Protestantism
Sham and Real

Scholarship and Teaching
False Antithesis

Social Work
Calvinism's Contribution

The Social Gospel
Changing Emphases

War and Peace
Reflections

Correspondence
Books
JOHN per year. bi-monthly. Subscription price: Two Dollars}

Address all editorial correspondence to Dr. Clarence Bouma, Editor THE CALVIN FORUM, Calvin College and Seminary, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. Address all subscription and circulation correspondence to: THE CALVIN FORUM, Calvin College and Seminary, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.

The CALVIN FORUM is published monthly, except from June to September, when it appears bi-monthly. Subscription price: Two Dollars per year.

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

THE CALVIN FORUM 

VOLUME XII, NO. 6 

JANUARY, 1947

Contents

Editorials
Evangelizing the Student Mind ........................................ 107
Common Sense on Church Union ...................................... 107
Protestantism versus Romanism ...................................... 108

Articles
The Teacher as Scholar .................................................. 110
The Contribution of Calvinism to Social Work .................. 112
Changing Emphases in the Social Gospel ............................. 115
Reflections on War and Peace ........................................... 120

From Our Correspondents
Christian Reformed Church in Japan .................................. 122
Netherlands Letter ......................................................... 123

Of Books
Heaven and Hell .......................................................... 125
An English Artist ........................................................ 125
A Dutch Novel ............................................................ 126
Tradition and Literature ................................................ 126
Plain Talk .................................................................. 127
Creative Teaching ......................................................... 127
Miss Schoolland's Books ............................................... 128
Dutch Paintings .......................................................... 128
Evangelizing the Student Mind

Last evening the present writer drove to the campus of Michigan State College at East Lansing to fill an engagement before the Spartan Christian Fellowship speaking on "The Christian Philosophy of Life." This Fellowship consists of a group of Christian students who have banded together on the campus of this state-owned college for the deepening of their faith and life and as a witness for Christ among their fellow-students. We often forget that evangelization, mission work, the spread of the gospel is not only carried on among the heathen, on street corners, and in mission halls, but also on the campuses of our colleges and universities where Christ does not have the supreme place to which He is entitled. Thank God for the Christian colleges and universities, in whose class rooms teachers and students honor God and His Word, but the number of such institutions is comparatively small. In our state universities and colleges the evangelization of the students is a challenging task. Such evangelization must move on the level of the student mind and must adapt itself to the approach and mentality of the modern university. There is no high-brow way of being saved. All must come by the way of Calvary. But the needs of the student mind are different from those of the average person who comes to conversion in a gospel hall or in a revival meeting. His difficulties in accepting Christ are different. Daily he listens to professors lecturing on the deeper issues of reality and life from the point of view of modern anthropocentric philosophy. He cannot always relate such teaching to his Christian beliefs. Much of what he is taught is in conflict with Christian truth, but such teaching is intricately interwoven with factual knowledge which is part of the body of truth for the Christian as well as for the unbeliever. In all this the student needs guidance. It is a golden opportunity for Christian leaders to address such groups, to which others besides professing Christians are also invited by this organized student fellowship. This particular evening—and it happened to fall on the very evening before the beginning of the examinations—there were some seventy students present, and at the close of the lecture the audience continued for another half hour listening to the discussion of questions raised by the lecture and handed in by the group. The approach is one of exposition, of setting forth the distinctive principles of the Christian philosophy, of showing how these principles cannot be harmonized with much in modern thought, and of presenting the glory and the challenge of the God-centered and Christ-centered view imbedded in the Scriptures. This is student evangelization, "evangelization among intellectuals" as it is called in some European countries, and it is spiritual work that may have farreaching results. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship is one of the outstanding organizations promoting this kind of work on campuses throughout the United States and Canada.

C. B.

Common Sense on Church Union

The question of Church union is in the air in many denominations. Two groups seriously contemplating a merger are the United Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Church in America. It looks as though the leadership in both bodies is committed to the plan of union, though there are voices of dissent. Possibly one of the unexpected voices of this kind came recently from distant Arabia. Dr. John Van Ess, highly respected and widely known missionary of the Reformed Church in America, gave his "Reflections on Church Union" in the December 13 issue of The Church Herald. Usually men on the mission field are favorably disposed to church mergers. Not Dr. Van Ess. Here are some of the words of good sense which he presented to his denomination for careful reflection. "In effect the argument is that if by union we double our numbers we shall be twice as strong. I personally should hesitate, if given the choice, to have any member of my body doubled in size. Or, to change the figure, a division of soldiers is not strengthened by merging two regiments of the same division. The great British Army contains kilted Highlanders and turbanned Sikhs, but each fights best when allowed scope for its familiar traditions. The real issue is loyalty to the one throne and the one flag . . . We do not become more freely conservative or evangelical or Calvinistic merely by doubling our numbers through union with others who think as we do. We must in the light of our own failures rethink and revalue and reimplement our heritage for ourselves." Speaking more directly about the bearing the proposed merger would have upon the mission field and labors of the Church, Dr. Van Ess continues: "That we (missionaries) need a new stimulus for broader vision to be obtained by enlarging our fields is to my mind at least very questionable. You can see as much with a microscope as you can with a telescope. And we in Arabia with a whole penin-
sula still practically unoccupied and grossly under-staffed as it is, keep hoping and praying for more missionaries to do the work which is not a new opportunity but an old and solemn obligation which we long ago solemnly undertook... Just how two neighboring families living in separate houses demonstrate their essential love and unity by moving into one big house rather puzzles me, particularly if they have never quarreled and have lived in amity next to each other." Without holding that each of these statements is equally cogent, the thoughtful reader will agree that Dr. Van Ess has said some things worth pondering by all enthusiasts for denominational mergers.

C. B.

Protestantism Versus Romanism

On the surface there appears to be a vigorous reassertion of Protestantism in the American religious world of late. The protest on the part of Protestant groups against the attempt of the Roman Church to debar Protestant missionaries from South American countries has been heartening indeed. For some years now Protestant groups have raised their voice against the presence of a personal representative of the President of the United States at the Vatican. The Protestant Voice, calling itself The International Newspaper of Religion and appearing semi-monthly with at least eight pages of genuinely "Protestant" news and propaganda, is now in its sixth year. Reformation Day, which for many years was remembered and celebrated only in certain strongly orthodox Protestant groups, has of late become the occasion for great mass meetings. Two stories appearing soon after October 31 last in The Protestant Voice were headlined as follows. The one: "Reformation Sunday Thrills Entire Nation. From Coast to Coast Multitudes Observe Birth of Religious Freedom." And the other: "Tide of Protestant Might Rising Strongly Across U. S. 12,000 at Cleveland Festival of Faith. Bishop Oxnam Bares Vatican Challenge to Civil Courts."

What shall we say to this "mighty revival?" Shall we rejoice in the rediscovery of this "festival of faith?" Insofar as the Roman Church is being exposed in its intolerance there is much in this movement which one would support. It cannot be denied that Romanism is a real menace, even though many lies have been forged in the smutty of its opponents. Romanism is a menace against the liberty, civil and religious, for which the Protestant Reformation fought in its day. The attitude of the hierarchy varies with the country in which it operates and changes front in accordance with the political situation in which it seeks to maintain itself. In this way many Roman Catholic leaders and writers are much more outspokenly democratic in their utterances in America than in many European or South American countries. But the real genius of Romanism is not in favor of liberty. It believes in liberty for itself and opposes oppression by the majority, if and when it happens to be the suffering minority. But as soon as it is in the majority, it laughs at any plea for freedom, both in the religious and in the civil sense. History and the contemporary world situation is there to prove the correctness of these serious charges. After all, the Roman hierarchy itself is essentially an intolerant and totalitarian regime. Its papal autocracy and its claim of being the only true church headed by an infallible spokesman allows for nothing else. Therefore we Protestants, one and all, have a great battle with the Roman Church and must constantly be on our guard lest we are robbed of the very liberties we are prepared to share with them. Calvinists will hence be very sympathetic to every honest attempt at exposure of this insincerity and inconsistency of the Roman Church.

Calvinists will also be on the side of those who protest against the recognition of the Holy See as a political unit. We cannot recognize the pope as the head of a political state. Vatican City is not a political unit, whether national or international. Although one may have to recognize that under certain circumstances negotiations with the Holy See on the part of civil governments may have achieved a desirable end, this can in no way justify the recognition of the pope as the head of a sovereign state. The Roman Church is a legitimate Church entitled to the same recognition and liberties which all churches enjoy, but it is no more than a Church. Just as the maintenance of religious liberty cannot be stretched to mean that Mormons can be allowed their "religious right" to practice the polygamy which their faith allows for, so the Roman Church cannot be allowed her claim that she is a sovereign state among the states of the world. The contrast between the Lord Jesus Christ, who told Pilate that His Kingdom was not of this world, and the occupant of the papal throne, who claims to be the vicar of that Christ on earth and arrogates to himself a unique political and international standing among the governments of this world, is a standing indictment of the political claims of the Vatican.

And so the Calvinist joins in hearty support and endorsement of the "revival" of Protestantism in America today? Hardly.

There is a great deal of animus and opposition against Roman Catholicism in our country that has nothing to do with real Protestantism. There is first of all the fanatic of the Ku Klux Klan type. He is anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish, and anti-Negro. He is eloquent in his attack upon the Roman Church and the exposition of the menace it constitutes to our liberties. But no intelligent Protestant can ally himself with such a movement or promote its spirit. Apart from some misguided church people, this K.K.K. brand of Protestantism is only Protestant in name. It lacks all religious basis, and by its high-handed methods and terrorism would destroy the
very freedom it claims for itself. No intelligent Protestant can join hands with the brand of "Protestantism" which the K.K.K. and those of similar spirit would foster. This way lies religious indifference and political anarchy.

Again, there is much enthusiasm for Protestantism that lacks the very heart of Protestantism. Here I am thinking of the liberals in the so-called Protestant Churches. The temperature of their anti-Catholicism has indeed gone up many degrees of late. But their Protestantism is as thin as ever. They are religiously negative. Politically they believe in civil freedom, the freedom which is endangered by the Roman hierarchy. With these people we can stand shoulder to shoulder in the defense of the political liberties which America has enjoyed these many decades. When they would champion this freedom and do so without the fanaticism and terrorism of the K.K.K., we find ourselves so far forth in congenial company and can subscribe to many of their pleas. However, when they speak of a revival of Protestantism, when they call many of the large mass meetings of recent date "festivals of the Faith," we must demur.

These liberals have rejected every essential doctrine of the Protestant Reformation and are not the spiritual heirs of Calvin and Luther. They have repudiated the erroneous and superstitious beliefs of the mediaeval, Roman Catholic system to be sure—but they have likewise cast over board the vital truths of the Protestant Faith. The authority of the Word of God they have undermined by their higher criticism. The living truth of the sinner's justification solely by faith is so much dead-wood to them, seeing they have exchanged grace for works, Augustinianism for Kantian Pelagianism, total depravity for the doctrine of man's autonomy. In their modernist religion and theology the sovereignty of God has faded out and the autonomy and lordship of man has taken its place. How can one spiritually join in with this group when they celebrate Reformation Day? How can one honestly call this a festival of the Faith? The very essence, the heart of the Protestant faith they have repudiated.

The present writer was deeply impressed with this fact when on the Sunday before last Reformation Day he happened to be in Cleveland. On that Sunday, when Protestants all over the country were having special mass meetings, he had the opportunity to sit in the crowd of over twelve thousand which poured into Cleveland's Public Hall and overflowed into the adjoining auditorium. Yes, the hymns were there, some of them at least sound and true to the faith. And the open Bible was there, at least physically and literally, when it was carried at the head of the procession to the platform. But that was all the "Protestantism" there was. There was in reality nothing of the faith of Luther and Calvin, nothing of the Gospel of sovereign grace, nothing of the high authority of the truths of the Word of God. The speaker was perhaps the most distinguished "Protestant" person that could have been chosen—Bishop Oxnam, President of the Federal Council of Churches, the organization which claims to speak for some thirty million Protestants. But this official spokesman for America's millions of Protestants in his lengthy address never touched the hem of the robe of the gospel of Protestantism. After an inconsequential allusion to Luther and Calvin, and a somewhat garbled anti-Catholic plea for liberty, the greater part of his time was taken up with the subject of world peace and the United Nations Organization. What an opportunity was missed by this pope of Protestantism to tell 12,000 people about the spiritual glory of the Protestant Faith!

We need a revival of Protestantism, but it must be a genuine Protestantism—not an empty shell. It must be the faith of Luther and Calvin, the faith of the Scriptures—not the vagaries of the Enlightenment or the humanistic mouthings of nineteenth and twentieth century Modernism. The Protestantism we need must have content. Much of it these days is purely negative, purely anti-Catholic. That is why it has no power. Protestantism to be sure is the greatest force historically speaking in Western civilization for the cultivation of liberty, religious as well as civil, but this passion for liberty cannot be divorced from the religious roots that have produced the plant. To have a true revival of Protestantism we must return to the Scriptures with their teaching of the sovereignty of God, the bankruptcy of man, the sufficiency of the Savior, salvation by sovereign grace, and the priesthood of all believers.

Without this weapon the battle against Romanism will be in vain.

C. B.
The Teacher as Scholar

I. T. Radius
Professor of Classical Languages
Calvin College

THE CALVIN FORUM * JANUARY, 1947

IT HAS been the fashion of late, even on the part of those who ought to know better, to make light of the scholarly activities of teachers in institutions of higher learning. Such jibes as, "knowing more and more about less and less," leveled at the scholar come from unexpected quarters. The only teacher-scholars who are generally exempted from this form of deflation are the workers in some of the branches of science. There seems to be even some feeling of respect and awe for the activities of those who, as the saying goes, "push back the frontiers" of our knowledge of the material world. Their investigations can be tolerated because it is now generally understood that university laboratory work frequently leads to results which add to the material comforts of our civilization; or, better still, when necessary, to the destruction of other peoples' civilization. I have no quarrel with the laboratory and I too can join in the general chorus of acclaim for the triumphs of science, though along with many other observers I must view with alarm the destructive potentialities of much of what issues from our deeper knowledge of the structure of the universe. Yet as Christians we are committed to an unending investigation of the marvels of God's creation. But, and this is my concern here, again as Christians we ought to understand that scholarship in the humanistic branches too is both valid and imperative. The work of the scholar in theology, philosophy and history does not lend itself to glamorization, yet its value for a civilization may be inestimable.

There is current the notion that teaching and research are incompatible. If a man is a scholar it is held to be axiomatic that he can be only a poor teacher. Now there are to be sure some very real practical difficulties facing the man who would combine these two lines of work and I shall consider them in due time. But just now I am challenging the popular fiction that scholarship and teaching do not mix. It must be at once conceded that many scholars are poor teachers, it is also true that many teachers who do no research are also poor teachers. Let a researcher here and there turn out to be an incompetent in the class-room and a hue and a cry goes up that research is the bane. It must further be granted that much that passes as scholarship is scarcely worth the candle. Though here too our judgments had better not be hasty. The sentence of triviality which the unthinking so gleefully pronounce on a piece of research often bounces back on the scorch. One need know only a little of the history of science to cite dramatic instances. But to set teaching and research over against each other as antithetical reveals a serious misconception of the whole nature of higher learning. And when this misconception finds lodging in the minds of the governing board of the college and university, a mischief has been set afoot which in time will seriously imperil the usefulness of that school. Presidents and deans carry a heavy load of responsibility in clarifying this question for boards of trustees which have come under this popular delusion.

It is no secret that professors themselves are often responsible for the low esteem in which research is held. There are many reasons why they cultivate this attitude. Some of it arises out of a rationalization of their own inabilities. Pushing frontiers is unbelievably hard work. It calls for a creative effort which in the very nature of the case relatively few in any group of teachers can command. It has been estimated that there are not enough scholars to stock five per cent of the colleges in the country. There are no established paths in research; a way must be cleared. A man has all sorts of precedents to guide him in teaching a course. Many before him have traversed the same ground. A body of knowledge has been built up which lies ready to hand and generally too some sort of methodology whereby it is to be imparted.

Then too, professors along with teachers on lower academic levels have frequently persuaded themselves of the validity of some aspect or other of that widespread educational evasion that they are teaching students, not subjects. The reluctance to take on the burden of the scholar, the negative attitude toward research is easily fortified by the virtuous notion that they are dedicating themselves to the welfare of the pupil in preference to the specialty. From this point on the descent is swift. Having escaped the discipline of the subject-matter, he stands in great peril of actually making himself rather than, as he fondly thinks, the pupil, the theme of his teaching. It's lots of fun to throw one's personality around in the class-room but a man must realize that the subject quickly exhausts itself, stretch it as you will.

As a parent I would hope for my child that somewhere along the path of his schooling he meet a Christian scholar, or, better still, a goodly company of such blessed men and women. It is especially
in the field of higher education that he ought to have this illuminating experience. By scholar and researcher I am not thinking first of all of the man who rates himself and his colleagues on the number of published studies. Publication of academic papers has in our time become something of a racket and special difficulties beset the Christian scholar who seeks to have his researches see the light of day in the current professional journals. I plead for research not for the sake of enhancing the reputation of the teacher or his college but on behalf of teaching itself. And further, by research I mean for the most part something less ambitious than uncovering new knowledge. If new ground is gained, well and good, but the important thing is that a man be busy as best he can with intellectual pioneering. He may never know the thrill of staking out a claim. He may find that others have anticipated him or it may turn out that he really never left home. No matter, his students are the richer. They have had the intellectual boon of contact with a prospector. We hear much today about the child-centered school. The various subjects of study are to be integrated around the core of the needs of the growing child. This in itself is certainly not a bad educational procedure if the true nature of the child be rightly understood. It all depends on how we perceive the personality of the child. Do we seek to nurture the self that the child is, or are we aiming at the self which the child ought to become? Are we cultivating the merely human element in the child, or are we fostering that ideal of human personality unto which he ought to attain as his covenant birth-right? So, I say, a child-centered education has its place. But there comes a time when the center of interest should shift from the child to the subject. For it is most certainly true that our pupil is not going to live out his life in a child-centered world. The college, and more especially the senior college years, ought to assist the young man and the young woman to make the transition from the ego-centricity of childhood to the relative impersonality and objectivity of maturity adulthood. And it is exactly here that the scholar-teacher makes his inestimable contribution. The school-master gives way to the professor, the text-book to the library and the laboratory. The student is taken behind the scenes and for a moment peers into the workshop of the mind of the scholar. Even though his subsequent life be outside the professions, he is a better man for the experience.

* * *

There is also the popular fiction that college or seminary teaching is an easy berth. Alas, I must confess that too often there is more than a grain of truth to the charge. This is the truth which is stranger than the fiction which alleges it. The non-productivity of those who have attained the top-rung of academic honors is a statistical fact. I am revealing no trade-secret when I admit the existence of this occupational disease. One does not shout this in the market-place but readers of this paper are nearly all in one way or another vitally interested in higher education and themselves the product of it. They are the informed public which to a large extent determines the quality of higher education. I need not explain that I am not thinking specifically of the institution with which I am associated and to which I owe so much. I am not the person and this is not the place to evaluate a particular seat of higher learning. But I like to think that our readers are the sort of people whose support is vital to the success of any venture into the field of Christian higher education in America. To these people I say that a good college requires something more than a considerable pile of money and a constitution grounded on the faith. It can be no seat of higher learning if its teachers are not diligent scholars. No profession has a corner on intellectual sloth, but for reasons which I need not enumerate here, both the teacher and the minister are too frequently its victims. If they are to transcend the hazard they shall have to feel an intellectual challenge issuing from their informed constituency.

The college teacher and the Christian minister are as a rule full of good works. Academic and ministerial chores are, each considered separately, necessary and worthwhile, but in the aggregate they create a situation in which scholarship is impossible. Whatever the bad results for the ministry, there is no doubt as to what it does to the institution of higher learning. A college is no better than its faculty and if intellectual vigor for one reason or another is not an outstanding mark of its teachers the institution suffers. It is the scholar who can teach or, if you will, the teacher who is a scholar that makes a school significant. Again, by scholar, as stated above, I do not mean first of all published books and papers. That is of secondary importance to my present point of view. Yet I would not like to be misunderstood on this score. I believe, as the editor of this journal has so often insisted, there is a great need for Reformed publications in every branch of academic learning. This need grows more urgent as perversions of and departures from the true gospel multiply. Furthermore, it cannot be too emphatically affirmed that the moral responsibility for this undertaking rests as heavily on the shoulders of governing boards as on the faculties. But let the teacher be a researcher for his students first of all. Even though he never gain such academic rewards and honors as commonly accrue to the man with a long list of publications to his credit, it is reward enough if he clarify and make meaningful and challenging for his own students some aspect of this amazing creation.

* * *

If the central thesis of this survey be correct, certain obligations follow for administrative offic-
The Contribution of Calvinism to Social Work

A YOUNG lady from Ohio in a recent conversation with a Grand Rapids social worker expressed her interest in making social work her profession. The social worker encouraged her and asked where she was attending school. When the young lady replied "Calvin College," the social worker manifested disappointment and sighed, "That's too bad; because in social work one must be tolerant."

A similar indictment of Calvinism in its relation to social work comes from Reinhold Niebuhr in his Contribution of Religion to Social Work (1933) where he writes: "Calvinism stops short of deep concern for the most needy. Calvinism has never been able to overcome the temptation to regard poverty as a consequence of laziness and vice and therefore to leave the poor and needy to the punishment which a righteous God has inflicted upon them."

Such charges, coming from widely different sources, cannot be allowed to stand without challenge and refutation. Adequate refutation will not come by vehement denials or heated protests either, but rather by a survey of the positive contributions which Calvinism has been making and is capable of making in the field of social work. This in no wise pretends to be a complete analysis of this contribution. The aim here rather will be to place the problem in its proper setting and to observe a few of these contributions.

Just What is Social Work?

It is well to have a clear conception from the outset as to just what social work is. Many conceive of it as merely the dispensing of material relief, a misconception obviously shared by Niebuhr. Although the granting of material aid is a part of social work and was a large part of it during the depression, other challenges to social work include feelings of insecurity, maladjustment and emotional disturbances, disintegrated personalities and environmental hazards.

Besides helping individuals to achieve economic well-being, health and a decent standard of living, the social worker is also concerned with helping to provide satisfying social relationships. These two main aims are vitally related. To give the former without the latter is insufficient since "man does not live by bread alone." And yet one can hardly have the latter without the former.

Social work has been called the science of adjusting people to life, or the tinkering with the lives of other people so that the world will be a little better because they have lived in it. Again, it has been called the business of healing the sick, those who are sick in certain kinds of ways. "The idea of brotherly love, a true, friendly, neighborly relationship between me and the one who calls for my help is the core of our creed," according to Hans Weiss, Boston Juvenile Court probation officer.

Basically, social work is providing help for those in need of help due to circumstances beyond their control or within their control. The essential purpose is to organize the potentials within the individual or the community so that those without resources as well as those ineffectively using their resources may be helped to achieve a more adequate way of life.

Three main methods of approach are used in social work. First there is social case work to meet the needs of a given individual or family. Such is the function of the child guidance clinic, the visiting teacher, the family welfare worker. Then there is social group work to meet group needs through social settlements, youth organizations, etc. Finally, there is social action or social reform to meet mass needs. The social worker turns to the forces in the community or government to achieve such objectives as better housing, prison and court reform.
The Calvin Forum * * * JANUARY, 1947

Social security for dependent children, the aged, the blind and the unemployed, and the extension of public health services. All three of these approaches are being used by Christian social workers and more particularly by Calvinistic groups.

The Social Worker

Such is the scope of social work. What of the social worker? For our purpose they can be classified into four groups. First, there are those workers with a Christian philosophy which determines the character of their work, including their approach and their methods. Then there are those with no religious orientation but who do recognize the salutary influence of religion and may use the services of religious institutions in their work. The writer knows of several workers, quite irreligious, who nevertheless make every attempt to strengthen the religious beliefs of their clients. The third group disregards religion and religious influence altogether. Finally, there are those who are definitely hostile to religion. This hostility is often due to their observance of the deleterious effects of certain types of religion on their clients. Particularly effective in stirring up this hostility has been the categorical opposition of some church groups to birth control and sterilization and the belief by some groups that the unmarried mother must keep her illegitimate child instead of placing it for adoption so that she may be punished for her act, regardless of the effects on the lives of the mother, the child and others. Although one can understand some of this hostility, much of it is based on misconception.

Religious Groups and Social Work

Before looking at Calvinism in particular it might be noted that religious groups have always been in the forefront of social improvement movements. Pioneer work in institutions for the mentally defective, orphans, the aged and others was done by church groups. Demands for large scale organization of the work and the disunity of the church later made secularization of much of this activity necessary.

The Quakers were especially active in social work. They were in the forefront in the abolition of slavery; Tuke, a Quaker, established the first hospital for the insane; Elizabeth Fry was notable for prison reform; Timothy Nicholson was instrumental in organizing the first national charities organization in the United States. The Salvation Army, combining religious fervor and social service, was especially active in work among unmarried mothers.

The Catholic Church historically and today has been a mighty force in social work. Dr. L. Lauer-
glorify God and enjoy Him forever.” This is the driving power behind the Calvinistic social worker, and disillusionment should not be her lot.

Secondly, the Calvinistic social worker will have a deeper sense of sympathy and understanding, with their roots in her conviction of general perversity. Often the cases with which the social worker is faced are apt to stimulate feelings of revulsion and criticism. The Calvinist, however, is aware of her own shortcomings and the unworthiness of all others also, which should kindle sympathetic helpfulness.

Indicative of the critical, holier-than-thou attitude are the following remarks by a social worker, overheard recently in an institution for unwed mothers: “If you had been smart enough and good enough, you wouldn’t have had to come here... If I had run around as much as you have when I was young...” All principles of social work technique agitate against such an attitude, but for the Calvinist his philosophy of life undergirds these principles. “Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye and considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye.” “In Thy sight no man living is justified.” To her, contrition and forgiveness are linked together. A sustained sympathy, inspired by a vital religion, is often the only force which will overcome the temptation to contempt and loathing for the type of person with whom the social worker must deal.

A Satisfying Philosophy of Life

A third aspect of this contribution is that the Calvinistic social worker comes with a satisfying philosophy of life when the client finds his foundations are shaken and has probably lost all incentive for living. The mechanics of living, the ways and means by which men live, in normal life functioning often become the end of existence. Ultimate, long-range, major objectives are pushed back into the realm of the unreal or irrelevant. When these day-by-day mechanics lose their efficiency and the individual is faced with a mal-functioning, then these ways and means are forced back into their proper secondary place and the basic objectives of life come again into focus, or, at least, the ground is prepared for bringing them into focus. Here is the golden opportunity of the Calvinistic social worker with her all-comprehensive philosophy of life. Here is where the majority of social workers stand with empty hands or with shallow platitudes.

The Christian social worker in such a situation will not only attempt to strengthen existing religious resources but will also attempt to stimulate new religious interests. She will come with words of real comfort and assurance: “Let not your heart be troubled... Be not anxious... Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world... Say unto them of a fearful heart, ‘Be strong, fear not.’”

J. A. Hadfield testifies to the need for basic foundations in such a situation when he writes in his Psychology of Power: “Speaking as a student of psychotherapy, who has no concern with theology, I am convinced that the Christian religion is one of the most valuable and potent influences that we possess for producing that harmony and peace of mind and that confidence of soul which is needed to bring health and power to a large proportion of nervous patients.”

Finally, the preventive influence of Calvinism is tremendous. There isn’t a social worker who does not point a finger of blame for many of the difficulties she encounters at home conditions. Calvinism with its emphasis on caution in establishing a family, on the permanence of the family as a divine institution, on children as a divine blessing and responsibility involving a covenant relationship, on mutual forbearance and forgiveness, makes a significant contribution in preventive social work.

Calvinism, then, has a vital contribution to make to social work. Neither is it all in the theoretical category. The contribution is now being made in many specific instances. A complete description of these activities is impossible here, but some may be mentioned. A partial list would include the Christian Guidance Bureau, Good Samaritan Guild for the placement of children in Christian homes, Bethany Christian Home for Children, various city missions (West Fulton Mission performs a large function in this regard), the Morals Committee in the field of social action, Christian boys’ clubs and summer camps, youth organizations, the Diaconates and material relief, pastoral counseling on family and individual problems, and our various institutions for mental cases, the aged, and the tubercular.

In addition, a number of Calvin students have taken and are taking training in social work so that they may be better equipped technically to meet this challenge. A course in social work is being offered for the first time this year at Calvin.

The contribution that Calvinists are making in the field of social work falls far short of the contribution that can be made, however. Here lies the challenge.
Changing Emphases in the Social Gospel

I. Period of Social Optimism

It may well be, as Visser ’t Hooft suggests, that the social gospel is America’s unique religious contribution. Reflecting, as it does, the activism which is our national temperament, embodying the idealism and progressivism of a budding civilization, and striving to make religion relevant to the clamorous problems of a technological age, the social gospel is one of the truly significant religious interpretations of recent years. It will amply repay careful study.

The Background of the Social Gospel

In his brilliant and discerning volume, The Background of the Social Gospel in America, Dr. Visser ’t Hooft pieces out various roots of the movement, stressing especially its American antecedents. Puritanism, originally strongly social, frittered out into an other-worldly individualism; yet as an attitude toward life its influence remains vigorous. As such, it has contributed to the social gospel in its passion for reform, its belief in social discipline, and its ideal of a thoroughly Christianized society. The Enlightenment passed on to the social gospel its demand for a rational religion, its belief in the goodness of man and the perfectibility of society. The American elements in the background of the social gospel, one can understand his omission of this root. I refer to the theology of Ritschl. Of course, one needs to take into account Kant, Hegel, and Schleiermacher as well, in understanding the temper of modern theological thought. But the social gospel movement, it seems to me, bears predominantly the stamp of the Ritschlian theology. It shares Ritschl’s aversion to metaphysical problems and lays all its stress on value-judgments. Like Ritschl, the social gospel finds the essence of religion in the moral will; like him, it makes the community more important than the individual. In both, the test of doctrine is its practical, social fruitfulness; both appeal to the word and work of Christ as the source of authority. In both, the chief significance of Christ is His founding of the Kingdom of God; whereas the doctrine of the Kingdom of God is central in both theologies. One of the peculiarities of the early social gospel is that it virtually transformed theology into the study of social values, and psychology emphasized the changeability of man through altered environment. Such were the formative influences of the social gospel in America.

The Ritschlian Influence

I should like to mention another root of the social gospel, as important as any that have been mentioned. Since Dr. Visser ’t Hooft intends to emphasize the American elements in the background of the social gospel, one can understand his omission of this root. I refer to the theology of Ritschl. Of course, one needs to take into account Kant, Hegel, and Schleiermacher as well, in understanding the temper of modern theological thought. But the social gospel movement, it seems to me, bears predominantly the stamp of the Ritschlian theology. It shares Ritschl’s aversion to metaphysical problems and lays all its stress on value-judgments. Like Ritschl, the social gospel finds the essence of religion in the moral will; like him, it makes the community more important than the individual. In both, the test of doctrine is its practical, social fruitfulness; both appeal to the word and work of Christ as the source of authority. In both, the chief significance of Christ is His founding of the Kingdom of God; whereas the doctrine of the Kingdom of God is central in both theologies. One of the peculiarities of the early social gospel is that it virtually transformed theology into the study of social values, and psychology emphasized the changeability of man through altered environment. Such were the formative influences of the social gospel in America.

In thus comparing the social gospel with Ritschl, I have been describing the social gospel in its early stages. In later years some of these views were modified, especially after the impact of neo-ortho-

---

1 W. A. Visser ’t Hooft, Background of the Social Gospel in America, p. 100.
2 Ibid., pp. 114-125.
3 Ibid., pp. 142, 143.
4 Ibid., pp. 154-168.
5 F. Lichtenberger, History of German Theology in the Nineteenth Century, p. 580.
doxy, as we shall see. Enough parallels have been shown, however, to demonstrate that, in its inception, the social gospel was chiefly an American amplification of the Ritschlian tradition.

**Two Stages in the Social Gospel**

In discussing the theology of the social gospel, I should like to distinguish two main stages, an earlier and a later. It is always difficult to divide thought into stages; yet these two periods do have distinguishing characteristics. Roughly we may date them as follows: the early period, which we may call the period of social optimism, runs from approximately 1890 to 1920; the later period, that of social realism, from 1920 to 1940. It will be seen that, chronologically, Rauschenbusch belongs to the early period; in many respects, however, as I shall try to point out, he represents a transitional view between that of the early and that of the later period.

**The Early Period of the Social Gospel**

The early period of the social gospel was characterized by lush optimism. The faith of the Enlightenment and the theory of evolution had aroused a buoyant expectation of progress. There was a lyrical hope in the onward march of civilization. But there were other factors as well.

"More important than these ideological roots has been the plasticity of American life—the freedom from long and stubborn inheritances; space in which to expand; the marvellous application of science to environment; the rapid growth of a civilization in the wilderness; the openness of the American mind, always to change, sometimes to reform. This social situation made it natural that the fusion of secular and religious dreams would lead to romantic optimism."6

**The Position of Samuel Batten**

By way of reviewing the theology of this early period, I shall first set forth in some detail the thought of one of the exponents of the social gospel in its optimistic stage. Dr. Samuel Z. Batten was a professor of Social Science in Des Moines College and the chairman of the Social Service Commission of the Northern Baptist Convention. His book, *The Social Task of Christianity*, written in 1911, is a clear and outspoken statement of the romantic optimism which first characterized the social gospel.

The main thesis of the book is enunciated in the Foreword:

"Christianity is essentially a social religion; the kingdom of God in the Christian conception of things never means anything less than a human society on earth; the supreme task before the men of good-will today is the creation of a better and more Christian type of human society; the ends of the world in this time demand that men's personal, social, industrial and political life as a whole be transformed and Christianized; in a word, the superlative duty of men today is the Christianization of Christendom" (p. 8).

It will be seen from this quotation that Dr. Batten virtually identifies the Kingdom of God with the new social order which is supposedly about to be ushered in by the co-operative effort of "men of good-will." Since this is an important aspect of the theology of the social gospel we should note that it is beyond doubt a cardinal element in Batten's thought. "The purpose of God as defined in the kingdom of God on earth contemplates nothing less and lower than the creation among men of a righteous and fraternal and Christian society" (p. 69). "In brief, the ideal of the kingdom implies a perfect man in a perfect society" (p. 72). "We never shall take hold of Christianity in its largeness and power till we enter into its fundamental and central idea and consciously and collectively seek to build a human society according to the divine pattern" (p. 180). "The time is coming and it is even now here when the value of Christianity will be proved . . . in its ability to transform cities of destruction into the city of God and to build up in the earth a Christian social order" (p. 194).

This does not mean, however, that the Church is identified with the kingdom. "The kingdom of God is the all-inclusive term that includes the person, the family, the Church and the state. The Church is a realm of the kingdom in which its reign is realized, an agency in and through which the kingdom is revealed and established. But the Church is not the kingdom; it never has been and it never can be; the whole is ever greater than any of its parts" (p. 114). Thus, although in practice the social gospel brought the church and the kingdom very close together, in theory the distinction between them was usually maintained.

It should be noted, also, that, despite the stress laid on social activity, Dr. Batten does not disapprove the conversion of individuals. The latter is indispensable. Only soul-winning alone will not bring about the redemption of society; actual, realistic social reformation is demanded. (p. 152.)

This means that environment is not everything. Batten and others like him would probably grant that a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit is the most basic prerequisite for transformed living. Yet the stress is constantly laid on the environment as shaping the life of individuals. "We have expected men to live saintly lives in hellish conditions. We have forgotten that environment determines many things in life both before and after conversion" (p. 157). This environmentalist accent is one of the salient features of the social gospel.

Another characteristic of the early social gospel, exemplified by Batten, is its idealistic view of human society. Batten "contemplates a human society on earth in which the Spirit of Christ can find

---

a home" (p. 129). One senses a failure to make a realistic distinction between the possibilities of living out the Christian ethic within the Christian community, and within the world at large.

A final outstanding feature of this theology in its social optimism. Throughout his book, Dr. Batten implies that the ideal society which he calls men to create is realizable on this earth. "The idea of the kingdom of God . . . is a confession of faith in the divine order which God wills and wants established in the earth; it is the faith that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of God" (p. 227). There is a facile confidence that if men but unite in pursuing the ideals of the kingdom in earnest, the new social order will arrive with amazing rapidity. If each man does his part, the world may be made over in a generation.

**Extreme Optimism**

That this attitude is typical of the proponents of the early social gospel can be readily demonstrated. In 1893 Josiah Strong wrote, "There are reasons for believing that the world's progress toward a perfect society is to be much more rapid in the future than it has been in the past." George D. Herron said in 1895, "It does not seem mystical to me to believe that the mind of Christ shall become the creative spirit of political action, and express itself in the statutes of the state." In 1913 Washington Gladden informed his Columbus congregation that "the things we have been praying for will come to pass one of these days, for men will begin to believe in it and look for it. People will be living in heaven right here in the Scioto Valley." Even Rauschenbusch wrote in 1912: "the largest and hardest part of the work of Christianizing the social order has been done."

Arthur Cushman McGiffert, who may be considered as belonging to this group, writes in similar fashion. "There is in it (the modern social emphasis) the conviction that a reconstruction of human society is at once imperative and possible." Again, at the conclusion of his chapter on the social trend: "Under the influence of the modern social emphasis we are coming to see . . . that to be saved in the full sense of the word means to be part of a saved race; that anything short of a redeemed humanity —of a human society Christianized through and through—is unworthy to be the aim of Christian effort, and that apart from such a Christianized society there is no real and abiding salvation for any man." This makes salvation inextricably related to this world, inseparable from the confident hope of a completely Christianized society.

---

7 All of these quotations, together with their sources, are given in Bennett's chapter, "The Social Interpretation of Christianity", found in The Church Through Half a Century, pp. 116 and 117.
9 Ibid., p. 278.

**Main Concepts of this Theology**

It will be seen that the dominant concepts underlying this theology are such as these: the idea of growth rather than catastrophic change; the goodness of man; the gradual perfectibility of society; the identification of the Kingdom of God with the perfect society; the social conception of salvation; the assumption that the ethics of Jesus can be fully lived up to in human society; and the optimistic hope for an imminent Christianized social order. Further theological presuppositions will be seen in Rauschenbusch.

In a sense it may be said that the social gospel corrects its own excesses. We shall see how many of these extreme assumptions were modified, partly through the inexorable logic of history, partly through the impact of neo-orthodoxy. Suffice it here to comment on one of the fundamental errors of this early stage: the identification of the kingdom with the perfect society on earth. Since this is an historical survey, it is not necessary to go into a detailed refutation of this view. But it could easily be demonstrated that this is not at all what Jesus had in mind when He taught men to seek the Kingdom of God; that the Kingdom was for Him primarily a spiritual entity, and not to be identified with any human organization; that it was to be a leaven transforming every human institution, rather than any specific social or economic order; and that it was ultimately eschatological in character, its perfect fulfillment to be realized only in the life to come.

**The Theology of Rauschenbusch**

We turn now to Rauschenbusch. Although he belongs to the early period, he is in many ways a transitional figure between early social optimism and later social realism. Rauschenbusch is undoubtedly the intellectual giant of the early social gospel. He had a tremendous grasp on the problems and evils of modern industrial life; he was impelled by a glowing religious idealism. And yet the very keenness of his observation and breadth of his thinking made him correct some of the naive Utopianism of his predecessors.

In setting forth Rauschenbusch's theology, I shall use chiefly his Theology for the Social Gospel, written in 1917. Since he died in the following year, this book may be taken as representing his mature outlook.

To begin with, what is Rauschenbusch's view of the relation between the social gospel and theology? On page 1 he says, "The social gospel needs a theology to make it effective; but theology needs the social gospel to vitalize it." The first part of this sentence suggests that theology must be revamped to fit the social gospel, which is precisely
what Rauschenbusch proceeds to do. This view implies that the source of theology is experience or contemporary need, rather than revelation, and thus betrays the relativistic bias behind the entire structure of social gospel theology. One feels throughout that Rauschenbusch bases his theology more on reason and experience than on the Scriptures.

**His View of Sin**

Rauschenbusch is quite realistic about sin. In distinction from the bland optimism of many of his predecessors, he had a keen sense of the reality of evil forces in both individual and society. In this respect he is a transitional figure, preparing the way for the post-war realistic phase of the social gospel. From a strong passage on sin given on page 32, I quote only the last line: “The weakness or the stubbornness of our will and the tempting situations of life combine to weave the tragic web of sin and failure of which we all make experience before we are through with our years.”

In fact, Rauschenbusch claims that the social gospel has not made sin less serious but more so (p. 36). To understand this, one must know where the emphasis is laid. The theology of the past has stressed ritual sins and ceremonial shortcomings. It has thus laid emphasis on the minor sins, and kept silence on the profitable major wrongs (p. 35). “To find the climax of sin, we must notlinger over a man who swears, or sneers at religion, or denies the mystery of the trinity, but put our hands on social groups who have turned the patrimony of a nation into the private property of a small class; or have left the peasant laborers cowed, degraded, demoralized, and without rights in the land” (p. 50).

This social interpretation of sin is amplified in Chapter VI on the nature of sin. Three forms of sin are there distinguished: sensuousness, selfishness, and godlessness (p. 47). Yet in the very next paragraph the author goes on to state: “Theology with remarkable unanimity has discerned that sin is essentially selfishness” (p. 47). This observation, however, may be called in question. Even Augustine, who stressed the selfish character of sin, always viewed this selfishness as a repudiation of the will of God: self-love instead of love of God. The more basic view of sin has always been that which is expressed in the Westminster Confession: sin is a transgression of, or want of conformity to, the law of God. Sin has primary reference to God. As such, social sins may be heinous, but violation of the will of God is more fundamental. The first table of the law is more basic than the second. Now Rauschenbusch would not deny that social sins are sins against God, but his conception of God is so close to immanence that he almost identifies God with society.

**His Conception of God**

This interpretation of Rauschenbusch’s conception of God is substantiated by his assertion on page 48 that we must “democratize the conception of God.” “Our universe is not a despotic monarchy, with God above the starry canopy and ourselves down here; it is a spiritual commonwealth with God in the midst of us” (p. 49). Further, in the chapter on the conception of God, Rauschenbusch declares that Jesus democratized the old, autocratic view of God (p. 175). The view of God is always determined by the social and political structure of the age. In former times, God might perhaps be thought of as an autocratic ruler; today, in our democratic society, we must conceive of Him as immanent in humanity, living and striving with us (p. 179). The question should here be raised: Is the conception of God which we must hold merely a projection of the historically-conditioned human consciousness?

On the question of the transmission of sin, Rauschenbusch concedes that there is a substance of truth in the doctrine of original sin. “But,” he continues, “the old theology overworked it. It tried to involve us in the guilt of Adam as well as in his debasement of nature and his punishment of death” (p. 59). It is evident from this and from the rest of the discussion that Rauschenbusch holds a semi-pelagian view of the transmission of sin: corruption is transmitted, but not guilt. As to the mode of this transmission of corruption, this is social even more than biological. Sin is passed on by the channel of social tradition. One generation corrupts the next; vices, evil habits, selfish and lustful thoughts, perverted economic practices are communicated to individuals by the social environment in which they are enmeshed (p. 60). This is not just a matter of imitation but of the spiritual authority of society over its members (p. 61).

This thought is expanded in the chapter on the Kingdom of Evil. “Our theological conception of sin is but fragmentary unless we see all men in their natural groups bound together in a solidarity of all times and all places, bearing the yoke of evil and suffering” (p. 81). By the Kingdom of evil is meant the solidarity of evil in the organized social structure, its entrenchment in social institutions. It is one of the great merits of Rauschenbusch that he has helped us to see sin and evil in its social dimensions and to recognize the compulsion of social tradition in transmitting sin.

**His Teaching on Salvation**

What does Rauschenbusch teach about salvation? On page 96 he writes: “We might possibly begin where the old gospel leaves off. and ask our readers to take all the familiar experiences and truths of personal evangelism and religious nurture for granted in what follows. But our understanding
of personal salvation itself is deeply affected by the new solidaristic comprehension furnished by the social gospel.” This suggests that Rauschenbusch would not deny the necessity of individual conversion or of personal religious experience. His point is, however, that conversion must issue into a vital concern for social problems. “As long as men are wholly intent on their own destiny, they do not necessarily emerge from selfishness” (p. 108). “Salvation is the voluntary socializing of the soul” (p. 99). One feels that, although he would not exclude personal conversion, all his emphasis falls on the social usefulness in which such conversion should culminate.

A bit of the romantic optimism of the age in which Rauschenbusch lived crops out in him when he says, “Super-personal forces are saved when they come under the law of Christ” (p. 113). By super-personal forces he means such groups as the community and the state. The belief that such collectives can be brought under the law of Christ is one of the tenets of liberalism against which Reinhold Niebuhr hurls his most vitriolic invectives. Yet so strong is Rauschenbusch’s belief in this tenet that he says, in the next chapter, “The individual is saved, if at all, by membership in a community which has salvation” (p. 126). In addition to its environmentalist flavor, this statement also contains the damaging implication that salvation is mediated wholly by a social group. Is there no room, then, in the process of salvation for the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit? One senses here the immanentist, anti-supernaturalistic drift of the social gospel movement.

His View of the Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is the most important single doctrine of the social gospel. With it, the social gospel stands or falls. We have already noted that the identification of the kingdom with the perfect social order is the root-error of this theology. Let us consider whether Rauschenbusch made any important modifications in the usual social gospel view.

That he similarly identifies the kingdom with the perfect social order is beyond doubt. “The Kingdom of God is humanity organized according to the will of God” (p. 142). “Since love is the supreme law of Christ, the Kingdom of God implies a progressive reign of love in human affairs” (p. 142).

Yet he may be said to differ from the early social gospel in that, according to his latest volume, he did not expect the kingdom to be fully realized in this life. “The Kingdom of God is always both present and future . . . It is for us to see the Kingdom of God as always coming, always pressing in on the present, always big with possibility . . .” (p. 141). “So then it (the Kingdom of God) exists in heaven; it is to be created on earth. All true joys on earth come from partial realizations of the Kingdom of God; the joy that awaits us will consist in living within the full realization of the Kingdom” (p. 238). Rauschenbusch, it would seem, was too much of a realist ever to expect to see the full actualization of the kingdom in the present life.

He always felt, however, that considerable progress could be made. In 1912 he wrote that “Christianity had already a high degree of success in Christianizing the family, the church, and the political state and that it was now prepared for its last lap, the capturing of the economic order.”10 In general, Rauschenbusch certainly belonged to the optimistic school. Though he admitted that the Kingdom of God would always be in conflict with the Kingdom of Evil, and that occasional catastrophes and revolutions would be inevitable in its onward march, he was convinced that as a general rule the Kingdom would be ushered in by a process of gradual development (pp. 225 and 226). Though he was realistic about man’s present condition, he was certainly optimistic about his future progress.

In the chapter on “The Initiator of the Kingdom of God,” he avers, in typically Ritschlian fashion, that the doctrine of the two natures of Christ was a false trail and that the social gospel bases the divine quality of Christ’s personality on the free acts of His will rather than on the inheritance of a divine essence (pp. 150 and 151).

Rauschenbusch on the Atonement

The final chapter discusses “The Social Gospel and the Atonement.” As to the sense in which Jesus bore our sins, Rauschenbusch says, “He did in a very real sense bear the weight of the public sins of organized society, and they in turn are causally connected with all private sins” (p. 247). He goes on to enumerate these six public sins which killed Jesus: religious bigotry, graft and political power, corruption of justice, the mob spirit, militarism, and class contempt (pp. 248 ff.). The guilt of these sins, however, is not restricted to the Jews; it extends to all who reaffirm the acts which killed Him (p. 259). While grateful for this emphasis, one feels at once that, if nothing more is said, the heart has been cut out of the substitutionary atonement.

What was the effect of Christ’s life and death on God? “It altered the relation between God and humanity from antagonism to co-operative unity of will; not by a legal transaction, but by the presence of a new and decisive factor embodied in the racial life” (p. 265). What is this new factor? Christ “set in motion a new beginning of spiritual life within the organized total of the race, and this henceforth pervaded the common life. This was the embryonic beginning of the Kingdom of God within the race. Therewith humanity began to be lifted to a new level of spiritual existence” (p. 265). All this sounds pretty much like Schleiermacher, to whom Rauschenbusch acknowledges his indebtedness.

---

10 John C. Bennett, op. cit., p. 117. Mr. Bennett was quoting from Rauschenbusch’s Christianizing the Social Order, pp. 124 ff.
edness in a footnote. Yet I feel that the latter was not nearly as close to Schleiermacher as he thought he was. He was too much of a moralist to share Schleiermacher's mysticism. In Rauschenbusch, the relation between Christ and the human race is not so much that of mystical union as that of moral uplift. Faith plays little part in this; obedience is all-important—obedience which manifests itself in the advancement of the kingdom. Here again Rauschenbusch leans most heavily on Ritschl.

This observation is confirmed by what is said about the effect of the "atonement" on man. The life and death of Christ "furnished the chief guarantee for the love of God and the chief incentive to self-sacrificing love in men" (p. 272). Insofar as Christ's death revealed the love of God, it should be noted that this view omits to state that Christ's death similarly revealed the wrath of God. Insofar as the rest of the sentence is concerned, it will be seen that this brings us closer to the moral influence theory than the mystical theory. And again, while recognizing the truth which is contained in the moral influence theory, we cannot escape the conclusion that this leaves no atonement in the strict sense of the word.

Classifying Rauschenbusch

We have treated Rauschenbusch at some length because he has given the only complete elaboration of the theology of the social gospel. It is clear that, by and large, he adheres to the Ritschlian tradition, implementing it with a much more thorough background of sociological and economic facts. It is also obvious that Rauschenbusch belongs to the early, optimistic period of the social gospel, both in time and in thought. H. Shelton Smith, in the first chapter of his Faith and Nurture, lists four dominant tendencies which moulded the Christian Nurture movement in the early part of the twentieth century: the immanence of God, the idea of growth, the goodness of man, and the historical Jesus. But these four conceptions are also basic to the social gospel of the early period; and it cannot be denied that they underlie the thinking of Rauschenbusch. The third concept looks like an exception in his case; and yet he traces man's sin chiefly to social influence and believes in the gradual perfectibility of society, of human institutions, and of individuals. Basically he has not relinquished the optimistic, evolutionary anthropology of his day.

There are, however, points on which Rauschenbusch transcends the easy optimism of his predecessors. These we have noted in our discussion. They prepare the way for the change which settled over the social gospel after the First World War.

[Note—This article will be followed by another on the Period of Social Realism, exhibiting the Changing Emphases in the Social Gospel.]

Reflections on War and Peace

W hen the children of Israel stood on the borders of the Promised Land, there came to them a passingly strange command. They were ordered to massacre the Canaanites. Men, women, and children of that alien nation were to be slain in cold blood. No quarter was to be shown them. Neither age nor sex was a conditioning factor. The seven doomed nations were to be ruthlessly exterminated.

A Moral Problem

That apparently heartless command has caused no little concern for seriousminded readers of the Bible. They can hardly square that command with their conception of God. It hardly seems credible to them that God would levy such a command. They are aware of the fact, it is true, that there are those today (Modernists) as there have been those in the past (e.g. Gnostics) who have eased themselves out of this difficulty by conveniently positing a distinction between the O. T. God, a God of harshness and sternness, and the N. T. God, the God of love and mercy. But they who maintain the unity of the Testaments find themselves face to face with a formidable moral problem.

In coping with this problem, we do well to keep an important distinction in mind. It is the distinction between absolute right and relative right. As far as absolute right is concerned, God can do what He wills with His creatures. He gave life and He can take life whenever and in whatever way He chooses. If He chooses to send a tornado that cuts a devastating swath, or an earthquake, that leaves death and ruination in its wake, there is no one that can say a word of protest against God. As Sovereign God, He brooks no criticism of His doings. But then there is this matter of relative right. That has to do with the moral nature that we have. It is this moral nature that is shocked at this apparently heartless command of God, and if it be borne in mind that God has implanted that nature within us, the problem begins to take on proportions.

It is obvious at once that if this problem is to be satisfactorily solved, its solution will have to be one that commends itself to this moral nature. It will hardly do to say that whatever God commands

THE CALVIN FORUM • • • JANUARY, 1947
must be right and summarily dismiss the problem. No, a solution that is to be satisfactory must be one that commends itself to this moral nature. And it does in this instance. That condition is met. God gives an explicit reason why the Canaanites must be exterminated. It is because of their fearful moral degeneracy. This nation was wallowing in the mire of iniquity. It was unspeakably vile. It was guilty of unimaginable immoral excesses and since the danger was present that this corruption would spread like a cancer through that part of the world and infect even the people who were the depositaries of God's revelation, God demanded their extermination. Unfortunately Israel did but a partial job. This corruption did spread and a Roman writer of a few centuries later charged that the "Orontes has poured its filth into the Tiber."

It is pertinent to remark at this point that since this reason was given, no parallel can be drawn to the pulverizing atomic bomb of the present day. Estimate the moral angle of devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki as you will, its indiscriminate taking of countless lives cannot be justified by an appeal to this passage from the Word of God. Israel was explicitly named as the instrument of God's punitive justice in this O. T. episode and by no stretch of the imagination can that be said of the B29's that sent these missiles of destruction upon the ill-fated Japanese cities. Neither can it be said of those who sent them forth upon this mission of wholesale destruction. I would not presume to say that there was no justification at all for the dropping of the bomb but I do insist that it cannot be justified by an appeal to this part of the Word of God. No such parallel can be drawn.

Promotion of Peace

The Canaanites were to be exterminated. To the rest of the nations, however, Israel was to hold out the olive branch of peace. Their ideal, identical to ours today, was the promotion of peaceable relationships within the commonwealth of nations. It must be said today that we are striving for peace. Peace has not yet been attained. The period of history through which we are passing now is little more than a truce between wars. Real peace is positive in character. It is that religiously. The "peace that passeth all understanding," the peace between a Christian and his God, implies not merely that God is no longer antagonistic to us but rather that His favor comes to us abundantly through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is positive in character. So too is peace between the nations. Real peace means not merely that their swords are sheathed for the moment but that good feeling, harmony and cooperation obtain between them. That kind of peace is not ours today.

And yet even though that is the case, even though the peace we have leaves much to be desired, we are interested in preserving it. At any event, it is more desirable than the spilling of blood. We are interested in prolonging this span between wars. But what are we as Christians doing about it? Do we feel that peace and its promotion "begins on our street"? Or have we been rather apathetic about this highly important issue?

It seems to me that as Christians we have, in a measure at least, detached ourselves from this problem. I wonder why it is. Is it because we know the prediction of the Scriptures that there will be wars until the end of time and therefore any efforts towards a permanent world-peace must necessarily be abortive? Is it because we know that before we can have a sustained peace the Christian minority among the nations must become the Christian majority, and that prospect seems to be so remote? Is it because we are Calvinists in theory but actually Fundamentalists in practice? Whatever the reason may be, the fact can hardly be denied that Christians in the main have been negligent in the matter of promoting the peace.

Two Practical Suggestions

In this brief article I wish to suggest two things of a practical nature. The first is negative in character. As followers of Christ we ought to take care that we do not become unwitting contributors to the spirit of war. What I mean is this. There are propagandists today (and the Romish press falls into this class) who stress the inevitability of a showdown with Russia on the field of battle. They apparently assume that there are inexorable forces that make that clash a certainty. We do well to bear in mind that God is above historical trends. He has intervened innumerable times in the course of history and He can and will do so again. There is no such thing as an "inevitable" with God.

That implies, secondly, that we should not fail to pray for the preservation of the peace of the world. During the recent war we prayed fervently and repeatedly for the great boon of peace; Christian homes and Christian churches and Christian institutions joined in one great intercession at the Throne of Grace. I wonder whether we have been praying just as faithfully for the preservation of peace today. The one is just as important as the other. God has reminded us once again in the failure of the peace conferences that all planning without Him is foredoomed to failure. He must be acknowledged and if men fail to do so, "The Lord will speak to them in His wrath and vex them in His sore displeasure." Let us not fail to continue to pray for the preservation of peace. Not merely for personal and sentimental reasons but for the sake of the kingdom of God. Kingdom expansion is curtailed and even restricted in times of war and if there is one thing that we desire in this period of peace that God will give us, it is that His gospel may be carried to the ends of the world. It remains for us to seize the opportunity. Therefore, go—give—pray.
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN JAPAN

A MID the debris and chaos engendered by war's devastation and defeat, the proclaimed conviction that "The hope of the world is in the God of Calvinism" brought into being a new denomination which calls itself the Christian Reformed Church in Japan. The date was April 29, 1946. The occasion was a planned meeting of nine Japanese Christian pastors and three elders from various parts of Japan who came together in Tokyo.

Grossly dissatisfied with the developments within Japanese Christendom during both the war years and the post-war period, these representatives felt that further compromise with their convictions and heritage would be spiritually fatal to themselves and disastrous to what they believed to be the true Christian faith as revealed by Christ and restored by His true followers at the time of the Reformation.

The conflict between the centrifugal pull of ecumenical desire for union at any price and the centrifugal force of denominationalism based on love and respect for purity of doctrine and church order resulted in the organization of a church all but identical in name with an older American denomination. The only historical connection between the two groups, however, is indirect. Three of the organizing members know of the existence of the American church group, as well as its reputation, by virtue of the fact that they had studied under professors at Westminster Seminary who were one-time members of the Christian Reformed Church in the states. The name was selected because of the felt necessity to incorporate the name Christian in the church name of a group existing in a predominantly non-Christian country; the name Reformed was chosen because the Japanese group considers itself definitely part of the great Reformed tradition "which not only holds the true 'evangelicalism' which maintains the principles of the Reformation in its entirety, but also retains the true 'universality' and 'orthodoxy' and professes to be the reappearance of the Biblical Apostolic Church."

One of the members of this new group remarked to me in a recent conversation that if it were necessary to claim any close kinship with any American group, that probably the Orthodox Presbyterian Church might then be mentioned. However, the conditions which brought these two churches into being are utterly dissimilar and unrelated. Probably the simplest explanation of the new denomination's existence is that it came into being because a few Japanese Christians who had been brought up in the Presbyterian-Reformed church and tradition in Japan felt that they could no longer justify their existence within the framework of the present united church in Japan.

During the war-years the Kyodan (United Christian Church) was ordered into being by the Japanese government. This united group was made up of a strange assortment of theological bedfellows, ranging from the most liberal Congregationalists to the most extreme holiness groups. In fact, every brand and breed of Protestantism was ordered to enter the Kyodan, and they all did with the exception of part of the Episcopal church and the Seventh Day Adventists. The greatest share of the leadership of the united church was in the hands of the former Nihon Kristo Kyokai, the church brought into being through the ministration of Reformed and Presbyterian missionaries, and the church to which the organizers of the new denomination also belonged. That, however, is another story.

It is readily understood why the statement of a theological position for the entire united church was held in abeyance during the war years when this heterogenous group was ordered into being by governmental decree, and when both individual and collective existence seemed at times to be all but on a day-to-day basis. True, the movement toward greater church union had been making more rapid progress in Japan before the war than, let us say, in the States. But to put it mildly, the forced unification was a bit premature if a well-organized and closely-knit United Church bearing all of the true marks of the church was to eventuate. (Whether the various groups, individually, and the Kyodan, collectively, compromised themselves too much during the war years is an abstraction about which it is my conviction we as American Christians have no real right with which to belabor our own minds or to condemn those who entered into the union—we were not present when the pressure was being brought to bear, and our own lives and organizations were not at stake.)

However, the United Church was an accomplished fact and an existing organization, tenuous as it may have been, at the war's end. All governmental restraints were at an end and the Christians had greater freedom in Japan than they had ever possessed heretofore. The desire for unity and union is normal in every true Christian's heart; schismatics have ever been condemned by the church. But, among the marks of the true church is a confession of faith. The Kyodan leadership said that that could come later; these others said, "Now!" In the early post-war months, the Kyodan refused to commit itself formally to even the Apostles' Creed as a minimal standard.

In the face of such reluctance to declare its beliefs, and convinced that the parent organization would never come around to a satisfactory creedal statement, these men, scattered over Japan, came together, organized the Christian Reformed Church, and agreed to and issued a declaration of faith. This declaration has been declared by at least one former veteran missionary as the most thoroughly worked out declaration of faith produced by any body of Japanese Christians in at least the last twenty years.

Opening with a statement of faith in and recognition of God's providential control of history, and proclaiming monothelism to be the only sure foundation for a new Japan, it comes out squarely for the principle of separation of church and state. Apparently infallaparitan in its soteriology and professing its belief in covenant theology, the declaration makes no reference to any of the current eschatological positions.

The declaration further states that of the thirty-odd historic creeds formulated in the past, the Westminster Standards of Faith must perfectly set forth the system of doctrine taught in the Bible. The Westminster Confession and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms become for the present the standards for the new church. However, the hope is expressed that although these standards are the most appropriate for the denomination at this time, the day may come when its leaders will be able to draw up a more excellent expression in their own words.

In polity the new group is presbyterian, although it recognizes the relative merits of other forms of church government, and does not claim presbyterianism to be the only scriptural form that may be held. It chooses from choice and because of the conviction that this particular form of polity is inherently scriptural and can best safeguard the purity of doctrine and purity of the church.

Although not perfectionists in doctrine, the declaration recognized the necessity of the believer's need of ever seeking with earnest prayer sanctification by the Holy Spirit, realizes the impossibility of attaining perfect sanctification in this life, and further states that "it is the duty of those in Christ to mutu-
ally admonish the sins of the brethren as they are moved by the Holy Spirit."

The declaration virtually comes to its close with the following paragraph: "The Christianity of the Reformation was the revival of early Christianity. The Reformed Church is that which best maintains the truths of the Reformation. It is not arrogance on our part to feel that it is a great mission to carry Reformed Christianity to the coming age, even as early Christianity for the Middle Ages and the Christian Reformation for the Modern Age performed its mission. We feel, rather, a painful responsibility."

At present the membership of the Christian Reformed Church in Japan approximates two hundred and fifty and has twelve congregations scattered from Sendai in the north of Honshu to Kobe in the southwestern part. The denomination has a general assembly and is divided into two presbyteries. The Rev. Takaoki Tokiwa, pastor of the Morimotocho Church in Tokyo, is the current moderator of the denomination. The charter members of the church, in addition to Tokiwa, are: the Revs. Takeshi Matsuo, Kita-Urawa; Shigeake Fujii, Yokkaichi; Hisaaki Haruna, Nishihi Church, Kobe; Sensuke Kawashima, Shiroishi Church, Sendai; Tatsuo Noda, Higashi-Takamatsu; Minoru Okada, Nada Church, Kobe; Chiuchi Oyama, Fukui; Kehi Watanabe, Sendai; and two others. The present church is also old. It was organized, has grown, and has had many changes. In addition, the charter members two pastors have since joined the denomination, Matsuda and Yamazaki, while two other pastors are currently on the list as probable new members. Of the present number of churches, three have been added since the denomination was organized. They are located in Kobe, Nagoya, and Sakaide. Four of the ministers, Matsuo, Okada, Tokiwa, and Watanabe, have had American theological education at Western Seminary in Philadelphia. Japanese theological seminary training was obtained by Haruna, Noda, Okada, and Oyama at the Chu Seinary in Kobe, while the others, with the exception of Watanabe (who has attended no Japanese theological seminary, but spent four years at Westminster following his graduation from the Imperial University at Tohoku), received their training at the Nippon Theological Seminary in Tokyo, or schools which were later merged to effect the organization of the Tokyo institution.

Tokyo, Japan

HERMAN J. KREGEL, Regular Army Chaplain.

* The writer acknowledges his great indebtedness to Major Lucnner W. Moore, former Presbyterian (US) missionary to Japan and now on duty with the War Crimes Commission in Tokyo, for his translation of the declaration of the Synod of Tokyo. (For other assistance in the preparation of this article, All quotations in the article are from Major Moore's translation of the Declaration of the Christian Reformed Church in Japan.

NETHERLANDS LETTER

Groningen, Netherlands, December 2, 1946.

Dear Dr. Bouma and Esteemed Readers:

The last month of the year has just begun and I am writing this in the hope that you may still see these lines before the New Year. I think it wonderful that we can in this way be in contact with one another as Calvinists throughout the world. I could wish that every internationally-minded Calvinist would be a subscriber to our monthly. Not far from all of the success of the venture, but especially because I conceive it to be demanded by our God-given vocation to keep in touch with one another. Calvinists should never be "isolationists" (don't take this word in too American a sense!) We cannot afford to be exclusivists or separatists. The reason for this is very simple, viz., the fact that our Lord does not restrict His activity in one country or race or nation or class, but is Lord of the entire world. And then there is the much deeper reason, viz., because in Christ all believers are members of one another. Hence principle demands that we be internationalists, that we keep in touch with all Christians, and especially with those who are most closely related to us in the faith. Being an internationalist hence to me is not a sport of luxury, or a hobby which you can indulge if you feel for it. On the contrary, it is a matter of high duty.

You can imagine how pleased I was that a group of four of our men had paid you a visit. I wish you could have heard and read in our papers the enthusiasm which they displayed. It has done untold good that they visited you people in America and attended the ecumenical Synod. Apart from any good it may have done others, that is just what we needed. We must not allow the ties to relax. If travel expenses had not been so high, I believe I would have come too at my own expense. But we are hoping for better times and fondly anticipate having the opportunity sometime to become acquainted with our friends across the ocean. If the Lord graciously spares our lives, I may even eventually visit you, if the Synod will allow me only 47. Only yesterday I was lodging with an international businessman, who said to me: "Prins, you must go abroad sometime. You like it and you have aptitude for it!" I only replied: "My good friend, how would I ever be able to realize it?" But—no more of this.

Our group is quite numerous, and so it is not possible for all to go. The four brethren who have visited you were indeed worthy representatives. Soon you will have our Professor of Missions, Dr. Bavinck. There is another fine man. I may say this, because he is a personal friend of mine. You people ought also soon to have a professor in this field. In fact, I have been somewhat surprised that you people in America, where mission interest is so strong and live, do not yet have a professor in these subjects. (Or am I mistaken? If so, Dr. Bouma can correct me.) We now have a professor of Missions, and also a professor to teach Evangelization. Why should you not follow the old country in this?

In our churches we have already witnessed the first fruits of this new professorship in Evangelization. Professor Bril­lenburg Wurth, the new appointee, makes regular contributions to our church weeklies on this subject. The Synod of Zwolle, as you may have read, appointed a large commission to stimulate evangelization activity in all the churches. Perhaps you know that many churches were still quite remiss in their duty in this respect, partly because many of them were located in rather orthodox districts, so that they were not so conscious of the welfare of the world for the kind of Kingdom work, there were still many people who took no part, a condition which possibly obtained in your group as well. It is the duty of the large representative commission appointed by General Synod in its name and on its authority to stir up love for this work both in the congregations and in the heart of individual members, and to map out a program of procedure. Personally I have been convinced for many years of the need of such a representative Commission, as you can see from theses printed in my dissertation in 1937 and defended at the time of receiving my doctor's degree. At the time I stated explicitly that it was desirable to have such a Commission, but the idea met with much opposition then. Such opposition is now a matter of the past, for which I am grateful because of the importance of the cause.

This Commission for Evangelization at once made a good start. By means of a collection funds were gathered for the establishment of an Evangelistic center ("Evangelisatiecentrum"). Besides, they toured the country and held local meetings in twelve different centers, in each of which they called conscious of the need for Kingdom evangelization and Kingdom objectives. These meetings proved a grand success. It soon became apparent that there was a greater love for this work in the hearts of our people than the members of the Commission themselves had dared to hope. The thought is beginning to take root in our church that we have a great calling to bring to this world the blessings which are ours, as did those four men who between the fortifications of the Assyrian army and the walls of Samaria found food and drink which saved
their lives. You can read this beautiful story for yourself in the Book of Kings (II Kings 7:9).

To be sure there were in our churches the leftovers of the leaven of the Anabaptists, perhaps not so much in doctrine as in life and in the attitude assumed toward the world. Calvinism, so different in its approach and attack from Anabaptism, appears to permeate our churches increasingly, also in practical living. In this connection I must make mention of a very gratifying development. Until recently our evangelization work was mostly restricted to the lower classes, i.e., the poor and the common folk. At most our committees for evangelistic work would contact some people of the middle class. But the more well-to-do and the educated (intellectuals) were not reached. Of course, this was not right, but there were many reasons for this state of affairs. At least many excuses were offered, such as: they were short of help; many hesitated to testify before persons of the higher and educated classes who would do so among common people; then also, most of the gospel workers were themselves common people. However, it is of the greatest significance for the Christianizing of the nation that also those who occupy positions of leadership shall come into contact with the gospel. These in turn can exert a beneficent influence over many others. Also such people would be lost without the gospel.

Another new element is the shift of emphasis from the individual to the group and nation. Up to this time all the emphasis was strictly individual, and the aim was to save this and that individual, instead of seeking the evangelization of the nation. Also this element is now coming to its own. Then there is the growing sense of the need to reach also lawyers, doctors, college and high school teachers, and industrialists. With this in mind the publication of a series of writings has been undertaken under the collective title: "The Gospel and the World" (Publisher: J. H. Kok). Such pamphlets are distributed to the classes of people mentioned. These writings deal with all sorts of current and scientific questions. Such questions are also to be discussed in groups of such readers afflicted with unbelief or doubt. For this purpose again a center or retreat was needed in the nature of an estate. To defray these expenses an offering was taken in all the churches aiming at the sum of 140,000 florins (between fifty and sixty thousand dollars). The ideal was to start this undertaking without debt. The way it now looks, the plans have been real

ized. Now it will be possible to meet with such people at such an estate for a few days.

As you possibly know, we now also have a central office for missions, where meetings can be held and from which all mission activity can be directed. An ordained minister is at the head of this office, devoting all his time to such activities. This man has just been called for this purpose. He will be the general secretary of missions ("predikant in algemeenen zendingdiens") in our country. This shows what is needed on the home front of missions, and parallel with this organization of missions the work of evangelization is being built up. Also for this cause there will be such a center and an ordained man will be called to have charge of it.

So you see there is still a good deal of life and energy in the churches, more than one would expect in view of our almost daily bombardment with propagandistic and controversial pamphlets on the part of the Schilder-group. The growth of this group has pretty well ceased. These brethren, as I told you in my previous letter, are still unwilling to enter into oral discussion with delegates from our Synod. Sad to say, there are many among them who will not even recognize our churches. We have become an apostate church!! All this despite the fact no change of any kind has been made in either doctrine or life! It is very sad to see to what lengths a sectarian mentality can lead a person. I wish a delegation from churches abroad could come and speak with these brethren that have left us. Now they refuse to have any conference with us and insist that all communication shall be carried on in writing, which would mean that they would be carrying on their propaganda at our expense and on our paper and in our circles! Perhaps Schilder c.s. might receive a delegation from across the waters. God grant a change in attitude and spirit! For the simple reason that certain persons have been suspended because they failed to observe the rules of good order, our church has now become an apostate church! How is it conceivable, you will say.

Now I must close. I wish all of you a blessed New Year. I might offer many good wishes for 1947, but let me summarize them all in this: May God keep and strengthen us to the task which we severally and together face and may He bind us together in the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

With hearty greetings,
Cordially yours,
Pieter Prins.
HEAVEN AND HELL


Most of Clive Staples Lewis' books are small, hardly larger than a respectable brochure. But to those of us who have found evangelical Lewis almost as orthodox as orthodox and every bit as urbanely modern as modernism claims to be, they pack the delight and satisfaction of an intellectual feast with the convenience of K rations. The author of The Great Divorce is the same Oxford don who finds time between his popular lectures on medieval English to challenge a religiously indefinite and indifferent England (and America) with his consistently brilliant expositions of orthodox Christian themes. American readers have come to know Lewis through such pieces as The Screwtape Letters, The Case for Christianity, The Problem of Pain, Christian Behaviour, Beyond Personality, and some fictional gems such as Out of the Silent Planet.

In the latter he demonstrates a rare ability to combine theological and philosophical depth with the lucidity and novelty of the best fiction. Christian Behaviour, The Case for Christianity, and Beyond Personality are scripts of radio broadcasts over BBC; the others were written expressly for the press.

Men revolting against the stubborn finality of traditional Christianity have constantly tried in some way to bridge the chasm between heaven and hell, or to unite the two as Blake did when he wrote The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. In The Great Divorce, Lewis insists on their eternal incompatibility. Besides he contends that there can be no living in both houses, and that to abide in either is to be completely shorn of everything congenial to the other. Says Lewis: "The attempt [to marry heaven and hell] is based on the belief that reality never presents us with an absolutely unavoidable "either - or"; that granted skill and patience and (above all) time enough, some way of embracing both alternatives can always be found; that mere development or adjustment or refinement will somehow turn evil into good without our being called on for a final and total rejection of anything we should like to retain. . . . If we insist on keeping hell (or even earth) we shall not see heaven: if we accept heaven we shall not be able to retain even the smallest and most intimate souvenirs of hell." This paragraph from the preface may serve to introduce one to the purpose of the book as well as to illustrate the classic simplicity of Anglican layman Lewis' style.

To accomplish his purpose he uses the tested literary device of a dream fantasy. In his vision he accompanies several ghosts on a bus trip from the regions of hell to the suburbs of heaven. Having arrived, he meets the spirit of the Scottish poet and preacher George MacDonald who guides him through his dream and helps him understand the great divorce. Together they listen to conversations between ghosts up from hell and redeemed spirits who have descended a little below heaven to urge the hapless ghosts on to glory. A ghost whose dramatized self-pity keeps him from salvation, and several others who for various reasons insist on retaining their follies in hell—these all illustrate to dreamer Lewis the impossibility of natural man entering the Kingdom. They chose hell (and Lewis insists on their having chosen it) because they elected to live on in their cardinal sins of spirit and mind. The only person to ascend into heaven is a poor chap hindered below by carnality who gains the heights by letting a helpful spirit kill the parasitic lizard of lust (which he was powerless to destroy himself) and convert it into a powerful silver stallion. The stallion is a natural desire sacrificed and thereby transformed into something beautiful and strong on which man is able to ride into heaven.

Lewis uses a great deal of the lizard and stallion type of symbolism. For instance the grass in the plain between heaven and hell is hard and painful to the feet of ghosts who have always mistaken illusion for reality, and always will, even in hell. It bends softly, however, under the feet of the saved. This suggests how impossible it would be for natural man to enjoy himself in heaven, even if he were able to get there.

The vision ends with Macdonald subtly explaining the folly of man's attempt to look at eternity through the lens of time. The moment we try to see reality from God's point of view we lose sight of a vital element of God's likeness in us: freedom! This is perhaps the one place where Lewis' vision seems first to get away from his simplicity. And yet with a second reading one may see it not as cunning, but as good sense. Consider this paragraph, incomplete because plucked from its context, yet illustrative, I think, of the point:

"Time is the very lens through which ye see—small and clear, as men see through the wrong end of a telescope—something that would otherwise be too big for ye to see at all. That thing is Freedom: the gift whereby ye most resemble your maker and are yourselves a part of eternal reality. But ye can see it only through the lens of Time, in a little clear picture, through the inverted telescope. Neither the temporal succession nor the phantom of what ye might have chosen and didn't is itself freedom. They are a lens. The picture is a symbol: but it's truer than any philosophical theorem (or, perhaps, than any mystic's vision) that claims to go behind it. For every attempt to see the shape of eternity except through the lens of Time destroys your knowledge of Freedom . . . . Ye cannot know eternal reality by a definition.

Perhaps the two outstanding features of The Great Divorce are its eloquently simple prose and its wise, I dare say profound, explications of common foibles of humanity. In all of his books Lewis illustrates how instruction and admonition can be combined with prose of monosyllabic simplicity and with a style as smooth and fresh as a running brook. Those engaged in teaching the popular mind could do worse than to cultivate intimate acquaintance with him. The Great Divorce would be an appropriate introduction.
it is hardly more than a long short-story—it deals with pro-
found realities.

Although the matter of the book is profound, there is some-
ting delicate, almost fragile, about Miss Godden's art. Her
manner is frail and tenuous. The author herself is aware of
this quality in her writing. In *Thus Far and No Further*, a
beautifully-written journal of notes describing the months she
spent at a tea-plantation on the slopes of the Himalayas, she
says: "I never long to be a man so much as in my writing: to
be a man because I should have a man's wholeness ... men
have this robust easy power ... I do not resent it. I can only
recognize it and do what is within my power." Perhaps this
lack of robustness is compensated for by Miss Godden's ex-
treme sensitivity. What is within her power to do she has
done extraordinarily well.

In *The River* she captures a brief moment in the unfolding
life of a thirteen-year-old girl. Harriet finds herself too old
to play with Bogyey, her young brother, and too young to be
a companion of Bea, her older sister. She is whole-heartedly
in love with Captain John who is interested only in Bea. When
Bogyey dies, Harriet enters into a new world of adult responsi-
bilities. But to summarize the novel is to do it an injustice,
for the story has the rippling flow of the river which runs
beside the children's home and which may be taken as a sym-
bol of the inexorable passing of time. The worth of the novel
is not in its plot, but in its subtly perceptive analysis of life.

The scene is laid in India and the setting is vividly presented.
The children, however, are English, and they are completely
natural children. If Harriet seems at times a prodigy, it is
only because she is a born poet. She is an individual, but she
is also the type of all children when they begin to realize that
the secure, timeless world of childhood is closing behind them.
Miss Godden used the same theme in a previous story, *Break-
fast With the Nikolides*, and a comparison of the two novels
shows how her art has grown and matured.

Miss Godden has a magic power of creating atmosphere. In
*Black Narcissus*, an earlier, powerful novel, she evokes an
eerie quality of sinister brooding. In *The River* she uses her
magic to recreate the familiar but half-forgotten world of
childhood. She has captured its essence.

John Chamberlain, in a *Harper's* review of an earlier novel,
writes: "Miss Godden is the best thing in the way of a novelist
who have come out of Britain (including the Empire) in years." This may or may not be true, but it is certain that Rumer
Godden is an artist. *The River* will not greatly increase the
promise of achieving, at least in some of its representa-
tives, the rare combination of beauty and goodness.

B. FRISMA.

TRADITION AND LITERATURE

THE CLASSICS AND THE MAN OF LETTERS. *The Presidential Ad-

In this lecture, the English poet, dramatist, and critic,
Thomas Stearns Eliot, returned to the theme of an essay,
"Tradition and the Individual Talent," which he wrote
about a quarter century ago. In fact, the significance of tradi-
tion for life and letters was also his main subject in such inter-
vening books as *The Use of Poetry*, the Collected Essays, *After

Eliot's persistent concern for defining the meaning of tradi-
ion arose from his predilection as a poet. As a poet he
wanted to communicate, and he found communication difficult
in a social context in which, for want of tradition, words had
lost their meaning. In his effort as a poet to control his mean-
ing, he wrote poems which the critics called obscure. Thus
his poem *The Waste Land*, for example, which appeared in 1918,
was at first regarded as the self-expression of an oddly sophis-
ticated genius. Since then, however, some of those who con-
demned the poem as a typical product of the Cult of Unsus-
tellibility have come to see that its novelty was no sham-
novely but significantly borne from and related to the tradi-
tion of English poetry.

Obviously, if in a given culture certain words do not mean
certain things, if there is no sense of meaning which is com-
on, or at least prevailing, in society, sincere writers are
forced into obscurity in their attempt to control meaning.
In such a society, too, insincere writers can peddle their nov-
eties, pervers, eccentric, and peculiar, without fear of discov-
ery. When language, which can be expressive only in a cul-
ture, that is, in a common culture, approaches a state of
anarchy because no culture is common, obscurity must result.
Such obscurity, says Eliot, is the product "not of individual aberran-
cy ... but of social disintegration."

Presumably this confusion of meaning which is character-
istic of our time is more vexing to men of genius than to men
of ordinary talent, but any person who tries nowadays to use
such words as nature, reason, freedom, love, tradition, cul-
ture, morality, and others like them, will have some feeling
for Eliot's profound sense of predicament in the modern context of things. It is the predicament of a writer who writes in a social situation in which there is no common religion, no common philosophy, no common education, or to use a word which is itself the product of the confusion, no common sense of values. This is a confusion of which some are not aware, those particularly who suppose that tradition has no real importance, as though experience and science are adequate alternatives and are possible without tradition. It is a confusion which makes some look to Basic English or the science of semantics for hope, as though a concern for the meanings of words can make up for an unconcern about religion and philosophy. And it is a confusion which leads still others to insist that a core of common education, a basic course of liberal arts and sciences be made compulsory for all in schools and colleges. Clearly, those who appreciate the importance of this cultural difficulty will welcome Eliot's sustained and illuminating effort to define tradition and to name the conditions of a culture and a civilization.

In this little lecture Eliot is concerned only with a phase of the general difficulty. His thesis is that if there is to be a continuity, a tradition, of English literature, the maintenance of a classical education, in which he includes much Latin and some Greek, is essential for the man of letters. By the man of letters he means not only the man of genius, and not only the novelist, the poet, and the dramatist, but also, and these especially, the persons who are the first audience, critics, and spokesmen for the originator.

Accordingly the theme of the lecture is an important one. In fact, it is evident from Eliot's concluding pages, as it became evident from his After Strange Gods and The Idea of a Christian Society, that, as he understands it, nothing less than the continuity of Western civilization, with which Christian culture is entangled, depends upon a common education of at least the spiritual leaders of our time.

HENRY ZYLSTRA.

PLAIN TALK


UNHAPPILY this book is not so good as might be inferred from its irresistible title, the determined advertising of its publishers, and the generally favorable notice which it has received.

It is a book which "tells you," says the author, "how to speak and write so that people understand what you mean." That sounds modest. But what a promise it is.

What is good in this book, almost good enough to warrant buying it, is this. It abounds in telling illustrations of good writing and of bad writing. It counsels the use of short sentences. It cautions against the far-fetched, the unnecessarily abstract, and the circumlocutive. It recommends personal references for directness of appeal. See to your verb, to the active voice of the finite verb, and see to your noun, it tells us, and you will need fewer adjectives and adverbs. It warns against empty phrases, against "with reference to" when "about" will serve, or "in the event that" when "if" will do. It exposes the painful exactness of legal language and government publications. These and similar points are worth making, and the book makes them well.

What is disappointing in the book is that it cackles too much over the egg it has laid. This author has a Ph.D. and the book is a popular presentation of the findings of his doctoral dissertation. This dissertation contained "a statistical formula for measuring readability," and it is the formula, the yardstick for measuring the degree of difficulty of one's writing, that is featured as the remarkably practical value of the book. So the art of plain talk promised in the title becomes science. That is comforting perhaps, and may help the sale, but it is false.

This study is expressive, therefore, of the typically contemporary attempt to put everything, including the art of writing, on a scientific basis. Word counts have been taken (and doctoral degrees awarded for taking them) of writing on various levels of difficulty, for example, those of the comic, the pulp paper, the smooth paper, the quality, and the learned and professional magazines. Reading-difficulty scores have been reckoned on the basis of the number of words in a sentence, the proportion of root-words to affixes (in the word remarkable, mark is a root word, re- and -able are affixes), the number of personal references, and like considerations. All one has to do now to determine whether one has a readable style is to sit and count.

In the end such hocus-pocus is probably no more helpful than the advice of traditional rhetoric: Be clear, be simple, be direct. Disappointing in the book, further, are the sophomoric innuendos against grammarians, caricatured, of course, as persons in schools determined never to split the infinitive and so to hinder the expressiveness of language. Moreover, the author's own style in the book lacks sincerity. By using such stanzas as "all this business about" and "to sell you on the art of plain talk" he assumes what James Truslow Adams once called "the mucker pose."

One thinks of T. S. Eliot and his anxiety, in The Classics and the Mum of Letters reviewed above, about the state of education. It may be that his hard way is still the easiest way to effective communication.

HENRY ZYLSTRA.

CREATIVE TEACHING


It is a pleasure to acknowledge that the copy of Forever Growing which is being used for this review was given to the Calvin College Library by Katherine Calé, once enrolled as a student at the College as Miss Katharine Geisel. Katharine Calé has done much to dignify the profession of acting on the legitimate stage in New York, and she distinguished herself during this past summer by playing the leading rôle of Eleanor Dare in Paul Green's fine historical drama, The Lost Colony.

Forever Growing is a kind of testament of faith, an artist's credo, a poet's way of life. Life, says Mr. Green in the opening and key sentence of his essay, is like a tree forever growing. That is a beautiful figure, one which can be buttressed, as Mr. Green does buttress it, by a similar figure from the First Psalm; and it is pleasantly sustained and illustrated in the fine prose of these forty pages. As a statement of a philosophy of life seriously recommended, however, it is as unsatisfying as any statement which tries to capture the rational, moral and spiritual phases of human life in a figure drawn from nature. Paul Green's statement is, in short, a contemporary restatement of the romantic philosophy which conceives of all life, divine, human, and natural, as uncreated but ever-creating process. To say this, and to add that one has encountered such thinking before—in Heracleitus, in August Wilhelm von Schlegel, in the young Goethe, in Coleridge, and Emerson, and others—is not to deny that there are fine qualities in this testament of the romantic way of life.

Besides being a poet, Mr. Green is a teacher, and his intent in the little book is to remind teachers that in their teaching they must be creative. He is concerned to point out, what always needs pointing out, that teachers are likely to substitute secondary or tertiary matters for primary matters. Teachers of literature, for example, are likely to teach a novel or play as representing this or that, the romantic movement, say, or as illustrating this or that, Greek influence, say, and to present poets and novelists as being the exponents of some school or other which only the meddling intellect of the literary historian can define. So the poem, the novel, the work of art tends to become lost in the science of classification, or, if you will, the
first-rate in genius is supplanted by the third-rate in scholar or textbook. “In place of life and art and literature,” says Mr. Green, “we thus substitute a method of derivation, matters of influence and style and types—whether of classic, romantic, realistic, naturalistic, expressionistic, or what not, and on down to as many adjectival examples of labeling as we can dig out of our inkwells or typewriters…” This is a temptation to which teachers of English are especially liable, but it may be that in the teaching of other arts and sciences, too, the commentary supplants the Bible, the Life of Jefferson the Federation Papers, Doormerge the Institutes of the Christian Religion, the Story of Philosophy the Republike of Pisto, and Livingstone the Hid.

Although it seemed necessary, therefore, to do just what Paul Green cautions against doing, to snuff out the flame and kill the green growth of a book by categorizing its philosophy with a label, it is necessary also to praise him for insisting, be it on the basis of a philosophy which totters, that teaching be creative. In this the romantic—there it is again—Mr. Green joins with the classical Sir Richard Livingstone in his recent, choice Toronto lecture “On Speaking the Truth.” Both insist that, particularly in these stupidly scientistic times, the interesting, the provocative, the life-giving, the creative be kept primary in the student’s attention.

HENRY ZYLSTRA.

MISS SCHOLLAND’S BOOKS


EVER early in the history of children’s literature, nature literature in the form of stories of animals and birds was written. The purpose of many of these early writers was to direct the children through nature to God. But nature study and nature literature as we think of them today belong to more recent decades. The study of nature has taken a more prominent part in the school curriculum since the turn of the century. Not all of the literature that has been written since that time has a high literary quality, nor is it always a truthful portrayal. As is true of all authorship, so also a writer of nature literature must have time for observation and writing. She must have literary ability to present facts interestingly and truthfully. She must know nature and the God of nature. And to make an appeal to children, she must know children.

Such a writer is Miss Marian Schoolland, one from among us. She is an observing student of nature who knows how animals live and act throughout the seasons. She knows the lore of plant life in season and out. At the present time she spends most of her time in writing. Her books and articles appeal not only to children but also to adults.

Since 1937 she has written seven books. The first of the books to appear was More Wonderful than Fairy Tales. Jimmy, the hero of the book, found the discoveries in woods and fields more wonderful than the creations of man’s imaginations, and he was taught that all life comes from God. This Miss School­land does in all her books. We see the glory of God in the little living things.

The God’s Great Outdoors Series which were sponsored by the National Union of Christian Schools were published in the next few years. They serve very acceptably for reading in the home as well as for supplementary reading in the schoolroom. Since that time the books indicated in the caption above have come out. Each book is written for children and finds its appeal in the experiences of children. Through these experiences and with the guidance of adults, the child is taught to read God’s book of nature.

There is a definite need of this type of children’s literature and of all kinds of literature for children from Christian pens. We recommend these books and we would stimulate to writing all potential authors.

JOSEPHINE BAKER.

DUTCH PAINTINGS


This Calendar Book is of large size and beautifully executed with 52 Dutch paintings, 30 of which are among the world’s masterpieces. The prints are in black and white, but nothing has been left undone to make them attractive and worth-while. The book is really too good for an Engagement Book. It deserves a place among the art books in every art lover’s library, especially if he be of Dutch descent. One could only wish that some one would write a new story of Dutch Art to tell the younger generation anew what great works the Dutch Calvinist painters of the seventeenth century have produced, and that he would use the good-sized illustrations of this Calendar Book to show that not only the great masters, but also the little and third class masters possessed gifts that were marvelous. This is a book that ought to draw the attention of many Americans of Dutch descent, especially those of Reformed conviction, for it shows convincingly that Calvinism and Art make excellent companions.

H. J. VAN ANDEL.