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Ownership and Trusteeship

We Americans have within our boundaries almost all, if not every one, of the varieties of climate and of natural resources which this earth offers us. Other countries may have greater natural wonders of certain kinds than we can claim, but for variety and abundance of the gifts of nature and for remarkable and ingenious appropriation of these gifts, no other nation can equal us. Our mineral resources, our western forests, our deserts which now, in thousands of square miles, actually “blossom as a rose”, our great expanses of farm lands which this year have produced vegetation so lush and beautiful that even the blasé American is speechless in his admiration of them, our resources in great streams of water and in great sources of power—all this and much more is ours to use and enjoy. How grateful we should be!

“All this is ours!” we say quite boastfully. No wonder that foreigners who visit us and who doubtless are amazed at our good fortune are at times, and understandably, almost a bit ungracious in their inability or unwillingness to gush over what we proudly point out to them as belonging to us. We so easily forget that the earth and the fulness thereof belongs to the Lord. The earth is actually, tangibly ours and we are inclined to revel in its bounties, inclined, in our gloating, to forget that all that we have we have as a trust for future generations as well as for the present.

Our sense of possession and our almost glutinous exploitation of what we have makes us insensitive to the responsibilities and privileges of our trusteeship. One of the great privileges is the opportunity given to us to see the glories of God’s creation. We ourselves do not see, nor do we train our children to appreciate the beauty and the glory of what God has given us. As one writer puts it, “Mankind walks blind through hurricanes of beauty and never sees them”. This year more Americans are on the highways than ever before. Recreation areas are crowded. Our beauty spots are overrun. Few, however, really see the beauty that the Creator has given us to behold. Sometimes an artist sees the beauty and paints his conception of it on his canvas. Occasionally a poet sees it and breaks into song. Some men, it is true, do see the beauty of the creation and they may, through their words and their deeds, match the beauty of a bird on the wing, of a mountain top concealed by snow and cloud, or of a sturdy monarch of the great and silent forest. But the “men who discover beauty keep it mostly to themselves, and the majority of mankind do not discover it at all.”

Just as we are often insensitive to and inappreciative of the glories of our resources and the privilege that is ours to enjoy them, we are slow to realize how we can meet the obligations of our trusteeship while using them. This is not the place to repeat the catalog of wasteful usages of which we have been guilty. Let us be reminded that we are doing much to protect what we have and to preserve it for posterity. Let us heed the mandate also that we can and must do much more. To point out only one instance, the success of the Tennessee River Valley project suggests what might be done in the Columbia River Valley, where a repetition of this year’s disastrous floods can be prevented in great measure, if we but try. As our knowledge of what we have done to our resources increases and as our vision as to what can be done becomes clearer, we have the greater responsibility to accept in trust what has been given us and to use it for the greater benefit of all men.

H. J. R.

Economic Co-operation Administration

The newspapers have been reporting the huge sums which this nation is agreeing to lend to the nations of Western Europe in order to implement the Marshall Plan. Although this is indisputable evidence of our intention to check the growing influence of Russia in Europe, it is, there is little reason to doubt, evidence also of a genuine desire to help the needy peoples of the western world. It is more than a sentimental gesture. The coöperation we are offering to Europe is carefully planned and it calls for effort on the part of Europeans as well as for cash and effort on our part. In order to see to it that the funds loaned to Europe shall further the attainment of the purpose for which they are intended, we have set up the Economic Coöperation Administration to administer the lending and spending of them.

The E.C.A. is headed by a distinguished American who has demonstrated not only his public spirit, but also his administrative ability. He is Mr. Paul G. Hoffman, well known as the former president of the Studebaker Corporation and also as the chairman of the Committee for Economic Development during the war. The Administration, as he has set it up, calls for the active participation of Europeans as well as Americans in enlisting all kinds
of activity for European recovery. It involves planning by representatives of all interested groups. The economic statesmanship of Mr. Hoffman is evidenced by his considered attempts to enlist the cooperation of labor groups in his planning. Labor leaders are prominent in the group of Americans whom Mr. Hoffman is using to determine Western Europe's need for aid. European labor leaders are thus brought into contact with Americans who have a sympathetic understanding of labor's problems and who view Europe's problems from the point of view of the workingman as well as from that of the business man.

From all reports this appears to be more than a gesture. It is part of a realistic attempt to get Europe's economy to function for the benefit of all classes and thus to furnish the basis for sound recovery. If successful, it should help the Europeans to repair the damage done by the war and to enable them again to return to productive exploitation of their resources. Although not as bountifully supplied with the gifts of nature as we are, Western Europe has in the past taught the world many a lesson in the careful husbanding and development of God's gifts to man.

It is noteworthy that in administering the granting of loans to Europe the E.C.A. has decided to work not only with the various groups vitally affected by its program, but also with the governments now in existence in the various European states. There is no attempt in this Administration directly to determine the course of politics in the countries concerned.

H. J. R.

Political Alignment and World Responsibility

We are interested in the recovery of Western Europe because the continued economic prosperity of this country is dependent upon prosperity in the rest of the world with which we have in the past actively engaged in trade. The peoples of Western Europe are, by the same token, greatly interested in the continued economic prosperity of this country.

It goes without saying that the people of Europe are concerned about the outcome of the presidential election in this country, especially since the political alignment in this country is that of labor (through the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O.) and the so-called more radical elements which support the Democratic and Progressive parties, over against the business and more conservative elements which are represented by the Republican party. In Europe the big issue for years has been that of capital versus labor, and Europeans are, therefore, keenly interested in what is happening here.

Mr. Truman, the underdog in the presidential campaign, has been making sharp and bitter attacks upon the Republicans, as well as dire predictions as to what will happen to labor if the Republicans win. Mr. Dewey, carrying on a confident and less belligerent campaign, has not been averse to making capital of anti-communist feeling by campaign promises to rid the administration of communists. This anti-communist feeling is often stirred up against labor leaders also, and especially by opponents of the present administration. Although it is true beyond any doubt that communists have bored their way into the unions, the sweeping charges of communist control are obviously unfounded.

There is little doubt that the future political alignment in this country threatens to be that of labor versus capital or business management. Mr. Truman is, of course, outspokeenly the friend of labor and the foe of the "plutocrats". Mr. Dewey, up to this writing, has not come out with a program that will win the general support of labor. If the lines between labor and management do come to be more tightly drawn, name-calling or evasion of issues by our presidential candidates does not augur well for the future.

Fortunately, in a way, much of what is said in the campaign is only pre-election talk. After the campaign the oratory is soon forgotten. Unfortunately, however, the situation which has been developing in this country is one that should cause us deep concern. Cleavages are developing now which, if they continue to widen, bode little good for the future.

It is almost a foregone conclusion that the Republican candidate of this year will be our next president. Mr. Dewey has, we are told, as large and as capable a "brain trust" as Franklin Roosevelt ever had. It is not, we are reminded, composed so largely of college professors and of theorists as Roosevelt's was, and the implication is that, therefore, it will give the country wiser guidance. Whether this be true or not, Dewey's advisers should include a number of men whose experience enables them to give sympathetic consideration to the needs of labor.

The excesses, especially the looseness of the Roosevelt administration, are now a matter of record. The record of the Dewey administration, if Dewey is elected, is still to be made. It will not be a sound record if the country is given a lot of moralizing about the evils of government planning in Europe, in such countries as England, France, and Holland, and a lot of rationalization concerning what is actually going on in this country. Today the rationalization of the huge profits being made

* This was written about two weeks before election day.—Editor.
in industry and trade are almost infuriating to labor, the trust in an economy regulated by price bitterly ironical to labor, in the face of the general concern as to what may happen to our economy if “things get out of whack”. It is to be hoped that the next administration can foster more cooperation between the two great groups in industry than the present one has. An Economic Co-operation Administration for this country would seem to be as necessary as one for Europe.

No matter which party it is that wins the election, we can be certain that the administration that is set up next January will assume the responsibility of governing a country whose available resources are as great as those of any country in the world’s history. The new administration must attempt to govern our affairs in such a manner that men do not only exploit the resources we have, but replenish them also, that they do this not only in the case of material resources, but in the case of human resources as well. The opportunities facing the administration are great. It will have to meet them, however, with the staggering burden of a great national debt, the possibility of class division and struggle in this country, and the ever-present spectre of friction and of war in international relations. The times call for much self-examination and individual self-discipline, but they also call for thoughtful governmental supervision and for collective discipline. May the new administration merit the trust that the American people place in it. 

H. J. R.

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**Without Words**

Could I but fashion into words this Autumn season,
Find phrases rich in color as yonder flaming tree,
Or paint with pen the golden wealth spilled out
Beneath each hedgerow. Oh, that I could be
Articulate enough to set in rhyme the whisper
Of each gay gypsied leaf that softly spirals down,
Set into meter the ragged river’s plunging
Through sumaced hill and smoke-blued town.
I must remember these fall days surfeit with color
Before the silent snow sifts down. Oh, could I hold
 Forever each dark winging coterie of birds,
Each rain-wet, fallen leaf, frost rimed, this first bright cold
Of afternoons. I cast aside my silent pen
To fill my heart instead with hill and stook-filled field
And thank God Autumn comes each year again.

Grand Rapids

—Marie J. Post

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THE CALVIN FORUM * * * NOVEMBER, 1948
The Federal Government and Education

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IT IS a well-known fact that in recent decades the federal government has been increasingly active in the field of education. This increased activity has brought into the open a sharp divergence of opinion on the part of our educators and citizens generally. On the one hand there are those who view the trend with alarm; on the other hand there are those who consider recent developments as long overdue. Orthodox Christians are also divided on this issue, some favoring and others disapproving of increased federal participation in education. This being the case, a discussion of this major problem and the issues involved seems desirable.

One of the arguments of those opposed to federal intervention is that it is a violation of the federal constitution. Article X of the Bill of Rights specifically states that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively or to the people." Since education is not expressly mentioned in the Constitution, so runs the argument, it was the purpose of those who drafted the Constitution to make education a function of the governments of the several states.

It is also contended that federal aid to education must of necessity lead to federal control and that such control inevitably leads to state socialism and totalitarian regimentation. German Nazism, Italian Fascism, and Russian Communism are cited as warning examples of what happens when education is controlled by the central government. Many of those who manifest this fear accept explicitly or implicitly the Jeffersonian negative conception of government that "that government is best which governs least."

Some object to federal participation in education on the ground that it violates the very nature of education. Sound education is grounded in a set of personal relationships, those between teacher and parent, teacher and pupil, school and community; it must spring from the "grass-roots" and therefore must be localistic in character. Any extension of federal participation tends toward the development of an impersonal bureaucracy which stultifies and even kills the true spirit of education.

There are those who see in federal subsidy a threat to private and parochial education. Since private and parochial educational ventures are usually affairs of the local community, such ventures will be looked upon with disfavor by a centralized federal agency as being out of keeping with the established pattern of education.

That there is some strength in the arguments just advanced no one can deny. The dangers cited are very real. Here also "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

On the other hand, there are also weighty arguments presented by those in favor of increased federal participation. They dispute the contention that it was the intention of the drafters of the Constitution to reserve education to the various states. At the time the federal constitution was adopted, the establishment of a comprehensive system of education was not commonly regarded as a function of government at any level—federal, state, or local. Even though some of the contemporary state constitutions did include some general indefinite pronouncements on education, the widespread sentiment at that time was that education was a private, religious, or philanthropic function. Although in the subsequent century and a half there was an increasing tendency to view education as a function of government at the local and state levels, this is not to be attributed to any Constitutional principle involved but is to be explained in terms of historical conditions. Moreover, the Constitution itself in its preamble in the clause "to promote the general welfare" confers upon Congress broad powers in the field of education. Under this "general welfare" clause Congress has passed various laws providing land grants, gifts of money, and subventions for education. The Morrill Act of 1862, paving the way for the establishment of land-grant colleges, and the Smith-Hughes Law of 1917, supplemented by the George-Deen Act of 1936, providing for federal aid for vocational and agricultural education are illustrative of this type of legislation.

That such aid leads to a certain amount of federal control is admitted. It is the moral duty of government to provide certain controls relative to the expenditure of its funds. In no case, however, has such control extended beyond providing the...
proper safeguards regarding such expenditure. The administration of education in the various fields subsidized by the federal government has largely been left to the local and state agencies.

Those who favor federal aid do not believe that such control inevitably leads to totalitarianism. They point to various European countries such as Netherlands, France, and others, which have a long tradition of centralized governmental control of education and which have in the main not succumbed to totalitarian control. Whether or not increased federal participation will result in regimentation depends on the individuals placed at the helm of the Ship of State. It still remains true "that governments, whatever their form, are only as moral as those who hold the throttle of power at the moment."

Then again, it is argued, the negative conception of government which would place rigid limitations on governmental authority is not a defensible one. Government is more than an agency to restrain the wicked; its task is also that of promoting and carrying out a positive social program. The laisser-faire theory of government is not a product of Christianity; it is an application in the field of politics and statecraft of the basic principles of 17th and 18th century liberalism with its unbounded faith in the essential goodness and humanity of man and its emphasis on human dignity and individual rights.

A growing federal interest in education, it is further maintained, need not per se destroy local initiative and interest in education. In fact, historically the opposite seems to be the case. The interest of local communities in agricultural and vocational education, for example, has been deepened as a result of federal subventions in these fields.

The contention that federal intervention jeopardizes the existence of private and parochial schools is also considered to be groundless by the proponents of federal aid. It is their contention that it is the federal government which has safeguarded the continued operation of such schools. About a quarter of a century ago the Hamilton amendment, which by requiring all children between given ages to attend a public school would in effect have closed all private and parochial schools, was submitted to the electorate in Michigan. Although the amendment was defeated, a similar proposal was enacted into law in the state of Oregon and was upheld by the supreme court of that state. The case was appealed to the United States Supreme Court, which declared the law void on the ground that it unreasonably interfered with the rights of the parents in the upbringing and education of their children. The federal court said:

The fundamental theory of liberty upon which all governments of this Union repose excludes any general power of the state to standardize its children by forcing them to accept instruction from public teachers only. The child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations.

A compelling reason advanced by those favoring federal aid for education is the need for a greater equality of educational opportunity. There are marked differences in educational opportunity, both within each of the several states and among various states and regions of the country. In some states the more prosperous school districts have more than one hundred times the taxable wealth per child than do the poorer school districts. Great differences in taxable wealth and ability to educate their children also exist among the several states and regions of the nation as a whole. States and regions predominantly rural are also the ones where the number of children is the largest and the per capita income the lowest. The educational advantages of the child in the industrial North are markedly superior to those of the agricultural South. Such inequalities cannot be looked upon with complacency by any fair-minded American citizen.

The existing inequalities within the several states can to a certain extent be solved by the states themselves by establishing state equalization funds for the purpose of subsidizing local communities too poor to support an adequate educational program through local taxation. Many States have already passed such equalization laws.

However, there is no agency other than the federal government that can correct the educational inequalities among the States. The great disparities among States in the support of education are not to be attributed to lack of interest or of effort on the part of the States providing the least support. There is ample evidence to indicate that with few exceptions States of low financial ability rank high in the percentage of income devoted to schools but rank low in the quality of education provided. States with the poorest educational systems are spending more of their income for school support than are the States with the best educational system.

These facts definitely point to the need of some form of federal aid or subsidy. Such aid will serve as an incentive to local school communities, now suffering from a sense of frustration because of crushing educational burdens, to take renewed interest in their school programs.

Not only does a sense of fairness and equity demand a certain measure of federal support for education, but such support is also in the interest of the nation as a whole. Our economy has become highly integrated and interdependent. No community lives unto itself. In the last half century there has been an increasing migration of population from the rural districts to the cities. More particularly the migration has been greatest from the rural communities of the South where in general the educational advantages are most meagre to the urban communities of the North where the educational systems are comparatively highly developed. Since the birth rate in the cities of the North is too low to maintain their present population, these cities must continue to look to the rural communities to supply...
population reserves. Even from the point of view of self-interest the industrial North cannot be indifferent to the type of education given to the boys and girls in the schools of the rural South. The problem of equalization of educational opportunity is clearly one that is national in its scope.

Calvinists are generally committed to the view that education is a function of the home and not of the State or of the Church. As citizens of the Republic, however, American Calvinists cannot ignore the fact that ninety per cent of the coming generation are being trained in public schools. The question of educational support is one to which no American citizen can afford to be indifferent. The issues involved in federal support must be honestly weighed and considered. To raise the cry of paternalism, regimentation, or even Communism whenever federal aid is proposed as a means of correcting some of the educational inequalities will get us nowhere in the solution of the problems involved.

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**Shade or Fruit?**

A group of orchardists sat in the shade of a tree.

The spiritual leaders of a church sat in their council chambers.

The tree was an apple tree, but its foliage was thick with leafy branches and the apples were few and scattered, and there were many spots where no fruit appeared at all. It made an excellent shade, but was a poor example of an apple tree.

The church had a great Christian tradition, but it was rife with inactive and delinquent members. The members were scattered in all parts of the city, some were in distant parts of the country, and many never exercised any spiritual responsibility at all. The church owned a fine old building in an expensive section of town and enjoyed the reputation in the community of being tolerant and broad-minded. Almost anyone could ask for and receive its ministrations.

The owner of the orchard came and protested to the orchardists, "Why don't you prune that tree?"

God came to the church in the form of a preacher who believed His Word and He said, "Why don't you carry out church discipline in this church?"

One workman replied: "Oh, but that hurts the tree and makes it bleed."

One elder said, "Oh, but discipline hurts people's feelings. The members are interrelated, and whole families may be offended."

Another said, "But then, Master, the tree will not cast as much shade."

Another elder said, "That will put us in a bad light. Previous officers have not done it, we will not be in office long; we'd rather not take the responsibility."

A third workman spoke: "Then the tree will lose much of its fine imposing appearance. This tree stands in the front of your orchard, near the highway, where all the traffic passes by. Surely, you want the best-looking tree where it can be seen. Pruning is all very well for the trees farther back, but we regard this tree as an exception."

A young deacon spoke up: "If we carry on discipline, we will lose prestige and we will have hard work to keep up our beautiful property. This church is strategically located near downtown and it has a responsibility to the community to maintain. Discipline is all very well for churches in outlying areas, but we regard this cosmopolitan congregation as an exception."

At these answers, the owner was angry and cried, "I am not interested in raising shade-trees. These trees are supposed to bear fruit. As for those who pass by on the high way, they would be the first to see that the tree has no fruit and they will criticize me and my orchard. They will not blame you."

Then God and His servant were angry and said, "I did not send my Son to suffer and die that big organizations might arise to shelter anyone who desires the social polish of church affiliation. My church is intended to bring forth fruit meet for repentance.' As for your influence in the community, the world outside the church is the first to see the sins and inconsistencies of those who profess the Faith and it does not blame its leaders, it casts reproach upon Me and upon My Word."

"If you do not prune this tree," went on the owner, "I shall come personally some time when you least expect it and I will cut the tree out by the roots and burn it."

"Prune it or it perishes!"

"If you do not cleanse my church", says the Lord, "I will come unto thee, quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of its place. I will root up your proud church and destroy it in the fierce heat of my wrath."

"Discipline or Death!"

—ALAN BANDON
Christian Principles and the Organization of Labor

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It is generally agreed that the modern labor unions have done a great deal of good, as many a laboring man will testify. Where organized labor has reared its head, wages have increased together with a corresponding decrease in the number of hours worked for this higher pay. Working conditions have been improved immeasurably, unemployment insurance and sick benefits have been secured, and all in all organized labor has proved a boon to the laboring man.

This modern labor movement was born of necessity. For many long years labor was exploited by the employer as simply another commodity to be bought at the lowest price possible. Gradually the conviction grew that if the laborer was going to improve his condition, he must needs organize. The sweat-shop methods and dangerous working conditions together with slim pay envelopes could not be eradicated by individuals. To oppose Capitalism pure and simple. Through the adherents of Socialism was preached to the working class, class consciousness, and class struggle. These were and are the bonds which hold the working people together.

What is the Issue?

It is our distinct task in this paper to try to evaluate the labor organizations as we have them today, and to see whether or not our Christian principles are in accord with these. Permit me to begin by saying that there are those who suppose that the Church and religion has nothing to do with the realm of economics and the economic factors present in the labor struggle of today. It is their claim that the duty of the Church is to bring persons in relation with Christ, and this does not entail its entrance into the social and economic fabric of our world today. We cannot permit such a position to stand unchallenged.

It is indeed a biased view which separates the spiritual and the physical as though they are in complete opposition to one another. It would indeed be very strange if the spiritual life of the Christian had no bearing on his physical acts. It is very true that it is the duty of the Church to bring the sinner to the Cross of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit, but it is also the duty of the Church to point out the road in which the Cross must be brought to bear on the world. Therefore the Christian does not merely discover his personal salvation in Christ, but also how this personal salvation must come to expression in a redeemed member of the human race. He is a high-priest who must bring all things to the honor and the glory of God, and only the Christian can be a true high-priest in this world, for he alone realizes his purpose as a creature of God. To properly perform his high-priestly work requires dedication of purpose and steadfastness of character for he must battle sin at every turn.

Moreover, because the significance of the new life within us has a cosmological as well as a soteriological bearing, we must, through belief in Christ, mediate this new life to the world. “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Ephesians 5:11.)

The Bible clearly impresses us with the above mentioned truth when we turn its pages. It not only gives us a story of the redemption which is offered to mankind, but it also gives us the ethic by which our home life, social life, and state life should be governed. For instance, how many times does not Paul refer to the social and economic fabric of his day when he speaks of the servant-master relationship. The Christian cannot bow his head in a passive attitude before evil in any sphere of
life, but instead he must fight "the good fight of faith." The Christian, therefore, has a place in the labor struggle of today. But do the principles of the new life in Christ clash with his membership in the unions of today?

The only way in which we can judge the unionism of today is to ask ourselves several important questions. First of all are the constitutions of the unions of today anti-Christian in their character or not? Secondly, are the aims of the unions of today motivated by a Christian spirit of righteousness, or are they trying only to achieve the supposed rights of a certain class of people? Thirdly, are the means which are used to achieve their ends in accordance with the Word of God? If we can answer these questions to our satisfaction, then we can give some evaluations of the unionism of today.

The Constitution of Unionism

In speaking of the constitutions of certain unions today, there are some which are definitely anti-Christian. As I'm writing, I have at my elbow the constitution of the International Typographical Union, and I should like to quote it in full:

"I hereby solemnly and sincerely swear (or affirm) that I will not reveal any business or proceedings of any meeting of this or any subordinate union to which I may hereafter be attached, unless by order of the union, except to those whom I know to be members in good standing thereof; that I will, without equivocation or evasion, and to the best of my ability, abide by the constitution, by-laws and the adopted scale of prices of any union to which I may belong; that I will at all times support the laws, regulations, and decisions of the International Typographical Union and will carefully avoid giving aid or succor to its enemies, and use all honorable means within my power to procure employment for members of the International Typographical Union in preference to others; that my fidelity to the union and my duty to the members thereof shall in no sense be interfered with by any allegiance that I may now or hereafter owe to any other organization, social, political or religious. For any Christian to make such a pledge is to deny his allegiance to Christ, for he places the things of this world above spiritual things. Moreover, in a previous statement the Christian would even bind his conscience for he must promise that "I will at all times support the laws, regulations, and decisions of the International Typographical Union." This union also takes upon itself a certain religious coloring when on page 117 of its constitution it provides a form for the funeral service of its members. This form is in the traditional Unitarian theology.

The constitutions of other unions in the AFL and the CIO are not so markedly anti-Christian and do not demand that one place his membership in the union above one's membership in the body of Christ. These are the so-called neutral unions, at least in so far as their constitution is concerned, for their constitutions are not contrary to the Word of God. There is even a certain fine moral tone in certain sections of these constitutions. I read in the constitution of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America (sec. 305): "Any member who enters the meeting in a state of intoxication, or who disturbs the harmony thereof, or who uses profane or unbecoming language, shall be admonished by the chair. If he again offends he shall be fined by the chair, not less than $1 nor more than $5, and may be removed from the hall." Whether this is carried out in practice or not is quite another matter, but the constitution as such is not anti-Christian.

The Objective of Unionism

The spirit which motivates the aims of unionism today can be summed up in this statement, that it is not justice which must be sought, but that which is bad for the laboring class is wrong, and that which is done for the good of the laboring person is right. This necessarily leads to a class struggle, and has caused one leading labor leader (Walter W. Cenerazzo, Watch Workers Union) to state in a letter to all the members of his union, "A few years ago our employers had it all their own way. Now the pendulum has swung toward us. Are we now going to show some sense? ... Some guys will yell: 'So you're company-minded.' Sure I'm company-minded. I'm union-minded too. A man who is only company-minded and who can't see the union except as something to plunder is a class-struggle man. To prevent the class struggle from wrecking the country, America must be union-minded and company-minded both." We may say what we will, but the fact remains that
there is more socialism with its class struggle in the unions of today than we imagine. Thankfully, there are some who see the danger of a class-struggle, but in the main, this is the desire of the unions, and constitutes their aim through which they hope to attain their objective of more for all.

Samuel Gompers reiterated time and again that neither he nor trade unionists in general ever declared that there exists or should exist "harmony between capital and labor." (The American Labor Movement, p. 23) Modern Labor leaders have taken over the same song and dance. Gradually it is coming to the light that the primary ideal of labor unions is not solely to gain for its workers a higher scale of wages, but rather to gain power and control. This incessant struggle for power by the modern unions can have only one result, if not stopped, and that is complete socialization of industry. Even as Gompers said many years ago, and history bears him out, "The working people will not stop, when any particular point is reached; they will never stop in their efforts to obtain a better life for themselves, for their wives, for their children and for all humanity." (The American Labor Movement, p. 20) Inevitably the unions of today are seeking the changing of the existing status quo. They are seeking their supposed rights irrespective of the rights of others. There is no attempt to seek after fair-dealing with the employers, but ever an attempt on the part of labor to take over the functions of management. Significant is the attitude of Reuther toward management, so that management, according to Lester Velie in Colliers, sees in him "the cocky but purposeful embodiment of a new type of unionism that threatens the authority of the management in its own house." Surely, a Christian cannot partake of this spirit in present day unionism with its aims. This is contradictory to the truths of Scripture. Rather the Christian must seek righteousness and fair play for both himself and the other man, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The Closed Shop

Let us now look at some of the methods of unionism today. The first I should like to mention is forced membership. Although curtailed by law to some extent it is still used widely to promote union security by methods allowed under the law, which in effect create a closed shop condition. There are several types of closed shops. The more common one, which is generally referred to as "the union shop," leaves an employer free to hire any one he desires. If, after a trial period, the employer finds the new employee satisfactory and makes him permanent, he is then required to join the union. The less frequent type is where a union maintains an employment office or hiring hall and supplies all employees. Even in these cases there is usually permitted to the employer a trial period during which he can demand another worker. However, the employer has to refuse to hire a prospective employee if he is not a member of the union or will not join it. Should an employer violate such a law, he would have a strike on his hands.

The union shop is gained in a factory through a majority vote and not by means of a unanimous vote. Such procedure is guaranteed by the Labor-Management Relations Act and is more rigidly enforced of late. There is no freedom accorded to the individual who, because of conscience, feels that he cannot join the union. He is either forced to join, or he must get out. This principle is definitely anti-Christian in that, as has happened in many instances, one must either over-ride his conscience, which is a very dangerous thing to do, or he must leave his job. In other instances, when there is pressure for a closed shop, some Christians have twinges of conscience while fellow Christians have no conscientious objections. These then discriminate against their fellow Christians by refusing to work with them because they are "scabs." This discrimination is expected and required by union regulations, which as in section 304 of the constitution of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators, and Paperhangers of America, AFL, usually demands that "No member of this brotherhood shall injure the interests of another by undermining him in prices or wages, or wilfully performing any other act by which the situation of any member may be placed in jeopardy; nor shall he be allowed to work at his trade, within the jurisdiction of any local union, with anyone who does not carry a membership card in the Brotherhood."

It is unreasonable to suppose that these brethren can gather in the communion of the saints and worship in brotherly love, while during the remaining part of the week the union brother has an economic dagger at his fellow Christian's throat and attempts to over-ride his conscience. Which brotherhood comes first, the brotherhood in Christ, or the union brotherhood? The commandment which Christ has given to us "That we love one another, as I have loved you" is not merely a love which finds its expression on Sunday, but it also demands that in our attitude and actions toward one another we show forth the love of the Christ. However, economic factors are frequently disturbing factors in the relationship of saints to one another. The government, moreover, makes no provision for the freedom of conscience with respect to this matter. The government in its legislation protects the group as a whole, but the individual person is submerged in the group, and hence, receives no protection. The conscientious objectors of the last war were given the permission of maintaining their religious con-
There are those who say that in a democracy the democratic principle of majority vote should determine these issues. Even as the congressman represents both those who voted for him and against him with the minority retaining only the right of petition and protest, so also it should be in the unions. However, there is a fallacy in this comparison. Though one may be of the minority of the voters voting for a congressman, still one does not have to join the other party. In the union he cannot even be a member of the minority, but must of necessity join “the other party,” and this contrary to his conscience.

The relation between an employer and an employee has been defined by our courts as that of master and servant, but the closed shop principle has shown the tendency of taking unto itself the rights of management, and thereby destroying the authority which rightfully belongs to the owner. The unions are not the owners, and having no investment entail no financial risk in the manufacture and disposal of goods; yet by means of the closed shop the union can virtually dictate as it sees fit. Unions will not honor the divine authority of the employer who generally occupies his place by virtue of certain talents with which God has endowed him above others. Moreover, the concept of private property, a form of possession which has existed since the beginning of the human race, cannot be destroyed by the Christian by force. This is to be condemned as a form of stealing, and in so far the right of private property is guarded by the Word of God.

The Strike

A means that goes hand in hand with the principle of the closed shop is the strike. This is simply a form of coercion which frequently leads to violence, and forms a threat by which the unions attempt to force the employer to yield to their demands. As far as the Christian is concerned this is an illegitimate weapon. It is this because generally unions are laboring under a contract, and if this is so they must live up to the contracts made with their employers. However, if they are not under contract, then surely, they have the right to leave their jobs, but if they leave and strike, they have no further right to their employment. It is only when the employer openly flaunts his part of the contract that a strike is permissible, and then only when all other means have failed. Someone might question the right of a worker to his job, and indeed, this is a much debated question, but the union in the face of no contract claims that the worker still has the right to his job, and the employer has no right to hire other workers even though it is his own property. Labor fundamentally violates thereby the right of the employer who has created the jobs. Under the present economy, the owner-worker relationship, the worker has no right to claim the right to his job while on strike against his employer. It is only when the worker becomes part-owner in a business that he has any essential right to his job. Under the present economy it is only, or rather should be only, by means of his skill and efficiency that he has any right to his job.

On the basis of such a passage as Romans 13, the Christian accords only to the state the right to enforce obedience by means of force within its own jurisdiction. Does not the union in its attempts to gain its own ends invade the realm of government? Unions are purely voluntary and have no right to resort to force, coercion, and intimidation. Through the means of the strike the unions force their will upon their fellowmen, and thereby infringe upon their fellowmen’s personal rights by not permitting them to work. Thereby they deny to fellow-men their freedom in the pursuance of their supposed rights. That strikes are used to procure power and to dictate to management is further evidenced by the use of sympathy strikes, strategical strikes, and these can never be justified, even as boycotts and “tie-ups” cannot.

The Irresponsible
of the Unions

What strikes one more and more as one reads the history of labor unions is their irresponsibility. Because there was not sufficient legislation curbing their powers, they did not concern themselves with the interests of the public but simply with their own supposed rights. As the corporations of the late 1900’s labor unions battled with a vengeance any attempt to curb their powers and make them correspondingly responsible for their actions. But even as it was necessary to legislate anti-trust laws against the corporations in order to curb their powers, so also we had to have legislation to curb the irresponsible actions of the unions. The recent coal strikes are a fine example of this necessity, and have caused more than one writer to say that the national labor unions consider themselves above the law and are calloused to public suffering and the public interest.

It is a fact recognized by many Christians that if they are silent concerning the evil practices of the labor unions they make themselves guilty of these same practices. Yet many Christians firmly believe that if they do not perform sinful acts but protest against them, they have cleared themselves of their responsibility for the sinful practices of labor organizations. In this way they save their consciences and rationalize their membership in

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modern labor unions. The fact of the matter, however, is that they do not thereby relieve themselves of their responsibility. Even though they protest, yet if their protests are continually ignored, they have only one recourse, and that is that they must leave such an organization. The Scriptural injunction is that we must not "be unequally yoked together with unbelievers," and if they will not listen, we must "come from among them and be separate." It is sometimes necessary that we ally ourselves with unbelievers for a common good, but then we must not be the followers but the leaders. Even as an Abram who allied himself with wicked kings in order to free Lot, so also must we at times make alliances with unbelievers. But also like Abraham we may not follow the unbelievers, but we must lead them. Any other kind of an alliance is anathema.

Moreover, this right of protest is mere fiction in the main, for it is becoming more and more a fact that the unions of today are less and less a representative body of the laboring class. In fact the unions of today are fast approaching the point where the union is simply another boss for the laborers to contend with. There is no bill of rights present in the constitutions of the unions today, and it would be sacrilege for a member to propose that there should be such a bill of rights for the worker. According to Wellington Roe, who has worked with labor unions for the last 20 years and for two years was special assistant to A. F. Whitney, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, and who is at present editor of the Railway Reporter, "Union constitutions and by-laws are largely written to insure absolute compliance with officers' wishes. Often under these rules, a worker may not criticize his union leader publicly. He must not oppose the union's political endorsements. In some cases he cannot even write other members about union affairs without having his communication approved by the body's president. Generally speaking, union chiefs will not tolerate any action for democracy, although they use the word incessantly." Even when workers have appealed to the courts, help has usually been denied. Most courts have taken refuge in the legalism that inasmuch as unions are voluntary associations, a person joining one accepts the restrictions placed upon him by the union rules, and therefore, should seek no redress at law for any injustice done him by the organization.

Oh, yes, there are provisions in the constitutions for protests, etc., but these have caused a pro-labor writer, James Myers, to say, "Theoretically, the constitutional provisions permitting to aggrieved union members a hearing are thoroughly adequate. In practice, however, the appeal provisions have proved inadequate because the officers against whom the complaint is directed frequently dominate the board to which the complaint is made, and the responsible officers of the national body fail to take impartial action. Moreover, the membership often does not avail itself of intra-union machinery because of apathy or because of a realization, not only of the difficulty of invoking this machinery, but also that aggressive union members, if unsuccessful, may be punished by expulsion from the union, or by the arbitrary imposition of fines or penalties." The consequence of all this is that seldom can a Christian push his protest to its conclusion or above a verbal statement. Moreover, the unions have a hold upon the workers which originally the union movement set out to eliminate, namely, intimidation based on the threat of throwing the worker out of his job.

Conclusion

We do not deny the right of labor to organize, but whether or not Christians can affiliate themselves with the present labor organizations, outside of the Christian Labor Association, is a moot question. As was pointed out, though the constitutions of the above-mentioned unions (AFL, CIO) may be neutral, their aim is not righteousness, the spirit found present in them is not a Christian spirit, and their practices cannot stand the light of God's Word. However, we would grant at the drop of the hat that all affiliated unions and locals can not be judged with the generalities which of necessity characterize this discussion. Unionism differs the country over and must be judged accordingly. The membership together with the governing bodies are determinate factors, and hence, every individual union must be scrutinized concerning its character.

In conclusion, however, permit me to state that the existing so-called neutral unions, whose character is in accord with the Word of God, are few and far between. The logical conclusion is, therefore, that Christians should establish their own organizations such as the CLA. Of course I realize the difficulties contingent upon such organization. Numerical deficiency, and hence, a lack of power, together with a frequent refusal on the part of Christians to live a consistent godly life governed by the principles of the Word of God makes for great difficulties in the organization of Christian unions. However, the ideal remains and always shall, for the Christian must "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."
CHRISTIANITY IN ETHIOPIA

Sayo, Ethiopia.
June 28, 1948

Dear Dr. Bouma:

WHEN we left America for the Mission field, nearly two years ago, we thought we would have adequate time on the field to do many things we had always wanted to do. Catching up on reading, writing, and what not. We pictured the six months of isolation during the rainy season, as just the time to do those many things. But, it just isn't so, and we have less time now than ever before. I shall allow no more things to interfere, however, and get the article which I promised so long ago, out with this mail.

It is quite certain that all of the area below Egypt was referred to by classical historians and geographers as Ethiopia; the darkness of the black people of that time being referred to as Ethiopians. It is even doubtful that the classical writers knew of the existence of the mountainous and almost impassable terrain known today as Ethiopia. Little authentic information is available about early Ethiopia, but many theories and legends exist. In some of the writings compiled by native authors, the Kings are said to be descendants from Solomon by Makeda, the Queen of Sheba. In others they claim that the first King of Ethiopia was Ethan, the son of Ham, and in still others the progenitor of the kings is said to be Adam. Many of these legends are firmly believed and it is difficult to determine what is fact and what is fiction.

The history of religion and the church in Ethiopia is also filled with many legends, but there is enough evidence that the church has been closely associated with the government or state, at least since the twelfth century, and the church has been one of the most important factors in the history of Ethiopian independence. This national independence of Ethiopia within Africa, gives Ethiopia a definite distinction amongst the nations of Africa.

Christianity was probably introduced into this area about 340 A.D. Before this time there must have been contact with Egypt, and much of the religious worship of the pre-Christian era was no doubt influenced by the worship of Egypt. Ruins of temples exist in Ethiopia today which indicate the Egyptian influence in architecture as well as worship.

According to Rufinus Tyrannius of Aquileia (340-410 A.D.) Christianity was introduced into Ethiopia by two Christian young men, captured by the Ethiopians when their ship was either shipwrecked or came into Adulis, one of their ports on the Red Sea. These men were Frumentius and Edesius from Syria. They were taken as captives to the King, who at that time worshipped Astar, the moon god, and Mof, the earth god. Through the discoveries of new material by Ernold H. Littmann and Theodor von Lupke of the German Expedition to Askum in 1906, it seems certain that this King was Ezana, who was undoubtedly one of the greatest kings of Askum and the surrounding territory. The two captives found favor in the King's court, and were evidently true ambassadors of Christ as evidenced by the subsequent events. The King, hitherto a mighty pagan warrior and conqueror, became a Christian and ascribed all his success and victories to the "Lord of Heaven Who hath made me Lord, who to all eternity reigns, the Perfect One". His coins which before carried the symbols of the Sabean cult—the crescent and circle—after his official conversion show the Greek or Maltese cross.

The whole story reminds one of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar—here re-enacted in Ethiopia in the early Christian era and in the midst of paganism. The King, though Lord and master of hundreds of thousands of fierce warriors, could not compel all his subjects to cast aside the cults in which they had been born and bred, but he could make his court and his officials and the upper class of Askum accept the new religion, and there is pretty strong evidence that he did.

Frumentius and Edesius later returned to their own country, where Edesius was made a presbyter of a church at Tyre. It seems that there were quite a few Christians in Abyssinia when they left, for Frumentius went to Alexandria and asked Athanasius, the head of the Coptic church at that time, to send a bishop to lead the shepherdless flock. It was Frumentius who was consecrated and returned as bishop to Ethiopia and who is today regarded as the founder of the Church of Ethiopia.

Soon after, the Scriptures of that time were translated direct from the Septuagint into Geez (or early Ethiopic). This direct translation is important and often used as a check by language scholars in translation work from the Septuagint, to get the original Hebrew text. Other church men came from Rome and Egypt, and in the fifth century some influential monks came who, it is claimed, did most of the translation work. There were many who came to cultivate their own peculiar form of monophysitism, for most of these monks refused to accept the rulings of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D. regarding the doctrine of Eutyches on the nature of Christ, which was such an abomination to them that it caused them to establish their own independent monophysite church; this monophysitism has been maintained here till this day.

Christianity prospered during the sixth and seventh centuries, but many pagans remained. In the south the people had kept their animistic cults and we know that the Falashas had a kind of Judaism, very different from the ordinary post-biblical Judaism, which is still present amongst the Falashas found here today.

With the conquering Arab invasion Christianity declined and was nearly lost till the thirteenth century, when a number of Coptic priests again came from Egypt and devoted themselves to the restoration of the Church of Ethiopia. They brought with them all the liturgy and doctrine of the Coptic Church of Egypt, the service books, the Books of the Miracles of the Virgin Mary, the Canons of the Apostles, etc., and translated all these as well as the Gospels into Geez. Great literary activity took place at this time with the approval of the rulers and authorities of the time. But then came Muhammad Gran, the great "Left Handed One", with hordes of Arabs and conquered most of Ethiopia. The churches were destroyed and all Christian books defiled and burned. The monks and clergy were slain and many erstwhile Christians embraced Islam.

It was at this time that Queen Helena of Ethiopia sought help to save her country and found it in the Portuguese, who came with a sufficient force to conquer the invaders. In return the Ethiopians were expected to accept Catholicism and officially they were grateful enough to enter into friendship with the Pope. Many Jesuits came and much was done to instruct the people. However, the attachment to the doctrines of the Church of Alexandria was too deep-rooted, and soon the Jesuits were violently persecuted and driven out with the greatest cruelty and barbarity. The monks were then able to resume their work on religious literature and develop the indigenous monophysite church based on the ancient Jacobite Church of

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* * *

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Alexandria, which remains till now the state church of this land.

Throughout its development the church has had much control over the state, the Kings of which have ever been ardent supporters of it. The few which were not, were dethroned. The tenacity with which the Ethiopians have clung to this church in spite of invasions, wars, with Mohammedanism forced upon them, wars with Turks and Negroid peoples, intertribal wars, famine and plagues, etc., for nearly sixteen hundred years, must evoke our admiration. If only Christ as the perfect Lamb of God, who came to bring us salvation and the hope of everlasting life, were the central figure of this church, what greater admiration would be ours, and what greater joy would it be to the people here.

From all of this one might deduce that this land must indeed be a Christian land, where the church is and has been playing a great part. Sad to say, this is not so. The majority of the people, especially in the South, are Animistic. One need only drive over some of the roads and see the many sacrifices placed there, as offerings to the gods of the river, or mountains, etc., to be convinced of this. Most of those who live under the teachings of the church know there is a God, but nothing about Christ. But more about that next time. I hope then to tell a little about the doctrine, liturgy, and religious practices of that church of today.

Sincerely,
F. W. Den Dulk, M.D.

A LETTER FROM PEIPING

College of Chinese Studies,
5 Tung Sun Toutiao Hutung,
Peiping, China,
September 22, 1948.

THE CALVIN FORUM,
Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Beaum:

I have been over a year since I first received your request to write a letter from Peiping for the readers of THE CALVIN FORUM. The only reason I refrained from complying immediately was that I was still a tenderfoot in China. Consequently my observations were bound to be immature. At present I am still a long way from being an "old China hand" and am just a student beginning to get the feel of this difficult language. I hope you will bear with me as I write my impressions of some of the significant things that are happening in North China.

The Chinese Inter-Varsity

When I attended the world convention of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship in Toronto in December, 1946, I was not deeply impressed with the scope of their activities. But after travelling half way around the world to Peiping, I found that the IVCF also had an aggressive chapter and leader here, and that their work had assumed major proportions. Perhaps the reason is that Peiping is the cultural center of all China. There are approximately fifteen universities and colleges in Peiping, including Yenching University of which J. Leighton Stuart, present U. S. ambassador to China, was the former president. Chinghua University has the highest academic standards of any government school in the country, and has a present enrollment of some 2,700 students. Some fifteen to twenty thousand students take entrance examinations to Chinghua each year.

The IVCF has small classes and Christian fellowship groups on almost every campus in the city. The present leader, Mr. L. T. Lyall, is performing a noble work in organization and instruction, but the turnover in student population is so great that it is most difficult to maintain a status quo and to organize stable groups.

An important reason for this turnover and flux is the fact that thousands of students are pouring into Peiping from some of the big universities in Manchuria. Recently we tried to visit some of the famous temples in Peiping but found the compounds choked with refugee students. Some of them are trying to continue their studies independently and some have gained entrance into Peiping's schools, but the majority are doing nothing. Thus the evangelistic opportunities of the IVCF are tremendous but for them to organize any systematic classes in Biblical instruction is most difficult. This difficulty also stems from the various pressures exerted upon the students, of which I shall write shortly.

The IVCF is the only orthodox movement among China's student population. Its principles are sound and it is determined to present nothing but the truth as revealed in the Scriptures. The Student Christian movement, beginning with great ado and pomp, has maintained its quantitative strength mainly through the YMCA and YWCA, but the quality of its religious teachings has deteriorated into an anemic and watered-down "do-goodism" and social service that says nothing concerning the central teachings of the Bible.

Disturbed Conditions Among Students

Chinese students are in a precarious position these days. They are being exploited by the Communists on the one hand, and are under constant surveillance and investigation by the government on the other. This accounts in part for the many student strikes this past year. Last week's newspaper even reported that a grammar school went on strike, undoubtedly under the pressure of the teaching staff politicizing for higher wages. Such news gives one the impression that students are constantly on strike, are highly emotional, are easily stirred by agitators, and are always against the reform movements of the government.

Philip De Wolfe, an English instructor at Chinghua has tried to analyze the attitude of the students. In the first place, there are many kinds of pressures exerted upon them. Economically, they are hard pressed for funds. At Yenching University, he reports, the board bill is only $3.00 per month and yet the students cannot meet the payments. Many are living on starvation diets. As a result they become bitter and discontented, and their physiological condition affects them psychologically and emotionally. Consequently they are easily stirred, and any mass movement makes them strangely irrational. There are also family pressures. A university student is the pride and joy of his family. He has strong family ties. He is honor bound to uphold the prestige of his family by scholastic achievements. The question of whether to go out and do reconstruction work by his own efforts or whether to maintain his scholastic records is always a moral dilemma. Upon the death of his grandparents or parents he is duty bound to return home for the funeral. With travel conditions completely upset, he must pay high prices for travel accommodations which often mean that he is forced to drop his work at school. There are also political pressures. Both the Communists and the Government issue blacklists that are extremely disconcerting and embarrassing. If he is blacklisted by the Communists he is antagonized by the so-called "professional" students. If he is blacklisted by the Government, not always legitimately so, he is forced to hide out for fear of a purge. For example, the Hwa Bei Yen, a legitimate student organization according to reliable reports, was accused of being a Communist front group. This immediately placed all members on a government blacklist which forced them to leave school and drop their work. With all these pressures in mind, it becomes easier to understand why the students are so emotional and high strung and why Peiping and Shanghai have been the scenes of some serious upheavals when student strikes were organized and carried out. Undoubtedly many of them were communistically inspired.

Henry Cabot Lodge's speech in Shanghai in defense of American policies in Japan, has an amusing story behind it. In the speech he used the word "might" which was misunderstood by some students whose English was faulty and who interpreted...
it as calling China a "mite" or as being insignificant in world affairs. This matter was trumped up and a serious, anti-American, student strike resulted.

A second reason for the instability of China's students is that they came through the Japanese war looking through rose-colored glasses. They had high ideals for the country. But the civil war against the Communists caused them to lose considerable face and now they have a deeply ingrained feeling of shame. At the same time they feel a national responsibility and consider themselves the voices of the voiceless masses. The attempt to overcome this shame with their intense patriotism leaves them only one alternative: to make themselves heard through strikes.

Communism in China

I have no sympathy whatsoever with Communism especially as manifested in China. The attempts of the Communists to establish model governments are only for propaganda purposes. Their real intents become apparent in their mass murders and "searched earth" policies. They have only one ideal: the complete overthrow of the Kuomintang and the establishment of a Russian puppet government in China. The capture of Kaifeng, the capital of one of China's northern provinces, illustrates their intentions. They first captured the city, then spoiled it as best they could, stripped the student population and recruited them into their armies, carried off all military supplies, and then withdrew. That happened six months ago and today's construction funds. Such policies are accomplishing their intentions. They first captured the city, then spoiled it as best they could, stripped the student population and recruited them into their armies, carried off all military supplies, and then withdrew. That happened six months ago and today's construction funds. Such policies are accomplishing their intentions.

The introduction of a new currency last month is the Government's most recent major attempt to stabilize the preposterous inflation that gripped China since the end of World War II. The results are not yet apparent, but if strict economic watchfulness on the part of the Government wins out and the currency remains stable, we have reason enough to hope for improved conditions. The economy of the government is closely linked with political security, and if China can stabilize her economy political conditions are bound to improve.

At present there is a definite lull in the fighting in North China. Political observers term this the calm before the storm. Ten thousand government troops have been airlifted into Mukden as an effort to hold on to this important industrial capital at all cost. To date is still in the Government's hands after a year and more of siege. The lifeline between Peiping and Tientsin on the China coast is still open by rail. I took a trip to Tientsin recently and found the railway well defended. On another trip to Paoting, the capital of Hopei province and about 130 miles south of Peiping, I found only 100 miles of the railway intact, and made the remaining thirty miles of the trip through the courtesy of an armored truck convoy. Dr. Van Reken, our mission doctor, and I made the trip to observe the medical and evangelistic work of the Presbyterian (USA) Mission at that place.

The Need of the Gospel

I trust that these observations of mine will give the readers of The Calvin Forum a better idea of conditions among the student population of China and the present political outlook as it appears to me from the peace and tranquility of these college halls. If there ever was a time ripe for the bringing of the Gospel it is today. Students flock to meetings, and many are accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour. If it were not for our understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit it would be hard for us to see how the Chinese, and especially the students, would accept Christianity. In spite of the knowledge that future Communist domination would mean torture and death to Christians, students are responding to the call of the Gospel in a marvelous way. There is a darker side to mention. I would venture a guess that fifty per cent of all Missions carrying on work in Peiping now are liberal in their theology. Such a condition is disappointing and disgusting to a young missionary like myself who assumed that foreign missions had to be impelled by a desire to teach nothing but the saving grace of Jesus Christ. But this makes us all the more determined to go out and preach nothing save salvation through Christ and the Calvinistic interpretation of the sovereignty of God in all walks of life.

In closing let me voice my appreciation for The Calvin Forum. It is quite prompt in reaching this part of the world. Its thought-provoking articles and letters are a stimulation to me. I especially appreciated Clifford Vander Ack's recent article on the danger of laxness and false security in this post-war world. May the Lord bless your efforts to give to the world a periodical of significance in the Calvinistic interpretation of life.

With Christian greetings,
HENRY BRUINOOGH.

HUNGARIAN LETTER


Dear Dr. Bouma:

FIRST of all I congratulate you, along with the few others so distinguished, upon having been elected an honorary professor of my now 47-year-old seminary at Sarospatak, Hungary. The honor is well placed in each case, both as to personal merit and wider representation. The old and the new world must have living connections, as both need the ‘charisma’ of the other. The catholicity of Calvinism and the communion of saints must be demonstrated in every generation. In the decades of the Reformation, as the records show, there existed a surprising and wonderful connection and solidarity among Calvinistic centers of learning and education. The interests of a wider and deeper Calvinistic vision demand the renewal of the ancient practice of the days of the Reformation.

Hungary’s Schools and Churches

Sarospatak, as I presume you know, is one of the four intellectual and spiritual Reformed centers that was spared by the sweeping nationalization program of the present regime of Hungary—Debrecein, Papa, and Budapest being the others. The rest of the schools of all description, 1,079 in number, had to be surrendered, as of July 1, this year.

It was the most painful operation the Church in Hungary had to go through since the days of the Reformation. Not even during the times when some churches had been forcibly handed over to the Roman Catholics, did the church suffer such a loss, spiritually and materially as well.

Was there any way to avert this loss? No. Not even if the Church risked bloodshed. The loud protests of the Roman Catholics were just as vain as the “irresistible sorrow” with which the Reformed authorities bowed to the dictum disguised as a law of the state. All that the Church could do was to solemnly uphold its right to establish and to maintain institutions of learning as soon as practicable, and to draw the lessons from accepting favors and subsidies from the state. The Church is determined to sum up the past, to gradually make itself financially independent of the state and to become a free agent of Christ in the Hungarian life. For this vision and determination we, who have been loudly advocating it for a quarter of a century, thank God. It would have pleased us better if the principle would have been put into effect immediately, but we have to realize that a time of general reduction to poverty demands caution and gradation.

The all in all view of the Church in Hungary presents a promising picture to us. Evangelical fervor, pastoral care, finding new ways for the education and indoctrination of children and youth, a craving for apostolic simplicity is something that really commands respect and warms one’s soul to those brethren under trial!

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I for one am not gloomy about them. On the contrary, I see them shaped in the image of Christ more noticeably and powerfully than ever since I can remember. The Hungarian soul is shockingly interesting. It throws the brightest sparks when it is placed on the anvil under the hammer of God, the strong-armed sovereign God of Calvinism, Who shows His favors through His visitations. Yet the Hungarian soul is not what one may call ‘tough’. It is appreciative of a little sympathy and encouragement in the hour of trial. To give at least that much aid and comfort to this presently exposed member of the family remains the task of Calvinists everywhere. So much about the brethren overseas.

American Hungarian Calvinists

Our several groups in America are as one in sympathetic concern for the one-time common mother church in Hungary. We are anxious to see that she passes all the tests with credit to all of her offspring. We want her to remain our crown and pride. We agree that she has to serve the people in the midst of which the Lord deigned to plant her as a representative of biblical Christianity, but it would be a sad day for all of us ever to see her become timid and servile. Thus far, in our opinion, she stood the test; not in the sense of a political opposition, but in the sense of a political opposition.

With this common concern for the one-time mother church the already mentioned cause of organic union with our brethren in the Evangelical and Reformed Church did not go hand in hand. According to the impressions of your correspondent the Hungarian group in the E. and R. Church went so far in modernist-liberalism (presented as “Americanism” to us), that they find our position too rigid on more than one score. This we cannot help and are not disposed to help. For the sake of a mere outward unity we do not desire to fall into a Babel of individualism, where creeds, principles, discipline, law and order are looked upon with suspicion and with more or less concealed enmity. Even our people as a whole are against such a merger. It is a sad fact, but nevertheless a fact, that even brethren can have “einen anderen Geist”. The issue is still on the docket of both groups, but no one could deny that it has lost impetus and interest to a point more suggestive of failure than success. More and more people on both sides are convinced that cooperation in certain practical fields should be the limits of our joint efforts, rather than chasing after an organic union.

In view of these circumstances we are re-dedicating ourselves to the work ahead of us within our own Church. We have a catholic view with a particular field in which to uphold and practice it. We are increasingly disposed to step out of our thus far narrow bounds, but nothing less than the companionship of nearly identical spiritual understanding could satisfy us. That circumstance raises our eyes above any and all racial or national considerations.

The invitation to the 1949 Ecumenical Synod to be held in Amsterdam is in my hands. I did not have a chance to present it to our synod as yet, but I have frequently pondered over it. That is one meeting I would like to attend! And looking over the list of Churches to which that invitation was mailed in the United States of America, I asked myself: “Lord, what if those churches could be brought together into a Federation of Calvinistic Churches in America?” Mark, not a merger, but a federation marked by intercommunion and mutual aid, presenting a united front in the propagation of Calvinism. I want your opinion on that.

Faithfully yours,

CHARLES VINCZE

THE CALVIN FORUM * * * NOVEMBER, 1948

DUTCH EMIGRATION TO CANADA

Holland Marsh, Ontario, October 5, 1948.

Dear Dr. Bomma and Calvin Forum Friends:

UNUSUALLY these letters are mailed to you from the city of Groningen, familiar to many of you, but this time I write at the head of my communication the name of quite a different place, viz. of Holland Marsh, in the Canadian province of Ontario. Here I am seated comfortably in the study of the minister, the hospitable Rev. Mr. J. Vander Meer. Do not conclude, however, that I am on vacation or anything like it. The reason I’m here is that I have been sent by our Synodical Committee to travel throughout Canada. For what purpose, you ask? What may be the reason of this mission? That reason is found in the great resurgence of emigration from our country since 1945. This movement is gaining in strength. A very high percentage of those who have emigrated and of those who still plan to do so (next year no less than 20,000 are to come across) are members of the “Gereformeerde Kerken”, which I have the honor to serve in the ministry.

Seeing our Churches until now do not have what the Christian Reformed Church of America does have, viz., a Committee on Immigration, another synodical committee has commissioned me to visit Canada with the following fourfold purpose: To thank the Canadian as well as the American Churches for the self-sacrificing services so far rendered to these emigrant members of our churches; to be of some help during my stay to the Canadian groups scattered far and wide, so that our gratitude may not consist only of words but also of deeds; thirdly, to become thoroughly familiar with the entire immigration problem; and fourthly to render report of these things upon my return to the proper authorities. This is a fine assignment, to be sure, but it involves a number of things. It calls for the relinquishing of the time being of my regular duties at home. And then such traveling, and traveling, and traveling again. In fact, I am myself almost pleasantly surprised that among all these experiences I still thought of my responsibility as correspondent for THE FORUM. Perhaps for once I am permitted to compliment myself! Of course, this is to be accounted for from my interest in THE CALVIN FORUM. Love makes you remember, and forgetting is often due to lack of love. But no more of this!

Let me tell you of some impressions I have received of late in this work. The first is that I am deeply impressed with the enormous labors expended by the Churches—especially the Christian Reformed Church—to receive and provide for those immigrants. And such labors as are expected from the ministers and officers of the Home Mission Board, as well as from the regularly established ministers serving the organized churches. So far I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with three such centers, viz., Hamilton, where the Rev. Dykstra labors; Saint Catherine’s, the center of an extensive territory for which the Rev. Perenac is responsible; and now Holland Marsh, where Rev. Vander Meer has kindly received me, given me information, and shown me around.

When this letter is finished I must gradually make preparations for a trip to the West, to Vancouver and Alberta. This calls, I believe, for a train trip of three days and three nights, an experience utterly strange to us in the Netherlands. I have developed a profound respect for the huge labors of the home missionaries (which I have not only seen, but participated in) and for the labors of the other office-bearers and the committees. Not only that they are called to numerous ministries as pastors in behalf of their sheep, but they are also called to be of help in a hundred and one ways in their practical life. I have developed a profound gratitude to God and men for the large financial sacrifices which the churches here are prepared to make. When I think of this work and, also of the radio ministry—which has come into existence only recently—and of the regularly established causes of Church and school, Calvin College and Seminary, and Missions, then I am
promised to exclaim: What a spirit of generosity and sacrifice in your church group!

This is my first impression. My second one is of another nature. I believe that our people in the Netherlands conceive of emigration as altogether too simple a matter. This is undoubtedly the reason why among the sturdy immigrants entering this country it also happens at times that some unfit material slips in. And my third impression is that the churches in Canada, after a few decades, will, under the blessing of God, come to a mighty development. It would seem that this development will be greater and much faster than it was in the United States from the days of Vaalstede on. This, to be sure, calls for much industry, prayerfulness, and watchfulness on our part! And so I could continue, but do not wish to prolong this letter unduly.

You have not heard anything about Holland as yet in this letter, but to that we can return later. Sad to say, the schism has not yet been healed. Would that the churches in America and Canada might put forth a serious effort to bring the two groups together, not only by persistent prayer, but also by well, perhaps they should think that out themselves, seeing I am not your adviser, but (especially now) your guest and pupil! Now I must close, even though there is still much in my heart and in my pen.

With Christian greetings,

Yours,

F. A. Prins.

SCOTLAND'S FREE CHURCH COLLEGE
15 College Sq., East,
Belfast, North Ireland,
12th October, 1948.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

The Free Church of Scotland is mourning the death of Principal Emeritus John Macleod. Dr. Macleod was elected to the chair of New Testament Exegesis in the Free Church College in the year 1906. He resigned in 1913. After seventy years of pastoral work he was appointed Professor of Apologetics, Natural Science, Homiletics, Pastoral Theology, and Missions; this position he held until May 21st, 1942, when he resigned with the status of Principal Emeritus.

At the opening of the 1948-49 session on October 5th, Rev. Professor E. W. Miller paid tribute to this great champion of the Reformed Faith. The Principal referred to Dr. Macleod as "essentially a big man" who "dedicated all his shining gifts and graces to the service of God and the Christian ministry." Dr. Miller pointed out that this man had been acquainted with the theologians of Christendom, especially those of Scotland, and he had ranked Dr. Cunningham as the greatest in this field. Principal Miller declared that we should be grateful to God for that which Dr. Macleod had accomplished.

Palestine and the Jews Today

That was the title of Dr. Miller's address at the opening of the new session. Dealing with this interesting topic in his scholarly and careful manner, he reminded his listeners that the world was insistently confronted with the Jewish problem. Friction in Palestine might precipitate a third world war. He pointed out that Palestine makes a profound appeal to evangelical Christians, and asked the question, Can God's purpose and plan for the world be seen unfolding in recent happenings—especially in Palestine?

Turning to the subject of Zionism, Dr. Miller dealt with (a) its origins, (b) its developments, and (c) its prospects.

(a) There were three factors in the urge towards Palestine: (1) Religious, (2) Persecution, and (3) Desire for freedom.

(b) Zionism went back (in germ) to the Babylonian captivity. Having traced the growth of the movement, the Principal declared, "Pioneering always has its trials." There was, for instance, the struggle with nature, but this was mild compared with the struggle with men. He referred to the growing Arab uneasiness among Christians and Mohammedans. On political grounds alone, he said, the Arab case was the stronger. Dealing with the query, Why has Palestine remained an unsolved problem, he asserted that local Jews had ignored the strength of the Arab contention. General Zionist aspirations had been the main cause of Arab apprehension. Hitler's rise to power had precipitated the 1936-39 Arab disturbances, but Jews and Arabs refused to form a single state in Palestine.

During the recent war the Zionists had proclaimed that a Hebrew Commonwealth was their objective. The Arab States, on the other hand, had formed a "League" with one of its objects being to secure Palestine as an independent Arab state. Zionist hopes had revived when "Labour" came to power in Britain, but the new Government had proved cautious. Britain was weakened, and the U. S. A. had taken a new interest in Palestine. The existence of "Israel" was still being debated, though recognized by U. S. A. and Russia. Count Bernadotte's last report, however, recommended partition, and this seemed agreeable to U. S. A. and Britain.

(c) Zionism was in essence political—a feature distinctly disturbing. It should not be overlooked that the Jews, as a whole visualized citizenship of Palestine as their "secondary citizenship" of some other nation such as Britain or U. S. A. The world owes the Jews reparation for past wrongs, and this was an opportune time. Justice and mercy clamoured for speedy action.

Dr. Miller concluded his remarks by defining the Church's duty in this matter. He outlined it as (1) Evangelism—the Church was in danger of not giving the Jew to which he is entitled. He stressed the need for maintaining and extending Jewish missions. (2) Consideration of unfulfilled prophecy—this was not an arena for the wildest extravagances of fancy. (3) Labour in prayer, Jew and Gentile would find lasting peace in common allegiance to Jesus Christ—the Messiah of the world.

The lecture, which was listened to with great attention, provided those present with much food for thought and, most important of all, something definite to pray for.

With hearty Christian greetings,

Yours in His Service,

Fred S. Leahy.

MORE BOOKS REQUESTED

THE CALVIN FORUM,
Dr. Clarence Bouma, Editor,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

We wish to thank you for placing our advertisement for books for foreign seminaries in THE CALVIN FORUM last spring. The response to the advertisement in THE FORUM and in a few other papers was encouraging. Four packages of books have been sent to Hungarian theological seminaries, four boxes of books to Reformed seminaries in Japan and Korea, a whole library of German works has been sent to a German pastor, and approximately two hundred dollars has been realized from the sale of sets which were too bulky for economical shipment. The money thus received will be used for the purchase of other volumes.

We shall be happy to receive any other theological volumes which readers of THE FORUM no longer need and may desire to contribute.

Very sincerely,

J. T. Hoogstra,
6 East 24th Street
M. E. Oosterhoven,
c/o Hope College

For the Calvinistic Action Committee.

Holland, Mich.
PROFESSOR KROMMINGA'S MILLENNIAL VIEWS


WHEN the past presses its way into the present for judgment, man is in crisis. If the crisis be functional, then the future is conceived as remedial, and man faces the future with hope. If the crisis be a total crisis, then the future is conceived as without remedial power to overcome the critical present and man faces the future with despair.

Today we live in the convulsions of a historical crisis which is total in its dimensions. Its total dimension is but partially recognized, yet it is undeniable that the most remarkable ingredient that goes into the making of the modern mind is despair. It is the something new that has been added. It accounts for the new outlook, an outlook either of abject passive despair, or of a fanaticism, receiving its strength from its despair, eagerly accepting the promised revolutionary remedies of state totalitarianism and economic communism.

Thus far, the Church has been unable to catch the spiritual imagination of the masses. She has been unable to convince the masses that she has that which can both annul the despair of the present and give that hope for the future that the best is yet to be.

The consequences of the Western world's past mistaken decisions and wrong departures are converging on her present, causing her compound of liberal democracy and bourgeois capitalism to fall apart. Yet the European man is not turning to the Church for refuge and hope. Instead, he either hopelessly surrenders to despair, or he reaches frantically to a communistic baited with messianic, eschatological promises. In America the crisis is less acute because less advanced; consequently, though less recognized because of the immaturity of her history, the need is the same. America, too, lacks a goal for her history, an historical eschatology which would enable her to avoid the despair and ennui of living-for-nothing, and to impart that hope that will undergird the burden of the present. American democracy cannot provide an eschatological goal that will in turn provide a dynamic forward passion to democratic map. Hence, he feels that he has nothing to live for, and easily slips into the “eat, drink, and be merry” philosophy, for, tomorrow—Nothing—we die. His democratic faith does not set a goal for his existence, for his democracy is philosophically rooted in static nature, rather than in the dynamics of history.

Nor is it yet apparent how the need, which we all feel, of a *denouement* of history within history, an unraveling of the mystery of existence within existence, can be met by the a-millennialistic interpretation of Christianity. For a-millennialism, like our political democratic philosophy of history, is, as the very term implies, *negative*. A-millennialism simply denies the validity of a certain type of historical goal. It offers nothing positive to take its place, for it defines the goal of history merely in terms of its termination. For, if, as most a-millenarians assert, Christ would come now then there is no good historical purpose for not coming now, i.e., the temporal prolongation serves no historical purpose.

As a result, the a-millenarian tends either to adjust himself comfortably to his historic situation, or, failing to achieve comfort his reaction to history is one of escapism. But to the man in historical travail, an interpretation of history seems inadequate which makes the historical telos synonymous with its *finis* and Interprets history *wholly* in terms of the non-historical, i.e., eternity. To such a man, the negativity of a-millenialism tends to add to his despair and to reinforce his nihilism by making Christianity seem irrelevant.

Is there another more satisfying Christian interpretation of history? Is it possible that God’s purposes are not so negative as to be merely intent with getting the Church out of history, but are also positive with respect to a Kingdom within history?

The late Professor Kromminga believed that on the basis of the Bible there was the possibility of such a positive interpretation of history. It is the interpretation of Christianity which presents the type of pre-millennialism which he describes in his book *The Millennium*. That a positive interpretation of history is possible and valid when Christianity is interpreted pre-millennially, is the element in his pre-millenialism that seemed to please him most. For Kromminga's millennialism is not, as most current millennialism, an exposition of a few scriptural passages combined with a religious psychological escapism that dreams delightfully and sometimes fantastically about a glorious future as an aid to forgetting the irksome, painful present. On the contrary, it is rooted in the whole Bible and presents itself as a philosophy of history which escapes that unwholesome other-worldly-mindedness from which pre- and a-millennialism are not always free.

The nib of the conflict between pre-millenarian and Reformed thought is the doctrine of the Covenant. Against pre-millennialism, the Reformed Doctrine of the Covenant affirms the persistence of the over-all sameness of God’s method in dealing with mankind, and therefore denies, for example, any essential difference between Israel and the Church. In short, the Covenant is a denial of the essential feature of current pre-millennialism, the distinction between dispensations which spells *dispensationalism*.

In view of the fact that this is the only point at which Reformed Theology is in conflict with pre-millenialism (not with pre-millennialists) “it is strange” writes the author, “that it (Reformed Thought) has not produced an inquiry into the possibility of harmonizing the conception of the millennium with that of the Covenant.” Having stated and explained his position, he declares, “I trust, it has become clear, that there is room for such a conception of the millennium in which neither the biblical doctrine of election and reprobation, of the antithesis, is abandoned, nor the equally biblical doctrine of the one Covenant of Grace which spans the whole of human history from the Fall to the Judgment, and in which the successive historical periods are but so many steps in which God carries out His saving purpose and maintains His covenantal relationship to our race as a whole.” And at the end of the book he confesses, “I can not say, that I have had to put forth any notable effort to keep my views from conflicting with other Reformed doctrines, though it certainly has been my aim to speak in harmony with the non-eschatological doctrines of the Reformed faith.”

The close argumentation and the vast amount of exegetical interpretation cannot be adduced here. The book itself is a close-knit discussion, without waste of words, and except in one or two places remarkably lucid. The following features of the book are indicative of the motif and drift of the argument, as well as of its scope and calibre.

The resolution of the present-day crisis cannot be resolved, asserts the author, by a return to the Reformation as Barth and Brunner imagine. Historically speaking, such a return is impossible. Moreover, it was the Reformers themselves who broke up the unity of thought and belief that was the cohesion of the medieval world. Maritain and Gilson would back-track on history still further and return to Aquinas. They, however, forget
that it was the failure of the authoritarian Church itself that produced the Reformation. Nor can our Western crisis be resolved through international unities, for if such unity could be achieved it would be hopelessly weakened by the fact that it would be a compound of the medum of Christianity left in the Anglo-American world and the non-Christian, non-moral Soviet ideology. The United Nations Organization can at best give but a brief respite so that “we may worry along for a while in an uneasy peace like a sleep disturbed by bad dreams and nightmares and in constant prospect of a final war of ultimate destruction.”

The only hope for the present world situation is the return of Christ, a return which “should not be stowed away in some dark corner of the memory” for future recall—a return of Christ which will initiate a new period of earthly history in which humanity will be vindicated on the historical plane. The author uses the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation, as a foundation for this historical reign of Christ with His saints. Kromminga begins by accepting the “surface meaning” of Rev. 20. He then indicates how the material of the entire book—even those parts that can only be fitted into an a-millennial schema (parallelistic or otherwise) by force and distortion—can be fitted into his pre-millennial arrangement without coercion and still retain their plain meaning. He proceeds to show that his arrangement is reinforced by the eschatological statements of Jesus and Paul (which most of us a-millenarian preachers conveniently ignore) and by the eschatological parables. Then, after placing Old Testament eschatological prophetic pronouncements under tribute, he draws an interesting parallelism between the pre-Abrahamic section of Genesis and the book of Revelation—a parallelism in which the sequence of those sinful events through which the divine purposes were thwarted at the beginning of history are actualized at the end of history, but in reverse order, so that the end turns back to the beginning. According to this parallelism, there will be at the end of history a divine undoing of sinful human history in the interest of the historical realization of God’s original purposes for history.

This God will accomplish, not indeed through a new dispensation which is on a par with the Old and New Testament dispensations, i.e., not by dispensationalism, which is ruled out by the fact that the Bible designates the New Testament dispensation as the “last times,” but through a sub-period within the New Testament dispensation—a sub-period which has its corresponding counterpart in the Old Testament dispensation. The glorified saints and the earthly society are both involved in the millennium. During the millennium some sinners will become saints, and the Christianization of the East—in like fashion and in comparable degree to the past Christianization of the West—will take place. In this manner, society will change from a homogeneous mass of nations (religiously considered) into a society which is broken up by a sharpened religious antithesis. Thus, for example, the clear-cut antithesis willed by God at the beginning of sinful history will be achieved in and by history, as God’s purpose with history. Here, then, the telos of history and the finis of history are not synonymous. First a positive historical purpose is realized in and through history, and then “cometh the end.”

Early human history was an attempt to amalgamate the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, first through inter-marriage, and later through the construction of Babel. In fact, history has ever been a continuous attempt to build Babel, not indeed in the form of an architectural tower, but in the form of an historical amalgamation, of the wicked and the righteous achieved through the annulment of enmity that God had placed between them. This sinful attempt at coalescence finds its embodiment in our social institutions. Today, this attempt expresses itself in the dominance of modern imperialism abetted by a Christless educational system. Thus, for human society, the millennium means the divine undoing of Babel in the interest of a sharp and clear historical expression of the antithesis between the redeemed and unredeemed.

For the saints, the millennium makes possible an actual realization of the promise that they shall not only be judged but shall also, with Christ, actively judge men and nations. This necessitates, and according to Kromminga the Bible teaches, two resurrections and two judgments.

The judgment in which the saints actively participate is of a relatively long duration—perhaps a thousand years. By virtue of their resurrection the relationship of the saints to the visible world and to historical society is re-established. Their judging activity in conjunction with Christ will involve the judgment of all history—of all men’s ways with God and all God’s ways with men. Hence they will need an appreciable length of time to acquaint themselves with all the historical detail (this perhaps accounts for the rugged and thorough manner in which Kromminga taught Church History) of persons and of things, of which the material of the entire book is a mere sample. That of judging will consist in a resumption of the task the saints performed on earth during their life-times, a co-laborship with Christ and God in conforming the world to the Word of God.

The late and highly esteemed author has bequeathed to us a great book with a challenging and original insight. Because of the originality of his position, his references to others, to grant acknowledgements or to receive substantiations, are almost innumerable—by virtue of being so few. His pre-millennialism is neither the product of a cold bright intellectualism, nor of an inordinate futuristic curiosity. It is pressed out of an agitated soul by the critical world situation on which, as he believed, the end of the ages impinges. It is the utterance of a soul living under eschatological skies. It is a clear spoken philosophy of history which will fascinate many, captivate some, and put a plain-spoken challenge to a stammering a-millennialism.

Is the late Professor Kromminga right and his pre-millennialism acceptable? “Accepting a future millennium initiated by Christ’s return which continues even in its judgment God’s saving work, I felt obliged to give my fellows in the faith an opportunity to judge in how far I am able to support my views from Scripture and to keep them in line with our Confession, as well as in how far they are an explanation of Rev. 20. That task is now done, and the brethren can judge.” Whether it is exegetically biblical, a correct exposition of Rev. 20, and compatible with Reformed thought, I, having no particular wisdom on the matter, leave to the judgment of others who are experts in the lore of millennialism. I only hope that they shall not maintain an indiscreet silence. The author asks his brethren for this threefold judgment. Not to judge would be unfair both to the living and the dead. And a genuinely Christian philosophy of history is the need of the hour.

One wonders why the author hesitated so long before becoming vocal, since this unique contribution, which rejects the Augustinian view and corrects that of Irenaeus, is so profound in depth and wide in scope that it will take his critics at least a part of a millennium to make their appraisal—unless indeed the label it bears is regarded as sufficient for condemnation.

Lafayette, Indiana.

JAMES DAANE.

A THEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF CULTURE


Dr. S. J. Ridderbos is a son of the well known scholar and writer, Professor John Ridderbos of the Kampen Theological Seminary, and a brother of Professor H. N. Ridderbos, successor to the late Professor S. Greydanus. Another brother, Dr. N. H. Ridderbos is the pastor of the Reformed Church of Amersfoort. The author hails from an illustrious family, a family well known in theological circles. The father and three sons serve in the Gospel ministry of the Reformed churches of the Netherlands, and all four obtained their degree of Doctor of Theology from the Free University of Amsterdam. Dr. S. J. Ridderbos was born on the 12th of
August, 1914, and since November 29, 1945, is the pastor of the large congregation of Rotterdam-Charlois.

Dr. Ridderbos undertook a large assignment to obtain his degree, and his thesis gives every evidence of diligent study and careful analysis of the views submitted and propagated by Dr. Kuyper on the subject of culture. Extensive footnotes and references indicate that Dr. Ridderbos did not limit himself to a careful study of Kuyper's *De Gemeene Gratie*, but has waded through all the writings of Kuyper in so far as these had bearing on his views of culture. The title of the book limits the study to a theological orientation of culture, and Dr. Ridderbos is primarily interested to ascertain the dogmatic and ethical foundations of culture based on the teachings of Scripture. The thesis does not pretend to dismiss various streams of philosophy only touching the problem of culture, but is a study of Kuyper's presentation of a Christian philosophy of history, of which the doctrine of common grace is an integral part. Ridderbos seeks to critically analyze the solution of the problem of Christian culture as submitted in various writings of Dr. A. Kuyper. Ridderbos defines culture as inclusive of every human task which seeks to maintain and develop the cosmos of God in harmony with the Scriptures. The book under review is to weigh the views of Dr. Kuyper on the subject of culture and to see whether these views are substantiated by the facts of Scripture and the Reformed Confessions.

Dr. Ridderbos has divided his material into five large sections. The first chapter presents the historical orientation necessary to an understanding of the views of culture at the time Dr. Kuyper undertook to write the epic three-volume work on Common Grace. Ridderbos points out very clearly that Kuyper viewed the Roman Catholic presentation of culture, the proper relation of the believer to the cosmos, with the greatest suspicion. Kuyper discovered that Roman Catholicism underestimate the true nature of sin, and the true meaning of grace for the believer and his place in the world. Rome failed to satisfy Kuyper as to the true catholic genius of the Christian religion. Rome's false eschatology and the false emphasis on asceticism called for a better presentation of the problem of Christian culture. Also the views of Luther could not satisfy. Ridderbos makes clear that Dr. Kuyper discovered the material for a Christian view of culture in the writings of Calvin. It was Calvin who overcame the dualism of both Roman Catholicism and of Luther as to the proper relation of nature and grace. Ridderbos also points out the fatal errors of both Humanism and Anabaptism to achieve a proper solution of the problem of Christian culture. It was Dr. Kuyper as a theologian and philosopher who determined to express what is the proper relation of sin and grace to the cosmos, church and the world in sin. Kuyper was determined to construct a view of culture that would maintain the seriousness of sin and the rights of the natural.

In the second chapter of his book Dr. Ridderbos presents the biblical foundation for culture as developed by Dr. Kuyper in his view of Common Grace in its various ramifications and relations. Dr. Ridderbos makes very clear that Dr. Kuyper immediately discovered the weak spots in the armor of Roman Catholicism, and that the dualism of life to be lived on a lower and on a higher level is not the answer of Scripture. Life cannot be both profane and that of the monk and the nun. The writings of Calvin stirred the soul of Dr. Kuyper and led him to a penetrating study of the relation of sin and grace according to the Scriptures. The views of culture submitted by contemporaries of Dr. Kuyper, De LaSaussaye and Dr. Ph. J. Hoedemaker, failed to do justice to the teachings of Scripture on the subjects of sin and grace. The solution to the problem of a Christian culture Dr. Kuyper found in the doctrine of Common and Special Grace. Dr. Ridderbos devotes the largest section of his book to a careful analysis of the doctrine of Common Grace as taught by Dr. Kuyper. The three volumes of Kuyper's work on Common Grace are discussed with a fine comb. No less than thirty pages are devoted to a discussion of the Scriptural evidences for the doctrine of common grace. The exegesis of various passages of Scripture submitted by Kuyper are carefully analyzed. The testimony of the Reformed Confessions is carefully perused, and both history and human experience are a testing ground to verify the doctrine of common grace. Dr. Ridderbos also devotes a large section of his book to reproduce the views of Kuyper on the concept of common grace, the working and origin of common grace in creation, its relation to the eternal decrees of God and the relation of common grace to Christ (pp. 51-98). Ridderbos summarizes the position of Dr. Kuyper in seventeen propositions (pp. 96, 97). This summary is briefly that there is no culture possible in a sinful world unless there is a divine restraint of sin and of the divine curse. The need for special grace arises for the necessary development of a Christian culture, since both the power of sin must be broken and restrained and the principle of the new regenerated life must become evident. Ridderbos agrees with Kuyper that there is a common restraint of sin taught in the Scriptures, and that this operation of restraint is much stronger after the Flood than before. Restrained of sin stands intimately related to the eternal Logos, Jesus Christ, and the purpose of restraining sin is not to add something new to the cosmos, but to preserve the original powers of creation. Dr. Ridderbos also reproduces the views of Dr. Kuyper to show that the doctrine of common grace is clearly taught in the Reformed Confessions.

Dr. Ridderbos is in full agreement with Dr. Kuyper that the working of common grace is both constant and progressive in character. The constant aspect is the restraint of the process of sin, a restraint of the destructive forces in nature and the sinner, which still makes possible the exercise of civil righteousness in the world. The progressive character of common grace is that God equips human life against suffering, and brings human life to a richer and fuller development.

The significance of the doctrine of common grace for the establishment of culture is formulated in the principle that a sinful man has retained in part a faculty for the development of the cosmos, and, hence, for the development of culture. The object of culture is the earthly cosmos, and the subject of culture is a fallen sinner, but due to the operation of common grace even fallen man retains ability for the development of scientific, artistic, technical, and physical advancements, for the welfare of all mankind. In the two operations of common grace God on the one hand acts independently of man, but in the progressive operation of common grace man is an instrument and co-laborer with God. Ridderbos is fully aware of the fact that in the three volumes of Kuyper on Common Grace there is a noticeable degree of development from the negative to a more positive construction of the doctrine of common grace, and the ultimate foundation of this grace must be found in the nature of God. The limits of this review do not permit us to set forth in detail the relation of common grace and the working of culture and the action of culture, and the unique relation between common and special grace. Suffice it to say that Dr. Ridderbos has reproduced in his book the views of Dr. Kuyper on these matters. A careful check of numerous citations shows that Dr. Ridderbos has performed a careful painstaking task to set forth the views of Kuyper in their proper perspective.

In a third chapter Dr. Ridderbos undertakes to present Dr. Kuyper's views on the temporal and eternal future of culture, and in the fourth chapter the ethics of culture is presented. The need of a spiritual antithesis is not in conflict with the doctrine of common or special grace.

In the final chapter Dr. Ridderbos presents the criticism offered by contemporaries of Dr. Kuyper and theologians of the present day who cannot see eye to eye with Kuyper's view of culture. The criticism of Dr. W. J. Aalders and Dr. Th. L. Haitjema, who accused Kuyper of propagating a Neo-Calvinism, is found to be false in the estimation of Dr. Ridderbos. The attack of Dr. A. A. van Ruler against Kuyper was of a more Scriptural nature. Van Ruler challenged Kuyper on the matter of exegesis of Scripture and accused the latter of exhibiting by the doctrine of common grace a dualistic world and life
view which never can serve as the foundation of a Christian culture. Dr. Ridderbos comes to the conclusion that Dr. Van Ruler's criticism is unjust, and that Kuyper is the father of a "werkelijkheidstheologie" is unfounded. Dr. Ridderbos also gives a careful analysis of the criticism offered by such men as Dr. S. G. De Graaf, Dr. H. Dooyeweerd, Prof. S. Greydanus, and Dr. K. Schilder. Especially the views of Professor K. Schilder are given a complete review. The view of Schilder which calls for a "common mandate" instead of a doctrine of common grace is rejected by Ridderbos. The charge made by Schilder that the view of culture propagated by Kuyper is anthropocentric and not theocentric is found to be untrue. The view of Schilder that God maintains a favorable attitude to everything that is "creatureliness" in mankind is considered by Ridderbos as fantastic, and the exegesis offered by Schilder of Paul's words in Romans 2:14 is equally rejected as untenable. Ridderbos comes to the conclusion that the main purport of Kuyper's presentation of a Christian culture is thoroughly Scriptural and acceptable.

Dr. Ridderbos in the closing pages of his book expresses his appreciation for the contribution made by Dr. Kuyper on the problem of culture. The author is convinced that Kuyper has opened the eyes of Reformed people to the evils of both Anabaptism and Humanism, and has contributed the impetus Reformed theology needed to express activity in every phase of human life. Dr. Ridderbos does not deny the necessity of reconstruction of Kuyper's views of culture, but he cannot approve of the work of reconstruction offered by critics of the present day. Ridderbos seeks reconstruction rather by addition than subtraction. He desires to remove the inconsistencies evident in the work of Kuyper especially on the problem of the kingship of Christ in regard to the doctrine of common grace, and also in the light of Romans 1:20b desires an expansion of the views of Kuyper. Ridderbos desires to continue to move in the line of approach adopted by Kuyper in the construction of a theological view of culture. Ridderbos apparently was not aware of the reconstruction effort put forth by Dr. C. Van Til in a series of three articles in the Westminster Theological Journal, and later reprinted in 1947 in book form under the title Common Grace. In a later edition of his book Dr. Ridderbos should include an analysis and an evaluation of the criticism offered by Dr. Van Til against the views of Dr. Kuyper on common grace.

The reviewer heartily recommends the reading of this timely and up-to-date book. The style is clear, and the external mechanics are good. The proof reading has been excellent. Anyone interested in Reformed theology and capable of reading the Holland language should place the book of Dr. Ridderbos on the "must" list. Incidentally the reading of the book will also acquaint the reader with a phase of the historical background which led to the recent schism in the Reformed churches in the Netherlands.

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WANTED: A CALVINISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY


PRIMITIVE religions are integrating social forces. They really satisfy their devotees. For the religious appetites of primitive and civilized peoples are essentially the same, and pagan cults fulfill the same function in primitive society as our religious exercises do for us. Primitive religion helps in the struggle for existence: and, "in spite of appearances, is not a name for childish tumult or bestial abandon. It is careful, thoughtful, purposeful and it is good medicine" (p. 4).

Such, in short, is the main thesis of Mr. Howell's treatise on primitive man and his religion. The introduction tells us that the higher historical religions, such as Christianity, are not good objects for anthropological study because they are too old and too big. Hence the selection of heathens and pagans to determine "in what ways religious needs may be fulfilled" (p. 4). These pagan cults, furthermore, may be distinguished from historic religions because they are non-messianic, non-ethical, non-missionary (i.e., not imperialistic), and not exclusive, snobbish, or intolerant.

Among the phenomena described are manu, tabu, magic (black and white), divination, disease and medicine, witchcraft, shamanism, souls, ghosts, death, ancestor worship, totemism, demons, gods. Further there are chapters on the nature of religion, the art of worship, and the rise and fall of a religion. The author sums up by saying, "What we have seen is forms and not origins, which remain a mystery," and a little further he says, "that all the evidence we have reviewed has dealt with types of religious ideas and their function, and none of it has pointed to religious beginnings." Again, he says: "We have been more successful in seeing what primitive religion does than what it is" (pp. 288 and 291-292, respectively). It is this functional approach, we are told, which sets the anthropologists apart as "bird watchers, with notebook, studying actual, living communities of all kinds, making careful records of how they worship, and trying to discover why. It is not after meaning that students seek, nor any absolute values; they desire only to know what is actually being done and what human reasons lie behind it" (p. 3).

How shall we evaluate the results of this phenomenological approach? To my mind there is first of all an immanent criticism that must be offered, viz., that the very limited "why" which is sought by the student is not answered and that reality is distorted. All the author achieves is to suggest certain reasons why certain acts of worship are engaged in, but the more fundamental question of why men worship is not dealt with. To say simply that the fuel of religion is the necessity of knowing the unknown (p. 68) does not cut deep enough. This unconcern for ultimate meaning by which the author separates value (e.g., the fact that savages are satisfied with their magic and worship) from the question of truth (e.g., "we know their gods do not exist and their magic is hollow") constitutes the death-blow to all religion. It makes all value relative and man merely lives in a world which is purposeless, senseless, meaningless.

On this relativistic basis not only is man robbed of his belief in an unseen order and a final cause, which gives meaning to man's striving and thinking, but now nature is all there is and nature is nothing but matter in motion, governed by impersonal force (Cf. W. T. Stace: "Man Against Darkness," Atlantic Monthly, Sept., 1948).

In no way does this evaluation detract from the impressive record of psychological, cultural and social values achieved by primitive religions. But the pragmatic argument for value does not satisfy the moral and spiritual consciousness of man. It simply lands us at the dead end of skepticism and agnosticism. "At the end the problem of truth stares us always sternly in the face, because man's deepest and noblest instincts refuse to extinguish the mark of his divine origin, namely, his thirst for and want of imperishable truth" (Cf. Hendrik Kraemer, The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World, p. 107).

Hence, from a Christian-Theistic point of view this otherwise splendidly written description of native cults, for which the author is to be commended because of his clarity, brevity and painstaking choice of material, is vitiated by his uncritical naturalistic approach. The position that man is the measure of all things and is responsible to no higher being, but may be satisfied in seeing temporal goods and in creating workable "gods" with his own finite, frightened mind, is uncritically assumed in the name of scientific method—in our, the method of anthropology.
the scientific point of view. Although the author has consulted missionaries Codrington and Van Wegen, he seems never to have heard of Kraemer and Bavinck and hence misses the fine distinction of the former between the "primitive," the "rational," and the "prophetic" apprehensions of life (see op. cit., p. 149). Kraemer decries the use of "primitive" in the sense of "initial" and "primeval" and says that it rather stands for a representative apprehension of life as opposed to that of the Greeks and that of the Hebrews. This apprehension is then described as naturalistic and vitalistic.

The fundamental assumption of this view is that man and nature are essentially one, that the macrocosmos and the microcosmos are correlative entities that exist side by side in an uninterrupted process of inter-relations. There is no possibility of a religious or ethical absolute nor is a personal God conceivable since the relation of man to his "god" is essentially an inter-relation of forces (Kraemer, pp. 152 ff.).

Also the daring insights of a fellow-phenomenologist have not so much as received a nod. I refer to the epochal work of Dr. G. Vander Leeuw of Groningen, entitled Einführung in die Phänomenologie der Religion, which appeared in English under the title, Religion in Essence and Manifestation. Vander Leeuw admits that religion is an ultimate experience based upon revelation. "The religious significance of things, therefore, is that in which no wider nor deeper meaning whatever can follow. It is the meaning of the whole; it is the last word" (p. 680). But in any case, religion is always directed toward salvation, never towards life itself as it is given; and in this respect all religion, with no exceptions, is the religion of deliverance" (op. cit., p. 682).

In conclusion a tribute ought to be given to author Howells for seeing and stating repeatedly that the native cults of the primitive man are not departmentalized functions but that they integrate his social and political and cultural activities, that religion on the savage level extends to the whole of man's existence. This observation comports well with our Calvinistic interpretation that religion must comprehend man's whole life and that every sphere of life must be claimed pro Rege. But on the author's relativistic assumptions this fact and its limited value of integrating tribal life has no ultimate meaning, and the "why" of this phenomenon is not satisfactorily answered, nor can it be without seeing man as a creature of God.

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AN A. J. CRONIN ENTERTAINMENT


Dr. A. J. Cronin turned from a successful medical practice to the successive production of such best-sellers as The Citadel, The Keys of the Kingdom, and The Green Years, to which Shannon's Way is, in a sense, a sequel. These novels are all roughly faithful to a common narrative technique; namely, the struggle of a tough-minded idealist in receptive opposition to a callous and sordid professional orthodoxy of habit and thought. The Citadel arranges the hypocrisy and materialism of the medical profession; The Keys of the Kingdom condemns the self-aggrandizement found among missionaries; and Shannon's Way decries the lust for tinselled publicity in supposedly disinterested research, and the smug subservience of hospital administrations to vested interests. The thesis, however, never encumbers the plot; as a matter-of-fact, the thesis unifies and vitalizes it.

Shannon's Way is the story of a gifted, but desperately poor, young doctor, who combines an ardent temper with an unusual capacity for sustained research under irritatively awkward conditions. His research, to which he sacrifices advancement and comfort, is obstructed by professional jealousy, and colossal selfishness. Shannon's disinterested pursuit of knowledge is lightened by a markedly interested pursuit of a girl; and Cronin manipulates events so deftly that, despite the vagaries of fortune and the brusques of opposition, no one can say "the struggle naught availeth," for the last chapter presents the hero with an excellent appointment in one hand and an attractive heroine in the other. The appointment flutters to the floor and Shannon's "lips moved without making a sound . . . his breast dilated with an immense joy . . ." Cronin knows how a best seller ends.

Unquestionably, a best seller has a right to end thus, but, in this case, not without a cost in artistic integrity. Cronin had in the making a gripping tragedy calculated to test heroic mettle. Had he stopped with Shannon's nervous collapse, the story would have had the iron ring of truth. To end the narrative, through an obvious tour de force, with the imminent peal of wedding bells is a sop to the sentimental. Shannon's return to faith and sanity would in normal experience have been slow, perilous, and painful; in the novel, it happens instantaneously through manipulation.

Cronin's religious interests appear in the romance of Robert and Jean. That, too, is hedged about with obstructions. Robert is a liberal Catholic, whose religion is at best tangential; Jean Law, on the other hand, comes from the fanatical Scotch Brethren. Her father is no "weak-kneed tract passer," but a fire-eating patriarch to whom "tolerance was a forbidden weakness." To him and his wife Shannon is wholly suspect, and Jean is forced to reign him. The problem is solved through Jean's repudiation of her parents, and a mutual tolerance, amounting to religious indifference. The treatment is essentially characteristic of Cronin's vague religious convictions.

There are poignant and sensational scenes in the book. The tragic death of young Sim through the inhuman carelessness of Sister Peck, the breathless wait for the result of prolonged experiment, the nervous collapse of Shannon are highly dramatic. As Trollope says in his Autobiography, all great fiction is sensational in the sense of being stirring or striking; it is only when it becomes incredible or marvelous that the illusion of truth is destroyed. Cronin never becomes melodramatic in specific scenes. These scenes seem actable, and one feels that they were pointed at the theatre. Consequently, also, the emotional voltage is high throughout.

The medium strikes one as hurried and nervous. The style has rapidity and movement; yet it never savors of the distinguished prose over which a reader lingers with delight. I did not feel impelled to reread a single paragraph, as one does again and again in the poetic and colorful prose of Meredith or Hardy. There, at times, the page sings, and one lingers over many memorable passages.

Shannon's Way recalls a great book of similar pattern, Sinclair Lewis' Arrowsmith; but the latter novel packs far greater power, and manifests finer artistic integrity. Arrowsmith is greater than Shannon, and Gottschalk dwarfs Professor Challis. The book was, it seems to me, designed to enthrall a large, popular audiences, and Cronin has exploited many avenues to popularity. By providing an obvious idealistic thesis, a rapid, engrossing narrative, a vague religious sentiment, an aura of disinterested scientific endeavor, a romance with questionable episodes, and a satisfactory happy ending, Cronin has pleased a wide public. The fusion is interesting; but to consider it impressive art would be misguided sentimentalism.

Calvin College. JOHN TIMMERMANN.
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