the extension of the doctrine 'Me First.' There is, and there will be, a considerable measure of this doctrine in life. But if it ever becomes the officially accepted standard to be followed by everyone, the tragedy, chaos and suffering, the demoralization and disintegration, will be indescribable. Selfishness is not a virtue for individual life. It is my view that the first pennant nailed to the mast of our foreign policy should state the objective to promote the slow, steady march of social, economic, and cultural progress of all mankind and the general welfare of one world at peace. Nothing less than that is worthy of America."

These many words of Captain Harold E. Stassen may well be pondered and taken to heart by all Americans of whatever party.

We cannot escape the world in which we live today, and we may not try to escape our solemn duty to that world.
The Future of China

From every point of view the unification and rehabilitation of China should be promoted. Now that the immediate threat of a civil war in the most populous country of the world seems to abate, one may well hope that this nation will come to its own. The Chinese have been in the second world war before we of the West ever recognized the existence of such a war or called it by that name. They have suffered much. All forward-looking nations having the welfare of others as well as their own in mind will bring their influence to bear in aiding them on the road to recovery. Now that Japan has been defeated, China may, before many years have passed, play a great role in the Far East.

America has a special responsibility in this situation. Politicians and financiers may look upon every country but their own as a potential source of exploitation for their own selfish ends, we who are guided by Christian standards must have a higher evaluation of the situation. Avoiding all impractical realistic talk that does not square with life's realism, we no less must be averse to the cynicism that is often heard on this score from the lips of those whose Christianity is perhaps only a Sunday Christianity. America has shown a noble attitude toward China in the past. This attitude has been influenced by the principles of Christian morality. Indirectly the American missionary leadership in China has had much to do with this. Our stand in the matter of indemnities after the Boxer Rebellion has shown China that America is interested in aiding her to come to her own culturally as well as politically.

Two things are needed sorely with a view to the larger future of China. The first is the unification of the nation. It would be a tragedy of gigantic proportions if the prediction-let us hope glibly made-of a ten year civil war should come true. The Chinese nationalist government under Chiang-Kai-Shek and the so-called Chinese Communists must join hands. Their cause is a common cause. Only unitedly can they build a strong and prosperous China. Nor does this prospect appear as remote as it did a few months ago. If recent and more accurate reports may be believed, the two groups are not as far apart in political views as was first believed. Just as much is called "fascist" which happened to be out of tune with a democratic regime, so the term "communist" appears to have been loosely applied to much that was only at odds with a nationalist regime. There appears to be a growing recognition on both sides that these two groups must get together. The appointment of General Marshall as ambassador to China looks from this point of view very hopeful. China needs a democratic form of government. All parties must be recognized. This is a huge order for a nation such as China with its 440 million people who are in sore need of education, of civil and national sense, of political maturity. But it must be done. And it must be done soon. The unification and the democratization of the Chinese people is their most immediate great need, and America can and ought to do more than any other nation in aiding her to attain this goal.

But there is another great goal which China must set herself to assure her future. This goal is the Christianization of China. A genuine and enduring democracy can be built only upon Christian foundations. This lesson, which our own nation must learn as well if its future is to be assured, China must imprint deeply upon its consciousness in the hope-for coming days and years of reconstruction. Already China owes much, in every way, to the noble band of missionary leaders, chiefly from America, who have placed their stamp upon Chinese life in the last century and a quarter. Their influence has been all out of proportion to the size of their forces. China with its Confucian moralism, its Buddhist superstition, and its Taoist magic needs the Christ of the Scriptures for its spiritual redemption. Christian missionaries, men of spiritual leadership and vision, are needed in China more than ever before. And these missionaries, though they remain American, must be Chinese at heart. Whatever the government may say, the attitude of these missionaries toward rights of extra-territoriality must be clear and unequivocal. Their efforts must be directed to the building up of the Chinese Christian Church under Chinese Christian leadership. Without any spirit of patronizing, we of America should politically—as a nation—and spiritually—as a church—be a big brother to this slumbering, giant baby among the nations of the world.

May God make our nation and, above all, the Christian Churches of America see their duty toward China clearly and give them grace, both common and special, to do it.

The Evangelical Library

Just before the outbreak of the war the editor, on a speaking visit to Cambridge, England, became acquainted with a most remarkable collection of books known as the Beddington Free Grace Library. This library, housed in one of London's suburbs, was owned and operated by Mr. Geoffrey Williams, a devout layman, who had spent some years in building up this most unusual collection of books from a nucleus in his personal possession. At the time of our visit it consisted of no less than 20,000 volumes. A brief editorial in the September, 1939, issue introduced this library to our readers and in that same issue Mr. Williams wrote an article explaining its history, purpose, and circulation (The Calvin Forum, Vol. V, pp. 61 and 75). The creation and circulation of this library
was a labor of love on the part of Mr. Williams, whose prime interest was to circulate Puritan devotional and theological literature as well as accounts and sources of Calvinistic revival in Great Britain in the 18th century. For a nominal sum these books were mailed out to anyone, even abroad, who was interested in such literature with the hope that the Lord might use such reading to bring about a revival and deepening of the God-centered faith of the Scriptures. Since our first writing on this subject Mr. Williams has from time to time favored us with letters from London, some of which dealt with the spiritual reaction of God’s people during days of blitz warfare over London, but in all of which he strove to keep the Beddington Free Grace Library before our readers.

We are happy to say that some of the ideals for this library to make it more widely useful have recently been realized. The library was transferred to centrally located premises in London; Mr. Williams turned over his entire collection to a Board of Trustees incorporated for that purpose; it was renamed the Evangelical Library instead of the Beddington Free Grace Library; and Mr. Williams was appointed Librarian and Organizing Secretary of the new project. A story of the opening of this new library together with a condensed report of the address delivered on that occasion may be found on another page of this issue. This library will undoubtedly continue to be of great interest to all lovers of Puritan Theology and the Reformed Faith. There is probably not another collection like it anywhere in the world. Its usefulness has been greatly enhanced by this recent reorganization. A catalogue is soon to be compiled and printed. Books may circulate throughout the world. Membership donations are solicited with a view to maintaining and expanding this library. Interested parties and those desirous of further information may write to: The Evangelical Library, Mr. Geoffrey Williams, Librarian, 55 Gloucester Road, South Kensington, London, S.W. 7, England.

C. B.

Should We Try to Christianize the Realm of Common Grace?

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In Christian circles, especially those which are influenced by Reformed thought, we have considerable demand today for the application of Christian principles to current problems. The general attitude is that there is such a thing as a Christian state, Christian art, Christian economics, so that in every day life there can be instituted forms of activity which may be called Christian. Moreover, it is usually held that the Christian community should strive, as far as possible, to set up in the realm of “common grace” this specifically “Christian” form of institution or activity. But can this be done, and should it be done? It would seem that this question must be settled properly or the Christian Church will fall into all kinds of confusion when faced with the problems of the post-war world. For the purpose of attempting to throw a little light on this matter, the present article has been written.

In order to see the problem somewhat more clearly let us look first of all at the relative positions of the two spheres of activity of Divine Grace.

There is first of all the saving grace vouchsafed to the elect: Special Grace. It is specifically related to redemption. God has sovereignly bestowed this grace upon the elect in order that they might be redeemed from the penalty and power of sin. It is the grace which sent Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to His humiliation and death. It is the same grace which raised Him from the dead, and which today gives Him the position of our Intercessor and King. It is also the source of our effectual calling, our sanctification and everything else which is ours as Christians. It is redemptive grace. But as such it is confined in its direct action to those who are Christ’s people. It may influence and affect those outside the realm of God's sovereign election indirectly, but it is not for them except as it is mediated through the Church of Christ. Thus special grace is limited to the relations of the Triune God to His elect people.

Common grace, on the other hand, is the sphere in which lies the world. It is the sphere of all men. It is the Common Grace of God which sends the rain upon the just and the unjust alike. It is the grace of God which does not deal with man's redemption, but does produce such men as Plato, Leonardo da Vinci, Edison and others. It is the grace which gives us the Red Cross, peace conferences, art, literature and other blessings. Common Grace is given to all men in some form or other, so that they are able to exist together and live as human beings.

But why call it grace? We can only name it this when we turn back to look at man's origin and that
which has befallen him. As originally created man was made in the image of God with true knowledge, righteousness and holiness, and with dominion over the creatures. Yet man fell. He refused to acknowledge God as Lord and King. He denied that God was his only source of truth and the only object of his existence. Instead he placed himself the edge God as Lord and King. He denied that God over. Thus man lost his true knowledge, righteousness and holiness; and had it not been for the grace of God he would have destroyed himself immediately by his own moral rottenness. Indeed, God Himself would have destroyed him as He practically did in the days of Noah. But the one thing that preserved man was the grace of God. In order to bring to full fruition His sovereign counsel for the redemption of His elect people, God bestowed grace upon all men. It was not that sin might be completely eradicated from the hearts of the non-elect, but that sin should not bring forth its full fruit in the individual and in society generally. The restraining hand of God was laid upon the power of sin, in order that His purpose with regard to His elect people should be fulfilled.

The restraint of sin brought about by Common Grace appears first of all in the matter of knowledge. While man lost his ability to give a true interpretation of the universe, he did not lose the capacity to understand the universe in its mechanical aspects and to use it for immediate practical purposes. Thus man has been able, to a certain extent, to overcome nature and to find out many of its secrets. He has even come to the position where he has been able to break the atom and to appropriate some of its power to his own use. But in all of this, man has not been able by means of his own little brain to solve the great “riddle of the universe” nor give any ultimate explanation of existence. Instead, his only logical, and from his point of view, sensible philosophy is pure pragmatism; for at least that point of view acknowledges that man cannot, by his own intellectual efforts, attain to a satisfactory world and life view.

Man, however, was not only preserved by Common Grace from a complete and absolute loss of knowledge; he was also preserved from a complete loss of righteousness. True his present goodness is but as filthy rags in comparison with God’s holiness. Nevertheless man could be far worse than he is. Even Belsen, Buchenwald and the Japanese prison camps do not represent the ultimate depths of moral degradation to which man might go were it not for the Common Grace of God. Because of this we have today such things as humanitarian institutions supported by non-Christians. We also have the civil government which aids in the restraint of evil. Both the virtues of the individual and the wider virtues found in society as a whole, making life at all liveable, all come from the grace of God. They exist because God has held tight the reins of sin, so that men would be able to live with each other. At the same time he has enabled certain individuals and peoples to develop, apart from Special Grace, moral abilities and gifts which have helped and blessed mankind. But still this is not saving grace.

Finally there is the effect of Common Grace in the field of aesthetics. Even here God has not allowed the ugliness and horror of sin to gain complete control. True there is much in this sin-cursed world today which is ugly and repulsive; but still there is much that is beautiful. Not only is much of the beauty of nature still preserved, but man himself also produces beauty. We see it in the great works of literature, music and art. We have a Homer, a Milton, a Shelley, a Longfellow in literature; a Mozart, a Bach, a Beethoven in music; and a Raphael, a Titian, a Rembrandt, a Corot, a Constable in painting. But they are not the sources of their own instincts for beauty in word, note, line or color. Their gifts come from the grace of God; and the very fact that sinful men can appreciate their works is likewise by the grace of God. But yet again, these gifts neither save the artist nor his admirers from the ultimate consequences of sin. They are merely a temporary reprieve from the full sentence of death unless Special Grace intervenes.

What then is the difference between Special and Common Grace? It is this: while Common Grace restrains sin so that the external form of the image of God in man is not completely wiped out, Special Grace has as its end the complete restoration in men of God’s image. Common Grace, shall we say, saves the surface, while Special Grace goes down to the very foundation. Special Grace brings man back to the position where he sees himself as the creature of a sovereign God, the service of whom is his highest activity in this life or the next. Thus one who is in the realm of Special Grace, approaches all things in life with this point of view, and has as his object in life the glory of God.

But the two spheres of the operation of grace do not exist as separate entities in the world. They are organically related but not united. For one thing, can we think of Common Grace as existing apart from the purpose of God to save His elect people from sin? It would not seem so. We might almost say that Special Grace is the reason for the existence of the sphere of Common Grace. The latter provides the necessary background upon which Special Grace must operate, even as Christ is made head over all things to the Church. At the same time, the sphere of Common Grace can be largely influenced by Special Grace. The Word of God, given unto the elect, that they might be redeemed from sin, also lays down many principles which can, should, and frequently are, applied in the sphere of Common Grace. Thus the preservative activity of Common Grace is strengthened by the
indirect action of Special Grace through the work of the Church upon earth. At the same time, were it not for the partial restraint of sin in the hearts of the elect before their calling, all their faculties would be destroyed. God therefore could not deal with them as rational, responsible creatures, but simply as automata or robots. Thus the two spheres of God's gracious activity are bound tightly together.

* * *

But our original question still remains: should we try to Christianize the sphere of Common Grace? This is perhaps one of the most fundamental questions involved when we think of the relation of the Christian and of the Church to their environments. Should we attempt to bridge the gap between the two realms making them all one through the widespread influence of the sphere of Special Grace? This is a question which has caused much trouble in the Church in past days, and is raising its hoary head again today.

In one sense we can say immediately that even asking such a question is an insult to God. He alone has the right and the power to extend the realm of Special Grace for that is His prerogative. Only by the supernatural action of the Holy Spirit can anyone enter the realm of Special Grace. This is God's effectual calling. Therefore in one sense we can have nothing to do with bringing the realm of Common Grace into the realm of Special Grace for that privilege belongs to God alone. He will bring that to pass only when Christ, Himself, returns to judge the quick and the dead.

In another sense, however, this question is perfectly legitimate. We hear people today talking about a Christian state, Christian education, Christian art, etc., as though there were such things. Can we say for instance that there is such a thing as a Christian form of government? The reply may be made that a theocracy is such a government; but are we to try to bring one into existence in this day? Again is there a Christian form of economy? Is capitalism—or socialism—or anarchy a Christian form of economic organization? We could keep on asking questions such as these concerning every sphere of human life. Ultimately we must ask God, in His Word, tell us directly or by implication what a Christian state, Christian art, Christian education should be? Or does he simply lay down certain principles for society, art, science, etc., which should be followed to attain the highest ends for those particular spheres of human activity?

Let us look at some of these questions more closely. If we take, for instance, the question of social relationships, we may find a partial answer. Concerning this matter, the Scriptures have considerable to say. They state that every power is ordained of God, and that the civil ruler bears the sword in order to punish wrong-doers. In the economic field also we are told that the laborer is worthy of his hire, that he should not be kept waiting for his wages nor be defrauded of them. We are also told that men should give to the poor and help those less fortunate than themselves. On the other hand, the Scriptures do not say that there is one certain form of government or political economy which is divinely ordained and for which the Church must continually strive. The form of government and the form of economic organization comes in the providence of God. It may partially fulfill the requirements laid down in the Scriptures, or it may not. But until Christ's kingship is finally acknowledged by all men at the end of days it does not seem that we should expect to see any such thing as a Christian state, or any other specifically Christian form of social organization, except the Church.

Let us turn to the question of the intellect. Does the Scripture tell us that there is some specific form of Christian education altogether different from others? It would not seem so. True, certain principles are laid down which should give the proper orientation to what we learn. We are told that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Then too, we know that God never changes, so that truth must always be one. At the same time we are also informed that all that man discovers by means of his own mind is due to the grace of God. But does this give us Christian education? Does it alter the facts of arithmetic, literature, etc.? It would not seem so. Principles are laid down for our instruction; but any method of education is Christian, or rather no method of education is Christian, no matter how it fulfills these conditions for all of them can be known by man through the operation of God's Common Grace.

Or take the question of art. Is there a revelation concerning art? True the Word speaks of the beauty of holiness, but that would seem to be beyond human art. We know that God created all things good, and that by His Common Grace He has restrained the power of sin to corrupt. Therefore, there is still beauty in the world. But when we have said that, have we found any motif of Christian art which is different from any other artistic principle? Some may claim that if an artist or a musician is a Christian, whatever he does is Christian art. But again, is that correct? Does the Christian artist use different media, treat of different subjects, employ different techniques and do it differently from non-Christian artists, simply because he is a Christian? No, he uses the same instruments and same techniques as the non-Christian, and—sad to say—sometimes produces inferior work. Can we say then that there is such a thing as Christian art? There may be art
dealing with Christian subjects, or by Christians, but it is doubtful that there is such a thing as Christian art, for art as such belongs not to the realm of Special but of Common Grace.

It does not seem reasonable, therefore, that we should try to Christianize the sphere of Common Grace. God's non-redemptive gifts are given to all men, and sometimes non-Christians seem to receive more than Christians. Moreover, if we should attempt to bring the realm of the action of Common Grace into the realm of Special Grace we should actually destroy both, for we shall be attempting to make specifically Christian what was never intended to be so in this world. We should be forced to deny legitimacy to all governments which are not made up solely of Christians working out what we consider a Christian policy. We should have to reject all learning which was not possessed by Christians as false learning and we should have to reject all art not executed by Christians, and perhaps of Christian subjects, as non-existent. What is more, since Special Grace deals specifically with redemption from sin, if there were no such thing as Common Grace, redemption would be absolutely and completely revolutionary in every phase of human activity. But Common Grace has so preserved man's ability in the realm of everyday things, that he can accomplish much despite his sin. True, he may not see the full-orbed implications of his own activities unless he becomes a Christian. Nevertheless, even should he become a Christian he would not then be required to forego everything he knew before as a non-Christian, either as to the form or content of his knowledge. Were this not so redemption would have to be purely mechanical, for man would no longer be a rational, responsible creature.

By this time, no doubt, there may be some readers of this article who will feel a rising opposition to the views expressed above. They may ask if the writer is not making a separation between the Church and the World similar to that made in Roman Catholic theology, or by many modern Fundamentalists. This he would hasten to deny. On the other hand, there is a growing tendency today to too much loose talk concerning “Christian state, art, etc.” The result is that many Christians feel that unless all the work which they are doing, no matter what its nature, is specifically Christian, it is worthless. A good example of this attitude is shown in the views of many that the United Nations Charter is evil and sinful because not specifically Christian. To the League of Nations the same attitude was manifested, many Christians declaring it to be wrong for a nation to adhere to it because it was not based upon the Christian doctrines of sin and redemption. They ignored the existence of Common Grace.

Along with these views goes another, which is frequent, though harder to define. It is that we can spread the Gospel by Christianizing the realm of Common Grace. As people have tended to forsake the church, there is a tendency for some Christians to feel that Christianity can be applied in the realm of Common Grace, and thereby men may be won to Christ. We must emphasize, however, that such is not the case. Men can be brought to Christ only through the faithful witness of the Church to the fundamental facts of sin and redemption through the sovereign grace of God. Evangelism by the Church, not Christian political science, political economy, art, literature, is the only means of bringing men to the Kingdom of Christ.

“But,” some will object, “can you make a separation such as this? Christianity embraces all things in its life and world view. Therefore, there must be a Christian political science, Christian economics, Christian art.” In a sense this is true. There is a Christian philosophy of all these matters, and of all others. We are given Christian standards of government, social relationships, etc., but we are still not given a recipe for a Christian government, nor for a Christian economic system, nor for Christian art. True, we do have a Christian Weltanschauung, but because of the effects of Common Grace our divergence from the non-Christian in practical affairs is not nearly so great as it might be. This idea itself is included in our Christian view of both Special and Common Grace.

We then are faced with the fact that, although Special Grace dominates his entire thinking, the Christian is in a sense a dweller in two spheres. Because he is a Christian he is not completely changed nor turned away from the realm of Common Grace. When he becomes a Christian he does not lose all the abilities and gifts which he possessed as a non-Christian. Through the regenerative work of God he now regards all things in a completely different light, although his outward way of life and action may not require any great or appreciable change. The non-Christian on the other hand, possessing the gifts of God's Common Grace without realizing their nature, does not look at them in the same way, although he may act in much the same way as the Christian. Indeed, his close relationship to the Christian's way of acting is due to God's restraining grace, even though his thinking is fundamentally directly opposed to Christian thought. Yet while the non-Christian's actions are not nearly as bad as they might be, possessing no little civic virtue, he is brought by them no nearer the Kingdom of God. The areas of Special and Common Grace cannot be organically united for they have different ends in view.

But does the area of Special Grace have no influence on that of Common Grace? It does, and very decidedly. It strengthens and indeed acts, as part of the restraining power on sin and its manifestation. Special Grace reinforces by the work and
teaching of the Church the true and proper principles which lie at the basis of all human activity and relationships. Thus the realm of Special Grace is most necessary for that of Common Grace. Indeed if the influence of Christianity begins to fade or weaken, the sphere of Common Grace seems immediately to begin a process of moral deterioration. Even then, however, there is by no means an equal deterioration in technical knowledge and ability. While that may take place eventually to a certain extent, it is by no means certain. Germany is perhaps one of our best modern examples. Special Grace influences the sphere of Common Grace, even though it cannot absorb it.

We must realize then that we cannot confuse these two spheres in any way. We cannot talk about a Christian political or economic program, Christian art or music. Christians may be involved in these matters, and they should be, but they must realize that right at this point they are Christians working in the sphere of Common Grace. Thus while they remain Christians with their own distinctive point of view and sense of responsibility, they should not try to make the realm of Common Grace part of that of Special Grace. The Kingdom of God is righteousness and truth and peace, not political parties, tariff reforms, views on perspective or dissonances of chords. As Abraham Kuyper pointed out in his Stone Lectures, while the Roman Church said that the Church should control all life, and the Anabaptists made the same claim for the Kingdom of God, Calvinism on the other hand "proclaimed that the Church must withdraw again within its spiritual domain, and that in the world we should realize the potencies of God's common grace." It is only when we hold this proper balance, that we can give both spheres of the operation of God's grace their due place in our thought and life.

**Flags in the Church**

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The remarks and suggestions in the following article are occasioned especially by two facts: first, by questions from readers of THE CALVIN FORUM, second, by the recent change from war to peace. These questions reduce to the following three:

- Is the national flag in the sanctuary a symbol of improper nationalistic imperialism?
- Is the so-called "Christian Flag" deserving of the place it has come to occupy in the church?
- Is any flag at all a proper accoutrement to church furnishings?

Our remarks are also occasioned by the patent fact that in many churches the war was the cause for placing the flags in the church and Consistories and Boards are wondering whether the advent of peace should mean a change of policy in this regard.

As a matter of actual practice, many a church simply acquiesced in the propaganda of "Patriotic" organizations who, sometimes blatantly, demanded that especially during war, Americanism demanded that the church express her willingness to cooperate in the national effort and national programs, by displaying the national flag in its sanctuary, just as it was being displayed in all other public assemblies. If, now that the period of acquiescence is past, we could feel free to go back to less nationalistic practice, all might now be ended. But in the course of the controversy centering around the flag question, statements of such universal import were made that permanent practice in this matter bids fair to replace what began as a temporary expedient. For that reason, it is important that there be a greater amount of clarity on some of these universal attitudes and opinions. Such questions as the relationship between church and state, and the fundamental premises of Pacifism, have been brought into the discussion.

The entrance of the national flag into the sanctuary was and is espoused chiefly by certain organizations committed to an unreasoning patriotism which is not even a real patriotism, in that it substitutes some form of "One Hundred Per Cent" nationalism for that higher loyalty to God which is the basis of all true patriotism. Such organizations simply fortuitously push the public services of the Church into the same category with all other public meetings. They do not hesitate to use the sacred worship as an opportunity for arousing public opinion on public questions, for eliciting one hundred per-cent cooperation for all sorts of national "drives" and promotion schemes.

On the other hand, the opposition to the presence of the American flag in church has, too often, been based upon an equally illegitimate pacifism. To say, as leaders of that element have said, that even the public school should ban the American flag as "a dangerous fetish-worship which promises thoughts of war among school children," is to use language that any lover of his country and its ideals rightfully spurns. After all, the flag is not only a symbol of war, but also of "peace and hope..." and of moral strength that is not to be trifled with. "Loyalty to all nations will not be advanced by..."
ridiculing loyalty to one nation" any more than a child may be said to lose respect for other people because he is taught respect and obedience to the members of his own family.

To say, as leaders of the Federal Council of Churches have said, "the church is not at war" is only to befuddle the issue. It cannot be said that the church, as such, is not at war. The church was and ever should be at war with the basic ideologies against which our Allied nations pitted their strength, a strength which is not only military, but, more important, moral. And that moral strength it is the very business of the church to foster and maintain.

The positions that have been set over against one another as though they were absolute opposites, namely that, on the one hand, the church exists under the protection of the state and, on the other hand, that the church is supra-national, are both true, but only relatively true. The church, as a spiritual unity, the invisible church, and the spiritual message of the visible church, these things are certainly raised above divisions and boundaries of nationality or race. But the church as a concrete organization, and the freedom of the visible church to continue to speak out its spiritual message, are things that, in such a state as America at least, and the same must be said of any government granting freedom of religion, are assuredly under the protection of the state.

But, there can be no doubt, actual circumstances, rather than theoretical considerations have created the problem. People generally, because of the war, had that on their minds and they wanted the flag in "their church."

To offset too great an emphasis upon nationalism, the so-called "Christian Flag" came into being. It has no universal significance, necessarily. It was designed by C. C. Overton in 1897, definitely as a "way out" of what seemed to be in danger of becoming a problem. It was, he said, "a flag for Sunday Schools and churches, which would not be restricted by any geographical boundary and would remind all men of their allegiance to God, just as their national flag expresses loyalty to their country." In the same spirit, the Episcopal church has designed and uses a church flag of their own.

But the "Christian Flag" instead of solving the problem, only raised it in another form. What must be the relative position of those two flags? Generally accepted flag etiquette decrees that the place of honor is to the right of the speaker if the flag is raised above the floor of the auditorium, and to the right of the audience if the flag stands on the auditorium floor. But which flag was to have the place of honor? The precedent of the navy of the United States, to fly a flag representing religion above the national ensign during the religious services on board ship and in training centers, seemed to give some weight to the idea that the Christian Flag should be in the position of greater honor. Objectors to that practice point out that the "Christian Flag" is not a universally accepted symbol of anything—it doesn't even have the sanction of a given church as has the Episcopal church flag—and if the Navy precedent were to be carried out, the position of the flags would have to be changed before and after each service to give the national flag precedence when the church building is not used for worship.

Several interesting compromises have been worked out. For example, the Zion Reformed Church of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, hangs the national flag from the balcony to symbolize that the congregation meets under the protection of the state. In West Milford, New Jersey, a church, after a particularly distasteful struggle, placed the national flag to the right on the auditorium floor and the Christian flag to the right on the platform, so that the impression almost seems inescapable that in spite of the fact that the loyalty of the church's official functions are for Christ first, the loyalty of the people still is for the nation first. A great many churches simply avoided difficulty by quietly putting the national flag in the place of honor, hoping that when the wartime hysteria is over it can just as quietly be removed.

In general, we feel quite definitely for the position that in a sanctuary where there is a cross, symbolizing loyalty to Christ, no Christian Flag needs to be added and the cross should occupy the position of precedence. The national emblem, if it is felt that it should be there at all, should be in a position that suggests national dependence upon Christ, penitence before His cross, rather than national arrogance, usurping authority where only Heavenly authority may be acknowledged.

In churches, where there is no altar or cross, and it is felt that the times require the presence of the national flag, we feel that it is hardly proper that it be there alone because in the minds of the people it is likely to become too compelling a symbol of the martial spirit and of worldly loyalties so as to detract from the spirit of devotion to Christ. In such churches, the Christian Flag is a legitimate way of guarding against one-sidedness.

In any case, it is wise to deal gently with the problem. Don't magnify the issues beyond their inherent importance. Remember, a great deal of the controversy is born of wartime hysteria and will die down. We may hope that the public demand for the national flag in church will soon lessen, not because the flag is necessarily out of place, but because bunting of any kind, whether national or "Christian," is out of harmony with the deep, abiding, eternal, spiritual values for which the church of the Lord Jesus Christ stands.
Labor and the Christian

Richard Postma
Editor "The Young Calvinist"

Labor today has risen to a place of unprecedented power in America. The larger unions boast of millions of members. They are led by men who, under different circumstances, would be perfectly able to manage the largest concerns in the country. The treasuries of the unions are filled to overflowing. The labor organizations are able to engage the keenest legal minds. Unionism in America has become a big and important business.

The American public is vitally concerned in these matters. Attitudes regarding the labor movement are being established and these attitudes are taken on the basis of opinions largely the result of information disseminated through the newspapers and the radio. It might be well for us to consider that many sources of this information are in the hands and under the control of groups not too friendly to labor.

Much of the criticism of labor and labor organizations is unfair and unjust. Strikes, unnecessary and unjustified strikes, have been, but they have not been of the magnitude and extent as to warrant the assertion that unions and their leaders are irresponsible and unpatriotic. When all the facts are known it may well become evident that labor is not the only one who has sinned in this matter. On the whole the record of labor during the war has been excellent and praiseworthy. Labor has produced abundantly and overwhelmingly the tools needed by our fighting men to bring, with the blessing of God, the war to a victorious conclusion.

That the American public is apprehensive when it regards the activity and the power of labor unions is caused by the fear of what the labor organizations are going to do in the days that lie just ahead of us. There is an almost universal feeling that all is not right and that a terrific struggle is in the making. In a recently conducted poll on the question which organizations are most in need of reform, labor unions ranked highest. Of the people who expressed themselves on the question 3.9% named the Supreme Court; 13.2% indicated the stock exchange; 13.6% mentioned utilities; 29.6% were undecided; but 38 out of every hundred persons asked stated that they considered the labor organizations as most in need of reform. Other recently conducted surveys reveal the fact that the public has not much sympathy for pickets; condemns sit-down strikes; believes that non-strikers should have the right to continue working in struck plants; favors compulsory incorporation of unions and most thoroughly dislikes men like Phillip Murray and John L. Lewis.

What it all adds up to is this: There is a feeling that America is faced by a labor struggle the like of which the world has never seen. There cannot be much doubt about it that the two sides engaged in this struggle are laying their plans and preparing their strategy carefully. Both sides know perfectly well what they want and they are ready to fight for what they want. Months ago Marquis Childs in his syndicated column mentioned Milwaukee Street in Detroit. Milwaukee street is a narrow thoroughfare. On one side of the street are the offices of General Motors Corporation and on the other side the offices of the Committee for Industrial Organization. "They are close together," wrote Childs, "but they are in reality so far apart that they can hear each other only when they are shouting angrily. It frightens one." With no less pessimism does David Lawrence view the situation when he writes: "A labor-management crisis of far-reaching proportions is on the way. . . . The labor problem soon will become top news of the country."

The coming days do not augur well for peace. In the great-struggle impending Christian laborers and the Christian Labor Association must play a part. God grant that it may be an important part.

Labor's Right to Organize

Today there are very few who deny labor the right to organize. It hasn't always been that way. There have been and there are even today employers who look with disfavor upon any and all labor organizations. If it were in their power to do so, they would gladly exterminate all labor unions. Such employers consider labor organizations a threat to their individual welfare and profits. The "I hire and I fire,—I treat them as I please,—They are to do what I tell them" type of employer, who used stool pigeons and kept a black list, considered labor a commodity to be bought at the lowest market price and violently opposed any organized attempt on the part of workingmen to improve their condition and defend their rights. That type of employer is a rarity today.

The struggle of labor organizations for the right to exist and for protection under the law is of rather recent history. During the time when business controlled government and big industrialists found the door to the White House and Congress always open, labor had no easy go of it. For the greatly improved
position acquired during the Roosevelt administration, labor may be truly grateful. Under the Wagner Act labor unions have a place in the sun, a place guaranteed by law. In the state the right of labor to organize has been firmly established.

And, strange though it may seem, even the church at times has denied workingmen the right to organize. Under the mistaken notion that those who were employed had no duty but the duty to obey the employers, Scripture passages dealing with problems of labor were interpreted in such a manner that, what was said regarding slave labor, was similarly applied to free men living in a free society. The words of the apostle, “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and the gentle, but also to the froward” were quoted with approval when discussing employer-employee relationships in a modern industrial society. It is gratifying to note that now Christian thinkers have a clearer and more wholesome conception of the rights of men and women in a free society. Neither fear of “the big boss” nor disapproval of church and state need keep the American workingman from exercising his right to organize with his fellow-workers in organizing unions for the protection of his interests and the improvement of his economic position. Men and women of labor, your right to do so today is universally admitted and guaranteed.

To Organize Also a Duty

That this right involves a duty you will readily admit. Privilege always implies responsibility. In our economic struggle the individual worker stands helpless. He needs the strength that comes from numbers. As he needs his fellow-workers, so his fellow-workers need him. Not to organize labor unions or failure to join an existing organization is reprehensible neglect of duty. Of such neglect no Christian worker may be found guilty.

The duty to organize is prompted by love of self. The second great commandment demands that we love our neighbor as ourself. There is a love of self which the Bible does not condemn. It is not selfishness, but it is proper interest in one's own welfare. Selfishness is of the devil; love of self is closely connected with love of God. It is the love which makes us desire to be what God wants us to be in order that we may be able to do more fully and efficiently what He demands of us. If, in the field of labor organization is necessary—and it is—in order that we may become better situated to equip ourselves for our God-demanded task, it would be gross neglect if we failed to use the means at our disposal.

Moreover, the workingman is responsible not for himself alone. Usually he is the head of a family. It may not leave him indifferent that his hours of labor prevent him from being for his wife and children what he ought to be. If these hours of labor destroy normal living in his home, or if the wages he earns prevent him from providing for his wife and children necessary shelter and food and clothing or the kind of education which his being a Christian father demands, he may not neglect to make use of the means of organization to bring about a change in the conditions under which he labors.

Even though he does not experience such conditions in his own circumstances, he still must realize his responsibility with regard to those who are not himself employed. There is in a certain sense a brotherhood of those who labor. He has to recognize the fact that he is member of the group and that, as a result of this, he has the duty to help those weaker than himself and less favorably situated than himself. There is in the Christian's life no room for the spirit of Cain. The spirit of neighborly love compels him to join with others in helping to improve conditions for all.

And yet, far more compelling than all previously mentioned considerations is his duty to do everything in his power to see to it that the justice of God be maintained and defended. No one knows better than does the laboringman that there is in the employer-employee relationship much that is unjust and unrighteous. Those who make the Word of God the rule and guide in this relationship indeed are few. Selfishness and personal interest are the controlling factors from both sides. As a Christian he must protest against this and he must fight against it. He may not tolerate injustice and greed when it is in his power to prevent it. As an individual his fight is well-nigh hopeless. Strongly united with others he can exert his influence. To do so is both his duty and privilege.

Christian Organization Needed

It should not require argumentation to convince Christian men and women that the labor organization to which they belong must be a Christian organization. That the unbeliever does not understand this need cause no surprise. To those who are accustomed to think of Christianity as something other-worldly the idea of a Christian Labor Association is ridiculous. They have never grasped the truth that the Christian with body and soul, both in life and death, is not his own but belongs to his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Neither do they understand that this “belonging” implies unquestioning obedience to the laws of God as He has revealed them in His Word. They simply cannot imagine the existence of men and women who believe that in every activity of life they must first of all ask the question: What does God demand of me in this situation?

Some time ago a group of army officers somewhere on an island in the Pacific discussed the subject of religion. Turning to a young captain one of
them said, “I’ve noticed that you are a religious man, captain. I cannot understand that of such an intelligent man. Tell me, what is your conception of religion?” To this the captain replied, “I have a father in the States whom I love very much. My greatest desire is to do what he wants me to do. It is a pleasure to me to conduct my life in such a way that all I say and do brings honor and joy to him. This is but a poor illustration of what religion means to me. By the grace of God I may believe that God is my Heavenly Father. It is my desire to do all things according to his law and to do those things which honor and glorify Him.” After the captain finished there was a momentary silence. Then one of the officers was heard to remark, “Such an idea of religion is new to me. I’ve never heard that before. I always thought that religion was an easy way to heaven.”

To be sure, the Christian knows that he is on his way to heaven, but his way leads through this world. In this world he functions as God’s representative. He is a pilgrim, but he also is a soldier. He is a soldier of the King. As soldier of the King he is commissioned to execute the King’s orders. These orders, which apply to every sphere of life, he finds in the Bible. That Word regulates his relationship to all men and all things. Material matters are not excluded from it and neither is the relationship which exists between employer and employee.

It is for this reason that a Christian cannot be a member of a so-called neutral labor organization. Such an organization, by the very fact that it desires to be neutral, expresses the conviction that the principles of the Word of God have no meaning for the labor problem. You may be a Christian in your home and church, but as member of the labor union you must leave your principles behind. This the Christian, who believes and confesses that to be a Christian has universal significance, cannot accept. His relationship to God and his fellowmen bars him from associations which in their very foundation ignore the Word of God and which in their activities but too frequently transgress the very laws which God has given in His Word. That the unbeliever does not understand this, we repeat, need cause no surprise. That Christians do not see it, that they even refuse to see it, is deplorable and unexplainable.

I have been informed that there are many here who, though their presence would seem to indicate some interest, neglect to join the ranks of those who in the management-labor relationship plead and work for the application of the principles of the Word of God. To those I would like to say: Christian men and women, face the issue squarely. Consider what your being a Christian demands of you. Understand that the battle lines are being drawn very sharply. Discontinue standing on the side lines. As Christian soldiers you must take part in the great struggle which is upon us. Join the Christian Labor Association!

The Future of the C.L.A.

Some have asked the question: Is there a future for the Christian labor movement in America? The question is prompted by some very serious misgivings and doubts. The so-called neutral organizations, it is argued, are so strong; their power and influence so great. And there is among Christians in America such a lamentable lack of understanding of the Christians’ rights and duties. The weight of these arguments we stand ready to admit.

Yet, in spite of it all, we do contend that there is in America a future for the Christian Labor Association. And we most earnestly warn against a defeatist spirit and a weak apologizing attitude. The cause of Christ does not need an apology. You, men and women of the C.L.A., need not feel ashamed of belonging to this organization. Lift up your heads and march proudly! The policy pursued by the larger labor unions is definitely harmful to the cause of labor and may well bring the country to ruination. You belong to an organization which has the solution, the only solution, to the labor problem. You are needed for just such a time as this.

You have that solution because you believe that the labor problem must be viewed and solved in the light of the eternal principles of the Word of God. It is your conviction that in that Word you find the road which leads to peace and prosperity and righteousness, and not to an ever-deepening class struggle. You are convinced that management need not be the enemy of labor and that labor must not be the enemy of management, but that both have their rights and duties. You contend that not strife but peace and co-operation is the road out of the jungle. This is your message to America. This is your conviction. In this conviction you are right. And in this conviction you go forward.

Give, then, to your organization all your loyalty and strength. Insist that it always be a true labor organization, contending for and defending the rights of the laboring men and women, using all legitimate means to improve their condition and defend their position. But insist with equal vigor that it be and remain Christian, guarding zealously against the ever present danger that in the conflict it forgets to listen to the voice of the King!

And with your King you march to victory! [This address was delivered at the annual open air rally of the Christian Labor Association in Grand Rapids last Labor Day.—Editor.]
Calvinism in Ceylon

T IS just over three hundred years that Calvinism was introduced into the Island of Ceylon by our Dutch forbears, when they arrived here and annexed the maritime provinces of the island driving out the Portuguese and establishing Dutch rule. It was the first form of Protestant Christianity to find lodgment on these shores and has continued without a break up to the present day.

Early Influence of Dutch Calvinism

With the thoroughness of the Dutch churches towards which their Calvinistic beliefs contributed in no small measure, they set about to spread the message of the Gospel and to evangelize the indigenous population of the Island. To facilitate evangelistic work the system of education prescribed by the Synod of Dort was introduced and five catechisms adapted to the ages of the children, three of which were translations from the Dutch, were adopted.

A printing press was established, and the Holy Scriptures, Confession of Faith, Heidelberg Catechism, Compendium, Liturgy, several Psalms to be sung in the churches, sermons, tracts, etc., were published both in Singhalese and Tamil; languages that were and still remain peculiar to certain districts of the island. The former, Singhalese, is the language of the race that claims to be the indigenous inhabitants and populate the western, southern, and central parts of the island; while the latter, Tamil, is the language of a race from the adjoining mainland of India which had invaded Ceylon in past ages and bore rule over the whole or part of the island from time to time, and were permanently established in the northern and eastern parts of the island nearest to India.

About the year 1708 a Seminary was established. "The main and original object was to train and qualify young men, both in Singhalese and Tamil, for becoming native preachers. The higher courses of instruction were imparted in the Dutch language, and the preliminary courses aimed at giving the students a thorough knowledge of the language. Latin, Hebrew and Greek were introduced later, and the medium of instruction in the higher theological classes was in the Latin language. The Scriptures and the Reformed Faith were taught and the students were trained to be able by argument hereafter with their countrymen to refute heathenism."

The training of native Christians was not limited to the ministry of their own congregation, but when bright and intelligent young men were encountered in the Seminary they were given every encouragement to continue further in their theological studies and even sent to Holland to graduate in the Universities there. An example of the success of this training was De Mello, a Tamil young man, who made himself so proficient in Theology that he was acceptable as a preacher not only in Tamil to his countrymen but to Dutch congregations as well; and did much in producing and translating religious literature in Tamil. Another outstanding example is that of Dr. Ondaatje who was also a Tamil. He too went to Holland and after graduation entered so conspicuously into the religious, social and political life of the land as to gain a niche for himself in the history of Holland.

The care taken in admitting natives into the church and the means employed to ensure that they were grounded in the Faith are evidenced by a letter dated 1681 which says that "previous to the administration of the rite of Baptism to native children the parents were examined in their knowledge of religion, and whenever found deficient the baptism of their children was postponed to the next visitation; the schoolmaster being in the meanwhile enjoined to impart the necessary instruction to such parents. The same practice was adopted with respect to adult candidates for baptism. They who were found imperfect in their religious knowledge and belief were entered on a separate list, and at each returning visitation re-examined until judged fit for admission into the church by baptism."

The Classis of Amsterdam, under whose jurisdiction the consistories of the Island came, when appealed to for an opinion on this point of Baptism replied inter alia, "We doubt not that when apostates are brought for baptism you resist them firmly, pointing out to the parties that they have excluded themselves from the Covenant or rather proved never to have belonged to it. And although under the aspect that those apostate parents had indeed been thoroughly instructed, yet we deem it safest and best that they be not baptised unless one of the parents either father or mother has remained faithful for then are the children holy." Amongst the reasons given for the above opinion are: "Children are not in the Covenant of Grace but by their parents. How then can their true admission be presumed when their parents have made a leagued and God-provoking profession or solemnly violated it by the sin of heathendom and devil-worship."

Writers on the period of the Dutch occupation of the Island make the charge that conversion was
forced upon the natives, but the description given above of the extraordinary care taken over the Baptism of both children and adults gives the lie to it and shows the emphasis placed by our Calvinistic fathers on the purity of faith and doctrine of their converts. The Bishop (Anglican) of Colombo, in a letter, dated 4th August, 1880, and addressed to the Governor states, "Her Majesty’s government is bound to this native church by a quasi-treaty obligation. When the Crown took possession there were it is said 380,000 professing Protestants of the Dutch Church . . . many of them being insincere, the majority ceased to be even nominally Christians when pressure was removed; but the remainder, our present subsidized church, is the direct descendant having received only small additions by missionary effort . . . Thus was the Church of England maintained by Her Majesty’s government and urged upon the people as a continuance of the Dutch efforts to maintain Christianity . . . That the Church of England continued to be pressed upon the people as the authorized form of Christianity is clear from the provisions made in 1815 and 1822 for regulating marriages among Protestants in which the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England are indicated as the most probable form of marriage, and the whole put under the control of the Archdeacon of Colombo. It thus appears that the native church now subsidized . . . is the direct descendant of that which the English founded in existence in 1796 and that in its Anglican form it is the legitimate representative of that body." The foregoing was written in connection with the disestablishment of the churches in the Island by the Government.

The Dutch erected many churches during their period of occupation of the Island; a fair number of these are still in existence though no longer used as places of worship. Some are used for hospitals, some as law courts and some even as stables and garages. Some of the larger buildings are maintained by the Government of the Island as relics of the past while a few have passed into the hands of other denominations. Only three of the churches, those situated in Wolvendaal, Colombo, and in the towns of Galle and Matara on the western and southern coasts of the Island, respectively, are still used as places of worship by the Dutch Reformed Church.

British Occupation

When the Island of Ceylon was ceded to the British in the year 1796, opportunity was afforded to those who wished to leave to do so, and many availed themselves of it and sailed to the possessions of the Dutch further East. Hence it came about that the churches in the out-lying towns were denuded of congregations and falling into neglect came to be employed at a later date for the purposes mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The tenure of the English in the Island was at the time considered uncertain and their occupation almost provisional and hence a fair number of Dutch families in Colombo and Galle and few of the more important towns remained behind, but in 1802 under the Treaty of Amiens the Island was permanently made over to the British and became a colony. When this happened the facilities afforded to the Dutch to leave the Island were stopped by the British much to the consternation of the former; and it was under these circumstances that to this day there remains a community of Dutch Burghers in the Island of Ceylon and that Calvinism as expressed in the Dutch Reformed Church continues its more or less isolated existence here.

On the departure of the greater number of the Dutch in 1796, practically all the Dutch pastors except one left these shores, so that the schools, churches and native congregations scattered about the island were entirely neglected and continued to be so until the year 1814 when the first of the various missionary bodies established themselves in the Island.

Under Art. 18 of the terms of the Capitulation of Colombo it was stipulated that the clergy and other ecclesiastical servants were to continue in their functions and receive the same pay and emoluments as they had from the Dutch East India Company. In pursuance of these treaty obligations, on the death of the only remaining Dutch pastor, the Rev. Mr. J. D. Palm, a Lutheran missionary, was appointed to fill his place and was ordained pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church and President of the Colombo Consistory at Wolvendaal. He pledged himself to conform without any deviation to the forms, customs, doctrines, laws and discipline of the Church according to the pure Calvinistic tenets.

Anglican Domination

In the transition of the official language of the government from Dutch into English, the Dutch Church fared badly, for the English discouraged the use of Dutch and at one stage forbade the teaching of Dutch in the church schools. Many of the Dutch Burghers who continued in their civil appointments under the English were forced by circumstances to make themselves proficient in English and took to attending the services of the Church of England, which, by the way, were conducted in the Dutch church at Wolvendaal, with the sanction of the Dutch Consistory. This led to many a family transferring its allegiance to the Church of England; and at a later stage a claim was made by the Singhalese congregation of the Church of England to the ownership of the Wolvendaal Church, which of course failed, as it deserved to, on the final appeal to the Secretary of State. This was the reward of Christian accommodation afforded by the Dutch Reformed Church.

This article will be followed next month by one in which the more recent developments in Ceylon will be discussed.—Editor.

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The Love of God

IT WAS high noon. The sun shone with baleful Eastern brilliance upon the plains of Ephraim. Maachah, the plowman, halted his ox with a word at the door of his stable. It was time to rest now, during the blazing hours of midday. They had plied the plow through the heavy soil, the ox and the man, since sun-up. After the sun had gone downward somewhat they would take up the work again until it became dark. Maachah ran an affectionate hand along the broad back of his faithful beast. He loosened the fastenings of the plow and tugged gently at the sides of the ox's head and moved quickly to loosen it, and shift it back upon his shoulders. The ox drank, he man brought him a cool grain and grass and the ox ate slowly and gratefully, his jaws unimpeded now by the galling yoke.

Maachah turned toward his house. The prattle of a little voice caught his attention and he saw his little son, scarce a year old, playing under a tree. He stepped to the little tot and set him upon his feet and laughed with the child as it set its little feet in odd angles trying to walk, while his father held him under his arms.

Maachah paused to meditate an instant, his child in his arms. On the distant horizon the thunder rumbled. He thought of his people, of Israel. He thought of the merciful forbearance of God through the long rolling centuries of the past, and into his heart spoke a voice, like the distant thunder on the horizon, like the voice of God.

He recalled the words of that strangely stern yet tender prophet whom he had heard speaking in the street only yesterday. They said strange things about the prophet. He had married a harlot and, as was to be expected, she left him with a brood of little ones. And yet he spoke so earnestly of the love of God. Maachah thought of his own happy home and mused that the prophet had doubtless learned by bitter experience to know God's love.

These had been his words, only yesterday, and Maachah thought with a smile of how true they were to his own life.

"I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms, but they knew not that I healed them."

Maachah thought of how he had just now helped his little son to walk and yet with what proud neighbors do not heed it. But, alas, it is as the prophet said, 'Ephraim feedeth on wind.'

"I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them."

Maachah thought with almost a start of how he had done that just now to his tired ox. "How wonderful," he said, "is the love of God! From age to age it is the same. How strange that my godless neighbors do not heed it. But, alas, it is as the prophet said, 'Ephraim feedeth on wind.'"

The same love has supported us in 1945 and will not forsake us in the New Year!

ALA BANDON

From Our Correspondents

SOUTH AFRICAN LETTER

University College, Pochefstroom, South Africa
October 24, 1945. [Rec'd Dec. 3, 1945]

Dear Dr. Bouma:

THIS letter starts with an apology and in a very personal vein. My previous letter, dated as far back as May 10, appeared in the double number of The Calvin Forum (Aug.-Sept.) which has only just arrived over here. I usually wait for the publication of one letter before I dispatch the next one. But there was another reason for my delay, viz. pressure of work. I try never to complain about the amount of work that I have to do. As a Calvinist I consider that as nothing but my duty and have only to thank the Lord who has considered me worthy to do this work. But during these last five years I have been particularly occupied. In 1941 I conceived a comprehensive plan of writing a fairly complete work on Calvinistic Education in four volumes. In 1942 the first volume appeared under the title in translation—these volumes having been written in my mother tongue, viz. Afrikaans—"In Introduction to Empirical Education", the equivalent of your "Principles (or Philosophy) of Education. And now I have just to-day completed the fourth and final volume, viz. "Introduction to Practical Education". I found the last volume the most difficult, notwithstanding the fact that I was a school teacher for many years, and since 1920 a professor of education. This completed work in four volumes attempts to describe an educational science based on the Calvinistic philosophy of life.

After the War

The war is over and still we are experiencing the horrors, disasters, and trials of this world wide catastrophe. Many of our relatives and friends have not returned and presumably never will—some are reported dead, and others lost; some have come back maimed for life, and others completely at sea in civic life. What lies ahead, nobody can foretell, but one thing is certain: the old world has completely passed and we are in for new, disturbing conditions of life. To crown all this, we in South Africa are at the present moment in the throes of one of the severest country-wide droughts we have ever suffered from, and South Africans are hardened to droughts.

Amidst all these distressing occurrences, we have to carry on with our daily small and big tasks.

As I wrote you on more than one occasion, the South African population is composed—as regards the whites alone—
mainly of Afrikaans and English speaking. The Afrikaans speaking are descendants mainly of the Dutch colonists, the French and the German elements having completely lost their identity. Our language is a daughter of Netherlands; one who speaks it as mother-tongue. Both languages shall be taught as medium of instruction in both Afrikaans and English schools. A very interesting administrative experiment in the meantime. In July 1945 the Transvaal Administrator, the highest authority in Provincial matters, put into function an "Ordinance to consolidate and amend the law relating to Education in respect of questions of language." As an experiment in bilingual teaching and as an attempt—to my mind doomed to failure—in creating national unity, this New Language Ordinance deserves very wide publication. This applies especially to other countries with the same difficult problem of two white nationalities occupying the same country, each claiming it as its home and each striving to be the dominant and finally the only national group.

This Law distinguishes between mother-tongue and other-tongue (Afrikaans and English). This law now lays down that up to and including the fifth standard (your seventh grade) of every public or private school the home language and the other language shall be taught, but that the medium of instruction shall, be, except in the case of the other language, the mother-tongue. Both languages shall be taught as examination subjects to every pupil of a public or private school in all standards (grades) above the fifth standard (i.e. up to the tenth standard, your twelfth grade). The aim shall be to teach both languages on an equal standard of proficiency—in the meantime an official committee of experts appointed by the Transvaal Education Department declared this to be an unattainable aim. The Law furthermore lays down that the medium of instruction shall be as follows: In the language itself naturally the language as medium; in an Afrikaans school (and vice versa) in an English school) one extra subject shall be taught through the medium of the other-tongue as from the beginning of 1946 and another extra subject as from the beginning of 1947, starting with the sixth standard and working up gradually, so that by 1951 the two languages, Afrikaans and English, shall be taught as equal footing as medium of instruction in both Afrikaans and English schools. In the Transvaal secondary schools (standards 6 to 10) the child can offer 9 subjects. This would mean that by 1951 every secondary school pupil will receive his instruction through Afrikaans in 3 or 4 and in English in 4 or 3 subjects. At the present moment, supervisors and principals of schools have their doubts about the possibility of arranging their school time tables so as to meet the requirements of this new law. Most people who know something about school education are against this new Language Ordinance. It has been forced upon the schools by politicians without any knowledge of educational principles and practices. Their aim may be praiseworthy, etc. to fuse the two tongues (Afrikaans and English) into one nation, but their procedure is totally wrong. You cannot weld two races into one by force; they have to grow organically by intermarriage, community of aim and life view, etc. into one nation. This New Language Ordinance has once again acted as an apple of discord and strife—it defeats its own end. I need not go into my own objections to this new Law; I did that again and again, even in your periodical. I am one of the staunchest opponents of this bi-lingual school idea and this formalistic procedure of producing a united nation, and I have sound reasons for this conviction—political, racial, psychological, educational, cultural, religious ones. And that must suffice for this time.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

J. CH. COSTEE.

FROM THE NEW HEBRIDES

To:

Tongoa,
New Hebrides,
21st Sept., 1945

Dear Doctor Bouma:

I N a letter to one of his correspondents Samuel Rutherford felt constrained to confess, "I am stricken with fear of unthankfulness." For my own part I am deeply conscious that goodness and mercy have followed me so constantly that I need to make the same confession. The Lord of the Vineyard has brought fruit unto the trees and cheered the hearts of the vine-dressers.

Three years have passed without a word from me, and during most of that time we have all been subjected to the alarms of war. Many of your fellow-nationals have been in our remote island home; a craggy spot 450 feet above the sea and far removed from others of our countrymen—and for the privilege of meeting these, your fellow-nationals, my wife and I have been sincerely thankful.

There was a time when we had to elect whether we would evacuate to New Zealand or remain with these people, in what we judged to be a critical phase of the church's life. Our decision to stay came easily at the time, and as we look back upon the early months of 1942 we bless God who gave us a heart to abide. Events wonderfully vindicated what we judged to be His leading. The article enclosed tells one aspect of that story.

I wrote this for our N.Z. church paper, but send you a copy, which you are welcome to recast in Epistolary form or use it as it stands, or pass by, as you see fit.

I was, during the past three years, constantly on the lookout for chaplains of the Dutch Reformed & Christian Reformed Churches. But our situation away from the main points of troop concentration brought us into contact with only an occasional chaplain. For the past three years our annual Synod gathering has been favoured with visits from chaplains, and some measure of fellowship has been possible.

My friend John Smith still keeps up his contributions to the Forum I note; and that is good. R. S. Roxburgh has left for India. I think we three were the spearhead of rejuvenated Calvinism in the Theological Student body of our day—an interest which has now grown to be a mighty force. I am constantly grateful for your invitation to write, back in 1939, to the Forum, because from that came a complimentary copy of Dr. Boettner's "Reformed Doctrine of Predestination" and from that everything followed. It was a case of the "Dairyman's Daughter" all over again. We bless God for what has been accomplished in the Antipodes through these Calvinistic Agencies and now the kirk itself is feeling the toning up of new zeal and studious devotion to the Reformed Faith on the part of a large minority of the younger men.

Mrs. Miller and I keep very well. Our two bairns—Graham and Sylvia—are constantly in danger of being spoilt by these exceedingly lovable and devoted black folk among whom we work.

With our united and most cordial greetings,

Fraternally,

J. GRAHAM MILLER.

"The devil cannot digest the church of God"

"The Bush has been burning these 5000 years, and no man yet saw the ashes of that fire." Samuel Rutherford (Letters.)

NATIVE CHURCH IN THE NEW HEBRIDES

HERE are two things which journalistic visitors to the New Hebrides poke fun at. One is the island steamer which, somehow or other has survived the hazards of two wars; the other is the Anglo-French Condominium. Neither shows any immediate prospect of cracking up. One has the feeling that a lot of hot air is expended on the Condominium government for want of something else to pull to pieces. And, like discussions on the mode of baptism, they seem to get you almost nowhere. For thirty years publicists, colonial service
men, tourists and missionaries have been confidently forecast-
ning the collapse of this system of administration, but still, "with 
packhorse constancy, it keeps the road." What the issue will 
now be nobody professes to know. And my own point of view is 
that there are more vital and honourable occupations than that 
of political-editor. The best way to prepare the native church 
for the unknown future is to prepare it for self-government, 
and that is what is being done.

It is not a very long story.

In January, 1942, when Jap occupation seemed imminent, the 
issue came clearly before one in the form of a dilemma. Either 
you prepare for a native church, or you have no church. So 
we used the few days which we still expected to have unmolested 
in preparing. The Tongan Session was only in swaddling clothes 
— a few four months old. But we told them that the 
future was in their hands and that if we ever came back 
again we would expect to find a living church. By fellowship, 
instruction and prayer the native Christian community was 
thrown on itself. We insisted that they continue to celebrate 
the sacraments though no ordained man be available, for neces-
sity knows no law.

The Japs never came; at least they never came in any num-
bers. But that stirring up of the nest worked wonders. Since 
them we have never felt any hesitation in delegating respon-
sibility as fast as possible. Today, in this one district of less 
than 2000 people, there is an eager, ordered, witnessing church 
constituted under two sessions. The session of Tonga, with 10 
elders, presides over a church of 550 communicant members. 
The session of Tongarikle and Bunings islands, with 6 elders, 
presides over a native church of 130 communicant members.

I am the moderator of the Tongan session; a native pastor-
designate, named Sulemanu, is moderator of the other, whose 
meetings I attend only about twice a year when visiting the 
outlying islands. The supervision of village schools, the exer-
cise of church discipline, the training of catechums, and the 
general work of spreading the fire are in the hands of these 
serious-minded and enthusiastic leaders.

Within this period a singular work of the Holy Spirit has 
sprung up among the women as a result of which they have 
their own weekly all-island gathering conducted by their own 
Order of Black Deaconesses. At present there are 17 deacon-
esses eight of whom have been ordained. It may be of interest 
to note that the eight ordained deaconesses attend and take 
part in the monthly session meetings. This came about almost 
by accident because the session wished to have the opinion of 
the deaconesses on some matters which fell naturally to them; 
and from that it became an established practice for them to 
attend. In spite of the Black Man's horror of anything savour-
ing of feminism, there is full spiritual equality accorded to the 
deaconesses by the elders.

A promising development of wider implications took place 
in June of this year when, for the first time in the history of 
the church in these islands, several districts got together for a 
five-day conference. For all practical purposes it was a Pres-
byteral meeting of the native church in the central New Hebrides. 
The Tongaon session played host to the elders of nine scattered 
islands. In all there were 56 delegates including Mr. 
Crump, Mr. Muir, myself, Pastor Robert of Nguma, 32 elders, 
10 preachers and 10 teachers. The fellowship was something 
entirely new, as many testified, and the solidarity of Christ's 
kirk in the central New Hebrides was felt. There was power in 
that fact alone. Two periods daily were set apart for Bible Ex-
position. The evenings were open meetings for all delegates, 
with no limitations of time. It was then that we worked through 
an agenda of business compiled by the delegates who wanted to 
reach common agreement on such matters as kava-drinking, the 
teaching of teachers, and the spiritual supervision of the native 
police who are largely recruited from these districts. None of 
us doubted, after the conference had finished, that opportunity 
follows in the wake of the conference. The observation of different 
islands and language groups is one of the indispensable means 
of grace for the developing native church.

Then in July of this year came the Mission Synod,— a particu-
larly momentous Synod for a number of reasons, and not 
least because we were to consider plans for a Presbyterian 
Church of the New Hebrides. Four years ago that goal seemed 
remote, unattainable. But a lot has happened since then, and 
today the proposal has the unanimous approval of the Synod.
The exact meaning of this step is that the native Christian 
community emerges from the tutelage of the Home Churches 
into the independence of a self-governing Church; from the 
comfortable confinement of the chrysalis into the mature and 
final organism, the predestined form, "holding Christ as Head, 
from Whom the whole body grows by the aid of every contribu-
tory link, with power proportioned to the need of each indi-
vidual part, so as to build itself up in a spirit of love." (Eph. 
4:16, Weymouth.)

It would be a mistake to imagine that this has taken place 
under pressure from within the native Church. The native 
Church takes very seriously its new responsibilities. Probably 
it would have preferred another decade of confinement. But no 
wise native mother shoulders her piccaninni until he is a grown 
boy. She coaxes him on to his own feet and by way of trial and 
error he learns to walk. Something like that will be the 
experience of the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides.

Tonga, 
New Hebrides 
Sept 29, 1945. 
J. GRAHAM MILLER.

FROM THE CANADIAN NORTH

Edmonton, Canada, 
Dec 6, 1946.

Dear Dr. Bousa of the Calvin Forum:

Thanks to you for your encouraging remarks on the pub-
lication of the Canadian Calvinist. We hope and pray that 
this "monthly publication for contact between Canadians of 
Reformed faith and life" may contribute to the cause of Cal-
vinism to which THE CALVIN FORUM is also committed. I gladly 
accept your invitation to correspond with your magazine.

Concerning the Canadian Calvinist, it has been seen the light as 
a result of a conference between the Revs. J. Roorda of Lacombe, 
M. Keuning of Neerlandia, and myself, in view of the need of 
some means of general contact between our Canadian Calvin-
ists; those in our own denomination first, but others also. Rev. 
Roorda writes on Church Matters, Rev. Keuning comments on 
Society Activity, and yours truly on Civic Interests, doing a bit of managing also. The Alberta 
League of Reformed Young People's Societies expressed will-
ingness to stand back of us financially, and thus far they, 
and other interested churches and individual parties, have done 
that so well that we hope to publish a printed sheet of larger 
scope in the not too distant future. We distribute our paper to 
all our Canadian Christian Reformed churches in bundles, and 
will enlarge our mailing list if conditions warrant it. Cal-
vinists in other churches may be interested also.

Christian Schools in Canada

Permit me at this time to call attention to two matters 
touched on in our paper; namely, Christian education and 
Immigration. Later I hope to touch on Church and Society 
matters. For some time Holland Marsh, Ontario, conducted 
the only Christian day school among our Holland-Canadians. 
However, Sept 10, 1945, was the date of the festive opening 
of a Christian school at Lacombe, Alberta. In the morning of 
that day, Miss Alida Keegstra met her 27 pupils in the attrac-
tive new building. In the evening a program was given in the 
church. A happy, thankful spirit prevailed. Lacombe felt that 
the Lord had done great things for her. A good example has 
been set by the Lacombe congregation. A fitting building was 
constructed on the church grounds and its use granted to the 
Christian school society. The "Free" Christian school is now 
conducted in property loaned by the church. A good way of 
solving an immediate need. It seemed for a while that Edmon-

THE CALVIN FORUM * * * JANUARY, 1946
Canadian Immigration

The immigration of Netherlands into Canada is discussed quite generally these days. A correspondent of the Edmonton Journal wrote from Holland that applications for passage and emigration to this dominion are piling up in The Hague Radio evangelist discusses the matter of prime importance. Our own Canadian churches are very sensitive to it. They want to know when and under what conditions relatives and friends will be permitted to come in. This immigration of Netherlands concerns the growth and prosperity of our churches. Since it is quite clear that Canadian Calvinists of Holland extraction are here to stay, their churches should increase both in number and in size. Such is necessary for more efficient congregational life not only, but also for their distinctive place in the life of the nation. And last but not least, renewed immigration will be of vital significance for the successful working out of our Calvinistic program of Christian education. Think, for instance, of the Christian High School we sorely need at some central location for the training of our own Canadian Christian school teachers. For the sake of the Kingdom, Calvinists in Canada must increase!

Official information regarding this immigration has been requested, but little light has been shed on it thus far. As a Canadian public policy the matter does not seem to be settled. It may take about a year until immigration permits and facilities will be available. Meantime something should be done to steer the anticipated immigration into the right channels, as we Calvinists recognize them. What can and should our churches do about it officially? The C.(canadian) C.(alvinist) wrote of late that Classis Pella of the Christian Reformed Church showed interest in the resettlement of some of its membership. Vona and Hamshire were advised to settle somewhere else where their spiritual life can be furthered better. Classis Pacific counselled its churches that interest themselves in the settlement of their returned veterans. Both Classes expressed themselves on natural things for spiritual reasons. It is agreed that caution should be exercised here. Such action may easily get the Church into deep if not hot water. Evidently for that reason Classis Pacific, though considerate of its own returning veterans, has shied away from looking into the matter of guidance to immigrants expected from Holland. But should not something be done by our churches for them also? The strategic location, size and spiritual implements of our Calvinistic churches could at least be brought to the attention of the religious press of our spiritual kinman across the seas. And they should be invited to report to our Calvinistic churches when and where immigrants of Reformed persuasion are expected to arrive. They must not be swallowed up by the great spaces of this great country! I wish that some of our sympathetic religious papers in Holland would take notice of these lines. And also of that which I conclude this letter which is rather long already.

Holland Girls and Canadian Soldiers

Mixed marriages of Holland girls with Canadian soldiers in the Netherlands run into the hundreds. Even girls from Reformed homes seem to fall for our Canadian "liberators," and that sometimes irrespective of the latter's faith. Anxious inquiries are made by relatives of such girls concerning the character of these Canadians. They may pose as Christians, of fair means, located near some "Dutch Church," and "thinking" that they "know" some of its members personally, but are these things true? Investigation of one such husband-to-be showed him of bad reputation, a habitual drinker and swearer, member of the Roman Catholic church, of little financial means, formerly living in a little shack more than a hundred miles from Edmonton!! We can somewhat understand the infatuation of our liberty-loving Dutch for the liberating Canadians, and their readiness to face a perhaps trying future together. However, let our Holland girls beware of rushing into matrimony with our Canadian soldiers unless they KNOW them thoroughly and are ASSURED of their proper moral and religious qualities. An adventure with one of essentially different background and faith is irresponsible. It cannot meet the demands of God's Covenant, and is bound to lead to spiritual ruin. Girls of the Netherlands, BEWARE!

Paul de Rokkoek.

LONDON'S EVANGELICAL LIBRARY

For twenty years a quiet man down in Surrey has been accumulating books. His personal Christian witness and service naturally took this form, the early developments following closely individual theological interests. Before the war, the number of books had outrun the 20,000 mark. And now, for the benefit of ministers, students and others, this great body of literature has been brought to London and housed at 55 Gloucester Road, South Kensington, London S.W. 7, under a roof shared by other evangelical agencies. At the recent formal opening, Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, of Westminster Church, said that the story of the library was almost that of its founder, Mr. Geoffrey Williams, who would now be the librarian. It was no ordinary enterprise, a statement with which his hearers agreed, for on entering they had found books in several rooms, with passages and landings also lined with books, books everywhere, indeed.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones told of the "discovery" of the library, the formation of a committee of management, and the decision to bring it from Beddington to London. Its formation, he said, had been a splendid adventure. One of their first decisions had been that the library should be kept intact and distinct. Amalgamated with any larger collection or merged in some college library, these books were not likely to prove so accessible and useful. On the basis of the library was the literature of the 17th and 18th centuries. Anatole France had remarked that when tired he was refreshed himself by going into the 18th century. Dr. Lloyd-Jones saw tired ministers making their way to "55" for the same remedy.

Mr. S. E. Denning, who has undertaken the treasurerhip (together with Mr. F. D. Bacon) described the financial conditions, stating that the annual membership fee would be 7s. 6d.
He foresaw developments and hoped that the library might be endowed, for in his opinion it was an enterprise of God. Mr. Denning alluded to a radio speaker who had applied for information and in this referred — to Dr. Lloyd-George, who was preparing a talk on George Whitefield.

The new "Evangelical Library" has the backing of a number of librarians and Church leaders, including Professor Daniel Larmour (Edinburgh University), Professor D. M. Blair (Glascow University), Mr. F. P. Bruce (Leeds University), Dr. F. Cawley (Spurgeon's College), and Dr. Basil F. C. Atkinson, Under Librarian in the University Library, Cambridge, who was quoted as saying he was "amazed at the extent and potential usefulness" of the Library.

A visitation to the several rooms confirmed the opinion of Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones of the value of the early theology and philosophy. Here were the voluminous Puritans on shelf after shelf and scarcely any writer seemed to be wanting. The founder had taken special pride in gathering books of all periods and some of its unique character and its potential usefulness that I at once urged that it should be transferred to some more central and accessible position, that it might be profitably made public. Then came the word, and it seemed that the project must be abandoned. But Mr. Williams proved to be a man neither easy to daunt nor willing to brook delay; and practised as he was in the use of the abated zeal and, I had almost said, cried daily to me, with something of the importunity of the man in the parable. Our friend the Rev. E. J. Poole-Connor gave him yeoman support in the case of the Library, and to the present premises where the library was resumed and the present commodious premises were secured at a nominal rental through the kindness of Mr. S. R. Lamont, J.P., of Kensington last January. Indeed, we do; and look forward to the time when the Library shall possess a dwelling which is altogether its own.

"I ought here to say that Mr. Geoffrey Williams, in a most generous and public-spirited manner, has handed the whole of his valuable collection over to a body of trustees, making but one request to which they readily agreed, viz., that a sum representing existing obligations arising from current acquisitions and other charges in respect of the Library should be maintained and increased; and it is through the liberality and zeal of the Rev. E. J. Poole-Connor and by means of private effort, they feel that the way is now clear to introduce the Library to the public, and make a wider appeal for its support."

**Why a Separate Library?**

"It might possibly be asked why, Why not hand over this collection to some existing Library? Let me say at once that this point has already received the fullest consideration; but it was finally agreed that it would destroy the uniqueness of this character, as well as impair its general usefulness, if this were to be done. It might join a company of tomes and be forgotten, or be so scattered amongst works of another character as to lose its identity. It is the founder's desire, in his own words, "to establish a Puritan Library, not only to secure a museum but a living force. And it is perhaps significant that the inauguration of this Library is coincident with a widespread tendency in many parts of the world to hope for a revival of the Faith of our forefathers. The almost world-wide effect of the more conservative outlook of men like Bar and Brunner is indicative of a return by many to truths which have stood the test of time. I may here mention that an outstanding feature of the Library is a section containing an extensive range of extremely important works on Revivals of Religion, especially those of the 16th century; and it is hoped that these, when widely canvassed, will assist the great need in London in filling which your project will, I hope, prove a living force in the religious life of the metropolis. Perhaps I can (I should certainly like to) help you in one or two ways; in any case I purpose giving directions to our Executors to do all that remains to the Library, subject to the works as I possess and I suggest an appeal to all the Religious and Denominational papers for gifts of books."

Mr. S. L. Denning was then asked to say a word on finance. In so doing he emphasised the urgent need of an initial sum of £2,000 to launch the project in a manner worthy of the objects outlined by Dr. Lloyd-Jones.

**Wider Usefulness**

"Mr. Geoffrey Williams has no limited outlook, his vision is world-wide and he has gathered this unique library together, which is a living example of common benefit of the nation and of lands overseas. Indeed he has already secured the sympathetic cooperation of such men as Professor Bouma of Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, and Professor John Murray, of the Free Church of Scotland; and of Branch Libraries in America has been proposed and books sent. Even in Australasia his efforts to expand the Library's ramifications have met with success. But to return. Some years back he took the initiative in forming the committee to consider the object of setting the library on a more solid basis; amongst whom were the Rev. Eliseus Howells and myself. At the suggestion of Mr. Howells I went down to Beddington, in Surrey, with a view to the opening of Branch Libraries overseas; and as a result several volunteers were founded, and the Library now extends its activities to the whole world."

Dr. Geoffrey Williams, the Founder of the Evangelical Library, is a section containing extremely important works on Revivals of Religion, especially those of the 16th century; and it is hoped that these, when widely canvassed, will assist the great need in London in filling which your project will, I hope, prove a living force in the religious life of the metropolis. Perhaps I can (I should certainly like to) help you in one or two ways; in any case I purpose giving directions to our Executors to do all that remains to the Library, subject to the works as I possess and I suggest an appeal to all the Religious and Denominational papers for gifts of books."

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Book Reviews

THREE BOOKS ON CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY


Three books have of late appeared which ought to give courage to Calvinists in America, because they make a plea for a Christian democracy in politics and economics. These works in many respects remind one of the Report to the Industrial Democracy of the Dutch Calvinists in 1916, not to mention other works by Colijn and Smeenk, all reviewed in the columns of the Calvin Forum, and the many articles advocating a Christian basis for our higher and lower cultural life which have been written by our American Calvinists and some of which have been published in our monthly. What Dr. Kuyper called the cosmological significance of Christianity was first advocated by Calvin especially in the famous chapters of his Institutes, Book III, 6 to 10, and separately published for centuries in both Latin and Dutch under the title: The Golden Booklet of the True Christian Walk. The quotations from Calvin in the works of Colijn, Smeenk, Diepenheest, Fabius, Slotemaker, de Brunie, Van Es, De Visser, and—last but not least—Kuyper, and referring to Christian culture in its broader or narrower aspects, are almost all from those vigorous, popular chapters of The Institutes, for the ideas of Christian stewardship, of the common or cultural mandate, and of a moderate democracy, are original with Calvin, and respectively projected for the first time in the history of Christian thought in chapters seven and ten of Book Three, and in the last chapter of The Institutes. This ought to be emphasized again and again, for it sometimes appears as if the voice of the Calvin Forum is a voice in the wilderness, but the voice of Calvin, though dead almost four hundred years, is not.

In these three volumes we find two Christian Liberals and a Roman Catholic making an eloquent plea for the ideas of Calvin and of the Calvinists of Dutch descent. The authors did not borrow them, of course not, from the latter, but they certainly did borrow them from Calvin, and Dr. Niebuhr is so kind as to acknowledge this in part. That is the reason why the present reviewer must call the appearance of these three books a national and philosophical event for all orthodox Christians, but especially for the progressive Calvinists. We might even state an international event, for America is leading and going to lead the world, and it is of the utmost significance that American Christians think and write, be they Calvinists, Liberals, or Catholics.

Liberal, Roman Catholics, and Calvinists

If all three groups, each in their own way, are going to make propaganda for a political, economic, cultural, and educational ideal that dates from Geneva especially in regard to a Biblical foundation for our philosophical thinking, we may be on the eve of a world revolution in the right direction. All depends now on the conviction and the organization of the forces that stand for this Biblical way of thinking. In politics and economics we Calvinists shall have to work largely with other Christian democrats. In education and social life we shall have to seek refuge in orthodox Protestant isolation to safeguard our children and our heritage. In education we shall ever have to emphasize the Calvinistic outlook with its two principles of the soteriological and the cosmological meaning of Christianity. We shall have to build numerous free Calvinistic schools, colleges and universities. For it looks as if there is now going to be a grand opportunity for the application of Calvin's principles at least in the line of politics, economics, and education. The light of Calvin is dawning in the camps of Liberals and Catholics. We, Calvinists, have certainly reason to feel happy and thankful that we get such an unexpected break. Our former enemies are building the city of God.

Of course, we cannot expect Simon pure Christianity from Liberals and Catholics. They are followers of William of Occam who separated religion and culture, nature and grace. They arrive at their conclusion by reasoning mainly from historical experience and by advocating mediation and moderation. But they speak no longer of a natural, or independent morality, for they call back to Moses and Christ, to the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount! The Calvinists are followers of Thomas Aquinas, and hence they do not believe that the Bible is a positive rule for our faith and life, but only a negative form, or a check, and that grace administered by the church should be a check on nature and culture. They want the Vatican and the Pope to play a role in the world's affairs which we Protestants cannot very well admit, for we believe that the church is an institutional institute, and that its counselors should not be officially represented in political and economic conferences. Nevertheless we do not object to unofficial, or indirect representation of the church. The Protestant and Catholic clergy have any advice to give, let them join the political, and economic movements and organizations, and let them proclaim loudly the demands of a Christian basis for all of life. We, orthodox Protestants, ought to welcome any action that calls the world back to Christ, and join in wherever we can. There is room for cooperation as well as isolation.

Now a word about each of these three volumes.

Johnston's Middle-of-the-Road Position

Eric Johnston's personality has made such an impression on the American World that his book has now a third edition at a popular price. He shows from his wide national and international experience that the world, and also our own country, is torn between two extremes: the bourgeois, or tory policy of the individualists and isolationists, and the totalitarian ideology of nazis, fascists, and bolshevists. He points out that either philosophy has worked harm, and will work more harm in the immediate future, unless we see the good in both authority and liberty, capital and labor, competition and cooperation. He finally shows that his moderation or middle-of-the-road theory should be anchored in the Bible, in the Ten Commandments as well as in the Sermon on the Mount. We must not only demand that the government protect the good and punish the wicked, but we must also realize the necessity of seeking the common good of the whole world.

We have one serious objection to Johnston's point of view. He does not emphasize the idea of stewardship. He seems to proceed from the old Roman and liberal notion that property is property, i.e., that man is the absolute owner of his possessions. Here is an inconsistency which is due to his lack of Biblical or Christian thinking. He sounds a sympathetic note for the poor and the oppressed. He speaks of fair play, compassion, kindness and social justice. But the words self-denial and stewardship (Calvin's terms but taken from the gospel) are not found in the index, and the writer cannot find them in Johnston's book. Here is his weak spot: He mentions the Sermon on the Mount,
but has not fathomed its depth. He says we ought to emphasize the fact that two-thirds of our nation are well-housed and well-fed, and not that one-third is ill-housed and ill-fed. But the Bible sounds a different note. Amos and all the prophets, as well as Christ and the apostles speak woefully to those who oppress the poor. It was a Calvinist, Dr. Kuyper, who in 1878 though ridiculed by the Liberals, read to them in the Second Chamber: “Come on now, ye rich! Howl and weep over your riches!” It was Calvin who told the rich that they should not only help the poor, but sacrifice for them. Johnston, disappoints, but he is not an advocate of the “drip system.” He wants both capital and labor protected. He wants administration of government, but under the banner of private initiative. No government ownership, supervision, or control, but government protection by relief of the unemployed and the farmers, by regulating labor’s right to collective bargaining—though he does not defend the Wagner Act—by legislation in regard to social security and banking—this is what he heartily approves in the New Deal. Johnston is a coming man, but he does not come far enough. He ought to add a few Calvinistic and Biblical terms to his vocabulary.

Sheen’s Christian Social Order

Monsignor Fulton Sheen sounds a much firmer note than Johnston. He is not satisfied with what Johnston calls the middle way, or the new American way: “The Western World must learn that Totalitarianism cannot be overcome by Socialism, by laissez-faire Capitalism, by Individualism, or by any combination of those... Unless we restore the Christian concept of man, and thus build a human rather than an economic order, we will be forced into a Totalitarianism in the hour we are doing our utmost to combat it.” The modified Individualism which wants to go back to the old-fashioned rugged individualism as soon as it is convenient finds no comfort in this Catholic priest. Nor does the state-socialist, or the Marxist. Like an Old Testament prophet he thundered against those who want the State to swallow up the church, and against those who think only of man as an animal who ought to have shorter hours to indulge in the pleasures of life. There is no neutrality! There is no neutral politics, economics, or education! Culture is either religious or anti-religious, Christian or pagan. The “capitalists” are wrong for they think they are always entitled to their six per cent. “Labor” is wrong because it tyrannizes the consumer. We must have justice and helpfulness. Either industry by pooling a percentage of all wages paid, or the State ought to help those who cannot make a sufficient income. The State ought to subsidize religious schools, and make the public school religious for the different religious groups. Not profit but service ought to be the motive of employer and employee. Then does not Calvin’s terms of stewardship, or self-denial, but he advocates the same ideas. He does not speak of Calvin’s contribution to democracy in church and state government, but he makes a plea for a Christian democracy in political and economic life. He wants separation of state and church, but no separation of state and religion. Of course, there is here and there a Catholic note, and a veiled or open criticism of the Revolution as the harbinger of the French Revolution. But Sheen belongs to that Catholic group that wants a definite, positive Biblical basis for state, society, and education, and is not satisfied with the middle way that drags in religion when it sees fit, and discards it when it cannot use it to advantage. He calls the nation, its institutions and its conduct back to the Scriptures. He believes in Christian stewardship, in the value of culture and in democracy of the moderate type. And, therefore, he ought to be widely read by all Calvinists who believe in the cosmological significance of Christianity. He wants Christian action, isolated and organized. Here is a Catholic, but in his philosophy he comes very close to Calvin, Kuyper, and Colijn.

Niebuhr’s Neo-Liberalism

The lectures by Professor Niebuhr are the least encouraging of the three volumes. Though he is considered to be the profoundest and the most influential Christian thinker by Liberals, the value of Niebuhr’s own thoughts is practically nil for the Kingdom of God. Niebuhr considers the history of the world not to be a struggle between Christ and Satan, but a struggle between self-interest and community interest; that is: a struggle between man and man. On either side are “children of light and of darkness.” The bourgeois spirit of our Western democracy forgot that the triumph of “free enterprise” does not always mean a square deal for the poor and needy. The Marxists forgot that they demanded the sacrifice of personal liberty on the altar of their communism. Each group had part of the truth, but they make the mistake of denying the fact of “origi­nal sin” and of not accepting the perpetual and persistent egoism of man.” Now, if we can educate mankind to see that self-interest must be absorbed in community interest, and, if we can politically and economically organize the world into smaller and bigger communities, and even into a global community in which the four big powers give a voice also to the small nations and in which every member is willing to contribute to an international police force, we shall in the long run arrive at world peace and world prosperity. Such is the technique of Niebuhr.

The only gratifying part of these lectures is that Niebuhr borrows his spiritual principles for world reform from Calvin. However, though he quotes Calvin as the originator of the idea of stewardship on page 94 of his book, he neglects to give him credit for the ideas of self-denial and religious humility which are borrowed from the well-known chapters in Calvin’s Institutes (III, 7 and 6). That is the reason why Niebuhr’s accusation of Calvin’s failure to reform bourgeois democracy or capitalism does not hold water. Moreover, Niebuhr seems to have an axe to grind. The Anabaptists with their idea that property was a result of sin, and, therefore, not desirable as basic for economy, appeal to him more than Calvin with his ideas about property and government which are based on the Scriptures. He wants to cast a slur on Calvin as the initiator of capitalism, and as unfit to be followed by a modern generation which has rejected Calvin’s principles about the religious, moral and cultural significance of orthodox Christianity. Niebuhr wants to be the prophet of a new Christianity which is not Christianity at all, for the Christ of Niebuhr is at his best an Arian Christ. It is remarkable that Niebuhr takes for granted that the “Christianity” of the Liberals is the only brand that is worthwhile, and that he continues to discredit Calvin after all the efforts that have been put forth by other Liberals to restore him to honor. One thing is fortunate: the language of Niebuhr is so technical and abstract that his voice will soon die away. On the other hand, the fact that Niebuhr wants to lay new foundations with Calvin’s principles of steward­ship, self-denial and religious humility makes a book like this worthwhile for all Christians who believe in social and economic reform. It is regrettable that Diepenhorst’s book on “Calvin and Economy,” and Fabius’ study on “Mosaic and Roman Law” are not available in English. They would be good antidotes for Niebuhr’s liberalistic propaganda, or, if you will, for his pseudo-Calvinism.

H. J. VAN ANDEL

AS TO GROWING OLD


He subtitle of this book is, “How to live gracefully and wholesomely during the second half of life.” Dr. Stolz discusses various problems in the life of a person past forty-five, and suggests how they may best be met. Life after adolescence is divided into four periods: adjustment, achievement, conservation, and retirement. To remain serene during the declining years, one should keep on learning and making friends. One should retain an active interest in the world; one should understand his body and observe the rules of health, should honestly accept the fact of old age, and should utilize the dynamic power of religion.
The book makes interesting reading and contains many fine suggestions. The style is clear, although not particularly gripping; at times there is a fondness for abstract words and abstract sentence structure.

Dr. Stolz's books are usually disappointing to us because of his pronounced liberalism in religion. This book is no exception. The statement, "The ancient Hebrew story that Eve was fashioned from the side of Adam is psychologically sound" (p. 76), will not endear the author to readers who accept the inspiration of the entire Bible. Another statement, "Faith in the God whom Jesus worshipped and served has enriched the lives of millions" (p. 187), clearly implies that, for Dr. Stolz, Jesus was merely a man. With a definition of religion like this: "the adjustment of the individual to the Determiner of Destiny" (p. 189), the author attempts to show the therapeutic and psychological value of faith in God. But his religion has no salvation in it, no sanctifying Holy Spirit, and no heaven.  

Anthony Hoekema.

**DESIGN FOR LIVING**


This is a vigorous book by an original mind. Originality, as we all know, does not consist so much in the enunciation of new ideas, as in the presentation of old ideas in new ways. In this latter sense, Dr. Kirk is certainly an original thinker; he knows how to express old truths in modern ways. He knows contemporary thought, is well acquainted with modern science, and speaks from within the modern temper. Yet, in language appealing to moderns, he restates his faith in the age-old Christian verities.

Your reviewer has the privilege of hearing Dr. Kirk at Princeton, and can testify to the freshness and vigor of his thinking. Educated in Europe, Kirk has a typically Continental distaste of American pragmatism. Rumor has it that he still subscribes to a London newspaper. Certain it is, at any rate, that he heartily abhors the superficiality of much American religious life and thinking.

The main theme of the book, in the author's own words, is this, "I believe that union with the Divine purpose as it is revealed through Jesus Christ is the only adequate pattern for a design for living" (p. 90). He develops this theme in three movements: "The New Element in The Modern Temper"; "The Divine Purpose"; and "The Human Response." Modern philosophies and fads are rejected in favor of the redemptive purpose of God in Christ. There is a fine statement about the cross on page 81: "God does not forgive our sins by words, but by the essential deed of atonement."

There are some fine thoughts and emphases in the book. Dr. Kirk feels that the most distinctive element in the modern temper is the awakening of spiritual feeling. Let us hope that he is right. Many of us may not agree with that analysis. We must all agree, however, with the penetrating observation that we have passed from a progress-conscious era into a crisis-conscious age.

One emphasis that I especially enjoyed is that reason includes more than the reasoning processes. The author warns against relying too much on abstract, speculative reason. Reason may play tricks on us. We must let the heart speak also. Says Dr. Kirk: "The intellect, if left to the devices of logic, will often slay the object that it loves in order to understand it. It deprives ideas of content, and offers in exchange a collection of abstractions that are too remote from reality to have any influence" (p. 63). The moral of all this for preachers is that if preaching is a "collection of abstractions" and nothing more, our doctrines will be emptied of meaningful content and our preaching will fail to influence.

Although he shares some Barthian emphases, Kirk is not a Barthian. In fact, he takes issue with Barth on the question of revelation, affirming that Barth went too far in denying any validity to general revelation. But Kirk agrees with Barth in demanding wholehearted response to God's call, wholehearted consecration to the divine purpose, "Christianity at the first is the religion of invitations. Jesus compels no man to follow Him, but if we accept His invitation we learn that we have chosen to respond to a totalitarian demand" (p. 85).

There are some very quotable sentences in the book, "Faith begins as an experiment and ends in an experience" (p. 67). "Jesus did not come to teach us a new morality, or to suggest a new ideal of humanity, but to deliver us from this present evil world and unite us to the Divine purpose" (p. 70). "The mind reigns but does not govern. We are governed by a tumultuous house of commons, made up of the passions, and the ruling passion is prime minister and coerces the sovereign" (p. 8).

We cannot, however, uncritically accept everything the author says. On page 64 he writes, "The first step in response (to God) lies in following the highest that we know, for in these primary impulses we have the raw materials for building a rational faith." But how does this square with Romans 8:7, "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God?" Again, on page 59 the author affirms, "God is the giver of salvation, but always offers it to men of a certain willingness to respond." We agree that the willingness to respond must be there, but is that willingness the root or the fruit of salvation? The Bible says that it is the fruit: "By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

Despite these strictures, however, Design for Living is a stimulating book. It is not easy reading, but it will reward the reader with new insights and new aspirations.  

Anthony Hoekema.