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the **CALVIN**
ORUM

Calvinism Today
Active and Potent

Unionism
and the Government

Scriptural Interpretation
Dynamic, not Static

Jeremiah's Message
For Today

Reformed Faith
In Ceylon

Javanese Problem
An Appraisal

News

Reviews

VOL. XI, NO. 7

**TWO DOLLARS
A YEAR**

FEBRUARY, 1946

EDITORIAL CHIPS

RECENTLY I have had the pleasure of conversing with many returned chaplains whose fellowship before entering the service had been with a sound, conservative, in fact: Calvinistic, church. Almost invariably these chaplains had been impressed by two things as they ministered spiritually to the men of the armed forces and had occasion to reflect upon their own beliefs and the beliefs and attitudes of their own church communion. More than ever they appreciated the doctrinal soundness, the thorough religious educational grounding, and the Bible-believing loyalty of the church that had been their spiritual mother and was now their spiritual commissioner. And with equal fervor they spoke of a growing appreciation of all believers, of whatever denominational affiliation and doctrinal hue, which are loyal to the great verities of the Christian Faith in these days of apostasy and humanistic moralism. This combination is just what the conservative, Calvinistic communions need. A broadening of sympathies and understanding toward all who have the essence of the gospel, going hand in hand with a deeper loyalty and growing enthusiasm for the distinctive Reformed Faith that is the finest flower of the interpretation of Scriptural truth.



☆ It is refreshing to note the revived interest in Calvinism in various parts of the world. No, it is not an avalanche. But we pray that in God's providence it may be a cloud as of a man's hand, which—please God—may bring copious rains of refreshing. In this and the previous issue of our magazine, a brother from Ceylon tells of the planting of Dutch Calvinism on this historic island and gives an account of the vicissitudes through which the Reformed Churches in this island have passed until today. There is a group in the Reformed Church of Ceylon that loves the Reformed truth and is seeking to bring it to new growth and development. An appeal has been made to America for one or two experienced, able ministers grounded in the Reformed Faith and in its practices to come and help them. And already arrangements have been made under which one or more students will study at Calvin Seminary. May God grant a revival of the Reformed Faith in Ceylon! Also in this issue we place the first letter from our correspondent in North Ireland, where Calvinism is fighting the same battle as it is all over, viz. against Modernism as well as Romanism. And in the previous issue of our magazine our

correspondent of the New Hebrides, writing of church life in his native New Zealand, spoke of a wonderful evidence of revival of interest in Calvinism in his native church.



☆ Perhaps you have overlooked it, and so we would like to call your attention to the refreshing words of our correspondent, J. Graham Miller, now a missionary in Tongoa, but only a few years ago a student of theology in New Zealand. On page 122 of the January issue he informs us: "I think we three (referring to John Smith, R. S. Roxburgh, and himself) 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."



☆ A remarkable tribute to the potency and activity of present-day Calvinism comes from an unlooked-for source. Under the title "Calvinism's Torch" Dr. Robert Schuler of Trinity Methodist Church in Los Angeles writes as follows in a recent issue of his snappy monthly, *The Methodist Challenge*. "When I was a boy preacher, two schools of thought, theologically speaking, were arrayed against each other—the Calvinistic and the Arminian. Calvinistic churches were formal, cold, and ecclesiasticaly dominated. Arminian churches were spiritual, warm, and evangelistic. At least that was true of the two varieties as I knew them . . . But one strange thing has happened in the onward march of these two varieties of theological formula. Fifty years ago the torch of evangelism was being carried by the Arminians. Today that same torch is being carried by the Calvinists. The great revivals were in the hands of the Methodists . . . Even the Calvinistic movements drew much of their ministry

from the altars of Methodism through that period. Then a strange, subtle leaven began to permeate the Methodist Church. German rationalism, destructive criticism, modernism and liberalism . . . The fires of the great revivals waned, flickered, and were all but extinguished. In the Calvinistic groups . . . there remained a strong and aggressive minority who swung to the other extreme. Many independent churches grew up and came to mighty proportions. Practically all of them were Calvinistic. The great Moody Church in Chicago, the Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles, and many others . . . They were sound in doctrine and evangelistic in practice. The torch of evangelism fell into their hands. Today practically all the active evangelists within the nation who are really drawing the multitudes are Calvinists. The Youth-for-Christ movement, by all odds the greatest spiritual manifestation of our generation, is under Calvinistic control. While men like Bob Jones, John Brown, and my own son, are active in this movement, all of them Arminian in their theology, yet the movement itself is being opposed by the Methodist Church . . . I have in my church almost an equal number of Calvinists and Arminians. They all believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of the Living God . . . Christ virgin-born . . . Lord of Glory . . . They hold to the sovereignty of God, the eternal planning of the Almighty, the blood atonement, the bodily resurrection of Jesus, His coming again, and believe that their one big task is to bring sinners to a Savior. They believe that the new world can only be builded out of men and women who are new creatures in Christ Jesus." And then he closes with these words: "Here is the torch! It does not please me to say it, but it is true that, in the main, those who are Calvinists have that torch today and are carrying it forward!"



☆ Nicholas Hendrikse, an intelligent, devoted, alert Christian gentleman of the town of Cicero, Chicago's well-known suburb, is no man to hide his light under a bushel. For some time he has been active in Cicero's civic affairs and has honorably held a number of town offices in recent years. At present he is Librarian of the Town of Cicero. Wherever he has gone and whatever he has done, he has always been known for his fearless devotion to righteousness and justice in the midst of much political graft and corruption. As librarian one might think that he would withdraw within his shell and bury himself in books. But we were pleasantly surprised recently to see a few editorials from his pen in the town paper. They were "Guest" editorials, one on "Victory and Peace" and the other on "Christmas." There is an idea. Among the readers of The Calvin Forum there are many more capable "laymen" like Nicholas Hendrikse who could

let their light shine through such channels as guest editorials in their local papers. Mr. Hendrikse, who is a self-made man and has had neither college nor seminary training, writes on the subjects of the day with discernment, insight, ability, and absolute devotion to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Especially Calvinistic churches have trained and are training a host of such men. Many of our college-trained and non-college-trained young men in the armed forces could put some chaplains to shame and in many cases became their assistants. They were grounded in the truth through the instruction received in their home, church, Christian school, catechism class, and church society. Calvinistic "laymen" of talent ought to let their light shine. There is great need. There are also many opportunities. Perhaps in your home town you could exert a noble influence through the writing of guest editorials for the town paper. Nicholas Hendrikse is setting a fine example!



☆ You would not think that anyone could have the ignorance or the brass, or both, to represent John Calvin as furnishing an argument against infant baptism, would you? Yet that is exactly what was done recently in the *Chattanooga Times* in a paid advertisement coming from a minister of the Church of Christ. John Calvin is—correctly—quoted as follows: "As Christ enjoins them to teach before baptizing, and desires that none but believers shall be admitted to baptism, it would appear that baptism is not properly administered unless when preceded by faith." It did not take Dr. Robinson of Columbia Seminary long to show how utterly misleading this statement is when taken out of its context. In the *Southern Presbyterian Journal* of November 15 he quotes the rest of the same Calvin passage, in which Calvin sets forth the covenant basis for the baptism of infants of believers and exhibits its scriptural authority. By the way, a fine little pamphlet refuting the Baptist contentions on this score has recently come to our attention. It is worth getting. The author is a Southern Presbyterian preacher, the Rev. John Scott Johnson of Augusta, Georgia. You pay only 15 cents for 40 pages of instructive material on this subject, which is often a pressing issue. The *Southern Presbyterian Journal*, Weaverville, North Carolina (yes, that is the full address) will be glad to furnish copies. If you wish for a hundred for distribution, you pay only ten cents a piece.



☆ Church Union is in the air again. Negotiations are going on for the possible merging of the Reformed Church in America with the United Presby-

terian Church, the Northern with the Southern Presbyterian Church and the Protestant Episcopal Church with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (i.e., Northern). The arguments for such mergers are not impressive. They betray much superficial practicality but no deep conviction concerning the truth. Mergers like these often lead only to new splits. The sad part of the whole merger and church union story in our country is that the fires of enthusiasm for such "union" are largely fed by the doctrinal indifferentism and silence which increasingly prevail in these churches. The Church reform which is going forward in the National Church of the Netherlands (Hervormd) is of a different caliber. See the letter of our correspondent, Dr. Prins, on another page in this issue.



☆ It is refreshing to read a vigorous letter from the pen of Arthur W. Machen, Jr., in the current issue of *The Presbyterian Guardian* in which he challenges the arguments advanced in many religious circles against peacetime conscription. Such arguments have appeared of late not only—as could be expected—from the old pacifistic crowd that is becoming vocal again, but also from the pen of men who both in the light of Scripture and of our present unavoidable world responsibility could be expected to know better.



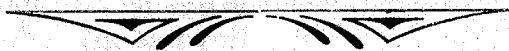
☆ If you read French and are interested in the revival of Calvinism and the Protestant faith in gen-

eral in the country of Calvin's birth, we call your attention to a valuable weekly which has made its appearance just last year. Its name is: *Rèforme*. Its Editor: Albert Finet. Its address: *Rèforme*, 3 rue Gay-Lussac, Paris-Ve. In one of the recent issues appeared a full picture of the Monument of the Reformation located opposite John Calvin's University in the city of Geneva. That issue also contained a fine bibliography of French titles of works on and by the great Reformers, Calvin as well as Luther. We hope and pray for a great revival of the faith of the Reformers in the country of the Huguenots!



☆ Announcement by the William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company of a Christian Fiction Contest with a single prize of five thousand dollars once more focusses the attention of all interested persons on the great need of fiction that shall be genuine fiction of real literary merit on the one hand, and that shall be no less genuinely Christian in spirit and conception on the other. We have had too much Sunday School story writing that failed to qualify as to literary merit. And of late we have also had enough of clever writing by word and plot artists who trample upon all the decencies and ideals demanded by a Christian ethic. If preaching and moralizing in story form is not necessarily fiction, neither does some of the realistic, sensual, and blasphemous writing which is lauded by some as great fiction, qualify. The Eerdmans Publishing Company is to be congratulated on its determination to stimulate the production of genuine Christian fiction and to make the effort for those who compete worth while.

C. B.



Authority, Government, and Strikes

Gerrit H. Hospers
East Williamson, N. Y.

RECENTLY our country has been greatly disturbed by strikes. Our government has had a big problem to deal with in order to aid in effecting a settlement. Statesmen, editors, clergymen, and other have expressed their views on the vexatious problem. General comfort will be served if we can have a correct conception of the nature of authority and whence it obtains. The choice is between its resting in God, the creator of heaven and earth, the supreme ruler therein; or, its resting in man. As to our knowledge concerning the first alternative, we derive that from revelation, given in the Holy Scriptures. The other alternative gathers it from the thoughts of man. The method of government is determined by the nature of authority as held by these alternatives. Its correctness, strength, permanence depend upon the characteristics inherent in either of these alternatives. The first has an axiomatic character: it is primordial, ultimate necessity, absolute truth. The second is the rather common idea that the people must make out these matters according to their own judgments. This locates sovereignty in the people themselves.

A Christian Statesman

In the 19th century there lived in The Netherlands a man of marked ability whose thoughts and labors have retained high value to the present day. It is a pity that so little is known of him in the English-speaking world. We refer to the Hon. G. Groen Van Prinsterer. He was born in 1801 and died in 1876. He studied in the University of Leyden. He was early appointed secretary to the King, and soon after became director of the royal archives of the House of Orange, which were issued in the French language and in thirteen volumes. History was his specialty. He also had a legal training. He became a Christian statesman, a member of the States General for many years, where his historical knowledge and pronounced religious principles made him a man of note, so that his influence in The Netherlands is great to the present day.

It is instructive to note what the basis is of the political parties in Holland. They all rest more or less on religious ideas. The Roman Catholics definitely organized themselves as a party in 1865. Formerly almost all the other citizens constituted the

Liberal Party. Groen Van Prinsterer (we shall call him now and then simply Groen, as is done in Holland too) and the conservative element did not feel at home in this Liberal Party. In the debates in the States General, Groen stood alone with his orthodox religious opinions. He had poor support from such people who like him were known for their old-fashioned piety. As a student of history he saw more and more the weak character of the politics of his time. In his writings and in his debates he testified against the principles of the French Revolution, which he in common with the eminent German conservative statesman, Friedrich Julius Stahl, noted in the religious atmosphere of all Europe. On the basis of these views Groen slowly evolved the so-called Anti-revolutionary Party. Its beginnings were small, its growth for many, many years was painfully slow, but it finally became one of the major Parties. Later, the Liberal Party weakened, and the Socialist element, which it contained, took a definite stand as a Party.

As we have already said, Groen during almost his whole career battled alone, so that the opposition taunted him with being "a general without an army." Though lacking the inspiration of appreciative support, Groen remained firm in his convictions. He always declared that temporizing and half way measures and beliefs were an abomination to him.

What Is Revolution?

In 1847 Groen issued his famous book, "*Ongelooft en Revolutie*." It is a large volume. I have a copy of the fifth edition, which means much for so large a book in so small a country. It is still a standard work, often quoted by Kuyper and other Dutch statesmen.

In his Introduction Groen says: "To bring out the nature of my subject it is necessary to state what I understand by *Revolution* and revolutionary ideas. With *Revolution* I mean not the many events by which the relocation of public authority is brought about, not alone the revolutionary storm which has raged in France, but the subversion of thought and disposition manifest in all Christendom. With revolutionary ideas I have in view the principles of freedom and equality, people's sovereignty, social contract, conventional regeneration, which are honor-

ed as the cornerstones of state-right and state-structure" (pp. 4, 5).

Groen says elsewhere: "The standpoint of our study is that of the Christian, who desires to glory in nothing but in Christ and Him crucified; who, in religion, morality and right, in family and in State, recognizes no wisdom or truth which does not begin with submission of heart and mind to Revelation; who, with the deist in history likewise traces out and takes notice of the leading of a Providence; but true to the confession of the Gospel with firm conviction recognizes and expects in the coming of the triumphant Savior the solution of the riddles of the history of mankind; who loves the appearance of the Savior because therein he perceives with the historian Von Muller 'the accomplishment of all the hopes, the point of perfection of all philosophy, the explanation of all revolutions, the key to all the apparent contradictions of the physical and moral world, of life and immortality.'

"After the labor which I have given to the study of history it would be unanswerable if I did not give witness to the truth as it is in Christ by showing that the history of the last sixty years [this was written in 1847] in the outpourings of wickedness has been the fruit and manifestation of systematic unbelief."

Stahl formulated his idea thus: "The term '*The Revolution*' I take in its world-historical conception. It did not exist full-grown before 1789. But since that time it has become a world-power, and history is occupied with the battle for and against it . . . Tracing back to its true origin, '*The Revolution*' is a single and at the same time a great historical fact; to know the invasion of the spirits through the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of man which made of it the source and the center of all truth in putting reason and the human will in the place of revelation and divine law. The Revolution is the history of the irreligious philosophy of the past century; it is, in its source and results, the doctrine which, freely developed, destroys Church and State, society, and the family, produces discord without always establishing liberty or restoring social order, and in the matter of religion infallibly leads its conscientious adepts to atheism and despair. The anti-revolutionary principle is the contrary of The Revolution; it is the Gospel and History which oppose anarchy, in the name of religion, of right, of progress and of liberty."

Christianity and Democracy

Prof. D. P. D. Fabius, of the Free University of Amsterdam, in 1903 gave a masterful address at a political convention of his Party in the subject: "Beginselen en Eischen" (Principles and their Demands). He said:

"The word 'democracy' has different meanings. When Groen was asked whether he was a 'demo-

crat,' he first wanted to know in what sense his questioner used the word.

"In a general, somewhat indefinite sense the word 'democratic' according to its etymology means 'rulership of the people,' and as such is used for the influence of the people on the government as regards the course of affairs in the state. In that sense Groen and the Anti-revolutionary Party used it.

"Further, 'democracy' has a sharper definition as indicating *rule by the people directly*. In that sense the word has been used for centuries in science and in practice. The study of history had not gained Groen's assent to that signification. He believed in the *authority* of the heads of Government, and in the *influence* of the people. In that sense Groen and the Anti-revolutionary Party always used it.

"In a yet stronger sense the word *democracy* appears in the sense of revolutionary popular sovereignty as a peculiar *right* of the people. Guizot refers to that meaning when he says: 'The more I think about it, the more I remain convinced that the great evil of France, the evil which is at the bottom of all its evils, which undermines and destroys its governments and its liberties, its dignity and its honor, is the evil which I attack: democratic idolatry. Chaos lies hidden today under one word: *Democracy*. It is that idea which must be extirpated. Social peace obtains at that price. And with social peace come liberty, security, prosperity, dignity, all good things, moral and material, which only it can guarantee.'" Groen agreed with this, and added: "Such democracy I abominate."

In his oration referred to above, Prof. Fabius warned his hearers against using a Party name with a questionable basis and connected with a captivating prefix. He said: "History has definitely proved that a name composed of a rather general and even good word becomes less acceptable when prefixed with the word 'Christian.' Today mention is often made of *Christian-democratic*. But if that word 'democratic' is there used in the sense of absolute rule by the people which leaves revelation out of account, then that prefix is foreign to the basic term, as Vinet said of Chateaubriand's '*Christian democracy*': *the substantive devours its adjective*; that is, the Christian element disappears in that which it was to improve. The word 'Christian' does not recommend itself as a prefix to the word 'revolution,' because *we* are *anti-revolutionary*. The consistent Christian must also object to such a combination as *Christian-Socialist*."

The political parties of the United States are not founded upon definitely religious principles. It is difficult to explain to a foreigner (even if we among ourselves understand it) what is characteristic, religiously and ethically, of our Democratic and Republican Parties. And so it comes to pass here in these United States that infidels, communists, socialists, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, etc., can belong to any of our political

parties. However, a good-sized Socialist Party is emerging, and, as in Holland, it may in time gain many adherents from the major Parties.

In 1903 there occurred a nation-wide railroad strike in The Netherlands. The Anti-revolutionary Party, aided by the Roman Catholic Party, was then, for the first time, in power. The strike came suddenly. It was declared because of economic matters. Later, the leaders said that religious considerations had come up as an after thought. The Government had a difficult time to cope with it. It was not prepared for it. Military power was weak. After a few weeks, Dr. Kuyper, the Premier at that time, was ready, and took decided action. He gained the day in preventing the political tyranny which threatened. The Cabinet took strong position on the ground of Divine authority.

Once more, in November, 1918, at the end of the First World War, there were anxious days. Troelstra, the leader of the Socialists, threatened revolution. Some anarchy prevailed. The collapse of the red danger was due, in the first place, to the loyalty of the Parties of the Right, supported in The Hague by the faithfulness of a regiment of Roman Catholic troops from Limburg, and a regiment of Anti-revolutionary troops from Friesland.

Unionism and Governmental Authority

In our Labor strikes this year our Government faced a difficult situation. *It has had to deal with another Power.* That Power is Unionism. It originated from workers banding together in well organized form, and executing its demands through officers duly elected by themselves. If refused, its demands are followed by deeds, in order to enforce them. It simply is a form of violence against established authority, and hence against the general public which is represented in that authority. The effect of the action of the new Power amounts to a *strangling of the body politic*: it has the public at its mercy. In our Government there has been too much leniency and temporizing. There has been too little regard for sound principle and righteousness. This has obtained so long that the reins of control have slipped out of the hands of our rulers. The coal miners were far on the way with their threat to stop production and freeze the public into subjection through the surrender of the regular authorities. The recent threat of a general railroad strike was an exceedingly serious one as its execution would have brought unparalleled misery to the public. Unionism has even endangered the existence of the nation in limiting the means of carrying on the war. Such acts of Unionism amount to *insubordination to the legally constituted authority*. It is insurrection, revolution. Too long altogether our Government (and our citizenry) have failed to understand the Divine principle of authority, and in the self-sufficiency of our statesmen has trusted its own wits and

wisdom. It lacked moral courage in not grappling with the brazen presumption of men who do not recognize the Supreme Ruler, namely, Him who regards earthly rulers as His ministers (Rom. 13:1-7). The principle of the French Revolution, *'ni Dieu, ni Maitre'* attracts many, but it is not seen that it carries the seeds of lawlessness and anarchy. Pickets stationed around factories are agents of lawlessness as they invade the rights of ownership. It violates Art. IV of the Amendments of the Constitution which secures the "persons, houses, papers and effects" of citizens "against unreasonable searches and seizures." It is humiliating to contemplate the act of the Governor of a State to permit a "sit-down strike" which takes illegal possession of the property of the owners. That act of a Governor is the violation of an oath to uphold the Government and its Constitution. The revolutionary cancer has so grown that the Chief Executive appointed a violator of the Constitution to become a Justice of the Supreme Court! This act is on the revolutionary line and would have received the unqualified condemnation of Guizot, Stahl, Groen, Van Prinsterer, Kuyper, Lincoln and other men of adamant principle and moral sensitiveness.

Solution for Present Crisis

More than one outstanding periodical has recently stated that there is a crisis in the history of the world. One declares that there must arise a *sound world or there will come world destruction*. It is believed to be humanity's problem and that humanity can give the solution, as though humanity is able. Hence, there obtains bewilderment, a groping in the dark. Mark Sullivan relates how really nothing is done to get out of our difficulties with Labor, that a remedy is still frantically being sought; and that "the nearest thing to certainty is that it will grow worse." Mr. Lippmann writes of a "Perilous Drift towards a Race Armaments." Discussing important questions of the day, he says: "The fact of the matter—to put it rather bluntly—is that the administration is not in control of its policy." Furthermore he says: "We are drifting towards a catastrophe."

Situations and conditions such as these would have received the same judgment as Groen uttered a century ago: "Where the divine origin of authority is ignored, nothing remains but a choice between two extremes, as long as the resiliency of the public has not suffered extinction, namely, a choice between unrestrained licence or complete slavery." Groen means that when Unionism gains the power to demand and obtain everything, we are no longer free, but are the slaves of a foreign Power.

The Hon. Samuel B. Pettengill has all along sent strong warnings in the same direction. He asks his readers whether they want to continue giving further control to the big Unions, since Unionism now

is making a bigger "push for Industry-wide Power." Then Pettengill adds: "That concentrated power will be used to take the whole nation by the throat whenever it is decided to shake more dollars loose. That happened twice in the time of the war and in the coal strike, and the government was compelled to knuckle down to the demands of Unionism." Its demands are increasing. It begets tyrannical domination without regard to the comfort of the people. Slowly on the public will have no part in the Government except as it serves the Unions.

At this writing the Conference with the Labor authorities called by Secretary Schwellenbach is in session. The Secretary said of it, that it would be

the "most important Conference being held anywhere in the world." He is right if the fate of free government is then to be decided. We are drifting towards lawlessness if our Government supinely accedes to the demands of Unionism.

The remedy does not consist in relying upon the wisdom, ability and integrity of man, which has always failed in solving the deepest problems of existence. It lies in the principles held by Groen Van Prinsterer, Stahl, Guizot, Vinet, Burke, Gladstone, etc. Groen's motto was: "Against Unbelief, the Gospel." Authority is based upon a recognition of the Living God, a study of His will and a desire to obey Him.

Inscriptions and the March of God

Martin J. Wyngaarden
Professor of Old Testament Interpretation
Calvin Seminary

THE scope of the knowledge available for Scriptural interpretation, as possessed by the Church, is increasing even within rather recent times.

The Lord is unchangeable, but He is not static; instead He is dynamic, unchangeably at work.

And for us the important question is this,—can we keep pace with the march of time, with the march of God, through the centuries, and with the lessons that He wants us to learn in the course of time?

Let us take a number of illustrations and reflect upon them.

There was a time when the Chaldees of the Book of Daniel were gravely misinterpreted. The king called in the astrologers and soothsayers and wise men and Chaldees. Were the people of Chaldea so intellectual that they could all be classed with the wise men? That would be as if the President called in the brain trusts, the economists and the sociologists and the Californians. Can all Californians qualify as brain trusters? How then could all Chaldeans qualify as wise men of Babylon? The answer is not evident upon the basis of the Hebrew language nor on the basis of our English translations.

But the scope of objective evidence has been increased within our own life time. And this particular difficulty was solved on the basis of the Babylonian and Sumerian languages, by one of the greatest linguists of modern times, the late Dr. R. D. Wilson of Princeton and Westminster Seminaries.

Then these Chaldees were not necessarily inhabitants of Chaldea at all, but galdu,—great builders, one of the classes of wise men of Babylon, and recognized as such in an inscription, published by the late Prof. A. T. Clay of Yale University.

Such great builders were they that they could even build or group the stars of the heavens into the signs of the zodiac and into various constellations, like Orion and the Pleiades, which are mentioned in the Bible.

The scope of objective evidence for the interpretation of the Old Testament, especially, has in the providence of God been greatly increased, in our day and age, through the decipherment of the inscriptions in many languages formerly completely unknown, such as Babylonian, Assyrian and Hittite. Seeing that Solomon's mother, Bathsheba, had first been married to Uriah, the Hittite, and seeing that the speech of the Hittites shows great variety, it is no wonder that Solomon's speech shows more variety than that of many other Old Testament writers, a variety that was no doubt increased still more by many of his foreign wives. If ever there was a man well prepared to write on vanity of vanities, it was Solomon, and the Lord used him for just that.

Among the ancient languages deciphered to good advantage was also the Elamite, in which the late Prof. Dr. C. Van Gelderen, of the Free University of Amsterdam, was a specialist.

Moreover, Arabic and the Samaritan of the Samaritan Pentateuch,—Phoenician and the Aramaic dialects of Daniel, Ezra, and other men,—the Syriac dialects of Damaskus, Edessa and other places,—the languages of far distant peoples, such as the Egyptian, Armenian,—and even the Ethiopic of the land of King Haille Selassie,—have all contributed to the better understanding of the Scriptures.

There was a time when it could not be shown how the books of the Pentateuch, such as Exodus and Deuteronomy, could have been written in Hebrew

script as early in history as the days of Moses. For no Hebrew inscription could then be pointed out from the time of Moses. And so Naville, a Swiss, conservative scholar, thought that the Pentateuch had originally been written in the Babylonian language. Dr. R. D. Wilson once varied this theory by holding that the Pentateuch might have been written by Moses in the Hebrew language, but in the Babylonian, cuneiform, wedge-shaped script.

But when the Hebrew inscriptions in the Sinaitic turquoise and copper mines were discovered, all this was changed. These inscriptions were found to antedate and precede the time of Moses, and so it can now easily be shown how Moses could have written the Pentateuch in the Hebrew script, as well as in the Hebrew language.

The time is not so long ago that liberal and radical scholars thought that the differentiation between various kinds of sacrifices, such as burnt offerings, sin offerings, and trespass offerings, did not arise until much later than the time of Moses, and would

not fit into the era of Moses. But now the inscribed tablets found at Rash Shamra, north of Palestine, from approximately the time of Moses, show such distinctions of sacrifices, at such an early time in history, even among the pagans that lacked God's inspired revelation and His infallible Word.

Like Esther, the inscriptions have come to the kingdom for such a time as this.

The scope of the philological evidence for the interpretation of the Old Testament has increased so rapidly in the last century, that many new works and new revisions were needed to reflect that advancing tide of knowledge.

In fact one historian called the decipherment of ancient inscriptions one of the great intellectual triumphs of the century.

But the march of time, the march of God, is so swift that man has no time to look back upon such triumphs, except for a moment; new problems arise in every field of study and in every kind of Christian endeavor.

God's Reversible Dealings with the Nations

Arnold Brink

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THE church is expected today to speak authoritatively on all sorts of subjects. But what the church may say is determined by her original charter given when Jesus said, "Teaching them to observe all things, *whatsoever I have commanded you.*" In its broadest aspect, "Whatsoever I have commanded you" includes the whole of Scripture, all of which is the revelation of the LOGOS of God.

To many a modern ear it would seem strange to hear some of the things about which the Bible says nothing.

In these days many a church auditorium rings again with resounding plaudits about Patriotism as a great Christian virtue. It is a human virtue but let us not confound it forthwith with Christian virtue. The Bible never mentions Patriotism in any form, much less treats it as a virtue. The love of homeland and Jerusalem, referred to in the Psalms, for example, is chiefly a religious loyalty to the place of God's dwelling and revelation, which is something quite different. Neither does the Bible express a preference for any given form of government. The Old Testament theocracy was something unique. When Samuel protested the establishment of a monarchy, he did so for religious, not political reasons. It is no more an argument for Democracy

than the communal life of the early church is an argument for political communism. Jesus never once uttered a word of objection to the rulers who held sway in Palestine. He once called Herod a "fox," but not because He held any brief against his political position.

The Bible says a great deal about war. Almost every feature of modern warfare, organization, strategy, supplies, casualties, war-prisoners, military intelligence and international negotiation has its place in the Bible. But, contrary to the opinion of many, there is no place that glorifies war for its own sake. The conquest and utter destruction of Canaan was commanded by God for spiritual reasons of His own, but the cruelties and barbarities sometimes perpetrated in those days and these, are never commanded nor condoned by God.

War is often treated as an unavoidable evil. It is clearly set forth as a result of sin. And it is clear also that, war or no war, God controls, by His overruling Providence, the destinies of men and nations.

Jeremiah's Political Philosophy

This brief resumé will serve to introduce the political philosophy of one of the uniquely great figures

in human history. He was one of a group of those dimly seen colossal religious leaders, who moved in the shadows behind the thrones in the days when Israel and Judah were going into their twilight and the great world empires were about to rise as suns in history's sky. The whole story of these Old Testament prophets seems to reflect one great lesson that we do well to watch as we go forward in history today. These prophets were exceptionally able and indeed inspired religious reformers, and yet they exercised very little effect upon the general life of the people unless they were aided and supported by a Godly king. Is that a lesson to the church today? The church must continue to be a leaven in human society, but is she destined to continue to be a voice crying in the wilderness, until God establishes rulers after His heart? The church represents a tremendous block of humanity and yet she is not succeeding noticeably in her attempt to bring about national penitence and revival. She is constantly defeated by political leaders whose only qualifications are opportunism and worldly-wisdom.

Jeremiah began his career as power-behind-the-throne during the rising star of a child of God, Josiah, who ascended the throne as a lad of eight years in the year 639 B.C. In 627 a copy of the law was found hidden, say the Rabbis, beneath a paving stone in the temple court. Then reformation began in earnest. Jeremiah was called to the prophetic office the following year and for eighteen years he shared in the golden age of Josiah's reformation. And yet, all the while, he alone realized that at heart the people were still idolators. And when, in 608, Josiah persisted in his ill-fated war against Pharaoh Neco and was killed, Jeremiah cried "It is the end!" and in just twenty-two years, of steep decline into the abyss of ever greater national sin, Judah was ready for doom and died amid smoking ruins and streaming tears. Jeremiah saw all those forty years when the chariot of Judah was careening from the heights to the depths. And his single message all that time, even during apparent reformation, was that the nation was destined to ruin unless the people in sincere penitence turned unto God, and if they did, they would just as surely be delivered. That intensely practical philosophy is aptly expressed by Jeremiah in the eighteenth chapter of his book, and especially in this pungent passage:

"At what instant I speak concerning a nation . . . to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it; if that nation . . . turn from their evil I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation . . . to build and to plant it; if they do that which is evil in my sight . . . then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." (vss. 7-10.)

The Potter and the Clay

In order to preach this message God directed him to the home factory of a potter and he watched as the potter set a lump of clay upon the wheel which he revolved with his feet. Jeremiah watched as the potter turned the clay and molded it into a cone-shape with his hand, then set his thumb in the top and began to form one of the cone-shaped crocks of which Palestine was and is full from one end to the other. Jeremiah saw that the clay persistently crumbled at a certain place and he noticed how deftly the potter flicked the crumbly clay out of the half-finished pot and changed its size and design according to the clay he had left. Then the word of Jehovah came to him saying, "Can I not do with you as this potter has done?"

Jeremiah applies the illustration to national life, Paul in Romans 9 applies it to spiritual life. So it is important that we catch the intent of the potter parable.

The parable undoubtedly underlines the sovereignty of God. But there are those who then jump to the conclusion that God is arbitrary and capricious and we are passive and irresponsible. Some have gloried in it and some have revolted against it, but both have accepted a distorted kind of Divine sovereignty. God does not teach that at all, either here or anywhere else.

Jeremiah was watching a potter, not a child. This man is seriously engaged in a life work of making vessels to be sold to buy bread. This is not a man who would playfully make one kind of pot and break it to make another. So God, who has power to be arbitrary is never so. To picture God as sovereign in that sense is blasphemy. His sovereignty is always a holy sovereignty.

There are people today who scan the tangled threads of modern history and lift their eyes piously and say, "No one knows why God deals thus with the world and no one needs to know. We must simply trust." That is not true. We do know why God deals as He does with the world and we do need to know and it is not enough to trust if our trusting leads us to thrust our heads in the sand whenever the situation calls for a clear and positive Christian testimony, whether at the polls, or at Washington or San Francisco, or in public office.

Nor is it true that the potter's work failed because of the potter's clumsy hands. He was a professional potter, an artisan. The real answer is simple but fraught with great spiritual significance. Thomson in his *The Land and the Book* tells of watching a potter at work for hours before he saw the thing happen that Jeremiah describes, and it is not due to the potter's caprice or his inexpertness, but it is due to a fault in the clay. There was too much sandy mud in the clay. It would not adhere.

God is a sovereign God. "He doeth with the hosts of heaven and the hosts of earth according to His good pleasure," but His good pleasure is never anything but GOOD. His dealings with men and nations are determined not alone by His own will, but by what he finds in the clay with which he deals.

The result of that sovereign Potter's dealings with nations may be the same as that of any potter with faulty clay. He may change the design of His work, and make it smaller. This He did with Egypt in the days of Moses. The ten plagues and the loss of an entire army in the Red Sea did not wipe out Egypt but it did trim it down so that it was many generations before Egypt again appears as a formidable power in history. God may destroy the pot He is making and use a little of the material to form a new vessel. This He did with Judah. God may utterly destroy His vessel and throw away the clay. He did so with Babylon, Assyria, Persia, Macedonia, Rome, and Germany.

God's Message for Today

God still deals just that way, Jeremiah said. "If a nation" . . . any nation, changes its bearing toward God, God will change His dealing with that nation, and the change is instantaneous.

There are those who are blindly optimistic about the recent war and the prospect of world peace. To such minds it is all very simple. Over THERE are nations with bloated ambitions and without scruples who are bent on subjugating large portions of the world for their own profit. Over HERE are nations with nothing but high humanitarian ideals of maintaining freedom, democracy and Christian civilization. It is thus simply a matter of utterly defeating the aggressors and then these ideals will automatically triumph.

But the brutal fact is that there was opportunism and falsehood and greed on both sides of this conflict. The problems increase and the ideals recede into the shadows now that the day of victory has come.

There is only one way to explain this war. The nations of the world, without exception, whether they still mouth platitudes about God or not, have forsaken Him.

God built and planted each of these great nations and He has been amazingly long-suffering with them. But the Potter finds much dirt mixed with His clay. What will He do now?

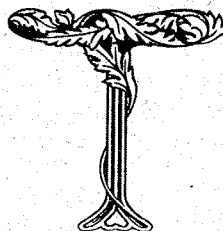
Archibald McLeish, assistant secretary of state, said recently in New York:

"The peace we seem to be making will be a peace of oil, a peace of gold, a peace of shipping, a peace in brief, of actual situations, a peace without purpose or human intent, a peace of dicker and trade about the facts of commerce, the facts of banking, the facts of transportation, which will lead us where the treaties of dicker and trade have always led us."

But we do not need McLeish to point out something that ought to be obvious to all of us. One need not be a prophet to see that with a Communist Europe, a Near East dominated by the false prophetism of Islam and the Western hemisphere prevalently secularistic, materialistic, we have all the ingredients for a global war whose magnitude staggers imagination. The next war, may, through robot bombs and new methods, be decided in five days rather than five years.

All this can be a reversed picture, but it depends upon whether the nations repent. And repentance must start with a church that has been shaken out of its *laissez-faire* complacency, and that must begin in my heart and yours.

"Turn ye, turn ye from your evil way, for why will ye die, O House of the Nations"!



Calvinism in Ceylon

H. H. Collette
Colombo, Ceylon

[In a previous article Mr. Collette carried the story of the Dutch Calvinistic Church in Ceylon up to the close of the eighteenth century, when the British gained control and the Anglican Church usurped the official position in the island. This second article carries forward the informative account from this point.—Editor.]

IN accordance with the practice of the time a political commissioner was appointed by the Government to a seat in the Consistory. At first a member of the Church of Scotland, Calvinistic in its beliefs, was appointed; but later Rev. Mr. Twissleton, a minister of the Church of England, was appointed, who insisted that the proceedings should not be in Dutch as he did not understand that language. Later on the Director of Public Instruction forbade the teaching of Dutch in the Church schools and in order to foster the use of the language, the pastor of the Church, the Rev. J. D. Palm, carried on the church services in Dutch. These and such like obstacles were placed against the maintenance of the Dutch language which together with the difficulty of obtaining Dutch pastors for the ministry of the Church resulted in Dutch being dropped as the official language of the Church and English taking its place in 1860 after a struggle for existence of 65 years.

As early as 1800 the transmutation of the form of worship of the Native churches from that of the Dutch Reformed to that of the Church of England began. The schools belonging to the church were placed under the charge of a clergyman of the Church of England and a Proclamation dated 24th May, 1880, stated: "We, considering it our bounden duty to take care under His divine providence that the seed of the Gospel be not checked with tares nor lost by neglect, have commissioned the Rev. Charles Fredric Schroter, a minister of the Word of God, to translate the liturgy of the Church of England into the Malabar language, which translation being completed we hereby order that it be duly read and used in all Malabar chapels, schools and seminaries maintained by Government for the use of Protestant Christians of this Island."

During the Dutch period there were Consistories at Colombo (Wolvendaal) Galle and Jaffna; these had jurisdiction over churches and schools of particular areas. After the ceding of the Island to the English the churches at Jaffna, Galle, and Matara were for a time ministered by proponents, the two latter churches being periodically visited by a pastor from Colombo. Jaffna, probably owing to its greater distance from Colombo and the difficulties

of travel, did not receive the same attention; and when in the course of time the Dutch families under the altering conditions of life left that town for the centers of business in Colombo and Galle, there was no congregation left and it ceased to be a center of the Dutch Reformed Church. The Consistories of Colombo and Galle have continued unbroken up to the present and that of Wolvendaal (Colombo) claims to be the oldest Protestant Church Court in the East.

Supported by its loyal members the Dutch Reformed Church, which was the sole representative of Calvinism, continued her existence at Colombo, Galle, and Matara; but, owing to her isolation both from the country of her origin as well as other centers of Calvinism, she was not able to follow a progressive policy of propagating the Calvinistic interpretation of truth, but had rather to bestir herself for her own existence and hold her people from falling away to those forms of Christianity that began to be practised in the Island under the support of influential bodies from without and that were able to offer to those in the Island great material advantages.

With English rule established in the Island, the Church of England as indicated in the foregoing, began to dominate the religious life of Christians, and Calvinism began to wane; for, though the Church of England is Calvinistic in her doctrine, it is quite well known that in practice and preaching she is averse to it. Very soon a Mission by the Wesleyans was inaugurated in the Island and its Arminian tenets began to be imbibed in Christian circles.

Scottish Immigration

But about this time Calvinism received an addition to its strength, when, after the conquest of the Kandyan kingdom in the interior of the Island, the fertile areas of the hill-country were opened up with coffee plantations. The pioneers of this movement were Scotchmen, and their advent was quickly followed by the establishment of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, which occupied a very strong position in the religious life of the Island. However, she carried out no mission work but merely ministered to the members of her communion who were colonizing the Island. Relations between the Scotch and Dutch Church were friendly and the former many a time supplied the latter with a

minister when she was in need. A proposal, however, to unite the two churches under one Presbytery was strenuously opposed by the Dutch Church for quite a long time probably because of the fear expressed in the following excerpt from a memorial sent to the Governor in 1869 for the appointment of a Dutch clergyman: "The memorialists have witnessed a gradual assimilation of the old forms of the Reformed Dutch Church to those of the Scotch Presbyterian Church and they feel seriously alarmed that the constitution of their Church may gradually and eventually become altered under the ministration of Scotch Presbyterian clergymen as to obliterate its distinctive character." They feared that she would be swamped by the more influential body and gradually lose her identity. This seems to be implied in the terms of association when she finally agreed to a united Presbytery with the Scotch Church in 1882 which specified that each church should retain its own standards, customs, and usages and that all matters of the Dutch Church were to be adjudicated according to Dutch Church laws, those of the Scotch Church according to her laws.

The strong position held by the Church of Scotland, however, declined after the coffee blight which ruined practically all the coffee estates and sent many a Colonial from Scotland back to his homeland. Although the tea industry took its place and became the mainstay of the Island, the followers of Calvinism, except those who remained behind to build up the new industry, did not number very largely; and as a result there was a reduction in the number of ministers and the activities of the Scotch Church became centered in Colombo and in Kandy, the hill capital of the Island. In more recent years the congregation of the Church in Kandy has dwindled and now consists of a very small number, a greater portion being members of the Dutch Reformed than of the Scotch Presbyterian Church. The Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland, however, still continues to send out a minister for this Church and contributes towards his stipend. As the years fled and Colombo became an important world-port, the Scotch Church received large additions to its congregation, and today it is still strongly established in the general Christian life here. With respect, however, to Calvinistic doctrine no leadership in the emphasis and practice of it is forthcoming from her.

The united Presbytery of the Dutch Reformed and Scotch Presbyterian Churches, though it helps in a measure to co-ordinate the activities of these two branches of the Calvinistic faith in Ceylon, does not possess the full authority of a Presbytery or Classis in respect to the two churches united under it. Each Church is largely autonomous, under separate Ordinances of State legalising their respective activities, and under which the Dutch Reformed Church is governed by a General Consistory composed of all the members of the Consis-

tories of the five local churches included in the Communion; while the Scotch Kirk is governed by its local Session.

The formation of a General Consistory came into being in 1926 when the earlier Ordinance of 1896, which provided only for one Consistory at Wolvendael, was amended to meet the requirements of the branch churches that had come into existence and to include the churches at Galle and Matara which until then had an independent existence.

As was implied earlier the ministers of the Reformed Church from the time of the British occupation have been members of the Scotch and Irish Presbyterian Churches and although the doctrine and liturgy of the Synod of Dort have continued to be the articles of our faith and practice yet some of our customs have suffered changes into English ways and as a result watered down the distinctiveness of its Dutch Calvinism.

Training of the Ministry

In recent years, when members of our congregation decided to enter the ministry of the Church, the Church assisted them to proceed to America for their training where they entered the Princeton Seminary and three of our ministers have so far been trained there. Two are with us still while the first has been called to higher service. Other young men whom the Church could not see her way clear to assist went on their own to the Indian seminaries at Bangalore and Serampore and, having completed a course of study, returned and offered their services to the Church. In accordance with a ruling by the General Consistory that a training in a Dutch Reformed or Presbyterian Seminary was essential for the ministers of the Church, the applicants were requested to fulfil these requirements. Unfortunately, however, a student sent by the Church to Bangalore with the intention that he should later proceed to Princeton, was allowed to complete his training in the former place and was taken into the Ministry. This lowering of the standard has opened the door to others who seek entry into the Ministry with the same training.

The ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church at present consists of six ministers, two being Bachelors of Theology of Princeton and the remaining four Bangalore trained students. The maintenance of Calvinistic doctrine and the teaching of Dutch Calvinism does not offer much hope of success under such circumstances for the majority are not only not grounded in the Calvinistic faith but have imbibed interpretations of Scripture and formed opinions contrary to it. This was recently illustrated when the Sunday School teachers met in conference to decide on the re-introduction of the teaching of the Heidelberg Catechism that had its place taken by that of Westminster (although it was not intended to discontinue the latter but that

the former should be taught along with it). The Bangalore trained ministers as a block were against it, though it was eventually adopted.

In the year 1925 contact with the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa resulted in a young and energetic pastor, the Rev. A. J. K. de Klerk, accepting a call from Ceylon and being ordained a collegiate minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon. Within a couple of years and mainly through his instrumentality, another South African minister, Rev. S. F. Skeen, responded to the call of the Church in Ceylon and came out in the year 1927. But alas! on his arrival in the Island he found his friend struck down with an illness to which he succumbed within a few days. It is to Rev. A. J. K. de Klerk and Rev. S. F. Skeen that the Church in Ceylon is indebted to the recent revival of interest in its Dutch Calvinistic heritage and for a desire after closer contacts with her sister churches elsewhere in the world. Four years later receiving a call from his home church Rev. S. F. Skeen returned to South Africa, and the Dutch Reformed Church was once again isolated from direct contact with any sister church. The Church holds a Conference for a week at the beginning of each year and when this was organized in 1922 it really took the form of a Conference where the subjects presented concerned some aspect of Church life and were discussed. The present legal constitution of the Church is the outcome of one of these Conferences, but before long the conferring aspect of the meetings began to be discouraged and the Conference dwindled into a series of addresses where very often ministers of other denominations take part, the net result being a loss of interest in the so-called Conferences which are now very poorly attended. Here is a golden opportunity of educating the congregations into their Calvinistic heritage and of inculcating in the minds of both old and young the outstanding tenets of the Calvinistic faith as a life and world system, neglected and allowed to slide into the net of common teaching. At present with the advent of the armed forces in the Island and the presence amongst them of ministers of Calvinistic denominations who participated in the Conference of 1945, its tone was raised more closely into conformity with Calvinistic standards.

Educational Problems

Schools are a prolific source for the spread and inculcating of the faith of the denomination that runs them; alas! such schools as are conducted by the Dutch Reformed Church are conspicuous in the neglect of the opportunity thus afforded them, and in this respect fall far short of the example of the Church when it was first established by the Dutch in the Island. To a great extent this may be due to the State Education Code which prohibits the teaching of religion to children not of the faith of

the denomination conducting the school, and quite a large proportion of children attending our Church Schools are Buddhists. Yet this cannot exonerate our school management from the neglect towards the children of the Church. The schools conducted by the Church have for many years been only those for girls. There are five of them in the various districts of the city of Colombo that are controlled by Local Consistories. A single Boys' school that was started about a decade ago is in no better position in regard to Calvinistic instruction than its older contemporaries.

Under a new Education bill that is before the State Council of the Island the existence of all denominational schools is threatened, and if it does become law the outlook for Church schools will not be by any means a rosy one, for with a Buddhist government in power the propagation of religious teaching will be further curbed and education divorced of its Christian, not to say Calvinistic, background.

The Dutch Reformed Church maintains a number of Sunday Schools as adjuncts to the teaching of the young. The beginning of these schools dates back nearly a hundred years, the first of these having been started in connection with the Wolvendaal church in the year 1847. They have done and are doing a great work, but here again Christian faith and doctrine is taught more in a general way than with a distinctive bent towards the Dutch Calvinistic interpretation of our faith. The opposition to the introduction of the Heidelberg Catechism into the teaching of the Sunday School mentioned earlier is an example of this. However, under the leadership of a few Calvinistically-minded teachers the teaching in our Sunday Schools is taking on more of a Calvinistic outlook, that it is hoped will create a desire, in heart and mind of the young, for the Calvinistic view of life.

The period of instruction for the young people of the Church, before they are admitted into full membership, is very short and covers six weeks, instruction being given only for one hour on one day of each of the six weeks. Obviously very little can be done in so short a time and as a result another opportunity that presents itself for the grounding of our members in their Calvinistic doctrines and history of the church is allowed to slip by and members are added to the church who do not fully comprehend such doctrines, as, for instance, the Covenant of Grace; and consequently our church membership affords a happy hunting ground for the various sects whose membership is largely drawn from our people.

Religious Periodicals

The Dutch Reformed Church publishes a monthly magazine called *The Herald*, which is edited by a pastor trained at Bangalore. It hardly ever pro-

duces articles educating our people in the Reformed Faith, teaching them that it is something more than Predestination; a life and world view, a God-centered system of faith which demands the expression of itself in every department of life that God may be glorified. *The Herald* merely gives church news and does not even editorially comment on matters that concern the spiritual, moral and social life of her people. About fifteen years ago a few friends united to publish a magazine *The Old Paths*, with the object of educating the people of the Dutch Reformed Church in their faith and heritage. This magazine is issued free but has been declined by some pastors and office bearers of the Church. In one instance an Elder wrote to the Editor expressing the edification he receives from some of its articles when he can find the time to read them, but requesting that the magazine be not sent to him as he thought the official paper of the Church was sufficient for its needs.

Missionary Activity

The Church carries on Mission work in a small way. She has established a mission center in the North Central Province of the Island, an area in which the ancient capital of the Island, Anuradhapura, is situated; a place renowned in the history of Ceylon for its ancient glories and studded with the relics of pinnacles, palaces, temples and dagobas. Naturally it continues today a stronghold of Buddhism and nothing less than the full and unadulterated Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ can make headway; but alas! there is such a mixture of Social Service even to the extent of receiving a subsidy from Government which today is more Buddhist than Christian, to maintain a maternity Home, that stultifies the Mission in its witness to Christ, and for the 25 years of its existence has shown hardly any spiritual progress. This mission known in the Churches as the Singhalese Mission is, though it may seem strange to say so, a potential source of danger to the Reformed Faith; because it has neither been conceived nor is it carried out upon the basis of the fundamentals of Calvinism, but left to the individual views of the Missionary in charge. Before he took up the work of the Mission, the Missioner was a Wesleyan who received his theological training at the Union College at Bangalore. As is to be expected, his sympathy with and his knowledge of Calvinism is limited and as a result the instruction given to converts brought into the church is devoid of all Calvinistic tendencies.

The Tamil Mission which is carried on chiefly within the city of Colombo is in a somewhat similar position; here too the Missioner is a Bangalore Union College trained minister of the American

Mission at Jaffna. As in the Singhalese Mission the instruction given to converts does not distinctly follow the doctrines of the Reformed Faith. Although translations of the Heidelberg Catechism in both Singhalese and Tamil of the Dutch period are available, no attempt is made to revise these into present day language. And so the drift from Calvinism goes on; and those who are entering the Church are left in ignorance of the Calvinistic view of life and faith and are easily carried away by the winds of doctrine propagated by the sects, becoming more and more unfamiliar with the doctrine and teaching of the Reformed Faith; and on occasions that these doctrines happen to be presented to them they are looked at askance, as if they were something new and contrary to true interpretation of Scripture.

Prospects for the Future

The sketch I have tried to give of the course of Calvinism and its present position in the Island of Ceylon is certainly not a bright one; but there are features that do not leave us altogether without hope of a revival and return to the true Reformed doctrine. Although not preached and practised to the extent one would desire to record, in the life and activities of the Reformed Church we continue to hold to the three Formularies of Unity of the Calvinistic faith settled by the Synod of Dordrecht and there has never been any desire to break away from these tenets. When in certain quarters there have been attempts at alteration these have been strongly resented, and the articles of our faith and doctrine remain one with those Calvinistic churches that originated in the Netherlands.

As a people we are not irreligious and the life of the community has to a great measure centered round the Church of our Fathers. The Bible is still revered and believed in. Our Calvinistic heritage has not passed from us, although it is dormant in regard to its expression in practical form. The fact is that our isolated position in this Island, both as a community and as a church, has left us without that contact with Calvinistic movements in the world from which we should have imbibed that which was needed for our growth in Calvinistic vigor. Lacking this we have drooped and withered under alien environments.

The motto of our Church "Spes est regerminat" is symbolized by the emblem of the stump and roots of a tree left in the ground from which a tiny sprout is shooting out. True to the thought set forth in this, one can continue to hope and trust and pray that in God's good time we in this little Island too shall be made ready to join in that revival of Calvinism that is even now gaining potential and that shall one day sweep in a world wide movement throughout all the lands of the earth.

The Eagle and the Sparrows

THESE was a city on the shore of a great sea, and it came to pass, one day, that a thick grey fog rolled up from the sea and wrapped the streets and houses of the city in a cold, damp blanket of darkness. The city fathers, attempting to overcome the darkness, ordered that lamps be lit in the streets. The lamps would have shown brightly, ordinarily, but they flickered and gave a fitful yellow light in the fog.

A flock of sparrows, caught suddenly in the fog, and not knowing where to go, found their way into the circle of yellow light around one of the street lamps, and were soon busy picking up crumbs, fluttering in and out of the circle of light, chattering quite gaily.

It happened that far above, a soaring eagle saw the city all but hidden in the fog, and flew lower to see at closer range. As he came nearer he caught the pale gleam of the street lamp and heard the merry chirping of the sparrows. It occurred to the eagle to exchange his often lonely soaring among the rugged mountains for this cheerful group of companions in the street, and so, he flew down and was soon busy trying to imitate the gay and aimless chattering and pecking of the sparrows.

But the eagle had forgotten one thing. He had forgotten that he was still an eagle and not a sparrow and that if a hunter saw him, the age-old animosity against eagles would assert itself, because he would be a desirable prey, and he would, moreover, be less nimble to escape such a hunter. And then it happened! A hunter came into the circle of light and spied the eagle among the sparrows. He would never have thought of shooting at sparrows. He had no case against them, nor were they desira-

ble game and they were much too quick to offer any chance of a shot. But the eagle!

The hunter raised his gun quickly. The eagle, unaccustomed to his new environment, was nearly killed but he escaped with wounds and flew off into the fog. He flew up and up until he had left the fog far behind and felt once more the warm glow of sunlight upon his back and wings. He nursed his wound upon a lofty crag, far away from the city, and as he sat there in the brilliant sunshine, he vowed he would never again be lured by a street light and sparrows.

* * * * *

Would you know the parable of the eagle and the sparrows? The city is the world. The sea is human wisdom. The fog is doubt. The street lamp is mere human learning. The sparrows are the children of the world, the eagle is the child of God. The hunter is the Devil. The sunlight is the Revelation of God.

When the fogs of doubt sweep in upon the world from the sea of human wisdom, man must pit his puny learning against it and it does very little to dispel the gloom. But the children of the world, knowing nothing else, are content to live in that feeble glow. But when the child of God exchanges the clear light of Revelation for the feeble gleam of human learning, he soon finds himself in a realm where Satan moves. The Devil does not need to hunt the children of the world, but the child of God, that is quite another matter! Besides, the child of God is not accustomed to the unnatural environment, and nearly falls before the animosity aimed against him. God grant him grace to escape, though wounded, to bask again in the sunlight of His eternal Truth!

ALA BANDON

From Our Correspondents

NETHERLANDS LETTER

Dordrecht, Netherlands
January 3, 1946

Dear Dr. Bouma:

YES, and not Dr. Bouma only but via him I herewith address all my American and Canadian friends and Calvin Forum readers in various parts of the world. We, Hollanders, in our "little" country are not restricted in our sympathies nor limited in our vision.

First of all, permit me to wish you all a Blessed New Year. Perhaps no year of our life was as important as that which has just come to a close. Especially for us in the western part of the Netherlands it will be an unforgettable year by reason of the inconceivable distress which we suffered under the Nazi regime. No one who himself has not experienced this can imagine what we went through. In that sense I sincerely hope that none of you will ever be able to imagine it. But God has set us free, especially through the help of the Allies, among whom your nation was not the least. Permanent ties have been

laid. They were already in existence, but now they have been drawn tighter.

With joy I noticed that many of you readers take a deep interest in the course of events in our land. My previous letter about the liberation of our country and also . . . about the sad schism in the Reformed Churches, became the occasion of writing for many of you and, in keeping with my promise, I have sent a copy of my sermon of liberation to all who requested it. If anyone of you failed to receive your copy, do not hesitate to drop me a line once more and I shall cheerfully forward you another.

Growing Prestige of the Church

Some of you added a few questions. Outstanding among these was the query whether our church life since the liberation is characterized exclusively by schism and controversy. To this I am happy to reply: Indeed no! There are still many good things in Juda. In my previous letter about the Schilder-schism this may not have been so apparent. Permit me at this time

to enlarge upon the blessings that have come to the churches through the stress and strain of the war.

In the first place, I can say that the prestige of the churches throughout the land has been greatly enhanced. How to account for this? When the Nazis invaded the land and soon had silenced the protests against their wicked principles and diabolical practices, the only voice that would not be silenced, the voice, in fact, which became more vocal as the years went by, was the voice of the churches. This was especially true of the Calvinists. Not so much the liberals and the modernists, but those groups who had always been the most positive in their confession proved also to be the most outspoken in their protest. And among these the communion to which I have the honor to belong, viz., de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (with which the Christian Reformed Church in the U. S. and Canada stands in the most intimate fraternal relation) protested more vigorously than any. This has cost the lives of many of my brethren and friends, and how I myself escaped I have had occasion to tell you in an earlier letter. The consequences of this strong stand of the churches soon became evident. Many who formerly had only words of criticism for the churches, now were again filled with respect and were more ready to listen to the message of the church than before. And many became convinced of the transcendent value of a definitely circumscribed Calvinistic creed.

Momentous Reform in "Hervormde Kerk"

In this connection mention must be made of another significant fact. This concerns the old Established Church, known officially as de Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk, which is the Church from which the Churches of the 1834 Secession and of the 1886 Church Reform movement had broken away. This Established Church in the previous century and even far into the present century had been honeycombed with liberalism and modernism, and this also was the reason, as many of the older among you will still remember, why the two secession movements took place. Now in this old, historic Church, which embraces no less than two-fifths of the total population—though the membership of many is only nominal—a great change has taken place during these war years, a change which has gladdened the hearts of many. Since the year 1816 this Church was governed by a small, permanent synodical body, which had been appointed by the State, and which had a part in filling its own vacancies when these occurred. In this way this small synodical body could at no time be said to be the true voice of the church, though that is exactly what it claimed to be. As a result the Church Order of Dort, which the famous Synod of 1618 (notice the inversion: 1618-1816), which met in the very city where I now hold my pastorate, had adopted, could not be enforced, with the result that every wind of doctrine had free play in the Church.

And now what has happened? During the years of the war all the Christian Churches organized an Inter-Church Council. This Council made it its business to discuss and act upon the dangers which threatened the Churches. This small, representative body devised measures and formulated protests against the Nazi overlord of Holland, Seiss-Inquart. This made the voice of the churches united and strong. This Inter-Church Council had again and again spoken out courageously against the German tyrants, but it has also had great significance for those who became participants in this Council.

The Established (Hervormde) Church now became aware of the fact that as a church it had no voice through which its convictions could come to expression. Eyes were gradually opened to the evil conditions that had obtained in that Church, and then the unbelievable happened, viz., this unscriptural form of church government, this State Synod, which for more than a century had blocked the spiritual growth and development of the National Church, has abolished itself! Until just recently no one in all the Netherlands had conceived this to

be possible. We have greeted this as a miracle of heaven. Also we of the Seceded Churches (both Secession and "Doleantie") have greeted this new development with joy.

Hendrick de Cock, the Father of the Secession which in 1834 began at Ulrum, wrote in his Act of Secession (which he really named an Act of Secession and Return), that he would return to the "Hervormde Kerk" as soon as it would maintain its Confession and would abolish its unscriptural form of government. Also Abraham Kuyper, the leader in the "Doleantie" of 1886, centered his chief objection on the form of church organization which had been adopted in 1816 as the chain which had placed the Church in bondage and robbed it of its freedom. If this State Synod had not been in existence, there would have been no such movement in 1886 as the "doleantie." What really took place in that movement was not that the departing brethren broke away from the existing Church but from the unscriptural governmental body which ruled the Church.

And now this governmental body, as a result of the war and the aroused public opinion in these churches, has abolished itself. On the Day of the Reformation (October 31) in the year 1945 the first Synod elected by the churches themselves assembled in the historic Nieuwe Kerk "op den Dam" in the city of Amsterdam. This is a happening of surpassing importance in our country. Even though it be only the first step on the road of the rebirth and renewal of the Church, at least it is the first step and one of the greatest significance. The new Synod, properly elected by the constituency of the denomination, is preponderantly conservative and orthodox. And this Synod aims to effect a reform of the Church on the basis of Scripture and the historic creed. This means, of course, that real church reform must still be accomplished. Modernists will have to be set straight by the disciplinary action of the Church or will, in the long run, have to be removed. If this is ever effected, there will not be one reason why our free churches (de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland) should remain a separate body.

This great event in the National Church has commanded the attention of the entire nation. No church event of greater importance has occurred for more than a century. Some hasty young people in our Church, who are moreover disappointed by the Schilder-troubles in our communion, are saying: we are thinking of joining the historic National Church, and some actually do so.

General Synod of "Gereformeerde Kerken"

And what is the condition of affairs in the Gereformeerde Kerken? For one thing, the secession, the schism has come to a virtual end. The 22nd of January a new General Synod will meet. Such a Synod usually meets once in three years. It consists of two ministers and two elders elected by every provincial Synod, which in turn consists of the classes (presbyteries) in that province. It is presumed that the entire Synod will be devoted to making replies to the overtures of complaint which center around the schism and also to efforts for the healing of the schism. The honor—I had better say, the burden—of being delegated to this Synod has also fallen to me, so that I hope to be in a position before long to report to you about the course of events.

God grant that it may be possible to achieve a reunion. May also your prayers for this cause ascend to heaven, and may your advice in the matter come to our attention. Personally I would favor the calling of an ecumenical Synod of all Reformed Churches to consider and decide upon these problems, hoping for decisions which might satisfy the largest possible number of people in our churches and make the disturbances in our Churches to subside. Some of us have for some time been seeking for ways and means of holding such an ecumenical Synod. May America not be averse to such a move!

And so I have tried to make reply to one of the questions that came from you. I dare not ask for more space of my

good friend, Dr. Bouma, nor for more patience from my readers. May I add that we again have food, and that although many, many things are still lacking, our gratitude for what we do have predominates. Commending you all to the Lord, I am with kind greetings

Yours,

P. PRINS.

CALVINISM IN NORTH IRELAND

Belfast,
North Ireland,
Dec. 11, 1945.

The Editor,
CALVIN FORUM,
Grand Rapids, Mich., U. S. A.

Dear Sir:

YOUR kind letter of November 24th has just reached me. I have considered your invitation to become North Ireland correspondent, and I think I might be able to help you in this respect. I am very grateful to you for the offer, and I will do my best to be of some assistance.

I expect you would like a little more information about myself. Well, after having been in business for just over four years, I decided to study for the Christian ministry. The Church I chose was the Methodist, as my theological knowledge at that time was almost nil. However I was a fundamentalist, and when I came in contact with the modernistic teaching of the Methodist Church in Ireland and England I was simply amazed. Eventually I had to withdraw from that Church for the following reasons—(1) Modernism, (2) Arminianism, (3) Worldliness in the Church, (4) Unfair terms for students. I looked about for a Church which was sound, but could find none in all Ireland. Then I remembered the Irish Evangelical Church, applied, and was accepted. At this time I felt it my duty to expose the teaching going on in the Irish Methodist Church, so I proceeded to circulate papers in N. Ireland, giving extracts from the various set books. Only a few supported me, and all the Methodist Ministers who replied were against me, and very indignant at what I was doing. But my conscience was clear—I had done all I could. Those papers are still circulating in N. Ireland and many have gone South.

The Irish Evangelical Church is the only 100% Calvinist body left in Ireland, and we stand for the doctrines of Sovereign Grace. At present I am in touch with most of our outstanding members, and we have some men who are really interested in the cause of Calvinism. I mentioned the Rev. Mr. Dunlop to Rev. Mr. Grier, and he knows him to be evangelical enough, but would hesitate in saying he was a strong Calvinist. The Presbyterian Church here (of which Mr. Dunlop is a member) is soaked with Modernism. To illustrate this I enclose—"The Irish Evangelical Church—WHY?" and "Charges of Heresy." These will give you just an outline of the history of our Church. Later on we hope to have a book by the Rev. Mr. Grier, giving the full story.

Of late I had been concerned about the future of Calvinism in N. Ireland, and I felt I should be doing something towards the spreading of our Faith and the unifying of our forces; I believe that there should be more coöperation between the Calvinist forces of the British Isles and our brethren in America, and in Europe. I hope that the future will see this come to pass. Your letter, then, came to me as an answer to prayer. I will be looking forward to receiving the copies of THE CALVIN FORUM, and if you would kindly let me know what length of an article or report to send in each time, it would be a help. Once I get in touch with the Calvinists of the States I will be able to tell the Christians on this side of the ocean about your doings and labors.

I trust I shall have something ready for you by January, 1946. I first saw THE CALVIN FORUM advertised in the pages of *Peace and Truth*, the official organ of the Sovereign Grace Union, (34 Ludgate Hill, London E.C. 4). They gave a list of

all the articles, and I sat down at once and wrote to you. By the way, The Sovereign Grace Union is the finest body of Calvinists in Britain, and their publications are very valuable to me, as there are hardly any other Calvinist publications besides theirs.

Well now, Mr. Bouma, I hope I have not bored you, but I feel that the above should be imparted to you; and I trust that God will bless Calvinism and Calvinists the world over. Again thanking you for your kind offer, and looking forward to future correspondence, with Greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ,

Yours in His Service,

FRED S. LEAHY.

MICHIGAN CALVINISTIC PHILOSOPHY CLUB

THE club had a meeting in the summer of 1945, and one in the fall, both at Calvin College.

At the meeting of August 23 the meeting was opened by the Rev. J. C. De Korne and presided by the Secretary till the arrival of the president, Rev. J. T. Hoogstra. Present were about a dozen members, and about two dozen visitors. Speaker was Prof. W. Harry Jellema, Ph.D, of the University of Indiana, who discussed the topic: "Christianity and the Presuppositions of Modern Philosophy." The speaker came to the conclusion that modern philosophy has turned its back upon Greek idealism, the theism of mediaeval Catholicism, and the Predestination idea of the Reformation and especially of Calvinism. This stimulating paper was followed by a lively discussion in which such topics as the scientific method, the fixed universe, common sense, Communism, Nazism, Confucianism, Calvinistic education, Christian culture, the bankruptcy of modern culture, covenantal millennialism, and the antithesis of Christian and modern philosophy were brought up.

The president told the meeting about the new federation of the two Calvinistic philosophy clubs into a National Calvinistic Philosophy Association and the possibility of having the papers of our club published through the Eastern club, together with reviews of philosophical books.

The meeting was closed by Prof. John Daling of Calvin College.

The meeting of Friday, November 2, was opened by Prof. Drost after the Rev. L. Oostendorp had been chosen vice-president in a preliminary meeting of the members only.

In the public meeting 9 members and 3 visitors were present. Dr. J. T. Hoogstra presided.

Mr. Dorr Kuizema, a lawyer, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, read a paper on the subject, "Aspects of a Theory of Authority." The thrust of this paper was that man comes to acceptance of authority over him through a moral suasion mounting to a faith in the right to the exercise thereof as being in the nature of a conferred power from a source beyond himself and which must be a supreme authority that possesses it in and of itself, and can be none other than a personal God. The speaker said it had often appealed to him that if ever proof called for witness of a derived authority that could not be directly supplied, it might nevertheless be by the negative one of the impossibility of its being shown to exist on any ground or constitution that is not of an a priori conditioning in man. It is the problem of the right to authority (the right to a right) that makes this challenge.

The theme was developed from a number of aspects. There is the deference paid by man to fellow man. There is no rude presumption upon him but a decent regard for his worth and dignity—which is his, of course, as an image-bearer of God.

People claiming authority do so usually upon the assent of fellow men. This may be so because God has implanted in man those fundamental notions underlying all rights: not to be hurt; to receive what is due him and not to be deprived of what is his own. The need of government arises out of the

need of these rights to be collectively vindicated. Not by social contract but by human solidarity of action.

The modern, revolutionary position can be based only upon might making right. To what else could insistence upon empirical thinking from known facts only, lead? Authority is here for the grabbing to be exercised by those who know best what is good for the commonality of mankind.

From a natural religious view man came to a recognition of an all-powerful being behind nature, Who is to be worshipped; to Whom he is accountable and Whose will he must do. Scripture, in Romans 13, reveals that all power is from God and that the powers that be do not bear the sword in vain. By both, God's natural and scriptural revelation, men are morally and readily persuaded to put themselves under the authority of government by man.

The purpose of the manifestation of authority is not merely power, but justice. The state must now right the wrong; yet, the creation principle for communal living remains love—the principle of fair dealing, equity, law. Without this, authority is meaningless. We arrive at these things not only by reason, but by all revelation and by faith in an all-authoritative and purposeful God.

The questions discussed bore on: Inherited authority, origin of State authority, choice of allegiance, delegation of authority, character of the law, character of man's rights, paternal character of state, and article 36 of the Belgic Confession.

The meeting was closed by Prof. Van Zyl.

H. J. VAN ANDEL, *Secretary.*

'INDISPENSABLE' OR 'EXPENDABLE'?

OUR thinking on the question of Leadership or Service leads into the question of whether a man is indispensable or expendable. If he be the Leader who is indispensable to the people then thousands may be sacrificed to keep his leadership beyond question. If he be a servant of his country or of his God he may be an expendable to be sacrificed for the good of the cause.

Perhaps, right here is one key to the failure of the axis and the success of the allies. Italy had to expand in Greece and the Balkans. The waning prestige of Il Duce demanded a shot in the arm. Tojo had to sweep up the myriad islands of the Pacific to indicate his claims of imperial grandeur. The indispensable Leader of Italy thus gave Russia precious added weeks of preparation; and the indispensable Imperialist of Japan thus failed to strike Russia when she was vulnerable. On the other hand, the American staff gritted its teeth and continued to pour supplies into Russia though it meant treating Wainwright and his heroic band as expendables. The allies hammered at the main point and won. Now we are trying to make it up to Wainwright and the men of Bataan.

Two years ago I attended the commissioning of a class of Second Lieutenants at the Army Infantry School of Fort Benning. These men were not told: The United States has no hands, but your hands; and therefore it is commissioning you as officers. They were not told: You are indispensable and that therefore you must stay in safe places and send out the non-coms to lead your platoons. Rather they knew that out of a class of 220 only 112 were graduating—that men were being flunked up to the last day and sometimes up to the very hour they marched on the platform to get their commissions. They were told that the greatest honor that can come to an American is the honor of commanding American soldiers in combat, that they should lead their men and know whenever one fell a better man was ready to step into his place. How well they kept the faith is written in blood and brawn and battles fought and won not by indispensable leaders but by expendable heroes.

In the Church shall we represent Jehovah of Hosts as less sufficient, as more limited and circumscribed than America? Shall we present the glory of God in Christ as worthy of less

sacrifice on the part of His servants than the Stars and Stripes have received? Shall I say that I am an indispensable leader to the Church and that therefore I can compromise the truth of my Lord as much as I think needful to keep my position of leadership? America can tell her officers that they are expendable—but God has no hands but my hands, so my prestige must be maintained at any cost! Brethren, such thinking is not Christian. The ancient symbol of a Christian is an ox standing between a plow and an altar with an inscription: Ready for Either. When the Gestapo gave Niemoller the choice he declared: God has other wicks on which He can put His light. I am expendable, I can be sacrificed for Him.

In the first century the leaders of the Jewish theocracy assumed that they were indispensable to the ongoing of God's kingdom. Therefore Caiaphas expressly asserted that it was expedient for their good that Jesus be put to death lest the Romans come and take away from these indispensable leaders their positions. And Jesus exposed the same selfish thinking in His parable of the husbandmen who determined to kill the heir and take the vineyard for themselves. But God's thoughts were not as man's thoughts. The indispensable leaders of the Kingdom were brushed aside, Jerusalem was overthrown, the Temple destroyed, the theocracy crushed. The vineyard was given to other vinedressers. The indispensables were not indispensable to God. God made Christ, the stone which the builders rejected as expendable, to be the head of the corner and the King under whose reign the banners of God have gone ever forward.

WILLIAM C. ROBINSON.

Decatur, Ga.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN JAVA?

There appears to be much misunderstanding about the situation in the Island of Java. The following letter, written by Professor Barnouw of Columbia University and distributed by the Netherland Information Bureau, serves to shed important light on the subject. We believe we are performing a service to our readers by placing it in these columns.—EDITOR.

THE news from Java is distressing to every Hollander. What is happening over there is probably less serious than the reports that are published in the American press would have us believe. The uprising itself is less alarming to the Dutch than the impression created among the American public that the fifty million inhabitants of Java are disaffected and bitterly hostile to the Netherlands Government. The reader who has never lived or traveled in those islands of the Malay Archipelago is apt to jump at the conclusion that there is widespread discontent and that, consequently, Dutch rule is reaping the fruits of its own sowing. One might just as well argue that, because there is widespread unrest among the labor forces in this country, American democracy must be a failure. It is, of course, just the other way round. The democratic system of government has given to the workers a sense of participation in it and has raised, in consequence, their self-assertiveness. The Nationalists in Java are not clamoring for independence because Dutch rule was unbearable, but because the Dutch have taught them how to achieve independence. This is the tragedy of the present situation: The ultimate aim of the Netherlands government is not different from that of the Nationalists. The difference is in the tempo of the march of events towards the common goal. Sukarno and his adherents say, "We must have independence now"; the Dutch ask them, "Be patient and let us continue to help in the building up of an autonomous Indonesia."

Sukarno's Nationalism

One would do Sukarno an injustice by calling him a Quisling. Quisling had the choice between siding with his own people or with the German invader, and he chose the traitorous rôle of delivering Norway to the enemy. Sukarno's aim was not to deliver Java to the Japanese. He did not help the

Japs in the hope of seeing his people enslaved by them, but found them useful in helping him achieve Javanese independence. He cannot have expected greater happiness for Java under Nippon than under Netherlands rule. He either took Tokyo's promises of freedom for Indonesia within the Great East Asian co-prosperity sphere at their face value, or he counted on the ultimate failure of Japan's bid for empire. Java, he reasoned, would be the gainer in either event. His patriotism is above suspicion. But does he realize that this love of country which inspires him was awakened to self-consciousness and self-assertion by the training he was given under Dutch rule? Kartini, who emancipated herself and others of her station in life from the social bondage in which nobly-born girls were held captive among Java's aristocracy, once wrote to a Dutch correspondent, "It may sound strange but it is, nevertheless, a fact that you Europeans have taught me to love my own land and people. Instead of estranging us from our native land, our European education has brought us nearer to it, has opened our hearts to its beauties and also to the needs of our people and to their weaknesses." Nationalism in Java is the fruit of Dutch education, and the Nationalists who now refuse to submit to Dutch rule are turning into practice what they were taught by their guardians. The guardians are taken aback by the suddenness of this self-emancipation. They consider it premature and ill-advised. But they have no reason to complain of Javanese ingratitude. There is always an unavoidable element of ingratitude in the ward's escape from tutelage. It is a foolish parent who resents his children's declaration of independence.

Minority Revolt

The present dilemma in Java, therefore, is not a question of right or wrong. It is a question of wisdom and expediency. Will Sukarno and Mohammed Hatta be able to set up a native government that will have the backing of all the Javanese people? The island's population is not homogeneous. Will Sundanese, Javanese, and Madurese work harmoniously together? And if so, will the Javanese rulers be able to maintain the political unity of Indonesia, which is the creation of Dutch rule? Failure on their part in these respects would result in civil strife, upset the archipelago's economy, threaten the densely populated island of Java with famine, reduce or stop the supply of valuable products essential to the wellbeing of the world at large, and compel the Great Powers to intervene at the risk of unleashing a new war. Editorial comments in the metropolitan press must create the impression in the reader's mind that Sukarno's voice is the voice of the Javanese people. It is only the voice of a small minority of intellectuals, a group of extremists who cannot claim to speak for the island's fifty millions. That out of those millions no other voices are raised in protest against their extremism has a very good reason: The Japanese, during their four-year occupation, stamped out all political parties, in the place of which they built up a fascist organization under Sukarno's leadership. Having been equipped with modern arms by the Japanese they are able to terrorize their political opponents into silence. If every Javanese could speak out freely, it would soon appear that the moderates far outnumber the followers of Sukarno and Mohammed Hatta. Sukarno has as little right to speak for the fifty millions of Java as Gerald L. K. Smith can speak for the one hundred and thirty millions of the United States.

Unfair Criticism of Dutch Rule

Dutch rule in the Indies has been criticized in the press and over the radio for having intentionally neglected to educate the masses, and America's brilliant record in the Philippines never fails to be quoted on such occasions so that the picture of Dutch inefficiency shall look all the blacker. The comparison is most unjust. In the Philippines the Americans found a population that had been forcibly Christianized by the Spanish conquerors. Augustinian friars accompanied Miguel Lopez

de Legaspi when he took possession of the islands in the name of King Philip II. His was essentially a missionary conquest. As a result the Filipinos are the only large mass of Asiatics that has been imbued, through three centuries of Christian practice, with the culture and the ideals of the Christian church. Here was a receptive soil for the seeds of western education. In the East Indies, on the other hand, the Dutch had to deal with a Mohammedan population that was impervious to the preaching of Christianity. It was easier to convert the pagan tribes that were not islamized than the faithful followers of the Prophet. Western teaching did not find here a receptive audience. Compulsory education could not be introduced. That would have led to resistance and riots. The people had to be coaxed into school. Only tact, persuasion, and patience could achieve results. It was a slow, uphill labor, but the slowness was never engineered by Machiavellian administrators for the purpose of keeping the masses ignorant and amenable. In 1939, forty per cent of the native youth of school age was receiving elementary education. To be fair to the Dutch, one should compare that figure not with the percentage of literacy among the Filipinos, but with that among the Moros and other non-Christian tribes in the Philippines.

Colonial Expansion Defended

Modern Holland is partly the product of her own colonial expansion. Her commerce, her industries, her international prestige would be less impressive than they are if she had not exercised control over those overseas territories. The Dutch, indeed, owe a great deal to the East Indies. But the East Indies, in their turn, owe a great deal to Holland. There is a tendency in America to look with disfavor and suspicion upon colonial powers and to damn their policies and all their works as the evil crops of selfish imperialism. But the history of civilization shows that its spread and progress have been accompaniments of colonization. Europe, at the dawn of the Christian era, was colonized by Rome. Roman armies occupied the undeveloped territories of the Celtic and Germanic tribes, built roads and bridges, founded fortified towns at the crossings of roads and rivers, and kept the various tribes from warring against one another. Roman traders and merchants brought the products of Mediterranean agriculture, arts and crafts to the remotest regions of Gaul, Germany, and Britain; Roman civil administrators established law and order and laid the foundations for a civilized society. What Rome did in Europe, nearly twenty centuries ago, has been done by Great Britain in India and Africa, by France in North Africa and the Far East, by Belgium in the Congo, by Holland in the Malay Archipelago. The time is at hand when the native peoples will have learnt enough from the white man to govern themselves. But their future historians, while recounting in bright colors the rise of their national independence, will have to admit their people's indebtedness to the white man's part in training and fitting them for self-rule.

Sukarno's Republic or Autonomous Status?

Generations of Hollanders have lived and labored in the Indies and left the imprint of their activities upon the land. There are few families in Holland that have no ties with those tropical islands. For many Dutchmen Java, and not Holland, is their real fatherland, the land of their birth, the scene of their earliest memories. Inter-marriage between the white and brown races has strengthened the ties that bind Holland and the Indies together. A Hollander's home in the Indies never looks like a makeshift establishment that he seems ready to leave at the earliest possible moment. It is furnished with the care that one gives to a place where one intends to stay. And many Dutch families do stay in the Indies. Bandung, in the mountains of the Preanger Regencies, is a favorite resort of permanent residents. The time is long past when the Dutchman thought of the Indies as an unhealthy region where one went, at the risk of one's life, to get rich quick. The vast

majority of Hollanders who went to the Indies in this century earned modest incomes for which they worked hard and conscientiously on plantations, and in private or government offices. They worked side by side with Indonesians, not as envious rivals, but as collaborators. And since no one need doubt the sincerity of Queen Wilhelmina's pledge of equal auto-

nomous status for the Indies with Holland, Surinam and Curaçao within the realm of the Netherlands, the immediate resumption of that partnership of white man and brown promises greater happiness and security for Indonesia than is likely to prevail under Sukarno's Republic.

A. J. BARNOUW.

Book Reviews

CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. By Father James. London, 1939. Burns, Oates and Washburne, Ltd. 184 pages.

THIS is one of the many writings of the Irish Catholic philosopher, Father James, who tries very hard to make plain that there is no real difference between the Dominican Thomas Aquinas and the Franciscan Bonaventura, the emphasis of the first being in the theoretical, and of the second on the practical aspect of a Christian philosophy. According to Father James, Aquinas not only transcends Bonaventura, but is really the answer to all questions. Aquinas once for all times gave theology and philosophy each their own place, making the first the realm of faith, and the second of reason. This distinction is not a separation. Aquinas established also the principle that reason was a vestibule or introduction to faith, and that the function of faith is threefold: to check (revelation is the negative norm of philosophy), to comfort, and to certify the outcome of our natural, or pure reason. Philosophy is not complete in itself, though it is autonomous. No Christian can find complete happiness in it. Every Christian ought to know theology, for it is only this discipline that makes for real peace of mind and heart.

The revival of the Thomistic philosophy, however, has brought about division and confusion. On the one hand is Professor Behier of the Sorbonne who contends that there is no Christian philosophy, just as there is no Christian mathematics. Philosophy is only of a technical nature, and is, therefore, absolutely autonomous. Then there are Gilson and Maritan who want to hold on to the Thomistic rule that philosophy is the total work of reason, and yet do not want to forget that revelation is a check on reason. Gilson is not satisfied with Aquinas' position. He contends that philosophy is the effort to get an integrated system of human knowledge, and that this cannot be had without the theological idea derived from revelation that God is Being. Maritan, on the other hand, holds that philosophy is not only autonomous, but self-sufficient in its own order. This means, says Father James, that the unity of Christianity and philosophy would only be accidental. The solution must, therefore, be found in the three c's of Aquinas as pointed out by Father James.

The exposition and argumentation of Father James, who seeks to defend Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura (James is a Franciscan) by all means, is not any too clear, but his booklet shows this very clearly that the Catholic philosophers are really divided into five camps, and that Thomas has not achieved clear sailing yet. How could it be! Thomas' position, as Father James sees it, is full of contradictions, the main one being reason is autonomous, and reason is not. There is no solution in Thomas. That is very plain from this collection of essays. Why not return to the simplicity of Calvin's *Institutes*? If we can accept Calvin's teaching of the total depravity of will and mind, of the salvation of will and mind by the process of initial, gradual, and finally total regeneration, of the partial checking of sin through common grace with different gradations in the realms of religion, ethics, and technique, and of the necessity of personal faith in Christ, of the correcting and

illuminating power of the Holy Scriptures, and of the irresistible testimony of the Holy Spirit to give certainty only to the believers, leaving many more philosophical data in Calvin about the values of knowledge and activity aside—we shall get much farther than Aquinas ever got. Aquinas is a dualist. On the one hand he teaches that only the Christian intellect can reach unity. On the other hand he teaches that the natural, or pure mind—an invention of Plato, and not of the Bible—can come to the same conclusion as the Christian. He teaches a *common ground*, but denies it at the same time. Calvin avoids these pitfalls, because he accepts the antithesis of sin and grace. He says that even Plato's mind was confused and corrupt. Only the Christian can think straight. Only the Christian philosophy can arrive at real unity. Let us not go back then to Thomas, but to the later Augustine, and to Calvin.

H. J. VAN ANDEL.

PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN SOUTH AMERICA

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN LATIN AMERICA? By Dr. George P. Howard. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1944. 170 pages. Price \$2.00.

THE author places a question mark after the title of his work because he takes us with him on a search for answers to questions which pertain to religious liberty in Latin America. Dr. Howard, a native of Argentina, but a frequent visitor to the United States and even a resident here for some time, when here on a lecture tour in 1942, had been troubled by the hostile attitude shown by Roman Catholics of our land toward the work of Protestant missions in Latin America. These Catholics claim that our neighbors to the South disapprove of the activities of Protestant missionaries among them and declare them to be detrimental to the Good Neighbor Policy.

Because of his long residence in Latin America, Dr. Howard received these criticisms with skepticism, but nevertheless decided upon a rigorous program of investigation, in the course of which he visited every South American country. The best thought and leadership of each country was interviewed and questioned for opinions on Protestant missions in Latin America, their right of existence, and their accomplishments. The reaction, he found, was very favorable to Protestantism. Practically all those interviewed were ready to declare that Protestant missions had accomplished much good for the people among whom they were established. Little or no resentment was encountered. On the contrary, the missionaries were praised and their work acclaimed. By vigorous social programs the Protestants were showing that they practiced their religion. The Protestant missionary strives as much as possible to conform to the customs and habits of the people among whom he works. He learns their language, he lives among them, and by precept and example strives to elevate them to a higher plane of living and to higher moral standards. He shows a friendly, co-operative spirit. He establishes a Christian home which again sets an example for those with whom he lives. In every way he sets an example of Christian living for the native. The visitor from North America, the American

business man or government official can well follow the example of the Protestant missionary who painstakingly avoids those exhibitions of superiority so offensive to Latin Americans. These characteristics of the Protestant missionary and the value of their program of activity has drawn the attention of observant Latin Americans who are quick to contrast the Protestant eagerness to help the masses with the Roman Catholic indifference to them.

Interesting observations concerning the Catholic Church and its activities were gathered by the author in the course of his investigation. He points out that there are two kinds of Catholics in Latin America, the one type is fanatical, the other liberal. The educated fall into the latter classification. These generally have no quarrel with Protestantism and give it credit for doing much good. The fanatical Catholics, however, resent the presence of Protestantism and often show considerable opposition.

We are also reminded that the Catholic Church in Latin America is a different church from that of North America. This is because the church of our southern neighbors did not come under the refining influence of the Protestant Reformation. This again results from the fact that it was possible for the Spanish authorities in colonial days to bar all heretical influences from their possessions. The degree of control exercised by the Spanish government over the colonial church was unparalleled elsewhere during that age. Immigration was carefully regulated and only ardent Catholics were allowed to migrate to the colonies. The inquisition, too, was a mighty factor in ferreting out and punishing heresy with unrelenting zeal.

Because there was no competitive church, the Catholic church of Latin America sank into a state of indifference and carelessness which has been reflected in the lives of its membership, an indifference which is quite noticeable to the observant Latin American, be he Catholic or not. The author makes the observation in this connection, that, wherever a church exists without competition, there is bound to develop a carelessness and a callousness which drives that church into an attitude of arrogance, not only, but also one of hatred and suspicion toward any would-be competitor. In some Latin American countries, therefore, the Church controls all phases of life, and in most of them it openly and unblushingly dominates political life and thought. It also has a stranglehold upon education.

The author, furthermore, calls attention to the fact that our State Department, has, without examining the facts, catered to the wishes and demands of the Catholic Church in regularly assigning Catholics to diplomatic and other official positions. It has also favored Catholics above Protestants in allowing visas to labor delegates, educators, business officials and other persons of influence and importance. On the other hand, our State Department has at times made it difficult for Protestant missionaries to go to South America. The author asks, and rightly so, why we as a Protestant nation do not show our colors. Our statesmen have nothing to apologize for. The Catholic minority in our country need not be catered to. We would earn respect rather than, as now, be the objects of suspicion and distrust; for especially the leadership of Latin America knows our Protestant background with its culture and its heritage of religious freedom and cannot understand our attitude toward the Catholic Church. We should be ashamed of the fact that we, the leading Protestant nation of the world, do not dare to come out for our faith, the dominant faith of our free land.

The quotations of the author show conclusively that the best minds of Latin America oppose the policy of the Catholic Church in hampering or opposing the work of Protestant missions. A surprisingly tolerant attitude was shown by Latin American leaders who are themselves Catholics. Latin America is not predominantly Roman Catholic as we are made to believe, but is controlled by a minority of militant Catholics.

In answer to the question, "Is there religious liberty in Latin America?" the author states that there may be religious toleration but not religious liberty.

The foreword by John A. Mackay of Princeton Theological Seminary must not be overlooked.

R. DROST.

Calvin College

\$5000.00 FICTION CONTEST

The William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company announces a new contest for writers of Christian adult fiction. A prize of \$5,000 will be awarded for the novel most successfully depicting Christian faith and Christian living.

The publishers are aware that, on the whole, Christian fiction has fallen far short of the literary standards established and maintained in the secular field; and they fully agree with recent critical articles published in the *Moody Monthly* and other religious periodicals.

The purpose of this contest is to encourage Christian writers to raise the art of the Christian novel to a new and acceptable level. *Roofs Over Strawtown*, winner in a recent contest conducted by the Eerdmans Company, indicated a definite forward step. It received an excellent press and was enthusiastically read by a discriminating public. It is hoped that the new contest will result in further progress and that in the near future we shall have superior Christian novels to rank artistically with the best in secular fiction.

In harmony with this program, it is desirable that in the submitted manuscripts the presentation of Christianity will be achieved through skilful delineation of the characters as they move naturally through the narrative, and not through direct teaching or moralizing.

Contest Rules

1. All residents of the United States and Canada are eligible to enter.
2. Manuscripts should be around 100,000 words or more in length. However, no rigid limits as to minimum or maximum will be imposed.
3. The Christianity exemplified in the manuscripts should be evangelical in doctrine and spirit.
4. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double spaced, on 8½" x 11" paper. Author should retain carbon copy and submit original. Every precaution will be taken for safety of manuscripts, but the publishers do not assume responsibility in case of loss or damage. Manuscripts will be returned after the contest.
5. Author's name and address, with the title of the manuscript, should be placed in a sealed envelop and enclosed with manuscript. Author's name should not appear on manuscript. Manuscripts should be labeled, "Christian Fiction Contest."
6. Only unpublished work is eligible for the contest.
7. Only one manuscript should be submitted by each contestant.
8. A prize of \$5,000 will be awarded the author of the entry considered best by the committee of judges. After the first edition author will receive royalties at usual rates.
9. Any manuscripts of merit not receiving the award will be considered for publication at regular royalty rates.
10. The publishers reserve the right to withhold the prize of \$5,000 should all entries prove of insufficient caliber to justify the award.
11. Contest closes March 1, 1948. Manuscripts should be submitted before midnight, March 1, 1948.
12. Manuscripts should be addressed to: Fiction Contest Editor, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave., Grand Rapids 3, Mich.

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