Johann Sebastian Bach
Bicentenary Reflections

Scripture and Theology
Ultimate Criterion

Abraham Kuyper
His Early Life

Pastoral Psychology
Appreciation and Criticism

Letters
Book Reviews

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Johann Sebastian Bach: A Lesson for Today

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On July 28, 1950, the musical world observed the 200th anniversary of the death of Johann Sebastian Bach. During the past year Bach's works have been performed commemorative-ly by many choral and instrumental organizations, articles have been written, and lectures have been presented lauding the contributions of this master to western music.

It is not the purpose of this short article to eulogize Bach nor to tell his life story. Enough material for those purposes may be found on the shelves of any library. There is, however, a lesson to be learned from the life of Bach which may be of value to Calvinists in their effort to place music properly in everyday life and worship.

Bach was not a Calvinist. He was a product of the Lutheran Church and worked for that church all of his life. But when one studies the record of Bach's association with his superiors in the church, he is impressed with the many differences of opinion which arose as to the place of music and the type of music to be used in the church service. Over against this, one must remember the background of Bach's musical education. As a member of the North German school of organists, he was a direct descendant of the greatest of all Calvinist musicians, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, who was organist of the Amsterdam Ou de Kerk in the early seventeenth century. It is the recent "re-discovery" of the importance of Sweelinck as the great Calvinist teacher of the North-German Lutheran organists which has made it possible for modern students to place Bach in the proper light as a church musician and composer.

In what way, then, can Bach's concept of music in the church and outside the church be of value to Calvinists in the twentieth century? It is true that the technical aspects of his music are studied thoroughly by students in Colleges and Conservatories in an effort to arrive at an understanding of the important eighteenth century contrapuntal-harmonic style. But musical theory means little to the average person. In such a technical study Bach's personality and the strength of his musico-religious philosophy are usually lost. All too often the result of such study is merely an objective evaluation of the number and types of chords used by the composer of that day.

Our present concern with Johann Sebastian Bach is his concept of music as it affected his daily life. During the last twenty-seven years of his life he occupied the important position of Cantor at the Thomasschule in Leipzig. He served as an instructor in the school which provided trained choristers for the many churches in Leipzig. In addition, he was in constant contact with the secular officials of the University and the Town Council, fighting the political battles which seem to be so inevitably associated with an educational institution. During this period of change in educational philosophy, he was consistently faced with the problem of the relation of music to the other humanities. Not since the days of Boethius had the place of music in the humanities been so seriously challenged as it was in Bach's day, and the retention of music in the German universities may be largely traced to the influence of Bach on the faculties of the University of Leipzig. As a result of the weakened support for music in the humanities curriculum, Bach had to contend with a municipal and university administration which, while niggardly with financial support, expected a high degree of perfection in the performance of the music used in the churches and in the university functions. This all seriously affected his own work as teacher and composer, and it should be noted that most of his later choral cantatas with instrumental accompaniment reveal a progressive simplification of instrumental parts because Bach no longer was able to call upon sufficient resources for their proper performance.

In spite of these difficulties Bach remained always the serene Christian servant of the Church. All music was, to him, an apparatus of worship. He himself defined music as "eine wohlklingende Harmonie zur Ehre Gottes." For him there was little or no difference between the styles and forms of secular and sacred music. Even the little keyboard exercises which he composed for his children and students were labelled "In nomine Jesu." And the title page of the Organbuchlein was inscribed "Dem Höchsten Gott allein zu Ehren." The praise of God, apparently, was the foundation of his work and of his life.

Since religion was the foundation of all of Bach's musical conception, it was only natural that the style of writing in his secular works should have been similar to the style of his sacred works. It is...
impossible to say that Bach used one harmonic idiom in his church cantatas and another in his secular compositions. The medium of performance may have changed from one composition to another, but throughout his works one finds the same breadth of style, sincerity of expression, and directness of thought. Bach was an advanced composer of his day, incorporating the best of his musical heritage and superimposing upon it the sincerity of his own personality coupled with the modern harmonic practice of his time. The stylistic unity of Bach's works is, of course, founded in his concept of all music as being designed for the honor and glory of God.

* * *

The significance of Bach's place in the musical world of his day is quite apparent when one compares his sacred and secular music with that of the twentieth century. It is tragic but true that the more important modern composers are almost entirely devoted to secular composition. Their works are conceived in a harmonic idiom which the average person finds strange and thus considers unfit for use in divine services. Thus if one wishes to hear music written in a twentieth century idiom he usually must attend the concert hall. Meanwhile, when he attends a divine worship service, he must re-orient his hearing to the music of a century and more ago. Obviously, the Christian Church has lost its contact with the ever-growing art of musical composition. Modern architecture, painting, color schemes, and furniture have been accepted readily enough, but somewhere, sometime, somehow, the worshipping church has lost its touch with the musical present. It is time now for the Christian Church to evaluate the progress of the art of music as it affects worship. Just as Bach, the greatest composer of his day, was of musical service to his church, so, today, the modern composer must be of equally significant service to the twentieth century church. Just as the seventeenth century church sought and accepted the work of Sweelinck, the eighteenth century church the work of Bach, so today must the twentieth century church seek and accept the work of its great musicians. * * *

Lest we be considered harsh in our judgment of the twentieth century Calvinist churches in America, allow us to refer to the admirable progress now being made in the modernization of the music presently used in the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands. Just as Bach made use of the contributions of earlier composers in the creation of his liturgical masterpieces, the modern Dutch church musicians are now trying to build their twentieth century music upon the wealth of their rich heritage of Calvinist music. The members of the Gereformeerd Organistenvereeniging (Society of Reformed Organists) have adopted a policy of encouraging the performance of organ works in their churches which are based upon the traditional Calvinist psalm-tunes in modern settings. The adoption of this "new" policy not only prevents the secularization of the music of the church, but is based upon the tradition established by Sweelinck who also used these same psalm-tunes as canti fermi for his liturgical organ works. That tradition, while losing its vitality in the Netherlands, was carried on in the Lutheran Churches in Germany, where Bach adopted the same practice of basing his liturgical organ music upon the traditional melodies of his church. The circle is now closing with the revival of this tradition in the Netherlands, adapted to twentieth century standards.

Using the traditional psalm tunes as the foundation for their compositions, scores of Dutch Reformed composers are today producing organ preludes, postludes, interludes, offertories, toccattas, fantasies, and fugues for use in their church services. At monthly meetings held in the important musical centers of the Netherlands the latest compositions are studied and criticized. The modern harmonic idiom of the composer is of course considered important, but of even greater importance is the relationship of the composer's setting to the original text of the psalm involved. Here is truly an important manifestation of the centuries-old belief that music is an apparatus of worship and must merit its use. All the technical developments of the day may be used in such composition, just as Bach used the "modern" practices of his day. The harmony, the form, the notes may be identical with those used in secular music. But the obvious relationship to scripture, the religious inspiration, and the origin of the canti fermi, unite to create music which is as typically "religious" music for the twentieth century as Bach's was for the eighteenth century.

Our admiration for Johann Sebastian Bach should not stop with the man. Rather, our admiration of his principles should lead us to emulate them. Only too often today is music considered an adornment of the church service. Not until we return to the principles of church music as laid down by the fathers of Protestant church music will music once more return to its proper place as an apparatus of worship and as servant of the Church.
As we cross the threshold of a new academic year, it is eminently fitting and proper that we pause and solemnly repeat the meaningful words of Scripture: Our beginning is in the name of the Lord who hath made heaven and earth. It is in the most genuine sense true of the work in which we are to engage and to which we shall be required to gear our total and consecrated efforts that any success with which our work may be crowned will be dependent upon the express favor and the grace of God. A profound sense of our own weakness and of our utter dependence upon him, a spirit of confident and trustful waiting on him must take possession of our souls as we set out into a new year of study.

Somehow we sense that the words are more applicable here than in any other realm of human activity and endeavor; that unless the Lord build the house, the builders build in vain. What grand prerogative and high privilege to be permitted to traffic in the ponderables of eternal verities; to delve in this mine of unsearchable riches of wisdom, truth and love; to gain perspectives and to gain heights which will serve as vantage points from which to view the landscape of God's truth as deposited in Scripture; and to recognize the relevancy, to sense the pulse-beat of this vibrant, living Word of God! As diligent, consecrated, Christian workmen we shall have an experience similar to that of the apostle Paul, who, when he was given to see the wide sweep of God's revealed truth, could break forth into a doxology of jubilation: O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! . . . For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever.

It is my privilege this morning to address the largest group of aspirants to the sacred office of the gospel ministry in the history of our Seminary. That God has put it in the heart and worked this desire on all of us to whom that answer, that solution, has been revealed. The world desperately needs God's solution, God's answer to man's problem. Whatever else we may or may not do at this Seminary, our one task and ever conscious aim will be to equip you to communicate God's solution, God's answer to man's need.

The outlook today is almost a complete reversal of what it was during the closing decades of the last century and the first of this present century. Man had been signally successful to subdue the forces of nature, and, intoxicated with achievements in the realm of the natural sciences which opened up new worlds and untold conveniences for man, he gently laid aside or openly disavowed his interest in the concerns of theology, of God and his truth. He turned with confidence to the laboratory as the house of salvation. The symbol of that era might well be called the machine, with all that more than ordinary significance. "For such a day as this," is not an empty phrase, meaningless rhetoric; rather, it is laden with hideous content. There is scarcely a parallel in all of history when the sense of frustration and of futility has been so universal. Satanic hatred, jealousy, suspicion, revenge are abroad in this world; Satan's lie is believed and acted upon, viz., ye shall be as gods; man becomes the measure of all things and is autonomous; God, the creator, preserver and judge is denied, his precepts and commandments ignored, his Christ dishonored and rejected: in a word, the fear of God is not known. But ignoring God and neglecting his Word signalizes a people without vision and such perish by their own hand as well as by the sure judgment of God. Unrest, dissatisfaction, fear and despair, a world not yet recovered from the staggering blows sustained by two world wars and the grim spectre of a world tottering on the edge of a third world war which threatens the very continuance of our civilization, such is the feeble and wholly inadequate description of the fearful and chaotic conditions that prevail today.

Little wonder that men without God and without hope should raise the query in brutal frankness: does life make sense? Indeed, a cry becoming ever more articulate and audible is heard: Who will show us any good? Who will free us from the chains of ugly despair and paralyzing fear? There is but one answer to man's predicament, one solution to man's problem. A solemn and weighty responsibility rests on all of us to whom that answer, that solution, has been revealed. The world desperately needs God's solution, God's answer to man's problem. Whatever else we may or may not do at this Seminary, our one task and ever conscious aim will be to equip you to communicate God's solution, God's answer to man's need.

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it connotes: mass-production and the amassing of huge fortunes by a few. But alas, the machine had no heart, nor was it calculated to change the heart of man, greedy, grasping and essentially selfish. Indeed, it only added urgency and stimulated these characteristics of natural man. The zenith was reached when man unleashed a power, a potential of destruction which can almost blast him from the face of the earth.

At this point he begins to reassess himself and his neighbors and finds to his dismay that the heart of man is desperately wicked and that neither he nor his fellowmen are to be trusted with this power, this machine that he has invented. Indeed, it is beginning to haunt him, his conscience is troubled, his heart is disturbed and restless, his night sleepless; he quakes with fear: in a word, he is scared to death. The florid optimism of a few decades ago is completely shattered, pessimism is the dominant undertone today. This proud, self-sufficient, autonomic man, man who would be his own god, is today a prophet of doom.

It is over against that dark background, the fierce challenge of godlessness, atheism, unbelief which has issued into dread fear, despair and pessimism that we are called to witness of, and to communicate, the message of radiant hope, of triumphant faith and jubilant life. That you have come in such good fortune, that you are chosen to discuss briefly with you, namely, The Scripture the Only Source, Foundation and Rule of our Theology. Doubtless the remark might be made that it is taken for granted. A truth that is relegated for thinking and acting, it creates havoc to man's thought structure and chaos in his moral life. That the whole of Modernism and Liberalism is adrift and at sea, that it has proved itself powerless to give special protection of the gods. And so he besought Jupiter to give him a sign that his request would be granted. In answer to this prayer, according to the story, there fell from heaven that night a wooden image of Pallas, the goddess of wisdom and war. The people of Troy took this Palladium, as the figure was called, and placed it in the midst of their citadel, living each day in the full assurance that if the Palladium remained there, the city would be invincible, but if it were removed or stolen that some great disaster would befall them. You remember that it came to pass during the Greek war against Troy that the sly Diomedes and the crafty Ulysses stole the Palladium and carried it away, which resulted in the downfall and disaster of the city. This is only a story, fancy you say, and indeed it is, but the story has a modern parallel in historic fact. In many seminaries this Palladium, the Word of God, has either been compromised or entirely removed; its compromise has worm-eaten the very pillars of their theological structure, and the removal of the Word has occasioned the entire collapse of theology worthy of the name. From an objective revelation of God, infallibly inspired, infallibly preserved by writing, many have turned to subjective experience, to speculative systems of thought born in the fertile brain of fallible men; from an objective, infallible “thus saith the Lord,” they have shifted to the subjective “I think,” “I suppose,” of fallible men.

But this supposed new scientific approach has not yielded satisfying results. It leaves man ever seeking for ultimate truth but never finding it, and in the meantime, lacking an ultimate reference point for thinking and acting, it creates havoc to man's thought structure and chaos in his moral life. That the whole of Modernism and Liberalism is adrift and at sea, that it has proved itself powerless to give a unified, coherent system of truth, is abundantly obvious from the writings of their spokesmen. That it has miserably and tragically failed to cleanse the cesspools of iniquity, vice and immorality, the whole satanic brood of sin, is equally apparent to any unbiased observer.

And this leads me directly to the theme I have chosen to discuss briefly with you, namely, The Scripture the Only Source, Foundation and Rule of our Theology. Doubtless the remark might be made at once that this is a self-evident, a most obvious truth among us, and so it is. That it is obvious, however, does not constitute a reason that it should be by-passed. Experience teaches us that the very worst thing that can happen to any truth is that it is taken for granted. A truth that is relegated to the category of “things taken for granted” has lost its heart; the vibrant throbbing of life no longer pulsates in it. This truth as stated must ever be a conscious conviction, deeply entrenched; a truth which we must accept without reservation and to which we without compromise must adhere. The slightest deviation on this point would signify the Achilles heel of our whole theological structure.

We read in the mythology of the ancients that after they had built the city of Troy, the founder of the city prayed that it might be taken under the
interest in Calvin and Calvinism has begun. It is a significant fact that there is at present a republication of Calvin’s major works. Subjectivising theologians would only allow for some historic value in the views of the Reformers, patterns of thought suited to the living flow of experience of people belonging to that century, but completely outmoded for this 20th century. Today, however, we witness a far different appraisal. It is being recognized that there is abiding value in the views of the Reformers, applicable to our present situation and world-crisis. The explanation for this is at hand: the Reformers based their convictions on the infallible Word, which changes not.

Noteworthy too, is the fact that along with the revival of interest in the writings and views of the Reformers, is an awakened interest in the historic creeds of Christendom and in a systematic, coherent setting forth of the truths of Scripture. It is being recognized that the faith which the historic church of Jesus Christ has articulated in these venerable creeds is vital, determining, directing, controlling and helpful to make meaningful man’s life. We have the enviable position to belong to a church which has articulated her faith in creedal confessions. How jealously we ought to guard that distinction and with what anxious solicitude ought we seek to maintain it! Not a few of those who flouted the slogan, “No creed but the Bible,” or “No creed but Christ,” have come to see the inadequacy and impossibility of that position. Fact is, that a creedless church is a contradiction in terms; a creed is a life-necessity for the church of Christ.

To the question, what is a creed, various answers are given. Dr. Polman in a recent study of the matter claims that it is possible to categorize the answers to that question in four definite groups. According to that plan the creed is adjudged to be:

1. Infallible decrees.
2. Iron bands and chains.
3. A beacon light, life-buoy, a public blazon.
4. Repetition of Scripture and therefore normative and regulative.

That they are infallible decrees is the position held by the Roman Catholic church, and this position was climaxed in 1870 when that church pronounced the dogma of papal infallibility of the Pope’s deliverances in matters of faith and morals. Even though this leads to tryanny, a trampling on conscience, a squelching of personal freedom, enslavement of the spirit, fostering heresy-hunting and inquisition, it satisfies a deep longing of the human heart for an absolute authority. For the pious Catholic nothing is so suicidal as the Protestant principle of private interpretation, which he claims is subjectivism run wild, leading to anarchism and endless division of the body of Christ.

Within the Protestant camp there are those who are avowedly opposed to creeds. One group declares that creeds are iron bands and chains. Their objection focuses to these three points: 1) creeds, they claim, do violence to the majesty, value and authority of the Holy Word, for there is ever a tendency to exalt the creed above the Word; 2) creeds are, so it is alleged, injurious to the freedom of the churches and the conscience, because they are binding and authoritative; 3) they take exception to creeds, for creeds are divisive. In answer to this criticism, be it said that we do not claim that creeds stand on a par with Scripture; they are subordinate to it and ever appellable to it; they are binding and authoritative; not because they are imposed by church or state but by voluntary acceptance of them. That they occasion division is only a partial truth, for it can readily be shown that in point of fact, it is the lack of such definite, articulated faith that engenders strife and division in the church of Christ. It is the duty of the church to contend vigorously, to agonize for the faith once for all delivered, for the church is the pillar and the ground of the truth. Indeed, all “contending for the truth must disturb that cold, death-like tranquillity which indifference to truth and purity of faith introduces.”

Others would do honor to the creeds as sign-posts, beacon lights, a sort of life-buoy. To them the creeds represent a station in the historic progress of the unfolding of man’s understanding of the truth. But these people seriously demur when we contend for the normative and authoritative and binding quality of the creeds. At best these creeds are but historic documents; in this fact alone lies their value, according to this group.

Our position differs quite radically from those thus far presented. For us, a creed is a formulation of truth, derived from and based on Scripture, officially declared by the church as faith to be believed. Creeds are a repetition of Scripture and therefore normative, authoritative and binding. Exactly for this reason, viz., that they are a repetition of Scripture, are creeds an objective criterion whereby we judge others, make distinctions and prove the spirits of men. A creed directs the mind to the salient truth of Scripture, gathers that truth in focus. There is an inevitable desire to communicate such faith which has become a burning conviction. This is wholly scriptural, for the psalmist said: “I believe, therefore I confess.” As faith without works is dead, so faith without confession is dead. Proclaiming a creed is in reality an evangelic act; it is a witness of good news.

Creeds, it has been said, are mass movements of Christian conviction: milestones and fingerboards in the history of Christian doctrine. We turn to the well-thumbed pages of the creeds and read in their faded lines the moving record of how the church of
Jesus Christ has given impressive utterance to her considered faith and passionate conviction. Scripture exhorts us to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for He is faithful. Paul earnestly exhorts to teach and to maintain this doctrine. We are told to abide in the doctrine, grow in it, keep it pure, engage in holy combat, agonize, contend vigorously for the faith. Since the creed is the echo of God's truth as revealed in Scripture it becomes the touchstone by which heresy is tried, the basis for Christian discipline, the test of orthodoxy of one's preaching.

And just because truth is an unchanging fact, even though the application may vary, the creed has great stability. It is the echo of truth that changes not. This static concept of the creeds and, for that matter, of the systematic construction of the truth as set forth by the great Reformed systematic theologians, is fiercely assailed and criticised by those who are caught in the toils of the maelstrom of change; by those who have embraced a philosophy that God and truth are in the process of becoming; and by those who, for want of a better term, are captivated by activism. These would emphasize that truth is dynamic rather than static. The fatal blemish here is in the attempt to make it an "either, or." The truth is, that it is both static and dynamic. Thank God for this static concept as applied to our creed, and to the dogmatic formulations and constructions of our faith. What a grand thought to consider, the continuity of our faith, even in its articulate expression. As I turn to this expression of faith I am reminded that I am herein confessing what our fathers confessed when they said: "This I believe." How bracing a tonic for the soul to clasp the hands of the myriad of those already translated to the church triumphant and of those now living, and with them all make one witness, one confession of faith! How imperative and urgent the apostolic word: "Keep that which is committed to thy trust; hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

[This address will be carried forward and concluded in the next issue.—Editor.]

Abraham Kuyper: His Early Life and Conversion

Abraham Kuyper was born in 1837 in the little town of Maassluis. His father, Jan Frederik Kuyper, was a minister in the Established (Nederlands Hervormde) Church. His mother, Henriette Huber, daughter of a Swiss officer of the guard, was a lady of intellect, as mothers of prominent men often are. It was a beautiful autumn Sunday morning when Abraham put in his appearance on this globe. He proved to be what the Dutch call a Sunday child (Zondagskind) in many ways in his later life.

He was a peculiar looking little chap with an extraordinarily large head—so big that mother Kuyper had trouble buying suitable hats for him. Often she had them specially made. Sometimes these hats were a bit odd and drew the attention of the boys in the street, who considered him and his hat a source of unusual merriment, and hooting after him cried: "There is steam under that hat! It is inflated with gas!"

As a child his parents were rather anxious about him because he made the impression of being slow, even a little backward. He could not read as quickly as other children of his age. They were afraid he was a hydrocephalus (baby with a water-head) and took him to a specialist who, after examining him closely, exclaimed: "Nothing serious! In fact, there is nothing the matter at all! This boy has an unusual supply of gray matter, and if his little body can feed it, and he should live, he will be a great man some day; for his brains are of extraordinary size and will be of tremendous capacity!"

Young Kuyper

At Middelburg

When the lad was about three-and-a-half, his father accepted a call to Middelburg in the province of Zeeland. Here the Kuyper residence was located near the harbor, at the Punt, where the merchant marine was concentrated. Little Bram would sit for hours at the drawing-room windows, watching the boats entering and leaving port. When he grew older, he could not resist the temptation to walk the gangplank to see the interior of a boat. He wanted to know how ships were built and how the sailors lived. On board these anchored ships he was often surrounded by sailors intensely interested in the little fellow, whose many questions they tried to answer.

As he grew older, he went on regular visits aboard ship, especially on Sundays, when he often delivered
a little sermonette to the sailors. He took tracts from his father's study and also, secretly, some of his father's cigars to reward those who had behaved well and had listened attentively to his childlike sermon. Really this young evangelist fascinated those rough boys. They just had to listen to him and, of course, they enjoyed the cigars, too! Little Abram became a real friend to them. But when they used bad language or took the Lord's name in vain, he would give it to them and a good scolding it was, too! To those who did not behave well, he refused the reward: the coveted cigar!

His mother was very proud of him. She cherished the idea that her Sunday child would one day be a minister like his father. But little Bram had different ambitions. His idee fixe at the time was to travel the high seas, ultimately to be a captain on a large boat, and to start as soon as possible as an apprentice at a nautical school. But God frustrated his plans. He called him to quite a different future. God was preparing him to be a church reformer, and then afterwards in the distant future, to be a captain indeed, but on the Netherlands' ship of state!

**A Student At Leiden University**

In 1849 his father received a call to Leiden. We know from my aunts that Abraham at this time was given the choice between becoming a sailor or a student. His sisters persuaded him to look forward to entering Leiden University; and so when his father accepted the Leiden pastorate, young Bram began his schooling in the grammar school there. Although then twelve years of age, he had never entered a schoolroom before as he had been previously tutored only by his parents. Among his schoolmates his record was an enviable one, as he stood consistently at the head of his class. When leaving this grammar school, Abram was chosen to deliver the valedictory, which he did in excellent French.

In 1885, when Abraham was seventeen, he became a student at the historic Leiden University. He enrolled for both Philology and Theology. He had no money for distractions, which proved a blessing for him,—no theater, no drinks, which are the ruin of many a European student. He knew well how to divide his time, for already as a student he worked out a definite daily schedule and stuck to it rigidly. Till the end of his life, the rigid budgeting of his hours has been the secret of his great success. He knew how to achieve an incredible amount of work in a given period. He lived by the clock. Work, meals, walks, writing, holidays, visits, interviews,—all formed a part of his busy program, and usually he started with a look at his watch. Often we teased him later in life that the great old man had become a slave to the second hand.

During his student life, he got up at ten and worked till late in the night, because he felt he could better concentrate when the family was asleep and the house quiet. Though he was a strenuous worker, he was by no means dry; on the contrary, he was gay, enjoyed a good joke, and was full of fun.

The Leiden manse had a lovely garden, where he received his fellow-students on Saturday afternoons. As he had retained his love for water and boats, he planned at one time a water-trip with them. They all embarked in a 'trekschuit' decorated with Chinese lanterns and spent several days vacationing, doing their own cooking!

He was very fond of a good argument and especially of a lively discussion. His father called him "animal disputax" (disputatious creature)! He would memorize long portions of poetry and walked through the house reciting them. He thought this belonged to his philological training. He stood at the top of his class and Dr. De Vries said he expected him to be a somebody someday.

Abram also studied the Gothic language. At one time during an examination, Professor De Vries asked him to read a part of the Gospel according to St. John (translation of Ulfilas). He was very nervous because he was not quite sure that he had mastered all of it. When the professor told him to stop and to translate, he was in despair. He asked kindly if he might finish reading the chapter as it belonged to the story. This was granted. His nerves calmed down. As he read on, the text became more familiar and the translation, including the first part, was then clear to him. He passed his B.A. in the Classics *Summa cum laude*. And as Dr. Rullman writes: "His philological study has been of great influence on his style. His deftness and clarity of expression remind us again and again of the great rhetoricians and historians of the ancient Latin civilization. Just as with those, so with Kuyper, the right word follows the thought quite willingly, but his style shows greater vivacity and exuberance, which makes him more a romanticist than a classicist." However, he followed no definite school, for Kuyper created his own Dutch idiom.

The time spent at Leiden University proved a period of fiery trial for his faith. Dr. Scholten's dogmatic courses robbed him of the faith of his youth, although he never became an atheist. His home influence and early training proved a real stronghold spiritually. But through Scholten's influence he went so far astray that when Prof. Rauwenhoff openly denied the bodily resurrection of our Lord, Abram assented to it and joined his fellow-students in literally applauding the assertion. Later, after his conversion, he repented of this and as often as the thought came back to him, he felt horror-stricken. Could this man ever become a
vessel fit for the Master's use? Yes, for God controlled his life and would bring him back to the faith of his fathers and that in a most wonderful way!

The Prize Essay
On A Lasco

In 1858, his tutor and faithful adviser, as Kuyper always considered Dr. Mathijs De Vries, drew his attention to a prize essay contest offered by the University of Gronigen on a critical comparison between John Calvin's and John à Lasco's (the Polish Reformer) conception of the church. De Vries urged Kuyper to enter the contest. Abram willingly consented. He started at once, full of enthusiasm, to gather the necessary sources.

Calvin's works were readily available at the Leiden University library, but when he tried to get à Lasco's works, he sought in vain. Even at the world's best libraries in London and St. Petersburg, not one volume was to be found. Facing this paramount difficulty, he went to Prof. De Vries and told him that he had decided to withdraw from the contest. His tutor, however, did not acquiesce but urged him to look around in private libraries. "And, my boy," he concluded, "start at Haarlem at my father's home. He possesses a rich collection of books on Church History."

Abram went to Haarlem to meet this elderly gentleman. But a new disappointment was in store for him when Dominie De Vries told him that he did not recall that he had a single volume of à Lasco on his shelves. "Come again next week; I'll take a look to make sure," he said in parting. After a week Kuyper returned to Haarlem but without the least hope of finding what he wanted so badly. Imagine his joy as well as surprise when the minister, upon entering the library, showed him a complete collection of à Lasco's writings. These books did not exist anywhere else. The young student was so amazed that he definitely saw in this God's providential finger. This ended his long period of spiritual apathy and he started again to pray, thanking his God fervently for this happy find, which seemed to him to give a sanctified character to this particular study. For eight months he worked at it steadily and zealously.

But even this study did not mean a spiritual change. He considered it only as an historical problem. His argument in the prize essay was rather a sustained criticism of Calvinism and perhaps an approach to the Irenic-Ethicalist point of view.

As the outcome of the contest, the Gronigen Theological Faculty honored Kuyper with the first prize: a gold medal. Laudations and congratulations were showered upon him. No wonder that this young man, just twenty years of age, felt very proud of himself. But the physical and mental strain of the months of arduous toil took its toll and Kuyper suffered a serious breakdown. His brain seemed exhausted. He could not even recall a book title. The doctor ordered a complete rest for months. But Abram just could not be idle. If his mind were to relax, his hands could be busy. Then and there, his old love for boats was revived. He bought the necessary tools and began to build a miniature ship: a two-masted vessel, such as he had seen so often in his early youth in the harbor at the Punt. When he had finished, a captain told him the replica was perfect; not a single pulley or string was missing. His fiancée dressed the little sailors, made the flags and embroidered her name on the topflag: "Johanna." This little ship later became the pride and joy of his children. It is still to be seen in the Kuyper-House in the room which was once his study.

In The Crucible

He next decided to improve his English by reading some novels with his youngest sister. They started with Miss Yonge's The Heir of Redcliffe, a plot which left a deep impression upon his religious life. He writes about this in his Confidantie. This story brought him to the first stage of his conversion. The chapter of Guy's death and Philip's remorse revealed to him his own sinful heart. Guy had forgiven Philip tenderly and lovingly for all the wrong he had done in trying to spoil his life. Kuyper saw that in God's sight haughty and talented Philip was nothing at all, a nobody, but poor Guy was the hero. Writes Abram, "And before I knew, I knelt down and wept. What my soul passed through in those minutes, I realized later. From that hour I despised and hated that which I had previously admired, and instead sought for that, which I had thus far despised. This masterpiece of Miss Yonge's has been for me the breaking down of my self-sufficient and stubborn heart."

It was in the summer of 1863 that Abraham Kuyper took his Doctor of Theology degree, Summa cum laude, on the dissertation for which he used his completed and corrected prize essay on à Lasco. That same summer he married Johanna Henderika Schaay and went with her to the parsonage of Beesd, a small village in Gelderland, where he became pastor of the "Nederlands Hervormde Kerk." He started his work in this part of God's vineyard with his usual zeal and enthusiasm. Day after day he ministered to the spiritual needs of this people, never suspecting the tremendous opposition that lay in store for him. As he says in his Confidantie: "A congregation was entrusted to me, but I did not come to give of what I possessed: but with a silent prayer that my own empty heart might be fed by the congregation! In the circle which I frequented a strong conservatism with a kind of orthodox hue without any spiritual power prevailed. There was
no voice out of the deep, no sound from an historical past.” His parishioners were smugly satisfied and complacent with things as they were. They absolutely refused to contribute to Kingdom causes and for Kingdom needs. Among them there was also a sizeable number of malcontents, who had been a headache to every previous pastor. But Kuyper treated them impartially, visiting them all alike in their humble homes.

Pietje Baltus And Abraham Kuyper

On one such visit God brought him in contact with a young woman, Pietje Baltus, daughter of a common laborer, who led him to the feet of the Saviour, there to find redemption in His blood. At last his heart was opened. She steadfastly refused to come to church, refused to shake hands with him, for, said she, “You do not give us the true bread of life.” Sympathetically she told him just what she believed and how she differed from the views of the Church. Here he found his Peniel, where God became victor! Here God prepared him for his gigantic task in Church life, dedicating all his many talents to the highest ambition. To that noble cause he gave his heaven and earth. The ideas and ideals of this famous Genevan reformer had been kept much alive in this peasant hut. Then and there started the tremendous struggle in the soul of Abraham Kuyper. Here he found his old parchments, which contained the Calvinistic Confession. She was thoroughly familiar with their contents, having read them all. She told Kuyper what Christ had done for her personally. Often he sat in that humble home for hours, just listening. He marvelled at the faith as well as the knowledge of this girl. How strong her faith in the absolute sovereignty of God! Gradually she led him to a deeper study of Calvin’s Institutes, where he found the same truths of which Pietje was trying to convince him. The ideas and ideals of this famous Genevan reformer had been kept much alive in this peasant hut. Then and there started the tremendous struggle in the soul of Abraham Kuyper. Here he found his Peniel, where God became victor! Here God prepared him for his gigantic task in Church and State. The deepening and propagating of the Calvinistic principles and confession became his highest ambition. To that noble cause he gave his entire life, dedicating all his many talents to the great task for which God Himself had called and equipped him.

Never did Kuyper forget Pietje Baltus, his spiritual mother in Christ. Till the very end of his life her photo stood on his writing desk in front of him as an inspiration and challenge. It is still there in the “Kuyperhuis,” where his study is kept intact just as he left it.

He stayed in Beesd until 1867. During this time he prepared and published the Opera (Works) of Joannis à Lasco in the original Latin, thereby establishing his reputation in scholarly circles.

To Utrecht And Greater Service

The publication of the Opera led to an amusing incident in his later life. In 1903 Mr. Birrel, the English Minister of Education, dined with us. Desirous of paying Dr. Kuyper a compliment, he told him of his admiration for all he had published and added that he wondered how, with all his scientific achievements, he had also found time to publish such a magnificent “opera.” We all looked surprised for my father had never been a musician. Still Mr. Birrel stuck to his assertion. “I’m quite sure I’m correct,” he said, “for I know it was a Polish opera.” Then the truth dawned on us: he had somehow been informed of the editing of the Opera of à Lasco!

In 1867, when Kuyper was thirty years of age, he left Beesd and moved to Utrecht, where he began the great struggle to deliver our country from government autocracy, a struggle which lasted till the end of his life. First of all, he started to purify the Church from declension and heresy, striving to bring her back to a sound Calvinistic basis, to ground her anew in her confession in obedience to her King and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He stimulated discussions with his colleagues who, though orthodox, had gone astray on different points. It was at that time that he delivered his first and memorable lecture, “Appeal to the People’s Conscience.” Present at that meeting was Mr. Groen van Prinsterer, then leader of the Anti-revolutionary Party. This great Calvinistic statesman then stood alone in the breach like a general without an army. He felt at once great affinity for Dr. Kuyper and found in him the man he needed to take the lead and to become his successor. Groen van Prinsterer became his staunch friend and fatherly adviser.

From this time dates the birth in his breast of the all-consuming ideal to conquer every area of human life and make it consciously subject to Christ, the King: Pro Rege! Or, as he formulated it in more concrete language at another time: Nowhere in all of human life and society is there so much as an inch of space of which Christ does not claim: It is Mine!
Pastoral Psychology

The appearance of this book is something of an event. The subject of pastoral psychology is one that has not received much attention in our Reformed circles. Many books on this subject have been written by modernists or out-and-out naturalists, with the result, of course, that we can by no means subscribe to everything these men have said. And yet at the same time, the subject is an extremely important one, and we Reformed pastors feel the need of guidance in this field. Hence we particularly welcome the appearance of this book, written by the Professor of Historical Theology at Western Seminary.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I is an "Historical Analysis," and briefly surveys the literature on pastoral theology in America from its early beginnings to the present time. It is amazing to note how many books there are in this field, and how surprisingly up-to-date some of these older writers sound. Part II is a "Research Analysis," in which the author describes and summarizes his study of sickness, suffering, and sorrow, previously published by the Baker Book House under the title, Victory Over Suffering. Part III is called a "Constructive Analysis of Pastoral Psychology." In this section the author makes some general observations about the co-ordination that should obtain between pastoral theology and psychology, about conversion, about sickness, suffering, and sorrow, and about Christian living. Part IV, which in this reviewer's opinion is the most valuable section of the book, is called "Technique Analysis of Pastoral Psychology." In this section the author makes some general observations about the co-ordination that should obtain between pastoral theology and psychology, about conversion, about sickness, suffering, and sorrow, and about Christian living. Part IV, which in this reviewer's opinion is the most valuable section of the book, is called "Technique Analysis of Pastoral Psychology." Chapter 11 deals with the "Qualifications of the Pastor," including some requisites of pastoral training; Chapter 12 is entitled "Knowing Life Situations"; Chapter 13 deals with "Systematic Counseling," including the matter of family visitation, but stressing personal counseling; Chapter 14 is called, "Minister and Doctor," and deals particularly with the minister's sick-calling; and Chapter 15 is entitled, "Commissioned Spiritual Ambassadors," and shows that in order properly to fulfill his commission as pastor, the minister must know God, himself, and his commission.

There follows a bibliography of 23 pages, which is quite the most ambitious and the most complete array of titles on the general subject of pastoral psychology and theology which this reviewer has ever seen. This bibliography alone, as Dr. Norman Vincent Peale states in his foreword, is one of the major contributions of this book. The book is concluded with a Bible Reference Index, and a rather comprehensive Author and Subject-Matter Index.

A great deal can be said about this book by way of commendation. This is a book which should be in the hands of all our ministers. It will be a helpful guide in an important field in which there has not been much guidance along Reformed lines, and will also introduce the reader to an amazing fund of literature. Best of all, a great many titles are, in the course of the volume, commented on sufficiently to enable the minister to decide whether the book would interest him or not. Most ministers reading this book will find themselves jotting down titles here and there for future reading or purchase.

Goulooze points out that both the crisis of our time and the development of psychological methods make it imperative for the Reformed pastor today to be on the alert for the newest techniques of pastoral work. This does not mean that he needs to swallow everything which is being written in such books today; Goulooze constantly maintains that pastoral psychology must be in harmony with Scripture. But the minister should keep abreast of developments, and use what he can use of these newer methods. Ministers therefore ought to study psychology. "Consecration to God's cause, without the proper knowledge of human nature and human situations does not necessarily spell success in the ministry" (p. 95). Ministers therefore need definite training in pastoral psychology. Goulooze quotes a statement by Carroll A. Wise to this effect:

They [ministers] are not trained to deal with the fundamental material of the ministry—the human personality. Their thinking and work become book-centered, idea-centered, or program-centered, whereas it should be centered in personality (p. 146).

Bearing in mind, of course, the reservation that the pastor's work must, above all, be God-centered, we can certainly agree with the above statement. Certain it is that as ministers we deal constantly, not only with books, but with people; and that therefore we should learn to know as much about people as we possibly can, in order to be properly prepared for our ministry.

Goulooze lays much stress on the importance of working with individuals. Although advocating family visiting, he recommends that such visiting be supplemented by a thorough program of individual counseling, since the pastor often does not


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really get at the root of a problem, nor do his people really "open up" to him, in a family visit. In fact, Professor Goulooze recommends regular conferences, annual if possible, with every adult and young person in the congregation, at the minister's study or church office.

The author further brings out that, although we preach to people as constituting an "audience," we must never forget that they are all so many individuals. In fact, he makes an interesting comparison, on p. 94, between the theological and the clinical approach to persons. Theologically trained pastors may have a tendency, he says, to view people in the light of certain preconceived patterns, whereas a doctor is more likely to treat each person as a distinct individual. Ministers, he says, should try to cultivate more of the clinical point of view.

Goulooze makes many helpful observations about sick calling, all the more significant because of his own recent experience of serious illness. He advises the pastor to study each case of sickness beforehand, if at all possible. He recommends that the minister confer with the doctor, the nurse, or the family, in order to find out as much as possible about the sickness, and about the patient's own attitude toward his sickness. He points out that there are, in the main, two types of attitude on the part of suffering people: there are the chronic "kickers," who invariably find fault with everything and everybody; and there are the submissive sufferers who are cheerful, optimistic, and trustful (p. 114). He counsels that the minister must avoid the preaching complex when visiting the sick (p. 188), and that he must not let himself be drawn into aimless discussion, but must have purposed conversation (p. 193). He further points out that many ministers fail to use the Scriptures effectively in their sick-calling, and suggests ways and means of doing this (pp. 174 ff.). He summarizes his own research on the problem of sickness and suffering by stating it as his conviction that "as pastors we have not begun to reach the actual conditions and circumstances of people under affliction" (p. 78).

One of the finest thrusts of the book is the continual insistence of the author that pastoral psychology presupposes the utmost sincerity and consecration on the part of the pastor himself—in other words, that the person of the pastor is the most important factor in the success of his pastoral work. The true pastor must have enthusiastic love for Christ, true sympathy for people, and genuine spirituality (p. 36). He should have a Christ-mastered personality, for what the preacher is speaks much more loudly than what he says (p. 51). The minister must himself represent the victorious Christian life (p. 117), and reveal in his daily walk the power of the gospel he professes to preach. Only then can he truly bring spiritual blessings to others.

* * *

This is not to say, however, that there are not weaknesses in the book. There are. The chief weakness, I would say, is that the author tries to cover too much territory, and, as a result, has to cover many topics rather sketchily. There is enough material in a work like this for two or three volumes.

A second main weakness of the book, in this reviewer's opinion, is its rather academic character. The Acknowledgment at the beginning makes it rather obvious that this book represents, in the main, the substance of a doctoral thesis which was presented to the Free University of Amsterdam. While admiring the immense amount of scholarly research that has gone into this book, this reviewer feels that the scholarship has somewhat gotten into the way of the author's message. For instance, there is an altogether excessive use of quotations from other authors. Often the author advances his argument by simply copying one quotation after the other, when he could better have stated his conclusions in his own words. After all, when a man has studied a subject as thoroughly as Professor Goulooze obviously has, he has a right to speak for himself, and the reader expects him to speak for himself. The multitude of quotations do not make for pleasant reading; many of them, in fact, seem quite unnecessary.

A more serious criticism of the author's use of quotations, however, is that sometimes his quotations contain statements of dubious soundness, which are left unchallenged. For instance, note this quotation from Fritz Kunkel on p. 93:

We have only one book which gives us the full description of the human situation, and of the way leading through all the troubles and frustrations, and finally into utmost light. It is the great textbook of depth-psychology: the New Testament . . .

But the New Testament is certainly not a textbook of psychology; still less of "depth-psychology"—another name for psychoanalysis—many of whose assumptions are directly contrary to the New Testament. Another dubious quotation which should not have been left unchallenged is found on p. 134, and attributed to J. G. McKenzie:

Modern psychology has elucidated how human motives work, how they become perverted, how they "split" our personality into flesh warring against the spirit and spirit against the flesh . . .

Although it certainly is true that perverted motivation may "split" one's personality, and cause wranglings within, such wranglings, this reviewer submits, are by no means to be identified with the warring of flesh against the Holy Spirit spoken of in Galatians 5, to which the above author obviously has reference. The warfare of Galatians 5 is not just a battle between one's "lower" desires, and one's own "higher" motives, but between the depraved desires of sinful man, and the God-born motives implanted within man by the regenerating and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. It is, in fact, one of the basic errors of modern psychology that it mistakenly identifies these two distinct types of

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warfare, and thereby implicitly rules out the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit. To mention but one more quotation which should have been challenged, Professor Goulooze quotes B. Conde on p. 196 as saying,

Just as Jesus transcended human life by the God within Him, so we too may pass from death to life and immortality by receiving as a child the gift of God's Spirit . . .

If the author of this quotation had fully believed in the essential deity of Christ, would he have spoken about his having transcended human life by "the God within Him"? The comparison which follows certainly seems to indicate that Jesus, in Conde's opinion, was merely a man who experienced the help of God—just as we, who are men, are also to seek the help of God. Quotations of this sort should certainly be commented upon, if they are to be included at all, in a book which claims to be loyal to the traditions of orthodox Christianity.

* * *

A fourth weakness of the book, as I see it, is that there is not enough detailed analysis of pastoral procedures. There are many good general hints, but not enough specific, step-by-step techniques. One wishes that there would be less quotations, and more case studies; less general statements, and more detailed counseling procedures. This reviewer, for instance, would very much like to know Professor Goulooze's reaction to the counseling technique advocated by Carl Rogers in his Counseling and Psychotherapy—a key book in the field of counseling procedures today. May we as Reformed Christians, specifically as Reformed pastors, accept uncritically what Rogers outlines as the "non-directive" approach to personal counseling? Or should our belief in the depravity of man, the indispensability of regeneration, and the dependence of man upon the Word of God for guidance make necessary certain far-reaching modifications in the use of the "non-directive" method? To the disappointment of this reviewer, however, although Professor Goulooze mentions Roger's book, no attempt is made at an evaluation.

We need more studies along these lines, in which we as Reformed pastors will be given thorough critiques of modern counseling methods from the Calvinistic point of view. This is virgin territory for American Calvinists. May some of our CALVIN FORUM readers rise to this challenge! Unless competent leadership is given in this field, our Reformed pastors of the future may either neglect this important area of studies altogether, or may accept more or less uncritically what modernistic and naturalistic writers try to force upon us, with tragic results for our Calvinistic heritage. We desperately need a Reformed approach to the problems of pastoral psychology today!

* * *

Summing it all up, we hail Professor Goulooze's book with genuine rejoicing. It is an impressive beginning of contributions in this field, and should serve as a valuable reference volume for years to come. It should also serve to stimulate further investigations along these lines. In the meantime, all of our ministers should get this book. It will be, for those who read and ponder it, a refreshing tonic, opening up vistas of greater and better pastoral usefulness.

From Our Correspondents

HUNGARIAN LETTER

Dear Dr. Bouma:

Last night I went to bed with the expectation of a sunny day and with the hope of a few days visit to my little cottage at Barnegat Bay in the vicinity of Lakewood, N. J. In the midst of painting, gardening and building up a supply of firewood for the winter I planned to make up, at least partially, for a vacationless summer. But the hoped-for sunny day turned out to be a cloudy and rainy one, and I stayed home. In order to make the best of the situation I decided to take care of a now long standing debt by writing you and THE FORUM this "Hungarian Letter."

First of all I thank you for publishing my simple address to young people of the Reformed Faith, "Our Godly Heritage," in the August-September issue of THE FORUM. The transmission of our faith to younger generations is one of our greatest problems. It is a truly existential task. In pressing toward a satisfactory solution some of our churches have Sunday schools; some churches utilize the Saturday for a longer period of religious training; some use both methods, plus a midweek released time program. The age requirement is raised from the traditional twelve years and the time element is extended for catechetical instruction in all of our churches. Vacation Bible schools are conducted, youth clubs organized and reorganized, youth conferences held, yet youth remains an ever-present problem, a never-finished task. In this great, difficult and vital task I for one am convinced that suitable pamphlets are also needed. This need would seem to be self-evident, yet one is put to surprise by the fact that really few pastors take advantage of even the few existing pamphlets as instruments for deepening the Reformed convictions of their young parishioners. Under the impact of this experience I feel particularly appreciative of your unsolicited readiness to place my address—which our Mission Fund published in a booklet format—on the dignified pages of THE CALVIN FORUM.

At Geneva

Then I wish to tell you about my trip, too, and ten-day stay in Switzerland. I was invited to attend, as an observer, the Second Plenary Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches, held in Geneva between August 16 and 23. After much deliberation about how to break away from the demands
of my never-ceasing tasks, about how to undertake a hereto­
fore untried method of traveling (by airplane), I decided to take
advantage of the obliging invitation. I can truthfully say, I
am glad I did so. In Geneva I literally drank in the reminis­
cences of John Calvin. I walked around on the steep, winding,
narrow, cobblestone streets of old Geneva until the soles of my
feet became bloodshot. I did not miss a single spot of interest
to a soul devoted to Calvinism. In Zurich I held a service for
a group of pasto­less Magyar Reformed brethren. I visited
Zwingli’s church, pondered in front of the house from which
he left for the battle in which his life was claimed by the
Lord. I stopped long enough in front of the house in which
Heinrich Bullinger composed the first one of our creedal stand­
ards, the Second Hel­vetic Confession. It was good to visit
these hallowed places of the Reformation!

The Congress itself, too, was a great and enriching spiritual
experience. For me it was especially interesting to see the
representatives of the old, historical lines of the Reformation
mingle, pray, deliberate in perfect harmony with those who
represented the fruits of evangelical missionary activities from
all parts of the world, with the parts behind the so-called “iron
curtain” excepted. The scene accentuated the essential cath­
olicity of the evangelical faith, and suggested the Lord Jesus
in the role of the “householder, which bringeth forth out of his
truths things new and old.” (Matthew 13:52) From among the
representatives of historical Reformed Christianity none were
more prominent than a size­able group from the Nether­
lands headed by Professors J. J. van der Schuit and G. Ch.
Aalder. Of course, I invariably find myself at home and pal
up with Dutch Calvinists wherever I find them. With a group of
three we had our meals at the same “pension.” We were
singing together two of the old Geneva psalms at Calvin’s
gate, and Dr. Aalder and myself were mutually happy to
recollect the days spent together while attending the same
Calvinistic Conference, in Grand Rapids, Mich.

From among the new confessors of Bible Christianity espe­
cially the following groups impressed me: the Latin Amer­i­
cans, those from the Philippine Islands, and those repre­sent­
ating the fruits of the missionary activities of Dutch Reformed
Christianity in Indonesia. The spokesman of the last­named
group especially touched the heart of the Congress. The re­
surgent nationalism of the newly born Republic of Indonesia
seems to frown upon any trace of the white man—Christian­
ity included—on the islands composing the republic. But these
brethren find Christ too precious to be sacrificed on the false
altar of blind and hateful nationalism. And these brethren
are ready, if need be, for martyrdom, rather than to deny
Jesus. A unanimous resolution was passed to call the attention
of the United Nations Organization to their plight.

But apart from any personal gain or impression, it was a
great privilege for my church, the Free Magyar Reformed
Church in America, to be represent­ated at this international
gathering of Bible­believing Christians. We finally succeeded
in breaking through the walls of the isolation which almost in­
variably is the lot of small denominations. For the time being
we became the sole free representatives of the whole Hungar­
ian branch of the Calvinistic Reformation. And we made an
honorable use of this fact. We called the attention of the
Congress to the plight of the Church behind the iron curtain,
to the plight of its refugee members forming a veritable mod­
ern diaspora. And Congress was responsive and obliging to
pass unanimous resolutions aimed at remedying the situation
as far as humanly possible. Hungarian Reformed Christian­
ity needs this international outlet, and I most assuredly will
recommend to my Church to officially join the International
Council of Christian Churches, at whose Second Plenary Con­
gress nothing whatsoever jarred my otherwise touchy Calvinis­
tic conscience. In fact, I learned a whole lot, and what I learned
made me a more zealous and a more determined and progres­
sive Calvinist.

Collaboration in Hungary

While in Geneva I also made a visit to the headquarters of
the World Council of Churches and to the secretariat of the
Alliance of Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian Sys­
tem. I had to make this call not only to satisfy my eagerness
to see World­Protestantism at work—pro and con, but chiefly
for the sake of the scattered one­time members of the Re­
formed Church in Hungary, a member of these organizations.
Here I found a gracious reception, received an attentive hear­
ing, and learned that as our Congress was to wind up on the
23rd of August, the European branch of the A. R. C. H. P. S.
was to convene in Strasbourg on the 24th of August, and that
Bishops Albert Bereczky and John Peter were also to be in at­
tend­ance. I longed to meet these churchmen, but being sched­
uled to return to the U. S. A. on the 24th of August, I did the
next best thing. I sent them a message, which seemed to have
expressed not only the opinion of all Magyar Reformed Chris­
tians abroad, not only the hidden opinion of the brethren in
Hungary, but also the mind of the rest of Evangelical Christ­
endom the world over.

In essence I told them that we, and the rest of Evangelical
Christendom, find no difficulty in understanding their coming
to an agreement with the new de facto and de jure exist­ing
communistic government in Hungary (recently the Roman
Catholics did the same thing), but that if they try to go be­

eyond securing a modus vivendi for the Church in Hungary
and lend their offices for propagating the idea that Reformed
Christianity and political communism are compatible and con­
genial, they would run the risk of ripping Hungarian Reformed

cor­di­ty out of the communion of Evangelical Christendom, and
that in that case we would fight them, refute them step by
step, forum by forum, all around the world.

The essence of this message was approved in a resolution
passed unanimously by the annual meeting of the American
Hungarian Reformed Ministerial Association held at Ligonier,
Pa., on September 5-6, this year. That this message and this
resolution was prompted by a lively instinct, is attested by an
“Open Letter” addressed by Bishop Albert Bereczky to Dr.
Visser’t Hooft, General Secretary of the World Council of
Churches. Bishop Bereczky openly and consciously runs the
risk of separating the Church in Hungary from the rest of
Evangelical Christendom. From the point of view of siding
with international bolshevism he is dissatisfied even with this
organization, which was walking in slippers in this respect.

What he wishes is nothing less than to have the rest of Chris­
tianity accept, approve and propagate his collaborative views
of international bolshevism. The result, most likely and most
assuredly, will be what we have predicted in our message to
him and to his faithful echo, Bishop Peter, namely that Hun­
garian Evangelical Christianity will find itself isolated, repre­
sented behind the iron curtain, and contradicted by its free adherents
abroad. From this moment on we are as much in open
conflict with those political minions, with these regime­sus­
tained “leaders” of the Church in Hungary, as free Hun­
garians all over the world are in conflict with the political regim­
em itself. The clearing of the situation pleases us. And we know
that the heart and soul of the brethren in Hungary is with
us. So is the rest of Christendom. We are too faithful to
Christ to allow even a Hungarian to parade around with a
false Gospel. Happenings in the relationship between us, Amer­i­
can Reformed Christians of Hungarian origin, and the pres­
cent leadership of the original mother church, will run along
these lines. This is a sure prediction. Yours ever sincerely,
Perth Amboy, N. J.

Charles Vincze.

September 20, 1950.

AFRIKAANS — THE LANGUAGE OF
THE BOERS

Our years ago Marshal Smuts was the dinner guest
of the Dutch Club of New York City. He was known
throughout the world as one of the greatest among the
elder statesmen of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Yet

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when he spoke to us who were assembled at dinner in the Dutch Club that evening, he made us feel that he was one of ourselves, a Dutchman among Dutchmen. He spoke to us in his native Afrikaans, and no one had any difficulty in following his discourse. That was clear from the repeated bursts of laughter that his witicisms evoked. He did his best, I admit, to help us in understanding him, for the Afrikaans that he spoke was far from the variety most commonly used in Holland Dutch; his most characteristic feature of Afrikaans is the repetition of the negative at the end of a negative sentence. No matter how long it be, if it contains a negative, the sentence must end in “nie.” Marshal Smuts, however, omitted it every time. Neither did he conform to the curious grammatical rule that requires the use of the preposition “vir,” meaning “for,” before a direct object when this is the name of a person or animal. “I shall never for you forget not!” renders word for word the Afrikander’s way of expressing the sentiment. Though I listened attentively, I never heard the speaker use “vir” after a transitive verb. By thus removing all possible pitfalls out of our way he made us feel that he and we spoke practically the same language. Yet I know from my own experience in South Africa that it is not easy for a Hollander to keep track of a conversation among Afrikanders. More than ninety per cent of the vocabulary that is used may be of Hollandish origin, but the forms in which the Dutch words have survived obscure to him their identity in the rapid flow of animated discussion. The speech of the Afrikanders has eliminated nearly all inflectional endings; it has done away with grammatical gender, and discarded the preterite; in a word, it has reduced the language to a simplicity more radical even than the simplicity of English.

English influence, however, had no part in this development. The Dutch speech of the settlers at the Cape of Good Hope had been reduced to its present uninflectional state nearly a century before any Englishmen set foot on Southern African soil. That speech had no anchorage in a literary standard, for the early colonists were people without much school learning. Frenchmen, Germans, and Scandinavians settled among them and adopted the Dutch language under compulsion of the Dutch East India Company. But the Dutch that these foreigners spoke was a language shorn of all features that were not essential to mutual understanding. Irregularities were smoothed out, the definite article, “die,” incapable of inflection, was made to serve with all nouns, the verbal conjugation was leveled under one single form serving for all persons and tenses, in short, the Dutch language at the Cape was reduced to the common denominator of the various forms of broken Dutch that were spoken by uneducated Frenchmen, Germans, Scandinavians, and Dutchmen. The non-European element of the population added to this process of detrition. The Hottentots, the black slaves from West Africa and Madagascar, and those who were imported from the Malay Archipelago, threw their idioms into this melting pot of languages. The last mentioned group spoke a mixture of Malay and Portuguese, the lingua franca in use throughout the farflung territory of the Dutch East India Company, and it is from that hybrid speech that several words of Portuguese and Malay origin crept into Afrikaans. The children of the settlers, left to the care of the slaves, must have imitated their broken prattle. They did, no doubt, their best when grown up to drop a manner of speech which, because it belonged to the slaves, was undignified for whites, but some of its traits, especially the modulation of the sentence, were so small a part of the speaker’s consciousness that they never could be shaken off.

The metamorphosis of Holland Dutch to Afrikaans was accomplished in less than a century. The first settlement at the Cape took place in 1652, and already the fourth generation of colonists spoke Afrikaans. Though the development is similar to the change of Anglo-saxon into Middle English. The sym-
nal freedom. And the language was the shibboleth of this new-born nationalism. Its claim to recognition could no longer be denied. In 1914 Afrikaans was admitted as a vehicle of instruction in elementary schools by decisions of the Provincial Councils in the Cape Province, the Orange Free State, and Transvaal; in 1925 it was recognized along with English and Holland Dutch, as one of the official languages of the Union; and even the Dutch Reformed Church admitted Afrikaans into its services and authorized a Bible translation into the language which it once rejected as unworthy of being spoken from the pulpit. And now it need not share with Holland Dutch the honor of being an official language of the Union. It is the other official language since Dutch has been discarded and ousted from its privileged position. To the Afrikanders of to-day Dutch is a foreign language that one learns to read in school for its literature, but that no one needs to speak or write. Yet Afrikaans, thanks to its predominantly Dutch vocabulary, remains a perceptible bond between Afrikander and Hollander, as will be readily attested by every member of the Dutch Club who had the good fortune to hear the address of Marshal Smuts.

Circular Letter
Netherlands-America Foundation
New York, N.Y.

A. J. BARNOUW.

**Book Reviews**

**LITERARY BEGINNINGS**

*Calvin Literary Review*, written and published by the students of Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Spring 1950.

With its second number the *Calvin Literary Review* achieves stature as a college publication of creative writing.

Here is imagination, skill, and in many of the selections an ease that belies the toil inherent in the marshalling of words. Here, too, is genuine artistry, with substance and form fused in patterns affording aesthetic pleasure, and lines conveying something more than the literal representation of their words.

Connie Ter Maat's prize-winning poems sketch scenes and moods with utmost clarity. Some are like mobile paintings; in others reverie is dominant. In "Singing Slavs" he records a scene from the Great Lakes:

I heard them sing one evening
On the pier that stretches in the lake—
A lazy snake whose single eye blinks red,
Answering its mate across the harbor.

He enters sympathetically into the singing of the Slavs:

The foreign words, sung long ago
In valleys known but to the older hearts
Were sweet to me, a child of still another tongue.

It is a long step from the mood of lyric poetry to the irony or tragi-comedy of Andrew Broekema's fable-like tale, "There Must Be Something under All This." Here suspicion and skepticism rise to spectacular heights as an entire apartment house population moves out, family by family. The new landlord in a gesture of fair play and good will has lowered rents one-third.

Joan Schipper has good fun in her verses "On Geometry."

Stanley Wiessman in a reflective moment observes,

Beethoven and Moses didn't have time to think,
"How great shall I try to be?"
Beethoven was too busy refining,
Doing perfect work . . .
For Art's sake.
Moses was too busy denying himself,
Losing himself in The Law . . .
For God's sake.

Employing a highly contemporary idiom, John Vriend takes up a discussion of the meaning of history. He states that man's reception in time of the cultural mandate, "Have dominion," and his response to it, "whether in obedience or not, constitutes the essence of history." His essay is lively with allusions and observations. It is also not without arresting assertions. Some readers may feel with the reviewer that the cultural motive is given too exclusive a place, and that a more complete reference to the spiritual purpose and intent behind the mandate would have rounded out the discussion.

In another essay Elizabeth Kamphuis answers for herself the question, "Four Years: For What?" She also contributes poetry; her "April Prayer" is an intense, direct utterance—a cry from both flesh and spirit.

Eloise Kuiper's story "The Angel Parson" is like a glimpse into some faraway quaint land, where the sublime and the earthly are innocently mingled and all the good folk have hearts and minds of children.

So one could go on turning pages. Stream of consciousness, autobiography, familiar essay—all are here.

This is a magazine published by the students of a Christian college; the influence of its Christian teachings leavens much of the material. However, many of the selections that are Christian in content would gain in power and effectiveness were they less tentative. We who profess the faith of our church have all the conditions for an unfaltering flight.

A few years ago Van Wyck Brooks in his "Opinions of Oliver Allston" wrote, "Literature, properly speaking, has three dimensions, but instead of describing these as length, breadth and thickness I should call them breadth, depth and elevation . . . The rarest dimension in our literature at present is elevation." The world is full of writers whose works abound in breadth. The Christian writer has in his possession elements that can supply depth and elevation.

**CAN SCIENCE SAVE MANKIND**


The author of this book is the Curator of the Museum of the History of Science at Oxford. His other publications give evidence of his interest in this phase of science. At present he is working on a history of scientific method. In the book under review he presents his conclusions concerning the effects of science on the individual and society. He is firmly convinced that we cannot understand the society we live in without such a knowledge. "When, and only when, society is fully aware of the powers and limitations of science, will it be able to order and control its advance."

Dr. Taylor states that two of the outstanding characteristics of the world of today are its understanding and control of the material world on the one hand and the obscurity and disorder manifest in human relations on the other. The first is obviously the result of progress in the realm of the natural sciences and he believes that much can be said for the view that the latter is also a consequence of it. The question he poses in the face of these considerations is, "Is it not, then, a
most extraordinary fact that only the smallest attention is
given to those that educate us to the nature and functioning of
this science, which has solved so many problems and is to-
day posing so many more?"

In the light of this question, Dr. Taylor attempts to defend
the thesis that the study of the effects of science on the indi-
vidual and society is a necessity for every member of our
scientific civilization. This he does in an excellent manner.
He calls attention to the fact that the scientist needs it since
the mere acquiring of the facts and laws of science does not
give him the key to the problems raised by science as a whole.
The average specialist in research is not necessarily qualified
to give leadership in the field of human relations. As one reads
this book it becomes obvious that those without a scientific
training need this type of study even more than do the scien-
tists. Nor should they doubt their power to undertake it. It
is not too difficult for such individuals to come to understand
what it is that science deals with and what is outside its scope;
how it has made our industrial civilization and become an
indispensable part of our present way of living; how it has af-
ected our view both of the nature of things and of the nature
of man himself.

In the first chapter the author attempts to answer the ques-
tion, "What is Science?". In doing this he shows that there
are two contrary attitudes to science. Some people hate it
and wish the world could go back to some less complicated
and dangerous condition. Others hail science as the savior of
the world and believe that there is no aspect of human activity
that it cannot enlighten, no goal that it cannot achieve. Both
judgments are clouded by emotion and the author has attempt-
ted to present the facts concerning science without prejudice to-
wards it or against it. His definition of science follows closely
the commonly accepted steps in the current idea of the scien-
tific method. He does not insist, as so many scientists do, that
science alone can give true knowledge since too many of our
laws depend on measured observations and no measurements
are perfectly accurate. All observations are inaccurate and no
laws sum up the observations precisely. Yet, although science
is never accurate, for the most part its accuracy or inaccuracy
is known. Although the theories of science may be far astray
its laws, i.e., general statements made from observations, are
unlikely to be far wrong. Only those activities whose methods
conform to the scientific method can be classed as science. But
that does not mean that an activity which lacks the qualities
of a science is useless for the understanding of our world.

The other topics discussed deal with such questions as "What
is not Science?", "The Scientist", "Science and Industry", "Science
and Modern Civilization", and "Science and the Modem
Outlook". Many worthwhile ideas are developed in these
sections. A few illustrations will suffice to bear this out.

Dr. Taylor believes that the prevalent tendency of using the
scientific method whenever this is possible has led to unfortu-
nate results. Chief among these is that science has been de-
structive of religion since it cannot demonstrate the asser-
tions of religion. Hence, if an age is to base its judgments
only on scientific thinking, it will become atheistic and that is
what the continual insistence on such thinking is producing
today. Furthermore, an age which relies only on scientific
thinking can have no standards of right and wrong since reli-
gion has always been the principal foundation of ethics. The
more truly a civilization can be called exclusively scientific, the
less moral, the less artistic it tends to be. If we wish to arrive at a
truly balanced way of considering our world we must discon-
tinue our inordinate exaltation of scientific thinking over all other modes of mental activity
and its application to situations to which it cannot profitably
be applied. Yet, if we are to have a highly developed civiliza-
tion, we must have science also.

The establishment of the spatial insignificance of the earth
sides one in conceiving of God as being infinite since it is easier
to think of an infinite God creating an infinite universe than a
finite one. Science cannot find any sufficient reason why a
world exists, but it can be explained if we believe in the exis-
tence of a Being who has the causeless cause of all things. To
believe that there is such a self-existent Being who created the
universe and who still maintains that universe in being,
fills the gap in the scientific account. God is the first principle
of all things, and equally lies behind the first principles of
science and the spiritual principles in living beings.

These are but samples of the many ideas presented by Dr.
Taylor. The thinking reader will be richly rewarded if he pur-
chases and studies this book. It is worth reading more than
once.

Calvin College

JOHN DE VRIES.

CONFRONTING THE CHURCH WITH HER PAST

W H AT IS church history? Is it merely a "chapter in the
continuous record of human affairs" (Emerton), or a
"phase of the history of civilization" (Schubert, H.)
or a survey of the development of a social institution (Case,
S. J.)? In contrast to these impoverished and inadequate defi-
nitions, the author of this recently reprinted monumental work,
born a Swiss but claimed by us Americans as our own since
he devoted forty-four years to the effective teaching of his
subject, first at the University of Basel, then at the Theological
Seminary at Mercerburg, Pa., and later at Union Seminary in New
York, defines it as "the rise and progress of the kingdom of God
upon earth, for the glory of God and the salvation of the
world." (Vol. I, p. 3.) According to this competent scholar,
the church is no mere social aggregate of like-minded souls
but a divine institution, founded in Paradise and charting her
struggling yet victorious course through the centuries until the
Second Coming when "she will . . . exchange her earthly
garments for the festal dress of the Lamb's Bride and rise
from the state of humiliation to the state of exaltation and
glory." (Vol. I, p. 20.) Its glorious Head is the Christ who is
the "key of all history" and the "flywheel in the world's
progress."

Hence any church history which is not Christocen-
tric, according to Schaff, is valueless in that it ignores the
core and the integrating principle of all history. "A church
history without the life of Christ glowing through its pages
could give us at best only the picture of a temple stately and
imposing from without, but empty and desolate within, a sum-
mary in praying posture . . . but withered and unclean." Church
history in order to be valid and valuable must reckon with
these three cardinal factors: God through Christ, man as a re-
sponsible moral creature, and Satan, who is a real being
employing the Antichrist as his agent at the end of time.

It is evident that we have here a scholarly work by a devout
Christian. On the flyleaf he states "Christiansum sum" and
maintains in his preface that "as no one can interpret a poet
without poetic feeling and taste, or a philosopher without spe-
culative talent, so no one can rightly comprehend and exhibit
the history of Christianity without a Christian spirit." (Vol. I,
p. 26.) That would disqualify at once such pseudo-church his-
torians as Ernest Renan, the French skeptic, and H. P. C.
Henke, (d. 1809), German rationalist, in whose work the
"church appears not as a temple of God on earth but as a
great infirmary and bedlam." Schaff completed this work
(with the exception of Vols. V and VI which his son finished
after the death of his illustrious father) in 1882, when Higher
Criticism was beginning to rear its ugly head, and sensing the
menace of the new movement, he wrote in his preface, "My
highest ambition in this skeptical age is to strengthen faith in
the immovable historical foundations of Christianity and its
victory over the world."

This is the "magnum opus" of a fine mind. Schaff projected
for himself the ideal of writing a history "from the original
sources of friend and foe, in the spirit of truth and love . . .
in a clear, fresh, vigorous style, under the guidance of the
twin parables of the mustard-seed (outward expansion of the
Dr. Polman on the Creed


English readers are familiar with systems of theology that were formerly written by way of a commentary on the Thirty-Nine Articles. In that way solid theologies have also been written by way of extensive treatment of the Heidelberg Catechism. The present work is such a theology cast into the moulds of a scholarly commentary on the Netherlands Confession, also known as the Confessio Belgica. This is the most systematic and the most comprehensive of the three doctrinal standards of the Reformed Churches of Dutch origin, both in the Netherlands and abroad (South Africa and America). Dr. Polman here offers a solid and scholarly discussion of all the great doctrines of the Reformed Faith as they present themselves in the order found in this creeds document.

Dr. Polman took his doctorate at the Free University on the thesis, Predestination according to Augustine, Thomas, and Calvin, and has recently been appointed to the chair of Dogmatics at the Kampen Theological School, the chair vacant since the departure of Schilder and temporarily occupied by Dr. K. Dijkstra of the Department of Practical Theology. On January 25 of this year Dr. Polman delivered his inaugural in this capacity on De Reformatorische Inzet der Dogmatiek (Kok, Kampen, 1950, pp. 35) in which he pleaded for an approach to the study of Dogmatics that would be biblical, experiential, and existential —such as the original Reformers had. The work under discussion is the author's way of proceeding at this time, after the appearance of the projected three volumes have appeared. It is possible that the third volume may prove to have grown into a fourth as well. In the present two volumes, 320 and 352 pages, the author has covered twenty-one of the thirty-six articles. Over 100 pages of the first volume are devoted to a general introduction. This introduction deals with the nature and value of a creed and is a very valuable discussion of a much-neglected subject. Here the meaning and importance of maintaining the confessional character of the Church is given lucid treatment.

The Dutch, who are interested in this as one of their creedal statements, have such commentaries as Zon's Room en Sterkte (by Arnoldus Rotterdam), De Geloofsbeïdenis der Gereformeerde Kerken (by W. H. Gispen), Het Geloof der Vaders (by N. Y. Van Goor), and more recently Onze Geloofsbeïdenis (by J. G. Feenstra). Dr. Henry Beets in 1929 supplied an American commentary on this creed under the title The Reformed Confession Explained. But all of these were rather popular works, intended for the general reading public. There was also room for a scholarly work, and Dr. Polman supplies that need here. From this it should not be concluded that this work is abstruse and impossible of use except for people who are advanced theologians. Far from it. The author has made it a point to avoid foreign languages and he trans-

The one section in this excellent work that the reviewer found disappointing was the evaluation of the Calvinistic system. Schaff seems to have been especially irked by the doctrines of original sin, total depravity and double predestination. Attend to these excerpts. "They (Calvinists and Augus­tinitians, JB) have alike to answer the question how such a doctrine (Original Sin, JB) is reconcilable with the justice and mercy of God... They destroy the foundations of moral responsibility by teaching the slavery of the human will; they turn the sovereignty of God into an arbitrary power and his justice into partiality" (adding in a later section that "Calvin's definition of divine justice is contrary to the general conception of human justice, which must be a reflection of divine justice.") (Vol. VIII, p. 551 footnote); "they confine the grace of God to a particular class, within that favorite and holy circle all is bright as sunshine, but outside of it all is as dark as midnight. These systems have served, and still serve, a great purpose, and satisfy the practical wants of serious Christians who are not troubled with theological and philosophical problems; but they can never satisfy the vast majority of Christendom." (Vol. VIII, pp. 542 ff.) We who bear the name Calvinist object strenuously to being dubbed naive, and outmoded, with no appreciation for the theology and philosophy of the faith. Nor will history bear out his insinuations. Schaff maintains further that Calvin's distinction between God's secret and revealed will "carries an intolerable dualism and a distortion into the divine will." (p. 561) Note also his comment on predestination. "The Calvinistic system involves a positive truth: the election to eternal life by free grace, and the negative inference: the reprobation to eternal death by arbitrary justice. The former is the strength, the latter the weakness of the system. The former is practically accepted by all true believers; the latter always has been, and always will be, repelled by the great majority of Christians." (p. 570.)

The doctrine of divine justice is contrary to the general conception of human justice, which must be a reflection of divine justice. There is in the main critical sagacity and balanced judgment. There is artistry of composition and vivid recreation of salient events. There is elimination of the inconsequential and yet a necessary fullness since the student wants and needs not "miniature pictures" (as in Hase's compend) but "full-length portraits." There is a catholic spirit which seeks to lay aside prejudice and sectarian bias and do justice to "common Christianity." And throughout it all there throbs an evangelical warmth and hearty piety which the author inherited no doubt from his esteemed teacher, August Neander, and which is so notably lacking in a cold, objective work like Gieseler's "Textbook of Christian History."
lates all quotations from such foreign sources. He writes very clearly. He even explains every strange term in parenthesis. What this work does for the Belgic Confession is to link its doctrines to the present, to the theology and heresy of our day. The great doctrines of the faith are given their historic settings in the age of the Reformation, but they are no less related vitally to the thinking of today. Just as in the case of the Devotional Studies of Dr. Berkouwer, Dr. Polman in this work gives his interpretation and defense of the historic creed in the face of the denials and perversions of Roman Catholicism and especially of Barthianism. Whether one reads Berkouwer or Polman, one feels that these Dutch theologians are right in the thick of the theological battle in which the Dialectic Theology is the center either of enthusiastic espousal or of penetrating attack. That the theologians associated with de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in distinction from those in the established or Hervormde Kerk have a clear conception of the incomparability of Barthianism and Calvinism is abundantly evident from their writings. This lends their works such value for anyone who desires to be true to the Reformed Faith and to be abreast of the theological discussion of our day.

There is another feature which renders this work of Dr. Polman valuable and unique both in its commentary on the Netherlands Confession and in its theological discussion of the great doctrines of the faith. Dr. Polman, perhaps more than anyone else in the Netherlands, has done extensive research in the writings of the theologians of the days of the Reformation and the immediately succeeding decades. He quotes the old theologians at length, translating them wherever they are not available in Dutch. There is also much old Dutch on his pages. Those who have been inclined to ascribe to the old theologians at length, translating them wherever they are not available in Dutch. Those who have been inclined to ascribe to the old theologians views which were rather the product of the re-interpretation of a later age, find in Dr. Polman a doughty opponent and corrector. He will have nothing to do with such distortion and wants to let the old theologians speak for themselves, without in any way doing violence to his own right and the right of others to give our modern interpretations and applications. This is a unique feature of Polman's work. Some think he overdoes the quoting, and for certain purposes it can be overdone. I do not find that this can be levelled as a charge against his present work. He reaches the final aim he has in mind, and that aim is not to be old-fashioned and out-of-date (the extensive discussions on Barth and other current theologies prove this beyond a shadow of doubt), but to let the theologians speak for themselves whenever he speaks of understanding the creed of their day. This is a laudable aim, and I am looking forward with a degree of anticipation when Dr. Polman will have written his chapter on the famous Article 36 of the Creed dealing with Church and State, Tolerance and Intolerance, and related subjects. Books have been written on this subject, but from material read by the author in the discussion on the revision of Article 36 at the 1949 Reformed Eucumenical Synod of Amsterdam, the present reviewer is convinced that he has some valuable and interesting light on this much-disputed subject—light which only careful study of the old sources could furnish.

Whether Dr. Polman writes on the Trinity or on the Testimony of the Holy Spirit, on the Simplicity of God or on the Canon, on the Two Natures of Christ or on Creation, on Inspiration or on Original Sin, on the Atonement or on Common Grace, it is all clearly and solidly written. This is theology at its best. Each chapter offers an extensive bibliography in which French titles abound more plentifully than is usual on the pages of our Reformed conferences in the Netherlands. And the titles in Latin and English are there as well. All for the advanced student who wishes to penetrate more deeply into the subject or to check the author in his researches. We hope there will be a full index at the close of the last volume. And may that volume (or will it be two of them?) appear soon.

Clarence Bouma.

HEAVEN AND HISTORY


This is not a usual book about heaven. Its purpose is not to sketch the bliss of those who have died in their Lord —although this element is generously present in the wake of the main discussion. Its scope is cosmic, not individualistic. By its own declaration it is "a history of heaven." Since heaven's history is involved in earthly history, the book is really a discussion of the problem of history. Some of the biblical ideas discussed, with their implications drawn, are Creation, Angels, the Covenants of Works, Grace, Peace, the Sabbath, Temple, and Sacramental Supper.

It is commonly agreed among Christian thinkers that the doctrine of creation is of primal importance for a Christian understanding of history. Schilder's uniqueness lies in his insistence that no less than earth, heaven itself—not merely as the present or future home of the redeemed—but heaven as the place of God's throne is part of the created universe. As created and subsisting in time and space, heaven is as vitally involved in the moving historical process as the world itself. Even the throne of God is not spatially fixed. It is capable, Schilder thinks, of change of location.

Although both are created, heaven is "higher" and earth is "lower" in the creational hierarchy. Heaven is God's dwelling place. Earth is Adam's dwelling place—but not forever. Adam must move through a historical process until he becomes a resident in God's very presence. The purpose of the historical process is the removal of this created distance ("diastase") between God and man.

What fuel pushes the train of history along its tracks to its high terminal? What makes history go? Schilder's answer: tension. He wants, however, a biblical not a speculative tension. He rejects a tension defined in terms of nature and grace (Neo-Platonism, Dante's Divine Comedy); first, because it does injustice to the Christian doctrine of creation; second, because it fails to provide any propulsive power for pre-Fall history. Nor can Schilder accept a tension drawn between time and eternity. He rejects the positions of Althusius and Windelband—and in the Dutch, unabridged work, the positions of Kierkegaard, Tillich, Barth and Brunner. This rejection will be under­stood by every biblical thinker.

The tension, says Schilder, is to be defined as follows: Pre-Fall Adam was aroused to holy discontent when he saw the angels, his servants, stand round God's throne, while he, the son, stands afar off. In this moment, Adam learns that his history is eschatological, and the tension emerges which incites him to strain forward toward the attainment of life in God's presence.

This is ingenious—perhaps even true. Yet the less daring thinker will feel a bit uneasy that the Genesis story does not even suggest that pre-fallen Adam ever saw an angel.

Pre-fallen Adam was, declares Schilder, subject to all the change and growth implied in his sexuality, but he desired to be, as Jesus said we shall be, like the angels in heaven, without sexuality in a state of unchanging completion.

This might seem to be after all a return to a tension defined in terms of time and eternity. Yet it is not. In Kierkegaard and his dialectical children, eternity is defined as an absolute norm, always remaining outside of history, yet always hovering over history as its norm and judgment. Hence the concern of the dialecticians with "super-history." This conception of eternity determines their definition of "eschatology." Eschatology is not a matter of "last things," temporally understood. The "last things" are the eternal, ultimate that hover over history according to which passing history must be evaluated. This leads to despair and nihilism. If the eternal is everything because eternal, and the temporal nothing because temporal, then everything historical is depreciated. History becomes a mere kicking in the dust, and Christian theology, like modern philos-
ophy, becomes a desperate, existential quest for value. Denial of a historical Fall involves the position that time and eternity have always stood in tension. Such denial is a predetermination that they shall remain apart in Christ, that the Word can only hover outside of history as judgment producing crisis. Hence, the truly “last things” (the end of world) becomes in such thinkers (R. Niebuhr) very problematic.

In his book, *Evolution and the Christian*, Schilder rejects this speculative tension in which eternity is only abstractly related to time. Time and eternity are concretely related. Heaven is not outside of history, neither as regards the present nor the future. Heaven is within history, for heaven itself is created and thus within the historical continuum. Schilder achieves a concrete time and a concrete eternity; both are within the scope of the created.

At this point the question arises whether Schilder is not using the term “heaven” ambiguously. On the one hand, heaven is a creational reality, i.e., that which is, and on the other, “heaven is a concrete state of perfection of all creation,” i.e., that which must come to be. Does not this betray a basic confusion between the “created” and the “historical”?

But back to Schilder’s thought. Though both are created, heaven and earth are not identical. Between them is the created “diastase.” The “diastase” means separation but not divorce. They are conjoined in terms of the “higher” and “lower” of the creational hierarchy. Thus the “higher” (eternity) holds itself before Adam not as judgment deprecating the temporal, but as a task. Hence even the purely passing possesses meaning. Thus, in a Christian philosophy of history, eternity represents a task (life in God’s presence) and not a mere elusive embodiment of value for which we temporal creatures frantically grasp.

On the other hand, this does not mean, that history will automatically produce heaven on earth. The goal of history is reached by two processes: “Evolution” and “Jolt.” Evolution is the development of powers inherent in the world. By itself, this process cannot attain the goal. The presence of the Word in sin-free Paradise indicates that the finite alone is insufficient. The “jolt,” the inbreach of divine power, is needed. The evolutionary process plays its genuine part, but only in conjunction with the “jolt” will man reach the presence of God’s throne. The goal will only be achieved catastrophically; not by a process, but in the “twinkling of an eye.”

Until that goal is reached, the tension is between the “Old” and the “New.” Christ has joined time and eternity, heaven and earth, as demonstrated by the Ascension. A Man is now dwelling in God’s presence. The creational “diastase” and the disjunction wrought by sin, have through Christ, in principle, been done away. The “Old” is dying, because in principle it is dead; the “New” in principle is born, though yet coming to be. “The former things are passed away. Behold I make all things new.” This is the only tension that remains in the world for the Christian. He still cries (as the saints in heaven), “How long until it be perfectly accomplished?”

What about the “Old?” Nothing old shall be carried into the new. “There can be nothing transported from the evening of this world into the morning of eternity.” The “Old” is not imposed on the “New,” but the “New” on the “Old,” and in such fashion that the “Old” will not be recognizable. Hence we shall not recognize our loved ones in heaven.

Although his discussion of the “Old” and the “New” is sometimes vague and raises many questions, I believe Schilder here points to a highly significant element in a Christian philosophy of history.

This book is eminently worth reading. It bristles with scintillating ideas and sharp biblical insights. Although many of the ideas need refinement, the book is a substantial contribution to a Christian understanding of history. It will warm the heart and stimulate the thinking of every Christian reader.

Lack of interest in this subject is, declares Schilder, an affront to God, man, and creation. If this be true, Marian M. Schoolland deserves a tribute of thanks for making this material available and very readable to English readers—material that will drive the Dutch reader back to the original for more.

JAMES DAANE.

**The Polity of the Churches**


There is not much emphasis upon the constitutional, or church-governmental aspect of church life in our day. Hence there is much ignorance even among church members on the subject. Church Polity was a subject of great importance in the days of the Reformation and especially Calvinists (Presbyterians and Reformed) gave it a place of prominence on the theological curriculum. In the days both of spiritual and of church reform according to the Reformed Faith in the Dutch Churches in the eighties of the previous century the matter of Church Polity and Church Government again occupied an important place in theological study and actual church management. The name of Dr. F. L. Rutgers (1836-1917) is linked inseparably with the promotion and development of this study in the Netherlands Reformed Churches and his printed advices are still current among those who read the Dutch whether here or abroad. For “decency and good order” (I Cor. 14:40) in the churches this study and its practical application is of the greatest importance. The two volumes of the Rev. Mr. Schaeffer (which should have been reviewed sooner) hence deserve the attention and interest of all office-bearers in the Church. What is the second volume constitutes a revised edition of a manual based upon the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church (i.e., its Constitution) together with the synodical decisions interpreting that Constitution and certain comments of the author upon them by way of elucidation. Every office-bearer of the Christian Reformed Church ought to possess this volume and pore over its pages from time to time, or, at least have it on his shelf for reference when specific issues arise. The author has greatly enhanced the value of this volume by giving it a companion (Vol. I of the set), in which the general principles of Church Government are discussed, especially those bearing upon bodies that have the Presbyterian order. The two volumes together would be a very suitable gift for anyone in the Christian Reformed Church who is called to serve as an elder, and for ministers these volumes are well-nigh indispensable. Whether in the second volume there should not have been a clearer and sharper distinction drawn between synodical decisions and the comment and explanation of the author, is a question for the experts. But of the value of these two little volumes for every office-bearer in the Church there can be no doubt.

CLARENCE BOUMA.

**Church Polity: Where Is the Final Authority?**


This book can be a real aid to ministers and consistory-members who are not in a position to make use of that treasure-house of sanctified common sense which is found in the “Kybernietiek” of Prof. W. Heyns. Even as was the case with Prof. Heyns’ “Kybernietiek,” so too the explanation of our Church Order given by Van Dellen and Monsma contains a great many practical hints which can guide the inexperienced in solving the oftentimes knotty problems of how to apply our Church Order to the multifarious circumstances of congregational life.

It is well, however, for those who use this volume to bear in mind that its title is somewhat misleading. It should have been called rather than the church order commentary. Other
men, such as Prof. W. Heyns and Rev. J. L. Schaver, have also written extensive explanations of our Church Order. And now it can hardly be said that the book published by Revs. Van Dellen and Monsma is more authoritative than the comments on our Church Order written by other men. The volume before us presents the opinions of its authors on a great many matters brought to the front by our Church Order, but these opinions so little bear the stamp of synodical approval and they are so little the official voice of the Christian Reformed Church that in various instances there is a sharp difference between what the Christian Reformed Church has said in its synodical deliverances and the views propagated by Revs. Van Dellen and Monsma.

For a proper evaluation of this volume we must remember that the authors, as they themselves readily admit, have leaned heavily upon the teachings of Prof. F. L. Rutgers touching church polity. Now it was quite natural for Prof. Rutgers, in view of the historical circumstances in which he lived, to lay great stress on the autonomy of the local church. But careful historical research on the part of Prof. W. Heyns and Prof. H. H. Kyuter, who was the successor of Prof. Rutgers in the Church Polity chair of the Free University, has shown that Prof. Rutgers erred when he stressed the autonomy of the local church to such a degree that he denied to a classis or synod the right to depose a consistory. So it is to be explained that our own Christian Reformed Synod in 1926 confirmed the right of a classis to depose a consistory and that the Synod of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands in that same year deposited from office a large majority of the consistory of Amsterdam-Zuid, namely all those consistory members who sided with Dr. Geelkerken. Yet Van Dellen and Monsma as late as 1949 maintain the view of Prof. Rutgers as though no one has ever successfully challenged it.

To our mind it is precisely an overemphasis of the rights and privileges of the local church and a corresponding failure to give due recognition to the rights and privileges of groups of federated churches met in classis and synod which constitutes the principal weakness of this church order commentary—a weakness which has also caused the authors to come into conflict with the Christian Reformed Synod of 1930, which maintained that a classis or synod has the right to call a missionary as well as a consistory.

We wish to call attention to one other point wherein the commentary of Revs. Van Dellen and Monsma comes into conflict with the position of the Christian Reformed Church. Our Synod of 1930 declared that children who were not born of believing parents, but who were adopted by believers, may belong to God's covenant. But this rejection of the covenant concept of salvation is far from the viewpoint of the present-day Reformed Church and the Christian Reformed Church. Our Synod of 1936 declared that children who are not born of believers, but who are adopted by believers, may be baptized, and this position was confirmed by the Synod of 1938. Van Dellen and Monsma venture the supposition that one's position on this question is largely determined by one's covenant view. We believe that this supposition rests on good grounds but we make haste to add that it will hardly do to claim that only those are in the covenant who belong to God's elect. In his scholarly studies on the covenant Prof. W. Heyns has shown that the circle of covenant-ship is far wider than the circle of the elect. And this position is in full harmony with Calvin's distinction between covenant grace and saving grace.

Our purusal of the volume before us has shown us once again that it is not easy to attain the ideal of Reformed Church Polity and always to maintain the golden mean between collegialism which considers the local church a rather insignificant subdivision of the denomination, the large superchurch, and independentism which fails to do justice to the unity of the body of Christ. So we consider it quite necessary for our ministers, elders and deacons to study alongside the church order commentary of Revs. Van Dellen and Monsma the writings of other men who have specialized in Reformed Church Polity. It would surely help to make the present generation of church-officers well-balanced if some one would put on the market an English translation of Heyns' "Kynernetiek.

HERMAN KUIPER
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PAYTON LECTURES AT PASADENA
BY ROBINSON


R. ROBINSON, professor of Historical Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary at Decatur, Georgia, was chosen to initiate the Payton Lectures delivered at the Fuller Theological Seminary of Pasadena, California, two years after the founding of this seminary. He has not disappointed those who expected him to furnish confirmation of the historic Christian faith and he has carried forward the good work of Carl F. H. Henry's The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism, which appeared the same year that Fuller Theological Seminary was founded, in 1947.

The theme of the book is set forth as follows: "For the Marxist communist, Christ is a drug, an opiate to lull the workers to sleep with dreams of a good time coming, while others profit from his labors. For the Nazi, He is a poison to sap the strength of Nordic manhood. For the culture religion of the modern man He is a cake, one which may or may not ordinate as a dessert after an otherwise adequate meal served by the Enlightenment. For the Christian believer, Jesus Christ is the bread, the staff of life; faith in Him is a necessity. Without Him we sinners are lost, undone, without hope, and without God."

The meaning of life is found in the Christ as Immanuel because Christianity is not a mere collection of general truths. Its essence consists in the historic fact and abiding value of the Incarnation which is "the strongest defense against any kind of idealism." The person and work of the Christ, the continuing presence of Christ through the Spirit, and the certainty of his return provides peace for the heart.

The distinctive merit of Dr. Robinson's contribution is that he seeks to go beyond abandoning the social question to the Liberal, the Communist, or the Catholic (cf. Dr. Ockenga's Foreword). Robinson would have Fundamentalism re-evaluate the historic Christian faith since such a reconsideration will lead to an inner critique which in the nature of the case must precede the highly necessary task of dealing with the social problem. And it might very well turn out that such a critique will prove to be the most effective way of dealing with social problems after all.

From that point of view we deeply appreciate the renewed and altogether timely stress on Justification by Faith as the key to pardon for the conscience because we are living in a world of people deeply troubled by uneasy consciences. Pertinent and effective is the recorded quotation from John Wesley: "If the sin of Adam is not imputed to us, neither is the righteousness of Christ." Heartening is the paragraph: "...the Christian minister commands men everywhere to repent and believe the Gospel. He teaches that the things of the Spirit are foolishness to the natural man, that except a man be born of the Spirit he cannot see the Kingdom of God; and yet at the same time, he beseeches men to be reconciled to God and to enter the Kingdom of His dear Son. Jonathan Edwards tried to span the gap between man's inability and God's command by a distinction between natural ability and moral ability. We are convinced, however, that the gap is bridged by the Almighty God, who gives life to the dead and calls the things that are not into being." Such an approach will do much to deliver Fundamentalism from the foolish ardor and bad theology and even worse psychology of some of its devoted friends such as Hyman Appelman, who wrote in his Ye Must Be Born Again, p. 110:

"God is ready, God is willing, God is eager, God is anxious, God is pleading for the privilege of wash-
ing away the sins of every soul in the precious blood of His Son and heir. But His hands are tied, His power is limited, His grace is constrained by you. If you want to be saved, God is willing to save you. If you don't want to be saved, there isn't anything that even God can do to rescue you from that pit of eternal burning.'

The way out of such confusion is indicated in the subsequent chapters which deal with the subjects of Christology and Ecclesiology in as complete a fashion as is permitted by the brevity imposed upon the writer who delivered these lectures at Pasadena.

The chapter on Christology is doubtless the most challenging, difficult, and important. While I find no difficulty in feeling myself at one with the basic position of the author whose forthright confession of the genuine deity and divine personality of the Christ is written large on every page, yet the impression will not down that in the interest of ecumenicity the author has here and there toned down his critical evaluation of certain deliverances. Cases in point are the following quotations of others: "For unless I understand Jesus Christ on His own terms I am lost eternally." I heartily agree, only I should like to be sure of the meaning of the words, "on his own terms." Again, "God became man"; this, too, is acceptable if placed in the proper framework, but the context (p. 121) is not too reassuring. Finally the statement of Irenaeus, "He was made what we are, that He might make us what He is Himself" is certainly open to serious objections and the objections should have been clearly registered. Aside from these minor but not unimportant strictures, the book is highly recommended.

JOHN WEIDENAAAR.

Calvin College.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES


DR. TENNEY, Director of Graduate Study at Wheaton College, presents this book with the hope that it will stimulate a personally creative study of the Word. As an orthodox evangelical he writes with warm love for the inspired Word, and as a scholar draws critical conclusions with commendable reserve. Galatians is the "Chart of Christian Liberty," "the charter of freedom from externalism in worship and from frustration in personal spiritual life" (p. 19).

The reader must remember that the author does not intend his book to be a critical and exegetical study of Galatians comparable to those commentaries of Lightfoot or De Witt Burton. As stated by the author in the Preface, this book constitutes "an attempt to present nine different approaches to the meaning of the Biblical text, and to illustrate each so that the reader can imitate the procedure and thus have the joy of making original discoveries in the divine revelation." He executes his attempt with simple non-technical language employing a minimum of Greek, and a rejection of comment producing understandable and delightful reading. Various outlines, maps and charts aid the reader in establishing contact with the Pauline message.

The author explicates the book by using nine distinct but closely related methods. The methods illustrated are: the Synthetic, Critical, Biographical, Historical, Theological, Rhetorical, Topical, Analytical, and Devotional. Each method seeks to illumine some facet of the truth contained in the book. At times the reader wonders whether the mechanics of methodology obscures or illuminates the text. Various passages indicate that more than one method must be employed to understand the text, and when a given section is treated under two methods, the meaning isn't made the clearer. This becomes apparent when the Allegory of Chapter 4 is treated in the sections illustrating the Theological and Rhetorical methods. Of necessity some passages are treated too briefly, and the reader continues to wonder whether this was due to the mechanics of the study, or whether the author concluded that the matter warranted no fuller explication.

In the section illustrating the Critical method, the author evidences thorough acquaintance with his material and handles it as an expert. There is valuable material on the thorny problems of Galatian's date and destination, and the average non-skilled reader can easily follow the arguments on all the angles in the problem. The author rejects the subjectivity of much modern critical study, and throughout remains loyal to the inspired Word. Perhaps the author could have been more explicit in stating his own position on some of the critical questions.

Theologically the argumentation of Paul is summarily stated, and at times the author leaves himself open for further questions. The vexing problem of Law and Gospel and their interrelation might have received more definitive statement. Paul's conception of the usage of the law cannot be as simply stated as appears on page 126. "It (the Law) was intended to act as a regulative and restraining influence upon human life between the promise of God and the fulfillment of that promise." Nor does one find more satisfaction with his treatment of the Law in its relation to the new life as recorded on pages 160, 161. However, one records this observation with reticence realizing that matters necessarily left unsaid can lead to misunderstanding.

The description of the Devotional method is worthy of the effort to memorize. "Devotional study is not so much a technique as a spirit. It is the spirit of eagerness which seeks the mind of God; it is the spirit of humility which listens readily to the voice of God; it is the spirit of adventure which pursues earnestly the will of God; it is the spirit of adoration which rests in the presence of God." pp. 189, 190. This is the spirit of the book. The reader remains richly rewarded with a more than casual reading of the book. This study is indeed a stimulating adventure into the mysteries of faith in Galatians. All Bible lovers will thank Dr. Tenney for this contribution, and with him will pray that it will lead many to a broader understanding of the message of Divine Grace in God's Word.

ALEXANDER C. DE JONG.

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PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED GROUPS

THE SCOTTISH COVENANTERS: THEIR ORIGIN, HISTORY, AND DISTINCTIVE DOCTRINES, by Johannes G. Vos. Published by the Author. 1949. 287 pages.

THERE is not too much recent literature on the Scottish Covenanters, at least not written from the point of view of those who champion that historic position most ardently today. The Reformed Presbyterians may be said to be the historic continuation in spirit and in principle of the Covenant position. The author of this book is a minister in the Reformed Presbyterian Church. It is the history of more than three centuries of the strictest Scotch Presbyterian tradition. The book consists of three parts: the origin, the history, and the distinctive doctrines of the Covenanters. Each chapter is well-documented. Perhaps the most distinctive tenet of the Covenanters and their modern Reformed Presbyterian spiritual offspring is found in a sentence on page 225, "Covenanters today hold that the civil constitution of Britain is defective, and that Christians, while they ought to obey the government in all things not contrary to God's commandments, yet ought not to incorporate with the government, become a part of the governing body; swear allegiance to the constitution or express approval of the constitution so long as the constitution does not recognize Christ's kingship over the nation."


Here is a detailed history of the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia. It was written for its centenary celebrated in 1946, and the work was undertaken by the author at the request
of the Assembly. This is the church in which the Rev. Mr. Allen, Australian correspondent for *The Calvin Forum*, is a minister. Some of his articles on the present situation in Australia may be found in earlier volumes of our magazine. In 26 chapters the history of Presbyterianism with special reference to the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia is here traced from the opening of the nineteenth century to the present. There are numerous pictures of ministers and of church buildings. This body holds to historic Calvinism as expressed in the Westminster Standards; is opposed to all higher criticism and Modernism; and strongly maintains Presbyterianism as over against every form of prelacy in church government. Like most of the conservative and smaller bodies among the Scotch Presbyterians and their offspring in America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, they are opposed to the use of instrumental music in public worship. The emphasis upon such instrumental music in the Old Testament is readily disposed of by holding that such use was abolished with the abolition of the Old Testament forms and ceremonies! It is interesting that the Christian Reformed Church has recently entered into fraternal relations with this Free Church of Australia. Also that the flow of Dutch "Gereformeerde" immigrants of recent date is also going to Australia and into this church. We are told on p. 384 that "the only Church whose principles approximate to those of the Free Presbyterian Church is that of the Reformed Presbyterian Church."


Here is another small Presbyterian Church, a very small one, standing in the same general strict Presbyterian tradition, though the adjective Presbyterian is no longer in its name. It came into existence as a secession from the Irish Presbyterian Church under the leadership of the Rev. Mr. James Hunter (1863-1942) in 1927 and is a protest against the Modernism infiltrating in the parent communion. This group has close affiliation in spirit with the Free Church of Scotland, whose Edinburgh minister, the Rev. G. N. M. Collins (a delegate to the recent Amsterdam Reformed Ecumenical Synod), writes the preface. Mr. Fred S. Leahy of this church is our *Calvin Forum* correspondent for Ireland. The author, the Rev. Mr. Grier, was a delegate to the Amsterdam Ecumenical Reformed Synod.


As most, if not all, readers of *The Calvin Forum* know, the denomination which calls itself by this name came into existence in 1925 when the minister of the largest congregation of the Christian Reformed Church located at Grand Rapids, Michigan, refused to abide by the synodical pronouncement that his denial of the doctrine of Common Grace was not in harmony with the Reformed Faith. He took the position that belief in this doctrine was Arminian and this is maintained by that body to this day. The Rev. Mr. Hoeksema, the father of the movement, its keenest mind, and today still its real leader, is the author of this history and defense of the standpoint of his Church. Photographs of its ministers, church buildings, and some of its consistorial groups adorn the volume. The denomination is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary this year, but the author of this book in a recent editorial in his monthly, *The Standard Bearer* (March 15, 1950), speaks in the most pessimistic terms about the present condition and the future prospects of his denomination. There are many personal insinuations in this book, but it makes the doctrinal and church-governmental position of the group, as the Rev. Mr. Hoeksema sees it, abundantly clear. This is not the place to start a polemic against the Protestant Reformed group. Those who are interested in the doctrinal issue and its implications may be directed to a recent statement of the Protestant Reformed Synod named "Brief Declaration of Principles of the Protestant Reformed Churches", which is published in *The Standard Bearer* of July 1, 1950. It covers some eleven columns and is submitted for approval to the churches by the 1950 Synod. For a recent refutation of the views of the Rev. Mr. Hoeksema the reader may be referred to the latest volume in the series of Doctrinal Studies of Professor G. C. Berkouwer of the Free University of Amsterdam. (G. C. Berkouwer, *De Voorzienigheid Gods;* Kok, Kampen, 1950; pp. 79-99). Our readers will be interested to know that according to 1949 statistics there are 24 Protestant Reformed congregations, 23 ministers, about 1300 families, and approximately 5,500 souls. The proportion of "mother" church and "daughter" churches may be gaged from the fact that two-fifths of the total membership of the denomination is found in the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, and that this church contributes approximately one-half of all denominational funds.

Clarence Bouma.