Christmas Gifts  
A Contrast  

Contemporary Ethics  
and Christian Morality  

Holland Centennial  
Its Challenge  

Christian Education  
and Culture  

"British-Israel" Theory  
Contrary Evidence  

An Allegory  
Three Rivermen  

Correspondence  

Book Reviews
The CALVIN FORUM
Published by the Calvin Forum Board of Publication

VOLUME XIII, NO. 5 DECEMBER, 1947

Contents

Editorials

Salvation is of the Lord ........................................... 83
God's Gift to Man ................................................ 83
America's Gift to Europe ........................................ 84
The Person in the Body ......................................... 84
Food—Still a Major Problem .................................. 86

Articles

Christian Morality and Contemporary Ethical Theories (Cecil De Boer) ........................................ 87
Origin and Destiny, 1847-1947 (Samuel M. Zwemer) .................................................. 90
Christian Theism and Education (Cornelius Jaarsma) .................................................. 94
The 'British-Israel' Movement (Martin J. Wyngaarden) .................................................. 97
The Three Rivermen ................................................. 99

From Our Correspondents

Higher Education in South Africa ........................................... 100
The Irish Evangelical Church .......................................... 101

Book Reviews

The Infallible Word .................................................. 102
Three Apologetic Works ........................................... 103
Van Wyk's Sermon Notes Continued ........................................... 103
Machen Re-issued .................................................. 103
Bible Stories for Children ........................................... 104
Rembrandt Etchings ................................................. 104
Christian Ethics ..................................................... 104
Salvation Is
of the Lord

Here is a Christmas only because God is God. Man is not committed to the program of self-preservation. History has clearly demonstrated that men, left to themselves, will turn their minds and hands to a program of destruction. They are incapable of doing any spiritual and abiding good, and inclined toward every evil. There is such a thing as man's inhumanity to man. Salvation came from above and not out of the depths of man's heart. Only evil lurks in the unregenerated souls of men. It took unlimited love to save men from destruction. Only God could have such a love that pursued the sinner who was persistently rebellious and who rejected from the very beginning the manifestations of His love. It required unlimited wisdom to work out a plan of salvation that could develop a way of salvation that would do full justice to divine holiness and to the sense of personal responsibility in the consciousness of every man. God had such wisdom. It has compelled every one who has tried to comprehend it to a confession of his inability to grasp a wisdom that is too high for him. It called for a power that could supersede all the forces of nature that could rend the very heavens and send through that rent the Son of God into a sin-cursed life of degradation. God had such power.

He who brings Christmas down to the level of the comprehensible has, by that very fact, robbed himself of all Christmas joy. The birth of Christ will not yield to a complete analysis to human probing. It says, in effect, "You must leave me as the Great incomprehensible miracle of the ages. If you do not, you have made yourself incapable of a real commemoration of the birth of the Son of God." The question that critics should face is not a scientific one, but a historical one. It is the credibility of the birth accounts that must be faced. The question, Have these things taken place? is not answered by a satisfactory answer to another question, How can these things take place? Fact and understanding may be two widely different things. It is sufficient to believe that salvation is of the Lord. To believe that salvation can come from a group of international experts is to invite dark disappointment in this world. To believe that God has taken an interest in this world and that he has the love, wisdom and power to do something about the sorry mess that we are in is the only source of cheer today, as it was twenty centuries ago.

H. S.

God's Gift
to Man

The kind of gift that God selected for mankind was determined by the kind of gift man needed. It was not a gift of beauty. Man's primary need was not in the field of aesthetics. That is the reason why there was nothing in the coming of Jesus that appealed to the eye. The prophet wrote correctly, "He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him." This lack of beauty increased the degradation to which the one who bore the sins of man had to descend. Rarely has an artist the courage to paint this aspect of the Christ. And in so far as they have failed, they have not caught the nature of God's gift. This lack of the attractive characterized the entrance of Jesus into the world. It was altogether inartistic.

The gift of God was not of great value in terms of dollars and cents. Man's greatest need was not found in the field of the material. There was need there, of course, but it was a need that grew out of a far deeper need. Therefore, God's gift had no price tag on it. A Christmas gift may enrich the owner in the form of an addition to his private possessions, but it is not God's distinctive gift. St. Peter had neither silver nor gold to give to the cripple at the temple gate, but he did have the great Christmas gift. Material gifts bring no abiding happiness, because they miss the mark.

The gift of God was not in the form of some direct social boon. He was despised and rejected of men. They did not have need of another person to satisfy their social longings. Men had their companions, clubs, sects and other organizations that could and did bring some satisfaction to their social longings.

God's gift was not a political leader. The Jews longed for a king because they did not enjoy the kind of rule to which they were compelled to submit. But their need did not focus there, and Christ persistently refused to be evaluated as a Jewish political leader.

The gift of God was spiritual in character. The fact of sin determined the nature of the gift. This need was at the bottom of all other needs. And any Christmas gift that fails to contribute something to the alleviation of need in this particular field cannot properly be called a Christmas gift. A gift without the Christ is secular and unworthy of exemplifying in any way God's gift to man.

H. S.
America's Christmas Gift to Europe

LAST month The Friendship Train began its transcontinental journey from southern California. As it stopped at various centers, additional freight cars were attached, loaded with supplies for the needy Europeans. When the train rolled into New York City, there were approximately three hundred freight car loads of provisions and supplies. These have been called America's Christmas Gift to Austria, Italy and France. They are expected to cultivate friendship between the two continents.

However, the gifts will be received only with the greatest reluctance. The needy will accept the food not gladly, but only because they are compelled to by gnawing stomachs. They will put on the clothing only because shivering bodies will not be denied the warmth so close at hand. Already reports are coming in suggesting something of the resentment against what appears to be a magnanimous gift from America. This resentment may be only a manifestation of the deep-seated irritation felt by every proud person when he, through no fault of his own, is brought low so that he is dependent upon others for the necessities of life. Pride urges us all to be independent. It is easy for us liberty-loving Americans to understand how intolerable such living by the grace of others may be.

But I do not think that this explains the reaction satisfactorily. There is, in the consciousness of most men, the idea that you cannot get anything for nothing in this world. The American generosity is regarded as a means of securing certain benefits or controls in Europe. And I am not so sure but what they are right. America, I fear, is seeking her own interests. It is repeatedly stated that if we do not "come across," there will be a revolution in Europe, or the Communists will "take over." It is regarded as in the interest of democracy that we must be friendly. I do not want to leave the impression that these motives should be condemned. I am sure that every American citizen is deeply convinced that the democratic program is the very best for the suffering Europeans. Nevertheless, we by these gifts tell the recipients, "We are the superior ones. You should adopt the American way of thinking and living. You must be friends of ours and not join hands with our enemies. You place yourselves under certain moral obligations by accepting these gifts from our hands."

The trouble with our Christmas gift lies precisely in the fact that there is nothing of the spirit of Christ in it. That is the reason why it is robbed of its real value, that it will be received only with reluctance, and that it will only deepen the feeling of resentment already festering in the heart of Europe. We have not demonstrated the spirit of self-sacrifice that Jesus revealed when He gave Himself to the world. We entered a war to save ourselves. We offered armaments to our needy allies with strings attached. We will render aid to Europe in peace time to secure certain privileges in the area of world commerce, and so on. We have told the people across the waters in effect, "You will not get anything for nothing, if we can help it." We have not dared to do the thing that is utterly foolish in the eyes of the world; namely, to give without thought of return.

We have manifested little interest in the deep needs of Europe in the area of spiritual values. We shall never help Europe to defend itself against Communism and various forms of revolutions by sending over dollars and cents or their equivalent. It is the spirit and the Gospel of Christ that would be a real Christmas gift. If we could teach Europe that it is an honor to receive gifts, when they are given as in Christ Jesus, as the Christian leaders attempt to teach the poor who are in need of help within the Christian circles; if we could only make them feel that these gifts grow out of the love of God and of men, and that America is being used as an agency to present God's gifts to them—then the recipients across the sea would recognize something of the spirit of Christmas.

As it is now, there is reason to fear that there is no Christ in all the thousands of tons of gifts. We are in danger of having the Friendship Train become a Train of Ill Will. In fact, ill will toward America is already raising its ugly head in Europe.

H. S.

The Person in the Body

DESPITE the impression which the sensational exaggerations of our Paul de Kruif's may leave on the mind of the critical reader, modern medicine has indeed made significant contributions to human welfare. Penicillin, streptomycin, Rh factor, the vaccines, the antitoxins; the elimination or control of many of the diseases of childhood and of the great plagues which in former centuries decimated whole continents. And always, of course, the dramatic triumphs of surgery, alleviating pain and prolonging human life. These and the like are the "wonder drugs" and the "wonder techniques" of present-day medical science and practice. And yet there has been going on during the recent decades another development in medicine which in retrospect may before long stand out as the supreme achievement of twentieth century medicine. It accomplishes often very dramatic results, yet it itself is quite undramatic. It uses no glittering apparatus. (I wish I could say that it employs no mouth-filling terminology of Greek origin). This new medical direction is not so much a discovery of new facts as a revolution in medical thinking about facts long known. It is, to state it simply, the recognition that there is a person in the body.

THE CALVIN FORUM • • • DECEMBER, 1947
Socrates is reported by Plato to have returned to Athens after army service among the semi-civilized Thracians with the observation that the Thracian doctors were wiser than the Athenian for they knew that the body cannot be cured without the mind. “This,” he said, “is the reason why the cure of many diseases is unknown to the physicians of Hellas, because they are ignorant of the whole.” He certainly would have been horrified by the impersonality of nineteenth century materialistic medicine. It was a sound instinct which joined the medical art to the functions of the priest for so many centuries of human history. Ancient peoples correctly understood that affairs of the world of spirit bore some relation to the health and disease of the body. And yet it is also true that the science of medicine could make no real progress until the functions of the priest and the medical man were separated. There is an important lesson here. Moving quickly across the centuries we see that the Renaissance brought to western Europe the rediscovery of the fundamental postulates of science as they had been elaborated in the texts of Plato and Aristotle. And then presently the Protestant Reformation freed the spirit of inquiry from ecclesiastical control so that once again as in fifth century Athens men could pursue with large freedom and independence their chosen fields of knowledge. From that point on we all know the story. The newly-won freedom of investigation was turned in attack on the very foundations of Christianity, that is, on the Bible itself. The results were devastating. Materialism grew apace. The modern sciences as we know them developed into mechanistic interpretations of the universe, leaving no room for spiritual realities. The Copernican astronomy, Darwinian evolution and the science of archaeology, to mention a few of the newer points of view, were felt to make belief in an infallible Bible untenable.

The history of science is endlessly instructive, the history of medicine especially so. The late nineteenth century and the early decades of this century witnessed a wonderful development in the understanding and control of disease. The full weight of the materialistic, mechanistic view of life, freed as it was now of all ecclesiastical supervision was brought to bear on the problems in medical research. This is the great age of laboratory analysis, aided by the growing science of chemistry. Truly a period of brilliant achievement, as significant as the attainments in any other science. More medical knowledge came to birth than in all preceding centuries combined. But contemporary with and parallel to this materialistic approach, beginning with Freud in the late nineteenth century and with attention focussed on abnormal states of human behaviour, there developed the uneasy realization that there was more to man than could be weighed, measured and analyzed in the laboratory. Man was seen to be something more than a machine. He had emotions, he had thoughts and especially, he had an unconscious or subconscious life. With infinite patience Freud and his associates sought to learn the topography of the deep well-springs of man's life. At first scoffed at by both the church and the official hierarchy of medicine these studies slowly gained a qualified acceptance. To cut the history short, today we are in the full swing of a newer outlook on disease which goes by various names, prominent among which is the term psychosomatic (soul-body) medicine. The famous sentence of the Roman satirist Juvenal, “mens sana in corpore sano” has at long last come into its own. It is not only a line of verse, it is scientific medicine! In this country alone there are more than a dozen technical journals in the field, books pour forth unceasingly and the lay press has popularized what less than fifty years ago was considered rank nonsense.

Now all this is an imperfect and a sketchy preface to what I want to say. It has been bruited about from mouth to mouth as if it were axiomatic that the education of doctors is no concern of the church. One wonders whether those who so glibly mouth this realize the role that the physician is destined to play in our civilization. For better or for worse people are placing not only their bodies but their entire selves in the hands of the doctor. To be sure, at bottom there is nothing new in all this. Wise men in every day and age have known that the body is influenced by the mind and the feelings. Even the unspeakable Thracian and the superstitious medicine man of primitive peoples uncritically assumed the connection. What is new is that today the whole thing has gotten scientific standing; the best minds in the profession are bearing down on the problem of analyzing the relationship. It is true that the curricula of our medical schools has not yet adjusted to the situation and the rank and file of practitioners are only imperfectly (though uneasily) aware of the trend. But the medical experience garnered from the First World War and now from a Second on a vaster scale has assured the continuance and the increased momentum of a medical approach inclusive of both psychic and physical phenomena.

The physician has long held an honored place in our society. He attends us as we come into and as we leave this world, and there are few of life's secrets in the intervening span which he does not come to share. The observant and understanding doctor has always understood that there was a close relationship between the sum total of a person's life-experiences and the health or disease of his body. This was the strength of the old-time family physician. With the rise of the medical specialities, the purview of the doctor was progressively narrowed. Engrossed in “organ therapy” he understood less and less of the real needs of his patients. Now one of these specialities, psychiatry, while
sharing in a way in the limitations which all specializations impose, yet owing to its very nature has thrown a flood of light on the problems in every branch of medicine. The investigation of the so-called "nervous diseases" has turned up a wealth of phenomena having relevance in every department of medicine. And so it has come to pass that today we have our psychosomatic approach, not another speciality but an orientation, a new and a more inclusive way of looking at the problems of disease.

The doctor may have no intention whatever of functioning as a spiritual adviser. And yet because of the broadened basis of medical science he cannot avoid commitment concerning the deeper things of life. The implications for physical well-being of such concepts as love and hate are necessarily his concern. His own philosophy of life, his own religious convictions or absence of convictions are obviously relevant to the therapeutic measures he may adopt. The minister in his capacity as pastor also operates in this area. He is bound by his ordination vows and furthermore he speaks in public what he feels to be true concerning how a man ought to live. But the medical oath and medical ethics guarantee nothing to the public as regards such very important aspects of the doctor's work.

My prediction is that Christian people will come to feel that they need not only Christian teachers for their children but Christian doctors for themselves and their children. And just as surely as we need the Christian college to train Christian teachers we need the Christian college and the Christian university to prepare Christian medical men and women. The newer approach is here to stay. Who would want it otherwise?

W. T. R.

Food — Still A Major Problem

Food is scarce. For the larger part of the world's population this statement is true, true without qualification. Millions are suffering from undernourishment; millions are starving. In this, the twentieth century, the one problem for many of the world's inhabitants is still that of eluding out a living, of maintaining an existence. Faced by want, want that persists, that gnaws at the very fibre of man's being, men become desperate. They forget ambition, lose ideals, fight for survival, grasp at any promise of more to eat and of higher standards of living. The poverty of Europe and Asia makes both countries susceptible to influence, political especially, not only from the United States, but from any other country that offers a ray of hope of material assistance.

Food is scarce in the United States. Actually, absolutely, this statement is not true. Relatively, of course, it is. Prices of foods have risen almost one hundred per cent since 1939. It was commonly said during the depression that one of our troubles was overproduction, especially overproduction of food. Nevertheless millions of our people were poor. They could and would have consumed much more of many desirable foods than they did, had they not lacked the purchasing power necessary to buy them. Ironical as it seemed then, and as it seems now, we destroyed food and, as a nation, took all the measures that we dared to prevent "overproduction" of it. Food was too plentiful because people could not buy it. At that time we could have alleviated much of the poverty in the rest of the world with the food on hand, but we did not have the means of distribution and thought we could not afford to provide them.

Today we are better fed by far than during the depression. We are eating more of the better foods, per capita, more perhaps than ever before in our history, more, undoubtedly, than is good for many of us. Yet we say that food is scarce. Money wages are high but the prices of foods are even higher. Therefore, food is relatively scarce. We could cut down on the quantities of certain of the foods which we eat, and which the rest of the world needs, and still be eating much more of these foods than we did during the depression. We are a democratic nation and we still call ourselves Christian. Today we have the wherewithal in finances and in transportation to distribute food to the starving in other countries. Shall we do it?

H. J. R.

The best Christmas gift you can buy for two dollars is a year's subscription to THE CALVIN FORUM. Why not remember your friend or relative with this gift which will be enjoyed throughout the year? Send a two dollar check and the name of your friend or relative to The Calvin Forum, Calvin College, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.

THE CALVIN FORUM * * * DECEMBER, 1947
Christian Morality and Contemporary Ethical Theories

MOVING from Kant to nineteenth-century idealism,* the analogues of form become less obvious, especially as we approach the close of the century. From the middle of the nineteenth century to the present, the spirit of idealist ethical doctrine is somewhat as follows. The tolerant critical intelligence of the civilized man seeks, not after truth revealed, but after truth achieved. Philosophy is a secular pursuit, and its field of interest includes the facts and problems of all historical, religious, and ethical movements. The major ethical problem is this. Assuming that moral perfection consists in the normal unfolding of man's true nature, how may the critical intelligence derive "a moral standard which is objective, imperative, and universal?" Moral distinctions characterize the very nature of things. The doctrine that good and evil are matters of Divine fiat, therefore, virtually denies the possibility of our having fundamental principles with respect to inherent good and inherent evil. For if we hold that a moral principle is good because God wills it, then we must conclude that if God does not will it, it must be evil.

Ethics of Idealism

Again, the idealist tradition speaks of such things as natural ends, rational devotion, and inherent natural rights, things eternally right and true, and belonging to the "very nature of things." According to Cudworth, for example, God cannot command as just that which by its own nature is unjust, any more than He can make the definition of a triangle coincide with that of an ellipse. The universe is a moral universe in its own right, and not even God can change it. God acts in accordance with moral law; in fact He must, and any god represented as flouting it (as, e.g., the Greek gods), is a false god. Moral ordinances do not exist because of what God wills or thinks, but because of what the universe eternally happens to be.

Regarding positive morality, the final court of appeal, according to the idealist tradition, is the so-called judgment of history. The authority of the moral law is the authority of the experience of the race. Thus Sidgwick tells us that the moral law is imperfect and apparently without intrinsic rationality (one can't demonstrate that dishonesty is evil, but only that it is inconvenient), yet, he says, because it is a "wonderful product of nature, a delicate mechanism of means adapted to ends, without which civilization and human happiness would be impossible," it is pre-eminently worthy of our respect. Contemporary reflective morality, therefore, is robed with the authority of the inevitable. Moral values require no Divine revelation and no world beyond the present to make them authoritative. No life hereafter can possibly modify our duties here and now, since whatever is truly advantageous for this life cannot be at variance with the standards of a possible life beyond. And to say that this act is right because God requires it, and that, wrong because He forbids it, is arbitrary.

Analogaes to Christian Doctrine

The Idealist analogues to Christian moral doctrine, although not as obvious as the Kantian, are clear enough to require only a brief statement. No Christian will object to the assertion that moral distinctions characterize the very nature of things, that the process of history constitutes a moral judgment, that true morality is in harmony with true reason, and that in and of itself mere morality signifies incompleteness (being moral in the secular sense of the term is not identical with being holy). In fact the Christian may admit the idea of the Absolute as an analogue to the doctrine of God's inscrutability. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Of course, there are significant differences. Mr. Bradley's Absolute practically annihilates moral distinctions. The Christian conception of holiness, on the other hand, may transcend our usual moral distinctions, but it does not destroy them. Except for the knowledge of good and evil, there can be no holiness. Never for the Christian moral consciousness do moral distinctions become irrelevant or a mere characteristic of incompleteness.

As to what determines the very nature of things, the Christian position, of course, is this. Perfect
reason is an attribute of God's will, and there is nothing over and above this. God is the source, not only of man's reason but also of whatever reason there is in the very nature of things. For man, therefore, "the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord." Cudworth's statement that God cannot command as just that which by the very nature of things is unjust is, from the point of view of the Christian moral consciousness, the merest platitude. And the argument that God cannot make the definition of a triangle coincide with that of a circle, hardly disposes of the Christian conviction that a life unexamined in the light of the will of God is not worth human living. The demands of triangularity are the demands of a definition, and a definition is an artifact the possibility of which depends upon the very nature of things as God wills it. Hence, the only significant question here is whether the definition, as an artifact, is useful in leading us to a correct conception of things as they really are, i.e., things as they reflect God's creative activity and, therefore, His will. From the point of view of Christian theism, therefore, the statement that God cannot make the definition of a triangle identical with the definition of a circle, would seem to be about as trivial as to say that an elephant is not a rabbit. In short, for the Christian the proposition that a thing is good because God wills it, and the proposition that God wills it because it is good, are identical.

Moral Standards of Pragmatism

Contemporary pragmatism differs from naturalism only in that it still employs valuative concepts. It postulates a "world in the making," a process by which men and things improve in ways not yet visible to present moral insight. It prefers to speak of the "new conscience" and the "new social morality." Where the idealist speaks of moral imperatives rooted in the permanent needs of human nature, the pragmatist denies the existence of permanent needs altogether. Consequently, for the pragmatist, no individual conscience has anything like final validity. Only the group, in its tentative evaluations, and, according to Professor T. V. Smith, the practical politician, whose job it is to compromise the consciences of partisans, determine what is moral for the time being. The world being what it is, no one need feel obliged to do what in a more perfect world he would be morally bound to do. The evolutionary progress of society occurs by way of the inevitable conflict between the reforming consciences of some men and the conserving consciences of others. For example, the conserving conscience would not commit itself to Marx's class war. Such a conflict might sacrifice more than the conserving conscience is willing to give up for the sake of economic righteousness. But economic righteousness is bound to be realized. Hence, we can will to realize it by means of a compromise between the reforming and the conserving conscience. Anyway, the fundamental law of being is change, and the fundamental moral virtue is the humble scientific spirit of tentativeness.

How may the spirit of tentativeness be reconciled with the moral necessity of decisive action? If ethical conclusions are tentative, have they any authority for a man's conscience? The pragmatist answer is this. Of course, no man can finally demonstrate his normative opinions. Also, where men are equally ignorant, one man's opinion is as good as another's. But, great as our collective ignorance may be, there is at least some difference between the expert and the layman. For example, the physicist may admit that he is largely ignorant of many things pertaining to the physical world, without thereby declaring that the layman's opinion is just as valid as his. He must continue to believe that there are relatively enlightened and unenlightened ways of handling problems in physics, and that, therefore, they who employ unenlightened ways are, at least for the time being, less reliable. It may be that contemporary physics is all wrong, but for the time being we must distinguish between those who have a right to speak and those who do not. Now the same is true within the field of morals. Granted that good morals are matters of opinion, our responsibility is nevertheless determined by the best opinion. What today we call good may conceivably not be good enough, but at least it is the best we know for the time being. As the race progresses men become increasingly aware of their moral needs, and it is for that reason that what we today believe about good and evil has greater authority than what our ancestors believed. In fact, what we believe has for us final authority. A moral code conceivably more perfect than ours would not be so; its is rather useless, since it would not answer to existing needs. For example, it may be that in the future society will outlaw such a thing as military. Warfare may be in the future be regarded by the enlightened and reflective man in much the same way as we today regard banditry, murder, and other forms of anti-social action. Meanwhile we shall have to place military skill within the category of legitimate occupations, because there is as yet no such thing as an international conscience. For the time being, therefore, the military virtues may be said to constitute necessary conditions for the good life.

As the human race becomes more enlightened, moral standards will naturally change. That, however, does not justify any refusal to acknowledge the authority of standards as they are today. The light that we have now may not be perfect from the point of view of the future, but we happen to be responsible for what we have today. And to refuse this responsibility is simply to revert to a lower order of morality. Of course, in all this we should guard against dogmatism. It may be that
what to us appears to be a reversion to a lower level of conduct may actually be a stepping stone to something higher, as, e.g., in the case of eugenics, divorce, and so on. In short, although conclusions in moral philosophy should be tentative, it is well to remember that some of them are scientifically more respectable, for the time being, than others. And these must, for the time being, constitute our standards.

Relation to Christian Standards

The pragmatist analogues to Christian moral teachings are few and hardly significant. No Christian objects to admitting ignorance. Nor does he object to the assertion that we should distinguish between expert and lay opinion, that all opinions should be tentatively stated, and that men should be modest about them. But he will hardly be willing to admit that having a good conscience before God is in the same category with having expertness in a science. Here the Christian moral consciousness is bound to be sceptical. No doubt, moral insight need not be perfect in order to be authoritative for the individual who has it. On the other hand, the incomplete moral insights of others can hardly be authoritative for me. Conclusions in moral philosophy coming from fallible men, men who are feeling their way in the spirit of tentativeness, can hardly be binding upon my conscience. Furthermore, just how certain can I be that as the race grows older it will inevitably obtain a more perfect insight into the real moral needs of improved human beings? Again, the fact that a given moral code answers to the moral needs of my contemporaries does not make it finally authoritative for me. It may be my duty to change the moral needs of my contemporaries. When all is said, the pragmatist invests the moral law with nothing more than the authority of a working hypothesis. And a working hypothesis may prove in the end to have been nothing more than a legitimate mistake—legitimate for the time being. Now it is impossible for the Christian to admit that man’s legitimate scientific mistakes can ever constitute legitimate guides to a man’s conscience.

Naturalism and Christian Moral Teaching

Within pragmatism the analogues to Christian moral teaching are few and vague; within naturalism they completely vanish. From the point of view of naturalism, science, magic, and religion represent different attempts on the part of man to make life somewhat more bearable. And as between magic and religion, magic is superior scientifically because, although it admits the existence of powers and forces not of the earth, at least it experiments with them with a view to gaining control over them. Religion, on the other hand, simply remains passive to the will of the gods. From the point of view of religion the supernatural, fortunately or unfortunately, exists; and since it does, we may as well make our peace with it, whatever indignity and insult to human nature that may involve. Science, of course, differs from both religion and magic in that it categorically denies the existence of any forces outside of man’s potential control. In fact science must make as its aim the achievement of prediction and control to the extent of rendering the influence of religion in man’s everyday affairs practically nil. There can be no doubt, so the naturalistic thinker believes, that science began as a rival of religion, and that in achieving its aim it has been more successful as a means of bettering the condition of mankind. In short, science and religion have nothing in common; they are mutually exclusive ways of looking at life and the world. They are not friends, but enemies. Science denies and attacks supernaturalism, and recognizes no necessity for religious behavior.

According to Mr. Russell, value is not a feature of the objective order. Inasmuch as value is something conferred by human desire, it does not belong to the category of things that can be known scientifically. We can no more demonstrate, for example, that a man ought to be monogamous than we can that he ought to like onions. Whatever we believe here must be dogmatically assumed; and just which assumptions are better or worse depends upon whether we do or do not like them. Russell’s final estimate of the human race is something like this. Man as a member of the cosmic order is not only insignificant but, if we consider his destructiveness and his bestiality toward his kind, worse than the animals. An omnipotent and good God would not have created such a sorry specimen as man to function as the bearer of his image.

Perhaps we can identify an analogue here. It may be that this is Russell’s unique way of saying that man is a sinner. But it is nothing of the sort. Years ago Mr. Russell stated as his mature opinion that man is actually a cosmic mistake. From the point of view of physics—which is the science par excellence—man represents a surd. Fortunately, according to Mr. Russell, he is destined to disappear.

What is the relation between Christian ethics and philosophic ethics? The answer is that they have in common certain analogues of form, that these analogues become increasingly vague as we pass from the idealist to the pragmatist tradition, and that they vanish entirely with the appearance of contemporary naturalism. Both Christian and philosophic ethics seem to agree, however, that no moral act is ever merely moral. For the Christian it is a religious act; for Kant it is a rational act;
for Hegel it is an act of loyalty to a rational institution; for Nietzsche it is a self-assertive act on the part of genius; for Marx it is a social and economic act; for the pragmatist it is a tentative assertion of opinion; and for the naturalist it is an act of desire. All seem to agree, however, that the merely moral man is essentially a self-righteous man and, therefore, an immoral man.

**Origin and Destiny**

1847 - 1947

Samuel M. Zwemer
Professor Emeritus
Princeton Seminary

"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us what work thou didst in their days in the times of old." Psalm 44:1.

In the history of our country, the year 1847 was a year of decision and of destiny. A year of extraordinary events, discoveries and migrations. Bernard de Voto has written the whole story of that year in a volume of five hundred pages and called it the "Year of Decision." The United States was facing the possibility of two wars—with Great Britain for Oregon, and with Mexico for Texas and California. Our future history, our geography, our social institutions were involved in the great decisions of that year. Think of the map of the United States as any newspaper might have printed it in 1846. The vast area of Texas was still in dispute and the war with Mexico was on the horizon. On the Northwest a great area (now five states) called Oregon hung in the dreadful balance of war with Great Britain. James K. Polk "whose mind was rigid, narrow, obstinate," had been elected President. History tells us "he was pompous, suspicious and secretive; he had no sense of humor and could be vindictive." But he was God's man for the hour. His integrity was absolute, he could not be scared or manipulated. Polk's election began the so-called "Roaring Forties" and the press welcomed his leadership with the dynamic phrase, "Manifest destiny."

There was no telegraph except a few miles on the Atlantic coast. There was no radio, no transcontinental railway. Only sailing ships around two continents, or the covered wagon, linked California to Washington. Yet, under Polk's administration the dream of a vast congeries of states from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Michigan to Mexico came true. The Great American desert was annihilated by the Mormon migration to Utah and the rush for gold in California.

In 1847 Thomas Edison was born at Milan, Ohio.

In 1847 Longfellow (voicing the sentiments of New England) wrote about Slavery: "The poor blind Samson of our land, scorn of his strength and bound in bonds of steel... who might bring down the Temple of our liberties in his despair."


1847 was the year and October 16th the day when a surgical operation was performed for the first time under anaesthetic at Harvard Medical School. The year before, Elias Howe invented the sewing machine. That year the Mexican War was at its height and on the 8th of April General Scott marched to the Capital. The same month a steamship service was begun from New York to Liverpool. On July 22nd Brigham Young founded Salt Lake City. In August the State of Illinois adopted its Constitution and George Evans found gold in California. On October 24th the first locomotive west of Chicago, reached Galena, Illinois.

About this time the first pre-paid postage stamps of five and ten cents were issued at Washington, and it was resolved to light the Capitol with gas. In 1847 not only Mormonism but also Spiritualism was born on American soil, and both in the Empire State.

In 1847 the authority of the United States was first established on the Pacific Coast. The first great Canadian railway line was begun. Sir John Franklin died in the Arctic after his heroic effort to discover the Northwest passage. The same year Charles Dickens wrote "Dombey and Son" and Thackeray "Vanity Fair." Emily Bronte published her first novel, "Wuthering Heights," and her sister Charlotte wrote "Jane Eyre." Civil War was brooding in France and there were insurrections in Italy and Austria. Metternich wrote to a friend, "The world is very sick. The general condition of all Europe is dangerous."


**The Dutch Migration**

In that year of destiny the Pilgrim Fathers of the West migrated to America. Tearing up their roots in the Netherlands they planted a colony in the Midwest. There were contributing causes but fundamentally it was the genius for dispersion, the passion for wider horizons which was part of their inheritance. The Dutch Republic since the days of...
William of Orange had an imperial outlook across the seven seas. The flying Dutchman was at the antipodes two hundred years before airplanes were invented. I remember how in my boyhood days I read Tollen's "De Overwintering op Nova Zembla," and how the Dutch sought the Northwest passage to India! They carried their trade and the Heidelberg Catechism to Brazil in 1637, to Ceylon in 1656, translated Matthew's Gospel into Formosan in 1624 where also they had martyrs to the faith; they founded colonies and churches at the Cape of Good Hope, where Vanderkemp labored and died, dreaming of a pioneer mission to Madagascar; their chaplains and later their missionaries taught the natives of Java and Celebes. In 1575 was founded the great University of Leyden. Born through the travail of war and persecution it became the fruitful mother of many schools of the prophets, from Stellenbosch, South Africa, to Holland, Michigan. Indeed, the first theologian connected with the Reformation who maintained that "the last command of Christ was binding on the church for all time," was Adriaan Saravia (1531-1613) a Dutch Reformed pastor of Antwerp and a professor at Leyden, who afterwards became Dean of Westminster. He wrote a treatise urging the evangelization of the world. The Dutch East India Company, founded in 1602, was bound by its charter "to help convert the heathen in the countries with which it traded." At the instigation of the Classes of Delft there was founded at the University of Leyden a Seminarium Indicum to provide preachers and missionaries for the Far East.

**Racial and Cultural Diversity**

Again we note that the history of the Netherlands is that of a cosmopolitan people. There was cultural pluralism in their origin and in their tradition. The eleven provinces of 1842 had been seventeen provinces and each had still its distinctive dialect and dress. No Zeelander could be mistaken for a Frisian and everybody could tell a Groninger by his accent. "The Dutch nation," says Professor Barnouw of Columbia, "is racially not a homogeneous whole. The large majority, no doubt, is of Germanic origin, but there is an amazing variety within that stock. The Hollander of the low polder region in the west is a different type from the peasant in the Achterhoek, (which is that part of the province of Gelderland that is closest to the German Border). The Brabanter and Limburger, in the south, show small resemblance to the people of Friesland, and the Zeelander, again, is a type apart."

The Frisians of the north, the Saxons of the east and the Franks in Zeeland, although they all speak the same language, have marked biological differences in features. There are longheaded blond blue-eyed types and brachy-cephalic, dark-haired, dark-eyed groups. The Frisians were the first to appear on the scene of history but the Zeelanders were the last to surrender to Philip of Spain and to Hitler of Germany.

The American Revolution was a melting-pot of races. So was the Emigration of 1847. George Washington was of English blood, Lafayette came from France, Kosciusko who fought under Washington was a Pole, Von Steuben, the drill-master of the American army, was a German and Haym Solomon. who with Robert Morris helped finance the Revolution, was a Jew.

Racial and cultural diversity was characteristic of the Dutch Pilgrims in 1647. The names of our Western pioneers are an index to historical difference in origin. There were Frisians, Flemish, Wallons, French-Huguenots and Low-Germans as well as Hollanders among the colonists. Graafschap, Gelderland, Overijsel, Zeeland, Drenthe, North Holland are not only place-names but denote provincial origin. The DePrees, DeMotts, Dumezis, Sizoons (Siceaux), Zwemers (Sur-mer), all claim Huguenot ancestors and are justly proud of their French-Dutch lineage.

While all Frisians can be detected in most cases by the characteristic final A of their names: Dykstra, Kuizenga, Veenstra, Monsma, Vennema, Steenga, Zeilstra, Hoekstra, Mokma, Joldersma, Hoeksema, etc.

Every province had its own armorial crest and motto, its own heroes and history. Zeeland was proud of De Ruyter as the province of Holland was of Piet Hein and Tromp; Zeeland had for its crest a lion struggling in a stormy sea with the motto:

*Luctor et emergo!*

Luctor! Ik worstel, brult de Zeeuwse leeuw,  
Maar beve nooit. Terwijl gelijk een meeuw  
Zijn maan op 't water zwemt, zijn hoofd omhoog,—  
Emergo, toen de woeste storm vervloog.  

Te klein dat eiland voor haar helden tal.—  
Gelijk wanneer de herfst haar bladeren-val  
Met gure, losse winden ver verspreid  
Zoo dreef Gods wind, in andere najaars-tijd,  
En blad en eikela van den Zeeuwachen elk  
Over den oceaan naar 't Nieuwe Wereldrijk;  
Om daar te vinden vrijheid, beter lot,  
Hoop voor de toekomst van God.  

Reizend van Oost naar West,—niet zwervend gaan,—  
Want God was leidsman op den langen Pilgrimsbaan.—  
Luctor, steeds 't eerste van die halve eeuw;  
Gode zij dank, Emergo, sprak de leeuw. (3)

The word destiny is of grave import not only by its very derivation which includes such ideas as a sense of direction, a goal for the human soul, and an eternal destination after the days of our years are numbered. It has also a deep historical significance in the Hebrew-Christian tradition, and in modern history as well.

Abraham was a man of destiny. The Jews were a chosen race. The prophets of Israel again and again called upon the people to remember God's covenant and their high calling to be witnesses of Jehovah among the nations.

We the children and grandchildren of the Western Pilgrim fathers may well remember our origin.

3) From a poem to my Father in 1892, but the lines still apply to the Zeelanders of World War II.—S. M. Z.
The sterling faith, the rugged determination, the heroic self-denial, the sense of vocation, the prevailing daily prayer, and the triumph over death, which the immigrant Dutch had in 1847 when they settled in Michigan.

Sense of Vocation

One of the strong characteristics of the Dutch Calvinists was their extraordinary sense of vocation. What Samuel E. Morison says of the Puritans was equally true of our forefathers here in Michigan: “Fatalism was completely wanting in their view of religion and life. Like the Jews they regarded this earth and humanity as a divine enterprise, the management of which was God’s major interest; they were God’s people and their God was a living God, always thought of as intensely concerned with the actions and characters of people and nations. Each individual was a necessary item in a significant and divinely ordered cosmos. God has a personal interest in me, and has appointed work for me to do.”

Men of such type did not make happiness the goal of living. They were only concerned to know the will of God and to do it. A favorite Psalm in all their worship was the stanza:

“Leer mij naar Uw wil te hand’len
‘k Zal dan in Uw waarheid wand’len.”

Such a sense of vocation is a remedy for all fear and discouragement. It gives all life an optimistic outlook and makes the believer triumph even over death. A sense of vocation was the mother of patient endurance and triumphant achievement.

Such a glorious heritage must not be squandered by careless neglect of the Bible or by losing sense of vocation and the daily practice of the presence of God. I do not think it would be an exaggeration to say that when the Dutch settlers came to Michigan every home had a family-altar—every daily meal was made sacred by prayer and sabbath observance was the rule of the whole community. Children were not ashamed to carry their Bibles to church!

Theocentric Philosophy

Again we emphasize the fact that Calvinism was to the Dutch not merely a theological system but a philosophy of life. The history of the Dutch Republic, their long struggle against Roman Catholic Spain for eighty years, the intervention of God’s providence at the siege of Leyden, the courage of men like William the Silent—all these were not to be explained in terms of human achievement. God was present in Dutch history as really as He was in the Old Testament narrative. All family life, at birth and baptism, at marriage and funeral ceremonies was Theocentric. “The eternal God was their refuge and underneath were the everlasting arms.”

In the present world crisis and the post-war confusion of tongues we too need to recognize the over-ruling providence of God and His purpose of redemption in Christ. History in its deepest sense is His story. The entire course of events is the orderly out-working of the plan of God. As Toynbee has shown, the true philosophy of history is theistic, and therefore emphatic in teaching the sovereignty of God. He governs men and nations because He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

As in 1847, so in 1947, God is working out His purpose. He uses human instruments.

Predestination and Destiny

The history of the ages is in cycles of progress or retrogression. Yet it is not the mechanism of blind chance. Intricate and perplexing may be the ways of Providence for the individual or for a nation, but the Lord God omnipotent is on His throne. Our fathers believed and we believe in Predestination. But neither we nor they deny or denied human responsibility. Predestination includes destination and therefore destiny. The whole long road from the cradle to the grave—not only for individuals but for a people. Because of the past century and the lives of our Pilgrim Fathers of the West, this generation has a rendezvous with destiny. The fact is that our destiny exercises its influence over us when, as yet, we have not learned its nature. It is our future that lays down the law of our today. The child is always father to the man. “One generation shall praise Thy works to another, and shall declare Thy mighty acts.” The memory of God’s great goodness to Van Raalte and Vander Meulen and their company in Michigan should inspire us today.

The days of our pilgrimage are brief but our destiny, our destination is eternity. Next to the Bible the Pilgrim Fathers loved to read John Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress. A copy was found in every home. (I recall the colored illustrations in the one we read as children on Sunday afternoons.)

Challenge of the Centennial

The best way to celebrate this Centennial is to take that old book from the shelf, to learn its lessons again, to pick up the pilgrim staff of our fathers and grandfathers and grandmothers and gird ourselves for pilgrimage and for the conflict with Apollyon and Giant Despair!

Dr. H. Clay Trumbull in a sermon at the Seventh World’s Student Conference at Northfield, July 3, 1893, spoke on “Our Duty of Making the Past a Success.” He said it was ever God’s plan that the
work of those who went before should not be made complete without the work of those who follow after. Those who live now are to build that of which their forefathers laid the foundations. Historic consciousness is not only an inspiration but it is judgment and condemnation if we fail to build truly and worthily on our past heritage. "The question is not," said Trumbull, "whether you are proud of your grandfathers but whether your grandfathers would be proud of you." That was a terrible word of our Savior, "Ye build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers have killed." To build monuments to Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln or to Van Raalte and Vander Meulen after we have repudiated their principles and trampled upon their high ideals or lost their faith and vision is only to deserve everlasting shame and contempt.

We honor Albertus Van Raalte and the Dutch pioneers of 1847 by holding fast to our heritage; by building on their rock foundation, Jesus Christ; by perpetuating their Puritan integrity, their love for God's Word and God's Sabbath, and their broad-minded tolerance and Christian fellowship.

We stand on a narrow neck of land today between the past and the future. The past surrounds us, here and now, with a great cloud of witnesses. They are in the heavenly places, we fight in the arena. They see us more truly than we see them. The future challenges us because of the past. We are indeed the trustees, the stewards of a great heritage.

There have been colonies and enterprises, great undertakings which fell into the hands of unworthy and slothful inheritors, who squandered their inheritance or betrayed their trust. And history's hand has written Ichabod on the last chapter of their existence. Where is the glory that once was Greece? The pride of Nineveh and Tyre? Where is the power of Caesar's Rome? What has become of Germany's cultural and theological preeminence?

We stand before a supreme court from which there is no appeal—the glorious company of our godly ancestors, the fathers who built Holland and Hope College and the churches which we love. Their bodies rest in Pilgrim Cemetery yonder but they are here, a great cloud of witnesses. Our fathers are telling us of what work Thou didst in their days in the times of old! May we their sons and grandsons hear the voice behind us telling us, "this is the way, walk ye in it," when we turn to the right hand or to the left. Mindful of our origin and of what God did for our ancestors, we shall then fulfill our high destiny in the years that lie ahead. Noblesse oblige! We owe it to our ancestors not only to preserve their heritage intact, but we owe it to posterity to transmit the same inheritance augmented by our tears and sweat and blood.

There is no more stupendous illustration of this principle than in the life of our Savior. He, in the very night in which He was betrayed, linked together His origin, His destiny, His heritage—Son of God and therefore Son of Man. Listen to the words of the Gospel; (John 13:1-4) we can never fathom their depth nor attain to their height. Even to comment on the words would detract from their profound significance. "Now when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world ... knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, (heritage) and that he was come from God, (origin) and was going back to God (destiny) . . . he laid aside his garments and took a towel and girded himself. After that, he poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded."

Conscious of His eternal origin, of His own omnipotence and of the glory which was His from all eternity, He took upon Him the form of a servant and washed even the feet of Judas who betrayed Him, and of Peter who denied Him! "Verily I say unto you the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, Happy are ye if ye do them."

Our duty, now, is to make the past a success!
Christian Theism and Education

Cornelius Jaarsma
Professor of Education
Calvin College

If we have correctly analyzed the crisis of our day (*), and the education proposed to meet the needs manifested in this crisis, the Bible-believing Christian can no longer delay a well-circumscribed position with relation to it, lest he too be carried along by the mighty current of the cultural stream. Being so inextricably involved in the historical process, how can we define our position? Shall we isolate ourselves from the culture of our time to the best of our ability, try to save ourselves and others from its influences, and pray that the Lord will keep us and deliver us? Is not worldly knowledge after all conceived in sinful minds and enlarged into systems grounded upon foundations contrary to the mind of God? And are we not told that we have the mind of Christ? Is not separatism our only alternative?

Those of us born and raised in homes consciously committed to the Calvinistic interpretation of Christianity revolt at the very suggestion of the separation of religion and culture. We have been taught to make the Word of God the leaven that should permeate the life of the individual, of human institutions, and of human relations. For this emphasis we are regarded worldly and humanistic in some fundamentalist circles. Even in our Reformed circles it is not uncommon to hear it said that we are too education-minded.

Christianity and Classical Culture

Recently I reread and restudied—for the latter is really necessary to benefit from the book as one should—I say I restudied C. W. Cochrane's Christianity and Classical Culture. Cochrane has given us one of the most objective studies of the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era that I have ever read. There is the kind of objectivity that one would expect in a scholar when dealing with great movements in history. I do not mean to endorse all Cochrane has to say with reference to the cultural crisis of that time, but what transpired in the meeting of Christianity and Classical culture acquired for me a new relevancy to the crisis of our time, especially with reference to education.

Classicism represented a mixture of ancient idealism, materialism, and scepticism. Its radical error, according to Cochrane, was "to suppose that the history of mankind can properly be apprehended in terms applicable to the study of 'objects' in 'nature'; i.e., in the light of the conventional concepts of form and matter." The distinctive principle of integration in the relations of individuals it finds in Aristotle's ideal of justice which is only formal and is given content in the justice of the polis.

In Promethean style the Classical idealist appropriates unto himself what belongs to God. Knowledge is therefore not used as a means to wisdom but as a source of power. It represents the fatal mistake of man to eat of the forbidden fruit in order to be like God. To quote again from Cochrane, "The power which he thus aspires proves, however, to be quite illusory. For what he has in fact accomplished is to substitute his notion of order for the order which exists in the universe; the fictitious for the actual; the dead concept for the living reality. His problem is thus to give currency to this counterfeit of cosmic order by persuading or compelling men to accept it as genuine. The effort to do so constitutes the history of 'politics' in classical antiquity."*9

Christianity pointed man in contrast to an order causally and teleologically related to the world order, and therefore normative for our interpretation of that order. No Prometheus could successfully challenge the supremacy of the God of Christianity. His sovereignty demands obedience of all men as His creatures. Besides thus coming into conflict at every point with what was deeply rooted in classical tradition, Christianity potentially challenged the supremacy of Caesar and of the polis. Persecution became a natural consequent.

When subsequently Christianity cumulatively gained prestige through its many converts, even in influential positions, a more tolerant attitude to Christianity began to prevail. Progressively Christianity made its way through tolerance to recognition and finally to supreme power in the fourth century. Constantine created the issues of the fourth century by invoking the aid of Christianity "to impart fresh vitality to the Roman order," according to Cochrane. In the course of this effort he gave rise to what took the form of a Kulturkampf, a struggle of cultures.

Tertullian, Origen, Augustine

The cultural issue became crystallized as Athens versus Jerusalem, the latter representing the Hebrew Christian tradition. Tertullian had seen in

(*) See article in previous issue entitled, "Education and the Crisis of Our Time."

1. p. 97.
2. p. 98.
3. p. 318.
this issue a real threat to the Christian faith, and, therefore, had sought a breach between “science” (referring here to the classical concept scientia) and “faith.” Origen, on the other hand, had freely permitted pagan ideology to qualify Christian truth. Tertullian by establishing an absolute antithesis between science and faith blinded himself to the true issue between Christianity and classical culture. Origen was too ready to have classical idealism and scepticism transform Christianity. The solution to the conflict had to wait until the opening of the fifth century when Augustine gave the issue a new perspective as he reasoned from the nature of the Trinity and creation.

Augustine saw a relevancy of Christian doctrine, of the Bible, to human culture. In the final analysis both proceed from the same source. The God Who created the world and endowed man with the genius of a creative mind is the same God as the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the One Who sends forth His Spirit as the third Person in the Trinity to convict men of sin and righteousness, is the same God Who speaks to us in the Scriptures. In our day Herman Bavinck reiterates the Augustinian view of the relation of religion and culture when he says, “It is the Father from whom; it is the Son through whom; and it is the Spirit in whom all things have being.”

The Struggle of Cultures Continues Today

The Kulturkampf that had its beginning in the fourth and fifth century has continued into our own day. Classicism has given way to the Renaissance. What Cochrane describes as the chief error of classicism is likewise the error of the Renaissance, that the history of mankind can be apprehended in the light of concepts that are of man’s own creation. Christianity and the Renaissance stand over against each other as two conflicting ways of thinking and living, as did Christianity and Classicism.

Today we too have our Tertullians. They would separate and place in opposition the genius of man in the natural realm and the mind of him who is born of God. They would create a dualism in education as they do in culture. The creative culture of human genius is forbidden ground for the Christian. It can hardly be avoided in a higher education today, but it should be treated as foreign to the Christian life, they contend.

Needless to say that to such Christians the world crisis means only one thing, the imminent return of Christ. They would almost pray that the world catastrophe might increase, for that might hasten the coming of Christ. They constitute the greater part of the fundamentalist world which in the language of Henry ought to have an uneasy conscience, but many do not.

But we likewise have our Origens today. They make world reform and cultural reconstruction the end, and Christian truth the means to that end. They belong to the Theodotians that seek to save a doomed world order by the means of a kingdom that is not of this world.

We thank God for the Augustinian view which we find still virile today, though among a comparatively small group of Christians. Here lies a meaningful integration based on the God-centered view of life. God is the God of our salvation, but He is also the God of His creation. Because of the privation of sin upon that world of God’s creation we do not turn our backs upon it, but behold in it the wisdom of His illumination. Only the Christian can explore that world meaningfully and truthfully for he consciously reads there the handiwork of his God.

Appraisal of Modern Education

Above we said that our endorsement or lack of it of the educational program for UNESCO must be predicated upon two things: a true analysis of the crisis education is trying to meet, and upon the correct and true orientation of the education proposed. Our verdict, it should now be obvious, must be unqualified condemnation. The crisis is instigated by man in revolt against his Creator, who tries to follow the road of his own would-be autonomous understanding. And the education devised for such a self-destructive course is predicated on the same false foundation designed to free man from bondage, but actually making him a slave of his own perverted, sinful passions.

More than Evangelism

Is not this verdict enough to turn us with the Tertullians against the culture of our time? How can we continue in the Augustinian tradition, and not lose ourselves with Origen in the pagan culture today?

Our answer is that the Christian theistic approach to education is not less relevant but more relevant than ever today.

But here again we must not be lured into a Tertullian position. We are happy to see the beginning of an awakening to the need of the Christian day school among many evangelical Christians. But when we examine carefully why evangelicals are seeking this education, we discover that it is primarily a reaction to the godlessness of state education. In itself this is to be praised. However, the schools many evangelicals want are schools that

---

evangelize the child. Child evangelism is their main aim in education. The child must be led to a decision. Education should be given in an environment favorable to, promoting such a spiritual crisis. The cultural significance of education as centered in a God-determined life is worldly and not even desired in many fundamentalist quarters.

**Distinctive Nature of Education Based on Christian Theism**

Our distinctively Christian theistic position with reference to education is more than spiritual in character. Education is the medium through which the man of God is equipped for the service for Christ and His Kingdom. The spiritual, personal relationship to God in Christ is central and basic, to be sure. The Christian parents who have committed their child to the Lord in baptism have vowed before God to bring up this child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that is, to lead him into a conscious, voluntary relationship to God in Christ. The Christian church through the preaching of the Word, through instruction, and through personal work comes to the aid of parents in this great responsibility. It is the function of the formal education of the school to enlarge and extend this education begun in the home, and sustained in the church, to the broad cultural life of the child. Here the social heritage of man as embodied in the institutions of society, such as language, economic relations, government, community, etc., becomes the medium for further development of the child's personality. The formal subjects of the school room constitute the organized bodies of knowledge and skills which equip the coming generation to fill their places in this world as Christian citizens. The school continues the spiritual emphasis in its devotional activities and in its personal work with boys and girls. This child's spiritual culture has a meaningful and functional relevancy to the social culture of which we constitute a part.

Christian education in the fullest sense of the word seeks the development of the whole man, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It relates man first of all to his God, his Creator and Redeemer. Hence Christian education is primarily redemptive in character. This it does through instruction from the Scriptures, through devotions, and through personal prayer and admonition. Habits of living appropriate to the man of God are being cultivated. Christian education relates man to his fellow-man as creatures of God, and especially to the household of faith, those who share with us the membership in God's family. It places our relationship to our fellow man on the high level of love, to love our fellow man for God's sake. Christian education relates man to the creative genius of the human race as given in the humanities, the arts, and the sciences, not as a product of an autonomous man, but as the work of the Holy Spirit in the natural man, as God restrains sin and illuminates the natural mind. Christian education relates men to the great vocations of mankind, the means of livelihood and of constructive contribution to the general welfare. Christian education inculcates a recognition of man's stewardship, that under God we are privileged to think His thoughts after Him, and to do His work here on earth, to be co-laborers with Him in the coming of His Kingdom.

**Conclusion**

Our verdict upon the secularism of our time is one of condemnation, but our alternative does not lie in a separatism which paralyzes all Christian action. Our alternative is Christian education from the kindergarten through the university which provides the appropriate medium for the cultivation of men and women of God for His service.

The uneasy conscience of modern fundamentalism originates in the neglect of the cultural responsibilities of the Christian in this world. The modern fundamentalist has only condemnation for the secularism of our time, but no constructive alternative. Often it tolerates the dualism of the so-called secular in the cultural sphere while it seeks to build the kingdom in the religious sphere. Such a dualism is self-defeating and frequently ends in the absorption of the spiritual in the so-called secular.

Christian theism would include the entire cultural life of man in its program of education, but permeate that culture with the leaven of the Word of God as normative for the whole life of man individually and collectively. Let us go forward in the faith of our fathers that the God-centered life and world-view is our message to the secularism of our time. Let this life and world-view constitute the Christian alternative to the current humanist's attack upon the critical problems of our time, and the education grounded in the former the Christian answer to the godless cultures of modern education.

---

A Christmas Gift for the Whole Year. A year's subscription to THE CALVIN FORUM will be greatly appreciated by father, mother, sister, or brother. All you do is to send only two dollars and the name of your relative or friend to The Calvin Forum, Calvin College, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.
The "British-Israel" Movement

Martin J. Wyngaarden
Professor of Old Testament Interpretation
Calvin Seminary

Our Lord has foretold false prophets and false shepherds in His name. In the light of prophecy we may expect false Messiahs and unauthorized Messianic hopes.

In spite of the fact that Christianity is international, or ecumenical, since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, the temptation is still strong for various nations to consider themselves in some Messianic role. Thus the Germans had their movement of the so-called German Christians. The Japanese also maintained a nationalist eschatology in their national religion of Shintoism.

We are prone to think that the Anglo-Saxon nations are free from such an eschatological, nationalistic bias. In the main this may be true, but if so, there is a notable exception in the movement of "British-Israel".

The Hebrew philology of the British-Israel view is especially weak.

For instance, the word British is interpreted as berith ish,—berith covenant, and ish man;—and then the British are interpreted as "men of the covenant." Now, even at best, the term British could never mean "men of the covenant," but covenant of a man;—if berith and ish were the component parts of the word, in a Hebrew sense. But such is not the case as can be seen from the words Great Britain and the Britons. The ish, at the end of the word, British, is in the same category as the same particle, ish, in boyish and girlish, bluish and pinkish. Certainly in all such cases, the particle, ish, does not come from the Hebrew word ish, for man. Such a philological theory is simply ridiculous and preposterous.

No less so is the interpretation given of Saxons in the term Anglo-Saxon. The Saxons are then regarded, with a mere witticism, as Isaac's sons, namely sons of Isaac,—the son of Abraham.

But Isaac comes from yits-chaq, he laugheth, and certainly the letters in Saxons are not at all identical with the Hebrew root letters in the word he has laughed, tsa-chaq. The one thing that can be said of the derivation of the word Saxon from the Hebrew root tsa-chaq, laugh, in Isaac, is that it is certainly laughable, and unfounded.

If philological data are treated in such a spread-eagle manner, approximately the same stricture can be made upon the manner in which the movement deals with historical data. Of course, there was a relatively small migration of Hebrews to the British Isles and to northern Europe and America. Such is attested by inscriptions on old grave stones. At an institution like the University of Pennsylvania with its enormous Semitic library, I have consulted published books containing Hebrew or Aramaic inscriptions derived from gravestones of Hebrews. Such inscriptions have been found especially in shore towns near the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and the North Sea, washing the shores of Europe and the British Isles.

But the languages and dialects of these Hebrew gravestones are Semitic, while the languages of the Anglo-Saxons are not at all Semitic, but Indo-European,—the languages associated with the descendents of peoples of Japheth, but not of Shem, both sons of Noah.

Any student or minister who has struggled with Hebrew in the Seminary has readily found out that his Anglo-Saxon vocabulary and grammar did not help him much in the study of Hebrew. There is no scholar of any repute who would rate the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary and grammar as belonging to the Semitic group, and who would for any such reason regard the British as essentially the ancient people of Israel. That is simply preposterous and all the evidence is against it.

The migrations of Hebrews to the British Isles, whether of descendents of David, or of Jews, or of people of the so-called lost ten tribes of Israel, are not of such scope and magnitude as to allow for the thesis that the British must be essentially regarded as Israel.

Such a theory overlooks the fact that the language of the Anglo-Saxons and various waves of migrations to northwestern Europe and to Britain were largely non-Semitic.

Only a very, very few English words can be derived from the Semitic languages, and only a similarly small percentage of the population of northwestern Europe and of the British Isles can be traced to Semitic sources.

The evidence is in the main against the British-Israel theory.

No philological continuity between the languages and dialects of the Jews or of the ten tribes of the Hebrews with the languages and dialects of the Anglo-Saxons can be proven, in the main.
But especially the British Israel claim that the eschatological throne of David was inherited by Irish and British royalty is heavily burdened by evidence to the contrary.

Even if some of the descendents of David intermarried with Irish and British royalty, that would not make the king of England an heir to the eschatological throne of David, and to the promises which the Lord associated with that throne.

The great son of David is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and He is the heir to the promises connected with the throne of David.

It may be conceded that it may be impossible to deal very evidentially with the genealogical claims that descendents of King David of Israel came to Ireland and eventually became related by a long line of ancestors and intermarriages to the royal houses of Ireland and of England.

To say that the promises made to King David concerning the son of David are to be fulfilled in the Royal House of England is contrary to the New Testament thought that the great promises to David find their fulfilment in Christ, our risen Lord, and more especially in His exaltation at the right hand of the Father.

Yet such is the presentation of the Book of Acts, chapter two, where we have Peter's great Pentecostal sermon. In it, the Apostle Peter proclaims in verses 29 to 34: "Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the Patriarch David that he both died and was buried and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was He left unto Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus did raise up, whereof we are all witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens, but he saith himself: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand."

In short, Peter says that he may speak freely of David and of the great promise that a son of David would sit on David's throne. But then Peter says absolutely nothing that could be an interpretation of a son of David sitting on David's throne, except for, the one great item that Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Father. Hence the intent is clear. Peter means to say that when he will speak freely of a son of David sitting on David's throne, he will point to Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father. Evidently Peter considers Jesus' sitting at the right hand of the Father to be the very fulfillment that he was going to stress freely concerning the promise that a son of David would sit on David's throne, according to II Samuel 7.

But now, if Jesus Christ, as the great son of David, has inherited the throne of David, how say the adherents of the British-Israel theory that the King of England has inherited the throne of David?

And this view is certainly intended in an eschatological sense, by the adherents of the British-Israel view, because they apply many Old Testament eschatological promises and prophecies concerning the world wide sovereignty of the coming son of David to the throne of the British Empire.

Now certainly the British throne today and the entire British Empire in our day do not share in such glory that one would be tempted to say that eschatological prophecies are being fulfilled in the socalled British-Israel as a political unit.

Moreover if the predicted world-wide sovereignty of the Son of David is equated with the world-wide sovereignty of the British King, that prediction looks feeble today with the growing feebleness of the throne of England.

And if the predicted world-wide sovereignty of the Son of David is equated with the sovereignty of the throne of England in the days of George the Third, then the American Declaration of Independence from George III was in essence a rebellion against the predicted sovereignty of the throne of David and thus a rebellion against God and against David's son who is also David's Lord.

No wonder that some zealots are spreading the British-Israel view in Canada. But all loyalty to the British crown should have quite another basis than the British-Israel view, even in Canada. And disloyalty to the throne of England in India and in South Africa cannot be branded as disloyalty to the predicted son of David.

That would practically make a false Messianic son of David out of the King of England, and we may be thankful that among the many titles to which the crown of England lays claim, officially there is not included the title of Son of David.

The prophecy of the future dominion of the dynasty and the throne of David is found in the last chapter of the Book of Amos. But this prophecy is interpreted by James in Acts 15 as applying to the missionary expansion of the New Testament era.

That missionary expansion has indeed had a glorious history from the first Synod at Jerusalem, to the last Synod at our own Christian Reformed Jerusalem, and in many other denominations.

And it can happily be conceded that in the missionary expansion of the Church of Christ the Anglo-Saxon peoples have by the grace of God made a great record.

In fact the following summary has been given of world-wide missionary activity shortly before
A RIVER flows through a deep dark valley. Its waters are black and brackish from chemicals that come into it at its headwaters and that bubble up from far down below the earth's surface. Yet the blackness of the river is not always apparent. When the sun shines upon it at certain times it seems quite beautiful and to those who are color-blind, of course, the river is ravishingly beautiful.

Downstream from the valley, just beyond its lower cliff is a great crashing waterfall. It is not visible from the valley but its grim rumblings can be heard plainly enough, except, of course, to those who keep their ears stopped up so that they won't hear it. If one were to take his stand in the middle of the river, which would be extremely dangerous, he would see at least the dread vapors ascend from the falls, provided, of course, that he was not near-sighted!

The river, in its rapid flowing, kept eating away its banks in the valley. Once and again, large pieces of the bank would fall away and dissolve in the river.

Above the valley, the sun shone every day, but the valley was narrow and deep and its shadows were dark and the sun was visible directly only if one looked up. But many a ray of sunlight filtered into the valley and made it a rather pleasant little place.

In the valley lived three rivermen who had been born on the banks of the river, but hoped someday to live where the sun shone more brightly and was not so often obscured by dark shadows. Their three little houses stood in a row on the very edge of the river, because the valley was extremely narrow.

One of the three rivermen saw little to fear in the river. He was told by the other two that its waters were black with poison but he didn't believe it. He was color-blind. He was told that downstream there was a great cataract that roared and crashed, but he didn't believe that either because he habitually kept cotton stoppers in his ears. One of his fellow rivermen said that he had once fallen into the river and had been swept into the middle of the current and had seen, for a moment, the horrendous vapors that arose above the falls, but the first man didn't believe that either. He was fearfully near-sighted and couldn't imagine anyone could see that far. He was warned that the river was eating the bank away beneath his house but he didn't believe that because he made it a practice never to look down, he loved the sunshine and stood always gazing into the sky.

One day, as he was standing on his porch, gazing upward, the river bank crumbled beneath him and his house toppled into the river. But he didn't fear anything. It seemed to him as though he were seeing the sun better than ever as he was swept into the middle of the stream. The other rivermen shouted and entreated and cried warnings, but he wouldn't hear of them, but gazed blithely up from the careening deck of his tragic craft at the sun, and the other two men fell trembling to their knees and covered their ears to shut out the sound as the house and its tenant crashed over the falls.
So now, two rivermen lived in the valley. One of these fell into the river too. It did not happen because he was color-blind, or near-sighted, or because he had stopped his ears. He knew the river and its dangers full well. He also knew that it was eating the bank away beneath his house, but he too had a strange aversion to looking down. He looked up at the sun and could not be convinced that he should do anything about the crumbling river bank. He expected that somehow the sun would harden the bank and keep his house from falling into the river.

Then the blow fell! His house toppled from the spongy bank and he with it. He was desperately afraid and cried out for help. The other riverman heard and dragged him to shore in the nick of time. But, alas! next day he died from grief and exposure.

* * *

One riverman remained in the valley. He lived next to that horrid river for his entire life time. He was always fully aware of the dangers of that dark and poisonous stream. He had, sometimes, slipped into its black waters a little, but had been rescued each time. He too loved the sun and often paused a moment to glance at it and at a stated time every day gazed into its liquid beauty with longing intensity. But most of his days were filled with hard work, dragging stones from the mountains to bolster the river bank and when his days of labor were done his house still stood safe and sound.

Would you know the key to this little allegory of the rivermen? I shall give you just the key. You must unlock it yourself.

The valley is this present world. The sunshine is the love of God. The river is Sin. The three rivermen are a Humanist, a Fundamentalist, and a Calvinist.

The Humanist will not believe in sin and condemnation. He will see only the love of God, and in the light of God's common grace the world of sin may seem a passing beautiful thing especially for those who are willfully blind and deaf to anything else. The end of the Humanist is surrender to sin and condemnation.

The Fundamentalist knows the power of sin and believes in Hell and recognizes Sin's power to destroy this present world but it never occurs to him that for the welfare of His world he must do something for THIS world. Everything must be done by the love of God. His end is the salvation of his own soul at jeopardy of his family, his society, his whole set of values. He very nearly suffers spiritual death and is saved "like as through fire".

The Calvinist knows sin, he knows and loves God, but he also recognizes his responsibility. And so he brings the rocks of truth from the eternal mountains of Revelation and applies them unto the saving of his soul, unto the welfare of his world of values and this world is benefitted by his labors.

* * *

You are one of those rivermen. Which one?
—Ala Bandon

---

**From Our Correspondents**

**HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

University College
Potchefstroom
S. Africa

*Dear Dr. Bouma:*

A VERY severe winter is gradually passing by. July was one of the coldest months we have had for more than a generation. But a cold winter is welcome; it makes the coming spring and summer so much nicer and more welcome. Spring over here starts more or less precisely at the beginning of August, when at the same time our north-westerly winds begin blowing. These winds are the forerunner of our season's rains. In the Transvaal we very seldom get any rain during the winter months, that is during May, June and July. Of course, August has its spells of returning cold, and only September and October are really spring time. From November to February we have the hottest months of the year and, of course, plenty rain. The old earth is just emerging from its winter sleep and an occasional tree is beginning to bloom. Generally, October is our most beautiful month: everything is then at its greenest and youngest.

I shall be away from Potchefstroom on leave for the better part of this second half of the year. In South Africa we have not the privilege of a sabbatical year. The best we can afford is a 50 days' leave after every term of 5 years. Our finances do not allow us to go for a longer period. Every 10 years, however, we are entitled to 6 months' leave with 5½ months' pay, but the ordinary leave does not mean much. We are paid but no substitute is appointed in our place and we have therefore to round off our work before we go on leave. That means, of course, extra work either before or after our leave.

Sometime ago I wrote you about coming changes in the university situation over here. I told you that the Minister of Education appointed a commission to go into the position of the University of South Africa. This university is a federal institution and in this federation there are at the present moment 5 constituent colleges, our institution being one of them. Besides the federal University of South Africa, there exist over here four independent universities—Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Johannesburg and Pretoria. The ministerial commission had to go into the position of the federal university only. The main question was: should the constituent colleges change over to independent universities, and if so, what should become of the University of South Africa itself?

After careful investigation and consideration the commission recommended to the Minister the abolition in the course of a few years of the federal university by, firstly raising some of the colleges to independent status, and secondly by changing the federal university itself into an institution with the
old name catering only to so-called external students. That amounts to changing it back into the old University of the Cape of Good Hope, which since 1873 to 1916 existed only as an examining institution. South Africa is such a vast country, students live so far away from institutions of higher learning, many people are too poor to send their grown-up children to the few centers of university education, that the existence of a type of student called external is quite impossible to eliminate. In South Africa we shall have to keep on catering to them and the new proposed University of South Africa will have to carry on with this job. Attached to it there has already been in operation since 1946 a Division of External Studies. This division does its work by correspondence. Besides examining the external students, the new University of South Africa will also, through its Division of External Studies, render the necessary instruction by correspondence.

In the present University of South Africa non-European students—colored and blacks—form an important section of the external students. Some of them do in fact receive backing at an acknowledged but not incorporated institution at Fort Hare, Cape Province, known as the S. Africa Native College. The ministerial commission recommended that this institution should be affiliated to the new Rhodes University at Grahamstown but retain its independent existence as an incorporated university college. In the near future, the Fort Hare College may develop into an independent university for the African (non-white). With regard to the university education of the African natives, there are at the present moment over here three schools of thought: total segregation, as represented by the Afrikaans institutions (Stellenbosch, Bloemfontein, Pretoria, and Potchefstroom); partial segregation as represented by the Natal and the Rhodes institutions; and practically no segregation, as represented by Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Coming to my own institution, I can report a very promising future. As you know, the full title of our institution is the Potchefstroom University College for Christian Higher Education, and “Christian” means to us “Christian Reformed” or Calvinistic. This ministerial commission has given us a very charming testimonial. I quote verbatim from the Report issued in May this year. “Your commission was on the whole very favorably impressed with the work of the Potchefstroom University College. It is a businesslike institution, characterized by a spirit of unity not always apparent in university institutions, and has shown great prudence and wisdom in the careful expenditure of its none too abundant revenue . . . The amount of post-graduate work being done is surprisingly high, considering the small institution (800-900 students, some 60 on the teaching staff), and while there is scope for more development, research work of value is being done. The institution is not so well equipped financially as some of the others, but it probably draws its funds from a larger number of small donors than any other university institution in the country. Indeed, the point should here be made that while Potchefstroom University College has not the same claims for consideration on Provincial grounds as the University College of the Orange Free State (Bloemfontein), it does stand for a definite tendency in education which it has sought to convey by its full title, and carries a great deal of support from those who share its views all over the Union.”

What more can an institution want? We have the men, the buildings, the students, the standard of work—all we need further is more “abundant funds.” The commission goes on: “Your Commission's general impression is that all the materials for a good, well run and useful university exist in the Potchefstroom University College, but that it may be a matter of a few years before it attains the status which has seemed to the Commission adequate for university recognition.” And it concludes its report on our institution by recommending “that as soon as the Minister is satisfied . . . that the Potchefstroom University College is ripe for independent status, and has applied for such he should grant it such status by Proclamation or by Private Act of Parliament.”

Our Senate and Council have immediately taken up the suggestion. They have formally decided to notify the Minister of Education that following the report of his commission they now apply for independent status, considering that the Potchefstroom University College for Christian Higher Education will be ripe for independent status within a few years. No definite time has been set but the general idea is “within the next five years.” It will be a great day for us over here when our institution could become the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, an acknowledged and incorporated university in South Africa. That day will see the crowning point of our Calvinistic action in South Africa since the beginning of this type of higher education! Soli Deo Gloria!

With kind regards,
Sincerely yours,
J. CHR. CoETZEE.

THE IRISH EVANGELICAL CHURCH

15 College Sq., East, Belfast, North Ireland, October 20th, 1947.

Dr. C. Bouma,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dear Professor Bouma:

On October 16th, 1927, it was decided at a special meeting in Belfast to form a new religious organization to be known as the Irish Evangelical Church. This was because of the radical departure of the Irish Presbyterian Church from the teaching of the Word of God and its own subordinate standards. That was twenty years ago. On October 11th, 1947, at a special representative meeting of the Irish Evangelical Church, its twentieth anniversary was celebrated. The past was reviewed, the present position outlined, and the future anticipated.

I was unable to attend this anniversary service, much as I should have liked to have done so, but with THE CALVIN FORUM in mind, I asked a member of the Council of the Irish Evangelical Church to favour me with an outline of the proceedings. I now present the report sent in to me by a very staunch supporter of our Church, Mr. W. A. Sampson. He writes:

“A special service was held in Botanic Avenue Irish Evangelical Church, Belfast, to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the denomination. The speakers for the occasion were Rev. W. J. Grier, B.A., minister of the Botanic Avenue Church and editor of the Irish Evangelical, and Rev. G. N. M. Collins, B.D., minister of the Free St. Columbia Church, Edinburgh. Rev. C. H. Garland, Chairman of Council, presided, and members from the various congregations of the Church were present.

"Mr. Grier referred to the little meeting held in Fountain St., Belfast, on 15th October, 1927, at which the Irish Evangelical Church was started, and pointed out that only five persons are alive today who attended that meeting.

"Those who formed the new Church had previously been members of the Irish Presbyterian Church, and Mr. Grier asked the question. Were they guilty of schism in severing their connection with that body? Those who leave churches on inadequate grounds, he said, are schismatics because they violate the doctrine of the oneness of the body of Christ. To answer the question Mr. Grier reviewed briefly the circumstances which led these believers to leave the Irish Presbyterian Church. Owing to the modernistic teaching given by the faculty of the Assembly’s College practically the entire student body petitioned the General Assembly of 1925 asking for ‘relief with respect to the formula of subscription.’ They objected to the term ‘Word of God’ being applied to the Holy Scriptures. Needless to say, they had the support of the professors as well as prominent ministers in the Church.

"As the Church was drifting farther and farther away from the teaching of the Scriptures and the Westminster Confession
of Faith, Rev. James Hunter, M.A., issued a number of pamphlets in the year 1926 calling the attention of Irish Presbyterians of Faith, Rev. James Hunter, M.A., to the serious state of affairs. These contained extracts from the lectures and writings of men prominent in the Church, and they showed how radical was their departure from the Reformed way of Salvation. He concluded by saying that the controversy which led to the formation of the Irish Evangelical Church was not concerned with non-essentials, but with the vital doctrines of the Christian faith. Those who loved these doctrines were not therefore schismatics when they seceded from a church which showed by the decision of its highest court that it had departed from them.

"Mr. Collins based his remarks on Hebrews 13:13, 'Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.' Referring to the difficulties of the Hebrews, he said that the hardest thing a man can be called upon to do is to re-think his religion. The text indicated a course to be followed. Alexander McLaren had said that 'Christ without the camp beckons his disciples to him.' The call of God is a separating call. The Christian must be separated in profession, conduct and spiritual loyalty from those who do not obey the gospel. The paramount loyalty of the believer is to Heaven's King. He must separate himself from any form of religion which denies to Christ any of His crowns.

"The text also reminded us of a burden to be borne. The reproach referred to were the reproaches which were cast at Him. There was the reproach of singularity. His enemies accounted for it by saying He had a devil and was mad. There was also the reproach of bigotry. The finality of Christianity was stressed from the beginning and this brought down upon it the enmity of other religions. Ecumenicity is the magic word today. We are exhorted to keep stressing the things common to all religions and somehow we will have peace upon earth. Would such a religion be worthwhile? As C. H. Spurgeon had said 'the truth is not ours to chop and change.' This truth realized led to the Reformation, to the forming of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843 and its continuance as a separate body from 1900 onwards, and to the organization of the Irish Evangelical Church in 1927.

"The text also spoke of an example to be followed. Jesus refused to be conformed to this world, and testified against its sins. We are never to compromise truth on the altar of a false charity. Jesus suffered without the camp. He bore our sins and carried our sorrows without being under any compulsion to do so. Let the fact of our indebtedness to Him be known. Let us go to Him without the camp bearing His reproach. We cannot go without a burden, but the gain vastly outweighs the loss. We can be assured that with Him we are on the winning side. His name forever shall endure.

"An interval was reserved for prayer, and Rev. C. E. Hunter suitably led the congregation to the throne of grace."

In these days when Modernists are talking of union, and in this country where a leading modernist Methodist minister, Leslie D. Weatherhead, gives support and approval to a modernist Bishop, Bishop Barnes, there is a greater need than ever for Evangelicals the world over to stand firm in a union of orthodoxy, and to defend with the utmost zeal the glorious heritage of the Reformation.

Extending to you all hearty Christian greetings,
Yours through Sovereign Grace,

Fred S. Leahy.
THREE APOLOGETIC WORKS


THERE are three books all of them fine specimens of the kind of apologetic for our Faith which are based upon scholarly study but can be enjoyed by any intelligent layman without special theological training.

The last two are reprints of books written by Dr. Machen when he was still at Princeton. Both of them are classics and deserve to be reprinted and read widely. In Christianism and Liberalism the main contention is that the modern liberal interpretation of the Christian Faith is a complete distortion of that Faith and the contrast between the two is shown on the score of the great doctrines: God and Man, the Bible, Christ, Salvation, and the Church. In What is Faith? Dr. Machen again champions the traditional concept of the Christian doctrine, but this time from the point of view of Faith, both objectively and subjectively viewed. These are the sort of books that intelligent laymen especially ought to read to be informed on the struggle of our day. The way to keep the memory of Dr. Machen green is to read his books.

Dr. Craig's book, published last year, champions historic, orthodox Christianity but he does so by showing that Christianity is a definite historical magnitude whose to-be-or-not-to-be depends upon maintaining the essential elements which constitute it. Repeatedly he insists the question he is discussing in the book is not Is Christianity True? but, What is Christianity? The thrust of his argument is that there are certain facts and truths so inextricably wrapped up with historic Christianity that to deny or repudiate them makes it impossible to claim the Christian name. That this must lead him to distilling an ultimate essence, a least-common denominator Faith that can serve as a criterion is apparent. He does so when finally in the next to the last chapter he sets up four "Test Questions" to determine whether what one believes is Christianity rightly so called or not. The precariously of this procedure is apparent but one cannot ignore the question, Is Christianity True? the truth of this Christianity is raised, and the author states not only that the Christian Church has always contended that this Faith was true, but also that the "great heroes of the Christian faith have maintained, that the Christian is the only true rationalist." And he goes on to say: "The court of reason here, as elsewhere, is at least the court of original jurisdiction. If not-suited in the court of reason, Christianity will be denied a hearing in every appellate court." This typically Warfieldian position anent the task of apologetics raises some important questions upon which Dr. Craig does not enter.

Quite apart from this issue, the book as a whole has great value in pointing out that supernaturalism, a high Christology, a real doctrine of the atonement, and the need for supernatural regeneration are integral elements of the historic faith that cannot be denied without forfeiting the Christian name.

C.B.

VAN WYK'S SERMON NOTES CONTINUED


By this time the late Reverend William P. Van Wyk's Sermon Notes are both widely and favorably known. For this reason it might suffice to say of the volume announced above that it sustains the splendid reputation as a model preacher which its author had already established. This is the fifth volume of Sermon Notes that stands to his credit. On a fly-leaf of the book we are told as a bit of good news that two further volumes of Sermon Notes are in preparation: one on "Old Testament Characters" and one on "Biblical Characters." The lamented author's Sermon Notes are beginning to constitute a veritable library of works of this genre.

As the title of the work now under review indicates, this volume brings us Notes of Sermons on doctrinal material. Thirty sketches are collected in this volume. Six of these skeletal sermons deal with a variety of interesting subjects, while the remaining twenty-four are occupied with the twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed. Brother Van Wyk was admirably apt at blending exposition and application, as appears from all his Sermon Notes. Owing to this happy talent of expounding God's truth applicatorily and applying God's truth expositively, his sermons escaped the danger of being either abstract and dull or showy and treposessive. As he presented doctrinal truth, it throbbed with life. In an age and land in which doctrinal preaching is not popular at all, perhaps excusably so, these Sermon Notes give clear and satisfying evidence that doctrinal preaching can be as interesting as it is necessary.

It may not be amiss to quote the author's Preface in part. The paragraph concerned reads as follows: "I realize that among ministers and workers, there is no danger that any may consider these Notes as an easy way out of the difficulty of sermon-making. It stands to reason that I would not submit these Notes to encourage those who merely copy them as they are. This book is offered rather as a guide for individual study of the Scriptures."

It is not without significance that the author felt constrained to include this paragraph in his Preface, in spite of his avowed optimism as regards the absence of the danger of copyism. Manifestly he did not want any minister to preach his sermons. What he strove to do—and he did it with eminent success—is to show by example what good doctrinal sermons are like. May such doctrinal sermons as the Reverend Van Wyk preached in his day on earth be published from an ever-increasing number of pulpits in our fair land.

S. VOLSEDA.

MACHEN RE-ISSUED


THE eloquent and sincere voice of the late stalwart of orthodox presbyterianism speaks once again in these recently republished works. The first edition of these companion volumes appeared in 1936; this is the second. The publishers might well have made it more obvious on the frontispiece that this is a subsequent edition. One's first impression is that he has the first and original edition in his hands. The preface remains as it was in the first edition and has no appendantatory statement. This may seem to be a matter of small moment, but, after all, there is something unique about the edition that comes fresh from the author's hand, and collectors of first editions will resent or at least regret this deficiency.

As a note that is issued, the publishers, who have rendered a valuable service in making these books available again. There is a logical sequence in the two volumes under consideration. That is to be expected since they constitute two sets of radio messages delivered in 1935, the first one dealing with the subject of the authority of the Bible and the Biblical doctrine of God while the second deals with the subject of the Biblical doctrine of man in relationship to the decrees of God. The fact that they were written for the rank and file accounts for their popular character. They are couched in simple style. The illustrations and analogies are choice and to the point. The paragraph concerned reads as follows: 

...
BIBLE STORIES FOR CHILDREN

There are so many books of Bible stories on the market that a new collection must have unusual merit or distinction if it is to gain recognition. "In this book," says Miss Schoolland in her Preface, "Bible stories have been selected and simplified for the very young child." That is the particular distinction of this volume—the stories are written for young children and written remarkably well. Writing stories for children is an art that requires peculiar skill and experience. Miss Schoolland has both the skill and the experience. She has gained a wide reputation as a successful writer of children's tales. Her books about nature have captivated a wide audience. Now she has turned her skill to tell Bible stories, designed, the publisher states, to be read to and by children from three to eight years old.

Her style is right for the young child. She uses simple, concrete words. Her sentences are brief and clear; they have dignity and beauty. The stories are short enough to hold a small child's attention, but long enough to give him a vivid picture and a well-defined idea. They are excellent for reading aloud, and a school child will find it easy to read the short paragraphs himself.

The selection of material is good. Long sections of the Bible which are hard for children to follow are summarized in a few sentences. Lengthy episodes are condensed; there is drama or some compelling interest in every short chapter unit. "But in each story the author has earnestly sought to be true to the purpose of the Bible, to keep God at the center, to show Him to the child." This is Miss Schoolland's statement of her objectives and she never loses sight of it.

The book is illustrated by Reynold Weidenaar, a nationally known artist. One of the drawings has been exhibited at the National Academy of Design; all of them might well be put on display, for they are all outstanding. I feel, however, that the fine art of these splendid drawings will not be appreciated by children, who like the obvious rather than the subtle. The intricate detail and the plain brown of these sepia drawings will not have much appeal for small children. But adults will appreciate them. And it may be that these drawings will make the volume a collector's item.

The drawings are not well placed in relation to the stories. It is confusing, certainly to a child, to see opposite a chapter title "Samson's Last Deed," an illustration "Elijah Goes to Heaven." Of the sixteen illustrations only one drawing is relevant to the material of the chapter in which it is placed. It is a defect, also, in the make-up of the book that there is no "List of Illustrations." But these are minor flaws which can easily be remedied in future editions.

There undoubtedly will be future editions of this excellent volume. I found it easier to hold the attention of a four-year-old child with this version of Bible stories than with any other collection I have read aloud. Parents and teachers would do well to remember Marian's Book of Bible Stories when they are selecting books for a child's Christmas gift.

MILNEED ZYLAIRA.

REMBRANDT ETCHINGS

This beautiful edition of 54 of Rembrandt's etchings is published in our own country, both in the form of an album and in that of a Calendar and Engagement Book for 1948. The same firm published last year a fine book of 64 Dutch paintings. Many museums are publishing books with Dutch Art illustrations; for instance, the Metropolitan Museum in New York. But the collections of the Querido firm are certainly outstanding as to quality and price. No person interested in Dutch Art will be disappointed in this booklet.

The size of some of these etchings has been reduced, but almost any of them will make a pleasant decoration for a quiet corner in the living room, in the study or library, or in a smaller room. Their variety is appealing. One finds the famous Hundred Guilder Print, Christ Healing the Sick, and many more of religious subjects, but also pictures from Amsterdam life, from nature, and from portraiture. Rembrandt's etchings went all over the world in his own day, and influenced even Chinese draftsmen. They have the same simplicity, universality, and mystery as his paintings. Rembrandt can say more in a few rugged lines than many others who indulge in finesses. He has fathomed the depths of human life and the symbolism of nature more truly than anyone else. He speaks especially to those who have suffered, and who found consolation in real Christianity. His works are full of tragedy, but there is always the ray of hope. Rembrandt was not a defeatist. He understood, not only as an artist, but as a Christian, how life becomes victorious; namely, through a complete surrender to the Triune God. And so he falls in line with Augustine, Thomas à Kempis, and John Calvin. This booklet will, therefore, make an excellent Christmas gift for people who care to look not only for beauty, but also for consolation and spiritual joy.

HENRY J. VAN ANDEL.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

It is not the duty of the Christian in the first place to be engaged in apologetics. It is his duty first of all to be a witness. Instead of being on the defensive he must be on the offensive." This is a paraphrase translation of Dr. Wurth's approach. He desires to place men before the choice: for or against Christ, "yes" or "no." We have to learn to talk to and with the world and let our claims be heard.

This book is a book in Christian ethics. Especially in view of the dire need of more Reformed treatises on Christian ethics, we welcome this book most heartily. It is also an appraisal of the positions of our antagonists. The author faces the issues of today. We admire his breadth and depth of knowledge disguised in very readable Dutch.


This book is a positive Reformed answer to these questions. It leaves behind the desire to know more of the law of the Lord and to delight in it daily.

JACOB T. HOOGSTRA.

THE CALVIN FORUM * * * DECEMBER, 1947