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Spurious and Genuine

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VOL. XV, NO. 4
TWO DOLLARS
A YEAR
NOVEMBER, 1949
The CALVIN FORUM

VOLUME XV, NO. 4

NOVEMBER, 1949

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The term ecumenicity has come into more or less general use among us of late. Amsterdam 1948, which means the World Council of Churches, and Amsterdam 1949, which is the Reformed Ecumenical Synod for short, were expressions of ecumenical consciousness. In some seminaries courses in “Ecumenics” are being offered. It may be well to attempt to clarify the region of thinking that is indicated by these relatively new terms.

This terminology is not new, not at least in its adjectival form. The student of Church History has spoken for centuries of the first great councils of the early Church as Ecumenical Councils. Ecumenical means that which applies to the world, the inhabited world, the whole world, so that an ecumenical council, in distinction, say, from a national council, is a council of the entire church, the church of all nations, of the whole world. Such was the Council of Nicea, the famous church assembly which in 325 A.D. adopted what has since been known as the Nicene Creed. The Christian Church then was one, it had a universal character, it was a world church, and its councils were hence properly called ecumenical councils.

In recent times the interest in the ecumenicity of the Church has arisen as a confession of, and a protest against, the divided condition of the church. This division came about historically already partly in mediaeval, but especially in modern times, through the operation of two factors, viz., the national differences and the doctrinal or denominational differences. Although the church may now be said to exist throughout the entire world, it is, organizationally speaking, not a world church, it is not one church. Through the barriers of race and language, but especially by reason of doctrinal differences, the historic Christian Church as its exists today is broken up into an endless number of groups and segments. Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, and Protestants represent great doctrinal cleavages in the Christian Church of today, and Protestantism in turn is divided into an endless number of groups each with its own doctrinal and ecclesiastical idiosyncrasies. And all these groups may be multiplied by the number of nations in which they have been entrenched and have assumed their own national form and organization.

The modern ecumenical movement is a protest against this state of affairs. It stresses the fact that the Church is and ought to be one. There is a world church. We must, so we have been told, cultivate this world consciousness of the church. In forms appropriate to the nature of the Church the essential unity of the Church of Christ throughout the world should come to expression. There should be cooperation, not competition, between these churches. The essential unity of those who are Christians should come to expression in organized form. Christ prayed that all his followers might be one, and often they fight and destroy one another. This is sinful, and the churches who tear asunder what belongs together or who refuse to unite what now lives apart are guilty before God.

As soon as the serious-minded Christian who desires to live by the Word of God asks himself what his attitude should be to this ecumenical movement, he readily discovers that he cannot cooperate with the movement as it is organized by the leading Protestant denominations in our day and has recently organized itself into the World Council of Churches. Many reasons could be advanced for this position, but all boil ultimately down to the only one and all-sufficient reason that the movement knows no distinction between true and apostate churches and includes them all in the proposed ecumenical movement. Now the simple historical fact is that many (if not most) of the large Protestant denominations are either themselves apostate as a whole, or are in control of an apostate leadership.

When using the word “apostate” I give the term its full and clear meaning of having essentially departed from the Faith. That is the biblical usage of the term. That great apostasy began in the Protestant Church in the 19th century and, with many fluctuations and variations, has continued to this day in the 20th. It is the rejection of the great fundamentals of the Faith which the Protestant Reformation reaffirmed after the night of mediaeval darkness, but which since the 18th and 19th century have been repudiated much more radically and much more consistently than Roman Catholicism ever did. Modern Liberal Protestantism repudiates the Infallible Word, the true Deity of Christ, man's
total depravity, and the supernatural grace of God—both objectively in the Gospel of the atonement on Calvary, and subjectively in the absolute need of supernatural regeneration through the Spirit of God. Essentially it denies the Trinity, the Two Natures of Christ, the Vicarious Atonement, the supernatural character of the new life in the believer, and the glorious hope of the Return of our Lord. We know the sophistry with which various schools of theology have sought to retain the terms of the Christian system of truth after they had emptied these great verities of all their essential and truly biblical meaning.

That movement of modern Protestant Liberalism is still in control in the large denominations, in the leadership of the churches, and in the training of the ministers-to-be through the seminaries. That group is also in control in the modern Protestant ecumenical movement. Let us not be deceived by the more or less “positive” language that is used by these leaders in our day. America is foremost in the World Council and the doctrinal indifference coupled with Protestant Liberalism that has held sway in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is the clearest mark of the apostate church or of the apostate leadership in sleeping churches. Even the fact that the Unitarian denomination has not been admitted to the Federal Council cannot be explained from doctrinal insistence on the trinitarian faith, but finds its real explanation in the threat of certain “conservative” bodies now in the Council that they will withdraw if the Unitarian Society is admitted.

Let no one pin his hopes on the swinging to the right which is apparent in recent Liberal Protestantism. Yes, there is a swinging to the right, at least on the part of many. But what have modifications to the left or to the right to do with the basic question of being for or against the Christ of the Scriptures? What these leaders need is not a slight movement to the right, but a radical conversion—a return to the majestic Word of God!

But this does not mean that we have no ecumenical calling. We must repudiate the spurious, but champion the genuine ecumenicity. No condemnation of what others do, coupled with failure to face the corresponding duty ourselves will do. Orthodox Churches have often made themselves ridiculous by condemning and berating and then failing to ask themselves the constructive question: What is my duty in this sphere? Also Reformed Churches have not always been alert to their duty. Sometimes our isolationism is lauded as a virtue, when in reality it may be only the instinctive expression of our narrow outlook, our facility at condemnation coupled with a spiritual indolence and refusal to face the duties of our day.

We have a great and challenging duty in the ecumenical field. This is not the place to set forth in detail in what activities that ecumenicity ought to express itself. That aspect of the problem is deserving of careful scrutiny, but for the present we would direct the attention of our readers in a slightly different direction.

We believe that those of Reformed persuasion should organize and express their ecumenical consciousness along two distinct lines. There is need for the development of a distinctly Reformed ecumenical consciousness to come to organized expression, but no less is there need for all to band together in an ecumenical movement who can truly be said to be of Christ. We believe that careful study of the principles, and reflection upon the situation in which the Church finds itself today, will make clear this double ecumenical responsibility which we have.

First of all, we should cultivate a Reformed ecumenical consciousness and bring it to appropriate organized expression. The Reformed Faith is, according to our conviction, the most complete and most truly biblical conception and formulation of the Gospel, of the Christian Faith, of the orthodox creed. It is not a general orthodoxy with a few peculiarities of its own added, which we call Reformed. It is orthodoxy itself in its full, dimensions, in its relatively purest expression according to the Scriptures. We perform the greatest service to our fellow-Christians by preaching, teaching, expounding, and promoting this Reformed Faith. It is a serious error to think of the distinctly Reformed doctrines as special points, certain additional conceptions, that only need to be added to the orthodox system, but which also can be left off if one is only interested in setting forth orthodoxy. The Reformed Faith is the Gospel, the system of scriptural truth, in its full dimensions and deepest implications.

It is therefore in the context of a Reformed Ecumenicity that those who love the Reformed Faith can do full justice to the doctrinal aspect of their task. The first task of the Church is always to preach the truth according to the Word of God, to present the Gospel of salvation, and to profess and propagate that Gospel in its fullness and purity. There are many other things to do for the Church of Jesus Christ and for the ecumenical movement of such a Church, but the primary task lies right here. The unity of the Church must first of all be a unity in the Faith, in the truth, in the witness to the Gospel. To maintain the purity of that witness, both in the form of preaching and of creedal expression, is the joint task of all those who are Reformed.

Of course, this is the task of each individual member, of each local church and its agencies, and of each historically Reformed denomination. But for
all these combined there is also a world task. There should be a united witness before the world. There should be a united struggle to maintain the faith once for all delivered to the saints. There should be a united wrestling with the problems of the new day and the question what the appropriate task of the Reformed Churches is for their solution. Such a Reformed Ecumenical Movement will give expression to oneness in the spirit among all who share like precious faith. In a sinful world these Reformed groups, moreover, have need of one another. We must help, if necessary admonish, one another. When distances are gradually being eliminated and various churches and groups find one another engaged in the same great struggle, though each against his own background and in his own national environment, it is heartening and inspiring to feel the tie that binds together in the struggle for the truth, in the spread of the gospel, in the witness for the Christ and for the honor of the sovereign God.

Precisely this is the task of Reformed Ecumenical Synods. Both Grand Rapids 1946 and Amsterdam 1949 made this their conscious aim and endeavor. As to participation in such a Reformed Ecumenical Movement, it is well to avoid being both too inclusive and too exclusive. It must be recognized that there are many churches which were historically Reformed and which still have the classic documents of Reformed Protestantism as their creed, but whose Reformed witness today has evaporated into a vague or sometimes even explicit denial of all that is precious in that faith. Churches that may bear the Presbyterian or Reformed name have, so we must note with sadness, in many cases succumbed to the doctrinal in differentiation and virtual modernism of the day. All their boasting of their hoary age, and their building the graves of the prophets who have historically attained to fame in the Christian Church, cannot wipe out the tragic fact that the glory has departed and "Ichabod" might well be written over their denominational portals. For "Reformed" and "Presbyterian" Churches like these there can be no room in the Reformed Ecumenical Movement until they repent and do the former works. On the other hand, we can also be too narrow and exclusive. I am thinking in this connection especially of some Presbyterian and Reformed Churches that have slipped but among whose leadership and membership many are found who realize their plight and are eager to restore the former glory. May those who hold positions of responsibility in the present Reformed Ecumenical Movement be given much grace to encourage and strengthen those who possibly have a greater battle to fight than they themselves.

* * *

But there is also need for the practice of ecumenicity in a wider circle than that of the Reformed Faith. The great antithesis, for or against Christ, though apprehended most clearly among the Reformed, is not an antithesis between Reformed and non-Reformed. All orthodox churches stand for those great fundamentals of the Christian Faith, the denial of which involves forfeiture of the Christian name and forfeiture of the name true church. In these days of a loose liberalized latitudinarianism that uses the name Christian Church for any institution which empirically goes by that name, we should emphasize the difference between the true and the false church. But it is not in the interest of truth, nor in the interest of the fundamental difference between the true and the false church, to overlook the fact that there are also various churches more or less pure.

We can approach this matter also from another angle. The great line of demarcation between truth and falsehood, between the true and the false church, must be found in the alternative between those who believe in the divine Christ, His incarnation and atonement for sinners, and those who do not. This is scriptural. The Apostle John in speaking of the criterion by which one may "prove the spirits, whether they are of God," wrote: "Hereby ye the Spirit of God; every spirit that the confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God." (I John 4:1-3) That is the criterion to apply when one faces the question whether an individual or a church can be called Christian, i.e., can be said to be on the side of Christ and not of the anti-Christ. It is not minimizing the glory of the Reformed Faith to recognize this. Though because of sin all Christians in this dispensation are not in one and the same church, the time is coming that they will all be one in the enjoyment of the glories of heaven.

With all such orthodox Christians we of the Reformed Faith are one in the testimony for Christ over against the unbelief of our day. It is sometimes said that we Reformed people have an enemy to the left of us in Modernism (which is Neo-Paganism) and to the right of us in Fundamentalism and Anabaptism and the like. This is true, provided we do not commit the error of implying or inferring that the group to the right is anti in the same sense as is the group to the left. This is the mistake that some people may make who are thinking of the right attitude toward culture. On that score some Reformed people sometimes seem to stand closer to the world with its unbelief and paganism than to the Fundamentalist and Anabaptist. But this attitude is a serious mistake, which sooner or later will lead to fatal consequences. The "opponent" to the right is our fellow-believer; the opponent to the left is on the side of the anti-Christ and cannot be recognized as a believer at all. We hope to sit down at the banquet table in the New Jerusalem with
Lutheran, Dispensationalist, Baptist, Arminian, and other orthodox believers, but not with those who deny the Christ of God and repudiate His redemptive work for sinners.

And therefore there is another ecumenical fellowship for us, besides that with Churches of the Reformed Faith. With all orthodox Churches we have the Faith in common which the liberals repudiate and the unbelievers spurn. We may regret the fact that not all these orthodox Christians and orthodox Churches promptly become Reformed, and we will pray and work for the furtherance of the Reformed Faith as the richest, the purest, and the deepest formulation of Gospel truth, but in a sinful world in which everything is imperfect we will recognize that there are millions of brethren in Christ and many churches of Christ which, though not Reformed, are nevertheless truly Christian. With all such churches we have a common cause in a world of unbelief. How often our soldiers and sailors during the war felt the blessed tie of spiritual oneness with those who knew the Lord but differed from them in many points of the Reformed Faith. They, as well as we who claim to be Reformed, are God’s people. They may belong—and do belong—to a less pure church than ours, but not to a false church.

How this ecumenical fellowship should express itself is another question. Surely not by wiping out the lines of demarcation and distinction between them. Perhaps one of the most helpful answers to this concrete and practical question may be seen in the actual activities of such organizations as the National Association of Evangelicals and the International Council of Christian Churches. One may differ on the way in which these activities should be carried on, and one may have legitimate criticism of some of these activities and the manner in which they are carried on. That will always be the case, even with a Reformed Ecumenical Council or Synod. But that concerns details, not the principle. There is a crying need in these days of apostasy and unbelief to stand shoulder to shoulder with all who confess the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour—not merely in name, but in very deed.

Let those who love the Reformed Faith see their ecumenical calling and humbly strive to do their part in both these circles of influence. 

A Note on Division of Income

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At the Creation of the world God created man as such in His image. From this fact people, all of them without exception, derive an equal dignity. On this fact the original rights of liberty of man are founded: his spiritual liberty (religious liberty, the right to truth) and his physical liberty (liberty of action, the right to work.) Also the right to private property must in principle be regarded as a personal right to liberty, for without property there is no personal liberty. Collective property is, of course, not condemned by this.

Besides the fundamental equality of man a fundamental disparity between men is founded in the order of Creation. This is based on the value of the individual personality of man, created by God. The disparity in nature and function of persons is the root of human society. The character of mutual completion is most clearly manifested in the most original form of community, that of the family, then also in that of the working-community. These forms of community, along with forms of collective property, are founded on the order of the Creation.

The family-community and the working-community are not only social, but as much economic
structural elements. God's command to economic life comprises such a use of the gifts of nature, that the objects of human life are attained, in sequence of importance, as much as possible. This economic activity must take place in co-operation on the basis of division of labour, in such a way, that there is a harmonious coherence between the economic and the remaining aspects of life. Consequently there is an ideal economic equilibrium, which does both liberty and community full justice. The exchange in which economic equilibrium comes about, is in fact a community based on the principle of mutual completion. With the exchange of goods a system of prices and incomes comes into being, which is in accordance with the ideal order of life. The division of income depends on the community-value of the achievements of the groups concerned. Among the achievements valuable to the community must be reckoned labor, thrift, and enterprise.

Through the Fall mankind has unlearnt to see the original liberty and community-binding as an unbreakable unity. Consequently harmony in society has got lost and has turned to individualism and collectivism respectively. Moreover, the insight into the factors of economic activity has been darkened and the scheme of ends has been disjointed. Consequently the economic equilibrium no longer reflects the universal harmony, but it issues in situations of exploitation, such as excessive competition and monopoly.

The state, instituted by God to check the effect of sin in the world, itself underwent the process of deterioration and even often gave guidance to it. This means that the state on the one hand got too great a task, because the original communities neglected theirs, while on the other hand the state often unnecessarily entered the field of the original communities and usurped their functions.

In the economic field it is the task of the free community to promote the ideal economic equilibrium. On this the schemes of wants of households and enterprises should be focused in their economic action. As judgment has been clouded and passions have got hold of man, this end is unattainable. The state, too, lacks the sense of the ideal economic equilibrium, as as aspect of the lost universal harmony.

Society and state nevertheless have as their task to fight against obvious abuses in price-fixation and division of income. When incomes deviate from the community-value of the achievements of those who draw them, and the social circles of life are unable or unwilling to eliminate this deviation, the state must intervene to correct matters by the imposition of taxes, price-fixing, production-regulation or other measures of economic policy. The difficulty is only to ascertain what must be regarded as value to the community. This can no longer be determined accurately, but in any case it is clear that, as the social value of achievements varies, it is also permissible that incomes vary. The disparity in achievements and incomes is reflected in the class-distinctions, on which the social structure of the community ought to be founded.
Night in the Area of Education

Henry Schultze
President Calvin College

Isaiah 21:11, 12: "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the morning? The watchman saith, The morning cometh, and the night continueth. If ye will inquire, inquire. Turn and come."

SOME twenty centuries ago the Edomites were suffering under the cruel and oppressive heel of the Babylonians. They were living in the night of divine disfavor. Their masters were not able to appreciate and understand their ideals and aspirations. Their experiences must have been somewhat similar to those suffered by the victims of the concentration camps during the war. But, however dark the conditions of a group of men may be, there are always some in whom hope never dies and aspirations never cease. Those among the Edomites who had possessed this spirit approached the prophet for enlightenment. It was the prophets' business, under the direction of divine revelation, to interpret history, to read the signs of the times, and to give the direction along which the people should think and act in order to obtain relief. It was to one of these prophets that the Edomites turned with the question, "Watchman, what of the night?" How much longer will the night last? Is there no way of escape? What should we do under the present circumstances? The watchman reported that the morning was coming, but that they should not be filled with unwarranted joy, for the morning would not introduce a cloudless day. The night would continue (a preferable rendering by Luther). He urged them to persist in inquiry and investigation, which, after all, is one of the best assurances of ultimate relief.

This prophecy finds its analogy in every stage of historical development and in every area of human interest. One might think that there would be no occasion for a prophecy of this kind in the area of religion. However, about a decade ago Adolf Keller, one of the strongest religious leaders on the continent, attended a religious conference at Edinburgh. One could expect something of the light of day to be prevalent there. Ministers are usually incurably optimistic. Their faith in a God who works all things well is not easily shaken. However, when Dr. Keller returned home from the conference and began to reflect upon the things he had heard and learned and began to evaluate the predominant spirit, he sat down and wrote a book, entitling it Five Minutes to Twelve. It was night in the religious world, in his estimation—almost midnight. However, as one gazed toward the eastern horizon he could detect what seemed to be the signs of a new day. There were such things as international religious conferences, revivals of well-nigh world-wide significance, and many other such dispensers of hope. But these are, after all, false harbingers of a new day. The night simply continues.

Turning to just another phase of human interest, namely the international field, it is being conceded by practically all the students of world affairs that things look very dark. There are men who are sure that we are coming to the close of the present era. There are predictions that western civilization is suicidal in its trend. Nations are now preparing themselves for a coming all-out struggle. There are, however, as history progresses, signs of a new day. After all, we have our World Courts, the Hague Tribunal, the United Nations, and peace treaties, that promise a new day. But history has taught us that, after all, these signs of hope are not dependable. The night continues. It seems to me that we shall not have a future of abiding peace and joy until, led by the Prince of Peace, we enter into that realm in which there is no night.

I am particularly interested this morning in finding in the field of education an analogy of the prophetic statement quoted at the beginning, and therefore shall speak to you about the night in the area of education.

A Tragic Reality

One cannot fully measure the sad estate in which education finds itself until he realizes that it is the greatest single force under God operating in this universe. It deserves the major credit, or blame, for things as they are. This is generally conceded. When Hitler overran the various countries of Europe he was fully aware of the power of education. He immediately entered upon a program of destroying educational institutions, imprisoning teachers and looting libraries. He knew that if he could harness education to a war machine, he could, in a single generation, develop a race of Nazis as fanatical as the most rabid Prussian goose-stepper. The same recognition is found in this land of ours. Whatever the conditions may be, education is some-

*Summary of the convocation address delivered by President Henry Schultze on the occasion of the opening of a new school year at Calvin College.
how responsible. Even educators themselves are willing to take this responsibility.

Men who were not educators took great delight in tracing every national difficulty to the door of formal education. When they twirled the indicator in a circle of possible causes, the pointer invariably stopped at education. Are there race riots? Then shake an accusing finger at the professors. Are there recessions? Blame the educational institutions. Is there war? The schools are to blame. That brilliant commentator, Walter Lippman, had no difficulty in finding material for his columns when he wrote his tirades against education. Paul Mallon with similar ease wrote articles against the American system of education. Military authorities would expose educators by arranging an educational program in which the objectives could be attained more effectively and in much shorter time. Education, therefore, was not doing its job. Competent judges, however, have since declared that what the militarists called education was no education at all. It was merely preparing a person to be a cog in the war machine and it failed to prepare him for the life to be lived after the war. It is of interest to note that even the educators feel the necessity of the revision of the educational procedure. They have been working feverishly on the matter of new emphases, new approaches, and new objectives. This is, of course, an acknowledgment that education has not fulfilled its purpose.

However, the educators are not fully aware that there is night in their area of interest. After all, what we really need is not newness in the periphery of education, but in its fundamentals. There is one difficulty in bringing light in the field of education; in this country of ours he who pays the piper can call the tune. Education merely reflects the ideals of those who pay for it. It is of interest to note that in a strong C. I. O. district the teacher must reflect the philosophy of the C. I. O. if he expects to carry on his work without molestation. We are living in a materialistic world, and in such a world the education will conform to the pattern. And materialism is not known as a philosophy that radiates light. In this present age there is a strong tendency toward seeking federal aid for educational purposes. It is obvious that when the government pays the bills, it will dictate the policies, and we cannot be so sure that such policies will lead to a new day. Leaders in the field of education in days gone by were popular not because they produced a new philosophy, but because in their philosophy they articulated the ideas of the American people. I think that Dewey's influence is due as much to his grasping the genius of the American people as to his working out a new philosophy of education. Once more, it should be clear that if educational philosophies are determined by the people, the education itself will not rise above the public ideals. Even in our own Christian school system, we have not yet "arrived" when it comes to a well-worked-out philosophy of education. At the present time some of our best minds are working on this problem in the hopes of giving expression to our basic educational ideals. We have not yet entered an area of cloudless skies.

If it is true—and it is—that a nation reflects itself in its education, then it is dark indeed. Chancellor Hutchins, of the University of Chicago, a keen student of educational affairs, recently wrote an article which received wide publicity, in which he clearly defined the condition of the nation such as to bode ill for educational developments. He finds many disturbing similarities between the Russian and American life. For instance, Russia is troubled with unbounded self-adoration. Judging from the reports that come to us via the press, the Russians were the first in every field of advancement. They invented the atom bomb long before we did in America. They were first in the discovery of the miracle drugs. They were first to develop a practical, jet-propelled airplane. Indeed, they won the war. That is the type of education that is prevalent in Russia. And the people will be conform ed according to it and, in turn, reflect that type of training in their educational endeavors. However, as Hutchins pointed out, we come a close second in the field of self-adoration. We, after all, are the ones who won the war. Judging from our textbooks, papers, and magazines, and other educational tools, we have been first in the important discoveries that have meant so much in the progress of civilization, and we boldly announce that we have become the leader among the nations. We can little tolerate criticism, objections, and unfavorable evaluations of ourselves. And yet we can expect that any evaluation by others of the part that our country is playing in promoting the welfare of the world will be colored by the personal and national prejudices that manifest themselves. Just recently President Heuss of the German Republic was complimenting an American military authority on the things that America was doing for Western Europe. He spoke highly of the contributions that we have been making through the Marshall Plan. He stated that that was the first incident in history where a conquering nation helped a conquered nation to get on its feet. He stated that it was the law of "love your neighbor as yourself" put into practice. We, of course, receive this flattery with a feeling of self-importance. But the fact remains that the Marshall Plan was sold to the American people on the ground that we should develop a Festung Amerika against the probable Russian attempts to conquer the world. I am not so sure at all that it was a love for the Germans and other western European countries that motivated the Marshall Plan, but rather purely selfish
interests. Of course, regardless of what our motives may have been, the Marshall Plan has undoubtedly been of inestimable value to the nations that were ravaged by the war. Yet the motives colored the deed, and the color was not brilliant. So this spirit of self-adoration will undoubtedly be reflected in the educational efforts of our country. Surely strict honesty would more likely herald a new day.

A Deep Concern

When the Edomites called to the prophet saying, “What of the night?”, they reflected, of course, that they were desperately concerned about the conditions in which they lived. That, after all, is a very hopeful sign. The promise of a new day would be a great deal more realistic if only something of this sort of concern would be manifested relative to American education. There are several reasons, I think, for failure to be so deeply concerned about it. First of all, we are an isolationistic people who are willing to step to one side and let the rest of the world go by. The consciousness of being responsible for the social and national fabric of which we are a part is exceedingly weak. We just don’t feel that we are in any way responsible for the education of others. Since education is a corporate affair we must develop corporate interests. This has not been done.

Just this last summer the Board of Education of Grand Rapids, realizing that our public schools were in a bad way, called in a committee of experts from the University of Chicago in order to determine a course of action. The committee reported that the large number of those interested in privately owned schools has worked very detrimentally for the public school system. Now, I do think that the statement is a bit overdrawn. It would not be difficult to prove that the interest, for instance, of the Christian Reformed people in the welfare of the public educational system is just as intense as that of the public in general. The difficulty unquestionably lies somewhere else. The commitment of our Christian Reformed people to the Sovereign God motivates their interest in all public institutions and obliges them to active participation. There is, of course, this difference, that the public at large is just plainly indifferent to its educational system, whereas our people do occasionally manifest a mistaken conception of the doctrine of isolation. They do not realize that the isolation called for by Scripture is not spatial or local in character, but spiritual. But this tendency toward isolation which manifests itself in some degree on the part of Christian people, and in a much higher degree on the part of others, certainly militates against the kind of concern that the public in general should have for its schools.

Then, too, we are breathing an atmosphere of materialism in America, and materialism never sustains real education. It is down on all education except that which can readily be converted into cash. It emphasizes the idea that education must teach the students how to earn a living. The matter of how to live is regarded as none of education’s business. It is therefore not surprising that there are educators who realize that because of this trend toward materialism we have entered a very dark night indeed. But it is the prevalent philosophy, and no new day will dawn until it gives way to more idealistic trends of thought.

There is still another reason for the lack of concern, and that is that we are living in The Age of the Youth. Youth is incurably optimistic. It lives by hope. The future is always painted in roseate hues. It is practically impossible for the citizenry of a youthful nation to be deeply concerned about the trend of the times. That is one of the characteristics of young people that makes association with them so inspirational and college work so pleasant. It will be one of the tasks of the college throughout the year to face things as they are, to develop in the hearts of the students a deep concern so that they too may be moved to cry out, “Watchman, what of the night?”. Humanly speaking, there is little prospect for the dawning of a new day until men and women by the grace of God are compelled to cry out in anguish because of the darkness of the night.

The Promise of a New Day

As one views the educational developments in our beloved land from year to year, he discovers rays of light on the eastern horizon which are sufficiently promising to inspire continued effort in the area of educational improvement. It is well, while we are discussing this item, to remember that the prophet warns that the darkness will continue. It is too much to hope that we shall be able to attain the status of educational perfection. However, it is our obligation to carry on, receiving whatever encouragement we can from the indications of promise round about.

We may notice also that there is a very general movement in the educational institutions in this country toward the liberal arts program. And the liberal arts program, in distinction from those of vocational and professional character, is always idealistic. Many outstanding institutions, such as University of Michigan, Michigan State College, The University of Chicago, and others are definitely committed to what has been called “Fundamental Education,” which usually means a thorough training in the humanities. The following quotation from the Intercollegiate Press Bulletins sustains the judg-
ment expressed above: “In keeping with a growing tendency toward emphasis on liberal arts subjects in vocational and professional curricula, such as home economics, engineering and agriculture, the Land-Grant colleges of the United States this year for the first time added arts and science sections to their annual meetings...” Various articles in educational journals are replete with evidence of the fact that there is a growing emphasis upon the introduction of the basic courses in the humanities. That is at least a movement away from the crass materialism that characterizes our country. This is certainly a hopeful sign, greeted joyfully by those concerned about our nation’s educational program.

There is also, on the part of the people who are concerned about the welfare of our nation, a realization that somehow or other our training in science has far outstripped our development along ethical and moral lines, and it is realized that this imbalance spells tragedy for our future development. Consequently, a great deal of attention is being paid to teaching the basic moral values. This, too, may be regarded as a hopeful sign. Those of us who are committed to the Reformed position will realize that, however hopeful this sign may be, the night will nevertheless continue, because any moral education based on principles other than those found in the Bible will contribute toward the continuation of a selfishness which fails to do justice to the highest moral ideals.

There is also some promise of a new day in education in the fact that the federal government is deeply concerned about the low estate in this area of human interest. There are many states and localities in this country of ours where the need of a good education is not felt and cannot be met due to the lack of sufficient funds. The government is about ready to come to the aid of such needy communities. Again, this is a promise of a new day. However, one may well wonder whether the control of education by the government, which will certainly follow its financial aid, will not continue the darkness, as the prophet himself suggests. Financial aid in itself is not necessarily an enlightening project. Nevertheless, those interested in education will welcome the aid where it is needed and will be filled with new hope for a better day.

It is heartening for us to note the increased interest manifested by our constituency in Christian education. Christian colleges are maintaining enrollments comparable to those of institutions supported by public aid. There seems to be a realization that there is something fundamental missing in education that is not distinctively Christian. The report of the movement from the office of the Education Department of the National Association of Evangelicals is surprising. Christian schools are being organized and established in almost every district in America. Establishment of such schools can be done only at considerable cost to those who are carrying on the movement. This is a very hopeful sign. There is, however, a bit of a cloud, it seems to me, in this movement. Apparently the motivation for the interest in this area is the realization that the public school system in at least one respect is woefully inadequate. This particular cloud would be largely dissipated if the drive toward Christian schools were motivated by a positive principle, in the hearts of men and women, gleaned from the Word of God. For instance, this Christian school movement grows out of the conviction of an obligation which God places upon Christian parents rather than from any negative criticism that people may have of public schools.

**Continued**

**Quest**

The watchman referred to in Isaiah recommends that the inquiry about signs of the times be continued. The night will have settled definitely and finally when men discontinue their searching for a better day in the field of education. Only dead men discontinue the struggle for more light and life. It is the nature of divine creation to search for light. It is a specific instruction of the Bible that men continue the search for God by revelational study, both in nature and in Scripture. The will to inquire is an indispensable element in every area of darkness. It is of the nature of God’s plan that men in this world never really “arrive.” Perfection is always ahead of us, just far enough to keep us fighting onward and yet never near enough for us to acclaim with assurance that we can rest on our laurels, having obtained the very acme of human achievement. And searching for light in the realm of God’s general revelation and, particularly, in the Bible is never more pressing than when it is dark. May I urge students and professors alike to keep on asking, “Watchman, what of the night?” They may be able to find some answer from men who have been trained by Him who is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into this world. Failure on our part to continue inquiry will mean that we have forfeited every right to carry on the work of education according to the principles of Calvinism to which we are committed.
Guardianship and Segregation

(Ralph J. Danhof
Minister Neland Avenue Chr. Ref. Church
Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Guardianship as a Solution

Leading political figures in the Union of South Africa propose Guardianship (Voogdyskap) and Apartheid (Apartheid) as the solution to the race problem, and these are advanced as phases of one political program of action. Says Prof. Cronje, "Voogdyskap en apartheid moet as onafskeidelik aan mekaar verbonde beskou word. Die een kan nie sonder die ander tot sy reg kom nie" (Voogdyskap en Apartheid, p. 29.) The implication of guardianship is that the white race possesses a superior position in South Africa by virtue of its experience, knowledge, and insight, and not by virtue of its white color as such, and that it is its task to look after the interests of its black wards, who are still immature, backward, and incapable of protecting themselves and their own cultural and racial interests.

The very idea of guardianship, or trusteeship, implies the superiority of the one and the inferiority of the other. The task of the guardian is to elevate his ward to preserve his own good cultural qualities, to lift the ward to a higher standard of morals and living. The white guardian as bearer of the Christian religion is also expected to bring the blessings and benefits of the Christian religion to his ward, and must seek to rid the native of his barbarism. The white man is capable of guardianship simply because at this stage of development he is in the saddle as far as political and economic power is concerned. The ultimate end of guardianship is to elevate the native to a position equal to that held by the whites, and to assist the black wards in developing independence and the ability to govern themselves. Guardianship is assumed to be only a temporary trusteeship, otherwise the exercise of such guardianship will be tantamount to an imperialism and a permanent domination of the white over the black races.

The practical difficulty arises when the question is raised whether the white race in South Africa will be willing to give to the native black races complete right of self-determination and self-government at the time when the latter has attained such a degree of development. Two possibilities present themselves. First, that as long as the white race and the black races, plus the bastard coloured race, live side by side in the same fatherland and...
share a common social-economic position as is at present the case, even though local segregation is carried out rigidly, the white race will not be able to maintain itself, and will be dominated by the overwhelming majority of the up and coming cultured Bantu and coloured peoples. The other possibility is that when the guardianship of the white race has served its purpose, the white race and the other races must come to a division of the land, so that each will have his own fatherland and each race its own social and economic position.

Applying Segregation

The first of these possibilities would inevitably lead to equality of the races in the same South African state with similar social and economic advantages. The white race sees great danger in this policy for it would mean complete domination by the Bantus and coloured and would mean suicide for the white man. If this racial policy would be maintained the white man argues that he must retain for himself the upper hand and continue to play boss. However, the proposed policy is precisely to join with the policy of a guardianship with all that may imply also the other feature known as apartness. This implies that the country will be divided exactly as Joshua divided Palestine between the tribes of Israel. The white race will have its apportioned share and the blacks and coloured also their assigned part of the original fatherland. The argument in favor of this part of the racial policy is that the white man will not run danger of losing his own place in the sun, and will not be overrun by the majority black and coloured. On the other hand, also the black races and coloured peoples will be able to develop their own native culture, and give expression to their own native inherent capacities. The native races will then also be able to build their own state alongside of their white neighbor.

Ira Calvin proposed a similar solution for our own nation. In his book, *The Lost White Race*, (p. 176) he said, “The negro will have to be separated from us before we can really have peace and unity in our own family. It would be a tremendous undertaking, but it can be done, and must be done.” Calvin’s proposition amounted to this, that a separate negro state should be created between us and Mexico. It would mean to bring all the negroes in all the states of our present nation into a designated territory, say the states of Texas, Alabama, Mississippi and thus create negro reservations similar to the reservations for the Indians in Arizona. The contention is that mere local segregation in separate assigned sections of a city or village will not curtail the evils of misconception, continued racial conflicts, and the detrimental influences of western culture. Without the application of the more radical principle of apartness Cronjé sees only a very dark future for the white race in South Africa. Says he, “... dat hy nie kan insien hoedat die witman homself op die lange duur op hierdie vasteland sal kan handhaaf as algehele rasseskeidig nie betyds deurgevoer word nie. Hierdie oortuiging spruit bepaal nie uit onnodige pessimisme nie, maar uit nytgewe wetenskaplike onderzoek en oorweging.” *(Voogdyskap en Apartheid, p. 45.)*

Difficulties to be Overcome

Political leaders are certain that it may be a difficult problem to maintain the economic structure of the Union without native labor, but the charge is also made that the white man has had an easy time of it and must learn to work as never before and learn to get along without native labor. The same reasoning is applied to the question of the costs involved in moving natives to their assigned territories. The proponents of apartness say that if huge sums of money can be obtained to wage ruthless wars similar amounts of money must be used for the realization of the apartness policy.

The application of the principle of apartness is not as simple as it appears. In South Africa it means a complicated program of action. The land would not merely be divided into two sections, a white and a black. At least three native territories would have to be assigned to maintain the ethnical and cultural differences existing among the natives, and in addition there must also be a territory assigned for the coloured race. The problem of the Indian in the apartness racial policy is easily to be solved. Racial leaders simply declare that the Indian has no business in the Union and must again be exported back to his own native country, whence he originally came. The motto is: Africa without the Asiatic! By common consent the Indian is considered an enemy by the whites, the coloured, and the natives. Cronjé is voicing a common opinion current in South Africa when he states, “Die enigste oplossing wat die Asiatievraagstuk uit die weg sal ruim, bestaan daarin dat die Aisiate wat in Suidelik-Afrika vertoe, in Asië gevestig moet word ... ‘Afrika sonder die Asiata’ moet die doelwit wees, ook al sal dit veel kos om dit reg te kry.” *(Regverdige Rasse-Apartheid, pp. 206, 207.)*

The division of the land and the territorial assignments for each group is considered to be a very difficult problem of solution. Today the British government maintains the protectorates of Swaziland, Basutoland, and Bechuanaland within the boundaries of the Union of South Africa. Leaders today are urging strongly that Britain be compelled to relinquish these protectorates and that this portion of ground be incorporated within the Union.
The second consideration is that also the mandated territory, former German South-West Africa, be annexed as a part of the Union. With the additional land the question arises whether there will be sufficient soil to carry out the territorial division to provide adequate economic prosperity for all races concerned. The answer to that is that the ultimate goal is to incorporate into the Union the 3 mentioned British Protectorates, together with Southwest Africa, South and North Rhodesia, Tanganyika, Kenya, Mozambique, Angola, Uganda, and even the Belgian Congo. The ultimate division of this huge territory must be determined by the following considerations: the minority of white population, and such matters as climatic conditions, living standards, ethnical differences, commercial enterprise, and racial protection.

Is This Solution Scriptural?

Professor E. P. Groenewald has written the second chapter of the book, Regverdige Rasse-Apartheid, and aims to prove that guardianship and apartness is the teaching of Scripture. (pp. 40-67) His first proposition is that the Scriptures teach the unity of the human race. The second proposition is that the division of the human race into races, peoples, languages is an act of God. The third proposition is that God demands that each race must maintain its own specific apartness. The fourth proposition is that apartness must be applied to the entire sphere of life of every nation. The fifth proposition is that in Christ various races come to a higher spiritual unity, but this spiritual unity, avers Professor Groenewald, only applies to the realm of the spirit and does not wipe out the natural barriers, and only a world Christianity comes to expression, but never a Christian nation (wereld-Christenvolk nie). (p. 59) The words of Kling are quoted with approval, that, "The higher unity ... does not destroy the distinctions of the race and condition, but it assigns to them a suitable order, and overcomes them in their sharp and selfish antagonisms." (p. 60)

Groenewald does admit that the spiritual unity must lead to better international relationships among nations and races, but the diversity among races which God has imposed must be recognized and maintained. The final proposition is that the stronger has a calling over against the weaker races and nations, and the stronger must assume the task of guardian for the weaker. Also the idea of guardianship, says Dr. Groenewald, is strictly in agreement with the Scriptures. Galatians 4:2 and Eph. 4:4-6 are quoted to support this view. He claims the natural lines of demarcation separating nations is not removed when various races become Christians, and the more advanced must assist the weaker. Joshua 9, Acts 17:26, Genesis 4:9, Rom. 15:15, 21; I Cor. 8:9-13; Mat. 25:31, 32 are Scriptural passages to indicate the task of the more privileged nations to the underprivileged. Dr. Groenewald summarizes his Scriptural findings in stating that the policy of apartness including territorial segregation is not in conflict with the principles taught in the Bible. (p. 65) He is also convinced that the neglect of these Biblical principles leads to humanistic, rationalistic, and liberalistic racial policies advocating equality among the races.
In the Courtroom of Heaven

A PARABLE seeking to explain a term, found only in Christian doctrine and scarcely heard anywhere else, and therefore often misunderstood: Justification.

The Divine Judge holds court in the court-room of Heaven. The prisoner at the bar is Human-Soul who is held to be guilty of such crimes against the Divine Order as makes his acquittal seem hopeless.

Prosecuting Attorney Conscience has a clear case. He speaks a language that every witness in the court-room understands well. But most of all he knows his words strike home to the cringing spirit of the criminal, Human-Soul. To strengthen his case, Prosecutor Conscience draws down volume after volume and reads the law in the case from legal authorities, both ancient and modern. He outlines violation after violation of which the hapless Human-Soul is guilty. From time to time, as Conscience finds his own feelings almost overcome with sympathy as he glances at his dejected victim, he is spurred on by additional accusations which are brought in constantly by a clerk who enters by a side door.

The clerk, in turn, is getting his information from another criminal who already is condemned and has been removed to an ante-room. The criminal who is furnishing the information which the clerk diligently scribbles on a piece of paper, is an interesting-looking character. He is distinguished-looking. He has a proud, even arrogant bearing. His face is highly intelligent, and his appearance is altogether attractive, with a few exceptions that only close scrutiny reveal. His eyes have a baleful gleam of implacable hatred against the Judge, against Prosecutor Conscience, against Human-Soul—in fact, he obviously hates the whole procedure. He seems to know that although he is turning “states evidence” against his fellow-criminal it will in no measure change his own condemnation. That is settled and sealed, but his fiendish hatred simply knows no bounds. He must destroy and devastate whatever he can. Human-Soul catches glimpses of his former crony and each time their eyes meet, Human-Soul cringes anew with a dread that is horrible to witness; and there is fear in his eyes and also a hatred for his former “friend,” but the hatred now seems hopeless and useless. And the convict in the ante-room knows it and seems to be filled with glee.

Suddenly, the court-room is electrified by an announcement made by the Prosecutor Conscience. The clerk had just brought in another slip of paper on which fresh accusations against Human-Soul were listed. And in an inadvertent remark, Conscience lets slip the source of his information. Can it be? Yes—it must be so! That hardened, baleful, condemned convict is none other than Satan himself. It is he who brings fresh accusations against Human-Soul when Conscience seems to weaken.

Prosecutor Conscience is ready now to summarize his case. He does so by quoting eloquently from the penal code of the Divine Law.

“Every man shall be put to death for his own sin.”
(Deut. 24:16)

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” (Ezek. 18:4)

“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. 3:23)

The Prosecutor then puts the last finishing touch to his devastating case by pointing out that Human-Soul is in an utterly hopeless and helpless position: “Shall I give the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”—This had been admitted by Human-Soul before the Court convened.

Prosecutor Conscience is content to rest his case. The Judge turns with eyes stern and forbidding to the dejected Human-Soul before Him, who has been entirely silent through the entire proceeding.

“Is there no plea for the defence?”

“No defence, your Honor, I can only plead guilty.”

The words come almost inaudibly from the stiffened lips of the defendant who stands still with head bowed, utterly cast down and discouraged.

“Is there no attorney for the defence?” asks the Judge again, still sternly but a shade more gently.

“No, your Honor.” The words can scarcely be heard, but the fact is obvious to every eye. Human-Soul stands utterly, dismally alone.

For a moment a heavy silence hangs in the court-room. Human-Soul droops in expectation of inevitable condemnation. Conscience looks a little pityingly at his victim, but he cannot retrench. He has done his obvious duty. From the throng of witnesses arises a cry, like a sigh, like a wail of despair. “Is there no balm in Gilead?—Is there no forgiveness with the Almighty?”

The heavy silence is rent once by a bitter fiendish chuckle from the condemned convict in the ante-chamber. Satan is savoring his revenge to its last acrid drops!

As though aroused by the sound of that chuckle, the Judge raises His head. He glances briefly at Satan through the open door. On His face is a smile of quiet confidence.

“You shall not have your way, you fiend!” says the Judge calmly, and before His words even Satan...
shrinks back, though the hatred is undimmed in his baleful eyes.

The eyes of the Judge sweep the court-room and come to rest upon the prisoner before Him.

"Then I will myself appoint an Attorney for the Defence," said He with complete composure.

The Judge steps to a door at His back and engages in a brief whispered consultation with a younger man who bears a striking resemblance to Himself. Then the Judge brings the young man forward and speaks: "This is my beloved Son, I have appointed Him counsel for the Defence."

The Son takes His place by the side of Human-Soul. For the first time, Human-Soul raises his eyes to the kind young face beside him. But there is not much hope in his glance. He sees no chance of acquittal even now.

The newly-appointed Attorney makes a brief but pointed plea.

He begins by admitting the justice of every charge brought against his client. He simply repeats on behalf of his client the plea of guilty which he had already made.

"But, if it pleases the Court, I propose to take upon myself the punishment this man deserves so that he may go free."

This is unprecedented! The spectators crowd from every side to "look into" this wonder! The Prosecutor opens his mouth to raise an objection, that it would be unjust to deal so, but he is interrupted by the quiet voice of the young Advocate:

"I too, am of this man’s flesh and blood . . . I am the way, the truth and the life . . . I am the resurrection and the life, he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

The Judge seems strangely pleased with the plea made by His Son. He glances now at Human-Soul, to see whether the proposal of his Advocate is acceptable to him. He sees that Human-Soul’s eyes are fixed upon the face of his Benefactor, and the Son is gazing into the eyes of the poor wretch, and in His gaze is a strange power that is sweeping away fear and distrust and giving faith and courage. In the eyes of Human-Soul there is nothing but unalloyed worship!

The Judge seems to be satisfied with what He saw and renders His public verdict.

"On the basis of the evidence presented in this court, I should have to pronounce Human-Soul guilty and condemn him to death. But in view of the willingness of his Advocate to bear his penalty, a plan which I have myself suggested and determined, and which I am pleased to honor, I now pronounce you, Human-Soul, Not Guilty."

After the court session was dismissed, two spectators were walking away together.

"You see," said one to the other, "when the Judge said ‘Not Guilty’ to the prisoner, that was justification. The man did nothing, the Judge did it all. The man could only accept or reject and even that power the Son gave him. Did you see Him bring His power to bear upon that helpless wretch?"

"Yes," replied the other, "It was wonderful. It was still the same miserable Man but suddenly, although his condition was the same, his legal status was changed entirely. Surely, that is Justification."

"Too bad that the criminal's condition has not changed," said the first. "I'm afraid if that miserable Satan ever gets hold of him again, he will soon get him to rejoin the old gang of cutthroats."

"Oh, but haven't you heard?" said the other spectator, "The Son has appealed to His Father personally and the Judge has agreed to adopt the prisoner, Human-Soul, as His own son. Then he will have every right and opportunity to eternal happiness and success."

"Is it really true? What a Judge we do have, after all!"

ALA BANDON.
From Our Correspondents

FROM THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

University College, 
Potchefstroom, South Africa, 
August 19, 1949.

Dear Prof. Bouma:

It is about time that I should send you some further news from the Southern part of Africa.

National Party Holds Its Own

Yesterday we had another bye-election for a member of our Union Parliament. Since the general election of May, 1948, quite a number of the elected members either died or had to resign on account of poor health. In March this year the National member of Parliament, Mr. J. L. Brill, of the Mayfair electoral division was drowned while fishing. Mayfair lies in the heart of the Johannesburg area and used to be a labor constituency. In May, 1948, Mr. Brill to everybody’s surprise obtained a clear majority. At the beginning of this year, the National Party captured this seat also in the Transvaal Provincial election. Yesterday was the third election in this division within 18 months. In May, 1948, the National Party won the seat with a total of 4,426 votes; yesterday the Party held the seat while the number of votes increased to 4,468.

This was a crucial test for the National Party government, as the United Party (General Smuts’ party) tried its level best to upset the National Party car. Both parties organized to the hilt, but although the United Party could also raise the number of its voters the National Party maintained its hold. The propagandists of the United Party used all means to overturn the National Party, but failed. Since the National Party had to take over the government of the Union after its successes in May, 1948, it had also to take over the mismanaged political affairs. The government of Genl. Smuts had raised the national debt to amazing and alarming heights—due to the war expenses and lack of economical administration that goes with every war effort. The Union was badly in debt, and life was extremely dear. After the war reaction set in; soldiers were disbanded, and having been accustomed to high wages during the war, they had to face the economy measures of the new government. Unemployment raised its head; curtailment of expenses was inevitable. Due to lack of overseas credit, the new government was forced to restrict importation of many necessities as well as luxuries of life. Prices had to be strictly controlled, and the flow of capital out of the union had to be stopped. These and many more inconveniences had to be endured by South Africans, and no government in such a position could remain popular and keep its hold on disgruntled electors. The United Party at this election exploited all these difficulties, and yet could not oust the government out of this urban division. People are still so dissatisfied with the United Party government that they are willing to stand a lot a position could remain popular and keep its hold on disgruntled electors. The United Party at this election exploited all these difficulties, and yet could not oust the government out of this urban division. People are still so dissatisfied with the United Party government that they are willing to stand a lot a position could remain popular and keep its hold on disgruntled electors. The United Party at this election exploited all these difficulties, and yet could not oust the government out of this urban division. People are still so dissatisfied with the United Party government that they are willing to stand a lot

The New Citizenship Act

An important political issue was also in favor of the United Party, at least so this party thought. During the last session of Parliament a rather important act was passed by the National majority in Parliament. This is the new South African Citizenship Act, which as a matter of fact does away with the old connotation of South Africans as British nationals. Naturally the English South Africans fought this Act tooth and nail but lost, and some are now trying to form a new party, to be called the Anti-Republican Party, because they think that this new Act is just the first step taken by the National Party to get at its real aim, viz., the separation of South Africa from the British Commonwealth of nations and the establishment of a South African Republic. The first principle embodied in this Act is that each member of the Commonwealth has the right to determine who its own citizens are, and secondly, that a Commonwealth country distinguishes between its own citizens and those of other Commonwealth countries on the one hand, and aliens on the other. By the new enactment the citizens of other Commonwealth countries are not regarded as aliens but still enjoy all the rights which they could enjoy through the common status and hence they will still receive preferential treatment in the acquisition of South African citizenship.

The question has been raised how the Act will affect the people of South Africa. The Minister of the Interior, Dr. T. E. Donges, who was responsible for the Act, answered this question on the South African Radio on July 23, and his answer is of real importance. Under the new Act, all those who are Union nationals when the Act comes into force will automatically become Union citizens—this includes inter alia persons born here after July, 1926, or naturalized in the past, or as British subjects resided here for more than two years. If a person is at present a Union national or complies with any of the requirements, he becomes a South African citizen whether his name appears on the voters’ roll or not. The Act robs nobody of any of his rights. As regards married women, the Act lays down that their position will be determined by what it would have been had they not married an alien; on the other hand, an alien woman married to a South African will retain her full citizenship and will become a South African citizen. But the woman must live permanently in South Africa. An alien woman who should in future marry a South African remains an alien until she herself acquires South African citizenship by registration or naturalization. Citizens from other Commonwealth countries may become South African citizens by application only after five years’ residence here, whereas aliens have to reside here for six years before they can apply. The same requirements, as far as language and knowledge of the responsibilities of South African citizenship are concerned, apply in both cases. The alien wife of a South African citizen may however apply after two years’ residence by means of registration only.

From the above it follows that South African citizenship may be obtained in the following four ways: by birth, descent, registration or naturalization. There is however this important difference: the rights of a South African citizen are determined by birth or descent; on the other hand, an alien woman who should in future marry a South African civil on the one hand, and aliens on the other. By the new enactment the citizens of other Commonwealth countries are not regarded as aliens but still enjoy all the rights which they could enjoy through the common status and hence they will still receive preferential treatment in the acquisition of South African citizenship.

The Act is based on a generally accepted new principle in the British Commonwealth of Nations, viz. that each member determines who its own citizens are. After that it distinguishes between its own citizens and those of other Commonwealth countries on the one hand, and aliens on the other. In short, the new system does five things: (a) it declares who are its citizens by birth and descent; (b) it does not regard citizens of other Commonwealth countries as aliens; (c) it gives preference to these over aliens—aliens are naturalized, these citizens are registered; (d) it restores citizenship to married women; (e) it does away with the so-called common status of
citizens of the Commonwealth countries as British or Commonwealth citizens;—in future South Africans will be known only as South African citizens. This explanation by the Minister does away with any idea that South African English-speaking people are deprived of their nationality, like the African-speaking people they will in future be known as South Africans. As a matter of fact very few English-speaking people residing in South Africa consider themselves British: they want to be called South Africans. This new Act gives them what they want.

**Potchefstroom a University?**

I would have liked to tell you something about our Christian-national educational policy, but that will have to stand over. In the meantime I am enclosing an English translation of this policy. In this connection I may just tell you that the draft of the proposed bill raising our institution to the status of a full-fledged university has gone to the government printer. This draft will be laid on the table of the House of Assembly during the next November and the Bill will be before Parliament early next year. We expect some opposition to our Bill as this Bill provides for Christian Higher education at the proposed "Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education."

With kind regards, sincerely yours,

J. Chr. Coetzee.

**NIGERIAN MISSION ACTIVITY**

Sudan Mission of the Chr. Ref. Church, (Sudan United Mission),
Lupwe, Wukari via Makurdi,
Nigeria, British West Africa,
September 11, 1949.

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

Dear Dr. Bouma:

This writing finds me at the comfortable headquarters of the American Southern Baptists at Ibadan reflecting on the six-day meeting of the Christian Council of Nigeria which I have just attended. The C. C. N. is composed of some nine or ten British and American Missions operating in Nigeria and the African churches that have been founded by these missions. It was a happy circumstance that I could attend this gathering, for it gave me an excellent opportunity to get an overview of Mission problems in this strategic African missionary area. It also gave me my first chance to get a good look at native African church leadership. I should like to pass on to FORUM readers some of the impressions I have gathered.

The C. C. N. is one of some forty councils spread throughout the world which together constitute the International Missionary Council with headquarters in London. The I. M. C. is for world missions what the World Council of Churches seeks to be for the churches in all lands. In 1946 the I. M. C. met at Whitby, Ontario, Canada, and a good description of what took place there can be found in *Tomorrow is Here* by Latourette and Hogg. Perhaps church historians will one day record that the rise of the national missions Councils and their coordination through the I. M. C. was one of the most significant developments in the Church history of the first half of the present century. This development is unquestionably a major aspect of the Church's response to such varied phenomena as the meeting of East and West, the need for a unified Church and Mission voice to speak with government, the loss of doctrinal distinctiveness within the Church, the desire to mitigate the denominational divisiveness on the mission field, and the obvious need for scattered missions in foreign lands to strengthen one another and to make a unified impact by cooperation and witness wherever such is possible.

The Council meeting in Ibadan was attended by some seventy delegates of whom about one-third were Africans. All of these were distributed over five committees—Theology, Education, Social, Medical, and Social Questions, Women's and Girls' Work. These committees met during three days and presented their findings on agenda materials submitted to them to three plenary meetings of the Council which accepted, rejected or modified the findings.

**Theology and Missions**

One delegate remarked that cooperation between missions and churches succeeds rather well if everyone will agree to leave two things alone: theology and finance. The meeting bore out the truth of this observation. It was my privilege and not altogether easy task to serve on the Theology committee. First item on our agenda was to define the nature of theological training for ministers in Nigeria. A Presbyterian minister who teaches in a union missionary college designed to prepare Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists for the ministry read an introductory paper. It betrayed little appreciation for the distinctively Presbyterian heritage and was full of definitions and generalizations each of which could well have occupied discriminating theologians hours in evaluating. All of which led to the submission to the plenary meetings of a rather meaningless compromise statement. The problems raised by joint activity involving finance were illustrated by the report that of 40,000 dollars which the Council is attempting to raise for the erection of a chapel on the site of the proposed West African University at Ibadan 400 had to date been subscribed.

These, however, are matters which, in my honest judgment, are more than balanced by effective gains. The same theology committee that floundered about helplessly in the matter of theological training registered a major victory in the plenary session on the score of the Church's attitude to African customs and practices having religious significance. This question had with naughtly wisdom been placed on the agenda of both the Theology and the Social Questions committees. Both presented wholly different recommendations. The committee on Social Questions recommended that wherever possible native customs and practices were to be followed by the Church and by Christians generally, but given a Christian content. The Theology committee, while alive to desirability of such a course, warned very strongly against supposing that transfer of content could be effected without the grave danger of giving pagan custom a Christian veneer. It had arrived at its position largely as the result of the testimony of four African ministers who in committee convinced us of the gravity of a most unwholesome development. Apprehensions already existing among older missionaries in our committee were strengthened by the native African reaction to a rather unreserved course of Christian adoption of native customs.

One of them exclaimed severely and almost angrily, "We know very well that when a Christian family in Lagos calls in a minister to dedicate a house at 7 A.M. that same family has practiced the pagan rite of dedication at 5:30." In plenary session the debate was, interestingly enough, almost exclusively between Africans pleading for the recommendation of the Theology committee and several white delegates defending the other. The Africans carried the day very beautifully in this debate, but it must be added that both in committee and on the floor restraint by the missionaries was necessary to keep them from recommending a touch, taste and handle not in keeping with the dignity of the Church's attitude to African customs and practices having religious significance. This question has been referred to one of the proposed West African Universities as a problem of great importance.

On this matter and on this matter only did the African delegates as a whole take any decisive and significant part in the discussions and it was done so warmly that I was much exercised in imagining what a wholly African synod would look and sound like if a really hot issue came up before it. The nature of the participation of the African delegates in the discussions in committee and on the floor also inclined me to believe very strongly that, so far as our more primitive area in eastern Nigeria is concerned, white supervision will be need-
ed well beyond the lifetime of any missionary now working in that field.

A promising project with respect to which the Council took a further step is the proposed Union Mission Hospital. One of its chief functions will be to train African (largely male) nurses. The government is to furnish funds and equipment, the missions the senior staff. With missions so largely occupied in medical work and the crying need for honest attendants called forth by the blatant corruption and extortion practiced from doctors down to night nurses in the government hospitals this project is deserving of universal support.

Mohammedan Religious Intolerance

In spite of the lack of vitality manifested by the Mohammedan world in the humiliating defeat of the Arabs by the Jews, the policy of the British government seems to be one of continuing its support of Mohammedan religious intolerance. Not only does the policy of not allowing public evangelism and Christian education remain in effect in the Mohammedan provinces of Northern Nigeria but existing barriers seem to have been strengthened by the recent condition attached to immigration laws affecting missionaries working in the Mohammedan areas to the effect that henceforth governors of the provinces concerned must approve of the entrance or return of missionaries to their areas, and missionaries must express agreement to “any conditions” the governors may incorporate into the permission to do mission work. The reasons advanced for the promulgation of this regulation do not seem to warrant so drastic an addition to existing policy. As a result the minds of many missionaries are disturbed and conversations on the highest levels of government and missionary agency are in the making.

The Comprehensive Approach

The Anglo-Saxon missionary world is by this time well known for its emphasis on the “comprehensive approach” to the missionary task. This emphasis wishes to extend the missionary witness and guidance beyond evangelism to every aspect of life on the mission field. Since churches of Reformed persuasion have long supported medical and educational missions no objection in principle can be raised against the new emphasis, but I believe it would receive more generous support in many quarters were it not often characterized by doctrinal indifference and thus to the effect that the foremost aim of missionary endeavor. The Ibadan conference manifested an aspect of the comprehensive approach which to me was both interesting and stimulating. Under the joint auspices of the government and the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain Dr. W. C. Lowdermilk, American authority on soil conservation, is making an inspection tour of British African areas and lecturing to groups interested in his findings. He addressed our gathering also. He views with gravest concern the increase in world population and the lack of proportional increase in food production coupled with decreasing soil fertility and the exhaustion of further frontiers for the expansion of population and agricultural exploitation. Since the vast majority of the world’s peoples live in rural areas, missions and missionaries cannot afford to neglect a problem fraught with so great significance not only for the people whom they serve but for the economic basis of the churches they are endeavoring to found.

An interesting example of joint enterprise in which Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists are, with the assistance of government trying to apply the comprehensive approach is to be found at Asaba on the Niger. Here a large rural development programme has been initiated in which an agriculturalist, a builder, an educationalist, a medical doctor, and a minister are attempting a unified approach to the problem of Christian life in Nigeria. In a four mile square area consisting of lands ranging from swamps to hilltops these folk are working together in school, model village, model farm, church, preventive health, fisheries, experimental farms and hand-craft seeking to find ways in which the African can best live his life while serving his Lord in that life. To this end men and women from the various villages and churches will be trained and will at the end of that training be sent back to their people to exemplify it.

The Primary and the Secondary

It will be evident from these few observations how complex missionary activity is becoming, how large the scope of service rendered, and how involved the machinery to effectuate what is being attempted. One thing seems to be quite plain: if missions are to remain missions, if priority is to be given to the command of our Lord to disciple all nations, some close thinking is called for to define the relationship between this priority and the secondary interests to which a whole some pursuit of the prior interest may give rise.

As concluding observation I would suggest that at this meeting a fair cross section view could be had both of the weaknesses and the advantages of cooperation among theologically and ecclesiastically diverse denominational groups on the mission field. To close one’s eyes to either is foolish; to carry on sincerely but with honest and open reserve seems to be the policy of wisdom.

Sincerely,

HARRY R. BOER.

FROM NORTH IRELAND

15 College Sq. East,
Belfast, North Ireland,
October 3rd, 1949.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

As you are aware, the economic crisis in Britain is acute. Many, if not most, of our people are bewildered. Others are living in a fool’s paradise. It is not strange that much bewilderment is abroad when we take into account the instability which has characterized our socialist government since it came into power with a huge majority. The behavior and language of ministers of the Crown has been amazing. In the past, British government was associated with dignity and self-consistency. For a time, at least, those days are over; and Mr. Attlee can sit in the House of Commons with his feet on the table! No wonder that much of the decorum which was an outstanding feature of British Parliamentary proceedings has vanished.

Devaluation of the Pound

It would almost seem that the Socialist party over here is as much bewildered as the people; or else they have lost all sense of conscious rectitude. Sir Stafford Cripps has not had much success since his visit to the Pope in the spring. His conduct over the devaluation of the pound has made all sane people this side of the Atlantic gasp. Over and over again Sir Stafford promised the people of Britain that he would not devalue the pound. He said so almost on the eve of devaluation. Hence the tremendous shock which we received when he coolly announced his new experiment. Britain is undoubtedly in the hands of irresponsible experimentalists who, while trying desperately to maintain their position, keep telling us that if we are to survive we must vote socialist at the next election. The editor of The Monthly Record of the Free Church of Scotland wrote just before devaluation, “Whatever the immediate result of the Washington talks, there is no gainsaying the fact that Britain can be saved ultimately only by her own efforts; all other expedients are, at best, mere palliatives that may allay the tension for a while or stave off the full fury of the economic blizzard.” And immediately after devaluation the editor of The Irish Evangelical commented, “The leaders of Britain have for long shirked taking the hard way. They have not called for drastic curtailment in public expenditure. They have been lavish in their spending programme. They have not dared to
set before the people the way out by really hard work, involving longer hours and tight belts. They haven’t had the courage. An election is now drawing near and they want votes.” That last sentence hits the nail right on the head. Socialism is not out for the good of the country. Many are awakening to that fact, and if the socialists are returned to power it will almost certainly be with a greatly reduced majority.

The National Bible Society of Scotland

Rev. Kenneth A. MacRae, of Stornoway, for many years associated with the above Society and president of the Stornoway Auxiliary, has written a short and lucid account of recent upheavals in a Society which in the past did a great work in Scotland. He tells how a joint committee of the Educational Institute of Scotland and the Church of Scotland published a new Syllabus of Religious Instruction for use in Scottish schools. The Syllabus was marked by a strong modernistic bias. Consequent upon this publication there arose a demand for a school Bible “so devised as to coincide with the ground covered in the Syllabus.” The N.B.S.S. proceeded to cater to this demand. The result was an abridged Bible, and the changing of the title to “Readings from the Holy Bible for use in Schools,” did not change the nature of the production. The historical and narrative parts of both the Old and New Testaments are fairly fully reproduced. “The Epistles, however, appear in a very attenuated form, but it is in this section that the dangerous nature of the production most clearly appears.” With the exception of the extract from Hebrews, which falls into the category of narrative, “they are all concerned with various aspects of God’s goodness, love and favor on the one hand, and with our duty on the other.” The passages setting forth the fundamental doctrines of Christianity are carefully avoided. The N.B.S.S. had offered to publish this work and bear the costs. But first of all they must strike out of their Constitution an article forbidding the publication of any English version of the Scriptures other than the Authorized. Immediately Stornoway Auxiliary remonstrated with the directors of the N.B.S.S., but finally, by an overwhelming vote, the directors “made it evident that they preferred to force the objectors out of their Society rather than relinquish their purpose.” For the objectors had made it very clear that they could no longer associate with the Society if it changed its Constitution. Mr. MacRae and his followers have now joined hands with The Trinitarian Bible Society, which is strongly opposed to Modernism.

A Protestant Calendar

The National Union of Protestants (Ireland) is publishing a Calendar which constitutes a landmark in the propagating of the great principles of the Reformation. Twelve fine drawings portray events of outstanding importance in Reformation history. The events have been taken from twelve different countries, and the drawings are accompanied by brief historical notes. Printed on fine art paper the coloring will be dark brown against a background of gold. The January scene is John Calvin preaching in St. Peter’s Cathedral, Geneva; February shows Philip II of Spain ordering the death of every Protestant in the Netherlands; and December has a splendid drawing of John Knox being tried for treason. Any American friends who may be interested can obtain “The Reformers’ Calendar” from N.U.P., 26 Howard St., Belfast, N. Ireland. One dollar, post free.

With Greetings from your brethren in Ireland,

Yours in His service,

FRED. S. LEAHY.
Niebuhr's Sense of History


Faith and History is another expression of present-day interest in the problem of history. In this volume Reinhold Niebuhr presents his understanding of the Christian view of history and contrasts it, as the subtitle indicates, with modern views.

Western culture contains three different approaches to the problem of history:

1. Greek classicism which equates history and nature and urges the individual by means of reason to escape out of the temporal-historical flux into the placid untroubled world of eternity. In this rationalistic interpretation of history the value of historical achievement is annulled; every temporal event is lost in the eternal moment. Eternity is everything, history is nothing.

2. The modern optimistic conception which regards history as progressive redemption. This view, heartily embraced by liberal theology, regards history as a progressive movement toward a historically attainable perfection through the progressive elimination of evil. Mankind will be saved by the suffering of history; the travail of the historical process will eventually give birth to heaven on earth. History itself is Christ; in pedestrian language, everything will work out all right in the end. In this view, time is everything, eternity is nothing. The disastrous character of recent history has, however, shown this view to be pure illusion. History appears to be more divine than contemporary man; his soul is filled with an uneasy presentiment of the abyss, of meaninglessness and despair.

3. The Biblical-Christian view distinguishes itself from each of these views. It distinguishes itself from Greek classicism by recognizing the validity of time, and from the modern liberal view by recognizing the validity of eternity. In Biblical thought there is no genuine history except in the area of interplay between time and eternity.

Niebuhr obtains his definition of history from his reading of man's nature. Faith and History is a broad expansive application of his conception of the nature and destiny of man. According to his two volume work, The Nature and Destiny of Man, man is a compound of nature and spirit. As nature, man is finite, limited, and bound; as spirit, man is capable of transcending nature (his own and the external world), i.e., man as spirit possesses freedom. Standing in this juncture of nature and spirit, man is aware of the finite contingent character of his existence and is anxiously concerned about his insecurity. Being both free and bound, both limited and unlimited, man is anxious. Anxiety itself, however, is not sin. “Anxiety is the internal description of the state of temptation. . . It must be distinguished from sin partly because it is its precondition and not its actuality and partly because it is the basis of all human creativity as well as the precondition of sin.” The tension and anxiety between finiteness and freedom is the basic source of temptation. Man’s temptation is in pride or self-love to deny the contingent character of his existence or in sensuality to escape the obligations of freedom through an unlimited devotion to and absorption in finite earthly things. In the former case man is tempted to pretensions to deity, in the latter man is tempted to live below the level of the human and become less than a man. In an effort to avoid a purely naturalistic conception of sin, Niebuhr declares that anxiety does not necessitate sin although it does inevitably lead to sin. His effort is more noble in intention than in execution, for the distinction between the “necessary” and the “inevitable” (however valid it may be as a description of all consequent sinning) is with respect to man’s first sin a distinction without a difference. This criticism of course would not trouble Niebuhr since he does not believe in an historical once-for-all Fall of the race. In the thought of Niebuhr each individual falls in the same manner as Adam fell. In this context, the individual’s experience of freedom and the empirical evidence for the universal-ity of sin, necessitate this distinction if a purely naturalistic construction of sin is to be avoided.

At this point it becomes apparent that Niebuhr is not a theologian but a philosopher of religion. For while the above analysis of sin contains many profound and brilliant insights, it is at best but a psychological reading and speculative interpretation of man’s existence as qualified by sin. Concerning man’s nature and human existence apart from sin, Niebuhr has little to say except that man was created good. For the rest every problem and question is consigned to the realm of mystery. Even man’s creational goodness is defined existentially by Niebuhr, i.e., it is a potentiality to be achieved, not an actuality given in creation. Orthodoxy Christianity has frequently learned from hereby and is willing to give credit to whom credit is due. It will accordingly give thanks to Niebuhr—and to Kierkegaard to whom he is undoubtedly heavily indebted on this score—for many illuminating and suggestive insights into the character of man’s existence. Orthodoxy will, however, insist that the anxiety and dialectical tensions of existence are rooted in sin, and are not, as Niebuhr insists, a part of man’s nature as created. More specifically Biblical Orthodoxy will insist that the anxious insecurity that qualifies man’s existence together with his attempt to overcome this insecurity by defying and eternalizing his temporality, is not itself the Fall but a consequence of it. Niebuhr’s denial of the historicity of the Fall and his denial of the moral quality of man’s existence prior to the Fall is the inevitable outcome of his philosophical method. Every psychological empirical reading of existence as we know it, no matter how profoundly interpreted, is unable to comprehend the Fall for the simple reason that every such comprehension is itself vitiated by that ignorance and confusion which the Fall produces. In short, every empirical reading of the Fall is itself determined and conditioned by the Fall. What Niebuhr explicitly denies is nevertheless true: what orthodoxy sees in the Fall and its consequences, Niebuhr sees in the structure of creation itself. For example: Niebuhr frequently asserts that Christianity, in contrast to Greek thought, declares that redemption is from sin, not from finitude. Yet “finitude” is at least as determinative in the thought of Niebuhr as is “sin.”

History, declares Niebuhr, is meaningful because of the goodness of the divine creation, the reality of human freedom, and God’s activity in history. History is a matter of achieving meaning and value for the completion and fulfillment of life. It is the conquest over that natural meaninglessness which is inherent in the transient character of existence—of which the sharpest expression is death. The fulfillment of life cannot, however, be achieved within history. Such achievement lies beyond history. It is because of an extravagant estimation of human freedom, asserts Niebuhr, that the modern optimistic view believes in the possibility of history fulfilling itself within itself. Such an extravagant conception of freedom ignores the fact that man’s freedom is limited, and the fact that man misuses his freedom. Man’s freedom is not absolute, hence his
historical possibilities are not absolute; man's freedom is ambiguous, hence man uses his freedom in history for both creative and destructive purposes. From this perspective he directs sharp criticism against Marxism's faith in historical conflict, Roman Catholicism's conception of the Church, Protestant biblicism's conception of the Bible, the bourgeois capitalism's pretension to finitude, the sectarian attempts (including Calvin's at Geneva) to create a pure commonwealth, and against every expression (John Dewey inter alia) of modern man's faith in history.

While there are possibilities for the achievement of fragmentary values and new beginnings in history for both the individual and the collective group, any claim that these historical expressions or configurations are final is to ignore the limitations of history and the element of pride which is found in the best historical achievements. There are no absolutes in history; history is in its very nature contingent, conditioned, and therefore only provisional. When absoluteness is claimed for any fragment of history such claim is a proud pretension to deity, and such pride ends in fanaticism and bigotry. There can be only partial and provisional fulfillments of life within history. These take place when men repent, i.e., cease their own attempts to fulfill and complete their lives. To such humble repenters God gives His grace. But even the receiver of grace remains a sinner—his life is never completely fulfilled in history.

The purpose (telos) of history is the Resurrection and is achieved through the Cross, i.e., by agape, suffering love. Such love transcends history. Even such love, however, cannot be absolute by a complete identification with the Cross as a simple historic fact, for the Cross as historical is also conditioned and contingent. Nor can suffering love be contained within an ethical code without degenerating into legalism. When ethical codes and regulations are construed as perfect embodiments of agape, the end-product is a pure legalism and a fanatical self-righteousness from which every vestige of love has departed. Moreover, a perfect expression of agape in history is impossible because in history every attempt to live exclusively in terms of agape ends in a crucifixion. Hence men necessarily live to a large degree by the lower forms of agape: justice, equality, and calculating self-preserving mutuality. (It is interesting to note that in this connection Niebuhr speaks of "common grace").

Niebuhr regards the Fall, Cross, Resurrection, Second Coming, and Final Judgment as very significant mythological symbols without which the Christian faith could not continue. But he refuses to regard them, as does traditional orthodoxy, as genuine historical facts. He has no objection, for example, to regard the Cross as an actual historical event, yet he does not regard its significance to lie in such historicity. He is not willing, for example, to ascribe to the Fall, the Resurrection, Second Coming et cetera, the type of historicity he is willing to allow the Cross. Yet for Niebuhr this type of historicity is of no essential importance. If these events are reduced, declares Niebuhr, to simple historical facts they do not require repentance and faith for their comprehension and cease to be eschatological facts that impinge on each moment of time. Orthodoxy will insist that God's works in Christ are genuine historical facts and therefore are capable of transcending and conditioning all history causing each moment of time to be brought under eschatological skies. The Heidelberg Catechism at least grounds the assurance of salvation on the factual historicity of Christ's sufferings under Pontius Pilate and on the historical factuality of the cross (Lord's Day 15). Niebuhr makes his basic mistake when he defines history so as to exclude the possibility of an absolute within history. The logic seems to be: because Niebuhr cannot find God in history, therefore, God cannot be in history. The very structure of history excludes Him. This is reminiscent of Kant. Refusing to recognize an absolute prior to the Fall, he takes his definition of and measures the possibilities of history from fallen history, i.e., from history as conditioned by the Fall. While orthodox Christianity finds it all but impossible to describe that "history" that precedes the Fall, just as it finds it almost impossible to describe the nature of man's existence and "history" as it shall be lived after history is brought to its finis, yet orthodoxy by its acceptance of the Genesis story is able to keep the lines of its thinking straight.

In spite of all the qualities of his thought which make him eminently worth reading, in the final analysis his thought never completely gets beyond his naturalistic moorings and in crucial places evidences a concealed despair. In this very context, for example, where he posits an end (finis) of time he declares in The Nature and Destiny of Man (Vol. II), "... we know nothing about either an abrupt ending of the world or of the gradual dissipation of its natural energies." In a grand attempt to combine Existentialism with the Christian Faith he reveals that the lineage of some of his most elemental and structural principles come from non-Christian philosophy rather than from Christian theology.

Orthodoxy can learn, among other things, one important thing from Niebuhr. Although Niebuhr's influence upon the modern mind is due in part to the fact that he is a voice of despair calling to despair, this in itself cannot be a total explanation of the wide impact of his thought. Niebuhr's books are not such easy reading that they threaten to drive sedatives off the market, nor are they calculated to please current optimistic liberalism. But he is nonetheless widely read. This indicates that orthodoxy too, in spite of its natural unpopularity, can be heard, provided it is geared to the times and is directed to our actual flesh-and-blood situation. Traditional Christianity must speak not from outside but from within the human situation. If orthodoxy speaks from within and in terms of the historical situation, it may not be generally accepted—but it will be heard.

Los Angeles, California.

JAMES DAANE.
is endorsed, usually without much proof. In a Banner article we have furnished the evidence in support of this statement. Moreover, anyone who has access to the book under review can find this substantiation for himself; e.g., on pp. 25, 29, 30, 307, 308, 596, 627, 908, 1236, to mention only a few. Moreover, this feature, which definitely brands the book as a "Bible of the Higher Critics," mars the New as well as the Old Testament, though it is, perhaps, more definitely evident in the Old.

What may be regarded as rather strange is the fact that, though the editors are all scholars, certain very questionable positions are advocated which they do not in dispute. Thus, the modern view of the Pentateuch is adopted, and we are told that the addresses of Moses in Deuteronomy are to be viewed as "a noble and inspired interpretation of the Mosaic covenant for the needs of the people in a later day." (p. 246.) With thorough disregard of conservative arguments a modified Two Document theory is adopted with respect to the origin of Matthew's Gospel. (p. 22 of N. T. section.) With very little appreciation for the counter-arguments of conservatives, which are to be found in various works on Introduction, the editors state (p. 384), with respect to the Pastoral Epistles: "Thus there is a strong case against attributing the epistles to Paul as they stand." Doubt is cast upon the traditional view that the apostle John wrote the Fourth Gospel. (p. 165.) In spite of the strong and unanimous testimonies of the earliest tradition, which ascribes the authorship of the book of Revelation to the apostle John, and in spite of the fact that a doctrinal thesis was ever written in defence of that view—facts which the critics know, of course—we find the bold statement on p. 458: "Who this John was we cannot determine with certainty. It is most unlikely that he was the author of the Fourth Gospel, for the style of the writer is completely different. There was a strong tradition in the Early Church that he was John, the son of Zebedee, but there is not sufficient evidence to establish this view. Probably he was a travelling 'prophet' or preacher well-known to the churches of Asia Minor."

Certainly on points such as these the Higher Criticism is not scholarly. It refuses to examine or to take seriously the evidence on the other side. It is dogmatic, biased. It naively assumes that its positions are right and cannot possibly be open to criticism. It stubbornly refuses to listen to any counter-arguments.

Hence, in spite of its many good and excellent features, which we admire, this Westminster Study Edition fails to satisfy. However, if anyone wishes to know what view of Scripture is held by the editors and is taught in the Seminaries where these men teach—Princeton Seminary, McCormick Seminary, etc.—he should purchase this book. He will soon know.

WILLIAM HENDRIKSEN.

FROM BETHLEHEM TO THE CITY OF GOD


Most seminary graduates of the conservative schools will be acquainted with this unusually valuable set of Bampton Lectures. I remember vividly how, in my own seminary days, the studies offered in this book brought me to a delighted awareness of the grand design implicit in the arrangement of the New Testament Canon. The lack of correspondence between the chronological and the canonical order of the New Testament writings confronts the beginner in canonical studies with a puzzling question as to the probable significance of the chronologically odd arrangement of the New Testament books. To this question the present volume gives a highly satisfactory and spiritually edifying answer. It leaves the Bible-believing reader with the conviction that the Holy Spirit controlled not only the production of the writtings but also their final arrangement in the canon, and that with a quite discernible purpose.

Bernard finds that the New Testament "exhibits a scheme of progressive doctrine" marked off in four stages corresponding to the four groups of writings, Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Revelation, and discoverable to a less degree within the groups themselves. His lectures trace the progress from the presentation of the basic facts of the Gospel, linked by Matthew and John in the respective Old Testament, through its embodiment in the developing and expanding Church, through the application of the Gospel to the exigencies of the Church living under varying circumstances in different localities and gradually requiring a fuller interpretation of the Gospel and its implications, to the final consummation, pictured for believers in the Apocalypse, of the Church that is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. Each stage, until the last, gives evidences of its own incompleteness, and contains intimations of the next. Each succeeding stage in the progress of doctrine satisfies the want awakened by the stage of development preceding. Taken in its entirety, the New Testament presents the redemptive revelation of Jesus Christ, progressively unfolded and complete.

Bernard's work distinguishes clearly between the progress of doctrine that is complete in the New Testament, and that which goes on throughout the history of the Church. While fully recognizing the differences in the modus operandi of the Holy Spirit between the various stages in the New Testament development of the Gospel, it discovers equal divine authority in all, and a sharp line of demarcation separating the work of the Spirit in the development and completion of the canon and the work of the Spirit in the further life of the Church. There is no conflict between the synoptics and John, or between Jesus and Paul, but only a necessary progress in teaching, in each case fully prepared for in the earlier stage, and clearly anticipated.

Reformed believers know that the best grasp of any portion of the Scripture is obtained against the background of an appreciation of the unity and design of the whole. These lectures show why it is so, and at the same time, by giving the key to this unity and design in the New Testament, provide important leads toward a better understanding of its several parts. Any preacher of the Gospel may enrich his understanding of the progressive revelation of Christ and his ministry of the Word by absorbing the contents of this book. The thoughtful student who is troubled by the critical allegations of doubts or unorthodox theological speculation in the New Testament will find a useful antidote here against the teachings of those who like to cull out of the New Testament the picture of the "historical Jesus." Many a believer, of average intelligence, will read his New Testament with greater profit and delight after reading this book.

The few, but very useful, notes are collected in the back of the volume, and need not disturb the reader who is not interested in the critical problems that arise in the discussion.

PETER VAN TUINEN.

Leota, Minnesota.

THE POWER STATE


GEORGE ORWELL'S brilliant Nineteen Eighty-Four is a major event. Alfred Kazin has already compared the torture scene at the end with some of Dostoevski's writing—an overdrawn but suggestive comparison. This book is partly satire, partly science-fiction; but essentially a prophecy of doom, a study in horror. Men can smile at satire, such as Orwell's previous attack on Stalinism, Animal Farm, but it will be difficult to smile at this picture of "statism" triumphant and Power enthroned. This is Sinclair Lewis' It Can't Happen Here made into literature. This is a book with shocks.
The "hero" is one Winston Smith, who tries in his own feeble way to oppose the State, and fails miserably. The story is a Cat and Mouse story, played out against a detailed background of the lies, hate and horror which mark England in 1984. This is Buchenwald brought to London, presented by a writer who can force some sense of what this would feel like and seem like. Oh, we have heard of it before. The Minister of Truth devoted to lies; New-speak, a type of double-talk developed for fooling the masses; the secret police, the midnight visits, the torture chambers; it is all familiar. But it happened "over there", "in Europe", to "them." Orwell makes one realize that it can happen "here", to "us."

Orwell is a first-rate writer. He is no Dostoevski, but he should be ranked with, say, Arthur Koestler; and this work is better on all counts than Huxley's Brave New World, to which it has been frequently compared. Why is this? Orwell handles words well: "the air seemed to kiss one's skin" sums up May, as "he held the cigarette upright, whereupon the tobacco fell on the floor" introduces a London in decay. Then too, Orwell writes in the economical but powerful style which characterizes much English writing today, and is always the master of his narrative. But the point of superiority, it seems to me, is in the excellent handling of characters. Orwell's people are alive; they mean something; they are remembered; they invite sympathy; they seem like people whom we know rather than characters in a book. This is the most difficult thing for a novelist to do, but Orwell does it. His characters are three-dimensional.

How does this book concern us? It is fine literature, and should be read for that reason. But it also concerns us as Christians. For God rules all of life, and all of life is our concern; culture and civilization, politics and society; truth and falsehood; and Winston Smith. The Power State, as Abraham Kuyper saw more clearly than many of us, is the enemy of everything Christian. The Power State: that is, the World, the dictatorship of worldliness. It is said by many—Niebuhr, Berdyaev, Toynbee, Murray, et al.—that the churches are not concerned, that the firemen sleep while the West burns. Orwell poses a problem for the Christian: what is Christianity doing about the Power State? As Abraham Kuyper said sixty years ago, "What will become of us if the process of centralization, now scarcely begun, will have run its full course? Where will we find the power to fight back if the apostacized state continues to brand every resistance as sacrilege?" Orwell does not answer, indeed he seems to say there is no answer. Christianity may furnish an answer. If it does not, our grandchil-

The style of the writing is that of simple narrative supported by descriptive passages both of which are employed for the purpose of instructing and informing the reader. Consequently, the author presents the ideas directly, simply and clearly, without use of figurative language. The sentence structure is simple enough for fourth grade children to follow, but the words composing them are choice bits of precision. Mr. De Jong has adapted his style and diction to the intent of his mind and succeeded, and therefore the work has genuine literary merit.

The only objection to my mind—if it be one—is that there is not enough factual material given. As it is, the reading mechanics of the book may offer no serious obstacle to an alert fourth grade pupil. But the content of the book interests those on elementary grade level only when, upon occasion, one may wish to use it as a reference work. As such it belongs in every school library. However, the content is of great interest to those who really know the Bible stories, and they are, generally speaking, of much more mature age. They are those who would eagerly absorb and appreciate much more authentic information so objectively given as that in Bible Days.

We hope that the author may see his way clear to cover, as it were, every foot of the land of Palestine as it was during Bible days. A relief map of Palestine is offered in the book. That is well. But we interested readers would greatly like to surmise what probable emotional waves and ripples swirled within a possible traveler in going, for instance, from Jerusalem to Nazareth by way of Samaria as he passed Jacob's well to enter the valley between Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal, or in walking from Jerusalem to Bethany over the bridge crossing the Brook Kidron and up the ascent over Mt. Olivet passing on its way the Garden of Gethsemane nestled in the fork where the road divided. Such a book would demand historical and topographical research, but it would make the whole of Palestine come to life and consequently add immeasurably to the appreciation for and understanding of the stupendous events which occurred during Bible days.

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