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Are Catholics Always Wrong?
An Editorial

When is the Teaching of Science Christian?

The Reformation Independent of the Renaissance

Modernists Claim Luther

Correspondence

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Contemporary Catholic Action

The customary Protestant indictment against the Catholic Church seems to be somewhat like this: Wherever Rome predominates, Protestants are treated as non-Communists are treated wherever Communism predominates, namely, as second-class citizens. In Latin countries, whether in the Old World or the New, the Catholic Church employs totalitarian methods, and the only factor preventing outright persecution of non-Catholics is political fear of public opinion in the West. But wherever feasible, the hierarchy seeks an alliance with civil government for the purpose of outlawing Protestantism. Inasmuch as the hierarchy identifies its opinions with the will of God, it cannot but be a relentless foe of evangelical Christianity. Accordingly, in his encyclicals the Pope nowadays tends to address Protestants not only as though they were accountable to the Holy See but also as though they could not effectively fight Communism without compromising their faith by some unholy alliance with Rome. Furthermore, it is evident that Protestants unequivocally condemn the persecution of Catholics by Communists. Have Papal encyclicals ever said a word in disapproval of the persecution of Protestants by either Communists or Catholics? May it not be that the Papacy is playing its customary political game, using the Communist threat as a means to the end of retaining and, possibly, increasing the prestige and power of the Vatican in the West? Anyway, wherever Catholicism has a controlling influence, it invariably exhibits intolerance of dissent, going to the extreme of using political authority and, occasionally, mob violence in order to check the advance of Protestantism. On the other hand, whenever Catholicism is a minor religious phenomenon, the local hierarchy tends to be rather vociferous about such things as tolerance and religious liberty. Catholics are broad-minded and polite whenever they happen to be in the minority; but if one is a Protestant one had better not settle down in, say, South Boston.

Catholicism In Its Handling of Government

The above statement represents at best an oversimplification of the facts. The Catholic Church does, of course, regard itself as the only true Church, embodying the apostolic succession and the universal Christian experience of almost two thousand years, both of which are assumed to justify the intellectual and moral authority of the hierarchy. And, as it is the task of government to secure men’s temporal welfare, so it is the task of the Church to secure their eternal welfare. Furthermore, inasmuch as the realm of the spiritual is higher than that of the natural, the Church is Divinely called upon to guide the state in the securing of men’s highest temporal welfare. A Catholic citizen is expected, therefore, to do his appropriate civic duties in order to prevent all forms of injustice, particularly those which tend to disturb international peace.

Here, incidentally, one might ask why the Papacy has not recently used the full force of its power to suppress acts of nationalistic aggression? To this the answer would presumably be that the Holy See, dispossessed of the authority it once had, often finds it difficult to decide just who is wrong. Furthermore, aggressions on the part of predominantly Catholic countries such as, for example, the Italian aggression in Ethiopia, represent an opportunity for advancing the true faith (an argument not unlike Protestant rationalizations in bygone days of the slave trade, to the effect that negroes were really the recipients of favor, being removed from heathendom to the blessings of a Christian environment).

With the exception of Communist regimes, the hierarchy does not officially favor or disfavor any particular form of government, insisting only that nations predominantly Protestant permit liberty of worship, protect the ballot, and guarantee freedom of speech and assembly. In democratic countries, therefore, the policy of the Vatican is to urge Catholics to do their duties as citizens and to use political pressure to promote ends approved by the Church. In totalitarian countries Catholic policy is to obey the government provided fundamental religious rights are not suppressed.

Today in countries such as Hungary and Poland the hierarchy is making a strategic retreat in order to find a modus vivendi which does not compromise dogma. Within these countries the leading Catholic bishops plus thousands of priests have sworn allegiance to red regimes in return for official acknowledgment of the Pope’s jurisdiction in matters such as the teaching of Catholic dogma, freedom of the Catholic press, and freedom of religious procession. Incidentally, the Lutheran churches in East Prussia seem to have done about the same thing. According to the Catholic version this is by no means a compromise with Communism but simply a retreat for the purpose of retaining the right to propagate the
true faith. The clergy in these countries had to choose between seeing their offices usurped by disguised Communists or having them filled with authorized clerical functionaries. It is all like a toothache: naturally, one doesn’t like it, but for the larger good one must for the time being put up with it.

**Protestant Suspicions**

Although there appears to be no evidence that Protestant churches in these countries have followed a policy essentially different, nevertheless many Protestants in this country, suspicious of Romanist duplicity, to begin with, and not at all convinced that a Catholic conscience could possibly be controlled by God, tend to wonder just what will prevent the Vatican from reaching an accord with this or that red regime in return for a privileged position which will enable Catholicism not only to propagate the faith but also to undermine the security of evangelical Protestantism. Of course, suspicions of this kind are hard to allay. Only recently, for example, Cardinal Spellman was severely taken to task in some sections of the Protestant press for offering sanctuary to the discharged West Point cadets. The Cardinal’s action was an instance of the scant respect which the hierarchy has for such a thing as a national institution. But what is to prevent a Catholic from arguing that this is simply an instance of Christian charity? Offering the sinner a second chance upon due repentance would seem to be nothing short of Christian duty. Why not regard the expulsion as a call for repentance to the cadets and a missionary challenge to the Church?  

Of course, to many a Protestant this will appear as only so much sculduggery and rationalization. The Cardinal is simply calling the attention of the public to the graciousness and charity of the hierarchy—it being assumed that the Cardinal is primarily an ecclesiastical politician, from whom not to expect an honest answer.

**Catholic Theory**

Just as orthodox Protestants feel duty bound to combat modernism, so the Church of Rome feels called upon to combat heresy and false churches, the difference being that the latter has occasionally shown few scruples against using secular methods. Inasmuch as the realm of the spiritual is above that of the secular and, therefore, above the state, the latter may legitimately be used to serve the interests of truth, i.e., the interests of the Church. The early Reformers, by the way, seem to have felt somewhat the same way, and in this respect the only point of difference between them and the hierarchy was a question of the right definition of the true Church. Anyway, a Catholic can logically take the position that in using the state, the Church is in reality extending to it the privilege of protecting truth from the attacks of error. In other words, it is a good whenever Catholicism does all it can to suppress Protestantism, i.e., error, just as it is a good that the tolerance and liberalism of Protestantism should be used by God in His inscrutable wisdom to protect the liberty of the true Church to the greater glory of God.

**Catholics in Practice**

Naturally, to a Protestant this seems a brutally uncompromising and self-righteous position. On the other hand, it seems obvious that the majority of cultured Catholics, however devout, never fanatically put into practice the conclusions to which their premises doubtless lead. Thus a strict constructionist interpretation of Catholic doctrine would pronounce all Protestant marriages, however fine and respectable, as cases of living in sin. But how many sensible Catholics in practice regard this as anything more than highly academic—at least from the point of view of morals? In this connection it may be interesting to observe that the Roman Catholic Study Center has for one of its purposes the investigation of the Vestigia Ecclesiae (elements of the true Church apparently present in other confessions). To date one of its conclusions is, or seems to be, that in some non-Catholic churches there do exist certain elements of the powers entrusted by Christ to the Church, elements such as the recognition of the authority of the Holy Scriptures and the insistence upon Baptism and the Holy Eucharist (Holy Communion) as necessary means of grace. It would seem, therefore, that although the Church of Rome regards itself as the one true Church, it is willing, nevertheless, to recognize vestiges of the true religion in other communions, vestiges apparently of sufficient import to form the basis of co-operative action in social, political, scientific and other non-ecclesiastical spheres.

Only recently Commonweal printed a discourse by the famed Catholic theologian, Father Adam, in which he criticizes both Catholics and Protestants for the present cleavage within Christendom. He calls attention to a declaration written by Pope Adrian VI two years after the Diet of Worms in which the Pope admits that the chastisement of the Reformation has come upon the Church because of the sins of all, and especially of “the priests and prelates”. Preoccupied with the Protestant sin of individualism, the average prelate fanatically insisted upon the principle of ecclesiastical authority, there-
by inviting the danger of reducing the Christian religion to a matter of blind obedience to the mandates of an institution. Theologian Adam pleads for Christian unity on the basis of the following principles: Men everywhere, both Catholic and Protestant, should begin to take the Christian religion seriously; that is to say, Catholics should cease to regard Luther as merely an apostate; they should recognize in him "the many lights of his character; his unfathomable reverence for the mystery of God; his tremendous consciousness of his own sins; the holy defiance with which he faced abuse and simony; the heroism with which he risked his life for Christ's cause; and the childlike quality of his own manner of life and his personal piety". As a good Catholic, Father Adam adds that Protestants should cease to regard a priest as only a fanatical servant of an institution. Furthermore, Protestants should learn to appreciate the fact that papal power and infallibility in matters of faith and morals did in fact rescue Divine revelation from human error, effectively standing off the various modernisms which are plaguing Christendom today. Finally, he admonishes both Catholics and Protestants to assume an attitude of love and trust in their relations to one another.

Again, only last year the Annual Conference of Roman Catholic Bishops in the United States emphasized a point or two regarding education with which Calvinists could hardly disagree. The Conference, after pointing out that the religious training of the child enables him to develop "a sense of God, a sense of direction, a sense of responsibility, and a sense of mission in life", stressed the need of religious training in the home and strongly emphasized the principle that not the state but the parents "have the primary right to educate" and that, therefore, it is of major importance that education in the home be a piece with education in the school.

Finally, in a recent encyclical condemning Communism the Pope stated that the Church must conquer, "not with arms but with truth; that every perfect gift comes from the Father of Lights ("with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning"), and that men should pray everywhere for peace and concord. Nowadays we read much in Protestant papers about persecutions in Italy, Spain, Latin America and other predominantly Catholic areas. On the other hand, we also read—and this has a strange way of being overlooked—that Latin America is witnessing a phenomenal growth in the number of Sunday Schools; that the spirit of religious liberty is increasingly evident; that more than a thousand Protestant radio programs are on the air every month; and that recently in Spain the Youth for Christ movement conducted its "Million Souls Crusade", one hundred sixty teams holding services in twenty cities, on account of which one of the provincial governors wrote a letter of commendation. Is the conclusion warranted that as the Protestant Reformation and the Counter Reformation removed evident simony, hypocrisy, and abuse from the Church of Rome, so the chastisement of Communism may in a measure increase both its charity and its sense of extra-ecclesiastical co-operation with evangelical Protestants?

Summary

To summarize: It appears that orthodox Protestants in America could greatly improve their perspective and, accordingly, their intellectual respectability by at least trying to believe that there are such people as Catholic men and women of good will, people who are intelligent and devout, people who do not permit the purely theoretical conclusions of some of their first principles to interfere with the spirit of common sense, humaneness, and charity. God is the ultimate object of a Catholic's faith, even though the Church may be the immediate object; and there are more devout Catholics whom the Church does not noticeably prevent either from communion with God or from charity toward a non-Catholic neighbor than most Protestants realize. It is from them that orthodox Protestants may reasonably hope for co-operation in matters pertaining to our most pressing moral, social, and political problems.

C. D. B.

APPENDICES

Apologia

To readers suspicious of the editorial optimism stated above, the answer is this. When for more than one-half of your adult life you have been engaged in a back-to-the-wall rear guard action against humanists, agnostics, and atheists on a university campus during the week, and against modernists in church on Sundays; and when upon looking back you find that your most consistent supporters were about a half dozen priests and a hundred or so Catholic and Fundamentalist students—then you feel entitled to a certain amount of understanding if you declare that you haven't the stomach for a hammer-and-tongs operation against Catholics and Fundamentalists. Incidentally, although objective and dispassionate and critical articles on Catholicism and Fundamentalism—articles such as the one by Dr. Meeter in the present issue—are invited, purely partisan attacks will be categorically rejected. The times are such that we Calvinists should learn to be thankful for small favors. We need friends.

Catholic Use of Secular Methods

The optimistic remarks found in the main body of the editorial are directed at Catholic practice at its best in the United States, and not at Catholicism as
The Growth of Catholic Influence in America

Protestant complaints about the growing influence of Catholicism in Washington, coupled with a citation of the growing number of Catholic schools, missions, colleges, journals, weeklies, and daily papers, constitute a pitiful exhibition of low religious morale. The Catholic answer to all this is an easy one. Just who, so they might say, is trying to prevent Protestants in America from doing the same thing? Can it be that American Protestant groups lack the necessary intelligent understanding of, and the necessary charity toward, even their own kind to get together for the purpose of doing something co-operatively along these lines themselves? What is there to prevent them from organizing extra-ecclesiastically for the purpose of influencing a pagan state in the direction of civic and political righteousness? We Catholics are only trying to live up to our commitments. You may not like our commitments but, then, that is another matter. We don’t like yours.

The New Dogma for the Assumption of Mary

In some sections of the Protestant press there has been considerable excitement about the recently promulgated Catholic dogma of the assumption of Mary. All that this excitement really does is betray an ignorance of the history of Catholicism which is inexcusable in Protestants who pretend to be educated. In its official sanction of this dogma, Catholicism is merely being true to its original declarations, one of which is its recognition of a continued progress guided both by the Scriptures and by the universal consent of the Christian experience of nearly two thousand years. All problems and issues are subject to clarification on the basis of the religious experience of the entire Church, including that of the devout laity.

It is to be hoped that Calvinists in America will be sensible enough not to engage in futile partisan recriminations and amateurish theological arguments about this dogma. Disputes of that kind succeed only in alienating the respect and good will of honest, congenial, and public-spirited neighbors. That there is not a shred of evidence in support of this dogma is hardly a good reason why we Calvinists should look with disdain upon our Catholic neighbors in a spirit of intellectual superiority. It should prove a valuable lesson in intellectual modesty and a stimulus to study up on what the higher critics do with the evidence for the translation of Enoch and Elijah. Incidentally, should anyone be interested in the purely theological significance of the promulgation of the recent dogma, there is an interesting and scholarly discussion by Dr. G. C. Berkouwer of the Free University in the July, 1951, number of the Reformed Journal.

C. D. B.

Thanksgiving a Reasonable Service

AMERICA is committed to the principle of separation between Church and State. Whether such an arrangement is ideal or not has frequently been seriously debated. In practice, however, it always falls far short of the absolute independence from one another. However, it is perhaps the best system of relationships in a democracy where freedom of worship is vouchsafed to each citizen. In such a country, the chief executive can and does each year call upon the people to go to their respective places of worship to thank Kind Providence for the favors and privileges granted in the year gone by. The response to such a presidential proclamation is not very encouraging and raises the question whether the present custom should be continued. Judging from the fact that the proclaimed thanksgiving day usually turns out to be a day of sport, a day of hunting, and a day of gluttony and alcoholic consumption, the nation manifests itself to be a conglomeration of ingrates or of people who feel that they have received nothing for which they should thank the Divine Being. One may seriously question whether the present system
in which the chief executive may even have no convictions of his own as to the part played by the Deity in the prosperity of the country is theologically defensible. If thanksgiving is a religious exercise, it could much more appropriately be called by the proper ecclesiastical authorities. It then could be done with a degree of sincerity which the solemnity of the occasion invariably calls for. Then, too, it may be pedagogically indefensible to set one day a year aside as a day of thanksgiving as if that will in large measure take care of our obligation to praise God. Even that, however, is begrudged Him. It would be a highly desirable thing if the Christians of America could be impressed with the consciousness that grateful expression to God is a constant privilege and duty coming to united nation-wide expression on a day set aside for that purpose. That will call for a process of education and sanctification to which our citizenry must first be subject. We have not yet learned as a nation that thanksgiving is a reasonable service. Consequently there is at best only a hasty attempt to enumerate and count the blessings of the year, before ascertaining what really constitutes a blessing. It is usually agreed that an increase in material prosperity and a greater security in the area of international peace constitute the basic items in the list for which gratitude should be expressed. But is this the most reasonable position? These are but temporary boons which have a tendency of slipping away from us and leaving us a memory that is mocking in character. Thinking individuals have testified that when they have passed through the valleys of privation and war they have received their greatest blessings in the form of new perspectives, and of seeing the priority of spiritual and eternal values over against the passing and material things. Thanksgiving calls for thinking. It is a reasonable service. If it be not rationally motivated, it may turn out to be sheer mockery. Paul declared that all things turn out for good unto those that love God. On that basis even the alleged reverses of life give occasions for gratitude. Men cannot select the experiences in which they judge that God has been considerate. Gratitude is a considered attitude on the part of those whose thinking is colored by divine revelation. It is therefore not a twenty-four hour affair. It is a life’s task, gladly assumed by those whose thinking has been directed from above and who do not determine their obligations to Providence by an emotional reaction of the moment. There are blessings in every Christian experience. Find them and thank God for them.

H. S.

Athleticism

JOURNALISTS have made and are to-date making much ado about the scandals of collegiate athletics. There has always been evil associated with education as there has been with every enterprise touched by human thinking, aspirations and control. However, when such evils come to be associated with college effort the country seems to burst forth in righteous indignation. It is true that collegians cannot be proud of their record of honesty and fair play upon the gridiron. However, the consternation that gripped the country when the exposé took place indicates the general feeling that such evils were not ordinarily associated with collegiate athletics and were regarded as being entirely inconsonant with the spirit and purpose of education.

The fact is that athletics has been regarded as a sort of intruder in the area of education, often a welcome intruder, but an intruder nevertheless. Perhaps more than any other branch of collegiate interest, it has been called upon to justify its place on the campus. In the days when the idea of character development was prominent among educational objectives, men hit upon the idea that athletics was precisely the field in which students could be taught fair play and teamwork and thus be best prepared to live in a democracy. But little came of the fair play idea. Character training as a whole failed, because education did not, and, as it was, could not, touch the heart of the problem. Little came of the attempt except perhaps in a formal way which tended to make cultural hypocrites of those most directly concerned.

Throughout the entire history of college athletics the best and persistent selling point has been that of physical education—training for health. Even to this day this is its best selling point. But that has been persistently subject to a twofold criticism. Physicians have been critical of the health benefit to the few outstanding athletes who do the actual work and are subject to the physical strain involved in collegiate contests. The student body as a whole has received little from the program except the thrill of sitting in the grandstand. We have succeeded only in making a few stars who have made and are making tremendous educational sacrifices for their dubious stardom.

However, the athletics of American colleges was fairly acceptable until the spirit of American commercialism placed its filthy fingers upon it. The finger of accusation should not be pointed at the athletic department but at the administration and alumni. They prostituted college athletics when they found that it could be used for effective publicity. It could attract students and more importantly the spirited support of men who were considering the distribution of their gains—fair-gotten and ill-gotten. Colleges need students and money—especially the latter. No department could compare with athletics on this score of meeting these needs. Therefore colleges made their sacrifices at the altar of Mammon. The sacrifices both to the college and the athletes were tremendous. They sacrificed their highest academic ideals. Mammon is no cheap god.

H. S.
Painful Exposure a
Hopeful Promise

The best thing that could have happened to collegiate athletics is the present exposure. This has been decidedly shocking, especially to the uninitiated. In some cases the athletic department seems to have been run more or less independently of the college administration. Presidents have been amazed at the things going on right under noses. Some, realizing their responsibilities in the matter, have resigned. But what happens to college presidents is after all of small consequence. The important matter is what happened to education. Pressure from those interested in athletics caused a modification of entrance requirements which made college entrance easier for the athletes, but college education infinitely more difficult. A health certificate and a record of athletic prowess in high school became the best documents for entrance. The academic prerequisites were reduced in direct proportion to the applicant's record on the gridiron. A good pair of legs was preferred to a good set of brains. Scholarship aids went to the athletes. A "letter" was frequently preferred to a diploma, and that often with some justification. The demands of a course were modified rather easily both as to quality and quantity to meet the needs of the student's athletic program. Sometimes outside influences were of such a nature that a professor dared not flunk a student athlete, be his class cuts ever so many and his grade of work ever so unacceptable. Good players were often bought. It was the best investment in terms of cash that a college could make. The gridiron heroes have been giving their all for dear old Alma Mater. But what has Mater given to them? They have been robbed under the pretense of receiving an education. It has been asserted that football players as a group have been only a bit more than half as successful as the rest of the student body in completing the requirements for a degree (Report of Faculty of William and Mary College). What a blessing it has been that this plague which has been festering in the body of our educational system has been exposed. It was a happy, even though a sad, day when the cloak of respectability was torn off this situation at West Point a few months ago. Upon the merits of the Cadets' case I am in no position to judge. But I am sure that few colleges have remained unscathed. My hat's off to those that can thrust their hands in their bosoms and withdraw them clean. Let us be assured that collegiate athletics will remain automatically clean no more than business, the state, the church and the home. The debauchery of an educational program into a commercial venture at the cost of surrendering institutional and student integrity must be stopped. Let colleges be ever mindful of the fact that they are institutions of education and that among the most important items of education is integrity.

H. S.

The Christian's Mandate
in the Field of Science

The relationship between Christianity and science has been the subject of frequent discussion. It is a particular problem for the scientist who is committed to the belief that the Bible is the infallibly inspired Word of God. Along with others, it is his duty to do all things including his pursuits in the field of science, to the glory of God. Having said this much, the sequent question is: How must this be done? Is it sufficient that the individual who carries out his work is a Christian at heart? Or must there be visible manifestations of the impact of his Christianity on all that he does?

The most commonly accepted view is an affirmative answer to the latter of these two questions. This is the motive behind the demand for Christian textbooks. The teacher's Christianity must put a stamp on his teachings and his writings. Again the question arises: What sort of stamp is this? How is it manifested? Frequently, the answers to these questions have been weak and timid, even apologetic. Some appear to feel that the Christian science teacher has discharged his responsibility completely when he concentrates his efforts on the refutation of the theory of evolution. The tragedy of this approach is that once the errors of evolution have been exposed, the Christian scientist has no further approach is that once the errors of evolution have been exposed, the Christian scientist has no further mission. This is to say nothing of the fact that it often happens that the methods used to refute the so-called unchristian theories are as ridiculous, if not more so, than the false theories themselves. Others seem to believe that the Christian method of teaching science consists of the juxtaposition of a bit of scientific data and a passage from Scripture. For others, the sum and substance of Christian science teaching can be comprehended in the state-
ment: There is a lot about this world that we do not know or understand; therefore isn’t God wonderful? Logically, of course, the conclusion to the first part of that statement would be a reflection on our own intelligence.

We admit that the Christian scientist must glorify God in his work, be it teaching or research. It is another thing, however, to say that science or the scientific method, per se, is a special or unique way of doing this. The purpose of this article is to consider this idea a bit more closely. The ideas set forth are not necessarily the convictions of the author but are tentative, subject to criticism and revision. Those who have an interest in this subject will also be quick to note that many of the ideas or thoughts set down in what follows are not original with the author.

Before beginning this discussion it may be well to say a bit about the nature and organization of science. The general object of all learning is the study of man and of the universe in which he lives. This is a tremendously large subject with an exceedingly great number of variables—so complex, in fact, that it is hopeless for anyone, save God, to comprehend it. As a result, parts of reality are studied rather than the totality of it. Each branch of learning stakes out a claim and endeavors to study its claim exhaustively, usually without regard for the other branches of learning. This whole subject matter could have been subdivided in various ways. However, in the course of time these divisions have been made as the occasions presented themselves, usually when a given field was recognized, or when techniques were available for gathering data in the field in question. Be that as it may, the fields are laid out as we know them today, although in several instances, e.g., physics and chemistry, there is no distinct dividing line between them. The point is that we have these various fields of learning and the term science covers several such areas. Science then, as it is commonly understood, is an attempt to study only a part of reality.

The method of the natural sciences should now also be discussed. In these sciences progress is made by abstractions. In studying a given phenomenon an attempt is made, as far as possible, to control or maintain constant all the variables or influencing factors except one. Then the effects of this one variable can be studied. Perhaps a specific example will aid in making this point clear.

Take the problem of the rusting of iron. It may be that the rapidity of this rusting process is known by general observation to depend on the temperature, the humidity of the atmosphere, and the amount of oxygen in the air. Now to understand this process, it is necessary to know the effect of each of these variables so that the rapidity of the rusting under known conditions of temperature, humidity, etc., may be predicted. Such a study might begin by observing the rate of rusting of several samples of iron under conditions of identical temperature and identical amount of oxygen present. But in each case the humidity of the air would be different. On the basis of such a series of experiments it might be evident to what extent the rate of rusting was dependent on the humidity of the air. Then, of course, similar experiments could be carried out to determine the effect of temperature, under conditions of constant humidity and constant oxygen content. Finally, by keeping the humidity and the temperature constant and varying the oxygen content, the effect of oxygen on the rusting process might be determined. At the conclusion of all these experiments, the investigator might be able to come forth with a theory or equation predicting the rate of rusting.

Then the theory would have to be tested. Samples of iron could be exposed to random conditions as found in various localities. If the observed results agree with that predicted by the theory, then some sort of credence would be granted to that theory. If the observed results do not agree with the theory, then the experiments which led to the theory were incorrectly carried out or they were wrongly interpreted. These experiments must then be rechecked. It may also be that the theory is incomplete. It may even be that the theory is false. It is possible that there are other influencing factors which have been overlooked. The point is that any theory is only tentative and is offered in order to be tested and, very likely, revised as more data are collected. This is but an example and perhaps it is oversimplified. But it may illustrate what is meant by the statement that progress is made by abstractions. The investigator, as he proceeds, is intentionally oblivious of many factors. For instance, in studying the rusting process he may disregard the fact that all the samples are not exposed to the same amount of sunlight. This is necessary to simplify and to narrow down the problem. But what he obtains then is only partial knowledge—knowledge that does not necessarily include all the interplaying factors. It is as if each student is chopping away at a small segment of the whole of knowledge. He is close to his subject and as long as he stays there he has no proper perspective for taking in the whole of even investigated reality.

With this as a background we may now proceed to examine more closely the nature of the effect of an individual’s Christianity on his endeavors as a scientist, or the contribution that science can make to an individual’s Christianity. It has been said that the study of science is permissible and useful because it lends support to the belief that the Bible is true. Hence our religious beliefs which are based on the Bible can be bolstered by a study or knowledge of natural science. This assumes, of course, that belief in the Bible is not firm and unwavering.

Suppose now that the results of a particular bit of scientific research, e.g., an archaeological investigation, show that there was a temporary separation
We may suppose then also that this separation can be explained scientifically. What has now been gained? Will someone whose trust the Bible agrees with scientific evidence. Any good history book does the same thing. Will this evidence now cause a former unbeliever to accept and believe the words of Psalm 23? Support from scientific evidence cannot be found for such and similar passages. Must these important passages remain in doubt then? Anyone whose belief in the Bible is so shaky will not be convinced by scientific evidence that it is the Word of the true God. Anyone who believes in the true God does not need scientific corroboration with the Bible record to strengthen his belief in the Scriptures. Belief in the Bible may precede scientific investigation; it does not come as a result of it.

The above statements are based on the assumption that the findings of a scientific investigation will support or corroborate what is found in the Bible. There is also a possibility that a scientific investigation may bring to light facts or relationships that appear to contradict what is found in the Scriptures. The fact is that such situations do arise. And, unfortunately, many Christians, because of these apparent contradictions unearthed by science, become afraid of science not only, but of all learning in general. But what then must the Christian do? Obviously, two things: re-examine the results of the scientific investigation, and re-examine the Biblical interpretations with which these results seem to be in conflict. Surely God, in whose image we have been created, would not seek to deceive His own children. He may test them and try them, but to mislead them deliberately is contrary to His nature.

In examining the results of scientific investigations it is necessary to bear in mind what was stated previously about the method of scientific research. Such investigations are carried out with an intentional neglect of control of many factors. (This is not always true since it is not always possible, e.g., in an archaeological investigation. But the general procedure is not changed. A theory or generalization is set forth on the basis of the data available. This theory is then tested by further data and revised accordingly.) Therefore, one should consider carefully whether the results would be affected if other factors were taken into account.

As an example, consider some ideas concerning changes that have taken place in or on the earth. Remains of elephants have been found in Alaska. This is a fact and can be readily verified by a Christian as well as a non-Christian. How can this be explained? Three theories might be advanced: (a) Alaska at one time had a tropical climate; (b) elephants have gradually evolved from cold-blooded to warm-blooded creatures; (c) in ancient times there was a zoo in Alaska. Each one of these theories may account for the presence of the elephant remains in Alaska. But do these theories hold up when other facts are introduced—for instance, the other objects found near the elephant remains? If the first theory is correct one would expect to find other evidences of a tropical environment. Not so if the second or third theory is correct. In evaluating such theories one must consider whether all the facts have been accounted for. One must also consider whether another theory can account for the same observations just as well.

Take as another example the history of the theories of the structure of matter. In the early part of the nineteenth century atoms were considered to be small solid objects. This idea seemed sufficient to account for certain types of behavior that had been observed. It did not account for certain electrical phenomena that had already been observed. Perhaps these phenomena were considered irrelevant. But today they are considered very pertinent. At that time it was believed that all the atoms of carbon, e.g., had the same weight. Since then, thanks to refinements in measuring techniques, it has been found that all the atoms of carbon do not have the same weight. Thus, what was a fact in 1800 is, in 1950, an error. This is to say that one must be careful—very careful—in calling an observation a fact. Of course, this does not mean that one must dismiss all such findings and generalizations. One must merely realize the limitations of man's mind in his search for scientific knowledge.

But where there are apparent conflicts between science and the Bible it is also legitimate to question not the infallible Word of God, but the fallible interpretations of man. Perhaps one of our greatest weaknesses is that we consider our interpretation of Scripture as infallible as the Scriptures themselves. Though we acknowledge that our judgment is perverted by sin, we usually consider it perverted only when we read nature and not when we read Scripture. This undoubtedly has led to many of the difficulties that now trouble us. Such critical evaluation of individual, current, or traditional Scriptural interpretation or exegesis must, of course, be done with extreme care and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This re-evaluation should also be carried out in the light of what has been established by a study of God's creation. We believe and confess that God has revealed Himself in a twofold manner—in nature and in Scripture. We believe also that God does not contradict Himself and that the two revelations are ultimately consistent. If this is so, then it is also legitimate to use natural revelation in creation as a supplement to the special revelation in the Bible. This general revelation may then be used to cast light on Scripture. But as we said, this must be done with prayer and with care. One must not twist or wrench the Scriptures to suit any current theory. Where the Bible is explicit, accept it in

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faith. Where it is not explicit, avoid trying to make it so. One must avoid imposing a theory or system that suits one's fancy. As an illustration of this consider the following excerpts from a review of the book "Worlds in Collision" by I. Velikovsky. This review apparently was written by one who is considered to be orthodox.

"It is evident, both from the Bible story and the myths from other nations that a very astonishing event did take place in Joshua's time. But it is difficult to take the Bible language quite literally. Joshua commanded both the sun and moon to stop moving across the sky. Now if some physical event had stopped the rotation of the earth, the sun would certainly have appeared to stop still in the sky, but not the moon. Nor does it seem likely that God would have performed a special miracle upon the latter, seeing that the moon was quite incidental to the story. Perhaps, then, it is better not to stress the exact wording of the passage . . . ." Science and Religion III, p. 100, (Autumn 1950).

Here the Scriptures are twisted to suit a current theory. On reading Joshua 10:12-14 one finds that the account of this extra long day is stated rather explicitly and not by implication. It would appear that here the reviewer is too blindly attached to his Bible or in God. Any day the theory may be superseded by another. Then what?

A scientific theory, because of its tentative nature, is a rather flimsy basis for bolstering a belief in the Bible or in God. Any day the theory may be superseded by another. Then what? If our belief in God became firm because of an apparent Scriptural corroboration with a scientific theory, does it now become weak? In that case we will have to tear "How Firm a Foundation" out of the hymnbook. The Bible would seem to dispense with this notion when it says, in Romans 10:14, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" And in verse 17, "So belief cometh of hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ." A preacher preaching the Word of God, and not nature, is considered to be essential to lead people to God. Thus it would appear that science is not to be used to win souls for Christ.

Frequently it is said that by studying science we can glorify God the better. It is implied that science can lead us to this glorification of the Deity in a special way. This then becomes a cogent reason for the Christian to engage in scientific pursuits. Furthermore, it is said that it is incumbent upon the Christian science teacher to display this in a particular way. Such statements are almost always made as generalities. A generality takes so little intellectual effort, and it is so very safe. But what would happen to the cogency of the statement if specific cases were considered? Let us see.

Often we are told that by studying astronomy we learn of the vastness of the universe and thus we come to a greater appreciation of the power of God. Or, we hear that modern ideas of the relativity of time give us some idea of what eternity means and thus we glorify God the more because He is eternal. Is it not just as likely, though, that if we had a clearer understanding of eternity God would become much more comprehensible, and hence, less wonderful? Furthermore, the ideas of relativity are merely schemes designed to show relationships between observed phenomena. Many of these schemes are mathematical or formal relationships and have little, if any, physical meaning. They, too, are subject to change and revision. That is inevitable. As was stated above, a finite mind forces man to compartmentalize learning and study into narrow fields. Any advance in a given field is therefore tentative. It is made by considering only a limited number of aspects of the problem. Now is this the kind of "knowledge" that leads one to glorify God? It is truly a weak basis for such glorying. Suppose Einstein's ideas of space and time are a basis for your glorifying God. It is well possible that in, say, twenty years Einstein's ideas will be found inadequate or even in error. What then of your glorying?

But don't we read in Scripture that the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork? Of course we do. And doesn't Jesus refer to nature to glorify God, when he talks about the lilies of the field, the sparrows, and the signs of the sky? Yes, He does. But in each of these cases Jesus uses the whole of a part of nature and not a scientific aspect of it. Thus, He does not talk about the chemistry of the color of the lilies, nor does He refer to the optics of the color of the sky, nor does He refer to the mechanics of the flight of the sparrow. The reference is to what everyone observes, and not to what the chemist is interested in as a chemist, nor the physicist as a physicist. It may be objected that Jesus used this language because He was addressing ordinary people and not a meeting of the Hebrew Chemical Society. But we may safely assume that Jesus would not have based the point of His discourse on a hypothesis which today is "true" and tomorrow may be false. For the lesson of the Master Teacher is as true today as it was two thousand years ago. And the natural phenomena which He used as illustrations to drive home His point can still be observed by us today. But no scientist studying the texture of blossoms or the fall of birds has ever discovered the lesson of Jesus. A scientist may be interested in a study of the rate of fall of a dead sparrow. Jesus was not referring to that. The sparrow falls, but the point is that it did not fall without God knowing about it and willing it. A physicist could not discover that. This must be revealed.

What then is the relationship of the Christian to the field of science? Should he concern himself about it? Should he study it intensively? Should science be included in the curriculum of our Christian schools? The answer is "yes". We have orders from God to study His creation. These orders are found in Gen. 1:28: " . . . and God said unto them,
Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, . . .” That command was given to man before the fall and was not abrogated by the fall. It is still in effect. The only difference is that now this work must be carried out in a world of sin. Consequently, it is more difficult to discharge this responsibility. The work is heavy and our minds are clouded. The work involves pain, but still it must be done. Therefore the question is “What method shall we use to subdue the earth?” We can only subdue it if we study it and understand it. It is necessary to know how it operates and what principles govern its behavior, etc. Only by knowing these can we intelligently and somewhat efficiently carry out this command of God. But this is a vast and humanly impossible task. We can only approach or approximate an understanding of the earth. Because of human limitations this work must be subdivided so that it can be carried out more intensively. One of these subdivisions is the field of natural science. These subdivisions might have been otherwise than we know them today, but there would have been subdivisions nevertheless. These subdivisions are necessary because of the vastness of the task and the limitations of the mind of man—limitations brought about because man is a creature of God, and the limitations then complicated because of sin. Thus each investigator studies a small segment of reality and publishes his results. This, of course, gives him only a partial view of reality. It gives a view that is likely to be distorted because it is so narrow. Hence it is to be judged in the light of what investigators in other fields also discover. To really know nature, one must have the results of all these studies. Even then a vital element may be missing. Because of our limitations we must proceed in this hit-and-miss, hunt-and-peck manner. Thus do we subdue the earth, slowly and imperfectly, but to the best of our ability.

If this reasoning is correct, then it is clear what the Christian scientist should do as he prepares himself for life. He should prepare himself for an intensive study of a particular segment or aspect of reality so that he too may perhaps contribute something to the fund of knowledge about the universe. But he has another task also. And that is to pull himself away from his chosen field in order to get a larger view of reality, to take in more than his field, to survey the forest instead of an individual tree. Only thus can he arrive at a more complete knowledge of reality. He should train himself not only to make this survey, but to appreciate and interpret it—to see in it significance. In other words, his training should be liberal as well as specialized.

If we agree now that a Christian has a mandate to study natural sciences, we still have the issue of whether he must work with orthodox Christians alone, or whether he may work with and use the results of the work of non-Christians. To answer this question we may, for our purposes, divide the results of non-Christians into two classes: facts and interpretations.

As to facts it would seem evident that these are the same whether measured or regarded by a Christian or an infidel. By facts we mean observations and measurable relationships. For example, in studying the time it takes for a baseball to fall to the ground from the top of the Washington Monument, it makes no difference whether this time interval is measured by a believer or a non-believer; if bones are found in the earth, they are there no matter who discovers them. Such instances could be multiplied. Such observations can be used by Christians. This takes place every day.

When it comes to interpretations, however, there may be differences, but these differences are not always inevitable. It depends on the area embraced by the interpretation. Thus a Christian and a non-Christian may arrive at the same theory to explain, for example, the fact that a solution of salt water will carry an electric current. However, when a scientist pulls himself away from his field in order to get the larger view of reality—when he retreats in order to survey the forest—then his interpretation differs from that of the non-Christian. This difference is unavoidable, for the Christian, in addition to the facts that are available from a study of nature, uses the fact that all this has been created by the God who has revealed Himself in the Bible.

If this distinction is made, it would seem that many of the so-called conflicts between science and religion would disappear. A distinction should be made regarding the interpretations put forward by non-Christians. If the interpretations or theories apply only to a given field then we need not be alarmed since they are then tentative and incomplete, and they have no use except for advancing knowledge in that particular field. There are no religious implications, e.g., in the various theories used to explain why iron rusts at a given rate.

However, when the non-Christian suggests theories that seek to unify the observations made in various fields, when he seeks to interpret all of reality, then we as Christians appraise critically and we differ. We differ because then we are speaking about reality in its entirety. Then we are no longer abstracting. Then all factors must be considered, above all the fact that God is the Creator of all reality. No hypotheses or theories or interpretations that seek to embrace and encompass all of reality are valid without this keystone.
The Humanist of the Renaissance

The Renaissance is a strange, a somewhat singular phenomenon in history. It stands at the threshold of the modern period. It marks the close of the state of affairs peculiar to the middle ages; it was somewhat of an aurora, a herald of a brighter day that followed.

The Renaissance: Its Distinct Periods

We cannot definitely fix the limits of the Renaissance period. We cannot say that here it began and there it ended. Like the other great movements in history it had its roots deep down in the past. It may be compared to a river ever widening and flowing faster as it advances, until it becomes a flood. Nevertheless, though we cannot lay our finger on its inception—many factors working together to bring it about—we can see it beginning to assert itself about the middle of the fourteenth century. At the middle of the sixteenth century the movement had again subsided, was all but past. Its great after-effects continued on through history and reach down even to the present day. The dates of Petrarch's life (1304-1374) may be taken to mark the beginning of the Italian Renaissance. Petrarch was the first of the typical men which the Renaissance produced—the humanists. His life may therefore be taken to mark the transition from the medieval order of things to that of the Renaissance. From the death of Petrarch, 1374, to the accession of pope Nicholas V, 1407, we have the rise of humanism and the formation of a new social and intellectual atmosphere. From 1407 to 1494, the time of the French invasion of Italy, we see humanism, having mastered the papacy and Italy, crossing the Alps and becoming a European movement. From 1494 to 1527, the sack of Italy, humanism north of the Alps becomes absorbed in the Protestant movement, and in Italy the idea of the papacy becomes entirely secularized. From 1527 to 1575, the accession of Paul IV, the Roman Catholic reform movement absorbs the main stream of humanism in Italy and checks the Protestant movement north of the Alps. The above division into periods marks off in a general way the various stages traceable in the development of the Renaissance.

The Movement Defined

This great movement in history can plainly be seen, but is hard to define. Besides, there is a distinction between a wider and a narrower sense in which the term Renaissance is used. It is often meant to include only the revival of classic art and literature during the period indicated. But the Renaissance included far more than that. It was a "new birth" in a much wider sense. Pater defines it as "the whole complex movement of the intellect and life, an outbreak of the intellect in every sphere". As such it influenced not merely the sphere of letters and art, but as well social, political, and ecclesiastical conditions of that time, not merely in Italy, but also through the rest of Europe.

There was an underlying spirit, a motivation, at the bottom of this whole movement, namely, the awakening of individual consciousness. That is why the Renaissance did not restrict itself to a mere revival of ancient learning and art, but found expression in every sphere of life. The individual began to be conscious of himself, of his ego. Formerly, as I hope to point out more fully in the treatment of the political and social aspects of the Renaissance, man was not conscious of himself as a persona, an individual, but as a member of an organization, be it the church, the feudal system, the guild, or the municipal commune.

Nature of the Awakening

As for learning, before the Renaissance it had to conform to the traditional standards set by generations of schoolmen. Learning was not thought to consist in being able to give one's own opinion on a subject, but in being able to reproduce what Aristotle or some other accepted authority had said on matters. Moreover, the Scholastics had degenerated into mere logicians and had lost themselves in the discussion of subjects which were far removed from life. What took place in the Italian Renaissance was that the individual person became conscious of the fact that he had an opinion on matters which deserved to be uttered.

This mental awakening made him turn from a study of logic to a study of nature. Furthermore, his self-consciousness urged him on to introspection and to a study of the world within himself as being of even more importance than the study of nature. The man of the Renaissance felt that new principles must guide his education. He must break through the traditional rules and standards, cease being a mere commentator of the works of past sages, and
make life itself in its various phases his object of study.

An illustrative incident is the story told of how Petrarch, the father of the humanists, found himself. One day he determined by himself to climb a mountain with the purpose of enjoying the scenery—something unheard of in Italy in those days. It tells of how he beheld the beautiful clouds above and the awful chasms beneath, of how on the mountain top he opened a book of St. Augustine at a passage that urged him to look higher than the material world to the world of the spirit, to look within his own soul. Petrarch had found himself!

This principle of the awakening of the individual consciousness expressed itself—in what is known to us specifically as the Italian Renaissance—in a revival of classic literature and art. The ancient documents of Greek and Roman literature and the models of classic art aroused a deep interest. However, these were not studied as new authorities to which to conform in place of the schoolmen. The eager search of the classics was the expression of an attempt of the ego, becoming conscious of itself, to free itself from the restraints of scholasticism and to get back to life. The classics were studied as a means rather than an end. It is true that toward the close of the Renaissance period the revival of classic influences in literature and art, as Burckhardt informs us, “tended to degenerate into slavish imitation of ancient morals”. But that was during the period of degeneration, when the Renaissance spirit was already far spent. It was not the spirit of the Renaissance in its prime.

**Why Italy's Prominent Role**

We might ask why Italy played such a prominent role in the intellectual Renaissance, why it was that the intellectual revival started there almost a hundred years before it did elsewhere in Europe. In a sense it is not to be explained. We might as well ask why one place produces many more geniuses than another, for such was the case with the Renaissance in Italy. Any number of men, geniuses in their field, men who could rise far above the level of their fellowmen, were in this age born in Italy within the course of a few generations. And genius cannot be explained from natural causes. But that this genius chose to run in certain specific channels is explained from the conditions in Italy at that time. Burckhardt explains it on the basis of geographical position, its having a dominant position in the Mediterranean, a sea which was then the center of the world's commerce. Italy's trade and commerce gave it a desire for freedom and a consciousness of power. Another factor was its being in a large measure the seat of authority in the church. The very nearness of the papacy took away the superstitious awe and reverence felt for it in the remoter sections of Europe. Excommunication and interdict were less dreaded in Italy than elsewhere. Also, several of the popes themselves, in their zeal to compete with the secular courts, became the great patrons of Grecian art and literature. All of these conditions tended to foster a Renaissance spirit and therefore were in a way causes of the Renaissance.

**The Typical Man of the Renaissance—The Humanist**

The typical man of the Italian Renaissance was the humanist. He was the man who had discovered himself, and who now sought to assert his individuality. In his investigations he went in quest of life as an object of study rather than busying himself with the disputations of the Scholastics. By preference he studied sources rather than mere traditions. As a result the humanist developed “a passionate devotion to the literature and liberty of the ancients”. In every branch of learning, in philosophy, history, poetry, and art, the humanist worked as a freed inquirer, and therefore as a critical one. There was nothing he did not treat critically, whether it be Aristotle or the philosophy of the schoolmen. Even the whole ecclesiastical system he felt free to criticize. The learning of the humanist may be called “new” in contrast with the “old” learning of the Scholastics. It was new as regards the object of study—life in all its phases versus the traditions of the schoolmen; new as regards the free and independent spirit of inquiry as opposed to the struggle to conform to tradition; new as regards the working with facts rather than with entities that have little or nothing to do with life.

Representatives of this type of men are: Petrarch, styled the father of the humanists; Benvenuto Cellini, in whom we see the less favorable side of the humanist, perhaps the worst type of humanist, the type given to boasting and pride, disregarding the moral law as much as suited his purpose; Castiglione, representative of the better class of humanist, as illustrated in his book The Courtier; Aretino, in whom we see the Renaissance at its height; Erasmus, the prominent man of letters of his time; Reuchlin, the Hebrew scholar, the first advocate of the “new” learning in Germany; and Sir Thomas More, the great intellect of England of that day. The same humanist spirit found in all of these men is also traceable in the art productions of the day. We find it in the paintings of Raphael, Andrea del Sarto, Leonardo da Vinci, Giorgione, and of Michaelangelo. It is present in the works of the mastersculptors such as Michaelangelo and Benvenuto Cellini. Whereas art formerly was employed only for religious purposes and was forced to follow patterns prescribed by ecclesiastical authorities, and at best was somewhat crude, the productions of these men reveal the spirit of freedom in portraying life as the artist himself conceived it.
Religious and Moral Aspects of the Renaissance

One feature that spurred the humanist on in his achievements, perhaps more than any other, was his thirst for fame. Often this thirst for fame prompted the humanist to great and noble deeds. Think of Cellini's efforts to produce the best there was in him in order to win the praise of duke, king, or pope. This lust for fame was the impelling force, the drive of the vaunting ambition of a man who wanted to be hailed as a great man, regardless of the means employed or the unhappy consequences which his action might produce.

Religiously and morally the Italian Renaissance has not much to its credit. Speaking by and large, it was detrimental to religion. This is a severe indictment. The uncontrolled assertion of the free, inquiring spirit led many humanists to become atheists or agnostics. The moral standard of the men that lived under the spell of humanism was not high. There were of course some nobler humanists who lived on a relatively high level of morality. They were the men that sought to attain such lofty moral ideals as were held up before them by Castiglione in his The Courtier. But the ethical life of the majority of the men who were swayed by the Renaissance spirit was little higher than the life which Cellini portrays in his autobiography. A good way to test the influence of the Renaissance on morality is to compare the moral level of society in Italy at the beginning of the Renaissance with that at its close. The moral status of Italy in the sixteenth century had dropped decidedly in the previous one hundred years.

The Contribution of the Humanist Movement

The great contribution of the humanistic movement consists in the stimulus it gave to learning. Not merely did humanism change the viewpoint and the object of study in the educational world, but it became a stimulus to very education itself. During the middle ages the average man was strictly unlearned. Even the feudal lords and the noblemen left study to the monks and priests. Who can wonder at this when he remembers that the only learning with which that age was acquainted was the logic of the schoolmen? But the learning of the humanists made an appeal. It had something fascinating about it. Moreover, during the middle ages the monasteries were almost the exclusive repositories of learning, and monks and priests were well-nigh the sole conservators of it. But thanks to the influence of the free spirit of the Renaissance there arose a growing tendency to break away from this status quo. Monasteries ceased to be the only dispensaries of learning to which all had to flock. Universities sprang up throughout Italy where the sons of the nobility were reared. No longer were the monks the sole dispensers of learning. Humanists distinguished themselves as educators in all Italy, at princes' courts, in the retinue of the families of the nobility, and at private schools where young men engaged them as teachers.

The above is a brief sketch of the prominent intellectual phases of the Italian Renaissance. But the Renaissance cannot be restricted to mean only the intellectual revival of Italy. The term must include far more, since the movement was far broader. The awakening of the individual consciousness acted as a leaven which, once having started in the intellectual sphere, leavened the whole lump. As well in the rest of Europe as in Italy, society, politics, the church, and education underwent enormous changes. The intellectual Renaissance spread rapidly over Europe. Young scholars, lured to Italy from all parts of Europe by the charm of this new learning, caused the spread of humanism, first to Germany and then gradually over the remainder of the continent.

Medieval Society

It is only, however, when we come to consider the influence of the Renaissance upon the social, political, and religious worlds of the day, that the enormity and widespread significance of the Renaissance shows itself. In order to appreciate this fact we shall have to contrast the conditions which the Renaissance brought, with those of the world into which it was introduced.

At the basis of medieval society lay feudalism. This is often called a "system" but perhaps erroneously so, since there was no one system in feudalism, but many differing systems. The situations can be characterized generally as follows: The country was divided into numerous fiefs. The possessor of the smallest land grant, the one at the bottom of this "system," held his plot of ground as a tenure from some one higher up who, in turn, held it as a fief from some superior lord, and so on until the final overlord was reached, who loaned from no one. In France at the time of the Renaissance there were about 10,000 of these overlords or petty sovereigns who were virtually independent of one another. This feudal ladder placed all men in social castes according to whichever rung of the social ladder the person happened to be on. Individualism counted for nothing, at least not among the lower strata of society. The caste was everything.

Besides this feudal "system" there were the guilds or federations of men united for the purpose of maintaining themselves in their respective vocations as, e.g., the carpenters' guild, the masons' guild, etc. Here, too, individualism counted for nothing. The guild was everything. Again, there was the municipal-commune, formed to maintain the rights of the townspeople over against the aggressions of the feudal lords. But here too a man was no more than...
a member of the commune. He might more properly have been designated by a number than by a name.

Over and above all this, man was a member of that all-embracing system, the Roman Catholic church. There too individualism was dampened, and the member of the all-saving church was passively to accept what the church had decreed. At the apex of this pyramid, which ascended through priests, monks, abbots, bishops, and cardinals, was the pope. He was the vicegerent of Christ in the kingdom of God upon earth. He was the court of last resort in matters both spiritual and temporal. It is not to be wondered at that the burden of all these relations fell heavily upon the common man and made him feel oppressed. It is only natural that the Renaissance should make headway under such conditions.

The structure of society as described above was reflected in the political situation. The feudal "system" was the political unit, as it was the social unit. Man had no more voice in the government than he had in his feudal "system." The men at the bottom of the feudal "system" had bartered away their political rights and liberties for protection by the overlords. These made their own laws and had jurisdiction over life and death. There was no recognition of the individual in the political world.

No Real Solidarity

If individualism was lacking, so was true solidarity. Of that time one could not properly speak of a "nation." There was no real national unity. The feudal lords were vassals of the king only for military purposes. A French and a German lord had more in common than a French lord and a French peasant. There was no national spirit or national law. Wars were party wars, factional contests. Think of how Italy, for example, was torn apart by factional wars during the close of the Middle Ages. One need only point to the struggles of the Sforzas and the Visconti of Milan or to the Guelph and Ghibelline wars which originally were party feuds, fought out by adherents of the popes and Hohenstauphens respectively. These conflicts continued long after the original cause of discord was forgotten. Also one could point to the way in which Italy was half ruined, especially the north and middle, by the struggles between the different municipal communes which in Italy formed the political units. We can here only remind of the perpetual struggles between Naples, Milan, Venice, Florence, and the papal states, and of the struggles of the various tyrants for the mastery of these cities.

Changes Effected by the Renaissance

Upon a world of this nature the spirit of the Renaissance operated as a potent transforming influence. During the period under consideration one-third of the states of Europe were absorbed into larger ones. Moreover, real nations were formed. The kings with their natural allies, the municipal communes, curbed the power of the feudal lords. Such a thing as national law now came into being among them. Feudal castes were gradually abolished. Man began to be estimated according to the personality he was, not according to the class of society into which he happened to be born. The common people gained a hand in government. Nobles began to associate with educated commoners to whom they formerly would not allow the crumbs that fell from their lordly tables. Practically all positions were opened to men of merit. The individual had redeemed himself! Of course, the above characterization of medieval conditions and of the change wrought by the Renaissance only indicates the general status of things. One would not assert that prior to the Renaissance there was no recognition of the individual whatsoever, or that none of the old was left after the Renaissance has passed.

Finally I wish to touch upon the influence of the Renaissance upon the ecclesiastical world. The direct influence was not great in Italy. The populace there did not sense the need of church reform. For one reason they were too close to the papal seat. That fact took away the glamour and the superstititious awe and reverence felt for the papacy in remoter regions. Besides, the glory of the papacy was in a way Italy's glory. Hence they would rather uphold the papacy than criticise it. The corruptions of the papacy which when told to the rest of Europe, created a shock, produced scarcely a ripple in Italy. It was only when the counter-reformation came in the sixteenth century—hence very indirectly—that the Renaissance had anything to do with the religious conditions of Italy.

Renaissance and Reformation Not Identical

But throughout the rest of Europe the "new birth" assumed a religious aspect to a very large extent. No one can successfully claim that the two movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation, were identical. A study of the great leaders of the Protestant Reformation reveals this. Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin, and Knox, were not humanists; their dominant motive was not humanistic. Their controlling motive was rather an evangelical one. However, there were men in the thick of the religious turmoil of the day who were humanists. Think of Erasmus, of Reuchlin, and More. But these men of letters—for so they were in the spirit that was dominant in them—could never have brought about the Protestant Reformation. Erasmus' remark, when asked why he did not break with the established church—he knew as well as Luther the hopelessness of reforming it from within.
—is characteristic of all the leading humanists that studied religion: "I am not made of the stuff that martyrs are made of." That was just his fault! And it places the Reformers and the Reformation miles above the humanists and the religious aspects of the Renaissance. Had men like Erasmus, Reuchlin, More, and several of the school of Le Febre in France who refused to step out of the church with Calvin, possessed the courage of their convictions and been willing to face the battle, they might have aided the cause upon which in the long run they proved so much of a drag. This leads us to the qualitative distinction between Renaissance and Reformation. The basic factor of the Reformation was not a natural one but a decidedly supernatural one. God’s Spirit was working in men’s hearts to the revival of the true religion.

While these two movements were distinct in the dominant spirit of each, they nevertheless collaborated toward common ends. To begin with, the humanism of the Alps did not become as prominent a movement as it did in Italy, because it was sucked into the vortex of the religious whirlpool that was started there. And humanism was made to spend its force largely in it. Further, it can be said that humanism, carried from Italy to Germany by young German scholars, helped prepare the soil for the German Reformation. The presence of the young humanists in Germany is largely the reason why Luther and Zwingli were not burned at the stake as were previous would-be reformers. “Do not surrender that man Luther,” said the German princes and the humanists; “he can perform useful service to us in combating the encroachments of the pope.” Furthermore it was the very underlying spirit present in the Renaissance, the mental awakening of the individual—that was so vigorously at work in the Reformation. It was an appeal to individual reason, an assertion of the right of the individual to interpret the Bible for himself. A critical attitude had been developed by the humanists toward the ecclesiastical leaders of the established church. Think of Erasmus’ Praise of Folly in which he ridicules the learning of the priests and pours his satire upon them for their loose morals. Such writings made the public the more ready to listen to the message of the reformers. The humanists also went to the original sources in their religious investigations; they studied Hebrew and Greek manuscripts to see if the things which the scholastics taught were true, only to discover that they erred on several points. Think of the school of Le Febre in France and the conclusions at which these men arrived—such as justification by faith alone, the insufficiency of good works as a means of salvation, the supremacy of the Bible as the rule of faith and conduct—all these before Luther had published his ninety-five theses. Humanists were prominent in the universities of France, specifically in the non-theological faculties, and Calvin counted several of his college friends among them. Certainly the humanism of the sixteenth century did aid the progress of the Reformation, though it was not at all an unmixed blessing.

The Modernist and the Reformation

IN recent years a growing interest in the Reformation has been shown by those who reject most of its views. This has stemmed partially from the inability of modern theology to cope with contemporary problems. Through the influence of the advocates of Neo-orthodoxy such as Barth, Brunner and Niebuhr, the heirs of the old nineteenth-century liberal tradition have increasingly turned back to the sixteenth-century Reformation. Numerous studies have been made of Luther, Calvin and other Reformation leaders in an effort to understand their message and to interpret it to the present day.

One of the best examples of this effort at understanding and interpretation is a recent volume by Professor Wilhelm Pauck of the University of Chicago: The Heritage of the Reformation (Beacon Press, Boston, 1950). This book is of value because of the author’s position both academically and theologically. Because he is a professor in the University of Chicago, one has the assurance that he is well versed in his subject, and that his words will carry weight. At the same time Professor Pauck is a well-known and active representative of the modern liberal theological tradition so strongly entrenched at Chicago University. Thus in reading his work one can obtain an understanding of the attitude of Modernism to the Reformation. Here one also finds expressed the fundamental tension between Modernism and the Reformation, despite various attempts to reconcile the two phenomena.

Liberalism as the True Heir of the Reformation

The book itself is a series of articles written over a period of some twenty years, only one having not been published previously. Yet despite this apparently disjointed nature of the book, there is an underlying unity to it because of its point of view. Professor Pauck seems to have had very much the same attitude towards the Reformation in 1929 as he does today. He has, however, in the later
articles attempted to relate the Reformation more closely to the present situation. He expounds the idea that modern Liberalism is the true heir of the Reformation whose heritage can be shared only as Protestant thought approximates the modernist point of view.

Since this is an important interpretation and one which will no doubt have very great influence, it would be well if a thorough study were made of it in order to ascertain what validity it possesses. Therefore, in the present article only one aspect of this work will be covered. An attempt will be made to understand Prof. Pauck's interpretation of the Reformation itself. In a later article there will be considered his view of the consequences and present day effect of the Reformation. In this way it may be possible to understand more clearly the orientation of present-day theological Liberalism. Our problem now then is the modernist's understanding of the Reformation.

Reformation, Renaissance, and Ecclesiastical Practice

It is well to note that right at the beginning Professor Pauck makes a very clear cut distinction between the Renaissance and the Reformation. He points out that the Reformation was not part of the Renaissance either in origins or in spirit. The common attitude today that the Reformation was really the Renaissance economic individualism clothed in an ecclesiastical robe is attributed to its proper source: Pietism and secular individualism. While the Renaissance was important in Luther's day, and had an indirect influence on the Reformation, it was a pagan movement, largely stressing secular affairs and interests. The author flatly rejects much which has been taught in recent years by modern sociological-historians such as Weber, Troeltsch and Tawney. To Professor Pauck the Reformation was primarily religious, based upon the religious needs and desires of men.

Negatively the Reformation was more than a mere difference with Rome over certain ecclesiastical practices. Dealing with Professor W. C. Bower's article in Christendom (1944) in which it was stated that ecclesiastical practices were the key to the situation, Pauck shows very clearly that the real kernel of the whole matter was "the doctrines of salvation by faith and of the Bible." These are what made all the difference between Romanism and Protestantism. They in turn led to an entirely different concept of the church. To Luther the church was primarily communio sanctorum, while to the Roman Catholic it was primarily corpus Christi-anum with an hierarchical organization. To Luther the communion came before the body was made visible, so that his conception of the church was spiritual rather than essentially temporal and visible. Thus Pauck has laid a very necessary empha-

sis upon the idea of theology being at the base of the Reformation. Doctrinal difference was its foundation.

World View Implicit In a Religious View

Yet at this point one is forced to pause, for Professor Pauck holds that the real difference between the two sides "does not lie in the field of world-views and philosophies" but in the question of man's religious relation with God. How can one separate his religious relationship with God, from his idea of the universe in which he lives? It seems to the present writer that one is implicit in the other. Just because there is that fundamental religious difference, there must be a basic philosophical conflict as can be seen in the opposing doctrines of creation, sin and redemption. Both Calvin and Luther set forth a "world-and-life view at fundamental variance with that of Thomas Aquinas, because their views of man's religious relations to God were so different from those of the medieval scholastic.

This becomes only too clear even as one reads further through Pauck's book. In his chapter dealing with "Luther's Faith" he brings it out most clearly. Luther's whole idea of faith manifests a completely different metaphysical view from that of the Roman Church. There is no idea that man is in anyway independent of God, or significant apart from Him. All certainty for Luther came not from human experience, but from divine revelation alone. Thus faith in God and faith in God's Word is basic to a true knowledge of anything in this life. This point of view is far distant from the Thomistic discussions of autonomous man contained in Summa Contra Gentiles. At the same time the faith was to be personal and individual, a faith which brought justification and sanctification. It was to be a faith in God revealed in Christ who made man aware of God's grace and mercy. By this means, by this direct contact with God, Luther came to peace within himself, knowing his sins to be forgiven.

Faith a Means Of Salvation?

And yet, while Professor Pauck seems to concede this metaphysical difference, one still feels that there is something lacking in his interpretation. One cannot but sense that the author thinks of Luther as believing that faith was the means of salvation. Throughout the chapter on Luther's faith, the object of that faith is largely ignored. Luther, however, was himself very certain that it was not his faith which saved, but rather the atonement of Christ. "There was no remedy except for God's only Son to step into our distress and himself become man, to assume himself the load of awful and
eternal wrath and make his own body and blood a sacrifice for the sin.” (Epistle Sermon, Twenty-fourth Sunday After Trinity). In ignoring this element of Luther’s thought, one may see appearing some of the assumptions of Liberalism. Apparently to Prof. Pauck, faith in Christ’s sacrifice was not really essential to Luther’s thought, but was rather a left-over from medieval theology. On the other hand to Luther the fact that Christ had once died for sinners was absolutely central, for it was in this assurance that he flatly rejected the mass and the whole medieval church system. Faith must be faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour, not merely as the revealer of God. He was not only the great prophet but also the great High Priest, a fact which Prof. Pauck largely ignores.

Coupled with the analysis of Luther’s faith is the emphasis that the Reformation, particularly in its Lutheran aspect, was not a mere explosion of unrestrained religious individualism. It is true that Luther gave to the individual an altogether new position, by placing him in direct contact with God through faith. But there was no idea that he set up a system which made everyone his own pope. His stress upon the Scriptures, and his belief that when one had come to faith in Christ, he had also entered into the communion of the saints, and into personal relationships with God, to Luther meant not anarchy but community. It was a community, however, not based upon a series of ecclesiastical laws and ordinances, but rather upon one’s vital, living connection with God. Thus modern attempts to show Luther as the father of modern secular or Pietistic individualism is flatly rejected.

**Luther’s Idea**

**Of the Church**

This brings one to Luther’s idea of the Church (chapter 3). At this point the author gives a sharp focus to both the personal and the communal motifs in Luther’s thinking. At the same time stress is laid upon the idea that Luther really held that all church forms were merely historical productions, without any particular sanction apart from custom. This is demonstrated from his attack upon the papacy as an historical production, and by his doctrine of the ultimate invisibility of the church. One might add that opinion that anything not forbidden in Scripture to the church was permissible would also lead to the same conclusion. The real core of the Church, its constitutive principle, was the “word” which was to be expounded, or set forth in pure doctrine. In this way Luther, stressing faith and not order, held that not only was he carrying on the true work of the church, but also because of the influence of the Gospel he was bringing true Christianity to men that they might apply it in life. Romanism had introduced the Canon Law with all its evil results. The German Reformer was instead to give the Christian man freedom to do the will of God. In this way the church, continuing its proper work of preaching would not only bring salvation to individuals, but would also bring light to the world.

**Luther’s Orthodoxy**

**Is Inconsistent?**

While there is much with which one can agree in this interpretation of Luther and his thought, one finds also a very definite attempt to lay down the principle that if Luther had really been true to himself, he would have been a modernist. For instance Pauck is never tired of saying that Luther really did not hold to the Bible as something which was to be taken literally. God’s “word” is his “self-disclosure in Christ.” “It is Jesus Christ as he is witnessed to in the Bible.” Therefore, when Luther accepted the Bible as the Word of God he was being untrue to himself. At the same time he made a very great mistake in accepting the old traditional doctrines such as that of the Trinity and the two natures of Christ. If he had followed his true genius, his emphasis upon man’s prophetic religious relationship to God, he would have modified these views. But he did not, the result being that there appeared an “orthodoxy” and a “creedalism” which has damaged Protestantism ever since. In place of a “religious” understanding of the Bible, he became entangled with a Biblicistic literalism so contrary to his genius.

The only comment which one can make at this point is that it seems that Professor Pauck was too anxious to make Luther like himself. As one reads Luther’s various works, he cannot but be impressed with the fact that Luther did believe that the Bible was the literal Word of God. Both his Introduction to the Old Testament and his Preface to the New Testament make this abundantly clear. Luther was not nearly so inconsistent as many Liberals would like to make out. He may not always have seen the consequences of some of his ideas, but there seems to be little doubt that the authority of the Scriptures as the Word of God was never questioned by the Reformer. Luther, therefore, was not inconsistent when he accepted the teaching of the Scriptures, even when they led to such non-rationalistic views as the doctrine of the Trinity and the two natures of the person of Christ. It would seem that Professor Pauck’s interpretation of Luther is really one which is based upon his own liberal assumptions rather than upon Luther’s oft-reiterated statement.

**Calvin’s Indebtedness**

**To Butzer**

While Calvin does not seem to hold nearly so much interest for Professor Pauck, there are at
least two chapters devoted to the Genevan Reformer. In these sections of the book it is said repeatedly that Calvin was very definitely not original in his thinking. As a second generation reformer he had derived most of his ideas from Luther and Martin Butzer of Strassburg. Apparently the latter acted as the medium through whom much of Luther's thought came to Calvin. At the same time one is told that while Luther was truly religious in his approach, Butzer was desirous of bringing the rule of God into play in every sphere of life. Not only the elect, but all men should serve God in their callings by conforming to God's revealed will. Luther on the other hand taught that a vocation is Christian, only because a Christian is in it; and because he is a Christian he looks at it sub specie aeternitatis, although acting perhaps exactly as the non-Christian. Thus Pauk shows the difference between Luther's idea of the priesthood of believers and that of Butzer's vocation of the elect, terming the former "anthropocentric, rationalistic and moralistic use of the Bible."

This same Butzer, according to Professor Pauk, is the real father of Calvinism. He shows how closely Calvin was connected with Butzer historically, at the same time maintaining that both Calvin's doctrine of election and his whole concept of church government and church unity were also derived from Butzer's thought. While no one can doubt that the two men had close personal relations, particularly during Calvin's exile from Geneva, it seems that such a sweeping attribution of Calvin's views to Butzer is a little more than one can exactly swallow. It leaves Calvin in the position of one who is a little boy merely repeating what he has heard from his teacher. Such a position is largely based upon speculation, for we have no evidence that Butzer had any real influence on the first edition of the Institutes in which work, as Prof. Pauk himself admits, he set forth the basic ideas to which he held throughout the rest of his life.

The Real Influence
In Calvin's Thought

A further consideration to be kept in mind is that while Professor Pauk terms Butzer a Humanist, he applies to Calvin the term a "Biblical theologian." Thus even if Butzer did have some influence upon Calvin, which he probably did, it would seem that Professor Pauk would have to admit that the real influence in Calvin's thought whether dealing with predestination or church government, was Scripture, not Butzer. Thus Professor Pauk is not really consistent in what he says about Calvin. While calling him a biblical theologian he does not credit Calvin with having really derived his views from the Scriptures. True he acknowledges that Calvin desired to be absolutely submissive to the will of God as revealed in His word, but when he came to the doctrine of predestination he desired to explain "what he believed to be actual occurrences." Here one rather receives the impression that Calvin's doctrine of double predestination was primarily set up to explain why some men do and some do not accept the Gospel. This is rationalism not Biblicism. To the present writer, it has always seemed that Calvin set forth his views because he believed them to be Scriptural, not because he felt them to be a humanly rationalized explanation of "actual occurrences." The same query may be placed after the statement that Calvin did not merely set up a church organization which represented the New Testament form, but rather projected the needs of Geneva back into the New Testament. One could hardly call this good "Biblical theology."

Summary: Protestant Reactions
To the Council of Trent

Leaving the reformers, in his last chapter in which he deals directly with the Reformation, Professor Pauk sums up the whole movement by describing "Protestant Reactions to the Council of Trent." This chapter is extremely interesting since it brings into sharp focus the differences between Romanism and Reformation Protestantism. Constituted as it was, the Council of Trent completed rather than healed the division. As called and organized the Council pre-supposed the supreme authority of the pope to interpret Scripture. The political leaders also took for granted that reconciliation could be obtained by negotiation and compromise. Professor Pauk very rightly points out that under the circumstances this could never have been. As stated at the beginning, the Protestants demanded changes basic to the whole Romanist theology. Only that would satisfy them. But as Rome could not, if it would retain its power, agree to this, reconciliation was impossible. The Council, therefore, was foredoomed to failure, acting as the divider rather than the unifier. It made the Reformation final and complete by formulating Romanist doctrine so definitely the only price of accepting the Protestants was their submission.

Here then, is Professor Pauk's view of the Reformation. Rejecting the economic interpretation, he realizes that the Reformation was indeed a revolt against Roman Catholic beliefs and teachings. It was an effort to get back to the rule of God, a rule cluttered up by the alien law of tradition which had hidden the true religious content of the Gospel. Out of the Reformation came Protestantism, with a prophetic religion based on the service and worship of God. It originated in vital religious insights, but was in very grave danger from Biblicism, a bondage from which Luther actually set himself free, but in which he was thereafter continually find-
From Our Correspondents

Dear Friends:

HIS letter is over-due. During the last few months, the people of the British Isles have passed through another period of austerity and growing state-control. As I write, we are again on the brink of a general election. In 1950 the Socialists regained power with a mere handful of seats, and ever since, the country has been neglected through the continual seesawing of an almost evenly balanced Commons. This state of affairs could not last indefinitely, and certain aspects of both home and foreign policy forced a tried and harassed government to take the inevitable step. Winston Churchill's Conservative party is on tiptoes, hoping to drive the Labour party from power, and even to undo some of their work. Two questions are in the minds of the electors: 1. Will the Conservatives win? 2. What difference will it make if they do?

Socialism in Britain

Most observers and commentators are of the opinion that Churchill has a good chance of winning, although they do not deny that the present two-party tension might well survive the polls and leave things just as they were. The Persian oil dispute, the number of railway accidents, the increased and steadily increasing cost of living, all augur in favour of the Conservatives. And the clear evidence of strife within the Labour party underlines the likelihood of a change. Yet it must be noted that there is a solid block of socialists throughout Britain, and their faith in the party is almost a religion. The Conservatives have every chance of winning if they use their opportunity aright, and Winston Churchill will throw all he has into the fight.

The second question is, perhaps, more important. If the Conservatives win, it is almost certain that they will have but a slender majority. Landslides do occur in British elections, but it is doubtful if one will come this month. It is the general opinion here, that Churchill with a small majority would not be much more comfortable than Attlee before him. True, the Conservative party would have better leadershup, more unity, and valuable experience—yet without a good working majority its return to power would not make the difference in the life of the nation that so many expect.

The Socialist party, apart altogether from political views, has made a sorry mess of its administration, and has made a poor show abroad. Many ardent socialists are disgusted with its record. British Calvinists realize that within the framework of this brand of Socialism, the liberty of the individual is seriously affected. Already the results of the Socialist regime are being felt in hospitals, schools, the business-world, and life in general. And this is but the beginning. While we deplore certain aspects of the Conservative policy, we are fully aware that that policy provides a framework more suitable to the development of individual liberty and national dignity. Regeneration we detest.

Conservative Ulster

In Northern Ireland, the position is different from that in Britain. We have our government at Belfast, and we also have our representatives at Westminster. During the last few years we have witnessed the peculiar spectacle of a Unionist (Conservative) party in Belfast, which supports Churchill at Westminster, carrying out the dictates of the Socialist over-all government in London! Ulster's rulers are Tories, yet they cannot practise what they preach. They will certainly breathe more freely if Churchill is returned to power. The political situation in Northern Ireland, as in Ireland as a whole, cannot be detached from the religious background. In Ulster, the Unionists guarantee us union with Protestant Britain; the Nationalists, representing the Romanist section of Ulster, stand for the secession of every link with the British crown and constitution. The British way of life, however, guarantees Protestant Ulster civil and religious liberty; hence her determination to retain the link with Britain. The Labour Party in Northern Ireland has not received the confidence of the people on this vital issue, and there is the old fear of splitting the Protestant vote. So the Unionists are invariably returned to power, although thousands who vote for them are exceedingly critical of their policy on matters concerning education and home policy.

In 1950, the Communists had 100 candidates, but none was returned, and 93 lost their deposits. This time they propose to have 25 candidates. They certainly will lose less money! By the time you read this letter in THE FORUM, the results of Britain's election will be history. But you can compare them with this forecast, which I hope is not fool-hardy.

King George VI

The British people are very much a family; that has been illustrated once again by the reaction to the illness of King George VI. The people seem more anxious about the welfare of their sovereign, than about that of the nation. The British monarchy is unique, being a great binding force in the life of the United Kingdom. It is hard to conceive of Britain's future, if the monarchy perished. The present King has won not only the respect of all his subjects, irrespective of party allegiance—party politics does not affect the Britisher's attitude to the Throne—but the respect of millions throughout the world. King George has worked faithfully for his people, avoiding all ostentation and fuss, standing by his subjects through the dark days of the Nazi blitz, and sharing their trials and triumphs, their hardships and their joys. It was not surprising, therefore, that the ominous bulletin announcing the King's serious lung condition, and signed by no fewer than nine distinguished doctors, caused a wave of anxiety to sweep over the country. Now that anxiety has given way to relief as the king continues to make progress. It may be hard for you in the USA to enter into the feelings of the British people at this time, but you will have no difficulty in recognising the almost mystical element in the attitude of millions in the British Empire towards the King and Queen. Living in a time when the world is changing with frightening rapidity, we cannot help being comforted by the thought that there is still a great international bond of sympathy and friendship which even Communism and Romanism have failed to destroy.

We of the Irish Evangelical Church, pray for our Calvinist brethren in the United States, as well as in other places. We take a lively interest in all your affairs, and wish you every blessing in Christ. "Brethren, pray for us." Yours in His Service, Fred S. Leahy.

P. S. We were sorry to hear of Professor Bouma's recent breakdown in health, and trust that he is feeling much better.

P. S. L.
Macartney interprets the significance of several Scripture passages which are often overlooked. When all is said and done, however, we find in this series stories of interesting people with practical exhortations to the hearers rather than an unfolding of the richness of God’s redemptive plan.

The last volume has been prepared by a committee of the synod of the Christian Reformed Church for reading services in congregations temporarily without a pastor. The twenty sermons have been prepared by twenty ministers. Hence there is an unusual variety of material and presentation. Here we notice in each case a conscious attempt to explain a longer or shorter text. The emphasis falls very strongly on the authority with which the Word comes to the congregation. In nearly every instance the truths of Scripture are presented clearly and challengingly as the only anchor of the soul in our times.

Although this volume will no doubt prove very useful in meeting the need in many vacant congregations, it is regrettable that the form of several of the sermons does not match the content. Not all the sentences read easily. In several instances grammatical errors appear. The main divisions are not in every case proper explications of the theme which has been chosen.

Yet all in all, these are good sermons. They consciously and consistently come to grips with the text. They are filled with a sense of holy calling and speak with the authority which befits the ambassadors of the Lord. If anyone desires to know what kind of sermons are being preached in the Christian Reformed Churches today, he does well to consult this volume which may be regarded as a fairly accurate sample of the spiritual food which is served there.

Peter Y. de Jong.

KNOW THYSELF

Gereformeerd, Waarheen?, by A. Bouman and Thys Booy; J. H. Kok, Kampen; price f 7.90.

Not only is self-examination good for the Christian believer; it is essential and necessary also for the Christian church. Sin attacks not only the individual but also the group. Therefore our churches, both as local congregations and as denominations, must consciously and frequently subject themselves to heart-searching in the light of the Word. God is often presented in both the Old and the New Testaments as sitting in judgment on the organized life of His people, weighing it in the balances of His justice and finding it wanting.

As Reformed Christians we have behind us a tradition which is sympathetic to evaluating the life of the churches in the light of the Word. Frequently we remind ourselves that a Reformed church must always be reforming herself. However, to profess this with the lips is usually far easier than to practice it consistently. For both within and without there are those who are eager to point out the glaring deficiencies of our organized ecclesiastical life but have little appreciation for the great spiritual benefits which God gives His people in His church. Hence we find ourselves trying
to hide some of our inconsistencies and sins. This is not as it should be. Sin must be searched out, exposed and rejected. Only by a process of continual reformation will the life of the church remain healthy, vital and fruitful.

In this book, according to its sub-title, we have “an introduction to a discussion on the direction of Reformed life.” The authors, young men who are members of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, are interested in subjecting the whole of Reformed life in that country to the judgment of the Word of God. They are deeply convinced that all is not well in the Dutch Zion, and that therefore it would be more cruel to cover up the weaknesses and sins than to speak out sharply and critically. The professed goal of their writing is an evangelical renewal of spiritual life among the Reformed groups there. For too long, they are convinced, the Reformed people have lived in the chilly atmosphere of dead orthodoxy, scholasticism, and clericalism. The churches have sinned by isolating themselves self-righteously from others who name the name of Christ. There is everywhere evident an unbridgeable chasm between Reformed theory and practice.

The division of the material is interesting. The larger sections are by Bouman; the shorter from the pen of Thys Booy who has criticized the clergy and the churches before. The first section deals with “our misery”; the second with “our deliverance—our gratitude”, terms which speak to the heart of Reformed people who have been nourished by the Heidelberg Catechism.

The attempt which is made here is indeed praiseworthy. Let it never be said that Reformed Christians refuse to subject themselves and their ecclesiastical life to the judgment of the Word. However, it is another matter whether this attempt is successful in giving us a comprehensive and honest analysis of Reformed life in the Netherlands. Even a cursory reading of the book leaves the unmistakable impression that there is not much good to be said about our Reformed brethren and sisters in the Netherlands. Although mention is made of exceptions, the authors definitely create the impression that deterioration and deformation are the rule among ministers, elders, educational and political leaders and congregations.

We trust that this book will be carefully read and critically evaluated in the Netherlands. By no means all will agree with the diagnosis. Yet it deserves a hearing. It has already been greeted with mixed emotions by leaders there. All insist that it be read and analyzed. Several claim that if the life of the churches be changed in accordance with the convictions of the authors, the churches would cease to be Reformed. Apparently the authors are not only interested in rectifying glaring inconsistencies. They seem to be convinced that the whole course of Reformed life there must be altered.

Perhaps we need a similar book about Reformed church life in America. If ever something like this appears, we hope it will manifest the same clarity and fearlessness, but also that it will demonstrate a deeper appreciation of what is truly Reformed. Only then will the churches be benefitted as they become more aware of what they are and what they should be in the light of the Word.

Peter Y. De Jong.

DOCTRINAL PREACHING

BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST, by Herman Hoeksema; W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan; 179 pages, $2.50.

If the reader is interested in the Heidelberg Catechism, he should obtain this book. This volume constitutes the sixth in Hoeksema’s exposition of the Catechism. It covers the material contained in Lord’s Days 25, 26 and 27. As theologian and pastor the author proves himself an able expositor of this Reformed confession.

Hoeksema is a careful workman. He operates deftly with many distinctions necessary in Reformed thinking. The opening chapter deals with the means of grace. After carefully detailing the four main usages of the concept grace, he gives the following definition of the means of grace.

“When we speak of means of grace, we refer to grace in the fourth or subjective sense of the word. It is through means that the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts, effects within us the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and bestows upon us all the blessing of salvation.” (p. 21.)

No doubt, if God’s people would make more prayerful and diligent use of the means, their commitment of faith would be more relevant and meaningful today.

There is an exceptionally worthwhile chapter on “Preaching as a Means of Grace.” As many today carelessly disregard and discredit the office of the ministry this chapter gains cogency.

“Today everybody preaches, except perhaps, whose specific calling it is.” (p. 28.)

“Preaching is the authoritative proclamation of the gospel by the Church in the service of the Word through Christ.” (p. 29.)

As such the following elements are involved: 1) being sent; 2) the proclamation of the whole Word of God; 3) by the church; 4) it is in the service of the Word of God through Christ, for only Christ through the Spirit can make preaching of the Word powerful and efficacious as a means of grace. With free lance preaching gaining ascendency, it is well to reemphasize the Biblical basis of preaching.

The authoritative character of true preaching lies in the theme of all preaching. This theme is Jesus Christ as the revelation of the God of our salvation. Joined with this emphasis is a chapter on “Preaching in the Covenant.” It is worth reading twice over. As the same Word of Christ is brought to all, it becomes evident that it is a savour of life unto life unto God’s chosen, and a savour of death unto death unto all others.

There is much valuable confessional material on the idea of the covenant. In Hoeksema’s discussion the view of the late Prof. Heyns, Professor at Calvin Seminary, is thoroughly criticized. Hoeksema is insistent upon making the distinction between the covenant as a means to an end and as an end in itself. At all costs he wants nothing to do with the covenant as a means to an end. This point is labored to wearsome lengths.

Certain questions refuse to be silenced when reading Hoeksema’s understanding of the covenant idea. How does he fit Esau and Judas into the covenant? What happens to history? Is not the covenant in the process of realization? Is not the covenant in a certain sense a method of the administration of God’s grace? Hoeksema apparently leaves no room for the distinction, historically maintained in Reformed circles and certainly not Scripturally unwarranted, between the covenant as an external and internal relationship? Though this distinction must be employed with care, and though it does not answer all the problems, it does appear to point out the limits within which we must confine our
understanding of the covenant. One can not escape the impression that Hoeksema wants to do the impossible. That is, he wants to harmonize for mere mortals the secret and revealed will of God. No one can bring together election and the historical realization of the covenant. Certainly not by restricting the covenant idea as exclusively an end in itself.

One regrets that the author sets up straw men in his discussion. This becomes apparent in his fulminations against the idea of the covenant of works. In connection with the covenant of works Reformed thinkers have always operated carefully with the distinction between the principle of justice and the principle of grace, especially in understanding the probationary command. Hoeksema summarily dismisses the distinction with this statement. "But I object that God cannot deny Himself, and that even by grace He cannot so condescend to man that the latter becomes a party next to Him, even though the relation is presented as one between a very great party and a very small party." (p. 139.) The reader is very unconvinced. Furthermore, no one who understands the covenant of works thinks of man as setting up his relatively autonomous stipulations as Hoeksema would have his readers believe.

Despite such questions, we would heartily recommend reading this book, as well as the preceding volumes. Hoeksema is Reformed, and demonstrates himself an able writer. We hope that God will spare the brother and give him strength to complete his work on the Heidelberg Catechism. Meanwhile we look forward to his next volume.

ALEXANDER DE Jong.

BOOKS RECEIVED AND EXAMINED

AN EXPOSITION OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, by Arthur W. Pink; Bible Truth Depot, Swengel (Union County), Pennsylvania, 1950; 455 pages, $3.75.

This volume meets the needs of the earnest Bible student as well as the constant desire of Sunday School teachers for fresh treatment of the great themes of Scripture. The author is editor and publisher of a Bible study magazine, Studies in the Scriptures, and shows himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Truth. This exposition is sound theologically, is thorough exegetically, and is very practical in its application. Here is a sample: (p. 36) "in this first section of the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus is defining the character of those who should be subjects and citizens in His Kingdom. First, He described them according to the wrought; the first four may be grouped together as setting entered into the peace which Christ made by the blood of the graces: having tasted the mercy of God, they are merciful Another. They are not self-willed, but meek; they are not self-righteous, nature, they now hate satisfied, but mourning because of their spiritual state; dividing the Truth. This exposition is sound theologically, having entered into the peace which Christ made by the blood of His Cross, they now wish to live in amity with all."

The author correctly calls our attention to the fact that to be "reconciled" to another (Matthew 5:23) does not mean that our feelings must be changed so much as to be restored to the favour of one we offended. In short, the term as used in Scripture has basically an objective reference. Further, one is favorably impressed by the emphasis on the divine law and its obligatory character, and by the rejection of the error of the perfectionists, etc. All in all, this is a good verse by verse account of the meaning and significance of the Sermon on the Mount.


This informative study of world conditions and the crises with which we are faced is frankly Premillennial in outlook. The author is looking for the final victory of Christ in two installments—one over world powers pre-millennial and the other over spiritual powers post-millennial. The idea that civilization is progressing toward an era of universal peace is confronted with formidable statistics to the contrary. The main thesis of the book is the progressive development of world-government, world-dictatorship, world-wide apostasy, and the trend toward world-religion. The latter is to be marked by its humanism, its anti-supernaturalism and its coercive character. All these have been clearly foretold in the sacred Scriptures. With this thesis any serious-minded Christian ought to be able to agree. However, one recoils when the author says that every Bible-believing Christian must accept the ultimate restoration of the Jews to Palestine as a fulfillment of the prophetic Scriptures. In my humble opinion the learned author has overlooked the simple fact that Old Testament prophecy on this score envisages a spiritually rededicated Israel, which cannot be identified with modern Zionism by the widest stretch of the imagination. Neither are we convinced when Dr. Smith quotes Jewish authorities who are not godless but are calling for a return unto the religion of the prophets. As I understand the Old Testament and the covenant of God with Abraham and Israel, there is no promise outside of the Christ, the Saviour whom God sent into the world in the fulness of time. But there is a general denial of the Christ among the Zionists whether religious or irreligious. Furthermore, the basic light of the New Testament concerning the problem is utterly disregarded. Jesus, for example, at the Jerusalem council maintains that rebuilding of the tabernacle of David that had fallen down is to be identified with the bringing of the Gentiles into the New Testament church. And Christ asseverates before Pilate that his Kingdom is not of this world. To maintain that the migrations of present-day Jews to Palestine are preparatory of the setting up of Christ's kingdom nevertheless, is, to my mind, a peculiar blindness related to that error of the Jews of Jesus' own day who would not receive Him as the Saviour from sin. For the rest, this book ought to be read by clergy and laymen alike, for it sounds the cry: "Be ye ready," and, "Lift up your heads for the day of your redemption draweth nigh!"

HENRY R. VAN TIL.

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